NOTE TO USERS

Being and Becoming an 'I want to learn person':
Participating in an Arts-oriented Learning Environment:
Perception and Context

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Acknowledgments

From a mountain as high as this one, he said to himself, *I'll get a view of the whole planet and all the people on it...*

<p align="right">de Saint-Exupéry (2000, p. 53)</p>

Completing the trek to the mountain has not be accomplished alone. There are so many who have walked with me, if but briefly. They have taken some steps and then ushered me on. Whether their steps be many or few, they deserve recognition....

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Abstract

The push for educational reform in the province of Québec, Canada has brought to the foreground many ideas about what needs to be done to improve the learning experience of students. While there has been some movement in the primary grade levels, change in the secondary level is still in its infancy. There are some teachers, however, in high schools who have been on the cutting edge of educational reform. The purpose of this study is to look at participation within a secondary classroom where the philosophy of the reform is being acted upon. The study, qualitative in design, is a type of ethnographic investigation of a teacher and students in a Grade VII language arts classroom. The classroom is a part of an exclusive program, namely the Alternative Learning Program, nested in a public high school in the Montreal area.

Using various means of data collection such as field notes and interviews, the researcher examines the various dimensions of participation as it unfolds in this particular classroom. The researcher identifies these dimensions as assigned and shared participation. The data suggests that dynamics beyond assigned and shared participation are also evident. The dynamics, identified as participative tone, contribute to student views of the uniqueness of this particular learning environment. To present a trustworthy description of what is observed, however, the investigator shows situations in which participation is not apparent. These situations are identified as participative resistance. The researcher deduces that participation and participative resistance need to be viewed as context-bound and are, in many respects, points on a continuum.

Attempts have been made in the research to allow the study participants to express their views. Through interviews, students share in their own words what participation means to them. Their words add depth to understanding of what student participation is. The study suggests that notions of the child-centered or student-centered classroom, while commendable, are not necessarily an aspiration to strive for.

The study affirms that the teacher plays a key position in the classroom environment. The study begins by showing the various roles that the teacher assumes

in her daily practice. Views of the teacher are presented along with perceptions of the students and the researcher to determine the various roles played out in this site. The study concludes that the teacher conducts her practice by exceeding the boundaries of her roles so identified.

The study shows that the classroom does not stand in isolation, but is subject to various influences from the school, as well as the community at large. The researcher identifies these influences as context and conditions using another site as a point of reference. The secondary sight brings clarity to what the researcher observes. The researcher concludes that in addition to communal influences, learning in the primary site takes place under the banner of what is defined as an arts-oriented curriculum. The arts-oriented curriculum contributes to the sense of community in the classroom. But data also suggest that the classroom does not always function as a community. In spite of the teacher's good intentions, tensions sometimes foster a competitive rather than collaborative spirit among the students.

Resumé

Dans la province de Québec, les pressons en faveur d'une réforme de l'éducation ont engendré de nombreuses idées sur ce qu'il faudrait faire afin d'améliorer l'apprentissage des étudiants. Bien qu'il y ait eut certaines tentatives au niveau primaire, au secondaire on en est encore au premier balbutiement Toutefois cependant, quelques professeurs d'école secondaire sont presque au bord de la réforme de l'éducation.

Cette recherche a pour but d'observer la participation dans une classe du secondaire où la philosophie de la réforme est déjà appliquée. Cette étude, de type qualitative, est en quelque sorte une enquête ethnographique sur un professeur et les étudiants d'une classe de niveau VII en Langage des arts. Cette classe s'inscrit dans le cadre d'un programme exclusif, nommément le Programme d'éducation alternatif, offert dans une école secondaire publique de la région de Montréal

En utilisant plusieurs techniques de cueillette de données, tel que les notes prisent sur le terrain et des interviews, le chercheur examine les diverses formes de participation ainsi qu'elles se sont développées dans le cadre de cette classe tout à fait particulière. L'investigateur qualifie ces aspects de participation assignée et partagée. Les donnés suggèrent aussi qu'il est évident que la dynamique va bien au-delà de la participation assignée et partagée. La dynamique, identifié comme étant d'expression participative, permet à l'étudiant de se rendre compte du caractère unique de ce mode d'apprentissage. Toutefois, afin d'offrir une description fiable de ses observations, l'enquêteur expose des situations dans lesquelles la participation n'est pas évidente. Ces situations sont qualifiées de résistance participative. Le chercheur en déduit que la participation et la résistance participative doivent être examinées dans leur contexte et qu'elles sont, sous bien des aspects, une grille d'analyse en continuum.

De nombreux efforts ont été entrepris pour permettre aux participants d'exposer leur point de vue. Ainsi, par le biais d'entrevues, les étudiants ont exprimé, dans leurs propres termes, ce que signifie pour eux la participation. Leurs mots ajoutent une certaine profondeur qui permet une meilleure compréhension de ce qu'est la participation étudiante. L'étude suggère que, bien que fort louable, la notion

de classe centrée sur l'enfant ou l'étudiant n'est pas nécessairement l'objectif à atteindre.

La recherche soutient que le professeur joue un rôle clé dans l'environnement scolaire. Dans un premier temps, cette étude présente les différents rôles qu'assume le professeur dans sa pratique quotidienne. Le point de vue du professeur est présenté en même temps que la perception des étudiants et du chercheur afin d'identifier les différents rôles interprétés sur le site. L'étude conclue que, dans la pratique, le professeur excède les limites de ses rôles tels qu'ils ont été déterminés.

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When I finally managed to speak, I asked him, "But what are you doing here?"

de Saint-Exupéry (2000, p. 4)

Prologue

This project reflects my personal journey as an educator. I pursued my profession with enthusiasm. I worked with conviction. Along the way I shared my passion for my discipline with my students. When it was their choosing, what was mine became theirs. Yet I felt alone. The isolation deepened my feeling that what I was doing was of minor consequence. I felt devalued. The demands of the task overwhelmed me. At the same time the feeling of marginalization paralyzed me. I was driven to inaction. My isolation turned to anger and depression.

We hear much of what is wrong with our schools. I cannot deny that these criticisms are not without their merits, but I have long learned that it is a dangerous practice to generalize. However, if I were to articulate what I feel is the most profound deficiency, I would summarize it in a single word: fragmentary. As educators we teach, as we have been taught, through isolating. We diminish knowledge to unrelated bits of information. We build through reducing. Numbers, words, music notation and the brush stroke appear to have little connection: they are mutually exclusive. The language of one cannot enhance the language of another. The musician cannot think in equations nor the mathematician, in rhythms. We synthesize by narrowing, comprehend by eliminating. We strive to circumscribe complexity; to confine the infinite.

As we reduce we rank. We value one view at the expense of another. Ideas are pitted against ideas; disciplines against disciplines. We teach that to accept one is to dismiss the other. We diminish learning to singular truths, and, in doing so, convey that some truths are of greater value than others.

Thus, the musician is isolated from the mathematician, the poet from the chemist. Our students are blinded from the science in art and the art in science. Exclusion in ideas soon translates into exclusion of each other. The human person is reduced to descriptors of gender, race and creed. We learn to disregard our similarities while equalizing our differences.

The spirit of fragmentation pervades the daily life of the school. It pits discipline against discipline; teacher against teacher. Subjects deemed as 'core' or obligatory are prioritized over those identified as optional. Students quickly learn that certain ways of knowing are superior to others. The students who excel in core subjects feel that the school is a friendly place; those who do not, often feel differently, or at best, indifferently.

How we have organized schools and what is taught there has caused me considerable discomfort. Except for smatterings of readings and sporadic references to possibilities of what can be done, the whole concept of what I have long perceived as a more interconnected, inclusionary learning environment seemed like an illusion. It was only when I met a woman whose teaching is driven by this philosophy that the realm of possibility translated into reality. This study investigated her approach.

Naming What I Propose to Do

The notion of interconnectedness spurred me to reflect upon what schools do. Is it enough, I ask, to ensure that students acquire information? Or, need schools be doing more? In my musings, I have concluded that if schools are doing what I feel they *ought* to be doing, they need to be places where students use information creatively. When I get beyond the boundaries separating each discipline, an arbitrary and artificial construction at best, I realize that the essence of learning is creative thinking, and inevitably creative action. That is, to take what has been learned, 'raw information', as it were, and use these understandings to solve problems, to arrive at meanings, and to explore new possibilities. Creativity has long been associated with human endeavours categorized as the arts. It stands to reason that a school wishing to nurture minds that can function creatively is likely to fuse its curriculum with qualities traditionally, although, not exclusively, grounded in the arts disciplines.

But creativity is not the exclusive domain of the arts, as much as some may wish to confine it there. It knows no borders. Traditionally, artists have been permitted, not always I might add with public blessing, to push boundaries, a privilege not necessarily granted to those engaged in other pursuits. I contend, however, that even in areas outside of the arts, breakthroughs have been made by those who dared to leap into unchartered territory. In essence, who dared to be creative.

Over the years, society has granted educational institutions the power to determine when and where creativity is acceptable. I argue, that we need to examine what happens in our schools and the messages that students pick up during their sojourn there. Fortunately,

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there are rebels among us: those brave souls who refuse to conform to standard pedagogical practice and have chosen to take learning experiences elsewhere. This study aims to examine one such example.

The purpose of my study is twofold: first, to examine the extent to which the application of a particular approach to teaching in a secondary school setting involves both the students and the teacher in learning; second, to explore how the context in which this approach is applied 'colours' the learning environment. It is my intent to contribute to the field by investigating the interplay among the various classroom conditions and contextual elements.

Situating the "I" in the Study

When called upon to articulate my reasons for doing this study, I was torn. I was torn between looking inward and risking the possibility of turning my work into a personal admission, or, looking outward and masking my views in the voices of others. Confused I turned to the literature. Maxwell (1996) informs me that I could do both, using practical application as a link between the two. With his blessing I continue.

My experiences and my own artistic inclinations fueled my research interests. I have always believed that as an agent for learning, the arts are rich with potential. Sadly, especially in this era of limited resources, potential remains simply that, potential: possibilities that are untapped or, at best, minimized. I had lived this reality. I had spent almost two decades as a music teacher and found that, with few exceptions, the arts have not received the respect they deserve in any level of the academy. I brought into this work these perceptions.

The problem, in my view, is that educational practice is influenced by those who for various reasons do not promote the arts disciplines. Remnants of behaviorism still brush the landscape of education psychology where, in the quest to understand human comprehension, the 'outside in' approach is still preferred (Davis and Gardner,1992). Decades of research support the idea that knowledge can only be true when I as the learner am detached from it. Once knowledge becomes a part of who I am -- when it is sifted though my psyche and shaped by my feelings -- it is suspect. The legacy I have acquired, and, in turn, passed on to my students is profound. One, I learned, can only know if the knowing is cerebral; if it is cognitive in the narrow way of defining it, that is, 'knowing with the head'. Once my feelings, that is 'knowing with the heart', enters the picture, my knowledge becomes

something else. It may be expression; it may be creative. But it is not knowledge and it is certainly not academic (Rabkin, 2002, October).

I feel strongly about these issues. I do not believe that feelings, nor the expression of them, are detached from cognition. And I do not believe that the arts, with their various languages of expression, are outside the realm of what I might view as being academic. It is time, I argue, for the languages of the heart to take their rightful place in the hallowed halls of learning. If in some small way I can contribute to their admission, then I have done my part.

Study Rationale: Educational Implications

Aside, from my own personal convictions, this study has also been timely given the current status of curriculum reform, especially in Québec, the Canadian province in which I currently reside. *Reaffirming the Mission of Our Schools,* the report of the task force on curriculum reform, affirms the pivotal role the arts play in human development. In the document it states, "teaching in the arts has a specific role to play in the development of each student's sensibility and intelligence" (Ministère de l' Éducation du Québec, 1997a, p. 51). The document does not confine arts-related pursuits to isolated courses, but sees merit in spilling them over into other learning endeavours. It names the arts (among other disciplines) as promoters of "a cultural aspect which must be emphasized" across the curriculum (Ministère de l' Éducation du Québec, 1997a, p. 26).

While these statements are commendable, I have some concerns. First of all the report still adheres to the tradition of separating cognitive from affective learning, linking the former with "rational thought" (Ministère de l' Éducation du Québec, 1997a, p. 25). Am I to deduce then that learning other than cognitive is 'irrational'? When I perused the pages in which the arts disciplines are discussed, I encountered words often aligned with 'rational thought' -- thinking words such as 'learn about', and 'provide with the knowledge'. These words, while giving a dimension of knowing in the arts, give only that -- one dimension. Little, if any, of the vocabulary acknowledges ways of experiencing them. To merely 'learn about' masks the essence: the human need for sensuous-affective connection and expression. As Coleman (1998) declares, "we turn to art not only to gain insight into life, but in order to become fully human" (p. 75).

Within the context of current curriculum reform the arts are given a prominent position, not only as isolated subjects, but as subjects that, according to the *Québec*

Education Program, Secondary Level "form meaningful and diverse connections with other subject areas" (Ministère de l' Éducation du Québec, 2003, p.6). The document continues that...

> the possibility of working on the same problem from the point of view of the arts and from that of mathematics, science and technology gives students the opportunity to experience two ways of perceiving reality that are both complementary and mutually enriching (p. 6).

I welcome the statement. It counters disciplinary fragmentation and gives merit to experiential knowledge. The most profound flaw of the *Québec Education Program* is that these ideas are not readily applicable to classroom practice. The fusing of the arts and other disciplines under the banner of cross-curricular learning experiences, that is, experiences that transcend the boundaries of subjects, is not clearly spelled out, particularly in terms of the changes this approach will have on both school and classroom organization. I hope this study will add to the understanding of what can be done to facilitate the process.

Study Rationale: The Research Strands

My reasons for pursuing the study are substantiated in the literature that form the theoretical underpinnings for my research. I did not conduct my literature review in the manner found in many studies. Rather than concentrate my literature search in one chapter, I have integrated it throughout. In so doing, I could closely align theory and practice in each chapter. I begin with an overview of the various bodies of literature supporting the strands of my study.

The literature indicates that if school learning is connected with what students already know, the learning will more likely become a permanent part of their intellectual schema (Applebee and Langer, 1983; Cornbleth, 1995; Glatthorn, 1994). Furthermore, the literature suggests that valuing the knowledge and experiences students bring into the classroom enhances the mastery of the learning that takes place there (Giroux and McLaren, 1992; Mitra, 2003; Sleeter and Grant, 1991). Mastery is particularly evident when students take ownership of their learning (Pate, Homestead, and McGinnis, 1997). Student perception of themselves as creators, as well as acquirers of knowledge, is an integral part of laying

claim to the learning experience (Fowler, 1994; Moore, 1995; Rudduck and Demetriou, 2003).

The dialogue on learning ownership has been drawn from identifiable bodies of literature. Creativity is one such strand. Through the literature I have explored what is understood to date about creativity and how such understandings have broadened the landscape of recent views about intelligence (Gardner, 1993; Markman, Yamauchi and Makin, 1997). Cognition and creativity are inextricably linked. To be creative requires 'knowing of' and the competence to apply it.

Expanding views of intelligence have left their mark. Educators are increasingly challenged to reflect upon how to best meet student needs (Grundy, 1987; Kessler, 2000). The aftermath of this reflection is a re-examination of the structure and organization of what the school offers (Harwayne, 1999). The second strand of the literature appears, in first broad brush strokes, as an overview of the curriculum, described by Eisner (1998) as a "mind-altering device" (p. 65). Curriculum alters the mind, not only in the raw content, the text, but in the way the content is nuanced by the teacher and the student. My discussion about curriculum included views expressed by various members of the education community during interviews I conducted to fulfil a reading course requirement. Their views became the springboard for examining what the literature had to say. Curriculum is looked at in some depth in Chapters 3 and 7. In Chapters 4 and 5, I look at the curriculum in terms of student and teacher relationship to it.

To begin, I described, in Chapter 3, the curriculum as it appeared in the study site. I did not assign a label to the curriculum until much later in my writing. I wanted the descriptor I chose to emerge out of what I saw and what I shared with the reader. My discussion of more particular types of curriculum, such as interdisciplinary and arts-based, is woven into Chapter 7. In a nutshell, I presented the curriculum from two points of view: firstly, curriculum as a lived experience; secondly, curriculum as a contextual component. While it is difficult, even unwise to separate these two perspectives, the lens I used for the looking, I argue, differed. At first, I portrayed curriculum, to use Miller Power's (1996) terms 'in the midst' and later, 'after the fact' (p. 28). By positioning myself differently in the discussion, I could show curriculum from various standpoints.

The second strand of the study moves from a general view of curriculum to a more identifiable strand of the curriculum, namely language arts. In doing so, I wanted to align my work with the *Québec Education Program* (Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec, 2000 and 2003) the document spearheading current curriculum reform in the province. As I intend to show, while the study focuses largely on a language arts curricular experience, the

experience is characterized by a shift in perception about subject-specific boundaries. The shifting of these boundaries spurred my discussions about cross-curricular learning or interdisciplinarity. In spite of difficulties in reaching a consensus about how interdisciplinarity is to be defined (Brandt, 1991; Klein, 1996), writers agree upon its enrichment of the learning experience (Beane, 1995; Tchudi, 1994). Advocates of interdisciplinarity broach the topic through the holistic approach to teaching language (Heath, 1983; Moffett and Wagner, 1992), through the use of various literary genres (Romano, 1995), and even more broadly through the use of various art forms (Goldberg and Phillips, 1995). The latter, commonly identified in the literature as arts-based curriculum, demonstrates, on the part of its proponents, robust connections with the creative process (Alejandro, 1994; Courtney, 1997; Eisner, 1998).

Within the scope of this study, one essential strand remains. The literature emerging from the sociolinguistic and psychological traditions emphasizes the importance of the contextual and situational aspects of learning and the implications they have on the individual learner within classroom practice (Ainley, 1993; Garber and Gaudelius, 1992; McMahon, 2003). In this study, the learner is more specifically identified as the adolescent learner (Alvermann, 1995/1996; Gilligan, 1996). This strand, as it is linked to a language arts environment, is examined primarily, although not exclusively, in Chapters 4, 6 and 7.

As already established, language arts, and, more specifically English language arts, was the primary curricular content in the learning environment I investigated. Vygotsky (1962), the lantern bearer of sociolinguisitics, concludes that linguistic development is grounded in complex thinking shaped and nurtured by the child's social environment. He concurs that in real life the complexities of developing word meanings "are *not spontaneously* developed by the child ...[but]... are predetermined by the meaning a given word already has in the language of adults" (p. 67)[italics added]. Likewise, Lakoff (1987), a linguist from a more contemporary vantage point, highlights the critical role of "experiential realism" on language meaning making. In his view, conceptual structures, the means by which we categorize and generate understandings in words and ideas, "are strongly (though by no means totally) constrained by reality and by the way we function as an inherent part of reality" (p. 372).

In spite of its emphasis in schools, language, the symbolic coding of meaning making, especially the 'non-verbal' language of the arts, continues to be viewed with suspicion. The onus is left to the believers to show what is possible; to show how different language media in Greene's (1992) words, "lead to a participant kind of knowing" (p. 3). "Knowing about", Greene (1995a) continues, "even in the most formal academic manner, is

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entirely different from creating an unreal world imaginatively and entering it perceptually, affectively, and cognitively" (pp. 379-380). While we share, and indeed must share, commonalities when comprehending the world, there is more than ample room for individual interpretation. The creation of, as in Greene's words, "an unreal world" becomes, in many dimensions, 'real' because it invites other ways of seeing. Likewise, Alejandro (1994) claims that our view of the world is enriched because through the canvas, the page and the musical performance, we "learn how to see" (p.13). In short, to take the Eisnerian (1991) view, we not only see, but learn to see in a certain way, or even, I contend, in certain ways.

Our ability to see or to comprehend, does not emerge from the world outside of us, but through our interrelating with it. Words is one of the media we use to express that relationship. The quest for understanding takes us to not only 'knowing of' but to 'knowing within', which according to Reimer (1992), "consists of a particular combination of involvements of the self with particular qualities of an encountered object or event" (p. 29). When deriving meaning from an object/experience, we not only see and express the object/experience, but our relationship to it through various forms (Wertsch, 2000).

The need to connect with the outside world compels us to find ways to express it. Some connections, we have long discovered, are felt more intensely than others. As much as words are essential for describing our experience, they are often ill-prepared for the task. Consequently, we are driven to seek other ways of meaning making, particularly when it strives to express feeling. Langer (1953) asserts that the human being not only has feelings, but "a life of feeling" (p. 372) which she encapsulates as a fluid, temporal "stream of tensions and resolutions" (p. 372). This life of feeling propels us to other art forms, mainly because they can be more organic, illusive and passionate than the word. The "space-tensions" and "space-resolutions" expressed in the visual or musical arts draw us in, and simultaneously, pull us away from limiting our emotive experiences to verbal text (Langer, 1953, p. 373). Through our interaction with the arts we are lifted out of the mundane, the ordinariness of life, and at the same time intensify our relationship with it.

For me, identifying the individual strands of my research was a reasonable way of establishing the parameters. It also provided a fitting introduction to the questions I designed to guide my study. The questions are as follows:

1. How do students participate in an English language arts component of an Alternative Learning Program (ALP) in a Montreal-based high school?
2. How do students feel about the learning environment in which they are participating?

3.   What role does the teacher play?

4.   What classroom conditions and contextual factors shape what transpires in the learning environment?

The Alternative Learning Program (ALP) was created to meet the needs of a select group of students. The program will be explained in greater detail in the chapters that follow, especially Chapters 2 and 4.

The research questions form the backdrop of individual chapters in this document. Responses to the research questions emerged from the data collected from various sources to be discussed in the next chapter. My treatment of the data, I discovered, reflected my background as a musician. As I will show throughout the study, I approached the data not as independent bytes of information, as they first appeared, but as integral parts of a larger whole. Like all worthy research endeavours, I arrived at my conclusions with more questions than answers, questions that may be a catalyst for further exploration and future investigation.

As already implied, I did not enter this research endeavour as a neutral observer. The investigation was conceived from my own value-laden perceptions. The best I could do was to be transparent about them from the outset. They may not be obvious to the reader and, thus, warrant naming:

1.   Student participation unfolds in different ways in the classroom.

2.   Students learn best when they are actively participating in their learning.

3.   To be a creative learner, a student must actively participate in his or her learning.

4.   Cognitive understanding is a necessary pre-requisite for creativity and is also enhanced by creativity.

6.   An environment with creative "leanings" nurtures learning by drawing in the learner, not only intellectually but emotionally.

7.   The teacher plays a pivotal role in the learning environment.

8.   More than an emphasis on active participation is needed in a school to nurture learning.

As the list attests, I entered this study with a sense that in this particular site students participate in their learning in different ways. I was also of the opinion that some forms of participation are more effective than others. The data, or to be more exact, my interpretations of the data, will determine whether or not this is the case.

I acknowledge that text could possibly fail to give a holistic view of the assumptions I brought into this study. To clarify my views, I designed what I call a conceptual compass to be presented in the next section.

Framing My Biases: A Conceptual Compass

My thoughts took me initially to the literature and to the term 'conceptual framework'. Miles and Huberman (1994) state that a conceptual framework "explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied - the key factors, concepts, or variables - and the presumed relationship among them" (p. 18). The authors provide insights into the kind of visual presentation I was looking for. However, given their positivistic leanings and their adherence to hypothesis testing, I was reticent to embrace their thinking entirely. Maxwell (1996) uses different terminology, namely concept mapping, which he states has, in some ways, a similar function to the conceptual framework. He explains that a concept map "like the theory it represents, is a picture of the territory you want to study, not of the study itself" (p. 37). The conceptual map is a visual outline, not only of the various components or strands of the study, but of their relationship to each other.

The literature supports my reasons for including a map at this point. I elected to use the qualitative approach to conduct my research for reasons to be discussed more fully in Chapter 2. The premise that all research is value-laden was particularly appealing. I could be transparent about my biases by making them a part of the research dialogue. According to Janesick (1994), I could use the conceptual map to "early on identif[y]...[my] biases and articulate the ideology" (p. 212). The map was a useful tool through which I could show the assumptions that initiated my journey.

I was aware of the inherent dangers of engaging in this exercise. While in Maxwell's (1996) terms, the use of a conceptual map could be useful in shedding light on what I was seeing, I had to be cautious not to become permanently wedded to it. In doing so, I would commit, to coin Becker (1986), "ideological hegemony" (p. 147-148). That is, I would let the map predetermine what the data would tell me. I was reticent, therefore, to use the term 'map' which could skew my research in a decisive direction. As an alternative, I chose to use the representation as a compass, that is, purely as a guide to indicate possible routes or orientations. In spite of the potential pitfalls, I decided that using such a visual representation was more beneficial than not.
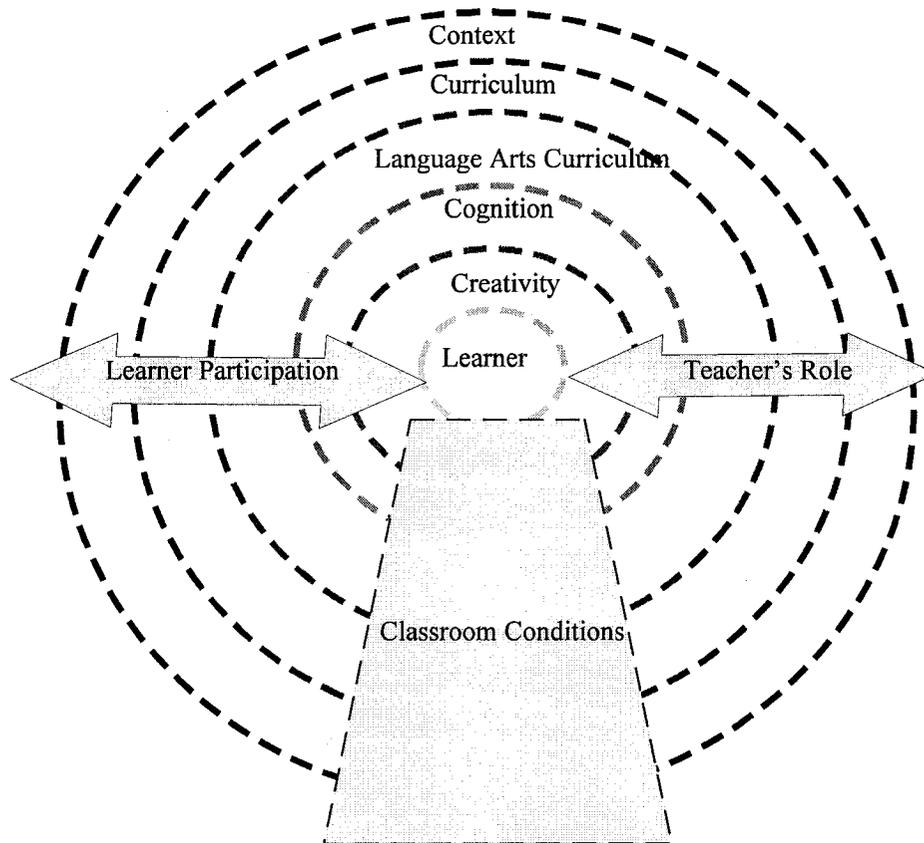
Figure 1. Strands of the Study: A Conceptual Compass

Although visual representations are found in the literature, I concluded that they did not show the interconnections I wished to explore. I decided to create one of my own. The reader will notice that the compass is abstract, but I intentionally kept it that way. For reasons already stated, I wanted to avoid getting mired in details that would set up preconceptions of what I would find. The Eisnerian notion of 'learning what to see' is, I have come to realize, a double-edged sword. It enables me to see through siphoning out other possibilities. What I cast aside could have been a valuable piece in the puzzle and, in the long run, seriously flaw my findings. As I committed the conceptual compass to paper, I was cognizant of these risks. I had to keep an open mind: that the visual presented in Figure 1 would be organic and subject to many iterations as the study progressed.

The concentric circles of the map depict the relationship among the various elements which is constantly in motion and evolving. As illustrated by the broken lines in the circles, the movement is fluid, one spilling out into the other. I placed the *Learner* at the core. The two-headed arrow on the left demonstrates a bi-directional flow that emanates to and from the learner in terms of *Learner Participation. Creativity* is closest to the learner since, at least to my way of thinking at the moment, is the element with which the student interacts directly. *Cognition* feeds into and out of creativity. The arrow on the right represents the critical role played by the teacher represented in terms of *Teacher's Role*. The two outer layers represent the environments in which cognition and creativity are nurtured. *Language arts Curriculum,* the focal point of the study is nested within the broader concept of *Curriculum. Curriculum* is embedded in a larger environment identified in general terms, at least in this point of the discussion, as *Context.* Some elements in the learning environment transcend or cut across the effects of curriculum and context. These elements are depicted in the funnel moving through the circles what I am loosely identifying at this point, as *Classroom Conditions.*

I was fully cognizant that the conceptual compass would be constantly in a state of flux: that the rendition currently presented would likely change with time. For that reason, I intend to revisit it at the end of the study.

Prologue Antecedent

Well along into the study I encountered Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's (2000) account of *The Little Prince*. Although considered a classic, I have to admit that I had never read the book before. A colleague at McGill recommended the book stating that it had been her favourite from childhood. I read. I was enraptured. The book spoke to me at so many levels. Its message complemented what I saw in my own work. I saw connections. The book spoke to me of finding deeper meanings even in the ordinary and the mundane. It became a lens for my looking. At the same time, the characters in the plot grew into metaphors for the study participants. The longer I spent time with them, the more was revealed. Like Caine and Caine (1997), *The Little Prince* spurred me to this realization. I saw that "deeper meanings are the source of most intrinsic motivation. They are the source of our reasons to keep going even when we do not understand" (p. 112). The book nudged me to keep looking even when the search was fraught with uncertainty. It beckoned me on.

But the merits of the book went far beyond the search for meaning. I was drawn to its artistry. Beauty spilled from its pages. The book was art: aesthetically appealing and creatively crafted. The language was simple, yet revealed so many truths. The book transcended age and location. It invited me in. I brought to its pages what I knew and reflected upon... "Speak to me of that Beauty which the people interpret and define, each one according to his own conception; I have seen her honored and worshiped in different ways and manners" (Gibran,1993, p.69). The beauty in *The Little Prince* opened me to new interpretations. It was a compelling companion. It invited me to imaginings far beyond.

If I've told you these details about Asteroid B-612 and if I've given you its number, it is on account of the grown-ups. Grown-ups like numbers.

de Saint-Exupéry (2000, p. 10)

In this chapter I focus on the method of research used in my study already identified in the previous chapter as qualitative. I had definite reasons for this choice, reasons to be discussed later in this chapter. To begin, I want to establish an understanding of what qualitative research is, or at best, what it is likely to entail.

Qualitative Inquiry: A Working Definition

A number of the writers I encountered in the literature had difficulty determining a succinct definition of qualitative methodology. Ely (1991) confesses that after a series of attempts she is struck by the formidability of the task. She makes reference to Lincoln and Guba (1985), who in trying to define what they call 'naturalism', concede that "... it is precisely because the matter is so involved that it is not possible to provide a simple definition ..." (p. 8). Ely (1991) is of the opinion that although Lincoln and Guba (1985) are talking about naturalism the statement could be just as easily applied to qualitative methodology. Strauss and Corbin (1990) admit that the term qualitative research "is confusing because it can mean different things to different people" (p. 18). Bogdan and Biklen (1998) are equally elusive in their comment that the exact use and definition of words such as fieldwork and qualitative research "varies from user to user and from time to time" (p. 3). Maxwell (1996) wary of 'pigeon-holing' this form of inquiry talks about its strengths derived "primarily from its inductive approach, its focus on specific situations or people, and its emphasis on words rather than numbers" (p. 17). According to these authors, determining what qualitative inquiry is remains at best an illusive exercise.

Some writers, on the other hand, take up the challenge. Unsurprisingly, they also struggle with ambivalency, reinforcing my appraisal of why so many writers of the qualitative persuasion are loathed to enter the definition debate. Strauss and Corbin (1990), for example, elect to define qualitative research in terms of what it is *not*. They posit that the

word qualitative means "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or means of quantification" (p. 17). Other writers prefer to focus on what qualitative research is. Jacob (1992) suggests that qualitative research is "research that is interpretivist at the philosophical or theoretical level, that has an open-ended and iterative design, that involves the collection of qualitative data, or that involves qualitative analysis of data" (p. 295). Creswell (1998) concurs that qualitative research is "an inquiry process of understanding based on a distinct methodological tradition of inquiry that explores a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting" (p. 255).

Jacob's definition left me wondering whether or not qualitative inquiry could transcend its philosophical and theoretical underpinnings. His definition, in my view, fails to enlighten me further about what this research approach entails. Cresswell provides more insight into the mechanics of qualitative inquiry by suggesting that the text is the primary, if not exclusive, tool for description and analysis. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) stay with a more inclusive definition which I found to be most acceptable. They contend that qualitative methodology is "multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter" (p. 3). In summation, Denzin and Lincoln's definition is palatable because it avoids naming, thereby confining, what data in this research methodology could possibly look like. They redirect their gaze to the research subject and to the means used for studying the subject. Their view aligned with my reasons for embracing this research approach.

In this study I aimed not only to answer my research questions but to deepen my understanding of the methodology through which these questions were explored. A wise teacher taught me that there is a reason for everything that we do -- that all action is governed by motive. I wanted to understand why I decided to do what I did in this project: that my reasons could be explained and, at least in acceptable dimensions, be understood.

Rationale

My reasons for adopting the qualitative approach were varied and, at least at the inception of my investigation, were born out of what I had learned from topical readings. They also emerged from my own experiences. I realized that I took into the readings my own personal biases about research methodology, biases which I will continue to dispel, or perhaps more precisely, re-examine. I learned some time ago to refute the either/or qualitative vs. quantitative polemic which seems to pervade some research circles. I arrive at

this juncture of the journey believing that no one method has superiority over the other. One may simply respond more effectively than the other to a particular research question. It all depends on the kind of parameters set by the researcher and the resources available to him or her. I chose the qualitative method because I felt that it would best provide the kind of answers I was looking for. The reasons for my decision emerge from the thinking of Sherman and Webb (1988, pp. 5-8) to follow:

(a).   I arrive at an adequate understanding of events only by seeing them in context. Therefore, I needed to immerse myself in the setting.

The purpose of my study was to explore the interaction between a teacher and students in a specialized program within a public school environment. To study such an interaction, I needed to leave my office and physically catapult myself into the setting. I needed to, in the words of Sherman and Webb (1988), understand "experience as nearly as possible as its participants feel it or live it" (p.7). In Eisnerian terms, I had to "view a situation in a way that seeks meaning in the culture of the situation rather than in the manifest behaviour of individuals" (1978/1997, p. 162). Context does not simply create a backdrop for human behaviour but interacts with it. It shapes as it is being shaped (Gruenewald, 2002). "The problem with everyday life," professes Grumet (1991), "is that it is always the ground, rarely the figure" (p. 74). Page (2000) views 'the ground' as "frame factors" explained as "the wider social and historical contexts that presumably have some impacts on, and are themselves influenced by, local instances of teaching (or learning, curriculum, etc.)" (p. 25). The context is the mirror projecting meaning unto human action. To understand qualitatively, I, as the researcher, could not isolate one from the other. I could not conduct the study from afar. I needed to be a part of it.

The naturalistic flavour of qualitative research suited the criteria of my study. I became an "educational ethnographer ... characteristically interested in the details of life in classrooms and corridors, the meaning-making of school participants, and the influence of local circumstances" (Page, Samson and Crockett, 1998, p. 300). Ethnography propelled me into the environment of the participants pressing me to see what they were seeing and to experience what they were experiencing (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998).

(b).   The contexts of inquiry are not contrived; they are natural. As the researcher I had to approach the study site with an open mind. Nothing could be pre-defined or taken for granted.

To understand how people interacted in the study site, I needed to see the site as it was. I needed to approach the site with the mind-set of an invited guest. I could be observer, even participant, but it was largely up to my host to determine how the events would unfold. Taking into account Wolcott's (1995) observation, I had to limit any conscious attempt to reconstruct the environment and to impose any changes. Having said this, I knew that my presence altered, even temporarily, the site by impacting upon, both consciously and unconsciously, the behaviours of the participants. I wanted to study reality 'as is' in its natural, untainted form (said in full awareness of the oxymoron inherent in such a statement). Yet my imposition, my presence, altered the reality I wanted to portray. I, to quote Sherman and Webb (1988), became "the mediator between a disrupted and a reconstructed life" (p. 13). Time, I believe, was the most plausible antidote to this precarious effect. The longer I stayed in the site, the more I blended into the milieu, became commonplace, as it were, so that life returned to normal and homeostasis was restored (Spindler and Hammond, 2000, Spring).

Nor could I approach the study site with a neutral eye. I carried into the environment my own values and preconceptions and spent the duration of the study being challenged by their seeming inconsistencies. Reflecting back to Eisner (1991), I had learned to see in a certain way -- a way that pre-defined my anticipations and coloured my perceptions. I could not readily step outside of myself and redirect the process. The best I could hope for was to be transparent about my biases and to acknowledge their mark upon what I was seeing. I was not a detached and all-knowing observer. I could not be objective about what I experienced. I was the researcher-participant, grounded in the realities of life in the classroom, touched by its successes and mystified by its contradictions. My interpretation of events was tainted by who I am -- a complex mosaic of intellect, values and emotions. As much as I tried to experience what the observed were experiencing, I could never leave the entrapment of my own persona, no more than they could be released from theirs. This reality was both a curse and a blessing: a curse because I could never truly know in an unbiased, omnipresent sense the whole story about another human being; a blessing because in spite of my tainted imposition of speculation and unpredictability, I needed to rely, as best I could, on the participants to reveal themselves to me.

(c).   As a qualitative researcher, I wanted the participants to speak for themselves. The research became an interactive process in which the participants taught me about their lives.

Because of my inability to shed the layers of my own being, I needed to let the participants tell their own story. In Polanyi's (1962) words, I had to reach beyond my own knowledge, and recognize the "contribution of the person knowing what is being known" (p. viii). Borrowing Pike's (1954) descriptor, I had to move into emic inquiry -- to focus upon how the observed defined their reality. I needed to erect a "two-way mirror between the observer and the observed" (Campbell,1988, p. 62): to engage in reflexivity in which I interpreted what I saw. I needed to connect.

To conduct my study successfully, I had to, at the very least, attenuate, in Palmer's (1998b) thoughts, the 'I / Thou' distinction (p. 10). My efforts generated their own tensions and struggles. It was evidenced in my own personal struggles with the vocabulary I used to express my thoughts. What words, I asked myself, do I use when referring to those I was researching? How could I talk about the teacher and the students without setting up an 'I-Them' relationship? For some time, I remained non-committal but finally realized that I had to use something. I had to write and needed a vocabulary through which to do so. Page (2000) reinforced the importance of the language I used. In her words, "*how* a scholar studies and re/presents others will constitute what the scholar learns *about* them" (p. 31). Beyond describing the relationship, the language in a sense *became* the relationship. After some consideration, I settled on the words 'researched' or 'the observed' interchanged with 'teacher'/ 'student(s)' or 'participants'. 'Researched' or 'the observed' has a decidedly more detached ring to it. In various times throughout the study, especially at the beginning, I adopted the stance of an outsider and used a reference like 'researched'. While in the thick of the study I acquired more of an insider status, I resorted to using words like 'participants' and even more closely to using their names. On these occasions, I disguised their identity by using only their beginning initials. In these instances, for example, I referred to the teacher as 'J'. When quoting the students, I used the referent 'Mrs. W'.

Beyond what vocabulary to use, I was aware, from a researcher's standpoint, that Thich Nhat Hanh's (1995) idea of "looking deeply" (pp. 10-11) carried its own dangers. I realized that it was possible to get too connected with the researched. I needed to step away; to retain some degree of outsidedness. Building upon Pike's (1954) thoughts, I needed to take an 'etic' stance defining what I saw through my own perception of what was theirs. Separating from the observed added another dimension to my understanding. As the researcher, it was not enough for me to be the medium through which the researched spoke. To derive deeper meanings behind the words and actions, I needed to, according to Garfinkel (1967), "know or assume something about the biography" of the speakers, as well as the circumstances of the utterances (pp. 4, 11). In doing so, I aligned myself with Goodson

(1992) that, in many dimensions, only the researched have the ultimate right to speak for themselves.

My thoughts on this matter took me beyond Pike's (1954) conception of the etic -- a conception I now view as being rather simplistic. He states that oftentimes, "an etic analysis focuses attention exclusively upon the physical characteristics of an event as such, *without reference to the response which that kind of action tends to elicit*" (p. 10) [italics added]. Pike contends that the researcher needs to enter the study void of any contextual reference point: that is, any preconceptions, assumptions or biases inevitably effecting what the researcher sees or feels.

Pike's view is astute given its historical reference. The vantage point of hindsight allowed me to so readily critique his thinking. His thoughts, though somewhat dated, catapulted me to look deeper. I, as researcher, carried into the study a story, so did the researched. It cast a certain light on the events unfolding before me. It shaded and nuanced what I deemed significant. Because my story had profoundly shaped who I am and what I carried into the research, I could not enter the site as a non-person. To acknowledge the subjectivity of the researched; I had to acknowledge my own.

It was upon the meeting places of our individual stories that we identified the harmonies, even dissonances enriching the journey we embarked on together. At the same time, the encounter added another dimension. We arrived at deeper understandings through our engagement in a form of "interbiographical dialogue between the knower and the known" (Campbell, 1988, p. 62). We engaged in a 'Bakhtinian' form of multivoicedness (Quantz and O'Connor, 1988), through which we revealed multiple constructions of reality and our own personal positioning in them. Through "transivity, a continuous unfolding" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 100), the researched, and inevitably, I, the researcher, explored and were explored. We were shaped by the interaction, as much as it was shaped by us. Our encounter added to the pages of our individual, and collective, biographies.

(d).   To gain insight into the focus of my study I needed to look at the site holistically, not as piecemeal, isolated variables. "The aim of qualitative research is to understand experience as unified" (Ely, 1991, p. 4).

The context of the study site enriched my research. My understanding of events was deepened, not impeded by the circumstances surrounding them. Shimahara (1988) contends that "an event cannot be isolated from the context in which it originates, for to do so will destroy the full meaning of experience" (p. 80). I agree. Context stripping (Mishler, 1979)

practised in other research traditions would prevent me from exploring the dimensions I desired. When looking at a study site as rich as the classroom, it was not enough to describe the events as they unfolded. I needed to know something about Kluckhorn's (1943) notion of the value premises that configured or shaped the unconscious map guiding life there.

The portrait of the classroom, even within the limitations of this study, could not be explained from a reductionist standpoint. I could not hope to give a portrait of reality while through mutually exclusive variables. Indeed, when all is said and done, my portrait was far greater than the sum of its parts. Undeniably, in my quest for understanding, I needed to identify the various components, but my task did not end there. I needed to look for connections; to try to ascertain how the components interacted to create that particular learning environment.

To understand the researched I needed to approach the endeavour holistically. Every piece of information told me something. Yet there was a limit as to how much I could include. Inevitably, I was confronted with the dilemma of what I call 'tailored inclusivity' -- that is, having to make difficult choices about what material to use, and what to dispose of (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998; Luttrell, 2000; Miles and Huberman, 1994). I could not hope to collect and interpret everything. And at some levels, as an outsider, a temporary guest in their lives, even their public lives, it was not my right to know all that could have been known. However, like Lincoln and Guba (1985), I came to the realization that while I had at my disposal only pieces of the whole, each of these pieces, from a holographic perspective, "contain[ed] the whole within itself" (p. 53). Each was a dynamic speaking to me of interaction and connectedness -- images of the whole. If I looked deeply enough, the picture crafted from the various pieces, even in its incompleteness, embraced the essence of the classroom under scrutiny. I was compelled, building on Guba and Lincoln (1989), to show it as completely and as persuasively as I could.

(e). Research that I conducted under the umbrella of qualitative methodology embraced the characteristics explored above. It was also open to the use of a variety of media.

One of the most appealing aspects of qualitative methodology, I argue, is its inclusivity. It is receptive to any possibility for the acquisition, interpretation and description of data. The empirical materials can take many forms presented as observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts: the case study, personal experience, introspection, life story, and the interview (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). The word, a common conveyor of meaning, has no supremacy over the number, or over aural, visual or kinesthetic imagery. Any

approach is plausible. Given this flexiblity, the qualitative researcher, in effect, becomes a kind of 'bricoleur' -- a "Jack of all trades or a kind of professional do-it-yourself person" (Lévi-Strauss, 1966, p. 17). The 'researcher-as-bricoleur' approaches the task as a kind of puzzle using whatever means at his or her disposal to unravel understandings (Becker, 1989; Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Nelson, Treichler, and Grossberg, 1992; Weinstein and Weinstein, 1991). Denzin and Lincoln (2000), elaborate that "the qualitative researcher as *bricoleur* or maker of quilts uses the aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods, or empirical materials are at hand" (p. 4).The medium of choice is determined by the questions and the body of knowledge the researcher wants to pursue.

The primary means I chose to gather my data, that of observation, reflective notes, and interviews adhered to convention. It was certainly not ground-breaking. I felt that for purposes of this study it got the job done. What may be regarded as unusual is my interaction with the data. I employed a multifaceted approach in my interpretations. I juxtaposed the subject's view with my own along with an analysis, not only of what I had observed, but of my interpretations. Finally, I used excerpts from *The Little Prince* to thread the interpretations together and to add richness to the meanings drawn from them.

My research approach aligned with the five characteristics of qualitative methodology as defined by Sherman and Webb (1988). It was conducted in the natural environment of the participants; allowed for personal interaction between the researcher and the researched; and acknowledged the presence of bias in interpretation. Context was integral to the interpretation process. I strove to look at the site holistically. I used what I decided was the most appropriate and the most effective to arrive at understandings about what I was seeing. I was conscious of my own position in the study and was transparent about it. The qualitative approach matched what I intended to do.

Qualitative research, with its leanings towards inclusivity, had much to offer my pursuit for meaning making. To reiterate, it contributed to my understanding of human interaction because it was the vehicle through which I acknowledged, rather than simplified, complexities.

Implications

I found this form of inquiry to be significant. To learn about the participants, I entered their world. I was not a passive observer, but like them, one of the actors. Revisiting Lincoln's words, I was the 'passionate participant'. The study focus, was not, as Wolcott

(1995) states "embedded within the lives of those whom we study, demurely waiting to be discovered" (p. 156). They were already living it. My presence may have sparked them to see what they were living with greater clarity. Together we engaged in a form of 'ethnomethodology', a study "of how people create and understand their daily lives -- their method of accomplishing everyday life" (Bogdan and Biklen,1998, p. 30). My study was not ethnically-oriented. It was role-oriented. Yet I saw parallels. Role has profound implications upon self-identity, as much, I argue, as any other sociocultural referent. Ethnomethodology studies the 'doing': how people do ethnicity, gender, and even, roles. I saw my study fitting in from that standpoint. Our relationship in the 'doing' was a vital piece of my investigation.

My understanding of these roles did not unfold linearly or logically. They surfaced again and again throughout my work. As I progressed through this study I envisioned a circuitous movement from broad to narrow and narrow to broad. My thoughts were rooted in the expansive, theoretical landscape portrayed in the literature and came to fruition in more sharply focused expressions of practice. To bring meaning into practice, I returned to theory. And so the cycle continued.

For me, the research questions linked theory and practice. They were the springboard, for inquiry, peeling away the portieres of obscurity that kept the story from being told. Within my research context, the idea of question-initiated inquiry made sense. It clarified what I wanted to investigate. At the same time, the questions were sufficiently flexible so that the data, not the questions, drove my analysis. The questions were not the defining part of my conclusion, but the catalyst to get me there. Anderson (1990) states that, "a problem well stated is half solved" (p. 28). The journey has taught me the wisdom of this axiom.

The Research Questions

The questions guiding my inquiry were born out of my interest in curriculum particularly from an arts perspective as discussed in Chapter 1. To review, the questions are as follows:

1.   How do students participate in an English language arts component of an Alternative Learning Program in a Montreal-based high school?

The key word in this question was participate. It implied within the context of the question a set of observable behaviours performed by a group of actors, namely the students. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (1983) defines the word participate as: to take part; to have a part or share in something. Taking a closer look at the definition, I saw three verbs: to have; to take and to share. These words provided a focus for initially engaging with the data. The other key referents in the question were the English language arts component and Alternative Learning Program. These terms will be explained in due course.

2.   How do students feel about the learning environment in which they are participating?

The question focused on student interpretation of their reality. It was the venue through which the students related how they felt about their learning experience. The literature suggests that classroom learning is enhanced when students feel they are being valued by their teachers and by their colleagues (Alexander and Murphy, 1997; Alvermann, 1995/1996; Rodgers, 2002). Students feel valued when they are encouraged to voice their opinions as individuals (Fine, 1987), as well as members of a collective.

3.   What role does the teacher play?

Through this question I investigated the teacher's role. I used the data to determine if teacher interaction with the students was congruent with their perception. The question opened the door to looking at the teacher's role more deeply. By engaging her in the conversation, the investigation transformed into revelations about her perceptions of her own practice. In a nutshell, the data emerging from the question explored the fit between what the teacher intended to have happen in the class, student perception of what was happening and my interpretation as the researcher.

4.   What classroom conditions and contextual factors shape what transpires in the learning environment?

I used the question not only to look at the environment surrounding the study site but to flush out the influences of that environment. I discovered that while contextual elements are particularized, at some levels they transcend the particular (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Donmoyer, 1990).

The questions gave clearer definition to what I intended to research. Yet they were open-ended to invite other possibilities. As stated in Chapter 1, each question served as the scaffolding for the various strands of my study and, inevitably, the backbone for the thesis chapters. The questions were more than the precursor for in Simon and Dippo's words the "dialogic scripts" (as cited in Page, 2000, pp. 26-27) permeating my study. They were my outline of what these scripts would look like. More will be said about the research questions later in this chapter.

The Research Context

Before delving into the specifics of what I did with the data, I wanted to provide a description of the research context. To my way of thinking, situating the study site was a critical piece of the research puzzle. It gave my inquiry both physical and psychological space. Context embraced more than the physical location of the study. It also entailed presenting a portrait of relationships, in particular, the relationship between the 'researched' and me, the researcher.

1. The Study Site
      (a). Description

The primary site for my inquiry was a Grade VII classroom in a high school within the Montreal area. The population of the school was approximately 1200 students ranging in grade level from VII to XI. To make the school a more welcoming place for the younger students, the physical plant was organized as a 'school within a school' (Sturge Sparkes and Smith, 1998, p. 140). The Grade VII and VIII classes were housed in a separate wing with its own administrative office.

The study site was designated as a component of the Alternative Learning Program (ALP) offered in the school for about 10 years. The program was designed to provide an enriched learning environment for students in Grades VII-IX. It was created to compete with the types of program offered in private schools. According to an information flyer, the program was described as being "interdisciplinary and involved both experiential and cooperative learning with a strong emphasis on creativity".[1] (The number indicates my data source as shown in Appendix K). Academic pursuits were expanded through incorporating such activities as photography, debating and the Internet. The thrust of the program was to

broaden the students' horizon by reaching beyond the classroom. Students participated in cultural outings to museums, art galleries, and concerts.

Students were admitted into the ALP program in Grade VII through screening. Admission was based on student application, an entrance exam and recommendation from the staff of the feeder schools. Retention in the program was not automatic. Students were obliged to reapply for the subsequent grades. It was not uncommon for students to be reassigned to the regular stream particularly at the end of the first year.

The Grade VII group I studied had 28 students. The teacher, one of the key participants in my study, worked with the students in both English and French language arts although within her classes specific projects were completed in collaboration with colleagues in such areas as mathematics, science and social studies. Classes were scheduled according to the language of instruction, one English and one French per day. For the remainder of the school day students attended classes in other subject areas.

(b). Access

My initial contact with this class was made through my work as a research assistant with the Office of Research on Educational Policy (OREP) at McGill University. In October 1995, I gained access into the school through a project entitled *Student Engagement in Learning and School Life*. The project was a four-year investigation funded by the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, aimed to study the dynamics of student engagement on-site. The cross-Canada study involved two schools (one elementary and one secondary) in five school districts from the provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Québec. A university team headed the study in each respective province. Involvement with this project gave me the opportunity to familiarize myself with the site at a macro level and to build a relationship of trust with the staff at large. The issue of access is critical for researchers, so in that respect through my employment as a research assistant, I had a decided advantage.

The school liaison person for the *Student Engagement* project, as it will be referred to from hereon, drew my attention to the ALP program. Under this banner, I gained access to the classroom. What I saw intrigued me and spurred my interest. I continued to visit the class through the Winter/ Spring semesters of the 1995/1996 school year in my capacity as a research assistant. While I did so, I fine-tuned what I planned to do for my own study, at the time within the parameters of a Master's theses. (The terms of my role as research assistant as opposed to graduate student are specified in more depth on pp. 29, 31). Since that time,

my study, with added dimensions, evolved into a doctoral dissertation. By the time I submitted my request for permission to pursue the study, I had established solid relationships within the school. My proposed work was accepted without any hesitation.

2. The Reflective Researcher
    (a). Building relationships

For reasons outlined above, I did not encounter problems with access. My main concern, especially at the beginning of my investigation, was commitment. I did not foresee the observation component of my study presenting much of a problem, other than possible conflicts in scheduling. However, it was in the later phases of the study, namely the personal reflections and interviews where I foresaw potential difficulties. Getting the teacher and the students to invest additional time and effort could take some negotiating. As the study progressed, my fears were assuaged. With each visit, the teacher and the students were increasingly more comfortable with my presence to the point that they became personally interested in what I was doing. It was not uncommon for students to lean over as I was writing my field notes and ask for feedback on what I was seeing. By the time I asked for more concrete involvement from them, they appeared to be more than enthusiastic about the possibility as indicated in the following excerpt...

> I arrive at the class to discover that J. has written the names of the students I am interviewing today on the board. She refers again to how much the students enjoyed the interview last day and says jokingly, "Are you sure that you were *interviewing* them?" (emphasizing the word 'interviewing'). We laugh. I refer to the consent forms and how three students are yet to return them. On the way to the room to get set up for the interview I speak to A. and C. [two of the students] about this.[2]

As I immersed myself more and more into the study site, I realized that trust was an essential prerequisite for candid and open communication. And time was its necessary ally. Creating such a relationship within a self-imposed time frame was challenging. My experience as an educator worked in my favour. I had long learned to read people: an essential tool of the trade. This ability navigated me through the murky waters of site-intensive research. All of us appeared to come through the process unscathed. By all accounts, as will be shown, we reached the end of the journey satisfied with the experience.

As part of the trust building I had to assure the participants of the anonymity of their identity. From the outset, they were made aware of the type of interaction they would have with me. They were also informed through the consent form that their involvement was strictly on a volunteer basis and that their rights and confidentiality as participants in the study would be protected according to the regulations of the McGill Research Ethics Committee (see Appendixes A and B).

In keeping with the premise of qualitative inquiry, I had to establish a good rapport with the participants. I wanted to show their 'humanness', not undermine it. The act required exchange from interviewer to interviewee. The success of the project depended on the depth of the interaction between us. Good data required subjective understanding. In my quest for data I was cognizant of Ferrarotti's (1981) view that, "knowledge does not have 'the other' as its object, instead it should have inextricable and absolutely reciprocal interaction between the observer and the observed" (p.20). Reciprocity had to begin with what was immediate and known. "People", state Page, Samson, and Crockett (1998), "do not construe meanings of self, other, and knowledge in irrevocable or formulaic fashion, but in ways that are understandable given the local and larger circumstances in which they act" (p. 328). Understanding also required a multitude of players. To portray a true picture of the study site, I understood the importance of representing all of the voices in the classroom. The student interviews challenged me in my commitment as revealed in this reflection ...

> [As J.(the teacher) predicted, the group is extremely talkative and expressive, especially R.and I. In fact, these two are so dynamic that I constantly have to work to make sure that K. and G. are given equal opportunity to be part of the discussion].[3]

How I presented myself to the participants was an important component in this "Self-Other" relationship (Fine, 1998, p.131). I felt that I had to adopt multiple roles and multiple voices. I could not be the same to all. When interviewing the teacher, I could adhere to my professional role and position myself accordingly. However, as time went by, the interaction became less and less formal, taking on more of an air of respectful congeniality. Bound by commonalities, we were able to decode the verbal exchanges between us with relative ease...

> We continue to discuss about her philosophy of learning and how this philosophy translates into practice. I refer to one of our participating schools in the *Student Engagement* project and how their belief in education is congruent with hers. I state

that it may be of benefit to her to visit that school. She is very receptive to this suggestion.[4]

Setting up a rapport with the students was more of a challenge. I had to adopt another voice -- less mature and complicated by life experiences. I was conscious of erasing the 'teacher' in my voice and felt compelled to adopt the role of an 'older' friend. As much as I tried, however, I could not re-position myself to their current location in life's journey. I could not become one of them. I could not look at the world through their eyes any more than they could view the world through mine. At the end of the day, I felt I had connected with them through the guise of role play, acknowledging it as a necessary initiator of conversation. There were moments when we broke the boundaries of role, taking our interchange in new directions...

> Interestingly enough, at the end of our exchange, a role reversal takes place initiated by the students. They become the interviewer; I, the interviewee.[5]

The connection, although for the most part congenial, was fragile. It was fraught with uncertainty and could easily have been severed as I discovered during the last student interview. I had asked the students to explain their understanding of the metaphor the teacher had used about the classroom being an 'open window'. One of the students suggested that it referred to the teacher's knack for welcoming her students in. Much to the amusement of his peers he continued by comparing the liveliness of the teacher to a rabbit. Without thinking, I wondered aloud what he was smoking. The off-the-cuff response was not well received. I learned a valuable lesson from that incident as indicated in the following reflection...

> [We are never too old to learn this. I think about T. and his reaction to my jest about the "bunny metaphor". One second of glibness on my part could have had a profound effect on the tenor of the interview. I am glad that I had the courage and the good sense to pursue him after the interview and apologize for what I had said. As J. and I discussed later: teachers are not always aware of the impact of our words, so often spoken in innocence or without much forethought to how they will be received. It is all too true. No person is an island...Students bring into the classroom experiences that colour the way they see the world, just as we all do. We can only hope to keep that reality in perspective as we engage in our daily interactions with them].[6]

Maintaining an equilibrium between being the researcher and the participant was delicate at best. Throughout my visits I was in the class but never totally a part of it. This reality jogged me during one of the final classes I shared with the group. J. permitted me to ask the class to complete a webbing exercise. Given that they had engaged in such exercises before, I felt that this approach would be a sound way to validate the data I had gathered from the interviews. Their response to the assignment appeared to be less than enthusiastic. At the time I noted that I was uncertain whether the apathy was driven by a lack of interest or by a lack of understanding. In reflection, I penned the following realization...

[I temporarily despair but realize that it could be a combination of things– the end of the year, plus the nature of the work which I am sure they regard as an 'add on'. I must remain cognizant that I am still a stranger to these students in spite of the amount of time I have spent with them. The relationship we have built remains tenuous at best. This reality is all too apparent to me now.][7]

By the end of the study, I realized that it was not simply a matter of my perception of them, but in return, their perception of me. They, like I, were aware of the tenuity of the relationship and were guarded in what they were prepared to invest. They, like I, had determined the dimensions of their insider/outsider status.

(b). Dilemmas and Biases

To fulfill my obligations as a researcher, I needed to articulate potential problems in my investigation. These emerged directly from what I brought into the research or in the way my research unfolded.

As already stated, my initial contact with the research site occurred within the context of the *Student Engagement* project. I intended to treat my study as a separate piece from the McGill study with which I continued to be involved. However, some overlapping inevitably took place. Instead of trying to attenuate the connection between the two, I decided to explore how my own project nested in the larger work. Throughout the study I reflected on my role as a researcher -- in particular, how I positioned myself between the two studies and the inherent "burdens and blessings" of serving two masters.

In the larger study I looked at the ways in which students were engaged in their learning. There is little doubt that I brought into my work that perspective but through the narrower lens of a specific program. I had to exercise caution about the extent to which the

Student Engagement study would spill into my own research. I had to allow my data to speak for itself.

Dealing with my own biases continued throughout my research journey. As alluded to in Chapter 1, I knew that bias was always a reality. Perhaps unsurprisingly for the reader, my research supported my bias that *no* form of human inquiry can be ideologically neutral (Fine, 1998). As stated, I had selected the qualitative mode of inquiry for that reason. To conduct my research wisely, I needed to engage, as suggested earlier, in the act of reflexivity, the act of unmasking, as Richardson (1998) describes, the "complex political/ideological agendas hidden in our writing" (p. 359). Mehra (2002, March) suggests that our understanding of our external reality cannot be separated from our inner reality, that is, "what we already know based on our lives and experiences" (p. 5). As uncomfortable as it might have been, I had to, if I were to be honest, confront biases of my own.

Undoubtedly, my passion for the arts were one of the biases I brought with me. It drove me to this research, defined its parameters, and inevitably saw me through to the end. I have been, to the best of my ability, transparent about my biases and have assessed their imprint on the data and the meanings derived from them.

From the outset I realized that this study had, in a sense, a built in bias because of the group of students under scrutiny. As already intimated, students gained access into the ALP program through screening. The study participants, therefore, had been subject to a pre-selection process over which I had no control. That reality undoubtedly influenced what emerged from the data since I was not describing a truly inclusive public school classroom. It may have subconsciously or even consciously prejudiced my expectations. I may have judged the participants too harshly or too lightly depending on the lens I was using at the time.

I reminded myself of these biases as the study unfolded. To do so, I kept account of them in the form of reflections included in the field notes. But the biases did not end there. They permeated throughout my research, infiltrating through Geertz's (1973) reference to the "strata of meaning" (p. 9). Biases found their way, not only in what I saw, but in my interpretations of what I saw. I finished this project realizing that I had, at best, addressed merely a few. Yet, it was through the process that "I lifted my personal blinds, if just a bit" (Hole, 1998, p. 421). The understandings derived from the journey may have been few, but defensible.

The Research Activity

(a). Data Collection: An Overview

My data came from a multiplicity of sources I have categorized as primary, secondary, and tertiary. Through 'multi-sourcing' (Huberman and Miles, 1998), I established Mathison's (1988) notion of constructing "plausible explanations about the phenomena being studied" (p. 17). Multi-sourcing appeared to me to be a viable way to build plausibility because it helped me to "develop, question, refine, and/or discard interpretations [of the data] and the underlying perspectives they reflect" (Metz, 2000, Spring, p. 62-63). Through it, I retained my bricoleur status and could, at the same time, apply rigor to my interpretations. The primary source provided data generated from direct and purposeful interaction with the participants at the study site. The secondary source supplied data not generated specifically for my study but, nevertheless, enriched my understanding of what I saw. The tertiary source, a foreign location to my study site, presented a contrasting point of reference. All three of these sources added their own dimension to my interpretations.

The primary source was three-tiered: namely observation, reflective writings (submitted by all study participants) and interviews. With each activity, contact with the teacher and students intensified. Collection of observation data continued throughout the school year (September-May) based on, where feasible, one visit per week (see Appendix C). I viewed the collection process as, what I call, an 'emergent sequence' design in which the data gleaned from one activity pointed to the next. The data collected from September to January set up the reflective writings completed in January. The reflective writings, in turn, were cues for the interview questions. The interviews, conducted primarily from March to May of that school year, were a venue for exploring more deeply what had been expressed in these reflections. I continued to record field notes while the other means of data collection were conducted. The notes were invaluable in setting the context for these collection activities as well as for reflecting upon them. To further validate my data, I observed classroom activities from January to June of the following school year. I realized that I had to exercise caution in this case. I was now observing a different group of students that brought to the class different dynamics. Yet the juxtaposition of one group against the other helped to bring clarity to my interpretations.

The secondary sources of data collection were two-tiered. The first tier comprised of information gathered, but not created by me. Such data took the form of artifacts distributed in the class, as well as samples of student work. My initial input rested with making a judgement call about what artifacts would be most beneficial to my study. The second tier

emerged from the *Student Engagement* project. Through that project I had built a rich bank of corporate knowledge about the school and the community in which my study site was nested. Although I had agreed to keep my own research separate from the project, it was inevitable that knowledge gleaned from one would spill over into the other. The lens through which I saw the school and the site could never be discrete or pristine, no matter how diligently I tried to keep it that way. Since the report emerging from the *Student Engagement* project had been released to the public, I felt it was acceptable to refer to it with the proper citations.

My tertiary source was another local public school with a strong fine arts focus. The subsidiary site was introduced not so much as a point of comparison but for providing another context against which my observations could be juxtaposed.

(b). Data Collection: Details of Sources

Identifying the sources provided the blueprint for how I interacted with the data. It confirmed or refuted the credibility of what I set out to do. I could not present what I saw and what I experienced in complete detail. In Apple's (1990) phraseology, I had no choice but to work with 'selective traditions'. Strands of these traditions were unwrapped. I had to substantiate the unwrapping. I had to align with Page (2000), who states that, "although something is always lost in translation, those conducting qualitative studies seek to honour local knowledge *and* to recast it, using disciplinary constructs, so as to explicate its internal cohesion and its connections with knowledge from other locales" (p. 30). I had to provide evidence and show its trustworthiness. My efforts to do so unfold in more detail in the descriptions that follow.

Primary Data Source
Level I: Observation

To reiterate, at the beginning I felt like an outsider. In many respects, I looked at the site through the eyes of an outsider. Yet the 'detached' eye, I learned later, saw very little. Much lay beyond the surface only to be revealed to me once I had developed a relationship with those being observed. This realization came to me during my initial encounter with a new group of students the following school year. After that meeting, I wrote...

[Maybe it is the tiredness of the day and the weariness of spirit but I am really having difficulty focusing on this group today. In reflection, as I drive back to the office, I see images of the class I got to know last year. Their warm, receptive faces are etched in my memory. Unfortunately (even though I know as a researcher I'd best not start comparing groups at such an early point), I can't help but long for what I felt with them – a sense of familiarity – a territory already explored; a territory that has become a part of me. Now I venture into unchartered waters. At the moment I feel no kinship with these students, as I know they feel no kinship with me. Their faces look banal and distant to me. I am unable to read what is transpiring behind their youthful eyes. I feel cold and insecure.][8]

It was during my initial visits with both groups of students that I realized the necessity of familiarizing myself with the study site. Through the *Student Engagement* project, I had gained insights into the school at large, but I had considerable distance to go to learn about this microcosm within it. I had to lay the groundwork so that I would connect with the participants. For that reason, the observation phase was critical to my research. It was the initiator, not only for peeling away the layers of what I was seeing, but also for establishing trust.

Observation, then, was a crucial part of the research activity and required careful documentation. To offset the temporality of memory, my observations were recorded as field notes. These notes were kept in exercise books earmarked for that activity. Each entry was identified with the appropriate date and time of my visit.

Being a seasoned student, the thoughts of taking notes did not raise my anxiety level. I also realized from the outset that the process of note taking had to be more than just thoughtlessly making entries: it had to be governed by conscious decisions of "*what* to write down, *how* to write it down, and *when* to write it down" (Hammersley and Atkinson,1983, p.146).

Deciding when to write was easy. Time was a critical factor. Memory was another. I did not trust my capacity to give an accurate account of what I had observed by reliving my observations after the fact. It was more feasible to document the moments as they occurred. I quickly decided, revisiting Miller Power's (1996) words, to take notes "in the midst" (p. 28). I was fearful that, if left until later, my observations would not always get recorded. And time has a way of dulling memory. Other events of living would get in the way. Any barriers to maintaining immediate and ongoing accounts were outweighed by this reality.

But the decision to record on the spot was spurred by something else. I welcomed the process as a way of keeping me busy: as an escape from being intrusive to those I was observing. I felt that my prying eyes would perhaps make them feel uncomfortable and make the classroom less welcoming. After all, this was their classroom, not mine. And what right did I have to make them feel that way?

Determining what to write was more complex. My notes were indirectly, or subconsciously, guided by the research questions. Even at the beginning I did not want to be exclusively bound to these questions. I preferred to think that they were loosely coupled with my observations. That having been said I knew that boundaries had to be established. The questions established these borders, even in the most liberal sense.

Experience had taught me that good note taking requires a balance between observing and writing. I was always conscious that I did not want to forfeit rich data by being embroiled in the mechanics of note taking. Notes written in the heat of the moment were just that: notes. Later, when transcribed to the computer, they were embellished with details. Verbal and non-verbal exchanges were included in the documentation. If at all possible, what was said by the participants during classroom interaction was quoted verbatim.

Each of the observation entries, forty-five in total, was transferred to the computer under a separate file. To establish an audit trail, I identified each file by its chronological order (log01), my initials(pcs), and the coding for the school(qc2), as in log01pcs.qc2. These identifiers appeared on the left top heading of the first page. The day and date of the recording appeared on the top right heading. Within each entry I kept a running record of the exact time when various events occurred during each class session. The accounting gave further insight into classroom organization and management by showing the emphasis given to a particular activity. To facilitate the cutting and reorganizing of the data into coding groupings, each log was transcribed in paragraphs that were subsequently numbered from 1-2028 for purposes of referencing.

To remain faithful to the tenets of the qualitative inquiry the field notes had to reflect my presence. It appeared in the form of personal reflections embedded directly into the descriptive accounts. The reflections were separated from the descriptive data by square brackets. They were often woven into a paragraph, as shown in this example:

> After hearing the story, the partner is to offer criticism. I notice that J. does not discuss with the class how to criticize constructively. [I can't help but wonder whether or not the students know how to help each other out in this way. I know students in graduate school who have not mastered this art.].[9]

In cases where I felt it was warranted, my reflections appeared in a separate paragraph following the description....

As the students leave, J. mentions that she is relieved that other students besides K. had to be spoken to about their homework. In that way, she states quietly, she cannot be accused of being racist.[10]

[I find it a difficult reality to accept that no matter how hard we try, concerns about appearing to be racist still appear front line and center. I guess it will take years of building before this issue does not take precedence in our relations with each other].[11]

My reflections were generated in two ways. Building on Schön's (as cited in Rodgers, 2002) thoughts, I engaged in reflection-in-action and reflection-on action. Sometimes I wrote my reflections spontaneously as I was recording my observations, Rodgers' (2002) notion of "in the moment" (p. 235). At other times, I added the reflections as commentaries about what I had observed earlier. Generally speaking, short one-sentence reactions were written 'in the moment'. Longer reflections, especially, those appearing in a separate paragraphs, were constructed "from moment to moment" (Rodgers, 2002, p. 235). Reflections on the interviews were included in the written logs corresponding with a description of the interview itself and a synopsis of the main points raised by the interviewees. In these cases, in particular, the reflection appeared as a commentary or as a question ...

[When J. makes reference to memorization I reflect back to the exercise I saw where the students presented a poem they had memorized. I can remember that I had felt at the time that more could have been done with this activity to help the students get as much out of it as possible. I wonder what J.'s perception of the outcomes of this activity is?][12]

My reflections positioned me within the study. They were, to quote Lampert (2000, Spring), overt glimpses of the "insider's narrative" (p. 92). My voice appeared throughout the study but in the guise of the mediator. In the reflections I peeled away the mask. The dialogic triad among the reader, the participant, and me was fully revealed. Through each reflection I created, in Kidder and Fine's (1997) discourse, multiple lenses of 'kaleidoscopic' interpretations. The story was told yet again, but with another view.

Level II. Participant Reflections

About half-way through the data collection period (in January), I asked the teacher and the students to produce a piece of writing giving their impressions of the Alternative Learning Program. The comments, I foresaw, would provide the vital link between my perception of what I had seen to date and their perceptions. When the time came to broach the subject with the teacher, it was apparent that the time taken to build the relationship paid off. She was very receptive to the idea and diligently assigned the task to the students and to herself. The task was given as homework. Of the 28 students in the class (two students had signed off), 25 completed the assignment.

To avoid confusion, I recorded the written reflections separately from the field notes. Each entry was assigned its own number. I designated the teacher's one reflection, for example, as prte01.qc2. I arranged the students' submissions (designated from prst01.qc2 to prst25.qc2, respectively) in alphabetical order and entered them into the computer under one file. For referencing, I assigned on the print-out a separate number for each entry. Since each student presented his or her views in one paragraph, no section number needed to be assigned. Unsurprisingly, the teacher's piece extended to two pages. She had organized her ideas into thirteen distinct paragraphs which, for future referencing, I simply numbered in chronological order from 1-13.

In hindsight, I questioned whether or not I should have asked the students to include their name with their entry. I wondered if this revelation tempered their desire to be open and honest. However, given that the students had been encouraged in this class to express their opinion, nuggets of honesty did surface in the writings...

> The only thing that isn't 100% likeable about the ALP is that some of the work is hard to follow and might be a bit too advanced that [sic] I think it should be.[13]

> It's been a [rough] time for me in the ALP but the teachers have helped me. I'm doing OK.[14]

As I read the students' reflections another lesson became apparent to me. While I was interested in finding out about their feelings towards the program in general, for purposes of my study, I wanted to know about their views of the English language arts course within the program. I realized that I might not have been clear in my instructions. Some of the comments were directed at the entire program and may or may not have applied to the English language

arts course in particular. I realized that I needed to be more explicit about this issue during the interviews.

In spite of the flaws in the reflection process, I felt the activity made a valuable contribution to my research. I saw interesting phrases emerging from the comments. I also saw patterns. I highlighted the phrases and noted them. They pointed to what to look at next. From the student reflections I garnered such comments as...

- Work is challenging but not hard.
- The program is more than educational; it's fun.
- We get to participate.
- We do things better than in the regular program.
- We get more respect than students in the regular program.

From the teacher's reflection, I noted the following ...

- I see my teaching role as a combination of sage, facilitator and animator.
- I run a child-centered program.
- The classroom is akin to an open window.
- Traditional teaching seems to stifle rather than promote the creative flow.
- I believe that learning can be enjoyable.

The statements helped to determine the preliminary interview questions. In other words, what was expressed by the participants paved the way to delving more deeply into their perceptions. The process made the participants a more integral part of the research process. They acted rather than were being acted upon. Through an 'emergent sequence' design I created a research environment, as in Cummins' (2001, Winter) thoughts, that adhered to a "reciprocal interaction" model (p.666). I wanted to dispense with the 'us-other' polemic by creating in Waller's phraseology a "we-feeling" (as cited in Page, Samson, and Crockett. 1998, p. 314). By engaging the participants' through their own ideas, I was practicing the ethnographic maxim that "expertise and authority are unerringly ambiguous" (Page, Samson, and Crockett. 1998, p. 325). In short, they were the experts of their classroom, even if, in their encounter with me, they were nudged to look at it in another way. As our ideas bumped against each other, we, in Marcus'(1998) words, pressed ahead in "reflexive engagement" (p. 404). Expertise was shared.

Level III. Interviews
i. Logistics

The next level of direct data gathering was a series of interviews conducted from February to April. The interviews unfolded in three configurations: students only; teacher only and administrator only.

Determining what term to use to describe the student interview sessions was somewhat problematic. Rather than simply use the term 'group interview' I chose the descriptor 'focus group'. In the student interviews, I wanted to look at not only what the interviewees said but to some extent the dynamics of their interactions (Morgan, 1988; Fontana and Frey, 1998).

I realized that if I had conducted one-on-one interviews I would have amassed much more data and would have been less concerned with group dynamics. I decided to use a 'focus group' format, however, because it conserved time and, more importantly, helped, at least some of the students, overcome shyness. As much as the students seemed to be comfortable with me, I knew that I was an outsider. They were aware of my status and presented a different persona to me than they would to others who had a greater presence in their lives. Yet, as already established, my imposition brought its own dynamics. As much as I wanted to understand their world from the outsider's view, I could never, borrowing on Schwandt's (1998) phrase, escape from the mutuality of *our* "being-in-the-world" (p. 229). While I studied them I was also studying them *with me*.

Conducting student interviews within groups helped to give a more balanced perspective by allowing students to express and to build ideas. The teacher brought this awareness to light. My original intent was to include her in the last session. When I raised the issue with her, however, she was not enthusiastic. She was concerned that her presence might censor what students wished to say, and thereby skew the data.[15] I respected her opinion and decided to run the interview without her. In hindsight, the decision may have been wise. As accounted earlier, it was during the final interview that a misunderstanding surfaced between one of the students and me for which I had to apologize. I have since wondered what impact her presence would have had on that event.

I divided the class into six interview groups of four to five students. Each of these student groups were interviewed once. The teacher offered advice about who to assign to the various groups. I valued her opinion. She had done a lot of group work with the class and had acquired considerable expertise in this area. She knew who worked well with whom;

who the talkers were and who were less inclined that way. Together we set the criteria for the group selections as illustrated...

> J. assures me that I will have no trouble getting the students in the focus group today to talk. I. and R. are very articulate. They alone will carry the interview.[16]

The student interviews finished with a seventh group formed by randomly drawing one name from each of the previous six sessions.

Since I talked with the adults individually, the sessions adhered to the traditional interview format. In this case, I wanted to focus on what was being said rather than on non-verbal responses. During my visits, I conducted four formal interviews with the classroom teacher. Two of the interviews took place during April and May of the first year. The third interview was conducted at the end of my return visit during the next school year. A fourth and final interview occurred by telephone much later during the writing stage. The formal interviews were enriched by informal conversations that happened regularly throughout my visits to the classroom. These exchanges were recorded in the field notes.

My interview with the school administrator took place in February of the first year. The purpose of this interview was to hear another perspective of the Alternative Learning Program. I wanted to gain insight into how the program was perceived at a more 'macro' level.

Interviews ranged in length from 50 to 60 minutes. The teacher's interviews took place, for the most part, during her unassigned periods. On one occasion we had to continue one of the interviews on the next day of my visit. The administrator's interview took place at the end of the school day. Fifty-minute interviews, while short in duration for adults, were more conducive to the younger participants and fit in nicely with the rhythm of the school day. I tried, as best as possible, to avoid spilling over into the class time that followed. I especially did not want the students to be the recipients of another teacher's angst. On the two occasions when the student interviews extended beyond the allotted time, I prepared notes for them to present to their teacher explaining their tardiness. Since other teachers affiliated with the ALP had been notified about my project, the interruptions, at least to my knowledge, had minimal impact. I appreciated the amount of time the interviewees were willing to give and respected the need for them to prioritize their obligations. I built my research efforts upon the premise 'do no harm' and to the best of my ability abided by that rule.

In hindsight, interviewing in groups had its strengths. The dialogue stimulated ideas. Individuals sparked new insights and brought clarity to what was expressed by others. When the conditions allowed, the synergy was palpable as exemplified in the following excerpt...

> The interview progresses well. I am pleasantly surprised with how verbal A. and P. are. A. is obviously a thinker and I notice that his responses shape or even direct the course of the responses. However, he does not have an overbearing manner and I feel that the other two in the group feel confident enough to come up with their own point of view.[17]

Yet beyond the dynamic of the group, the interview became a venue for individual expression. I was constantly reminded that, as with Fontana and Frey (1998), "each individual has his or her social history and an individual perspective on the world" (p. 73). The exchange forged the way to other avenues of understanding.

ii. The Interview Questions

I was aware that my decision to use interview questions countered some qualitative practices. Spindler and Hammond (2000, Spring) instruct that in keeping with the rules of ethnography, "one should never prepare a specific list of questions ... to be applied in interviews" (p. 42). The researcher, they argue, needs to keep the interviews unstructured to avoid "predetermining ... what is elicited from informants" (p. 42). It would not be wise for me to be totally dismissive of such a statement. There are certain research contexts in which this rule could be applied, and, I might add, quite successfully.

In keeping with my study design, constructing questions before-the-fact appeared to be the viable alternative. In thinking about this issue, I was reminded of Clandinin and Connelly's (1998) statement that "the kinds of questions asked and the ways they are structured provide a frame within which participants shape their accounts of their experience" (pp. 165-166). I built the questions from the personal reflections. In doing so, the participants were the co-constructors of the interviews and played an instrumental role in recounting their experience. For example, in nine of the personal reflections students described the work assigned to them as "challenging". A couple of them made a point of distinguishing between work that was challenging and work that was hard. I found this quite intriguing. To explore the concept further, I framed it into an interview question: 'In the personal reflections some of the students describe the program as "challenging but not hard".

What do you think this means?' Of the twenty-nine questions posed in the first interview, eighteen were created directly from reflective statements made by the students. I applied the same principle to the interview questions posed to the teacher.

Although I chose to use pre-formulated questions, the interviews adhered to an open-ended format (Fontana and Frey, 1998). Questions were always used as guide-posts rather than directives (see Appendix D). I was not bound exclusively to them. If I felt an interesting point was raised by a participant, I did not hesitate to explore it further, even at the expense of not covering all the questions prepared beforehand. For example, during the second student interview, a participant described participation in the class as being "interactive". I promptly detoured from the text and asked the students to explain what that word meant to them.[18]

Nor did I duplicate the same questions in each interview. If a student said something I found to be insightful I turned the comment into a new interview question. One of the issues I wanted to explore with the students, for example, was 'making mistakes'. My interest had been prompted by a comment made by the teacher in her personal reflection. She had written, "I believe that students learn in a non-threatening environment where they can experiment and not be afraid to make mistakes".[19] In the first two interviews I raised the issue by asking the students how they felt about making mistakes and what they did when this happened. During the second interview one of the students responded to the second question with the reply: "this is a nobody's perfect class".[20] Impressed by the student's insight, I turned it into a question for future interviews.

As mentioned, I had intended to include the teacher in the final student interview. Under her advisement, I altered that decision. Yet I felt it was important to establish whether or not there was a congruency between student and teacher perceptions of the learning environment. To address the issue, I designed the questions for one of the teacher interviews and the last student interview from comments J. had made in her written reflection...

Reflective statement: The Grade Seven Alternative Learning Program is a reflection of my teaching philosophy; of the way I believe teachers should interact with students. I see my teaching role as a combination of sage, facilitator and animator.[21]

I wove the statement into the following questions...

Teacher interview: In your personal reflections you describe your teaching role as that of a facilitator or animator. Tell me what this means to you. How does the term

"Child-centered" that you use to describe your program relate to your view of your teaching role?[22]

Student interview: Your teacher describes her role as that of an animator and a facilitator. What do these terms mean to you?[23]

During the interviews, I tried to maintain a balance between what Maykut and Morehouse (1994) refer to as 'thoughts' and 'feelings' questions. To gain insight into participant perception I wanted them to think with their hearts as well as with their heads. At the same time I did not want to lead them. That is why, at the time, I purposely omitted including the word 'sage' in the student interview question as shown. The word, I felt, was weighted with a certain connotation. In hindsight, I do not know whether or not this decision was wise, or even if it made any difference. As I engaged in, to quote Rogers (2000, Spring), "reframing subjectivity" (p. 81), I realized that my knowledge as well as anyone else's is relational in nature (Gilligan, 1996): that what I thought was a reasonable decision at the time appeared to be less so later on.

iii. Recording the Interview Data

I recorded the interviews on audiotape. To remain faithful to the thoughts of the interviewees, I had to show their words. Each word uttered by a participant reflected his or her consciousness (Vygotsky, 1962). If I paraphrased or summarized what the participants said, I risked substituting their consciousness for my own (Fontana and Frey, 1998). I realized that eventually I would influence the data through my own interpretation, but at least in the preliminary stage, I wanted to keep the interview data as true to the source as possible.

There were practical issues as well. If I resorted to note taking during the interviews, I foresaw becoming so occupied with the mechanics of writing that I would likely miss many of the cues that enriched the discourse. There was an even more pressing reason for my decision. Interviewees, I had learned, were not always comfortable with my recording on site. It diminished eye contact and rapport. I had learned in other interview experiences that the eyes relayed many things, at times even contradicting what the speaker was saying (Sturge Sparkes and Smith, 1998). For this reason, when informally interviewing students in the *Student Engagement* project, I relinquished the note taking until after the interaction was over. This approach worked fine with informal discussions which were not so demanding upon my

memory. Formal interviews were another matter. If I wrote an account of the interview after the fact, much of what had taken place would have been lost.

I could have opted to use videotapes as a data collection tool, but there were several reasons for not taking that route. First, the issue of obtaining consent, especially for the students may have been problematic. Second, videotaping would have been far more obtrusive than audio taping. I felt that, especially with the younger participants, the technology would inhibit them and diminish the richness of their responses. In the final analysis, getting at their ideas was much more important to me than keeping account of the minute details of their interaction. Audiotaping seemed to be the viable alternative.

I kept account of the multiple interviews through careful documentation of the audiotapes. I identified each recording with the person(s) involved, the date and the time. I presented this identification at the beginning of the tape, as well as on the tape label. The information was accounted for in a time line table kept in the binder with the other field notes.

Each interview was transcribed. The adult interviews, being few in number (5), were committed verbatim to paper. With the exception of the fourth interview that took place much later, I documented each of the sessions under a file name along with an appendage indicating the interview number. For example, I filed the first interview with the teacher as logpcs28.qc2/inte1.qc2. The interviews were embedded in a log entry since, in addition to the interviews, I wanted to record classroom events that occurred before the interviews took place. After carefully documenting the interviews, I listened to them again assigning a recorder counter number to each question for more precise referencing. Since the third and fourth teacher interviews were conducted 'off site', they were not recorded. In both instances the responses were organized in paragraphs and were numbered accordingly.

Documenting the student interviews was a little more problematic. At first I chose to keep the student interviews separate from the observation files. I identified the first interview for example as inst01.qc2. However, after the first interview, I realized that this method was less than satisfactory. I discovered that it was important to record the context for each of the interviews and to include any reflections I may have had. Beginning with the second student interviews, I listened to the recording that evening and pulled out the main points articulated in the student responses. I included the synopsis of the interview in the observation file written for that day (logpcs23. qc2). Adhering to this procedure had another advantage. Listening to the recording shortly after the interview kept the students' words fresh in my mind and paved the way for new interview questions as reflected in my field notes...

When I arrive home, I listen to the tape and note some of ... the significant points raised by the students. What they had to say provides rich 'cues' for building my next set of interview questions.[24]

Each of the interviews were transcribed in greater detail at a later time. I tried as best as I could to record the students' words verbatim through listening to the recordings over and over again. There were times, however, when the words were simply lost. The students sometimes talked over each other or did not speak clearly. Nonetheless, I was able to document the essence of what was said. Audiotaping enabled me to repeatedly revisit the interviews for clarification where possible. Once the words were committed to hard copies, I listened to the interviews assigning a counter number to each of the questions (eg. inst01.qc2, counter # 010).

The interviews were well worth the effort. They proved to be an invaluable source of information, especially in flushing out perceptions. The sessions affirmed for me the power of providing the opportunity for individuals to tell what they knew. In Heath's (2000, Spring) words, "Uncovering what we think of ourselves as already knowing is, however, not only the work of linguists, but of all social scientists who bring their analytical tools to bear on just 'who and what other things are'" (p. 50). The participants told their story. I was in large part the catalyst for the telling.

Level IV: Webbing

After the interviews, I surmised that the various means of data gathering needed, to borrow a musical term, a recapitulation or 'wrap up'. Since the last student interview comprised of a select group, I wanted some of the key points voiced during that event to be reflected upon by the students at large. I asked the students to complete one more activity...

Today I visit the ALP class during which they do their final exercise for me – a webbing of the statements drawn from the final interview with the students. I view this exercise as a culmination of the ideas gathered from my observations, the personal reflections and the interviews.[25]

The webbing exercise seemed a fitting way to pull together what had surfaced. Webbing, according to Katz and Chard (1990), is " a mapping of the key ideas and concepts that a topic comprises and some of the major themes related to it" (p. 88). Campbell (1995)

suggests that student webs "can become instruments for analyzing what students know, as well as touchstones for guiding and expanding student learning" (p. 39). The students had already been exposed to this activity so I felt that it would be a relatively easy process for them. Furthermore, I wanted to see if they could enlighten me on the ideas expressed by their peers.

The exercise consisted of eleven statements lifted verbatim from the last student interview. For example, Our classroom is: A place where our ideas matter. One statement was assigned per page. Under the statement, I had written the words: meaning, feeling, examples and suggestions. I explained what I meant by these terms.

The sheets were randomly distributed. With the exception of one, the students worked on their statement in pairs or groups of three. The students were to build webs of ideas from each of the terms that 'spoke' to the interview statement.

Some good ideas emerged, but they were not as plentiful as I had hoped. The 'suggestions' component was particularly sparse. I was uncertain if this outcome was due to a lack of understanding of what was being asked of them or, for various reasons, of simply not having anything to offer. In reflection, more time spent on Ausubel's concept of "advanced organizers" may have reaped better results (as cited in Freiberg and Driscoll, 1996). In my fervour to get the information, I had overlooked a critical point in any learning event -- the need for a solid 'lead in'. At the point of this writing, I reflect on J.'s words, "You're always learning even after all these years".[26]

Secondary Data Source
Level I: Artifacts

Artifacts, described by Hodder (1998) as "the intended and unintended residues of human activity" (p. 113), proved to be another vital source of information. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the nature of my study site, the artifacts I gathered were in paper form. In reflection, these papers could be clustered into three groups: 1. hand-outs and various forms of correspondence distributed to members of the study site including pertinent policy documents and other available reading materials; 2. learning materials in the form of worksheets and instructional materials distributed to the students; and, 3. student work. For me, the documents were snapshots of the events I observed in the classroom. For referencing I assigned each of the 42 documents a file number. The first artifact for example, was

identified as artpcs01.qc2 (see Appendix E) using the same logic for the abbreviations as explained on page 34.

The artifacts served a dual purpose in my study. First, information affirmed the findings derived from other sources. Second, the artifacts pointed me to other questions. Policy-related materials provided supporting evidence for issues surrounding context, especially when exploring the rationale behind the formation of the program in question. The instructional materials helped to substantiate claims of what I had observed in the classroom, particularly from the perspective of the teacher's role in organizing and providing learning experiences. Samples of student work reinforced what had been voiced in the personal reflections and in the interviews about having the freedom to explore ideas and express feelings. It was obvious to me that samples of their writings added to my understanding of the learning environment.

I soon discovered that evaluation of student work was largely, although not exclusively, based on portfolios. Students were to submit to their portfolio the work they wished to be evaluated. With the teacher's permission, I was granted access to these documents to further my understanding of how their work was appraised. In addition to selecting actual samples that were photocopied and added to the artifact file, I recorded the observations in my field notes.

After examining one student's portfolio, for example, I wrote in cryptic form...

I am wondering if the checklist I saw is to be self-assessed or is to be completed by the teacher or someone else.[27]

I notice that the book report is graded by both D. and J. [two teachers]. Where there is a discrepancy in the grade how is this dealt with?[28]

Artifacts, I learned, were not simply artifacts. They were representational 'agents of change'. Reflecting on Hodder's (1998) words, I discovered that "artifacts are produced so as to transform, materially, socially, and ideologically" (p. 114). The artifacts I gathered in my information tool box added meaning to my observations. They not only symbolized what had occurred in the past, but pointed to things yet to be understood.

Level II: *Student Engagement Project*

As already stated, my involvement in the project not only gave me easy access to the site for my own work, but more importantly, gave me a chance to familiarize myself with the organization in a holistic sense. Having agreed to keep my study separate, I soon discovered that the lines between the two could not be definitively separated. One spilled into the other, even as I shifted from etic to emic positionings (Guba and Lincoln, 1998) within the two studies. I continuously moved between the two, sometimes more insider than outsider and then drifting back again. During the preliminary fieldwork in the *Student Engagement* project, the researchers [including me], "got to know the school, students and staff, and, of equal importance, the students and staff got to know" us (Smith et al., 1998, p.99). Building relationships within the school prepared me for moving into the ALP classroom. Knowing nested within knowing.

My involvement with the larger project proved to be invaluable. Because of the amount of time I spent in the site I acquired a sizeable bank of knowledge to draw on. Some of the knowledge was overt; other, more tacit. It ranged from knowing the school, even from a sensory perspective, to knowing how to approach adolescents and to start a conversation with them. During the previous project, I had visited the ALP classroom a few times. I carried into my own study a point of comparison as illustrated in the log entry of my first visit...

> In a few minutes she comes back to me and tells me a little about the class. She enjoys this group more than last year. Three boys in last year's group did not have a great attitude which made things more difficult. I mention how she seemed to be uptight at times last year. She agreed. And then said, "You noticed that?", obviously impressed with my observation.[29]

In the previous research activity, the interview had been an important means of data collection. I carried into my study the experience I had garnered. My exposure to being an interviewer resonated in my reflections...

> [In reaction to J.'s nervousness I find that as the interviewer I take on an almost maternalistic role assuring her that everything will be fine. My words of assurance do manage to assuage her fears somewhat. Our cordial interaction has the greatest effect on warming her up to the event. She relaxes more as the interview progresses].[30]

The *Student Engagement* project was a significant stepping stone into my own research, not only because it opened the door, but because it provided tools for the opening.

Tertiary Data Source
The Secondary Site

Oftentimes, when I am immersed into something, caught in the microcosm of time and place, my eyes stop seeing. This phenomenon haunted me during my research. I needed to step away, perhaps to find something else to nudge me to see things differently. Under advisement, I decided to visit another site. The new site was not so much a space of comparison but a space of juxtaposition, a vehicle through which I viewed my study site. In the process I acquired Schwandt's (1998) notion of the "connoisseur's eye" taking me into "a state of enlightenment" (p. 245). The two sites, when set side by side, illuminated similarity and difference by presenting to quote Barone (2001, Winter), " a simultaneous shift in perspectives" (p. 735). I could now see another way.

I visited the secondary site on three occasions. The school was located in the Montreal area, selected because of its arts focus. It was not my intention to conduct an in-depth study of the site. I wanted to get an overview, a kind of 'positioned' feeling about the place. At the same time, I was only too aware of the perils of creating in Metz's (2000) words, an "inauthentic imposition of an alien point of view" (p. 67). I had learned through my investigations that things were not always as they first appeared. The three visits only allowed me to scratch the surface. But it was a start.

At the end of each visit I wrote a reflective piece about my experience. For later referencing I numbered consecutively each paragraph per entry. As I wrote I was cognizant that I tended to look at the secondary site critically, even negatively...

> Unfortunately, I am viewing the second site with a very jaundiced eye, but I am clearly disappointed with what I was able to see. I had expected something much more open and receptive to artistic expression. But from what I did see that was not really evident. I was maybe wrong in expecting so much.[31]

I had to remind myself that my perceptions may not have been triggered so much by the 'reality' of what I was seeing as much as by my desire to make my study site (in which I had invested so much) appear in a positive light...

This is my final time to visit the secondary study site and all I can say is that I am quite relieved. My visits there have been somewhat disappointing but not in vain. They have certainly sharpened my insights into what is needed for a site to be 'arts-based' in a holistic sense. It has also affirmed my gratitude for choosing the primary site that I did. I feel very lucky to have stumbled upon J.'s class. She is a master teacher and they are rare as I am being constantly reminded.[32]

The visits sharpened my insights into the contextual elements in my primary study site. In my reflection documented after my second visit I identified the elements as follows:

1. *Flexibility:* A learning organization needs to accommodate blocks of time that spill over more than one period for rehearsals and classroom projects.
2. *Latex borders*: The boundaries of subject and discipline need to be pushed back. Teachers need to collaborate to engage in cross-curricular learning events.
3. *Aesthetically-appealing surroundings*: A school needs to appeal to the senses so that the students are continuously prepared for artistic expressiveness. Student participation in decorating their space of learning fosters pride and ownership. It announces that "we care".
4. *Openness:* An artistic environment opens up to the world. People feel invited and welcomed into the school and into the world of the learners who in turn share what they are doing. The welcome includes parents and other members of the community. Precaution needs to be taken to insure students safety but this can be done without shutting others out. There needs to be, first and foremost, an openness among members of the immediate school community.
5. *Freedom:* Members of the school community are not paralyzed by fear. Creativity cannot flourish in an atmosphere of restraint and control. Control simply intensifies control.
6. *Structure*: Flexibility and 'latex borders' requires structure and a great deal of planning and organization. The school cannot be run in a laissez-faire manner. Everyone needs to be kept informed and to participate in the planning.[33]

The contextual elements noted in the reflective memos were key to framing my interpretations. They converged with the findings emerging from the literature review, field notes, the personal reflections and the interviews. They pushed me to look more deeply at the data I had gathered in my primary site.

The secondary site brought clarity to what I was seeing not necessarily because these contextual elements were missing but because the new landscape compelled me to see in another way. By juxtaposing the two sites, I was able to see that some of these elements were not as developed in the primary site as they could have been. The study site, in spite of its merits, remained a work in progress as do all spaces of learning.

(c) Data Analysis

Simply put, in this section I will discuss what I did with the mass of data I had collected. I intend not only to inform the reader of the procedure I followed. My hope is that in the process I might acquire some credibility for what I have done through acknowledging in Huberman and Miles' (1998) words, "the importance of "transparency"-- shareability -- of management and analysis procedures themselves" (p.180). As I will show, each research question was an important tool in my investigation and served as a blueprint for processing the data garnered as a result of the asking. I will also demonstrate what I did with the data in terms of organization and assembly to facilitate my interpretation.

I. Depth of Investigation

Qualitative analysis may take many forms. Yet, its primary aim is to, according to Maykut and Morehouse (1994), examine "the meaning of people's words and actions" (p. 121). The depth of the exploration moves along a continuum from basic description in which the researcher simply allows the data to speak for itself to a high level interpretation required in theory building (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Huberman and Miles, 1998). Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1986) adopt a higher ground of interpretation, a kind of 'descriptive-interpretive' treatment of the data.

In this study I moved along the continuum from data description to descriptive-interpretation. I began with basic description. In keeping with the spirit of rigorous research, however, I had to ensure that data were not only 'there', but there through various sources. 'Multi-sourcing'(Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 25) assured me of the validity of what I was seeing and increased my understanding of the various contexts at play.

II. Question-Oriented Investigation

I do not see myself as a qualitative purist, a belief reflected in the manner in which I conducted my work. I framed my inquiry with four comprehensive questions realizing that

such an action did not align with the thinking of some researchers as discussed earlier. To me, the questions were, in a sense, "vision quests" (Hubbard and Miller Power, 1993), that is, guideposts for data collection and interpretation. Inspired by Miller's (1995) thoughts, I realized that each question carried its own story and suggested plausible courses of action. At the same time, the question implied rather than declared, opening the door to a myriad of possibilities. I asked the question, but was never certain of the response it would solicit.

The research questions lead to various forms of investigation as indicated:

1.   How do students participate in an English language arts component of an Alternative Learning Program in a Montreal–based high school?

The question inferred the presence of an outsider, someone with an etic relationship with the participants (Pike 1954). I addressed this particular question through documented observation, that is field noting. The data gathered at this level was descriptive, showing what I saw. It also laid the groundwork for preliminary interpretation and for giving voice to the other participants garnered in the personal reflections and the interviews. I anticipated that the sources of data would, in some manner of speaking, give further insight into the initial findings (Mathison, 1988).

2.   How do students feel about the learning environment in which they are participating?

This question was addressed primarily through the words of the students. In this study, student opinions were expressed through the personal reflections and filtered through the verbal and non-verbal cues captured in my field notes and during the interviews. The question called me to interpret their reality. It altered my position. I no longer looked at the participants with an etic gaze. I moved into the action and was compelled to take an insider stance. I not only saw them but saw their teacher, even myself, in relation to them.

3.   What role does the teacher play?

This research question was pursued through classroom observations, personal reflections, and both informal and formal interviews. The investigation took the data to yet another analytical layer. I looked at the teacher's role, not only in terms of her perception, but in the students' perception. I also brought into the discussion my view of her role, through positioning my own role as an educator.

4.   What classroom conditions and obvious contextual factors appear to shape what transpires in the learning environment?

Data addressing this component of the study were drawn from my observations, but more importantly from interviews and informal discussions with the study participants as well as from others in the school community. Contextual elements were supported by data gathered from the *Student Engagement* project. To clarify my observations, I juxtaposed my primary site against another learning environment.

III. Data Interpretation

I anticipated that deciphering the data would begin after I had completed transcriptions of the field notes, the personal reflections and the interviews. Once into the process I realized that the distinction between data gathering and data analysis is arbitrary at best. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) remind me that "the way we enter the inquiry field influences what we attend to. We deliberately select some aspects that turn up in field texts" (p. 93). Conversely, they suggest that "field texts, in an important sense, also say much about what is not said and not noticed" (p. 93). My analysis of the data started with the collection process. Even at the beginning I was already screening what I deemed significant and what was not. Yet at a more conscious level I needed to engage with the data if I were to derive meaning from what I was seeing. Borrowing on Huberman and Miles' (1998) idea, I needed to move the data through processes of reduction, thereby in Lakoff's (1987) view "imposing limitations"(p.165) on what I had gathered.

As a preliminary step, I organized the transcribed texts into distinct paragraphs, realizing at that point that the designation was somewhat arbitrary. Hard copies of the transcribed texts were then produced.

The analysis ran the gamut of three steps. The first, I identified as Pre-analysis; second, Coding and third, Re-coding.

i. Pre-Analysis

I first read the transcribed text of the field notes, to flush out general patterns. The process started with underlining key points in the text. I had already completed this initial step with the personal reflections and interviews. As a next step, I read the logs to determine which research question was being addressed in each entry paragraph. I noted the appropriate

question number in the left margin of the paragraph. An excerpt may help to clarify the procedure...

> As if by osmosis, students migrate to their seats around the table. A cluster gather around J. passing in assignments and obviously asking her questions. The noise level has increased (logpcs01.qc2, ref.#5).

The entire paragraph informed me something about student participation in the class. Therefore, it related to Research Question #1. I indicated this connection by surrounding the paragraph with a square bracket and indicating RQ1 on the left...

RQ1   [As if by osmosis, students migrate to their seats around the table. A cluster gather around J. passing in assignments and obviously asking her questions. The noise level has increased] (logpcs01.qc2, ref.#5).

Other paragraphs were not as clear-cut. If more than one question was addressed, I divided the paragraph by brackets and designated the demarcation accordingly. In a few instances, the paragraph could not be cleanly divided. In that case, both question numbers were indicated (such as RQ1/RQ3). I decided later what question the data leaned towards. I was fully cognizant that the meanings I derived from the data could not be confined within one question. A statement, I have been reminded, can shed light on many things.

Following the assignment of the research question to each of the field note paragraphs, I needed to determine my next step. To facilitate this process, I followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) advice. They suggest that to begin the coding process, preanalytic notes be added in the right margin of each paragraph. These notes would consist of the key words especially the verbs that lead to forming the data categories. Using the excerpt above as an example, my preanalytic notes were as follows...

RQ1   [As if by osmosis, students migrate to their seats around the table. A cluster gather around J. passing in assignments and obviously asking her questions. The noise level has increased] (logpcs01.qc2, ref.#5).

- Migrating
- Clustering
- Questioning
- Noise Increasing

The marginal notes probed my thinking. They were instrumental in pushing me to think about the data beyond the words in front of me. I realized that this first step was merely the beginning in showing the connection between the text and the data categories. Yet it was a start. The research questions and the pre-analytic notes paved the way for the next level, the coding.

ii. Coding

I returned to the field notes. I used the research questions as a springboard for organizing the notes into what Bogdan and Biklen (1992) called "coding categories" (p.166). To begin the process, I first photocopied the logs ensuring that the original remained intact so that I could preserve an audit trail (Huberman and Miles, 1998) as reflected in the Chronology of Data (see Appendix K). I began the process of coding by first defining the key words emerging from each of the research questions, participation, perceptions, role and context. I cut the duplicate copies into mostly paragraph fragments and then segregated them into large categories according to the words highlighted in the marginal notes. In this first stage, for example, I placed the key words highlighted from the example illustrated above under 'participation'.

In the second step of the process I narrowed the data categories, by beginning what Miles and Huberman (1994) describe as 'clustering' the data (p. 131). I was careful to let the data point me in the direction to go. I began the process by grouping data under specific categories, for example, data that referred to student questioning. During this stage of the analysis I found that the data I had identified under the heading participation presented two aspects of 'participation'. For example, words like migrating, clustering and questioning seemed to me at this stage to represent action. They reminded me of Lakoff's notion of "Activity is motion" (p. 529). The fourth word phrase, namely noise increasing highlighted in the marginal notes of that paragraph suggested something else. Rather than action, the phrase spoke of the dynamics or tone of participation. I proceeded to arrange the cut data under the two headings: Participation as Action, and Participation as Dynamics.

With the third step, I narrowed the coding categories yet again and simultaneously acknowledged the patterns I was seeing. I designated 'participation as action', for example, into two layers, one representing what I argue was greater student involvement than the other. Building on the definition of participation discussed earlier, I identified the general headings as 'Having a Part' and 'Taking a Part.' The data categorized as questioning seemed to fit under the first layer 'Having a Part' since it represented to me an action with a passive

ring to it. Data I had clustered as engaging in, on the other hand, demonstrated, greater initiative on the part of the students. Therefore, the data, at least for this cut of the analysis was housed under the heading 'Taking a Part'.

I also tried to differentiate between data that spoke to the student as individuals and students as a collective. In doing so, data surfaced that did not fit under the Participation as Action heading. Such data categories as acknowledging the self and caring spoke to me of tone or dynamics and were therefore placed at least for the time being under the heading Participation as Dynamics. At the same time movement words spoke about earlier such as migrating and clustering also seemed to suggest something about the tone of the classroom. I clustered that data temporarily under the category of flow and placed it under the Participation as Dynamics heading.

Some data did not fit under any heading. They spoke to moments in the classroom that at least initially countered participation. If I were to remain faithful to what I saw, these outliers, as Donmoyer (1990, p. 181) calls them, needed to be acknowledged. I clustered the data under categories such as 'being a natural?' and struggling. The categories were placed at this stage under an the outlier heading 'Non-participation'. I realized, even at this stage, that while this data did not fit under the participation category it told me a something about what I was seeing.

iii. Re-coding

In the third stage of the analysis I revisited what I had done to date to reshuffle and reorganize. The headings for example for Participation as Action, namely, 'Having a Part' and 'Taking a Part', while momentarily serving their purpose, needed revision. I had to rethink what the data subsumed under these headings told me about participation as it unfolded in the classroom. What emerged was a difference between teacher-initiated participation and participation that appeared to be more student-initiated. I renamed the headings 'Assigned Participation' and 'Shared Participation', respectively. At the same time, I had to think about what links there were between the two.

The other general heading Participation as Dynamics was far messier. I re-named the heading 'Participative Tone'. Some of the data categories such as caring and supporting seemed to be a good fit. However, the cluster of rhythm or flow did not. I realized after some scrutiny that such data told me more about what the teacher did. In short, the data gave further insights into the role of the teacher rather than participation of the students. I moved

the data under one of the headings I had already created to describe her role, namely, Teacher as Conductor.

The data category of 'mistake making' was another example. I first encountered the data in the students' personal reflections. In these writings, a couple of students referred to feeling fearful or getting nervous when confronted with certain activities. One admitted that "when we get big assignments, everyone gets nervous, but then when we get into it, it's a cinch".[34] Another student wrote, "I don't feel as nervous doing drama or orals in this class".[35] In the latter comment in particular the student seemed to be making a comparison. To me, at least, she was intimating that this class differed from others she had encountered. The students' comments compelled me to ask what it was about this classroom that encouraged students to try. Not wanting to lead the respondents, I framed the interview question as "How do you feel about making mistakes?" Their responses as presented in Chapter 4 lead me to conclude that generally speaking they accepted 'mistake making' as a natural, even essential, part of learning. The data generated from their responses pushed me to probe deeper, to explore the source of this attitude.

Upon re-visiting the coded data, I realized that the teacher may have played a critical role in this regard. It surfaced in her personal reflection where she expressed her belief that the classroom should be a non-threatening environment. The question remained how this view translated into the daily life of the classroom. As I pieced together evidence from my field notes and the interviews, I re-categorized 'making mistakes' into a broader theme 'Taking risks'. When I stepped back to look at the classroom holistically I saw that 'taking risks' was a part of a something bigger, that it spoke more to the teacher and the conditions she set up to enhance student participation. After a number of iterations, 'mistake making' was subsumed under 'taking risks' which in turn folded under the broader category of 'opening to/for freedom', a condition of participation included in Chapter 4.

Likewise, the outliers required further analysis. As alluded to, I had in the coding stage temporarily assigned this category as Non-Participation. However, the identifier did not portray the essence of the data categories. The data spoke in its own way to student rebellion, therefore implied deliberate action. For that reason, I decided to categorize these outliers for student participation under the heading of Participative Resistance found in Chapter 3.

(d). Decontextualizing and Re-contextualizing

Mishler (1986) sharpened my awareness of the pitfalls of coding. Before reading his work, I felt that my mission would be to take the separate units of information and assign

meaning to them. According to Mishler (1986) when I lifted the data from the event I engaged in "context-stripping" (p.22), Tesch's (1990) notion of "decontextualizing" (p. 115). I would be removing the data from the sociocultural environment that gave them meaning. In doing so, I would be asserting my perspective, the product of my own sociocultural environment, unto the data. If I did not exercise caution, the data would speak less of the research participants and more of me, the researcher. As Luttrell (2000) reminds me, my "role in shaping the ethnographic encounter is huge; consciously or not, [I] listen and make sense of what [I] hear according to particular theoretical, ontological, personal, and cultural frameworks and in the context of unequal power relations" (p. 499). In keeping with Mishler's and Luttrell's advice, I needed to reduce researcher 'contamination' by allowing the data to speak for itself and be, to the best of my ability, transparent about my position as the interpreter. At the same time, I needed to keep the data connected to the environment from which it was extracted. I had to acknowledge, in Bosker and Scheeren's (1994) words, the contextual effects that exists in every site of inquiry.

To address the research questions, I needed to widen the lens of my looking. I needed to not only look deeply into the classroom, the focus of my study, but also to look at what surrounded it. I had to show the impact the participants had upon their environment as well as those things that had an impact upon them. To do so, I had to resume my role as the bricoleur. I had to stitch the pieces together to create a holistic view of the study landscape. I needed to connect the data generated from the various sources that deepened my insights into the contextual effects. For example, one of the questions I had asked the students in the seventh interview was 'Tell me how learning is viewed in your home'. Responses to this question were clustered with references students had made about their family from the previous interviews. These responses were linked with related statements made by the teacher and the administrator and interpreted accordingly.

In respect of the maxims of qualitative inquiry, I was reminded that the building of the context portrait could not be researcher driven. In keeping with Weinstein and Weinstein's (1991) thoughts, the building had to be 'emergent' (p. 161). I had to allow the data to tell their own story. What emerged was a realignment of my understanding of what I saw there.

But Is it Trustworthy?

In the end, whatever I chose to do in my study, I had to defend my choices. Defending called into question whether or not what I did was valid. Maxwell (1992) concedes that validity "in the broad sense, pertains to [the] relationship between an account and something outside that account, whether that something is construed as objective reality, the constructions of actors, or a variety of other possible interpretations" (p.283). Simply put, validity answers the question 'how do you know it is true?'. While such action may be warranted in certain research practices, it cannot be applied to all. It depends. To restrict truth, I argue, is to restrict knowledge by denying its pluralistic nature. Goodman (1978) contends that truth is a subset of rightness. Since there are various degrees and kinds of 'rightness', it must follow that there are different degrees and kinds of truths.

Knowledge, as I attempted to establish throughout this work, is essentially configured and shaped by the mind exploring it. The best I could hope for in setting up the ground rules for validation was to claim its reasonableness or, stated another way, its trustworthiness (Reissman, 1993). Even within a court of law this is the case. Those who advocate that true knowledge is experimental evidence must concur that *that* which they know is achieved through the experimentation. Be that the case, all other claims to knowledge are debatable and context-bound.

In my study, validity was dependent upon the information or data I had acquired and its subsequent interpretation (Mishler, 1990). My inquiry in many respects fell within the domain of critical research in that, in Kincheloe and McLaren's (1998) words, "the meaning of [the] experience...depends[s] on the struggle over the interpretation and definition of that experience" (p. 273). Validity was relative because my understanding was relative. As argued earlier, it is not possible for any investigation, including mine, to be independent of any particular perspective (Maxwell, 1992). Understandings are determined as much by omission as by commission (Runciman, 1983). What is omitted or committed is a call of judgement. And, at least in my understanding of it, judgement cannot be objective, even if the facts, upon which the judgement is made are.

As I recorded the unfolding events, certain nuances and particularities were inevitably lost, not only because of the restrictions of time, exposure and expediency (it was impossible to account for every detail), but for the simple reason that they were hidden from both the study participants, the observed, and, especially, from me, the observer. Thus, the trustworthiness of my inquiry was always determined by what was divulged to me, what I saw and what I decided to pursue.

Within my research efforts, triangulating my data was undoubtedly one of the ways that I could be assured that my findings might be valid. At first, triangulation, an accepted strategy in qualitative methodology, seemed to be a reliable means of verification. Huberman and Miles (1998) describe triangulation as a means of inquiry whereby the researcher collects and checks findings "using multiple sources and modes of evidence" (p.199). As the study progressed, however, I found that my treatment of the data did not conform to the regimentation implied in this strategy. Rather, it was handled more fluidly. I wrestled with this notion throughout, finally arriving at a concrete way of talking about it in Chapter 8.

That having been said, I did not wish to establish internal validity by producing proof within a causal paradigm. Rather, I wanted the data to point to some consistencies, or even, inconsistencies, upon which, according to Mathison (1988), I could *"construct meaningful propositions"* (p. 15) or, as Rajagopalan's (1998) suggests, adopt some form of a "meta-theoretical posture" (p. 352). I did not wish to explain why things existed or to name causes for their existence. I simply wanted to reveal what I saw and to make some sense of it.

Nor did I wish to lay claim to external validity, that is, the generalizability of my findings. At the end of the day, whether or not what surfaced could be applied to other situations remained questionable at best. Instead, I wanted to peel back the layers present in the environment so that I could reveal, in Gearing's words, "fascination with the commonplace" (as cited in Emihovich, 1989, p.5). I preferred to apply Kincheloe and McLaren's (1998) notion of "anticipatory accommodation" by adding to the discourse of what can be learned from comparisons of different contexts (p. 288). I wanted to derive some understanding of what works and under what conditions.

In my research, I was not intent on establishing validity, at least validity as understood from an experimental or even quasi-experimental research design. I wanted to be transparent in my belief that the truth *as I saw it* lay in relation to the world *as seen by* the study participants. Trustworthiness depended upon how successfully I was able to portray Fuch's (1993) notion of simultaneous viewing from the inside and the outside. It was established by how persuasively I could engage, from Bourdieu and Wacquaat's vantage point (1992), in an "ethnography of ethnographers" (p. 290). That is, in a balanced exposé of 'intra' and 'inter' perspectives.

That having been said, the trustworthiness of my findings, I argue, was enhanced by the time span of the research activity; the multiplicity of the data sources and the transparency of the process. At the final point of the dialogue when asked to defend my findings, my only recourse might be to show them in context. Like Hammersley and Atkinson (1983), I engaged in 'situated vocabularies' as a way of making sense of particular

moments in particular locations. My final defense may be that the data *felt* valid at that particular time and in that particular place. Given the nature of this inquiry, the subjective realm of understanding may be the most valid defense of all.

Conclusion

The intent of this chapter was to suggest a disclaimer for the outbursts of the little prince: that contrary to his appraisal of how adults understand, we can, indeed, go beyond numbers. Quantity attains most profound meanings when qualified. To counter his criticism of the adult mind, I showed how I conducted my research through qualification. First, I described the qualitative context and demonstrated why my research fell under that domain. Then, I presented the mechanics of my investigation by giving a detailed account of the means I used to collect and organize the data. Next, I attempted to show what I did with the data in terms of analysis and interpretation. I concluded the chapter with a defense for what I decided to do with the data and for the kinds of understandings that I derived from my investigation. In summation, within the scope of this study, the best I could do was to present glimpses of life in that particular classroom. But it was within these fragmentary glances that I saw essences of the whole and acquired deeper understandings of what it is to learn, and even, to live. In keeping with Johnson (1996), my probing showed me that "the diversity of the world offers fragments of beauty, goodness, and truth, both social and cosmic, facets of reality that point us in different ways to the one ineffable source and goal of all" (p. 118). It also affirmed that "none alone or even all taken together can exhaust the reality of divine mystery" (Johnson, 1996, p. 118). The glimpses, I discovered, revealed some-things about what transpired in that space of learning. Through their revelations, my efforts may have opened the door, if but ajar, to understandings far beyond.

Anything essential is invisible to the eyes.
<div align="right">

de Saint-Exupéry (2000 p.63)
</div>

In this chapter I explore my first research question: How do Secondary 1 students participate in the English Language arts component of the Alternative Learning Program?. The two key words in the question are 'how' and 'participate'. They act as indicators for my research. The word 'how' has an operational function. It implies by what means or in what manner. It points to behaviours both identifiable and analyzable to the observer. 'How' is directly linked to the verb 'participate', the word specifying and defining the relationship.

The context in which participating plays out appears to be a plausible point of departure in this chapter. I will begin with looking at the structure of the classroom first in terms of its physical lay-out and then the course of study offered there.

Structure of the Classroom

Physical Lay-out

When I entered the room for the first time, a number of things struck me as being unusual. The space was more than just another typical classroom. It was a suite of rooms, self-contained with an air of being removed from the rest of the school. The room comprised of spaces within a space: the main classroom, the computer room and the teacher's office. The main classroom had two exits: one from the main corridor; the other, from a smaller hallway. The computer room and teacher's office were only accessible from the main classroom. These auxiliary spaces, if I may call them that, while not large, were well utilized and cared for.

Another anomaly was the student seating arrangement. There were no desks. As sketched in Figure 2, students sat at round tables placed in the center of the room. The location of the teacher's desk and the chalkboards designated the front, yet not all of the student chairs faced that direction. The implications for this positioning were more significant than I first realized. As soon became apparent to me, they were arranged this way to enhance student interaction, not to facilitate teacher lectures.
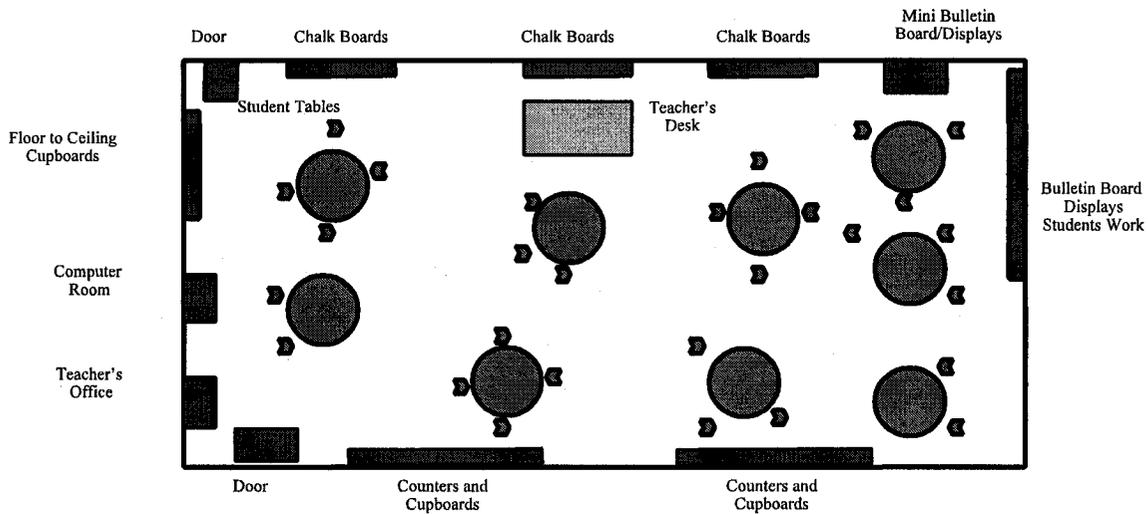
Figure 2: Classroom Structure: Physical Lay-out

Within the classroom, maximum use was made of the wall space to display student work. The full wall to the right of the teacher's desk was taken up with a large bulletin board for that purpose. This space, in addition to an adjacent smaller board at the front of the room was, as I observed over time, constantly in use.

The Curriculum

Before looking at the curriculum in the study site I preface my observations with what is written in the literature. I begin with an overview of curriculum in general, then moving more specifically to the language arts curriculum.

My search for defining curriculum took a number of directions. In an earlier paper, when I directed the question to a teacher, her response was: "Curriculum is the basis of the content you will have to teach: the guidelines for what you must teach during the year". Similarly, an academic commented, "I think that the original definition had to do with the documents from the Ministry -- the printed, stated programme of studies that got expanded to include all the planned learning experiences that occur (probably only) in the school...". Two

students, in response to my question, demonstrated this view in more succinct terms: "What they say you have to learn"; and, in like mind, "The things they teach you -- the content that you have to learn". While the voices represented in this discussion are minute samples, I suspect they likely reflect the sentiments of a wider population.

From a professional stance, I can understand why people focus on curriculum. It is the most tangible component of the learning experience and the most accessible point of reference for discussion and explanation. In short, it assumes shared understanding of what it is. The assumption is displayed, for example, in the Ministry about the revised curriculum at the primary level. It refers to curriculum as "the elements that structure what students learn in school: subjects to be taught, teaching time, programs, evaluation of student learning, certification of studies, and the organization of the various learning paths" (Ministère de l' Éducation du Québec, 1997b, p. 10). Assumption of shared meaning is also reflected in the handout circulated by the school about its enrichment programs including the ALP:

> In this bilingual and bicultural program, students receive a high level of instruction in all core subjects including French. This extensive French program eventually leads to a bilingual certificate. The teaching *extends beyond the regular curriculum* [italics added] through the use of computers, specialized projects, field trips and guest teachers.[36]

As indicated in the description, the school assumes that the reader knows what is offered in the regular curriculum and bases the design of an alternative program upon that assumption.

Defining Curriculum

The number of publications about this aspect of schooling is limitless. Not surprisingly, the views vary. Within the scope of this study I can provide merely a snapshot of the thinking on this topical, and I might add, potentially contentious issue.

To some writers curriculum is the content of instruction. Fuchs and Deno (1994) use the word curriculum "to denote the materials in which instruction occurs, not the goals, objectives, or outcomes inherent in the school's curriculum" (p. 15). Gaskell and McLaren (1987) subscribe that "curriculum involves the organization of knowledge in particular ways for teaching purposes" (p. 193). Similarly, surmises Campoy (1997), curriculum is "the way

that educators think about and organize teaching" (p. 54). In these definitions, the spotlight is on what is done to knowledge, more specifically its organization.

Some writers present a broader definition. Leonard (1983) posits that "curriculum is an emergent of the commitments, the knowledge, the care and communicative competence of teachers" (p. 21). Bobbit (1997) describes curriculum as the "series of things which children and youth must do and experience by way of developing abilities to do the things well that make up the affairs of adult life; and to be in all respects what adults should be" (p. 11). Grumet (1995a) probes further by concurring that curriculum is the "symbolic coding of the world so that it may be presented to students for their notice, understandings, and action" (p. 36).

While writers differ in their notions of what curriculum entails, a common thread binds them all. Curriculum manifests itself as organized materials or events designed *by* teachers *for* students. In short, students are recipients of the curriculum experience; they may act upon it as the definitions of Bobbit and Grumet imply, but by and large, it is the teacher who determines the terms of their action.

Other thinkers blur the distinction between student/teacher roles in curricular meaning making. Willis and Schubert (1991) espouse that curriculum is "the experience, the sources of meaning that altered and improved the outlook of those who participated in it" (p. 15). In like mind, May (1991) concurs that curriculum embraces the "active construction of meaning(s) by those involved in teaching, learning, and policy making" (p. 142). Curriculum, describes King (1986), is "a 'situated event' to which all elements of the physical environment and the social context contribute" (p. 37). In similar fashion, Pinar (1999) talks about curriculum as "the site on which the generations struggle to define themselves and the world" and later on as ... "an extraordinarily complicated conversation" (p. 366).

Blurring participant roles brings something else to the discussion. Unlike the Fuchs and Deno's definition, curriculum is no longer thought of simply as tangible materials. The view complicates as it deepens. In doing so, defining, that is, limiting or containing what we mean when we use the word curriculum, becomes increasingly more difficult.

For this reason, I surmise, some authors avoid the 'definition' route. They acknowledge the difficulties encountered in determining what curriculum is: that it is not something easily definable. As an alternative, they turn to multi-level ways of talking about it.

On a widening continuum, Walker (1988) synthesizes the definitions of curriculum offered in the literature: curriculum as *subjects,* or what I call, learning defined by content;

curriculum as *activities*, learning defined by projects or exercises; curriculum as *intention*, learning defined by teacher goals and aims; curriculum as *experience*, learning defined by the student. Grundy's (1987) perspective of curriculum to a large extent parallels that of Walker with her suggestion that curriculum may be approached conceptually and culturally. If I take the conceptual approach, I would most likely adhere to Marsh and Stafford's (1984) notion of curriculum as an interrelated module of plans and experiences. If I adhere to the cultural approach, I am likely to be concerned with "the experiences people have as a consequence of the existence of the curriculum, rather than with the various aspects which make it up" (Grundy, 1987, p. 6).

Westbury (1999) aligns his views with that of Grundy. Building on the thoughts of Reid (see Westbury), he looks upon curriculum as a composite of three levels. The first level is *curriculum-as-ideal*, that is a framework for "ordered enculturation into the bodies of knowledge, forms of thinking, and ways of life of a society and culture" (p. 360). The second level, *curriculum-as-symbols*, is the documentation of enculturation, that is, "authoritative statements of the consensual curriculum-as-ideal" (p. 361). The third level, *curriculum-as-symbolic actions*, a term I have liberally borrowed from other writers cited in Westbury's article, signifies the interpretation of the curriculum "in individual schools, by individual teachers in ways that make them amenable for teaching their particular students" (p. 361).

Each of the writers Walker, Grundy and Westbury use a different language to discuss curriculum. Similar strands, however, weave through their thoughts. All of them look at curriculum in layers. On the surface they look at curriculum in the form of texts and materials used for teaching purposes. But they also look deeper. To them curriculum extends beyond: that the tangibles carry meanings speaking to those who are using it.

It is obvious, even from these limited citations, that curriculum theorists do not share a common view of what curriculum is. Not all authors explain the concept in a singular, simplistic definition. Nor do they look upon curriculum as something removed from the lives of the people touched by it. Curriculum appears in many forms and in many guises.

How, then, do I define curriculum? Do I define it in terms of materials, instructional events, or learner experience? The choice, of course, ultimately lies in the hands of the definer. After having considered the data garnered in my study, I concede that it is all of the above. It is, in part, the organization of knowledge or learning experiences by the teacher, who in turn is often guided by the curriculum designer. But it is also more. And if I am to get at the heart of what education aims to do, I argue, that while the hardware of curriculum, if I may call it that, is an essential starting off point, it is only that: a point of departure.

As I grapple with the meaning of the word curriculum, I reflect back to its roots. Derived from Latin, the word *curriculum* signifies a *race-course*, or the *race* itself (Bobbit, 1997). This etymologic connection provides an interesting metaphor. When I talk of curriculum as a race, do I confine my gaze on the singular event, that is, the race, or do I include other events and conditions that effect it? Do I look at, for example, the training regime followed by the runner? Or, do I look at the runner who shapes and is shaped by the experience? To build a complete picture, I argue, all of these factors warrant consideration. I see, inherent in this analogous language, the necessity of looking at curriculum in the same way. While the whole may be greater than the sum of its parts, the parts reflect in minutiae different dimensions of the whole, thereby shedding further light on what curriculum ultimately is.

Defining the English Language Arts Curriculum

My investigation, as already established in the research questions, focused on a particular dimension of curriculum, namely English Language Arts. It was one of the disciplines taught by the teacher participant. The learning experience I observed namely, English language arts, undoubtedly had an impact upon the nature of student participation. For that reason, I needed to begin my discussion by establishing what English language arts is. To reiterate, the teacher in my study also provided instruction for the class in French language arts. My point of reference for this study, however, was the language arts classes conducted in English. Therefore, the term 'language arts' used in this writing will assume this identity.

I begin with a clarification of what I mean by the term. Unsurprisingly, the literature provides related, yet varied, points of view in this regard. Some authors adhere to the basics. Moffett and Wagner (1992) state that "language arts *is* what the language arts *are* -- speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is a set of two productive and two receptive activities -- one pair for oral speech and one pair for literacy" (p. 8). In their definition, Moffett and Wagner highlight the observable behaviours that comprise language learning.

Other writers adopt a broader perspective. They focus on the internal processes of language development and regard language first and foremost as an essential intrapersonal tool. In their view, language arts embodies the search for meaning. At the same time, they acknowledge that meaning making, while a critical component of language learning, is not confined to formal curriculum. Ball (2000) asserts that "the facilitation of language use within a sociocultural environment...is the predominant means by which people make sense

or meaning" (p. 232). Wertsch (2000), taking his cue from Taylor, contends that language arts embraces two approaches to meaning making, namely, designative, denoting that "language functions primarily to represent an independent reality" (p. 26), and expressive, denoting that language represents a reality both contextualized and personal. Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery and Taubman (2000) affirm Wertsch's position stating that a language arts program entails "learning to decode words in context" (p. 793). Language learning, by their admission, enables an individual to look out into the world and make sense of what he or she is seeing.

Other writers share the view that language development is not confined to the individual, but to the individual in relation to others. In short, they look at language development as being essential not only for understanding the world but for sharing that understanding with others. Willinsky (1990), for example, looks at literacy development as a condition of interaction. He surmises that "literacy is a social process in the daily landscape" (p. 6). Bainbridge and Malicky (2000) suggest that "language is the most common vehicle for helping children construct concepts and principles and for enabling children to share those concepts, principles, and operations with others" (p. 6). Similarly, the Ministère de l' Éducation du Québec (2000) reflects that the English language arts curriculum at the secondary level is a continuum from the elementary grade level where students have developed "essential reading, interpretive, writing, production, and collaborative strategies for their age and for their cognitive and social development" (p. 5). Language arts aims to provide the learner with the linguistic capacity to communicate, not only with oneself, but, of equal importance, with others (Armstrong, 2003).

Britton, Burgess, Martin, McLeod and Rosen (as cited in Willinsky, 1990) suggest that facility with language extends beyond the need to share. They argue that schools must impart to the learner the need for qualifying the sharing. 'Inner-speech', they assert, ultimately seeks out an audience, and for that reason, requires know-how in accommodating a variety of conversations. On certain occasions, an effective communicator requires a formal, impersonal, or transactional voice. At other times, a personal or expressive voice is more appropriate because it "signals the self, reflects not only the ebb and flow of a speaker's thought and feeling, but also the assumptions of shared contexts of meaning, and of a relationship of trust with his listener" (Britton et al. as cited in Willinsky, 1990, p. 42). Sharing with the other requires not one, but a multiplicity, of voices.

Recent thinking expands the notion of what language is. Writers broaden their view to include other forms of communication including visual arts, music and dance (Pinar, 1999; The New London Group, 1996, Spring). Martin (2002) states that Bakhtin's notion of

varying communication genres are not confined to oral and written language as has been traditionally understood. She contends that "just as self-expression in language utilizes linguistic styles and structures, communication of our visual, kinesthetic, musical, or mathematical thinking utilizes styles and structures inherent to those modes of expression" (p. 307). John-Steiner and Meehan (2000) talk about the complementarity of these various genres in terms of "cognitive pluralism" (p. 45). In their view interacting through different forms of expression "is an essential part of creativity...[since]...through combining different human processes, we move from internalization to novel construction" (p. 45). Cognitive pluralism, as explained by such authors, suggests that individuals not only see reality differently but have different ways of expressing that reality. The broadening view of what it means to express has implications for language arts programs, particularly within the constructivist philosophy undergirding current education practice.

Constructivist learning as advocated by current curriculum reform in Quebec carries the notion of cognitive pluralism even further. The approach is built on the premise that as humans we not only respond to reality as it is presented to us but are instrumental in creating our own. Hein (2002) surmises that "the world of meaning is not revealed through the senses and reason, but generated by us" (p. 199). Senses and reason, in the constructivist view, not only enable humans to react to external reality, but to actively create their own. Such thinking has an impact upon the learning of language. Constructivism does not assume there is one right answer. Nor does it assume that the teacher is the sole purveyor of what is to know. As Mirochnik (2002) declares, within this alternative approach, students "are free to *invent [themselves] in [their] own image*" (p. 36). Aligning with this philosophy, he continues, "we have chosen to replace the notion that the self can be discovered *with* the possibility that the self exists only because we make it up in song, in dance, in painting, and in poetry" (p. 36). Under the banner of constructivism, the term 'language arts' acquires a broader, more comprehensive identity.

In keeping with the previous discussion, the English language arts curriculum is no less complex. Like the generic term, it embodies a concept that is multifaceted. It depends on the lens I choose. Such a curriculum could be the content of language arts, be it the rules of grammar in writing or the interpretation of poetry or short stories. The curriculum could also embody the various classroom practices exercised by the teacher to facilitate student engagement with language. On another level, curriculum could be the quality of student interaction. In essence, it is what the students become as they develop a facility with language.

Inevitably, a discussion of English language arts in general leads more specifically to what transpired in this particular classroom. According to the teacher, the English language arts course, was pivotal to the program. Students received instruction in English language arts every day during an approximate 52-minute period. Seeing the students twice a day (one period, English language arts; one period, French language arts) seemed to provide greater flexibility. A couple of times, the schedules were altered to accommodate special activities in either discipline. As the data will show, in spite of the flexibility, the English language arts component of the program was highly organized as will be examined in the next section.

Organization of the ALP English Language Arts Course

Content

According to the teacher, the English language arts component of the ALP was primarily thematically driven. I noted early in my observations that the teacher used the term 'theme' and 'unit' seemingly interchangeably. However, when asked for clarification she explained that she viewed them as being separate, yet linked. In her words, the theme "is an overall idea, such as Fantasy. A unit is all the prepared work that goes under the theme".[37]

The issue of theme selection was particularly interesting. While J. chose the themes, students were given choices within them. When asked about this issue, J. admitted that she liked to explore things that interested her and that she felt would interest the students. In her words, "I like to present a smorgasbord of things and then they may discover that they like it."[38]

Literary genre were inevitably tied to the themes. At the beginning of the school year, the students were introduced to specific genres such as poetry and dialogue. The students not only learned about these genres but wrote within them. As the year progressed, the genres were carried over into the thematic explorations such as First Day at School, Conflict, Fantasy, Mystery, Science Fiction and the Middle Ages. For example, during my first visit, J. (the teacher) introduced the class to the notion of conflict...

> J. asks the class to explain what a conflict is. Phrases such as 'A misunderstanding' or 'a disagreement' is offered by one of the female students. J. continues this line of the discussion with the question "Who can you have a conflict with?" She answers her own question: "Parents, a brother, sister. teacher...anyone really!"[39]

Immediately after the brief introduction, the students were taken directly into a 'conflict' activity...

> J. ...directs the class to get into pairs and to create a situation with a dialogue that shows a conflict. "And no fighting!" J. warns the students laughingly.[40]

The vignette exemplified one of the ways in which J. introduced a new theme. It also showed one of the activities students experienced within it. J. was diligent about offering a broad repertoire of activities. In her personal reflection she wrote: "When I plan a thematic unit, I try to incorporate a broad spectrum of activities and a wide range of teaching/learning styles."[41]

The variety in activities was particularly striking. It confirmed J.'s aim to offer options within a thematic unit. In addition to enriching the various forms of communication, the activities were designed to match different learning styles. When introducing the concept of descriptive writing, for example, J. used an activity that drew on the senses...

> She asks the students to close their eyes and pick up an object on their desk and think about how they would describe the object. "What adjectives would you use?" she queries. Seeing that they are having a bit of trouble she asks them to think of sand: "How would you describe it?" The class comes up with the following: 'Granular? Hot? Cold? Grainy?' Pushing the discussion along she asks, "Supposing you're at Tadoussac and have your feet in the mud, how would you describe this?" One student responds, "Disgusting". "That is an opinion, not a description," J. retorts. With her prodding, the class together comes up with descriptors like gooey, mushy, and slimy.[42]

Activities within each theme conformed to a pattern. According to my observations, activities evolved throughout the class sessions in cycles moving in, what appeared to be three general domains namely, reading, writing and performing as shown in Figure 3. Reading was the core from which the other two often emerged. Neither domain was exclusive from the others. Rather, there was a flowing back and forth among them, a movement that often occurred simultaneously as depicted in the concentric circles. As the arrows suggest in Figure 3, fluidity of movement also took place from one activity to another, such as listening, speaking, and viewing, within each domain.

Preparing

Critiquing

Reading

Interpreting

Preparing

Performing

Re-submiting

Reading

Writing

Practising

Re-edting

Preparing

Reading

Writing

Reading

Reading

Critiquiting

Submiting
(Portfolio)

Analyzing

Interpreting

Critiquiting

Preparing

Editing

Writing

Analyzing

Editing

Critiquiting

Performing

Submitting

Viewing

Re-submiting

Re-edting
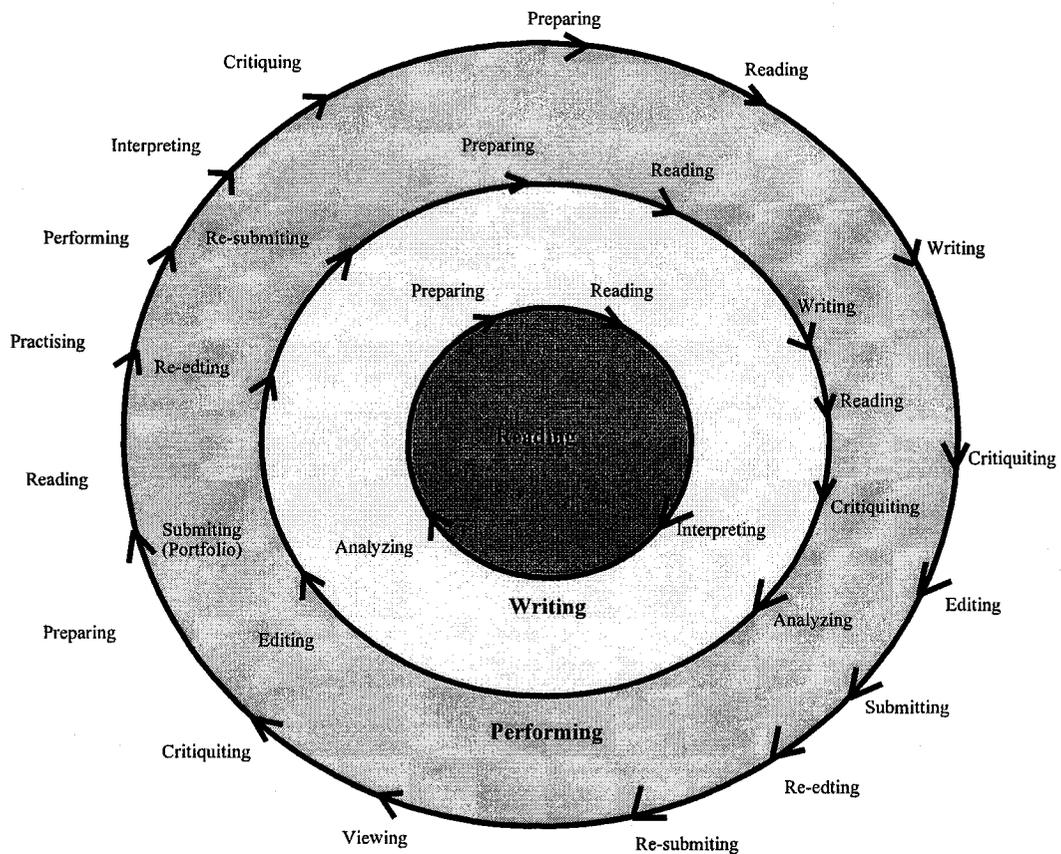
Figure 3: English Language Arts Activity Domain Circle

A more detailed description of the activity domains may give a clearer picture of what took place in this class.

Reading

From the beginning of the school year, reading seemed to focus on three genres: prose, verse and dialogue. Prose reading was largely oriented to a short story representative of the current theme. For example, Shirley Jackson's (1949) short story *Charles* fitted in with the theme 'First Day at School'. The story depicted a young boy named Charles and his impressions of school as a new student in kindergarten. Students read the story and then

discussed how the story spoke to them about their own experience. Another short story, Sir Arthur Canon Doyle's (1993) *The Redheaded League* was used to introduce the 'Mystery' theme. In the story, the famous fictional detective Sherlock Holmes had to solve the murder of a member of an organization identified in the title of the story. The class discussed the story in terms of plot and analyzed the elements of the short story. When asked why she selected this particular story, J. responded...

> ...there are various reasons. First of all, students are used to reading stories set in contemporary times. It is good experience for them to have to 'recreate another era'. Second, the story leads quite nicely into the Mystery theme we will be exploring. Third, I feel that the British language style is more challenging for the students who are schooled in North America.[43]

Activities related to short story reading and interpretation were continued throughout the year and usually tied in with a particular theme.

Prose reading was not confined to short stories. Time was set aside for silent reading of a novel the students selected themselves. Students wrote reports about the book. The report, as outlined by the teacher, included a description of the plot and their personal opinion about the book (see Appendix F). On occasion, students shared their reading with their peers in the form of oral reports as illustrated in the following ...

> Another male student presents his book report... The story is about three young women who are involved with a chat line. Through this system one of the characters gets in contact with a killer. When asked whether or not he liked the book, the student replies, "It's good". J. pushes him to be more explicit about what he means by that. "I mean," he states when pressed to pursue this, "That the dialogue adds to the plot."[44]

Students also had the opportunity to read in other genres. They selected a poem they liked, recited it to the class and explained what it meant. I observed one of these presentations during my first visit...

> J. calls a female student to the front of the class to read a poem. [Probably because it is my first visit, I do not understand up to this point what the purpose of this particular exercise is. I am not sure what the connection is between the reader and the poem. "Was the poem created by the student?" I ask myself. As the student is having

difficulty with some of the vocabulary I soon dismiss my earlier assumption.] After the student finishes the reading she is asked to interpret the poem. She experiences difficulty at first but becomes more fluid as she progresses. "This is a difficult poem to understand," concludes her teacher.[45]

From the very beginning of the school year, students were being prepared for writing and performing dialogue. As illustrated in a previous log sample, students were encouraged to look at dialogue in their readings. During the first class, students were introduced to punctuating examples of direct speech. Then, as already presented, they were instructed to create with a partner a conflict skit using dialogue and were given time to prepare for performing it. In addition to these activities, students wrote a dialogue and shared it with a partner.

Writing

In September, students began writing poetry in the form of rhyming couplets, the form they had worked with in elementary school. They shared their creations with the class during which time J. critiqued their work. She provided suggestions for editing and for subsequent submission to their portfolio, an assessment tool used in the class to be discussed later.

While students wrote rhyming couplets they were also being introduced to free verse. As a preliminary exercise spanning a few months, the students, as mentioned earlier, selected a poem they liked, shared the poem with the class and discussed it in terms of interpretation. The exercise provided students with the opportunity to be exposed to the works of various poets and to learn about the mechanics and artistic elements of poetry writing.

To nurture their own writing voice, students created poetry of their own. At a class I attended in October led by a substitute teacher, some students shared their poems indicative of the theme 'The Emotions of Colour'. They had a choice between adhering to rhyming couplet or free form, but I noticed at that time that a number of the 'poets' opted for free verse. Once their own creations were shared with the class, they were edited, if need be, re-edited and submitted in their portfolios. In keeping with language arts component of *The Quebec Education Program*, revision played an important role in the writing process (Ministère de l' Éducation du Québec, 2000, p. 53). When both the teacher and the student deemed the work a finished product, they were sometimes displayed on the bulletin board.

The poetry form resurfaced at a later date under the guise of the 'Fantasy' theme. I observed students preparing their edited version for display by embellishing the text with colourful designs or visuals.

A similar pattern was followed for the short story and later the descriptive narrative which paralleled the sequence of events followed with poetry.

Performing

A two-pronged approach was used to familiarize students with this domain: one written; the other, performed. In the preparatory stage in September, J. introduced drama in the form of written dialogue. As discussed earlier, J. began working with the concept by writing on the board a short exchange between a student and her. Students went over the mechanics of writing the dialogue including punctuation and form. In the same class, students grouped in pairs to act out a conflict situation using dialogue. Over the next few sessions, they committed the conflict dialogue to paper and used the guidelines J. supplied to share their dialogue with a partner and critique each other's work. The partner's suggestions were incorporated in the subsequent editing. The revised edition was submitted to their portfolio for corrections by the teacher.

By early November students were reading a play connected with the 'Mystery' theme which they shared and discussed in class. At the same time, their acting skills were honed on 'improv' exercises. By early December, under the 'Fantasy' theme, students were introduced to the play, Shakespeare's (1969) *Mid-Summer Night's Dream*, first by reading selected scenes as homework and discussing related questions in class. Students were pre-assigned parts, rehearsed with peers during specific class times and made their dramatic presentations. J. would critique their performance stopping periodically to ask students to clarify the plot, or to offer explanations if they were experiencing difficulty.

On at least two occasions, as recorded in my notes, students had the opportunity to be members of a viewing audience. One play, performed in French, was critiqued by some of the students during an in-class discussion later on that morning. At a later date, the students saw *Midsummer Night's Dream* performed by a professional theatrical group.

Not all of the activities I observed, such as the performing techniques of 'freeze' and 'improv' to be explained later, could be identified, at least in the traditional sense, as literary genres. Yet they were designed to enhance communication facility. Like Bagby (1999), the teacher had come to the realization that life's story is not confined to one medium: that which is to be sung, to be expressed, comes from many. J.'s use of the word spectrum

aligned with this perspective. As with a prism the activities reflected their own uniqueness, yet they were fractures of a whole. Through them the whole was enriched. In return, its tapestry of colours enhanced the inherent beauty of each thread. Together they shed new light on the meaning and persuasive power of language, regardless of the form in which it took.

A defining feature of the English language arts classes, was not only the course content but the manner in which the content was presented. Scheduling enhanced student participation as will be discussed in the section to follow.

Scheduling

For me, one of the most intriguing aspects in the site was the organization of time: a resource treasured by educators mainly because of the perceived lack of it (Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation, 2001, April). The teacher was aware of the limitations of this resource and made a concerted effort to use it efficiently. She designed the learning events so that they flowed both vertically and horizontally. As depicted in Figure 4, thematic units and the domains of reading, writing and performing flowed horizontally across the class sessions. At the same time, activities designed to develop specific literary skills within the domains moved vertically within individual class sessions. Students were introduced to the skills at various points during the school year. Often a skill was introduced at the beginning of the year, and reappeared later under different themes.

Horizontal Organization

Generally speaking, self-contained thematic units, such as First Day at School, Mystery (with its sub-unit Horror, Fantasy and Hero) were clustered over 4-6 weeks, while activity domains, such as reading could extend over longer periods, crossing over into various thematic contexts. For example, by mid October students were reading the short story, *The Redheaded League,* that fitted under the Mystery theme. Simultaneously, the story was used as a springboard for discussion about the elements of this particular genre. By the latter segment of the thematic unit, students were writing their own horror stories, with the rough draft submitted by early November.

As noted in my field notes, by mid November, students had added to their portfolios three short stories under the categories of tall tale, horror story and adventure story. These stories were used to engage the students in self-analysis of their own writing and in editing. They selected what they determined was the best story and defended their choice. Then using

the checklist supplied by the teacher, they identified what needed improving and submitted the edited version for evaluation. This pattern was repeated throughout the school year.

⟵				**Domains of Activities**							⟶
Poetry	Short Story	Drama		Poetry	Short Story	Drama		Short Story	Descriptive Narratives	Drama	
Theme 1: First Day at School 2-3 Weeks				Theme 2: Conflict 4-6 Weeks				Theme 3: Mystery 4-6 Weeks			
A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**
HK SHR PREP C/ED P/P	PRAC C/EVL PERF C/EVL.I PERF	HK PREP READ DIS WR	HK DIS C/ED PERF DIS	HK SHR PREP C/ED P/P	PRAC C/EVL1 PERF C/EVL2 PERF	HK PREP READ DIS WR/SK	HK DIS C/EVL PERF DIS	HK SHR PREP C/ED P/P	PRAC C/EVL1 PERF C/EVL2 PERF	HK PREP READ DIS WR	HK DIS C/EVL PERF DIS

Legend:

C/ED=	Correcting/Editing	P/P=	Practising/Performing	READ =	Reading
C/EVL=	Correcting/Evaluating	PERF=	Performing	SHR=	Sharing
DIS=	Discussing	PRAC=	Practising	WR=	Writing
HK=	Housekeeping	PREP=	Preparing	WR/SK=	Writing/Sketching

Figure 4: ALP English Language Arts Schedule

Vertical Organization

The teacher designed class sessions to develop various skills within the domains. The sessions consisted of an array of activities generally adhering to one of the patterns identified under the letters A-D illustrated in Figure 4.When I mapped out the activities that occurred in each class session some interesting data came to light. On average, each class session consisted of five activities. I kept a running record in my field notes of the time allocated for each activity. In a few instances in which the accounting had been overlooked, the times were approximated. The amount of time spent on each activity varied, but even within these variances patterns emerged. The classes often began with a debriefing of housekeeping items or what was to be done in that session. The debriefing was usually followed by a series of

short activities each ranging in duration from 4-11 minutes. The shorter events led up to a major activity, spanning on average 20 minutes in duration and occurring usually at the latter half of the session. In Figure 4, the major activity for that particular session is highlighted in red.

At the beginning of the year, students participated in the same activity. However, as the year progressed, when students were well versed in the classroom routines, activities were splintered. By the beginning of the second term it was not unusual to see groups of students engaging in different activities concurrently (see Appendix G). Over time, the classes unfolded with what appeared to be a natural rhythm of peaks and flows as will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 5.

When I raised with J. why she managed time in this way, she responded...

After 50 minutes of the same thing I find that students tend to get off task. With three little tasks the students are less likely to move away. I like things exciting, with movement, short enough with brisk rhythm.[46]

With considerable insight, a student described the program as 'classes within classes'.[47] In his view, the changing of activities within each class exuded spontaneity ...

One thing I like about this class is that everything can change so quickly. We can do something completely different. She [the teacher] can turn the entire thing around (a discussion ensues about the meaning of the word 'spontaneity' which T. had used to describe the class).[48]

Students, by their own admission, seemed to enjoy the change of pace. With the variety in activities, as a couple of other students told me, it was possible to "appeal to different interests" and "cover more ideas".[49] Some reference was made to the difficulty of keeping abreast of what was going on, but the general consensus seemed to be that the change in pace and in activities counteracted any possibility of experiencing boredom. The students pointed this out to me on a number of occasions during the interviews highlighting that this class was unique in that regard.

Classroom Organization: A Summary

The data suggested that the classroom was organized to accommodate student participation. The seating structure enhanced student interaction and the presence of adjoining rooms, especially the computer room, invited movement from one activity to another and embraced the different components of English language arts, particularly reading, writing and performing. The theme was used to unify the various literary genres. Domain activities were subsumed under these genres. The teacher designed the curriculum to allow for transferability of domains from one theme to another. She also set up the learning experiences so that students had the opportunity to build one skill upon the other. There was a rhythm to curricular pacing as students moved between activities. As will be investigated in Chapter 4, some students were aware of the pacing and seemed to enjoy the excitement that it brought to their learning.

Student Participation within Classroom Organization

In this section I will show how students participated within classroom organization. As I began clustering the data, themes began to emerge. In the beginning, as suggested on page 54, participation presented itself as an action aligning with meanings of having and taking a part. As I looked deeper, participating as action unfolded in two layers, reminiscent of McMahon's (2003) thoughts on the various levels of student engagement. The data in the first layer suggested assigned participation. It embraced such categories as explaining and questioning for the individual learner and being on task and instructing for the group learner. I assigned the second layer the term shared participation. The term emerged from such clusters as engaging in and taking the stage. For reasons to be explored later, unlike the first layer, I could not readily distinguish between the learner as an individual and the learner as a group.

Some data did not fit participation as action. The data, grouped in such clusters as caring and taking ownership spoke less of action and more of participation as a quality. I have named this theme participative tone. Finally, another cluster of data emerged not fitting any of the above. Reflecting back on Donmoyer's (1990) words, I realized that while these clusters differed from the rest of my data, I needed to recognize that "uniqueness is an asset rather than a liability" (p. 194). These outliers could provide their own insights into facets of participation as they unfolded in this particular classroom. I grouped such data clusters as

struggling and being subversive under the domain participative resistance. The data clusters will be defined in each section.

<div align="center">Layer I: Assigned Participation</div>

Students, as data suggested, participated in the curricular activities through responding to or complying with teacher requests. Because the action was generated through teacher initiatives, the data showed that assigned participation had two dimensions. In this layer student participation occurred from the standpoint of the learner as an individual as well as the learner as a group. In keeping with that observation, I present my findings from these two perspectives.

Individual Assigned Participation

Although students appeared to work well together, on occasion they ventured on their own. Individual participation appeared to be particularly evident when students were honing or fine-tuning skills essential for further learning.

Individual assigned participation prepared students to work more effectively with colleagues. I noted that when students worked in groups, they would delegate themselves particular tasks and work independently. This tendency was particularly evident with students who had a clear sense of what their task entailed and how to tackle it. On one occasion, for example, I observed students designing a board game. One group member was working on his own with green construction paper. "I'm making a baseball diamond," he explained to me. I watched as he carefully drew the configuration of the field with the bases precisely measured in place.[50]

Over time, I observed students developing a repertoire of skills to facilitate their individual learning. Based on the data, I classified these skills into four categories, namely: gathering information, explaining, questioning, and self-evaluating. I will define the categories at the beginning of each section.

Gathering Information

Individual students demonstrated that they were developing the 'know how' to extract ideas from the text and apply them appropriately. Evidence of this skill was observed in discussion sessions about a particular story or activity being pursued at that time. In one session led by a substitute teacher, the class explored a short story. A lengthy discussion

ensued about defense mechanisms adopted by people to avoid taking responsibility for their behaviour. "What responsibility should the parents in the story take?" asked the teacher. Fragments of responses permeated the room such as: "They should have corrected his (their son's) rude behaviour; and, "Someone should have contacted the school to enquire how he was doing".[51]

I observed the same degree of receptivity in classes conducted by J.. In one session, she asked what qualifications a person had to have to become a member of an organization called the Red-Haired League? A male student responded with a list of credentials: "fiery red hair; over the age of 31; a Londoner".[52] In a later class, J. was introducing the students to *A Mid-Summer Night's Dream*. She walked the class through a series of questions about the pages they had been assigned to read. I noted at the time that....

> it is obvious that the students have done their reading. Responses to J.'s questions spring around the room in rapid fashion.[53]

Explaining

This category showed that students were telling how or why something was done. Explaining often occurred in response to directives or an action. Yet explaining differentiated from a simple response in that it generally exhibited higher order thinking. Data falling in this category was particularly, although not exclusively, evident in formal classroom discussions. In one class session in which discussion ensued around the literary use of suspense, I., a female student, asserted that anticipation was built in the story when the author purposefully delayed the parental visit to the school even though a problem was apparent.[54] In another instance students were being directed to look at how J. had marked their portfolios. She raised an issue about grammar by writing the phrase 'me and my friend' on the board...

> "Why is this not correct?" J. asks the class pointing to the phrase. A female student explains that 'me' should be replaced with 'I'. "Why?" asks J.. "Because 'I' is the subject," suggests a male student. "Right!" responds J.. "'I' should come after my friend," states another female student.[55]

Explaining required a certain level of confidence that was even more evident in the informal interactions I had with the students. On one occasion as students were turning in

their folders to the portfolio box sitting on the corner of the counter close to where I was seated, I asked one of the male students about these different folders. He explained that the yellow folders were for the 'good' work and the blue folders for the 'not-so-good' work.[56] During a later visit, I spoke to two students working in the adjoining computer room. One student, with the assistance of a colleague, was sending an E-mail. J.(the assistant) explained to me that the list she was holding contained the names of Canadian authors. Included with the names was the title of the book each writer had written. The students were entering the class in a competition. If they won they would receive a collection of books.[57]

In other situations, a student used explaining to justify their action or their point of view. "Raise your hand and tell me what you did with your poem," the replacement teacher requested. Immediately, I.'s hand shot up and she offered the information. "I combined colours," she said... "like I see in autumn".[58] On another occasion, students were engaged in self-analysis of their work. A student explained that he improved the second draft of his story not by changing the dialogue in the first draft but by adding to it.[59]

Explaining took a higher form when it showed a student's ability to be creative, especially in his or her use of language. In one session of book reporting I noted that a male student, A., was a very good speaker. He exuded confidence as he relayed the plot and described the characters to the class. His effective use of excerpts from the book helped to grab the attention of his peers.[60] During another presentation, M., a colleague, demonstrated self-assurance in using an extensive vocabulary. Her speech was embellished with words like 'three-dimensional', 'descriptive' and 'visualize'.[61]

Questioning

On occasion, individual students used the question as a device for seeking information. Question use seemed to occur in this way when students were moving to a new concept or activity. In preparation for debating, for example, students directed the class discussion with a barrage of questions: "How long do we speak? How short? Can we ask our opponents where they got their information? What if they say something for which you can't make a rebuttal? Can you use quotes from a book?" [62]

Individual students also used the question when seeking affirmation about how he or she was doing. Questioning for affirmation occurred frequently suggesting that regardless of age, and ability, students need assurance that they are moving in the 'right' direction. "I have my analysis typed on the computer. Is that OK?" asked a male student to J.[63] On another occasion a male student referred to his debating team which consisted of three people. "Can

we have two do the formal speech while the third person does the rebuttal?" he inquired.[64] In my reflection about a class session I had observed later in the school year I noted that on a number of occasions a particular female student questioned J. as a means of seeking confirmation about what she had done.[65]

J. used the question not only to solicit responses but to push students to think as exemplified during a class session when exercises on dialogue punctuation were being corrected...

> Hands pop up around the class as students volunteer the answers. J. encourages the students continuously as they supply the answers. Interspersed throughout the exercise are questions raised by J. as to why a certain item is punctuated as it is. She allots time after the questions for the students to 'think it through'.[66]

Students clued into using the question for this purpose. I learned first hand when on a couple of occasions I became the subject for their inquiries. During preparatory work for developing their debating strategy, one team decided to conduct a survey. The two students approached me and asked the following: "Do you think commercials should be on TV? Should drugs be legalized? Should there be a four-day work week?".[67] Perhaps the most telling incident illustrating student awareness of the power of the question occurred during one of the student interviews. After I had finished with my roster of questions, a couple of classmates initiated a role reversal when they interviewed me.

Self-Evaluating

In this classroom, self-evaluation appeared to be an important tool for learning. Students took part in critiquing or evaluating their own work. They engaged in reflective activities about their own writing as exemplified in the self-assessment checklist I saw in a student's portfolio as shown in Table 1 ...[68]

Questions/Items	OK	To Improve
1. Do your sentences flow?	✓	
2. Do you use a variety of words (adjectives/verbs/adverbs)?	✓	
3. Is your vocabulary vivid?		✓
4. Is your point of view constant (1st/3rd person)?		✓
Grammar		
1. Capital Letters	✓	
2. Spelling	✓	
3. Paragraphs	✓	

Table 1: *Self-Assessment Checklist*

When I perused the portfolio of another student, I again, found evidence of self-analysis. The student indicated that his story needed improvement in such areas as character development and dialogue expressiveness.

The self-analysis exercises seemed to have an impact on student ability for self-appraisal. During one class a female student commented about her work, "I changed my story a lot from the first to the second draft. I mean I changed it a *lot* (she emphasized the word 'lot')."[69] At the end of one of the student interviews, I recorded that one of the participants was obviously a reflective thinker. His responses to my questions were shaped and directed by his obvious penchant for self-evaluation.[70]

Group Assigned Participation

Students were learning to fulfil the obligations set out by the teacher on a collaborative as well as individual basis. They worked together in combinations of formal and informal groupings. For my point of reference, formal groupings were teacher assigned; informal groupings, more serendipitous in nature, were student assigned. Formal groupings generally ranged in numbers between 4-5 students. Informal groupings were more flexible ranging in numbers from 2-5 students depending on the activity.

Whatever the group formation, when I looked at the data the following categories emerged, namely: being on task; instructing; soliciting interaction; and evaluating. In keeping with the procedure established earlier, I will define each of these categories in the appropriate section.

Being on task

This category embraced the various ways in which students collaboratively completed what was required of them. They used various strategies, namely seeking assistance, offering assistance, and sharing ideas.

Students were learning by requesting help from colleague. The requests seemed to occur among informal groups in particular. In keeping with the findings of Alvermann (1995/1996) and Mitra (2001) students appeared to be selective about who they sought out for help. While completing questions on a short story, for example, a male student turned to a colleague and asked, "What is the theme?".[71] During another class, one student was working in the computer room. Experiencing difficulty, she sought out a colleague seated at her table in the main room to assist her. Later, I noticed that both girls reappeared to solicit help from another colleague. Overall, students appeared to be open to each other in their requests primarily, I argue, because they were a homogenous group as will be pursued in Chapter 6. In a heterogenous grouping, student selectivity would likely be more pronounced and possibly divisive as Alvermann and Mitra suggest.

Some students appeared to be aware of the reciprocity of learning. As well as seeking assistance, they also offered it. In such instances, students again appeared to be selective about who they approached. "Can I help?" a male student was heard asking another on one occasion.[72] During another class, a male student was experiencing difficulty with the computer as he tried to E-mail his story for the Writers in Electronic Residence (WIER) project. Without solicitation from the teacher, another student moved to the computer located at the back of the main room to assist him.

Assistance was not only evident during class sessions. On one occasion I entered the classroom during lunch. Clusters of students were in both the main room and the computer room either working on projects or engaged in computer games. As I found my seat in the usual spot, two male students, J. and A. positioned themselves at the table beside me. J. recited a poem written by A. who helped him with the words he found difficult to pronounce.[73]

Sharing was an important component of being on task. It was evident in both informal and formal groupings. Informal groupings, especially pairings, for example, were used to share stories that students had written. The following excerpt captures such an event...

I take a short walk around the class as the students read their work to each other. Most appear to be oblivious to my presence. A male student at the front left table laughs as his partner reads his story and slips into a 'fake falsetto' voice as he portrays one of his characters.[74]

In an activity involving formal grouping, students were designing their Trivial Pursuit board game. I noted ...

I roam around the room looking at what the groups are doing. My initial survey is very general. There are 4-5 students per group. Some are seated, clustered around the table in a circle. Others are standing busily engaged in what they are doing. Some students lean over the shoulders of colleagues looking at what is being done. They inject their ideas into the discussion. The students are aware of my presence but continue to interact with one another.[75]

Students not only shared with each other, but were willing to share with me. I was struck by the confidence students exuded when explaining something to me. It was clearly evident when students were involved in creating something on their own. During the same visit described above, I approached one of the student groups. I asked them if they could explain their rendition of the game which solicited the following....

A male group member responded to my request enthusiastically. He indicated that the mound was to be a mountain and that around the board the players had to face various obstacles. He noted a spot on the board where there would be a body of water. I asked if the animals would be used by the players to move around the board. "No", he explained. "They will be trapped in the caves. Answering the questions correctly will lift the cage and free the animals".[76]

Instructing

Students participated by taking on a leadership role. They were forthright about instructing others when the need arose. "We need to make our bridge bigger!" declared one female student in her group. Whereupon, her colleagues listened as she explained how it could be done.[77] Later in the school year, students were given the opportunity to assume the teacher's role by instructing a topic of their choice. I observed a session in which two female

students taught the class about making a fruit salad. At the beginning of the class, they immediately moved into giving instructions, informing the class what they wanted them to do.[78] I was also the recipient of instruction. A male student, A., told me about the Writers in Electronic Residence (WIER) program, an Internet access enabling students to connect with professional writers. The writers gave constructive criticism about pieces of writing the students had sent to them. At the same time, students were given the opportunity to critique excerpts from the writers' works in progress.

Soliciting Interaction

There was evidence that students were learning to use questions to socialize. Unlike the previous category where questions were used to find answers, in this situation, questions, were used to invite interaction. "What is so funny about that?" K. was overheard asking two female colleagues as they discussed their stories.[79] "Practising?" inquired I. as she entered the classroom. It was the day of the in-class debate and R. was seated at the table, reading aloud what he had written on cards.[80] Later in the same class, as the evaluation sheets were being distributed, C. turned to me and asked how my thesis was going. "How long does it have to be?" he inquired.[81]

Although there is no clear evidence to support this idea, students may have picked up this strategy from their teacher. She sometimes used the question in this way as shown in the following exchange during a session about descriptive writing...

> A couple of students respond with the item "a polished wood table, but J. is obviously not satisfied with what she hears. The students do not appear to be getting it. J. queries, "Am I the only weird one in this class?" The students laugh.[82]

Evaluating

In addition to engaging in self-evaluation, students were learning to evaluate peers. In one exercise, students were to point out each others mistakes and help each other with corrections following the instructions the teacher provided ...

> Part I: ORAL: Students are to read their dialogue to their partner. The partner must listen and respond to the following:

1. Does it make sense?

2. Does it have a natural flow?

3. Do the words of the speaker match with the speaker?

4. Are a variety of synonyms used for the word 'said'?

Part 2: WRITTEN: Partners are to point out and help each other with their mistakes in the written dialogue. They look for mistakes in:

1. Punctuation

2. Indentation

3. Spelling.[83]

Students had the opportunity to engage in peer assessment on a number of occasions. During the in-class debate, for example, they were assigned the role of judges and selected the winners by tabulating their scores on evaluation sheets.

Layer I: Assigned Participation: A Summary

The data suggest that participating at this level took place in learning situations in which classroom activities were in Mitra's (2003) words 'teacher initiated' (p. 292). Teacher expectations propelled student action, in both an individual and a collective sense. In short, students were driven by the desire to please their teacher. This type of participation, I have identified as assigned participation is action generated in response to the will of the teacher. Students in this classroom were learning in an environment in which, to quote McMahon (2003), the teacher present[ed] material in an interesting way or ...use[d] a variety of strategies to convey information that the teacher deem[ed] important" (p. 260). At this level the distinction between the individual and the group learner was evident when students were complying with the teacher's aim to provide "individualized competition and cooperative groupings".[84] Assigned participation encompassed student responses to J.'s strategies to fulfil her goal. This issue will resurface in later discussions.

Layer II: Shared Participation

There were moments in this classroom when student will to act extended beyond teacher expectations. Students were active participants of their own choosing. For reasons to be explained later, I found the lines between individual and group participation to be less discernible. In this section, therefore, no distinction was made between the two. I have categorized my findings into the following categories: engaging in, taking the stage, expressing creatively, thinking critically, and blossoming.

Engaging in

It was evident that, overall, students were involved with their learning. That is, they displayed not only cognitive, but emotional commitment. On one occasion, a substitute teacher, who was very dynamic, was introducing a short story about a child's first day in school. The class listened intently as she talked about her daughter's experience. She then invited the students to think about their first day. "How did you feel?" she queried. Whereupon...

> A male student chimed in and related how he was nervous on the first day. A female student said that she could remember being half nervous, half excited. Another female student related how she was really excited because she was now going to school with her sister and how much she looked forward to spending time in the 'big kitchen' at the school [I gathered that by 'big kitchen' she was referring to the cafeteria].[85]

Sometimes students were so involved in their work that they seemed to shut out what was taking place around them. In one class, for example, a group of students were assigned to the computer room while the rest of the class read a short story at their tables in the main classroom. With the exception of one male student, the class seemed to be oblivious to the events in the adjacent room. As they silently read the story, J. called a student to the front desk for a conference about a writing exercise.

One of the most engaging activities I observed was the play, *Midsummer Night's Dream*. One student was obviously taken with the opportunity to participate in such a dramatic piece as indicated by the following revelation...

K. related to the class that when he was reading last night his father came into his room and asked what he was reading. "Shakespeare," K. replied. "Are you alright?" his father asked. "I *never* read," K. confessed stressing the word never as he said it and shaking his head for further emphasis.[86]

Some of the students were very much engaged with the interviews I conducted with them. One group, as J. had predicted, were particularly talkative and expressive. In fact, we got so immersed in the conversation that I ran out of tape!

Taking the Stage

The experiential philosophy of the program was played out in student performances realized in skits, plays, and improv. Some students in particular thrived in such classroom events. During one improv session, I. (a female student) volunteered to start. I commented in my field notes ...

> I can see why she wants to be first. She obvious loves being 'on stage'. Her dialogue must include such words as looneybin, grasshopper, Nike shoes and dentist. Shyness does not appear to be one of the words in her personality profile.[87]

Another performance during the same session sparked similar comments...

> The next student is definitely 'a natural' -- a real Robin Williams in the making! He weaves together words like ballerina, ugly, kangaroo and submarine as easily as if he had been practising the storyline for weeks.[88]

'Taking the stage' surfaced in other performance-oriented activities. On one occasion students were working on the improv variation called 'freeze'. In this acting session students worked in teams. One team member would start acting out a situation. When J. shouted "Freeze!", the actor held a pose. The team member who followed immediately resumed his colleague's pose and continued the story. My notes reflected how involved I got ...

> I can't help but get caught up in the action... the writing falls by the way side. A. (a female student) comes up with a 'gem', "I told you not to put your brother under the

couch!" The class laughs. J. (the teacher) refers to this 'gem' a number of times. It is obvious that she is impressed with it.[89]

Scenes from *Midsummer Night's Dream* invited aspiring actors to show their finesse on the stage. I reflected upon one performance...

[I notice with a mixture of amusement and respect how seriously the students take their performance of the play. Suddenly they become transformed: as if they are professional classic actors. Their whole demeanour and stance change once they take to the stage. It is as if they are saying, "We are doing something very important here and we must try to do our best. Since we are doing something 'grown-up' we must act like grown-ups"].[90]

Expressing Creatively

Students in general appeared to be developing the capacity to present artistic impressions of their world around them as evidenced in various forms. Creativity was expressed collectively as well as individually. As already discussed in a previous section, students in groups designed their own version of the *Trivial Pursuit* board game. During one visit, I observed the medieval castle sitting on one of the tables. I noted that the castle was an impressive start to the elaborate presentation of the game.[91] Creative expression was also apparent in performances. At the Open House, an evening session designed to familiarize parents with the various programs and activities offered at the school, a group of students performed a commercial they had created in which they combined a song and visual effects.

Creative abilities were especially evident in various literary genres. In one class I observed early in the school year, students shared the poems they had written under the theme referred to earlier as "The Emotions of Colour". One of the works generated the following comment...

A female student sitting at the back left introduces her poem in which she incorporates various colours. The common thread binding the work is reference to war. It is a powerful poem that leaves the listener speechless, especially the adults in the room. The ending is particularly outstanding. She refers to life as a colouring book with pages yet to be added. A budding poet here, I can tell.[92]

Later in the school year, J. suggested that I check out a poem written by T. entitled *Fantasy* (see Appendix G). As I read the poem, a Lennon and McCartney song flashed through my mind.[93] I broached him about the writing. As if to read my mind, he explained that his work was inspired by the Beatles.[94]

From my artifact collection I retrieved a short story, *The Chestnut Stallion*, written by a female student. A sketch that accompanied the five-page story is included in this document (see Appendix H). The story ending in particular caught my attention...

> Suddenly, a wolf, wounded on his neck, leg and jaw stepped out of the shadows. It went for the McGristles. Rhoddy saw the wolf leap at him and then nothing else. The wolf had not yet been beaten.[95]

Thinking critically

Thinking beyond the surface, I argue, is essential to the evolution of the independent learner. Others agree. hooks (1994), basing her view on Freire's liberatory theory, looks upon critical thinking as key to "turning education into a practice of freedom" (p. 20). Students practise freedom by engaging in what they are learning by, according to Banks (1991), formulating "new ways to organize, conceptualize, and think about data and information" (p. 133). The *Québec Education Program* (2000) recognizes critical judgement as a desirous education aim as shown in the following excerpt:

> The students recognize that events, problems, phenomena and productions in their immediate surroundings may or may not correspond to their own experience or that of others. They compare their perceptions with those of others. They verify the accuracy of information and use criteria to make judgments that take into account the context. With help, they indicate the values and principles that underlie these criteria. They express their opinions and compare them with those of others. They are able to explain their choices (Ministère de l' Éducation du Québec, 2000, p. 24).

Data suggested that students in the study site were developing as critical thinkers. The teacher used various literacy pieces to spark debate. Jackson's (1949) short story *Charles*, for example, initiated a discussion about sibling dynamics. The teacher commented that in school she felt that she had to behave to make up for her brother's behaviour. "I felt that I had to prove that just because one sibling is bad does not mean that the others that

follow are as well". "But that often is the case," asserted K. who then proceeded to elaborate on his point of view.[96]

Examples of critical thinking emerged in a class discussion about a play seen earlier that morning. When asked about their impression one female student commented that "she felt that the actors did not play their roles convincingly"; another said that "she didn't like the plot".[97]

In his report on Clarke's (1952) *2001 Space Odyssey*, A. included his opinion about the book revealing layers of critical engagement...

> I cannot say that I didn't like the book but I didn't really enjoy it either. I found the starting of the book very slow and that in general there was too much description. I think that the story should have been written in a more straight forward manner...[98]
> (see Appendix J).

Blossoming

Some students were not only willing to take on the challenges they encountered, but were thriving because of them. They were developing the capacity to think critically and, of equal importance, were willing to challenge others including their teacher. The classroom, I observed, was not an environment where, Takata (1991) espouses, the teacher signified "a power and authority which is rarely challenged or questioned" (p. 264). The students were not, in Frierian terms, passive receptacles. Evidence supported this claim. In one incident, for example, discussion ensued about the use of 'colours' in poetry. The teacher wove into the dialogue a comment about clothing colours. "My children tend to wear so much black," she offered seemingly as a criticism. "But black is a versatile colour," protested one of the students. "You can wear most other colours with it, including hot pink," she continued. "Yes, you have a valid point there," agreed the teacher.[99] Even though this exchange might have been rather frivolous in nature, the willingness of the student to challenge the views of the teacher was telling.

In a later class, J. was introducing a new short story by providing the historical context. The story was set in China when it was under the domain of the British Empire. She commented that the British did not treat the Chinese very well. "In other words treated them like dirt," stated one male student as a point of clarification. "You're right," responded J. elaborating on the societal effects of such treatment.[100]

Some students were learning that overcoming challenges required perseverance. A couple of examples come to mind. During one class I observed that a female student was experiencing difficulty interpreting a poem she had selected. After some struggling, she became more fluid in her description as she worked through it.[101] On another occasion, J. explained to me that a couple of students found the program challenging to the point of being overwhelmed. A couple had decided to switch to a regular program. I asked her if this was the case with one student in particular. "No," she replied, "He has decided to stick it out".[102]

For those who persevered, challenge was a catalyst for growth. As I recorded in my reflections...

> [I am particularly impressed with A. and M.. They seem to have 'blossomed' over the few months I have been visiting this class. At first they were rather reserved and expressionless, but now their enthusiasm for what they are doing is quite evident. Where they appeared to be on the fringe at the beginning they now seem to be in the 'thick of it', so to speak].[103]

What I found fascinating in this case was how my observation matched J.'s. And the timing of this discovery was uncanny! At the end of the class during which I had made the above entry in my notes, the following exchange took place ...

> As the students leave, J. comments again about what a great group they are. She mentions how some of them seem to have blossomed. I respond how I have noticed that as well![104]

Blossoming embraced both commitment and hard work. J. noted how poorly the students read the script of *Midsummer Night's Dream* when they first started. "You should have heard the reading," she related. "It was terrible. My, how they have improved".[105]

Layer II: Shared Participation: A Summary

In this layer of participation, data show that students were taking a more active role in their learning. Whereas in the previous layer, students showed a will to comply with teacher expectations, there is evidence in this layer that students were complying with a will of their own. While many of the activities were still teacher driven, students appeared to be taking

greater initiative in making decisions through voicing their opinions and making suggestions that the teacher took seriously (Rudduck and Dimetriou, 2003). Events in the classroom suggested that "through active participation in knowledge production students [became] more involved in learning both the required and the other curriculum, and ... consequently learn[ed] more successfully" (Thomson and Comber, 2003, p. 308). This observation aligns with Mitra 's (2003) view that when an individual has more control over her environment, she will feel more intrinsically motivated to participate.

A distinguishing feature in this layer is the blurring between the learner as an individual and the learner as a group member. This phenomenon may suggest that in this particular classroom the collaborative spirit was enhanced when students felt they were being acknowledged for their individual interests and abilities. Evidence to support this notion will surface in the section that follows, as well as in Chapter 4. In keeping with hooks' (1994) holistic model of learning, I saw evidence in this layer of stronger interaction among the students and between the students and the teacher. For this reason, I describe this layer as shared participation.

Participative Tone

As intimated earlier, some of the data indicated something else about participation. The data did not fit under participation as something acted upon, yet gave another dimension to my understanding of what I saw there. The data spoke to me of an aspect of participation less tangible as it were, but very present. I could see it in the actions. I could hear it in the words. Yet its presence surrounded the action in the form of a dynamic or quality I have categorized as participative tone.

Donne's (1985) phrase 'No man is an island' rings true as much for formal learning as it does for life. Participating, to reiterate, embraces sharing of ourselves with others. Spaces of learning demand sharing simply because, in Jardine's (1998) words, "none of us necessarily knows all by ourselves the full contours of the story each of us is living out" (p. 47). But sharing goes beyond exchanging ideas. To touch the essence, the stuff, each individual is made of calls for as Kessler (2000) puts it a *meaningful* connection: "respect and care that encourages authenticity for each individual in the group" (p.22). The importance of connection in the learning environment is recognized in the document on curriculum reform for the province of Québec. It states...

The students listen actively to others, and use their turn to speak appropriately to propose projects using cooperative structures. They suggest, reflect on, compare and select activities and modes of operation appropriate for teamwork. They become familiar with the different roles in cooperative structures. They modify their ideas or plans as needed, and can justify their choices by citing factors that help or hinder a given project. They readjust their strategies....(Ministère de l' Éducation du Québec, 2000, p. 40).

As substantiated, many students were developing a sense of connection, an *esprit de corps*, marked by a repertoire of behaviours I have categorized as participative tone. The data clusters describing the category are caring, believing in oneself, taking ownership, and being humourous.

Caring

Students were concerned about others as well as themselves. Caring included the adults who took part in their lives. It was evident in their willingness to support others in their learning, and to make others feel accepted. I observed students displaying sensitivity towards others during classroom interaction. During the reading of a short story, a substitute teacher asked a male student some questions about the plot that was rather convoluted and, unsurprisingly, difficult to decipher. The student was confused. Recognizing his difficulties, other students rallied to help.

Students showed their care for each other by extending support in words and action. Verbal support transpired as words of encouragement. On one occasion, students were sharing their stories to each other as a part of their editing exercise. I witnessed the following...

In the corner close to me, K. finishes reading T's story. "That's good," he beams at him. Within a few minutes T. finishes K.'s story. "Great job," he tells him. K. smiles broadly obviously pleased with the compliment.[106]

Caring transcended roles. Some students were equally attuned to the needs of their teacher. During a board exercise, a student made a critical remark about J.'s writing. A female student rose to her defense, retorting, "No they're not!"[107] J. felt this relationship of care with the students. On one occasion in particular she related how the students cared about

her as a human being not only as their teacher. She expressed that she was touched when the students gave her a 'Bon Voyage' card before she left for a brief trip to Europe.[108]

Students extended support to their teacher in more concrete ways. During one class, for example, J. reminded the students about the silent reading session scheduled for the following day. She reminded the class to bring a book informing them that she would be bringing one as well. She related what she was currently reading. A student informed her that her mother had a number of books written by the same author and offered to lend them to her.

Accepting others is concomitant with caring. My overall impression of the students was that they had a high degree of camaraderie. From the outset, I suspected that this intuition would be affirmed when I interviewed them. I based my initial sense of acceptance on how they treated me: first as a visitor, than within a relatively short period of time, as a part of their group.

I recorded events to support this claim. Even from the beginning of my visits, students were more than willing to make me feel at home, lending me books when needed and exchanging pleasantries. At first, the book sharing tended to be initiated by the teacher or by me. As the term progressed, however, the students initiated such overtures. The turning point of acceptance seemed to occur by my ninth recorded visit. At that time J. remarked that the students were used to having me around and didn't bother to ask, "Who is she?"[109]

As an adult who would have only a temporary presence in there lives, I experienced the caring first hand. On one particular visit I discovered that I had inadvertently left my notebook at home and had no choice but to write my notes on loose sheets of paper. A female student sitting close to me leaned over and lent me her binder to write on. She had obviously observed me trying to wrestle with paper sheets as I wrote on my knee.

As they became more familiar with me students were always receptive to answering my questions and offering explanations when requested. This willingness continued even when they did not feel inclined to do. One occasion, in particular, resonates with me. Earlier that morning they had attended a production of a *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Unfortunately, the play was aborted by the actors because of rather boorish behaviour by some students at the grade IX level. The students in my study group were extremely disappointed with the outcome and I could sense a heaviness of spirit within the group. Nevertheless, they were more than willing to share the sequence of events with me.

Believing in oneself

Students exhibited confidence in their own abilities and an acceptance of their uniqueness. According to various authors, 'believing in oneself' is a likely prerequisite for learning, especially learning that connects 'the self' to what is learned (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldbeger and Tarule, 1986; Kessler, 2000). Students demonstrated that attribute during the various class activities. I noted on a number of occasions the confidence that students exhibited when they were presenting in front of their peers whether it was giving a book report or presenting a position in a debate. Trusting in one's own abilities translated into a willingness to get involved with extra-curricular activities. One female student took on the responsibility of keeping the Christmas food basket list. She explained to J. what she planned to do to keep account of the pledges. In like manner, a colleague exuded confidence in her role described in the following account...

> I. (a female student) is assigned the job of keeping attendance in the class. When a substitute teacher refers to the matter, I. indicates that it is her job to do this and that it had already been taken care of earlier that morning. I. reports this with a look that seems to say, "it has been done already so why bother!" The substitute teacher decides not to pursue the matter further.[110]

Student were conscious of what they brought into the classroom discussion and acknowledged it openly. They had connected hooks' (1994) notion of "ways of knowing with habits of being" (p. 43). In a discussion during which students shared their horror stories with colleagues, a male student was overheard talking to J. about a dream that seemed to be real, that is, being buried alive. "I think that's my biggest fear," he openly admitted.[111] Perhaps the most revealing example of acknowledging the self transpired during a class discussion of the short story *The Red-Haired League*. J. was using a barrage of factual questions to catapult the discussion about the plot: "Who's the author? Where did Sherlock live?". The last question catalyzed the following exchange...

> "Baker Street," replied T., a male student. J. continued, "What number?" T. quickly supplied the answer, "121a!" He continued, "That is the same number as Sienfeld's apartment". Without hesitation he gave the complete address. J. looked at him in amazement much to the amusement of his classmates. "How do you know that?" she asked. "I'm an address freak!" he declared proudly.[112]

Taking ownership

Students demonstrated the ability to take matters into their own hands and to act responsibly. Counter to what I have experienced in other learning environments, this behaviour was particularly evident when a substitute teacher was present. In one session early in the school year students had already entered the class waiting for the teacher to arrive. I noted that except for controlled chatter, no attempt was made to take advantage of the situation. In another class the teacher was distributing the Social File Update forms. She distributed them at random even though J. had already assigned specific names to each document, an oversight quickly noted by the students. The teacher was visibly embarrassed by the faux pas. The students, without any consternation at all, took matters into their own hands and immediately sorted out the problem. In yet another session, amid a low-grade chatter, the teacher assigned reading parts for a play. As soon the play was about to start, the class suddenly quieted down. The teacher did not have to utter one word to get the students' attention.

As the term progressed, I witnessed students working on their own without supervision. One more than one occasion, groups of students were closeted in areas outside the main classroom, such as the computer room, J.'s office, the library, or even the corridor, to rehearse drama parts or to complete projects. Rarely did J. have to check on them or admonish them for misbehaviour.

The students demonstrated a level of maturity not always seen in that age group. During one debating practice, it was evident that students were perplexed by the topic. J. decided to make a switch. Undeterred by their previous experience, the students tackled the new topic with much confidence. On another occasion, J. was discussing a play that the class had seen that morning. She outlined the acceptable social practice of the historic period in which the play was set. "Years ago," she informed them, " a woman was not allowed to be alone with a man. If she was, it meant that she had sex with him. Her parents would not let this happen". I noticed that the class reacted maturely to the discussion. No one giggled or looked embarrassed. They took it all in their stride.[113]

Being Humourous

There was evidence to suggest that humour was one of the attributes that infused energy into this classroom. Humour often took the form of play on words. It was used not only to build rapport, but to defuse a potential misunderstanding as portrayed in the following vignette...

A female student enters the class late. Knowing that J. is a 'stickler' for punctuality, she explains she is tardy because on her way to class she saw on the display board of the graduating class of 1884 a picture of her friend's teacher of last year. The class reacts to her error with laughter. "She is old, but obviously not that old!" quips J. with a grin.[114]

Students used humour as a way of dealing with curricular challenges and defusing the tensions accompanying them. J. was choosing a topic for a debating exercise. She informed the class, "Now I draw your resolution from the hat," She proceeded to draw the topic from the envelope. The class laughed. "Where's the hat?" asked a student. "My you are good listeners," laughed J. obviously impressed.[115] Students used humour as a tension reducer as depicted in the following caption...

The actors for the day's scene of *Midsummer Night's Dream* arrange themselves in front of the classroom. G. introduces the scene. J. stops the speaker and asks what the text means. "He's an ass!" the student replied. The class laughs.[116]

Participative Tone: A Summary

The data suggested that the presence of participative tone made this classroom unique. There was a spirit there: that intangible something that made life in this classroom special. The classroom appeared as a space where, to quote Palmer (1998b), "the human soul does not want to be fixed, it wants simply to be seen and heard" (p. 151). The tenor of the participation both seen and felt, spoke to Smith et al.'s (1998) notion of "full participation" (1998), that is the linkage between engagement in learning and understanding of the 'Other' in the school-community context (p. 125). I saw an attempt to construct Wyness' (2000) view of a micro-society, a place where both teacher and student could draw on a variety of social strategies to feed their own learning. There was a fit between affirmation of one's own abilities and affirmation of the abilities of colleagues (Rudduck and Demetriou, 2003, Kessler, 2000). More will be revealed in the students' words in the next chapter.

Some of the data told me very little about what participation looked like. In fact, the data seemed to counter my understanding of it. On the surface, evidence told me what participation is not, rather than what it is or could be. To be faithful to my inquiry I knew that I had to acknowledge these observations. Donmoyer's (1990) notion of the outlier signaled to me that in addition to adding to the trustworthiness of my findings, such data could add greater insight into what I had encountered there.

Although the students were developing as learners, the process was not without its challenges. For various reasons, some based on observation, others on speculation, some students appeared to be better equipped to meet the demands of the program than others. The pushes and pulls of learning were fluid, ebb and flow actions and reactions I have categorized as participative resistance. I have organized the data within this category into the following clusters: 'being a natural?', struggling, being subversive and monopolizing.

'Being a natural?'

To reiterate, J. selected a repertoire of activities to appeal to a wide range of interests and abilities. It appeared, however, that the match did not always fit. In some cases, students readily experienced success. In fact, they approached certain activities with relative ease. Some of their peers, on the other hand, encountered greater difficulty. I use the descriptor 'being a natural?' to describe this phenomenon.

The question of being a natural, I realize, is a potentially contentious one. Studies indicate that abilities are not entirely a result of genetic endowment. Grigorenko (1999) cautions us that after 50 years of research, there is a general acceptance of "a robust estimate of its heritability" (p. 690). At the same time, while it appears that "about 50% in interindividual variation on IQ" (which in of itself is a questionable measure of cognitive ability) "can be explained by genetic influences, about 50 % is accounted for by environmental factors" (p. 690). A plausible argument arising from such a conclusion is that, according to Phelps (1999), we have yet to know definitively what cognition is (p. 318-319), let alone determine what shapes it. Given these assertions, I use the descriptor guardedly, recognizing at certain levels the fallacy of this claim.

That having been said, my intuition told me that something to do with possessing the 'right' attributes was occurring in the study. While the descriptor I chose may be a misnomer, it was evident that some students adjusted to the demands or certain demands of the program more readily than others. As I write this passage, I recount that earlier in the

school year, a couple of students had switched to the regular stream because they could not handle the workload. J. had also informed me that in the past, under her advisement, students had left the program due to poor academic performance. Many of the students who remained, however, seemed not only to adjust, they thrived. Performances within the improv activities were a case in point as described earlier in this chapter.

Issues with 'being a natural', however, were obvious to me. I recall the time when a student with less refined performance skills took to the stage. On this occasion, in particular, I admired the student's courage because he followed the aspiring 'Robin Williams'...

> A male student sitting at the left middle table bravely volunteers. Within a minute it is evident that he does not have the knack of his predecessor.[117]

I had observed other examples. During a debating activity I wrote... "it is evident that this exercise comes more naturally to some than to others..."[118] And in the next paragraph... "students on this team are stronger at 'thinking on their feet'...".[119] On my first visit to the class, some of the students presented their rhyming couplets. My impressions of that event are reflected in the following words...

> [As I listen to the renditions, I marvel at how they run the gamut of the quality continuum. Some of the topics are very childlike; others, quite sophisticated. Some are obviously worked on and consequently reflect effort and thought. Others are done hurriedly with scant attention given to content and creative flair. The difference in quality is quite striking].[120]

In my view, the question was not so much of being a natural, but of providing all students with a chance to shine. I observed that every student found certain learning activities easier than others. Tensions seemed to arise when students were of the impression that some abilities were more highly valued than others. This point will surface again.

Perception of ability seemed to be concomitant with perception of preparedness. There seemed to be an opinion among a few students that their past schooling did not help them develop the skills needed to meet their teacher's expectations. During a discussion about the short story being studied, the conversation suddenly moved to what was done last year in elementary school. I heard one female student say something like,"We didn't do anything last year!", a comment that generated a look of disbelief from J..Whereupon, the student continued with reference to the quality of teaching she had experienced ending her

comments with the words, "You're a better teacher!"[121] Rather than apportion blame to a specific individual, J. attributed student lack of preparedness to the schooling system at large. In her words...

> You want to encourage the students to think for themselves and unfortunately, the system often does not develop that capacity in them. Therefore, they are challenged with that and don't know where to start.[122]

Struggling

The data falling under this cluster referred to behaviours exhibited by some of the students showing that they were experiencing difficulty in meeting course requirements.

Tension for one student emerged as a language issue. Newly arrived from a northern European country, he was challenged by the language of instruction. He seemed to comprehend a question when it was directed to him, but was less proficient in supplying answers or offering opinions.

Other students struggled with particular aspects of the course. In an exercise in which students were to read poems they had selected, it was obvious that two female students were having difficulty. I noted that the two read the poems haltingly. They needed obvious help in reading creatively, that is, in bringing out the meaning of the poem through expressive connection of the phrases. In another class session, a female student had difficulty with the vocabulary in the assigned short story, while a male colleague struggled with the plot. The teacher asked him some questions, but as I recorded it was evident that he was confused.

As discussed earlier, other students were challenged by the more performance-oriented activities. During a debating exercise it was evident that a female student was confused by the topic assigned to her. After being corrected by J., she made another gallant attempt but it was clear that she was even more befuddled. In another debating exercise, a female student tried to challenge her opponent but her arguments were weak and unconvincing. It was obvious that acting was not the forte of all of the students. In one play performance I noted that...

> The various students read their parts. It is evident that they are struggling with the language. A few are relatively successful in raising their presentation beyond the reading stage, but most are wedded very much to the text.[123]

At times students displayed frustration with what they were expected to do. In one class, students were informed that their poems were to be typed and submitted the next day. I saw a male student sitting at a centre table facing me look at his colleague and exclaim in an emphatic whisper, "Typed! *Typed*!!"[124] Similarly, a female student when informed that the assigned short story was not to exceed two pages in length, reacted with surprise: "Two pages *maximum* ?!" she responded incredulously emphasizing the word 'maximum'.[125]

Frustration surfaced with what some students perceived as literary ambiguities. A male student had just recited his selected poem which seemed to be built on a metaphor about an opened door. One of his colleagues questioned what the poem was about. "I don't understand," the colleague asserted rather frustrated by the explanation, "Why didn't he just answer the door instead of going through the window?"[126]

Sometimes student difficulty generated frustration for the teacher, which, in turn further exacerbated student sense of inadequacy. A debating exercise I observed solicited the following comment...

> "Just state your idea and move on," declared J. rather impatiently. But even this activity is too much for a couple of students who are visibly unable to come up with a new idea relevant to the theme. [Some of the students I note seem to be embarrassed that they cannot match the demands of the exercise].[127]

Being Subversive

At times, some students were less than satisfied with the way that decisions were made especially when they perceived that their rights were being forfeited. On these occasions, students demonstrated their displeasure openly or resorted to more subversive measures. In one class, a discussion ensued about judges. A couple of students indicated the name of a male student as a possible candidate for the role. J. however, decided to take a different route and appointed two female students. The male student, clearly annoyed with the decision, muttered that "he could have easily done that".[128] On another occasion a student was solicited by the teacher to provide assistance in the computer room. "Not fair!" declared a student to his colleagues when it was clear that he was not the one selected.[129] In an even more blatant example, J. had just insisted that for the sake of classroom procedure, hands be raised before responding to a question. K. missed his chance to respond because another male student called out the answer. "Do I see a hand?" he commented sarcastically.[130]

Although students were presented with opportunities to provide constructive criticism, there was a tendency on a few occasions to resort to negativism. Later in the school year, when two female students were team teaching about making fruit salad, confusion arose among class members over the assigned activity. The following exchange transpired...

> The group is asked to work together to arrange their fruit on the sticks to create a design. A prize of fruit is offered to the winning team. I. suggests that each group arrange the fruit in patterns using colour rather than fruit type. The comment leads to some confusion. J. (the teacher) calls S. over requesting further clarification. With a shrug S. exclaims that she doesn't know what I. is talking about. To which J. calls I. to join them to sort out the issue.[131]

As much as students seemed to be receptive to meeting the challenges of the program, it was sometimes evident that their confidence was being tested. Collective hesitation surfaced during certain activities. During an improv exercise, J. asked for additional volunteers, but I could see that many students held back. I surmised that they did not want to be shown up. Reluctance to participate surfaced again during the reading of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. When the class had completed the assigned excerpt for the day, J. asked "What is the famous line from this particular scene?" The class collectively hesitated from responding to her question.[132]

Some students resisted by tuning out or displaying apathy. On one occasion, J. quietly but firmly chastised a student for failing to have homework done and for general disorganization of his work. During this reprimand, I observed...

> he makes little attempt to rise to his own defense. He simply looks at her with almost a deadpan expression on his face. He does not exhibit any strong feelings on the matter.[133]

Displays of apathy sometimes occurred during activities which generally as a class they enjoyed such as reading/performing plays.. On one such occasion I wrote...

> Some put much expression into what they are reading; others put little effort into their portrayal of the characters. One male student reads in a monotone, expressionless voice like a young beginning reader. I find the almost deadpan voice adds an eerie quality to the play.[134]

Apathy or unresponsiveness was expressed in overt self-deprecation or withdrawal. J. was soliciting a male student to participate in the presentation at the Open House. In her initial approach, the student responded with silence. When further pushed by a female colleague, he responded, "Can't do it...I literally suck!"[135] Later in the school year, I noted a change in the behaviour of one of the 'star' students. J. related that she had expressed dissatisfaction with one of his assignments which had mushroomed into an almost heated exchange with the student's father. I recorded that..

> I have noticed a somewhat more subdued T. as of late. I don't know whether or not this apparent coolness is a reaction to that incident or to something else happening in his life.[136]

Monopolizing

In spite of the emphasis on collaboration, the competitive mode was not far from the surface. I also noticed that periodically a core or small cluster of students tended to monopolize the class both verbally and in action. During a performance activity I penned the following observation...

> [I get the feeling that some of the class are a little resentful that two of their colleagues are monopolizing this activity].[137]

Improv was one class activity where the stars tended to eclipse the others. I reflected during one class...

> [I can't help but wonder if the 'chicken is finally coming home to roost' as far as participation in the 'improvs' is concerned. T.'s talent in this domain (from what I have observed) has clearly been affirmed to the point that other students feel that they cannot measure up. This feeling I am sure has kept them away from trying].[138]

There was evidence that not all students perceived of themselves as being equal to others. Sometimes students let others dominate. During one class, for example, the female student who was responsible for organizing the Food Basket project, let a male colleague do all the talking when suggestions were presented to the class. After an interview session with a student focus group, I wrote the following...

[I found that the female students did not exude confidence as those in the group last time. They had some very good points but these were lost in the shuffle. T. is definitely a 'force to contend with' and since there was no one else in the group with an equally dynamic personality, he was on his own. The others tended to let him 'take over'].[139]

Certain groups in the classroom sometimes put themselves second or altered their ideas to accommodate, even to please. I noted, for example, that a male student, quite mature looking for his age and with a foot in a cast, enjoyed the attention he was receiving from some of the female students who would obviously go out of their way to cater to him. During a teaching session, two female students altered the rules when their peers questioned their criteria for determining the winner of the design contest.

<center>Participative Resistance: A Summary</center>

The data showed that growth for the learner was not without its pains. In their daily interactions students confronted ambiguities -- ambiguities tipping the balance and constantly challenging. As I think about the inconsistencies I saw, J.'s words come to mind. In review, she expressed the desire to create a learning environment that promoted both 'individualized competition and cooperative groupings'. Her intent was to balance the two. I surmise that in many instances, behaviours I have classified as participative resistance were acts of rebellion when competition outweighed collaboration, especially when one side, be it individual or group, felt ill-prepared or ill-equipped for the contest. As much as J. may have wanted to quell the fires of "intense individualism" (Somerville, 2000, p.5), promoting collaboration was obviously not enough. Students brought with them social mores steeped in competition. In some cases, they may not have even been aware of how the imbalances played out. Silva (2001) cautions that without opening the dialogue, "efforts to increase student voice and participation can actually reinforce a hierarchy of power and privilege among students..." (p. 279). Without being challenged, students in this particular context, consciously and even unconsciously, exhibited competitive behaviour over and over again.

That having been said, students in this learning environment, while not compelled to address the tensions, by and large, worked through them. They played a role in determining

how things unfolded in their classroom. And, perhaps, because of this, were largely able to overcome the inconsistencies they met along the way.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored my first research question: 'How do students participate in the English language arts course within the Alternative Learning Program?' Participation unfolded in this classroom as assigned participation, shared participation and participative tone. Furthermore, the outlier of participative resistance shed further light on what participation could be. As I analyzed the data, one thing was clear to me. As much as the description of the curriculum may have been insightful, albeit essential, for this discussion, curriculum became more intriguing to me as I moved beyond it. In some ironic sense, as the focus shifted away from the curriculum, it revealed more about it. The words of Saint-Exupéry (2000) rang true:"anything essential is invisible to the eyes": at least to the eyes upon their initial gaze.

The gaze needed to be redirected. I needed to listen to the voices of those who were living it. There were glimpses in this chapter, but more awaited. Their voices needed to replace mine. They needed to add to the pages of their stories, informing me of what it was like for them: how they *felt* about their experience. The two chapters to follow will focus on these voices, first on the students, then on the teacher.

But at this juncture of my journey, I realized that beyond recognizing the richness of their multiple voices, the process taught me more. I, as researcher, was not the only one who brought *meaning* to the study site. The meaning was, in many ways, *already* there. It was not lying dormant waiting for someone with academic aspirations to awaken it. And like Jardine (1998), I realized that stripping back the layers was a questionable pursuit. 'Living the classroom' is, as with life in general, communing with connections. I, as observer, in grappling with its meaning had to attune myself to Jardine's thoughts that "these connections must not be severed in order to understand them; they must, rather, be delicately gathered in all their contingency, locatedness, and difficulty" (1998, p. 23). It was with these thoughts that I embarked on the next phase of the journey.

Chapter 4. "It's pretty neat being marked on having fun!"

"Only the children know what they are looking for," said the little prince.
de Saint-Exupéry (2000, p.65)

In the previous chapter I used the data generated primarily from my observations to look at how students participated in the English language arts component of the ALP program. The process revealed a great deal to me. It provided much food for thought about participation: what it is and what it entails. However, to truly understand I had to take the study beyond observation, that is, seeing the program through my eyes. I had to open up the dialogue, in Goodson's (1992) view, to step back and let the speakers tell their autobiography. In telling their own story, positioning themselves as the 'I', students would catch glimpses of the self in progress, unfolding as a complex mosaic of "contradictions, disjunctures, and ambivalence" (Miller, 1998, p. 148). I wanted to sanction this unfolding. I wanted them to talk about what they were looking for.

The student voice is often inaudible in what is researched and written about in education. In our quest 'to do it right' we engage in 'doing for', instead of 'doing with' (Smith et al., 1998; Vibert and Shields, 2003). Much has been written about curriculum, especially from the view of how it is 'good for' the student. Ironically, the recipient of the good will is often suspiciously silent. It is as if within the collective academic community we feel compelled 'to rescue' students and in doing so have forgotten the primary lesson: "they do not want to be saved but simply to be heard" (Palmer, 1998a, p.8). In our fervour to provide answers we do not hear their questions -- questions not always answerable but always worthy of being asked and certainly worthy of being acknowledged.

In this study, I wanted to listen to the students. I wanted to provide them with the opportunity to express how they felt about their learning experience. I argue, like Erickson and Shultz (1992), that "on the topic of student experience, students themselves are the ultimate insiders and experts" (p. 480). With their own voices they told me how they connected to what they were learning and how their learnings connected to what they cared about. They revealed that as individuals they had become mediators and integrators of meaning and experience (Phelan, Yu and Davidson, 1994, p. 419). As the researcher, I was the channel through which their ideas and feelings were expressed. It was through their voices they described their learning, not through their teacher's voice nor through mine.

My second research question, namely How do the students feel about the learning environment in which they are participating? initiated my quest. This chapter recounts what they had to say. I also wanted to link their voices with the literature about the adolescent learner.

At the risk of turning this writing into a confession, I was struck by how little I really knew about the adolescent in spite of my years of teaching them. I realized from the outset that I was imposing upon my research a Western perspective of this age group. I was also aware that this perspective extended beyond mere definition. I brought certain assumptions into my work about who these people are and how they would behave. I needed to remind myself that while the literature provides insight into the adolescent, it does not tell the whole story. Beyond all else, adolescents, like all of us, are individuals. And like all individuals how we think and how we act is not always predictable nor consistently faithful to research findings (Bruner, 1990). In the Brunerian sense we think and respond differently in different contexts: that the human capacity to process, generate, and respond to ideas is beyond what we, at least at present, can fully comprehend.

Patterns do exist, however. While we are never assured that we are viewing the whole 'film', we do see glimpses of frames within: frames from which we derive some understanding of human behavior and the thoughts and conditions driving it. The field of psychology has been invaluable in providing these glimpses especially pertinent to formal environments of teaching and learning. To set the stage for their responses, I begin with a profile of the adolescent as presented in the literature.

The Adolescent: A Psychological Profile

I started my search with the question: Who is the adolescent? The literature suggests that the concept of adolescence, especially in terms of proportion of lifespan, is a phenomenon of the Western culture (Mitchell, 1992). Wolman (1998) purports that Western perspective has created a time of transition that can be best described as "a never-ending period ..." (pp. 103-104). Moshman (1999) concedes that the "simplest way to define adolescence is to do so chronologically" (p. 5). He adheres to the views of the Society for Research on Adolescence that defines adolescence as "encompassing the second decade of life -- that is, ages 10 through 19" (p. 5). Given the Western propensity for prolonging that stage of life, some authorities extend it well into the 30s.

Whatever its assigned chronology, adolescence is a time of transition: a period of marked change. Cognitive and emotional development lag behind physical maturity. Individuals find themselves at the cusp between childhood and adulthood. Violato and Travis (1995) liken this crossing point to a 'lacunae' in which "life has been emptied of the child's world", and yet to be replenished with the world of the adult (p.51). The individual living in the adult body wonders why he or she still feels and thinks as a child.

Perched on the threshold of adulthood the adolescent enters in Erickson's words a "psychosocial moratorium" (as cited in Fuhrmann, 1990, p. 359), a stage Muuss (1988) describes as "a developmental period during which commitments either have not yet been made or are rather exploratory and tentative" (p. 72). The adolescent straddles the world of the child and the world of the adult belonging to neither (Atwell, 1998). Positioned in this 'netherworld,' the adolescent experiments with and explores social roles, interpersonal relationships and political ideologies (Mitchell, 1992). Shedding the persona of the child, the adolescent now must redefine who he or she is. In a quest for self-identity, he sets out, in Manaster's words, "to find himself and his place" (1989, p. 163) in a world swirling with perplexities and contradictions.

During this transitional stage the capacity to think as an adult gradually aligns with physical maturity. According to the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) (1993), the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of middle level students, beginning around the age of twelve, is characterized by thinking abilities ranging from "concrete operational to more mature abstract" (p.7). As the adolescent matures he or she increasingly engages in Piagetian formal thought Mitchell (1992) describes as the capacity to process:

- the possible as well as the real;
- implications as well as the facts;
- alternatives as well as givens;
- hypotheses as well as descriptions;
- "what if" as well as "what is" (pp. 14-15).

Symbolization, that is, the expression of experiences in symbolic form be it in word, music, visuals, or dance (Mitchell, 1992, p. 134), is a significant component of formal or abstract thinking. Such capacity has marked implications for personal development. Adolescents can now use a sophisticated repertoire of tools, an "emergent literacy" to borrow Montgomery's (1998, p. 58) words, whereby they can articulate "what they look at, what

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they listen to, and what they touch". That is not to say that younger children cannot see, hear or touch. I argue they can. Their relating is limited by lexicology, not by experiencing, Moffett and Wagner's (1992) notion of 'speech presupposing thought' (p. 12). Adults and adolescents, on the other hand, share the capacity to dialogue about experience: to engage others in discourse, deepening and enriching their interpretation of it. Adolescents, fully aware of this capacity, want to put their own stamp on the world.

Adolescence is a time of boundary testing, marked by an unwillingness to accept things as they are. Adolescents have a heightened awareness of social issues (Beane, 1991) and are inclined to view with scepticism, sometimes to the extreme, the norms of their social environment (Foss, 2002; Linn, 1990). Identity of the self, a manifestation of the inner world, is fine-tuned through observing and critiquing the outer world. While they are critical of what they see, adolescents have difficulty rendering viable alternatives. In their fervour to do things differently, they are often oblivious to the constraints that counter change or limit their influence upon it (Okun and Sasfy, 1983; Shannon, 2002; Violato and Travis, 1995).

Connectedness is particularly critical at this stage of maturity. Adolescence provides a space for redefining connections with others. The adolescent is pushed away from the relationship central to his or her life up to this point. The family and its values are no longer core to how the adolescent looks at his or her social needs. At the same time, breaking away from the familial world adds profoundly to a sense of loss. The adolescent finds himself at a crossroads between the security of the family and the unpredictability of the unknown (Kroger, 1992; Markstrom-Adams, 1992). To fill the void, the adolescent develops an interdependency with peers (Davies, 1992) engaging in what Wolman (1998) refers to as a "we-ego" stage of social interaction (p. 26).The values of the peer group appear to replace familial values. The Self is defined, in part, through the Other.

Yet within this new alignment, a dichotomy emerges. Peer dependency, the "we-ego", is an essential building block to autonomy. As adolescents connect, they disconnect. Their journey, marked by the self-imposed question 'Who am I?' (Stevenson and Carr, 1993), separates as it binds.

The struggle for self-identity emerging from the Socratian principle "Know thyself" is a decisive component of adolescent development. To have an identity, reflects Hewitt (1989), "... is to be a whole and complete person, not fragmented into roles and ruled by script ... [but]to be connected with others and yet true to oneself..." (p. 152). Mitchell (1992) refers to this event as the flowering of the "subjective self" (p. 128). Blasi and Oresick (1987) describe the phenomenon as experiencing "oneself as having an intimate centre,... felt as the real part of one's being, the source of one's individuality" (p. 81). Dialogue with the

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inner self, that is the discourse of introspection, pervades every intentional act, every overture of desiring, knowing and doing (Mitchell, 1992). Ironically, in this stage of self-formulation adolescents inevitably turn to familial rather than peer values. The presence or absence of these values is critical during this search for meaning and self-definition (Wolman, 1998).

How self-identity develops remains a subject of debate. Waterman (1992) metaphorically describes this process in terms of 'discovery'. "According to the discovery metaphor," he writes, "for each person there are potentials, already present though unrecognized, that need to become manifest and acted upon if the person is to live a fulfilled life" (p.59). Sarbin (1997), refuting the discovery proposal, opts for a different metaphor to describe what occurs. "A more apt metaphor," he suggests, "is 'poetics', a word that calls up images of a person creating, shaping and molding multidimensional stories" (p. 67). Thus for Sarbin, identity is created, not discovered. Marcia (as cited in Marcia, Waterman, Matteson, Archer and Orlofsy, 1993) embraces both. "I have got a kind of a mixed model," he states, "that relies heavily on construction but with allowance for things that seem also to thrust themselves on my experience that I cannot account for by construction" (p. 189). In his assertion Marcia acknowledges the existence of two realities, one within and one without. "But," Moshman (1999) surmises, "we can never know ourselves in a direct, simple, and final sense, any more than we can know the reality outside us. We have no choice to construct our understanding of who we are" (p. 93). As much as we are able to construct or create our identity we are always confronted with constraints not only exerted upon us by the world outside, but by our need to be true to ourselves -- that "pre-existing although dimly perceived self" (Moshman, 1999, p. 93). If we accept this argument, we concede with both Marcia and Moshman that development of self-identity is not an event, but a series of events, sometimes involving creation; sometimes discovery; sometimes both.

The key to the discussion is not self-identity per se but the conditions contributing to it. In short, what helps self-identity develop? Some authors argue that the development of the 'subjective self' requires simultaneous reflection and observation, highly sophisticated thought processes indicative of formal thinking (Eich and Schooler, 2000; Haddock, 2000). Self-identity is formed because the individual extrapolates meaning from the environment, reflects on such meaning and determines his or her relationship to it. Something else exists, however, surpassing even this ability. The individual, I argue, acquires a self-identity not only because he or she can extrapolate meaning but because he or she is conscious or aware of the ability to do so. In a Socratian sense, self-identity emerges through knowing the self. I am because I *think* that I am. The complex nature of identity formulation has profound

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implications for the kinds of learning experiences that adolescents desire. The aim of this chapter is to gain further insights into what they are.

<div align="center">Implications for the Adolescent as Learner</div>

Regardless of how self-identity develops, it is clear that adolescence is a time of discovery. The quest seeks connection as well as separation -- a connection that provides security as students create and discover their individual uniqueness (Kessler, 2000). Autonomy does not exist unto itself, but is something both shared and negotiated. Reddiford (1993) identifies the classroom as an ideal location for nurturing Portelli and Vibert's (2001) notion of the 'curriculum of life'. To enhance emerging intrapersonal and interpersonal identities, the learning environment needs to offer a flexible, yet supported, curricular experience.

Such environments do not happen by osmosis, or by indifference. The fit between the adolescent and the classroom does not occur automatically. Research substantiates that the environment of learning is not value-neutral. On the contrary it is value-laden, mirroring the contradictions existing in the larger society (Alvermann, 1995/1996; Nieto, 1994; Takata, 1991). An environment conducive to adolescent interests does not attempt to shield the students from these contradictions as they scrape and bump against each other. It is transparent about them.

Nor can the onus be left to the student to do 'the fitting' (Phelan, Davidson and Cao, 1992; Phelan, Yu and Davidson, 1994; Ruiz, 1991), particularly when the adaption requires, to embrace Phelan, Yu and Davidson's (1994) thoughts, "devaluing aspects of their home and community cultures" (p.427). Creating a classroom environment open to these realities is no mean feat, but, I argue, can be done with sensitivity, commitment, and imagination.

<div align="center">Student Voices</div>

And so I turned to the students to hear what they had to say. In their personal reflections and their interviews, the students revealed many things. Like Nieto (1994), I was "surprised at the depth of awareness and analysis" (p. 397) the students shared with me. They told me how they felt and at the same time alluded to what it was about their classroom that made them feel this way. In a sense what they told me was their story, certainly not in its complete form. But their words gave me tremendous insights into what life was like for them, at least their life in school. And in its own way, their story, even stories, gave me an

inkling of where they wanted to go in the greater scheme of things. When presented with the opportunity they had much to say. I reflect back upon Miriam Toew's (2001) interview with Leslee Silverman, artistic director of Winnipeg's Manitoba Theatre for Young People. In this interview Silverman states, "The universe is not made up of atoms, it's made up of stories" (p.66). The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to theirs.

To remain faithful to the second research question I asked the students to direct their responses to the English language arts course. Sometimes their comments would spill out into the complete program. When this occurred I would note their comments and pull them back into focus. I kept a record of their comments which would likely shed further light on context to be discussed in Chapter 6.

As I delved deeper into their words, patterns emerged. I organized these words into categories that appear in this chapter. I began to see connections, not only within the chapter, but between chapters. 'Participating' as discussed in Chapter 3 spilled over into this chapter. I decided as a point of entry to continue to build on the word and its meanings through the students' views.

Student Views of Participation

The students showed an understanding of what 'participating' meant to them. In this section I have arranged their thoughts into three data clusters: being active, being challenged, and being energized. As a point of clarification, the students referred to their teacher as 'Mrs. W'.

Being Active

This cluster was of particular interest to me because the word 'active' linked directly with the first research question addressed in the previous chapter. In that context, however, participating was looked at primarily from an 'outsider's' perspective. Although students did not use these words, a number of them differentiated between active and non-active learning, showing a strong preference for the former. "We take part in what we do. We have to take part," was P.'s response to the question about participation.[140]

Some students referred to participative learning in terms of physical engagement. "We *do* things," stated A., emphasizing the word 'do'.[141] It was clear that 'doing' went beyond being confined to desks. "I like being in the ALP," penned one student, "because instead of just sitting around working, we do all kinds of stuff".[142] "There's *always*

participation," volunteered J. stressing the word 'always' as she spoke. You just don't sit there".[143] L. described the learning as being a 'body' experience. "It's very physical. You're not just sitting there reading out of a book."[144] In keeping with the category title, one of the male students used the verb 'act' in his response. "We get to act stuff out,"[145] declared G.

Other classmates, talked about participation in terms of an emotional commitment. "Participate? It means we really enjoy it, like wanting to fit in; wanting to do things," declared A.[146] "We learn to think really quick,"offered S., "just yell it out! It's fun to participate."[147] R. affirmed...

> Everyone gets pumped up to do stuff. People don't sit in the corner and say, "This is so cheesy" [she later explained to me that 'cheesy' means, "It's so corny; so immature, so embarrassing..."]; two more say, "It's so not boring" and five more say, "It's so fun". Everyone gets so hyper. We all want to do it.[148]

Another student, M., added the dimension of sharing and collaboration to participation by introducing the descriptor 'interactive'. When pressed to tell me what she meant by the words, she replied, "Working together. Doing things that are 'hands on.'"[149] J. added, "We get to know people more. Last year you tended to work alone. We move in groups."[150] A. concurred that, "You interact with the teacher and therefore understand more. We express how we feel to classmates. We teach each other."[151]

In contrast to what they were experiencing at present, non-active learning was often referred to as boring. "Other programs are really boring. They're not interesting," J. declared, "You don't really care what goes on."[152] One student spoke of this type of learning as 'plain learning'. "It's much better than plain learning," declared S., "which can be pretty boring."[153] In contrast to what they were doing in this course, J. referred to classes in previous years as being 'normal'. When I asked for clarification he explained 'normal' as being "like last year. We didn't do anything special. We just worked."[154]

Some students were very clear about what 'plain' or 'normal' learning entailed: Nieto's (1994) 'chalk and talk' kind of learning where the teacher was heavily reliant on textbooks and blackboards (p. 405). "In another class nothing is fun," exclaimed J., "The teacher talks and talks and talks and gives us stencils."[155] Students assured me that this was not the case in this classroom. "We do extra without sticking to the book," A. informed me.[156] "We do different work in different ways," another colleague conceded.[157]

Being Challenged

Students also talked about participation in terms of engaging in things that were challenging. They initially talked about it in their personal reflections. I noticed that when the word was used, the students portrayed it in a positive light. M. wrote this comment in her reflection, "I think the ALP is a great program. This is because the students that want more of a challenge in their work can have it."[158] T. raised this point: "I thought the work was going to be really hard, but it's not; it's just challenging like any work should be."[159] The statement signaled to me that in his mind, at least, there was a decided difference between work that was 'challenging' and work that was 'hard'.

I felt this point was significant and required further investigation. When I raised the issue in the focus groups, S. compared a challenge to a 'mystery puzzle'. "You have to try to figure it out. You have to think it through."[160] A colleague explained the difference in this fashion: "Challenging is you have to put your mind to it but you can do it. Hard...you put your mind to it but you can't figure it out."[161]

Other students added an emotional perspective to the difference between the two. "If I find something challenging," declared L., "I enjoy learning about it. If it's hard 'it's a drag'!"[162] R., another classmate, responded to the question in this fashion ...

> If something is a challenge I feel I can get excited about it. I'm more up to it. If it's hard, I get frustrated. I'm pulling my hair out. "Oh no," I say to myself, "I can't do this!" You want to beat the challenge. If it's hard you feel you can't get it.[163]

Some students described a challenge as being something they could deal with on their own. G. talked about a challenge as "something that may be hard at first, but if it's challenging, we can do it ourselves."[164] A colleague in the same focus group echoed these sentiments. K. stated that "challenging is something I want to work on my own, like fractions. It's hard at first, but after working on it you can say, 'I've got it!'"[165] 'Doing for yourself' was particularly appealing if the challenge was accompanied by choice. M. intimated that "if you find something hard you find it frustrating. If something is a challenge you have choices."[166] T. explained...

> I like a good challenge because I want to do for myself. When I'm obligated to do something I don't want to do it as much. For example, in our debating I got to choose a topic I was interested in.[167]

A number of students identified a task as a challenge if it connected with what they already knew. K. described a challenge as "you know it but you know you have to work towards it."[168]. A colleague, M. added to the discussion that when something is a challenge, "you build on experiences to try new stuff."[169] Other students talked about challenge as building the capacity for future learning. J. stated, "I find that challenges make us work harder and work faster. It's improving how we work."[170]

The comments showed the depth of understanding these students had about their learning. Even though they were not able to articulate the concept using 'academic' language, they were, in my view, talking about metacognition, Nelson's (1999) notion of having 'a feeling of knowing' (p.626) or the 'aboutness' of knowing (p.625) to be revisited in Chapter 7. Students seemed to feel that challenges were significant signposts because through them they were becoming better learners.

Some students, seemingly aware of this, voiced that challenges were not to be avoided but to be welcomed. In one interview, R. appraised the English language arts course as one in which challenge was fun. "Challenging is drama," she conceded, "Freeze is thinking on your feet. You're having fun at the same time. Hard is 'I don't want to be doing this!'"[171] "It's a good opportunity," surmised A., "If you don't get challenges you will not learn as much."[172]

Being Energized

A number of the students described participating as involvement requiring a high energy level. In her personal reflection, R. wrote, "I really enjoy English [language arts] because it is extremely exciting. With debating, Shakespeare and drama, there is never a dull moment. After watching/listening to everyone around you, some of their enthusiasm is most likely to rub off on you."[173] In their interviews, various classmates confirmed R.'s point of view. When asked to produce one word to describe the English language arts course, J. replied, "Energetic!" [174]; another student, T. exclaimed, "Spontaneity!"[175]

To some students, the fast pace of the course energized them. One student, whose name was not identified, wrote that in the course, "you get to go on many field trips; you learn very fast; you have fun with your friends; and you do lots of activities in the class".[176] Various colleagues agreed. When asked to comment on a statement made in one of the personal reflections, B. explained, "I don't think we do it better. We do the same things as students in the regular program but we probably do it faster".[177] "We work quicker than other classes," declared I.[178] A colleague, however, took exception to the word 'quicker' asserting

that, "I would say rather than quicker we do it more 'efficiently'. It doesn't take us as long to do it".[179] A., I felt, encapsulated best his classmates' thoughts on this issue ...

> We go through things more quickly. We do a lot of work. We're always moving on to new things. It never gets boring. We're never dragging through the same thing... [180]

In whatever way they defined it, students seemed to see participation as something that could not be done half-heartedly or apathetically. Participating, to some of them at least, demanded energy and commitment.

Student Views of Participation: A Summary

The students added to my understanding of participation. In their words I saw glimpses of assigned participation for both the individual learner and the group learner. I saw references to individual development of skills such as gathering information and questioning as well as the group perspectives of being on task and soliciting interaction. Interestingly, in their eyes participation seemed to be thought of as something unfolding more deeply: what I have identified in the previous chapter as shared participation. There was a strong sense of engagement. Students were involved because they wanted to and not because they had to. They were actors rather than passive observers of their learning. In a nutshell, they owned their learning. They had high expectations for what they wanted to get out of the learning experience. They were highly challenged and even energized by what they were doing. Most importantly, they expressed participation in terms of an emotional investment aligning with, even adding to, my discussions of participative tone in Chapter 3. The repeated use of the pronoun 'we' in their statements affirmed this feeling.

Conditions of Participation

The students were articulate in describing what participation meant to them. They also told me much more. They had a clear idea what was needed for participation to occur. I have identified these pre-requisites as the Conditions of Participation. I begin with the conditions largely initiated by and directly acted upon by the students. Then I will proceed with the conditions set up by the teacher. The data clusters subsumed under student initiatives are wanting to learn, cooperating, being yourself and fitting in.

Wanting to Learn

Students shared an understanding that participation in English language arts course was driven by expectations to learn. Interestingly, a number of them talked about these expectations as being their own. "I knew I wanted to try out for it," L. informed me, "I wanted the challenge."[181] A counterpart in another interview stated, "I wanted the challenge instead of regular work. I wanted harder things to do," said J.[182]

Three students voiced expectations about the long-term benefits of being in the ALP. They had a clear sense of what they would 'get out of the program'. "It might pay off in the end," B. commented.[183] Two of his colleagues expressed greater certainty about the future. "This program will also get you to better jobs, universities and more when you're an adult," R. wrote.[184] During an interview A. related how the teacher "prepares us with things we will have use for as we get older. She gives us more variety for what we can be." [185]

Work did not appear to be an issue with these adolescents. They were prepared for that. One student, B., informed me, "We're not afraid to work."[186] A colleague, M., in another interview stated that in this program, "You have to like to work."[187] A. was more adamant about the issue, "If you are a person who does not want to work you should not be in the ALP," he declared. It became clear to me as I listened to them that work in and of itself was not sufficient. There was a stated preference for work that was meaningful, something they could connect with. J. talked about this in terms of 'good' work, "The work is challenging. We do good work," she informed me.[188] A. talked about his learning in this way: "It takes you beyond the basic line. You learn something new and different...something you don't know and want to learn. It allows you to do it."[189]

For me, one of the most compelling phrases in A.'s words was 'want to learn'. If we adhere to Merriam-Webster's (1983) definition ,'want to' expresses a 'strong desire to'. A.'s wish to learn sprung from within. He learned *because he chose to.* Any reference to external coercion was conspicuous by its absence. Intrigued by the student's comment I returned to the interviews highlighting the 'I/you/we want to' phrases as they appeared. I counted 34 more! It was a 'eureka' moment; I felt I was on to something. The number of responses suggested that at least some of the students had a sense of where they were positioned in their learning: that it was *their* journey. This message emerged from their words: "I want to work on my own; "I wanted the challenge"; "I've gotten out of it what I wanted." Even when the journey was acknowledged as a partnership it was talked about as being done with, not done to or done for as these words suggest ...

Soon we are also starting a unit in debating and that's probably going to be fun arguing with other people. Well, that's a thing that kids can do...We also discuss a lot of things [with] each other.[190]

The power behind these words was palpable. It spoke to me of students who refused to be placative or to be disenfranchised. They wanted to be, to quote one quip, "really into it." The words spoke to me of students who were developing an understanding of their self-identity. They made demands upon the program because *they were aware of their entitlement* to do so.

I was struck by the bearing of these assertions. True, the students came into the program with high expectations of what the program could provide for them. But something 'beyond the basic line' had drawn them in. Their enthusiasm was captivating and certainly genuine. What they were experiencing surpassed expectations of what they would 'get out of' the program. I.'s description captured what appeared to be the general feeling of her colleagues, "It's fun, exciting and challenging. It keeps us on our feet. We don't know all the answers. We are challenged to find out what the answers are."[191]

Enmeshed in this description was the word 'fun'. It appeared 30 times in the personal reflections alone. One student writing about why she was enjoying the English language arts component of the ALP penned, "It all starts with a teacher who is fun and wants to do fun things."[192] Student use of the word 'fun' in their writings prompted me to include it in two interview questions. The word sprinkled the interview conversations often without solicitation. In fact, it appeared 69 times!

I admit that initially the word caused me a little unease. As a education practitioner I have always struggled with the notion of linking learning and fun. I remember distinctly expressing my angst to a colleague. We were recounting a recent curriculum meeting where the issue of 'making music classes fun' had surfaced. We were mutually troubled. It disturbed our professional sensibilities. We dismissed it as trivializing learning, countering quality and undermining what a competent teacher of music should aim to do. I now remember with considerable embarrassment being highly critical of colleagues who substituted what I perceived to be challenging learning experiences for those of lesser quality: all in the name of 'having fun'. Forgive me, but my ethnicity was showing. How could a WASP (white Anglo-Saxon Protestant) possibly attach something as 'sacred' as work to something that brought such joy and above all such 'Fun'? Perish the thought! John Calvin would never recover or so I thought at the time.

But the students in my study have taught me that it is possible, even as the students I had taught in the past would have told me if I had been more receptive to listening. They showed me that 'being fun' does not undermine quality nor detract from the virtue of being productive; that students can have it both ways and in fact prefer it. When I chose to listen, that is, to quote Greene (1988), grant them "audibility" they were more than willing to share what they already knew. Their realizations humbled and moved me.

The students showed me that the desire to learn was nourished by fun. They did not view the two as a dichotomy. T. informed me that "there should be a connection...that the best teachers combine the two."[193] Many of his classmates agreed. In her personal reflection, M. described the program as "more than educational; it's fun too."[194] "It's a very good program. We learn a lot more. It's not like torture. It's learning in a fun way", J. announced during the interview.[195]

The students, however, did not look at fun in a superficial way, something that was easy without demands and commitment to work. To reiterate, they were highly committed to work. Fun was looked upon as a bonus. One student, J., shared what had been my thoughts: that there was a clear separation between learning and fun. I noted her elation when she discovered that this did not have to be the case. "I thought it was all about learning and work...no fun," she stated, "Then I got here and discovered that Mrs. W. was into drama. I was a lot happier![196] "When we do improv," B. declared, "we are learning how to act and at the same time having fun."[197] "In debating," S. added, "we are going against each other but we learn facts on a topic. We have fun."[198] A classmate M. probably summed it up best, "It's pretty neat," she stated in wonderment, "being marked on having fun!"[199]

It was clear that for some of the students fun was generated from having accomplished something, from doing something well. "I feel proud when I do well," explained A, "Sometimes I write stories and think they're OK but when someone else reads them and says they're good, I feel happy![200] "Especially when you finally get it," admitted S, "You feel proud.[201] "When you totally get it," exclaimed T, "it's like 'yes'!"[202]

Cooperating

Students viewed cooperating as another condition of participation. A number of students explained what cooperating meant. Some talked about it in terms of working together. "We work together. It's not a problem working in groups and making it work," one student declared.[203] Others spoke about cooperation as interacting or pulling together. A.

explained, "In plays and improv we interact with each other and learn to cooperate with the teacher and with each other."[204] M. concurred with her colleague...

Cooperation plays a big part in the class. We do a lot of group work. We are marked both individually and as a group in our group projects. No one person is the leader and we do everything together. We pull together.[205]

A couple of students used words like 'compatibility' and 'compromise' to discuss their relationship with their peers. T. surmised that, "You need it. In 'improv' we need compatibility. We need to be open minded. We need to think on the same track or on different tracks. We need to combine our efforts."[206] "It's easier to work with two people rather than arguing with half the class. We learn to compromise," explained R.[207] M. described compromise in this way, "We can work together and do it without complaining about who we're with. We get along."[208]

Other students talked about cooperation as 'opening up' expressed in their own words as helping, understanding and trusting. "We work with a partner," G. stated. "You help each other and learn from each other's mistakes."[209] In a cooperative environment, R. informed me, "You learn to explain you point of view and to understand others."[210] "Cooperation," a peer declared, "means trusting the other person to be fair."[211] A male student, identified by the initial A., took an expansive, even philosophical spin on the issue...

Everyone expresses their ideas and accepts them. We learn that there are other people in the world and that everyone has equal say. We have to work together.[212]

A few students expressed the enjoyment they reaped from interacting with colleagues. In her personal reflection K. talked about how the class was fun. She referred to "the cooperation of the kids and that equals drama and dancing."[213] "It's great working together," A. stated. "[It's great to see] everyone loosening up and really listening to each other."[214]

Students credited the teacher with creating the kind of environment where cooperation flourished. They spoke about the teacher's knack for making the classroom an 'equal playing field'. "The teacher finds something that we have in common," T. explained.[215] I. stated, "We are willing to understand the problem that someone has. Someone is [always] willing to help. Mrs. W. makes it even. We get to choose."[216]

To some students establishing an equitable learning environment meant instilling that everyone in the class had something special to contribute. The students felt that the teacher was particularly adept at drawing on their strengths when she formed their working groups. J. stated, "Mrs. W. is good at matching different skills. Each of us does something well. No one's better in this class than anyone else."[217] In another interview J. added, "She knows us very well. She knows who is good at what ... who is good at drawing, for example. She sorts us out in groups very well and makes it work better. No one person hogs it all."[218]

Two students related that the teacher imparted to them the value of cooperation. B. commented, "Mrs. W. teaches us that even if you are on opposite teams we share our notes. You help each other."[219] In a later interview T. echoed B.'s thoughts, "Mrs. W. teaches us the importance of helping each other even if people are on opposite teams like debating."[220]

Some students ascertained that they were participating in this classroom at various levels. They were not only aware of their involvement as students, but were developing a sense of Foss's (2002) notion of their 'multiple identities'. This learning experience, while of critical importance to them, was in some respects a rite of passage: that they were encountering experiences they would carry into other spaces of learning and other spaces of living.

'Being Yourself'

The students felt they could participate because their classroom was a place where they were safe to explore who they were. To them, the classroom was not only a place where they could learn, but a place where they could 'be'. M. spoke about it as "you are not under anybody else. You don't have to prove anything."[221] In her personal reflection, R. penned the following comment, "In our English class being yourself is an important thing."[222]

'Being yourself' showed in the way some of the students talked about their own abilities. In her personal reflection S. wrote, "I love writing and people say [that] I have a good imagination."[223] "I'm good at projects," stated J. rather unassumingly (a comment that was greeted by affectionate laughter from his colleagues). "I'm good at putting things together. I put together a haunted house which you can walk into."[224] "I like the acting," confessed R., "but even more I like taking part in discussions like public speaking. I'm really into it. I'm good at it. I like to totally take off with a topic."[225] On another occasion, a colleague made the following admission...

I'm better at written stuff. Improv is OK. That requires thinking on the spot which T. is good at. My mind works better at other things like writing. [I like being] alone in my mind. I have a clearer mind when I have time to think.[226]

One of the most endearing qualities of the students was their openness in praising colleagues for their abilities and accomplishments. I noted these gestures in my observations as well as in the interviews. They occurred frequently suggesting that students felt secure about their own abilities and what each had to contribute. When the student mentioned earlier, for example, was explaining about constructing things like a haunted house, his reference prompted the following response from his classmates: "Have you seen his projects?" asked a female student, J., "The house was covered with magazine pictures." The entire group was very complimentary about his work. "I have never seen him make anything small," another stated almost in awe. She referred to him as being artistic.[227] In another interview when responding to one of my questions, R. listed three classmates and their strengths," T. is a good debater and is funny; I. is a good actor and G. does good accents. Everyone has different qualities which we share."[228]

Students in this class had an overall sense of their self-worth and the gifts each of brought into the classroom. While there were moments when some shone more than others, the prevailing wisdom, as reflected in M.'s words, seemed to be that 'no one was under anybody else'. All were an asset; all had a story to tell. I reflect on Shor's (1992) suggestion that "What students bring into the class is where learning begins. It starts there and goes places" (p. 44). Students in this class appeared to be going places and they knew it.

Fitting In

While students overall projected a feeling of being accepted, they seemed to be aware that certain boundaries had to be respected. I refer to these boundaries as 'fitting in', a term used by one of the students and weighted with meaning. The term implies the presence, perceived or otherwise, of pre-set conditions or rules to which the students had to comply. The few students who contemplated this issue articulated their initial reticence with the program, a reticence which they claimed disappeared with the passage of time. One student admitted that the thoughts of attending a high school intimidated her, "I was scared to come to high school," J. admitted, "I didn't have an older sibling to prepare me."[229] Her comment countered others in her interview group who talked about the support they had received from older siblings in their decision to enter the ALP.

A number of students had qualms about how they would fare in the program. "I wondered if I would fit in," R. stated expressing this concern a number of times both in her personal reflection and in the interview. "I figured that people in the program would be 'nerdy' like really into science."[230] T. wondered if it would be beyond his capabilities, "I thought it was going to be way out there like rocket science. I thought it was going to be really advanced, but it's great! Not that I'm disappointed. It's at my level."[231]

Generally speaking, students expressed a desire to belong in the program. A. declared, "We really enjoy it, the wanting to fit in; the wanting to do things."[232] At the end of the interview, K. announced, "I like the activities and the teachers. I hope I can stay."[233] I found K.'s statement to be particularly significant. It not only spoke of a desire to be a part of the program, but showed an awareness of the 'conditionality of belonging': that staying in or belonging to carried certain expectations. A student in the same interview elaborated upon K.'s words. ....

> We don't have to stay in it. You can as long as you are not fooling around and you are getting good marks, no lower than 60%. If you have to leave you go to French immersion. If you don't do well there, then you have to go the regular stream.[234]

'Fitting in' is a concept I would have liked to have explored further. It also brought to the foreground one of my concerns as I write. Like Clandinin and Connelly (1998) I needed "to consider the voice that is heard and the voice that is not heard" (p. 172); to reflect on the temporality of meanings not only because of what was said, but what was not. Meanings eluded me not only because of miscues and misinterpretations but because the discourse inviting them were simply not there. The heroes in this story were not all 'sung'.

One regret I have, among a number, in this research was that a couple of students who seemed to be experiencing the greatest difficulty adjusting to the English language course chose not to participate in the interviews. Their silence widened the spaces between what I observed and what the students told me. J. (the teacher) shared my feelings. She was particularly concerned about one student. She, as I, would have liked to have heard his point of view. She felt the student's resistance, expressing that she felt at odds with K. and was not sure where he is coming from. She believed that "his view of the program may differ from the others."[235] I agree. From a researcher's perspective I acknowledge that his silence, and the silence of one of his classmates, likely skewed the interview data, creating a homogeneity in the views not necessarily reflective of all of the learners in this microcosm. Their silence attenuated my understandings. More importantly, it deprived both the teacher and I of 'food

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for thought': of how to draw in students seemingly less receptive to the way things were done in this particular learning environment.

I realize, at this juncture of the journey, that I could only work with the data made available to me. The best I could do is acknowledge the absence of certain pieces of information and only through conjecture predict what imprint they could have had on my findings.

As the data indicated, students regarded themselves as being instrumental in their own learning. At the same time they were aware that certain conditions were present that nurtured their commitment. Unlike the conditions cited above that were largely student determined, the students were also aware of conditions determined by the teacher. One of the students with the initial J. expressed this concept in terms of 'being free' in her words "our teacher does not close us in. She lets us do more. She lets us be free."[236] I grouped the data and organized them into two overall clusters: Opening to/for Freedom and Structuring. Students, overall, felt free to express themselves, to make mistakes and to make choices. They were also aware that the freedom they enjoyed did not just happen: it was undergirded with support.

The data clusters, nested in Opening to/for Freedom are: expressing, taking risks and making choices.

Opening to/for Freedom

Expressing

Students saw their classroom as a place where they were free to express themselves. A number of students identified specific in-class activities, such as debating, as good venues for self-expression. M. penned in her personal reflection, "Debating helps us be more aware that we can resolve an argument by using intelligence, wits and facts to be proven correct."[237] A. conceded that he enjoyed participating in debates because "you get to express your anger. You can say what you feel without asking permission."[238] "Debating," agreed M., "teaches you to get things out of your system; to stand up for what you believe."[239]

Acting and oral presentations were also acknowledged. "One of the things I like the most about being in Mrs. W.'s class," wrote K., "is that she likes us to do drama and orals and things in front of the class. I don't feel as nervous doing drama or orals in this class."[240] M. supported K.'s point of view. "In this class,"she penned, "we do a lot of oral presentations that help us build self-esteem and become less shy when speaking in front of a large group of people."[241] When asked in their interview what improv taught them, S.

responded, "thinking, talking, acting...expressing yourself."[242] "All in all," summed up R.,"we are all good at acting and debating. It's a really good class for that. It teaches you to express yourself in public. No one is really shy in our class."[243]

To some students, freedom of expression was not confined to particular activities but represented a general state of being. It meant entitlement to an opinion. R. informed me that in the class, "You *have* an opinion," stressing the word 'have' in her statement.[244] "She [Mrs. W.] asks students for their opinion," concurred A.[245] One student in particular understood the value of being able to express what he believed: "Mrs. W. is not that scary," P. revealed, "you can state an opinion without fearing that she will get mad."[246] B. summed up the issue succinctly by declaring that in the class he was learning, "not to be afraid."[247]

Nor was self-expression confined to what was articulated. Some students appeared to be aware of taking ownership in their assignments. In a discussion about their projects, A. informed me that "there are a lot of ideas but you can add your own."[248] A colleague, P., elaborated, "In our projects we can decide how we want to do it. It's not like we are told exactly how the teacher wants us to do it. We do it our own way. We have a say in it. We do it *our own way*," he repeated for emphasis.[249]

Some students seemed to feel that being able to express things 'their own way' opened the door for being creative."In our projects," stated J., "you have to be creative. You have to add something. It makes you work and learn something."[250] I., a colleague, wrote, "I think that the English ALP offers a lot of creative writing. We write many stories and paragraphs on other subjects."[251] "Our class also does written assignments such as inventing horror stories, which helps us students be more creative," penned M.[252] "We get a chance to be creative but in an organized way," voiced A., "There's a format to follow but you can put your own touch on it."[253]

Students realized that being creative was another way of knowing. They sensed that creativity involves expanding notions of what it is to understand, Lorde's (1984) view of "making knowledge available for use" (p. 109). It requires an openness, a receptivity to how knowledge is defined. Knowledge bytes do not stand on their own but find meaning in relation to other knowings. As Poincaré (1946) declared, we know when we see, "an unexpected kinship between facts long known but wrongly believed to be strangers to one another" (p. 386). Suddenly the stranger is a stranger no more...

At night you'll look up at the stars. It's too small, where I live, for me to show you where my star is. It's better that way. My star will be...one of the stars, for you. So

you'll like looking at all of them. They'll all be your friends (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p.77).

The stranger is now friend, not because of some ethereal change in the knowledge itself, but in the way it is perceived. The eyes that see, now see differently.

Students positioned themselves as knower and actor. 'To know' in some detached sense was clearly not sufficient. They revealed that the meanings of knowledge are embedded in its contextual surroundings and derived from the perceived world of the knower. They acknowledged that 'to know' in the truest sense means to engage in the simultaneous act of "pluralizing and individualizing the ways of knowing" (Gardner, 1991, p. 80). The students expressed this understanding as 'doing it *our own way*' or 'putting your *own* touch on it'. In these words, they unwrapped the paradox: in accepting the multiplicity of knowledge, they embraced its peculiarity.

The students' words directed my thoughts to the complex nature of what it is to be creative. Their words conjured up images of Rhodes'(1961) framework: creativity as product, process, person and push. Beyond that it propelled me to explore the link between creativity and meaning making. 'Knower as creator' expands meaning making through embodied meaning, Glenberg's (1997) notion of "meaning ...intrinsically embedded in human functioning...[that] reflect[s] human capabilities, goals, emotions, and perception" (p. 509). "Creativity is an outreach of your spirit into form," states an eighth grade student, "Then you see it, hear, feel, touch it" (as cited in Kessler, 2000, p. 94). In Merton's (1971) sense, creativity offers a glimpse into the "hidden wholeness" Pasternak's (1999) thinking of the simultaneous unveiling of Oneness and plurality (p.2). The creative act is a holographic impression of both the creator, and in many respects, the audience. The creator re-creates frames of knowing through technique, composition and feeling. She expresses meaning overtly and in so doing invites others to explore their own.

For me, the freedom to express and to express creatively opens other doors. As an artist in a musical sense, I realize that to be creative one has to push against the boundaries. That is, to act against commonly held norms and expectations. I cannot be creative and at the same time 'play it safe' (Sternberg and Lubert, 1995a). Creativity is not only compatible with risk, it seeks its out, even demands it. Ironically, creativity seems to thrive in an environment where people *feel safe to take risks*. It seeks out an environment where the possibility to make mistakes is always present.

Spurred by this implication, I revisited the data and began to see that 'taking risks' existed in this particular classroom environment.

Taking Risks

Students seemed to feel safe to take risks. I approached this question by asking them how they felt about making mistakes. Given the sophistication of the students I did not expect the responses to be homogeneous. However, I was surprised that within this group of obvious high achievers there was a general receptivity to 'mistake making' as an opportunity for learning. M.'s response to my question seemed to typify the overall feeling of the group: "Everyone makes mistakes...that's how you learn."[254] L. took a more philosophical stance: "Making mistakes is a part of life."[255]

The 'grief' generated from making a mistake, even among those most concerned about it, was highly conditional. "It depends on how big the mistake," responded J. to my question.[256] These sentiments were chorused by T. in more descriptive detail, "It depends on the mistake!" he chortled, "If I put a 'g' instead of a 'y' it's OK, but if it's a big mistake like I thought the project was not due until next month, I couldn't get any lower. I feel like a little amoeba...like I want to fall in a hole!"[257]

Other students measured the gravity of a mistake by pitting it against prior knowledge. "Sometimes you feel really stupid that you should have known better!" exclaimed L.[258] "A lot of people make mistakes," P. surmised, "It's OK. Sometimes I feel embarrassed. It depends on the kind of mistake. If I screw up on a word I sometimes get embarrassed."[259] "If I make a mistake and I really knew the difference I feel bad," admitted J.[260] A. articulated acceptance of the mistake in this manner...

> When I make a mistake about something I already knew I feel lousy. I know I shouldn't have made the mistake. I didn't pay enough attention. I make sure that I remember it the next time. If it's something I didn't know I don't worry about it. I learn from my mistakes.[261]

Interestingly, negative feelings generated from 'mistake making' seemed to be 'self' rather than externally imposed. Student reaction to 'mistake making' focused on how *they* felt, rather than on how someone else *made them feel*. Of the twenty-four students interviewed, only three spoke about teacher intervention in terms of disciplining or 'teaching us a lesson'.

Students generally talked about being self-motivated to correct the error. They spoke of what they did, rather than what the teacher did. "*I* ask what *I* did wrong if *I* am not sure. If *I* know *I* check it *myself* and correct it," responded B. to the question.[262] "It depends,"

asserted J. "*I* study it harder or *I* figure out why *I* made it."[263] S. informed me, "*I* try to correct it or *I* get help."[264] "*I* ask the teacher or a friend. *I* check in books. *I* ask questions. *I* ask others how they got it," answered G.[265] True, the interview question asked the students to focus on *what they did* and in hindsight I realize the wording may have been leading. That having been said, I argue that the repeated use of the pronoun 'I' or its derivative (italicized for effect) is insightful. It suggests that the students were to a large extent taking control of their learning, at least in addressing their errors or their learning gaps.

But more than a control issue emerged from these words. There was something being said, not only about feelings, but, beyond that, about *need*. In Glasser's (1990) sense the human journey is a quest of needs, difficult to satisfy, even to define...

> What we always know, however, is how we feel. And what we actually struggle for all of our lives is to feel good. It is from our ability to feel, essentially from our ability to know whether we feel good or bad, that most of us gain some idea of what our needs are (p. 45).

In this study, as in any other, it would perhaps be folly to 'read too much' into what the students told me. I argue, nonetheless, that it would be equally folly to read nothing. The students were expressing feelings (in itself a risk). At the same time they were expressing a need: a need to feel good about their learning.

To the students satisfying a need meant taking action. They were proactive about their mistakes. They were not inclined to depend upon the teacher to initiate the correction. They were clear to make this distinction. They credited the teacher, however, with creating the kind of environment where making mistakes was accepted. "I don't get embarrassed," G. informed me, "I always feel that I can raise my hand and ask for help."[266] "The teacher understands," B. stated, "She tells us it is OK and makes us feel better. We know what to do the next time."[267]

Some students identified the classroom as being a safe place where mistakes were seized as learning moments. "Mrs. W. pushes you to think," I. expressed. "'What do you think is wrong?', she asks, 'How can you improve it?'"[268]

I noted that 'mistake making' was used to teach another important lesson. Mistakes are not absolutes. They are relative. A mistake in one context does not necessarily constitute a mistake in another. It depends upon contextual conditions and the eye of the beholder, Pasternak's (1999) indication of "the empirical uncertainty of thinking" (p. 118). In his view, relations between and within phenomena are fleeting, even indefinable and "are analytically

verifiable by our senses only" (p. 119). They are abstract representations, albeit perceptive moments. It is through these abstract representations that I acquire understandings. Mistakes as a manifestation of understanding, are not context free, but, context bound. They are also ultimately tied to the perceiver.

The teacher seemed to have some sense of this reality and imparted it to her students. In her classroom, mistake making was turned into an opportunity for seeing things another way. "If you make a mistake," R. informed me, "you get to explain why you responded as you did. You show the class another point of view."[269] In her approach the teacher was opening the door for Barone and Eisner's (1997) notion of "artistic creation ... ideas that are fed by ... perceptivity: seeing what most people miss" (p. 33). Mistakes were openings for expanded classroom conversations.

The virtues of risk-taking were not lost on the students. Taking a chance or trying was more important than getting it wrong. "It doesn't matter if it's right or wrong as long as you try," asserted J.[270] "But you have to try," emphasized S., "There's a 50/50 chance you'll get it right."[271] "Last year I would have been embarrassed. [That's] not the case this year," affirmed R. when discussing how she felt about the issue.[272]

There also seemed to be an understanding, among a few students in particular, of what risk-taking entailed. It reminds me of Palmer's (1998b) imaging of "deep speaks to deep" (p. 31); of being stripped of pretense and being exposed to the perils of revealing. It embraces Smith's (1988) notion of "living in the belly of a paradox" (p. 175); to open oneself up to the terror "of the full conflict and ambiguity by which new horizons of mutual understanding are achieved" (p. 175). In their own words students spoke about this paradox. They talked about the classroom as a place where risk-taking surpassed constraint; where possibility overshadowed fear. The essence of this idea is expressed in R.'s words...

> The best is that everyone is different in our class and we are much more open than I think other classes are. It's the little things that add to it...like in public speaking. My perception is that in our class you can get really excited about something. In other classes you are more subdued [R. demonstrates with her voice]. We can get excited about things and feel really comfortable being that way.[273]

Feeling free to open up, the students appeared to accept each other for who they were. One of the students had her own description of it. "This is a 'nobody's perfect' class," S. aptly described it, "We *can* all make mistakes," she stated stressing the word 'can'. "I work at it so that the next time I think about it, remember it, and get it right."[274]

S.'s descriptor intrigued me. It revealed much about her classroom. It was an 'idée fixe' worth pursuing. I used it as a question for subsequent interviews. Student responses spoke less of risk-taking than what made it possible. Many of the responses eluded to the necessity of balancing both the solitary and communal conditions of the learning journey raised in Chapter 3, and subsequently pursued in Chapter 6. Acceptance was key. "Everyone helps each other. All are friendly," stated R. "The ALP is not made up of perfect kids, you know 'perfect angels' who get straight A's. It's impossible to be perfect but everyone is friendly. Everyone is known for doing something well."[275]

To restate, students were open in their celebrations of what they felt were their own strengths and the strengths of their classmates. These overt commissions did not reflect bravura. Rather there was an air of respect, even reverence for what each other brought to the classroom. The presence spoke of Palmer's (1998a) notion of bringing the sacred -- that "sense of the precious *otherness*" (p. 26) -- into their learning. T.'s counter to the 'nobody's perfect' descriptor, as glib as it may sound, reflected that sentiment. In his view, it was an "everybody's perfect" class.[276]

That having been said, I found that something else was reflected in S.'s description of "nobody's perfect" and R.'s pronouncement of "perfect kids". The words implied a sense of extending beyond a celebration of their current strengths and their present state of being. There was an acceptance not only of being but of equal significance of *becoming* (Freire, 1995, p. 65). "Each of us does things well," responded S., "but there's always things we can do to improve and make better."[277] Added L., "Everyone has a strong point. Some are good at physical activities like improv; others are good at writing. We can learn from each other."[278]

For these students, the classroom was a learning environment unchained by fear of the present and of the future. The students were challenged not only in knowing that they could measure up, but that they could measure beyond. Fear was a specter not to be overcome, but to be embraced. Their courage to lean into the fear brought me to Lorde's (1984) words ...

And I began to recognize a source of power within myself that comes from the knowledge that while it is most desirable not to be afraid, learning to put fear into perspective gave me great strength (p. 41).

The classroom was a meeting place where students felt free to accept themselves and each other, not in spite of their imperfections but *because* of them. They were free to fail and in doing so could rise to new heights of understanding.

Making Choices

The issue of choice surfaced and resurfaced throughout the interviews. It was clear that this feature of the course struck a chord with the students. When asked to use one word to describe the course P., for example, responded, "choice."[279] The word sprinkled the conversations I had with them. It was clear to me that it was a concept deserving closer scrutiny. Looking closer at 'choice' I again saw layers: on the surface, 'choice', then nested within it, 'choice within choice'. The surface 'choice', the most visible of the two, initially revealed itself to me in my observations of the curriculum. What the students said reinforced what I had already seen. It supported my observations. Even in this most visible level, I saw glimpses of something else lying beneath. The layer yet hidden began to unravel as I delved into the students' words.

The second layer, 'choice within choice' spoke to experiences that seemed to connect more intimately with the students. Its hiddenness did not preclude its presence. It merely made it difficult to name. One student expressed the concept as "thinking for ourselves."[280] Throughout the conversations, students voiced the concept in various ways and even more importantly talked about what it meant to them.

On the surface, students talked about choice in terms of the curriculum. Although the term, curriculum in action embodies both the content (the what) and the activity groupings (the how), at this point of the discussion they will be treated separately.

Choice in Curriculum Content

Some students talked about choice in terms of the various themes that were covered in the year. I found this interesting since ultimately the themes were selected by the teacher as discussed in Chapter 3. My pursuit of this issue with the students was triggered by a comment J. had made about presenting a repertoire of themes so that they might discover what they like.

When I raised the question, the initial reaction was to ask what I meant by the word. Baffled by their seeming nescience I provided an example, "Like fantasy," I answered. "Oh," they responded in chorus as if being enlightened. My fears were soon assuaged. From the discussion that ensued they were able to shed much light on the topic even though they did not appear to be familiar with the term, at least as it was used initially in the interview context.

Generally speaking, students liked the variety of themes presented to them. In their eyes it appealed to various interests. "This year we did fantasy and some people did not like

it, so we did science fiction too," P. informed me. "It makes it more fun. It appeals to different interests."[281] In another interview R. responded, "Everyone has different skills. Some people are better at writing adventure stories; others, fantasies. You get to pick the one you feel is best."[282] B. summed up the question of choice in themes with these words...

> We get to cover different themes: sports, horror, life, love, death, fantasy, dreams, science fiction. We are asked to write on one. We have many different ones to choose from. People had different ideas. We did fantasy. Now we are starting a new one with a book called *Other Skies* which is about science fiction.[283]

From an outsider's perspective I found the issue of theme choice a potentially contentious one. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, J. (the teacher) claimed that her classroom was 'child centered'[284] and in many ways, as I hope to show, it was. Yet there were areas in which J.'s classes did not always comply with that intent. Some of the reasons for the aberration, if I can call it that, are still not clear to me even as I write about it. I realize, with the clarity of hindsight, that it was a matter I should have pursued. That having been said, as again will be explored in the chapter to follow, J. factored in student interests when making the theme selections. In that sense, perhaps, compensation can be given for the manner in which certain curricular decisions were made.

In addition to the themes themselves, students talked about being able to make choices in the daily activities embedded within themes. P. identified these choices as 'options': "There are different options. She writes these options on the board. We choose between reading a chapter in a book...answering questions...we choose what to do."[285] "In some classes," J. (a student) informed me, "you get put on one thing and all have to do that. Here we have a choice. There's a lot of different things to do."[286] "There are sometimes five things going on at the same time," B. stated, "Some are in the library; others watching a movie in the computer room. We have a lot of choice every day."[287]

Other students talked about having choice within individual activities. "In book reports we did recently," M. said, "we combined that with two newspaper articles or pictures [of our choice]. We always have a choice. Classes are arranged so that we have something to choose from."[288] Like P. in a previous section, T. referred to choice being offered in activities as a way to appeal to different interests...

> We had to do one project that was interesting. We had to read five stories and write on one we liked the most and the one we liked the least. We had to give an

evaluation. It gives her an idea of how fast we work; what we like and dislike; what we want to learn and don't want to learn. ...what things appeal to us.[289]

Choice within Choice'

It was evident that within the activity choices, students were able to make further choices as suggested in the following words: "Sometimes you have to choose among different choices," A. stated, "[You can] split things up and have a variety of things."[290] Interestingly, I found that this part of the conversation generated the most passion. One group in particular related how choice plays out in their portfolio submissions. In conversation the three students stated, "Sometimes she [Mrs. W.] assigns what is to be corrected; other times, we get to pick what we feel is our best work for her to grade."[291] Subsequently, in the same interview, all four students in the group agreed that the majority of the time they got to choose what work *they thought* was the best. As an example they informed me that "we *get to choose* what we want to send to the authors in the WIER program" [italics added].[292]

The italics reflects the confidence with which these students stated their case. While I detected that the students in this group felt that what they were experiencing was unique, I did not get the sense that they viewed it as a privilege. The message they imparted to me was that this is the way learning should be. "We are more independent," I. declared, "We can make a choice for ourselves. She doesn't think we are babies. We can think for ourselves."[293]

Choice in Activity Groupings

Students talked about choice within daily activities subsumed under themes. As suggested in Chapter 3, there could be as many as five different activities occurring simultaneously. From my perspective, the impact of curriculum choice upon classroom organization was obvious, particularly in the manner in which students worked.

Choice was manifested in different 'tasking' configurations: individually or with others. A student explained that "you have a choice: to work alone, with a partner or with a group."[294]When the conversation focused on working with others, students talked about choice in group formation. "Groups are always changed," M. added in the same interview, "There's a choice...assigned groups and chosen groups."[295] Feeling that M.'s thoughts needed further clarification, J. elaborated, "*Sometimes* we make our own groups..." [italics added] [296] J.'s point was affirmed by a colleague in another interview. The reader can see a discrepancy in perception of frequency as pointed out by the italics, "We *often* choose our own groups,"

stated M. [italics added], "That works well. The teacher *sometimes* assigns groups."[297] The students made the point that even though the teacher assigned groups, there was a perception, at least among a few of the students that they had ample opportunity to form their own.

While it is undeniable that choice was a condition that was cherished, there was some evidence that it was also a source of concern for some students. They were aware that freedom came with a price; that is, it carried certain liabilities that could be overwhelming. With choice, they realized, came responsibility. It required a keen sense of one's own abilities and a strong dose of self-discipline. "Sometimes it's not really good working on more than one thing," T. surmised.[298] M. conceded that working in this type of environment "may require more decisions on our part," that it may demand that students be 'like perfectionists.'"[299] In another interview, M. acknowledged that while "we get more privileges, we also have more responsibility."[300]

Structuring

As much as students cherished freedom in their classroom they seemed to be aware of the presence of the structure. They made reference to it during their conversations. Structure grounded flexibility, a form of 'choice within structure' to borrow the teacher's thoughts.[301] From my vantage point, I saw structure manifested in two ways: Organizing the Environment; that is, the care given to the physical elements in the learning environment, and, Setting Boundaries, providing guidelines or rules for action.

Organizing the Environment

Some students talked at great length about the teacher's care for the working environment. "Her first concern is what the classroom looks like," B. informed me.[302] "Every few weeks we clean the tables," related A. who was corrected by a colleague saying it was more like every week![303] "We also dust and clean the shelves...clean the counter tops, her desk, and the computer room", added K.[304] Another student, K., referred to her organizational skills, "She keeps files of things we do in class," she informed me.[305] The students seemed to admire this concern for neatness and organization. One articulated its benefits. "At the Open House, we attracted some new people into the program because they could see how neat and organized everything is," J. surmised.[306]

The teacher's care of the classroom space seemed to spill over to the students. Several shared views about keeping their work organized. A. stated, "We keep our work organized in binders."[307] G. offered a more detailed explanation: "She wants us to be

organized. She checks every month. She makes us check our binders and our dividers. She doesn't want us to lose anything."[308] Another student, R., talked about the portfolios. "We keep our work in two folders. In the yellow folder we keep our work like our WIER stories. In the blue folders we keep our best work." (Laughter erupted from the rest of the group who reminded her that the opposite was actually the case!) "Well," she continued, "the work in the yellow folder...our teacher reads it and grades it. We keep a table of contents. We number everything."[309]

The concern for the physical well-being of the classroom struck a chord with me. I have always been disenchanted with how unappealing places of learning can be. The unkempt, even unclean, appearances speak volumes about how we feel about who we are and what we do. It speaks to me of shutting out beauty from our lives; of diminishing the sacredness of our calling. Our lives are 'practising dualities': affirmations of the mind and the spirit to the detriment of the body and the heart. We choose to live as Moore (1998) states...

> as if we don't have bodies. We are boldly spiritual and obsessively materialistic, but these two opposites seem rarely reconciled in a true spiritual love of the world. For all our consumerism we don't have many things of quality in our homes and public places, and for all our spirituality we are not world leaders in the area of spirituality and values (pp. 245-246).

We have yet to learn the ultimate lesson: that we live in the spirit not by rejecting the body, but by acknowledging and caring for it.

The strength of this message imprinted upon me when my work with a university project took me to a school in Chicago. The school, located in a depressed area of the city, was populated almost entirely by African-American children. Mandated to revitalize the school, the principal started by upgrading the physical appearance of the building. As I entered I was greeted by an African banquet for the eyes. Tapestries dressed the windows and wood carvings softened the corners. The corridors, virtual art galleries, depicted Black children engaged in school and in play. The works were visual celebrations of the students' lives. My comments about the beauty of the landscape drew a passionate explanation from the principal. She felt that the students needed affirmation of who they were. To accept others they first needed to accept themselves. They needed to see themselves in the grace of their surroundings: to experience beauty in spite of their poverty; to feel that they were a part of something that enriched their minds and their souls. The principal chose to bring beauty

into her profession. She had learned that when we turn our spaces of learning into, as Harwayne (1999) puts it, "inviting settings" (p. 48), the message is clear: "People live here. We care about one another. This is our home away from home" (p. 44). Children, like adults, thrive in these 'inviting settings'...

And one day he advised me to do my best to make a beautiful drawing, for the edification of the children where I live (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 16).

The teacher practised this maxim in her classroom. She drew students in through showing care for the classroom and for them. Their space of learning was turned into an 'inviting setting', a good place to learn and simply to be.

Setting Boundaries

When some students talked about choice, they linked it with something 'to choose from'. The phrase implies a repertoire of possibilities. In this classroom 'structured choice' appeared in a range of activities, assignments and in various configurations of student groupings or non-groupings. But it implied something else. The choices as alluded to earlier did not occur through happenstance. On the contrary, they were the result of diligent planning.

And thus, students spoke about the variety in the activities in their classes. They named what these different activities were and how the teacher often assigned these options.[310] T.'s analogy of a "class with a class" was a fitting description of what transpired there.[311] Students, however, seemed to be ambivalent about what it took to create structure; in short, to organize classes in such a fashion. They spoke about it in vague terms such as "the teacher seems to put more effort into our program,"[312] "she mixes a bit of everything,"[313] or "she always has something else ready for us to move on to,"[314] but beyond that no reference was made. Perhaps, their seeming obliviousness spoke of the skill with which the teacher managed the sessions. At this point, I do not know. The only inkling I have is the reference made about things being done differently. Some, as a point of comparison, talked more pointedly about structure as they had lived it in the past.

Students were aware of activity structure as it related to grouping. They talked at some length about teacher-assigned groups and the criteria used for group formation. To reiterate, they credited the success of these groups to the teacher for "know[ing] us so well,"[315] and for "drawing on different skills."[316] A couple of students referred to the cyclic

shifts in the group configurations (M. stated every five weeks[317]), indicating that "change is a good thing because you have to learn to get along with different types of people."[318]

On those occasions when structure was discussed, it was done so in terms of boundaries, especially boundaries that effected students individually. A couple of students talked about boundaries as 'deadlines'. J. stated that, "Projects are dead on as far as time is concerned. She sticks to deadlines."[319] "She is usually strict about deadlines," affirmed K., "If she finds out that nobody is finished she might extend a day but that's all."[320]

Surprisingly, structure was rarely referred to as a 'negative', that is, as disciplinary measures. On the contrary, students made passing reference to the teacher who "just gets a little upset" if someone is acting up,[321] or "taking your punishment" for not having work completed,[322] but that was all. In fact, discipline was almost a non-issue, something rarely noted in my observations and, most importantly, talked about by the students. On their part any reference to punitive measures was notably overlooked -- a telling commentary about the way life unfolded for them in this classroom.

Students on a number of levels recognized structure in their classroom, acknowledging it as a positive, even essential, presence. For this reason I suspect that structure will surface again in the chapters that follow.

Conditions for Participating: A Summary

The students in their own voices revealed much about how they felt about this particular learning environment. They were talking about a classroom not only free of fear but free from a sense of futility. It was a place where in Palmer's (1998a) words they could reclaim "the vitality of life" (p. 25). Liberated from fear they could live 'love' expressed in the scriptures as "There is no fear in love" (*The Holy Bible*, John 1, 4:18). This absolution from fear opened them to building in Deweyian sense a community-in-the making. For them the classroom was a communal space, Greene's (2000) notion of a place "where there can be dialogue and exchanges of all kinds in which persons can speak in their own idioms, avoiding the formulaic, the artificial and the 'sound-bite'" (p. 274). In partnership with their teacher, students experienced first hand "education as a practice of freedom" (Freire, 1995, p. 62).

In the students' eyes, freedom and structure and the categories subsumed under them contributed to their connection to life in this classroom. Freedom was, in some contradictory

sense, one of the foundations upon which participating flourished. As will be revisited in chapters to come, freedom energized. It moved the learning forward.

At the same time, freedom required an anchor. Structure undergirded freedom, providing the security that allowed freedom to be exercised. Freedom needed definition and direction.

As the students talked about 'freedom' and 'structure', one thing was made clear to me. Students were not prone to talk about their learning in terms of texts and assignments or as something distant and removed from them. They were more inclined to talk about their relationship to it, even to position themselves in the centre of it. It is this positioning that I found unique in this study site. Curriculum was not something that existed in some external, abstract form. It was something inside. The students made it a part of who they were.

The students showed in their words a depth of understanding of the requirements of participating. While they articulated awareness of the part the teacher played, they placed the onus for their learning largely on themselves. To them, participation required a desire to learn and a commitment to hard work. In short, they had a willingness to do what was required to succeed. At the same time, their maturity in recognizing the need for taking matters into their hands, that is, in acting upon the learning environment, spoke strongly of the development of self-identity. It was also a precursor to acknowledging the contributions each brought to their learning. They appeared to be less propelled by control exercised externally, but were more prone to be driven by their own expectations. They wanted to affirm and be affirmed. They wanted to take risks: to risk the perils of being broken open; of facing the possibilities of challenge and reflection; of being who they wanted to be.

Outcome of Participation

As already shown, students were able to articulate their understanding of what participation is and what was needed for it to be possible. They also had a sense of what participation brought to them, both as individuals and as a group. This feature of participation, I have named as the Outcome of Participation will be explored in the next section.

Students demonstrate that they had an understanding that participation brought rewards beyond the academic. They talked about these rewards in terms of opening up or bringing together which I have identified this data cluster as connecting.

Connecting

Students expressed that it was through participation that they felt connected to their learning. It made them feel that they mattered enough to warrant being opened up to; to being acknowledged for what they had to contribute. This feeling was clearly evident in the voices of one student about the WIER program...

I enjoy connecting with the author Kevin Major. I am now reading his book *Eating Between the Lines*. It's really interesting. On the inside cover of his book it says he is a full-time writer. I find it amazing that a full-time writer would have time to do this: to take the time to connect with us.[323]

A number of students credited their teacher with creating the kind of environment where connection flourished. Three students talked about it as 'bringing out, drawing on or drawing in'. B. expressed, "She brings our character out, both as individuals and as groups."[324] "The teacher is good for drawing on different skills," credited M.[325] J. astutely referred to their teacher as someone who "makes it fun. [She ends up] not scaring us away, but drawing us into it."[326]

Other students felt that they were able to excel in the program because the teacher made the effort to find out who they were. I. wrote in her personal reflection, "I really like being in Mrs. W.'s class. She really reaches out to the children."[327] "She knows us well," T. stated, "She knows how much time we will need to get something done. She gives us projects that will appeal to us in a group. She knows how much time we will need. She's always dead on."[328] In another interview, L. showed another perspective, "She's in tune with us. She reads us. She knows our moods. She knows how we feel."[329]

Some students associated connecting with knowing the reason why they were doing something. They expressed appreciation for their teacher who took the time to make sure they could relate to what they were doing. "She never gives us something to do without giving us the reason," explained G., "We see connections. We know why we are doing things. We understand the reason."[330] R. supplied an example: "She always tells us 'we are doing this because', like when we did Shakespeare, she said, 'We are doing Shakespeare because we want to know something about it before we see the play.'"[331] Knowing the reasons was important to these students. It made them feel validated. In Dewey's (1938) sense they felt that the teacher valued them enough to apply the "principle of interaction" (p. 40). They were learning not because it had "educational value in the abstract" (p. 40) but

because it could be adapted to their "needs and capacities" (p. 41). M. added, "She knows what we like. She teaches us what we need to learn but in a way that we like it."[332]

Students were aware that participation also connected the individual with colleagues. They praised the virtues of 'really getting to know' each other. M. stated, "We are always together so we really get to know each other."[333] "We go to all the same classes or practically the same classes. We know how everybody else does," affirmed K.[334] In describing the program as interactive, J. surmised that, "You get to know people more. Last year you tended to work alone."[335]

The students' words not only reflected the intensity of their connection with each other, but lead me to question what that intensity did to their relationship with peers outside of the program. S. admitted, "The problem is that other students do not know us and we do not know them."[336] The student had some sense of Booth's (1993) idea of the "philiated" self (p. 90). That is, the claiming of self-identity through creating "a kind of society, a field of forces; a colony" (p. 89). Divisiveness, as the student suggested was a problem not because the students did not see eye to eye with their colleagues outside of the ALP, but because the structure of the various programs stifled any possibility for conversation. Students in the various programs were separated from each other, impoverishing their collective and individual stories.

This matter surfaced on a number of occasions during my conversations with the students. The separation seemed to, reflecting on Booth's words, draw them closer together, creating in some respects a closed, even minority, community within the school. They were, in a sense, segregated into Smith's (2000) notion of 'safe houses of identity'. As will be discussed later in this chapter, the students were living out the 'perils of privilege' and experiencing a sense of inequity, of separate-ness, that comes with it.

As evident in the data, the students had many positive things to say about their participation in this class. Yet there were flashes of inconsistencies, even incongruities, markings of any kind of human interaction. While they were not pronounced, they were evident. If I am to remain faithful to my responsibilities as a researcher, they need to be named.

The data suggested that many of the students through participation were connecting with themselves and with others. At the same time they expressed contradictions. They had an awareness of 'fitting in' and what that entailed. While, they attributed cooperation as being one of the cornerstones of life in the classroom there were moments when some of the students were less receptive to being cooperative. They talked about what it was like to be accepted. Yet, to reiterate, they acknowledged that relations between themselves and their

counterparts not in their program were sometimes strained. These issues, which I consider to be outliers to connecting will be dealt with under the headings Choosing not to be Cooperative and 'Us and Them.'

Choosing Not to be Cooperative

Although students were generally positive about classroom cooperation, some indicated that it was not constant. To them being cooperative appeared to be conditional. That is, it had an 'it depends' attitude attached to it. "It depends on what they are doing," P. informed me, "Sometimes people think that something is boring and start fooling around. Most of the time people are cooperative."[337] T. confirmed the view of his colleague, "We do have cooperative instincts, but sometimes we choose not to be. We need to work harder at being cooperative."[338]

A couple of students offered reasons for the conditional nature of being cooperative. To A. it was a question of respect, "If kids want to do something they will cooperate. When they don't like the activity, they don't. Sometimes it's annoying. You should accept and respect other people. They should be open to new things. You've got to respect others."[339] "It's also a question of maturity," commented S. bringing another dimension to the discussion. However, after making such an assertion, I noted that she felt compelled to assure me that "most of us are OK on that score."[340] T., while acknowledging occasional shortcomings in group camaraderie, was more forgiving in his appraisal, "Most of the time students follow their cooperative instincts. Sometimes when one or the other are in a bad mood I can understand why they are not cooperative."[341]

'Us and Them'

The test for acceptance of and by others was particularly evident when I raised points of comparison some of the students had made between themselves and colleagues not in the Alternative Learning Program. It was evident that issues of 'fitting in' spilled beyond program borders and into the larger school context. Students had encountered barriers with their peers and other teachers outside the ALP, a phenomenon I identified earlier as 'the perils of privilege'. These barriers sometimes translated into name calling and subtle or not-so-subtle forms of ridicule.

During the interviews, a number of students talked about being called the 'nerd herd'. "We get a bad rap for being in the ALP," R. informed me, "They'll say 'Oh you get so much homework, nerd herd'. I don't think that is necessarily true!"[342] The responses had been

triggered by a question I raised during the interviews. The question came directly from a comment made by one of the students who had written in her personal reflection that students in the ALP get "more respect [than] the regular classes."[343] "More respect?" questioned P. incredulously, "We are often referred to as nerds."[344] "I feel that the only reason why they call us the 'nerd herd' is that they are jealous," retaliated M., "Just because we are in the ALP."[345] I. expressed agitation over being tested by non-ALP peers for a right answer, "...like people will come over and ask you a question and then make a big deal out of it if you don't know the answer, like 'You don't *know*?' They act surprised."[346] "Adults give us respect because we are in the enriched program," contested S., "Some people say we are smarter, that we are nerds [she takes great exception to this]. We are not nerds! We may just try harder!"[347]

I was struck by the reaction the question solicited. The students were almost unanimous in their rebuttal against what was implied in the question including the student who admitted that she had written one of the comments. They were also very quick to defend their counterparts in the other programs. At the same time they were aware of the tendency to be treated differently because of their academic placement.

The question of ALP students 'doing things better'(also derived from a student's reflection) generated equally spirited responses: "How can a person compare when they are not in the other program?" queried J.[348] Retorted M., "We may be learning more but we are not smarter or better than other students...overall we are the same."[349] "We do different things but we are not really smarter," declared A.[350] "I don't think we do it better," responded S, "It's not a question of being smart. I don't think that is a good statement to make. Some people not in the ALP are just as smart as we are."[351]

It was the question of respect, however, that incited the strongest reaction. Some students assertively denied that they warranted more respect: J. stated, "It's not that we get more respect, but I think they expect more from us. They expect us to have better manners. It doesn't mean that we are nicer!"[352] "I could be an intellectual," added S., "but not a very nice human being. I could be a genius but not a nice person!"[353] In another interview the group reacted to the questions with laughter when M. confessed that she had written the comment. "We don't get more respect," she rebutted, "You are considered smarter. People might think we are more advanced. They may think we are OK."[354]

What was particularly insightful to me was how 'respect' was linked with perception: how one person or group of persons looked upon another. T. twigged on to this...

I don't know if I should put it this way but teachers are somewhat superficial. They see your character in your work. They judge you by what you do in school... but you are so much deeper than what you do in school.[355]

What T. was intimating goes beyond teacher judgment of students. It spoke to functioning within boundaries "meant to keep others (other meanings, other interpretations, other understandings) out" (Jardine, 1998, p. 79). Boundaries exclude. They polarize. As they create 'insiders', so they create 'outsiders', masking us from seeing each other as "whole people in our actual complexities" (Lourde, 1984, p. 118). The edges of our communing spaces are hardened by the dogmas of "should/must's" and "either/or's" (Nieto, 1998). Rarely are they cushioned by the contemplation of questions. The dialectic supersedes the inquiry and stifles the song....

What a peculiar planet! he thought. It's all dry and sharp and hard. And people here have no imagination. They repeat whatever you say to them. Where I live I had a flower; she always spoke first...(de Saint-Éxupéry, 2000, p. 54).

But boundaries erected can also be destroyed. Some students understood this. They ascertained that opening to others, to connect, was a likely way to break these barriers down.

Outcome of Participation: A Summary

Students were cognizant of the benefits derived from participation. It was voiced in terms of connecting and really getting to know each other. The words added further understanding to the participative tone of this classroom. But the words also shed light on something else. Students were aware of the inconsistencies in the classroom. But what I found to be most compelling was how intelligently they could talk about them. They acknowledged the importance of cooperating as a condition of participating, yet they were honest in their appraisal that cooperating was not always a given. There were moments when the desire to cooperate dissipated. They also admitted that these moments of disconnecting had a negative impact upon learning.

These admissions added to my understanding of participative resistance discussed in the previous chapter. I learned that resistance is not only a possible product of participation, but is contextually bound to it. What may be resistance in one time or space is not

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necessarily resistance in another. Resistance, like participation itself, is fluid, moving along a continuum and defined by many factors. The boundaries are not clear-cut or absolute.

Students were aware that elements of disconnecting went beyond the boundaries of the classroom: that certain preconceptions between ALP and non-ALP students undermined collegiality within the school. This reality carried implications for the learning context as will be discussed in chapter 6. Yet, even as they addressed the issues it was evident to me that overall the students in this classroom had made a conscious decision to actively participate in their learning.

Conclusion

The students, in their own voices, showed tremendous insights into their learning. As I listened something became apparent. Their understanding of what they lived in the classroom was limited only by the vocabulary they used, *not* by the experience itself. They derived meaning from the experience even if they had yet to acquire higher-order language, the subscribed language of the academy, with which to describe it. But within their own community they had arrived at, in Bruner's lexicon, "negotiated meanings" (1990, p. 47). As a collective, they understood their experience. The onus was on me, the outsider, the linguistic 'bystander', to reach an understanding of what these words spoke to me.

Something else was clear to me. Many of the students were aware that in this classroom there was deliberate 'breaking away' from the norm of what classrooms often looked like, and more importantly, what they felt like. The difference, the students noted in their own words, was the attenuation of control: a deliberate turning away from the "spatial, temporal, and ritual order of industry and bureaucracy" (p. 24), Grumet's (1988) description of 'paternal authority' (p. 25). There was no 'expert' in this room, muting their adolescent voices and stifling their enthusiasm. I am inclined to disagree with Wolman (1998) in his assertions that "most often adolescents are self-centered" (p. 31). I argue that adolescents tend to be self-focused and inward looking, if they feel that who they are is being systematically stripped away. I would further argue that a person of any age would likely respond in kind under similar circumstances.

Contradictions, as acknowledged by the students, were present. Pushes and pulls between students and between teacher and students were inevitable. And there were some students who seemed to fit more readily than others. There was always room for further

openness and freedom. Yet it was a classroom with hope: that this, and even beyond this, was possible.

And when you're consoled (everyone eventually is consoled), you'll be glad you've known me. You'll always be my friend. You'll feel like laughing with me. And you'll open your window sometimes just for the fun of it...

de Saint-Exupéry (2000, pp.77-78)

In response to the third research question, I turn my attention to the teacher. As the students indicated in the previous chapter, she played a pivotal role in how they perceived their learning experience. I noted that student impression of the program linked with their view of their teacher. Trying to separate one from the other is highly suspect, even from a research perspective. Student views of their learning experience ultimately point to the teacher no matter what attempts are made by some curriculum designers to separate the two (teacher proof texts, a case in point). As Eisner (1998) states, "As fundamental as curriculum is, no curriculum teaches itself. The curriculum is always mediated" (p. 63). To my way of thinking Eisner's comment reflects that reality.

If we delve further into what happens in classrooms another reality is apparent. The teacher is not only the mediator between the curriculum and the student, but *is* the curriculum. Curriculum may be designated by a government agency, but is inevitably nuanced by the individual at the chalk face simply because curriculum is more than what is readily seen. Curriculum has a less visible dimension that packs a punch and leaves a lasting impression. It is directly linked to the teacher, who that person is, how she views herself and how she relates to the students. No curriculum agency has, nor should have, the power to regulate this reality. To gain further insight into what occurred in this particular classroom, I had to gain some understanding of how the teacher positioned herself in her role. It was essential to explore this aspect of the classroom dynamic.

To review, my third research question is: 'What role does the teacher play'? The wording of the question implies that the teacher's role would be looked at from my perspective. I did not wish to undermine the importance of my gaze. In reality, it was always there. That having been said, I wanted to present a more complete portrait by granting her audibility. I had to let her tell her story.

The literature seemed a plausible place to start my investigation. It established the context for my viewing and, from that perspective alone, warranted acknowledgment.

Defining the Teacher's Role

The dictionary describes role as "a socially expected behaviour pattern usually determined by an individual's status in a particular society; an identifier attached to an index term to show functional relationships between terms"(Merriam-Webster, 1983). The term speaks to a function, of a working relationship between two entities. Since the relationship is functional it needs to be established within certain boundaries of propriety. In short, 'role' is socially constructed and works only because members of a particular social group have agreed to abide by the rules.

Initially, it may appear that the term role has implications only for interpersonal relationships. But it has an intrapersonal dimension as well. When we take on a role we accept a descriptive label, an identity, not only determining how others see us, but how we see ourselves. Adopting a role, a label, has an air of superficiality about it as the word 'play' in the research question implies. The role of teacher, for example, carries with it socio-historical identities sometimes foreign to the individual. Donning the vestments of the profession may require taking on a "prescribed" identity (Cooper and Olson, 1996, p. 87). In Britzman's (1991) words, "becoming a teacher may mean becoming someone you are not" (p. 4). Butt, Raymond, McCue and Yamagishi (1992) concur."All their lives," they declare, "teachers have to confront the negative stereotypes, teacher as robot, devil, angel, [and] nervous Nellie" (p. 55). Sometimes the label fits; sometimes not.

Since the concept of role is socially constructed, it means different things to different people. One school of thought promotes the teacher as the all-knowing purveyor of information (Shor and Friere, 1987; Sleeter and Grant, 1991). Information is used for the sole purpose of preparing students to become productive members of society, Carnoy's (1984) identification of a "functionalist" view of education promoting "the *correspondence* of schooling to work" (p. 10). This view compliments Reitman's (1981) opinion that schools exist for the "acculturation of the young to society's collective achievements" (p.37). Daggett (as cited in O'Neil, 1995) claims that schools need to make "the content we're teaching more relevant to our technological information-based society" (p. 47). In these statements we see the teacher as the transmitter of cultural 'know-how'.

Few would dispute the reasonableness of these claims. One of the aims of schools, we would hope, is to nurture well-adjusted, productive citizens. The problem seems to be more of degree than intent. We have cause for concern, I argue, if the teacher is looked upon *solely* as a cultural transmitter and students, *solely* as cultural receivers.

Various thinkers in the field are highly critical of such a view. Freire (1995) likens the idea to a 'banking system' in which "education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor" (p. 53). He continues that when education is viewed in this manner the educator's role is "to regulate the way the world 'enters into' the students" (p. 57). The teacher is the filter through which acceptable, sanitized bits of knowledge are carefully selected and transported, Everhart's (1983) notion of 'real' or "reified knowledge" (p. 86). Pickles (1985) analogizes this Cartesian model of teaching to 'egg delivery' in which "knowledge as information is passed on from the teacher to the student as if it were a basket of eggs. Effective teaching and learning are achieved if the 'eggs' are conveyed safely, intact, and without damage" (p. 234). Such thinking assumes that the student enters the classroom as an empty slate, a 'tabla rasa', relying on the teacher for enlightenment.

What happens in such a learning environment is obvious. Students are treated as passive recipients of a body of knowledge that is 'out there' waiting to be ingested. Interestingly, such knowledge speaks to the head, seldom to the heart. Rarely, in such an instance, is the learning environment classroom an arena for Bless and Forgas's (2000) concept of the 'How-do-I-feel-about-it?' heuristic (p. 382). Students learn that the *only* knowledge of worth is that which has little meaning to them, little association through experience, even less through emotional attachment. Paradoxically, students soon learn that the classroom is a space of learning in which to be on task is to be detached and disengaged. But I would argue that if the classroom is an outlet for knowledge delivery it requires not only the disengaged student, but the disengaged teacher. In such a role, the teacher becomes the *placative* mediator. This point is significant to my study.

The 'Disengaged' vs. the 'Engaged' Teacher

Teacher disengagement often occurs on three fronts: teacher-teacher, teacher-curriculum, and teacher-students. Rudduck and Demetriou (2003) indicate that the teacher by nature of the profession operates within a culture of autonomous individualism. Pedagogical practice is defined by the boundaries of the classroom and competence is determined by

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independent management. Teachers in the long run fare no better with this unbridled individualism than do the students. Professional isolation often leads to detachment and disengagement (Gruenewald, 2002; McMahon, 2003; Palmer, 1998a,b). Teachers feel unsupported by colleagues and the community. The collaboration enjoyed by other professionals is largely foreign to them. They walk the journey alone. 'Subject' territorialism limits as it isolates.

Professional marginalization attenuates teacher belief that they can make a difference. This view is especially apparent in classrooms, as suggested earlier, where 'doing to' overrides 'doing with' (Freire, 1998; Vibert and Shields, 2003). What emerges is an "instrumental view of teachers, one in which they are reduced to objects which can be manipulated for particular ends" (Casey, 1992, p. 188). Teachers become little more than wards of the state: that is, conveyors of prescripted curriculum. Standardized testing keeps them on task, and success is measured by published examination results. Unfortunately, statistics reflect the destination, rarely the journey.

When teachers take on the role of state warden, it reflects in their teaching. Students soon emulate this detachment, distancing learning from experience, rarely being circumspect, rarely speculating what it *means* to them...

> *A geographer doesn't go out to describe cities, rivers, mountains, seas, oceans, and deserts. A geographer is too important to go wandering about. He never leaves his study (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 45).*

A disengaged teacher rarely leaves the sanctuary of scripted text.

Engaged teachers, on the other hand, see learning as a part of life. They free learning from the chains of detachment and liberate it from 'otherness', opening the doors in Darling-Hammond's (1998) words "for a greater range of students to learn more powerfully and productively" (p. 80). Giroux and McLaren (1986) claim that if teachers are to experience emancipatory authority, they need to redefine their role from intellectuals to "transformative intellectuals" (p. 226). They need "to name and transform experience...one of the most crucial issues in critical pedagogy and the fight for social change" (Giroux and McLaren, 1992, p. 15). Giroux and McLaren argue that naming and transforming experience requires a critical look at language since "it is through language that we both *name* experience and *act* as a result of how we interpret that experience" (1992, p. 15). The transformative intellectual opens the classroom to the world so that students see connections; that they look at themselves as co-participants in the conversation.

The term 'transformative intellectual' resonated with me. It portrayed the essence of this study. While I agreed with Giroux and McLaren's concept, I took exception to the term 'authority'. My criticism rose from the connotations I saw embedded there. Maybe it was because life has taught me, particularly as a woman, that authority is often defined by others. The word spoke of imposed truths, stripped of their contextual connections. I saw myself. I saw the years I unknowingly pressed my students to accept that knowledge, knowledge unquestioned even as my soul cried out that something was not right: that there existed other compelling points of view. I had dropped the 'I' of my knowing, just as I asked the students to drop theirs. I disregarded their resistence, as I ignored my own. I became in Berger's (1972) words "the surveyed female" (p. 47) fashioning my authority from how others ordained it. Issues of power dominated my discourse -- discipline, management, control -- patriarchal rules of doing it right, yet fearful that I would not. I raged at how insidiously I had been encultured and how unquestioningly I enculturalized. I was oblivious to Bannerji's (1991) cry for the 'problematization' of social power and social organization, even as it played out in my own professional spaces. The only authority I have, I now realize, is the wisdom to initiate the most pressing questions and the power to provide a safe environment in which to explore them.

What is all of this leading to? Questions spill over the page. What does an 'engaged teacher' look like? What does it mean to be a 'transformative intellectual'? What kind of teacher role emerges from this? Perhaps my queries reflected my journey. Perhaps exploring someone else's biography, a biography similar to my own, at least in spirit, would confirm what I have known all along. And perhaps it was no accident that the teacher, the focus of this study, is a woman: that her journey, positioning herself as an outsider, came with a cost. I had to step back. I had to let her claim who she was through the power of her own voice as she struggled with the contradictions swirling around and within her (Gilligan, 1993).

At the same time, I realized that as important as her voice was it was not the only one. Because of the nature of the question, she would take the lead, but not exclusively. Teaching is not the lonely journey it is purported to be. The teacher is always communicating with someone. J.'s biography, as significant as it was, was shared. These other voices needed to be heard. While not wishing to diminish J.'s musings, I wanted to open up the dialogue: to turn this chapter, revisiting Pinar et al.'s (2000) phrase, a 'complicated conversation', engaging J., her students and me.

Was the teacher in my study an engaged teacher? Would she have been the type of person, at least professionally speaking, Giroux and McLaren (1986) had in mind? I thought it best to let the voices and actions speak through the data, affirming or not the answer to that question.

My search took me to my field notes, the personal reflection, and the interviews. To start, I needed to get a sense of who J. was and what brought her to the teaching profession. I have kept in contact with J. and had just recently conducted a 'mini' interview with her by telephone. When I posed the question about her career choice, her response was surprising. She confessed that she had "come in by accident and stayed by choice."[356] In the beginning the profession appealed to her because it accommodated her desire to be a wife and mother. Over time, she became increasingly drawn into it. She started her career in the elementary grades, and by her own admission, was a very traditional teacher. When I asked her to elaborate upon what 'traditional' meant she replied, "You know: students sitting in rows all working in their workbooks. My lessons were presented in tight little packages with little variety." She admitted that she hated teaching that way: "That it just wasn't me."[357] It was during her years of teaching 5th graders that she began changing her teaching approach. She noticed that students found the traditional approach boring. To get them involved, she had the students create little television programs through script writing and acting. Her revised approach was honed when she taught a split 5/6 group.[358] Later, J. carried what she had learned into the Alternative Learning Program.

As I transcribed J.'s words I reflected back to the discussion about the engaged teacher. I wanted to declare from the outset that J. was engaged. But, if I were to remain faithful to my inquiry, the data had to lead my interpretation. The data had to determine if J. not only saw learning as a part of life, but conducted her classes that way. The phrase 'part of' took me back to the concept of participating introduced in the previous chapters. To participate, I deduced, drew on certain behaviours from both the teacher and the students. And because behaviours were observable, so too was I a part of it.

At this juncture of my writing, I could see that participating and what it entailed was becoming the thread binding the various chapters. I revisited the data categories I had arranged in the folders to see if the evidence leaned in that direction. As I looked at the category clusters, actions surfaced. I saw verbs like instructing and posing questions. They showed the ways in which the teacher participated in the class. More importantly, the data suggested that her participation played out through roles. I begin with the role of facilitator.

As a starting point, the term required defining. The dictionary offered the following: "one who makes easier" (Merriam-Webster, 1983). The definition spoke to me of preparing; of setting up. It implied someone who invites others to act. A facilitator, in my view, is an agent for change in others. J. as the teacher, was as a facilitator through various actions that fall under the following clusters: instructing, providing help, organizing and posing questions. In keeping with previous chapters, I will define each cluster within each section.

Instructing

The data in this cluster encompassed the various means the teacher used to impart knowledge to her students. In my view, knowledge included knowing about and knowing how. J. was transparent about her expectations. She used the lecture approach as one method for imparting knowledge. What was unusual was the way in which she used it. "I try to keep the lecture approach, which I think is a more traditional approach, at a minimum", J. informed me.[359] As indicated in Chapter 3, J. adhered to this principle when conducting her classes. She minimized teacher talk. Yet it appeared often, sprinkled as episodic moments throughout each session. J. used instruction to preface each classroom event and to bridge one activity to another. Instructing was the primary vehicle for preparing and for appraising.

Preparing

J. practised, in a sense, 'high-efficiency' pedagogy by providing only what she felt students needed to know. Through instruction she gave essential information ranging from foreshadowing to supplying information about a literary piece being studied. On occasion, J. foreshadowed events such as the upcoming visit of a Shakespearian actor, or aspects of a literary work such as the context, the plot or stylistic features. For example, when the students were being introduced to *Midsummer Night's Dream*, J. gave a thumbnail sketch of the story line and explained that in the days of Shakespeare, women did not act out the female roles. They were performed by young boys.[360]

On another occasion, J. supplied background information about a short story providing an overview of the setting and the social context of the era being represented...

...The story uses 'funny' English to emulate how some of the British spoke to the local people in baby talk thinking that this would help the people understand the

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language. "Isn't it funny how people will resort to that way of talking or even talk loudly to compensate for their lack of understanding?" J. asks the class. She introduces the term 'pidgin English'."That is why English is strange in this particular story," she explains.[361]

The overview, I noted, took no longer than 5 minutes.

When she felt it was warranted, J. would introduce concepts by foreshadowing them. A particular example illustrates this approach. On one occasion, J. had the students engage in what I call a 'pre- debating' exercise. A couple of student groups had a chance to debate such topics as 'Be it resolved that MacDonald's is better than Pizza Hut' and 'Be it resolved that computers are better than TV's'...

At J.'s signal, the students return to their seats. Once they are settled, J. asks, "What we did is not exactly a debate. Why?"A male student responds, "Because we were not arguing the points." "Exactly," replies J.[362]

Such events took a small amount of 'air time', less than 10 minutes by my calculations. Yet, they were invaluable because through them J. effectively led the students to arrive at their own understandings of the concept.

Instruction about 'how to' seemed to take a bit longer, mainly, I ascertain, because it prepared students for more immediate action. J., for example, took proportionately more time explaining the mechanics of debating when the students were preparing for a competition. She used the largest amount of continuous instruction time (I estimated 30 minutes) to explain about the debating procedure: from the introduction, to presentation of arguments, to the rebuttal and to the judging. She also used the time to explain the difference between parliamentary and academic style ...

We are doing the academic style," she informs the class. "We do not have to provide a plan of the stand we are taking. We simply have to give an opinion.[363]

During the instruction, students were not simply listening. J. invited their participation with such questions as: "What is the first thing that the first speaker of the affirmative should say after the greeting 'Good morning'?" "Why should you have your first sentence written down?"[364] Students responded in kind by asking questions of their own. Student-initiated questions sprinkled throughout (during this particular exchange, for

example, I documented six). Overall, J. instructed in sound bites, as exemplified in such statements: J. explains to the class that today they will be doing some written work on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*[365] or directives such as, "Write on two characters instead of four."[366] To compensate for the brevity in instructions, J. devised other means to ensure that students were kept informed to be discussed later.

Appraising

J. was transparent with the students about their progress. Appraising included being open about the demands of class activities and the students' ability to handle them. On one occasion she prefaced her introduction of a new concept in debating with the following comment, "Today we will be making our practice a little more difficult. We will be practising how to use refutation." She continued to explain that in this procedure a student offers evidence to question or debate a statement made by a previous speaker.[367] On another occasion, after listing each activity to be performed at the Open House, J. assigned certain students to participate in them. She declares, "I have assigned students to the activities I feel they are able to do well."[368]

J. kept the students informed about how they were being evaluated. During one session, she explained to the class how an assignment was to be graded by both the librarian and her.[369] On another occasion, after distributing the portfolios, she explained how she marked them...

> As soon as they are distributed, she asks the students to refer to the Table of Contents. I notice by glancing at the portfolio of one of the students seated in front of me that J. has assigned a mark to each of the titles on the list. She mentions that the total mark is 25%.[370]

Often, J. designed assessment criteria that were shared with the students. She explained her rationale by referring to an activity in which the students taught a topic of their choice...

> They are given the criteria ahead of time. For example, the assessment criteria for their teaching presentations differ from their written work....When I assess their teaching, I not only look at how well they are organized but how much their

colleagues learned from their session. In their creative writing I include such an item as what I call the 'imagination' criteria.[371]

The appraisal criteria applied to the teaching presentation was as follows:

Preparation: Were the presenters prepared?	5%
Presentation: Was the presentations clear? Helpful?	5%
Organization: Is the presentation well organized?	5%
Involvement: Is the class involved? Does the presentation draw on their involvement?	5%
Interest: Is the topic interesting? Does it appeal to the students?	5%
Any learning? Does any learning take place?	5%
Total	30% [372]

Table 2: Criteria for Assessment: Teaching Presentation

J. was of the opinion that being overt about evaluation facilitated student learning. In her view, evaluation pushed students to be involved. Learning, they had discovered, was a risk. Mistakes would be made. Transparency opened them to this possibility. It drew them in.

J. also used something else. She resorted to various strategies of authentic assessment (Wood, 2001, p. 53), that is, strategies of "questioning, discussing, guessing, proposing, analyzing, and reflecting" (Shores and Grace, 1998, p. 11). The suffixes attached to these verbs suggest process. J. viewed evaluation as exactly that. As if taking her cue from Scriven (as cited in Pinar et al., 2000), she looked at evaluation as a formative rather than summative endeavour. Students had a sense of how they were doing throughout the year. They were continuously kept in the loop. As one explained to me, "We get to discuss why the teacher marked you that way."[373] It also indicated J.'s view of what teaching demanded of her. Nothing was left to chance. J. regarded teaching, in Alexander and Murphy's (1997) words, as a "purposeful undertaking" (p. 33).

Providing Help

J. was in tune with her students. She recognized when students required assistance and created different ways to help. During my first visit I heard her say to the class, "Anyone who does not have a personal computer may use those in our computer room. Just let me know and I will arrange a time for you."[374] I observed on a number of occasions, J. assisting students in the computer room, particularly with downloading their work on diskettes. Assisting also appeared in smaller forms. To help the students read though assigned parts of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, J. made bookmarks for them that she encouraged them to use.

J. knew that offering assistance had a vital counterpart. The facilitator had to be able to identify who was receptive to the 'offering'. She was diligent about keeping abreast of where the students were at any given time. It was not unusual to see J. checking to see how each student was doing. She readily identified when help was needed...

> J. moves around the classroom giving directions. "What is the little voice I hear underneath what I am saying?" asks J. A female student sitting at a middle table to my right responds with raised hand, "That's me. I can't find my sheet!" I can tell by her expression that she is somewhat agitated. Without reprimanding her, J. directs her to the blue box in her office. The female student heads to the office and returns to her seat without further comment.[375]

As already established, group work was a 'tour de force' in this class. When students worked in these configurations J. moved among the groups checking to see how things were progressing. I noted on a number of occasions that...

> J. is making her rounds sitting at different tables and offering assistance as the need arises.[376]

> J. weaves her way to the computer room. "What is happening here?" she asks. Her tone expresses concern rather than criticism.[377]

J. used various approaches to assist the students, particularly when they were preparing for an assigned activity. Sometimes she offered suggestions to prepare them for debating, for example, as illustrated in the previous category. At other times, she walked them through a series of questions designed to give direction. Providing structure was key.

'Doing with' meant being available. J. purposefully arranged the classes so that she could hold one-to-one discussions with a student when a problem surfaced...

> I then ask J. what she was discussing with the individual students who moved up one at a time to where she was seated. J. explains that she is going over the mistakes they made in their revision of the dialogue. "There are still many mistakes," she states, "For example, one of the students who came to see me still cannot distinguish between 'it's' and 'its'. Sometimes students just require further clarification."[378]

By her own admission, providing help was an important facet of J.'s role. Students were cognizant of J.'s accessibility, and talked about it in their interviews. As shown in the previous chapter, students were aware that help was present upon request and that the teacher readily assuaged any fears they were harboring about making mistakes.

Organizing

J. surmised that her teaching approach required a lot of organization. The data indicated that she focused on two areas, namely, the books and hand-outs used in the class and a system for completing tasks. These organizational components are addressed as clusters called tracking materials and establishing routines.

Tracking Materials

J. had a system in place for taking care of classroom materials. There was an orderliness about the classroom, even when there was a flurry of activities going on. As strange as it may sound, this orderliness was reflected in my notes by *not* being reflected. Let me explain. I am generally a person who prefers neatness (although not obsessively so). For that reason, I would have likely taken note of an unkempt room. No comment appears in my notes until log # 7. I knew from experience that an organized classroom does not occur by osmosis. It requires considerable planning and foresight. When followed through, it looks so easy, as evident in J.'s room.

Clues to this reality surfaced during classroom interaction. On one occasion J. made reference to the books lying haphazardly in the book case by the door to the computer room. She commented on how they were not put away tidily after being used the last time.[379] Early in my visits I noticed that each student added hand-outs to a binder. J.'s commented that the students had two binders one for English language arts and one for French language arts.[380] I

discovered later that the binders were divided into sections that were to be identified and kept separate...

> J. then directs the class attention to the questions about the story in located at the back of the Shakespeare sheet. "This sheet should be in the literature section of your binder," she reminds the class. She tells them that they received this sheet sometime in October, but they should have kept it. She speaks to one of the male students who has been negligent in organizing his binder. "You need more dividers," she tells him.[381]

J. paid considerable attention to the portfolios. As mentioned earlier, each student had two: one blue; one yellow. Early in my visits, I had a sense that there was some organization to them, but was not certain, especially when I saw students take their compositions randomly out of the two. I was even more confused when I witnessed the following exchange...

> One male student is asked to get his composition. "It is in my blue folder," he replies. J. informs him that it does not matter which folder it is in as long as he has it [I am now more confused that ever about the system of blue and yellow folders. I will need to check with J. for further clarification].[382]

At the end of that class, I queried J. about the portfolio situation. She smiled and stated that it was partly her fault for not keeping on top of it. All of the student's work was supposed to go in the blue folder, while the 'best' went in the yellow. Later in the second interview, I asked J. to tell me more...

> In the blue folders are the work in progress, all we do in class. The work doesn't have to be finished. In the yellow folders, students keep what they feel is their best work, explaining why they selected that work. However, with the WIER program coming on side I had to change that concept. So much paper was being generated by the WIER program that their blue folders were filling up very, very fast. I thought, I can't start another folder. Therefore the yellow folders became two concepts in one. As you know the students do a lot of their written work at home. This work is submitted in their blue folders, which I grade. Sometimes I grade them for making an attempt, for showing that they made the effort.[383]

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J. regarded the portfolios as in integral part of classroom organization. In essence, they were a kind of 'artist's portfolio" (Johnston, 1992) in which students included (especially in their yellow folder) "work that [they] [saw] fit to display and talk about to others" (p. 129). J. admitted that she found "it difficult time wise to constantly assess the two folders."[384] The presence of the portfolios, however, ensured continuous assessment...

> Assessment is ongoing from the beginning and to the end. I avoid assessing only at
> the end of the term. I try to stick to blocks of assessment. In their portfolios they keep
> a numbering system so that we can keep track of assessment periods.[385]

Students were very aware of J.'s penchant for organization. As much as it was a source of humour for them as articulated in Chapter 4, they respected and appreciated J.'s seeming fastidiousness. It seemed to give them a sense that J. cared about her environment and about them.

Establishing Routines

At first I found the classroom to be a bit overwhelming, simply because it was not something I was used to seeing. To the newcomer, the constant comings and goings of student groups seemed chaotic. The data clustered in this category indicated that this was not the case. The teacher had a prescribed way of doing things. What disguised the routine at first was the ease with which the events unfolded. When I looked deeper I saw that J. was a strategic planner, determining well ahead of time where she was going. As J. succinctly pointed out, " I know what I'm doing. It may not look that way when you come into my classroom, but I do!"[386] J.'s abilities as a planner did not escape her students. They told me in various words that their teacher was always prepared.

Part of her classroom strategy was to keep students informed about what they were doing next. At the beginning of one class, for example, J. stated, "On Wednesday we must select our teams and reach a consensus about debate topics. On Thursday and Friday we will go to the library and research our topics."[387] As the students told me, J. was adamant about deadlines, rarely readjusting the due dates. Since I had not persued this issue with J., I am not certain as to why this was the case. It remains a point of conjecture. I assume that given the demands of the program, J. felt she had to keep moving and couldn't be held back by procrastinators. In keeping with Rosenthal and Jacobson's (1968) findings about teacher

expectations, the students, by their own admission, soon learned this and respected her time lines.

J. organized the classroom to facilitate student interaction. As one explained, "I like it that we sit in groups at round tables. We can communicate better sitting this way than in rows."[388] J. assigned the seating altering it throughout the year. During a number of subsequent visits, I noted that the seating had been changed. J. informed me that she changes the seating about every five weeks. She believes it is good for students to know what it is like to work in close proximity with a variety of people.

While J. frequently designated the groups, students had on occasion the opportunity to choose their own as talked about in Chapter 4. They articulated the benefits brought about by working with different people. They got used to the shifting and were able to readily adapt to change. As I reflected during my visit the following year...

[I am intrigued by how little effort it takes to divide into groups. The original plan was for each group to consist of 2 boys and 2 girls. However, the student presenters have been reminded that there are more boys in the class so such an arrangement will be impossible. "Well whatever. Try to distribute a mix throughout," responds one of the presenters. The students organize themselves so easily, mainly I believe because *they are used to doing it*. While J. designates groups, she also has given the students the opportunity to organize themselves. And this freedom of choice has paid off. Students learn to exercise their own decisions about whom they work well with and whom they do not].[389]

I discovered another important facet of classroom routine. J. could limit the amount of time needed for explaining procedure because she had what I call a 'silent' partner, the chalkboard. It was constantly in use not to supply notes, but instructions. The instructions took various forms as outlined in the following synthesis:

1. general overview of activities to be done that day...
    Example
    1.   Read
    2.   Identify theme.
    3.   Answer questions...p. 168: #'s 1, 2 and 3[390]

2. work to be completed by a specified date....
    Example
    Due Wednesday, November 27

- Rough copy (first draft)
- Checklist (was done in class)
- Analysis of story (based on checklist)
- Second draft (typed and double-spaced)[391]

3. assignment of students to specific tasks...
    Example
    Midsummer Night's Dream
    Rehearse for 10 minutes, p. 27-32
    (List of students' names)[392]

4. specific points/questions for exploration...
    Example
    Features of the short story
    1. Plot →climax
    2. Characters (dialogue)
    3. Setting
    4. Style
    5. Point of view
    6. Theme[393]

J. spent time with the board instruction exemplified in item #4 (specific points/ questions for exploration). Otherwise, limited attention was given to what was written, if at all. Students were expected to adhere to the instructions provided there. As J. reminded a student during one class, "Don't call out," she explained patiently, "I wrote it on the board for you."[394]

J.'s organizational skills spoke to her desire to participate. She took a keen interest in the working environment. She was willing to use whatever resources were at her disposal to facilitate in the truest sense, that is, to make things easier. A telling example for me was the way in which she kept track of the students to be interviewed for my study as illustrated in Chapter 2.

Posing Questions

It was not unusual to hear questions. They dotted the landscape of the conversations. As suggested in a previous section, the question-response exchanges were woven into instruction time. Questions, were often, although not always, initiated by the teacher to connect new ideas with prior knowledge and to guide the class into new territory.

In one class J. asked a student the following questions "How is your day so far?"; "What did you do this morning?". She proceeded to write the conversation on the board to

introduce how to write a dialogue.[395] Later, in the same class, as described in Chapter 3, students were asked to define the term 'conflict'. J. responded to the explanation supplied by one of the students with the following: "Who can you have a conflict with?". She used the question to combine the concepts of conflict and dialogue. In the months that followed, dialogue and conflict unfolded into explorations of the short story and debating. It all began with a question asked on that September morning.

As appeared to be a pattern, J. used the question to lead the class to a new theme...

"What makes a horror story?" J. asks. Students respond with such answers as: "Monsters; life and death; things that make you scared." J. continues the discussion with reference to the site of horrible events. Students respond with graveyards; on vacation; downtown...J. uses the horror story as a leverage to bring the students to the point of writing their own.[396]

J. applied this technique a number of times. In keeping with McNurlen's (2004) referent, J. introduced a new concept through using the 'Big Question'.The question welcomed as well as informed. It was used, building on Gabrielatos' (2001) thoughts, to elicit interest, to guide, to check and to manage. The question framed thinking. In Miller's (1995) sense, the question invited both teacher and student to tell their individual autobiography. But the question was more. It was an initiator of dialogue (National Research Council, 2000). It served a purposeful role in introducing, leading, 'bringing to' (Stronge, 2002). As will be revisited later, it served other purposes as well.

Teacher as Facilitator: A Summary

J. fulfilled her role as a facilitator. In a nutshell, a facilitator is a maker of possibilities, well grounded in practicalities. A facilitator is earth-bound, anchoring dreams and aspirations to practice. In Nunan's (1995) words, the facilitator determines "what is feasible" (p. 133), skillfully crafting Hinchman and Oyler's (2000) idea of a "situated pedagogy, that is pedagogy designed to meet the individual needs of the students (p. 506). Borrowing Knowles' (1992) term, the teacher as facilitator engages in an artisan relationship with his or her wards, establishing a form of "classroom apprenticeship" (p. 105).

J. shared my view of what her role was. When I asked her to discuss her role in her personal reflection, she began her writing with this comment: "I see my teaching role as a combination of sage, facilitator, and animator."[397] As the data showed, J. set up the

conditions that enabled her students to engage in assigned participation introduced in Chapter 3. Through instructing, providing help, organizing and posing questions, J. paved the way for students to acquire the knowledge she felt was essential.

J. had her own notions of what the role of facilitator entailed: "As a facilitator I help the students in whatever job they want to do... .I make it easier for them. I give them suggestions. I give them guidelines."[398] In J.'s eyes being a facilitator implicated process explained in this way...

> As a part of the preparation, I find things that are exciting and interesting. They [the students] get to work with someone, discussing themes, writing elements of the fantasy and analyzing their own work. I try to get them psychologically and literally prepared for the long writing...These bits and pieces are all put together in the long story. I bring in others: another class; other people.[399]

Students had an idea of what the term facilitator meant. When asked to define the term, one of the students was particularly astute. He responded,"Whatever we do she puts it on the board. She brings us to different facilities like the library, the computer room."[400] Being a facilitator meant in his eyes, one who 'brings to'. She took the students from where they were to new experiences, to new ways of doing and looking at things.

The data showed that the role of the teacher, in this dimension of participating, took on the characteristics of a facilitator. The role was an act of preparing, setting up, leading to growth and regeneration. It meant reaching out and inviting in, bringing in new experiences, and turning them into learning moments. Along the way J. nurtured the individual blossoms...

> *"I believe it is breakfast time," she had soon added. "Would you be so kind as to tend to me?" And the little prince, utterly unabashed, having gone to look for a watering can, served the flower (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 23).*

In keeping with the dimensions of participating already identified in Chapter 3, J.'s role went beyond that of facilitator. Like her students she participated at a deeper level in a role I identify as animator to be discussed in the next section.

My thoughts on the term 'animator' took me to thinking about how I would define it. After some deliberation, I arrived at the following. An animator is a person who stimulates the learner's desire to learn and awakens learner's belief in his/her ability to meet challenges. In short, an animator stimulates learner engagement.

Evidence supported the notion that J. participated through her role as an animator. I have clustered the data into the following groups: involving, nurturing creativity, sharing and enjoying.

Involving

J. showed her students that she expected them to participate. Involving took on various dimensions. She not only insisted in their involvement, but showed concern for the quality of that involvement. From the outset, involvement was not looked upon as being all things to all people. J. adhered to the philosophy that, "I am a visual person and for that reason get the students to learn in a variety of ways. We write, say, give out information and we do."[401] Her statement was revealing in the vocabulary she chose. In the words 'I get' she showed recognition of her role. The use of the pronoun 'we', on the other hand, implied that learning was a meeting place for both the students and for her.

J. believed first and foremost that students needed to be active participants in their learning. She understood both the individual and collective dimensions of participation. During classroom discussions, students were affirmed for what each contributed to the class. It was evident when students were working on an exercise called 'Making a Case' in preparation for debating...

> In a few minutes the class 'corrects' their responses. The second statement 'Students presently are allowed to smoke only outside school entrances' generates some discussion. T. raises a counter argument. J. encourages the current 'debate' with the comment that the answers 'can be debated'. She asks the class to consider what is the best alternative.[402]

Class involvement went beyond toeing the party line. J. was obviously at the helm determining the course content. She made no apology for that. As she declared,"I don't have a problem with determining what is valuable to learn."[403] J. would likely agree with Hlebowitsh (1999) that "although the nature of learning is always fluid and cannot be

completely understood beforehand, it is still framed with a directive purpose" (p. 347). As intimated in Chapter 4, and explored in greater depth in subsequent chapters, J.'s practice contradicted the tenets of student-centered pedagogy. There was, however, a sense of purpose, a continuous pressing forward in her class. That being the case, she made a concerted effort to move away from Cornbleth's (1995) reference of "curriculum knowledge control". She provided students with the "opportunities to construct, reconstruct, or critique knowledge" (p. 166). In so doing she ultimately gave them a strong voice.

J. knew that giving a strong voice meant relinquishing hers. It meant giving over talk time to the students...

> She mentions how some people who have seen her in the classroom feel that she does not teach because she limits the amount of time she talks to the children. She is intrigued that some feel that unless she is the one doing the talking learning does not take place. "I often speak only a few minutes and then the children take over. Some people find this difficult to understand."[404]

J.'s admission was revealing. It shows how narrowly teaching has been defined and the pressures put on those who dare to do it differently. Research shows that in spite of efforts to change pedagogical practice, teacher talk still dominates. Levin and Nolan (1996) have this to say about Newmann and Wehlage's view of verbal interaction...

> When authentic instruction takes place, both the learners and the teacher are engaged in dialogue and argumentation that is not scripted or controlled and that builds on participants' understandings as opposed to verbal interactions characterized primarily by lecture and short, preplanned, predictable conversations...(p. 110).

I would like to think that Levin and Nolan's vision is the norm, but I also know that it is not. And I take exception to the term 'authentic' since it implies something real as opposed to something that is not. In my view, every classroom experience is a reality. Furthermore, there is not one reality, but many. Some realities, however, connect better than others. A master teacher aims to connect. Dialogue connects when meaning emerges from it, Berthoff's (1990) notion of 'mediating representation'. He states: "Just as all learning is collaborative, so all knowledge is necessarily mediated by our experience of the world"

(p. 364). J. had some sense of this, and even more significantly, so did her students. They were expressing this awareness in statements like 'she relates to us'; 'she really reaches out to the children'; and, 'she's in tune with us'.

For J., engaging in dialogue meant stepping back and allowing students to contribute to the conversation. Contributing included stating opinions. J. had strong views on this. Students, she felt, not only were to be given the opportunity to express opinions but had a right to do so. She felt that expressing opinions was a companion to learner growth....

> Students sense if they are allowed to express their views. Students should be allowed to express their opinion and to know that an opinion can't be wrong. Facts and opinions are not the same thing.[405]

Acceptance of opinions went beyond polite acknowledgment. While even this might be seen as a far-fetched dream, in some classrooms, J. took it further. Student opinions were more than valued, they were acted upon. As J. explained...

> The other day we were planning a trip to Tadoussac and one of the students came up with a suggestion that I thought was a great idea so I changed the plans to accommodate her idea.[406]

Opinions and ideas were acted upon in various ways. Students were given responsibilities. To evaluate group work, J. designed a system that took into account specific roles for each student. But she left it up to them to define the role. As shown in one of my personal reflections...

> [I notice that J. frequently draws on the students to take care of various housekeeping activities in the classroom. I also notice that she tends to give the students freedom to decide how best to take care of their duties].[407]

J. wanted students to not only meet her expectations, but to exceed them. She encouraged them to take the initiative; to go beyond merely doing what was expected of them. She gave them a wide berth to do things their way...

> As students write, J. circulates around the room and gives comments. One male student asks, "Can the glass be broken?" "Yes, go for it," J. replies.[408]

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Initiative was equally valued in group work. I recall an occasion when J. expressed delight that students decided to create a photo collage of ALP Activities for the Open House.[409] On another occasion, she explained to me with pride how students in a group had taken responsibility for one another's behaviour by trouble shooting a brewing confrontation between two classmates.[410] As with individual work, J. gave students freedom to work things out...

> "Noisy writers," J. comments tilting her head towards the students. "I don't know how much check listing is going on." I tell her I think some of the students are reading each other's stories. "I know that's not exactly what they should be doing at this moment, but I don't want to discourage them from doing so," she states, "I think it's a great way to start in the editing mode." [I agree.][411]

J. was aware that her enthusiasm was a precursor for student involvement. During one interview, J. informed me, "I am aware that if you do something you like you will approach it with greater enthusiasm. You're keener and the kids pick up on it."[412] It was almost redundant to be told that. J. liked what she was doing: that was self-evident. It showed in the enthusiasm with which she approached each class. I could feel it.

The effects of this exuberance on the students has been noted in research. Burton, Horowitz and Abeles (2000) conclude that...

> The more teachers are excited about their work, the more insights and knowledge they have to guide their students, the more positively their students have been found to respond (p. 230).

J., knowing this principle, tackled her teaching with gusto. She acknowledged that involvement was nurtured through her own enthusiasm, that it was something to be shared...

> I share my enthusiasm for what I am learning and doing with my students. I bring in books that I am reading. I talk about plays and shows that I've attended and I let the students see that much of what we do in class is not abstract learning but activities that adults engage in for pleasure.[413]

Students felt her enthusiasm and were touched by it. It left its mark: "With her enthusiasm is number 1," declared one student;[414] "She's very energetic," two other students informed me.[415] Her energy stimulated their will to learn: "She has a different way of teaching. She gets your attention and gets you involved," stated another.[416]

Some students had a sense that getting involved meant being expressive themselves: "She shows us how to act properly, how to use movement and to express ourselves."[417] I recorded many examples of J. pushing students to show more enthusiasm; to use greater expression. Sometimes the word appeared in her comments...

"K.", states J., "Put more expression into what you are saying. I know you can do it. Flatter her!"[418]

On other occasions, J. used the general word 'emotion' to indicate what she wanted or, being more explicit, named the particular emotion she felt needed to be expressed...

"You're not showing any anger. Show it in your voice. Be sarcastic. 'Oh brave heart.'" J. states these words in a voice thick with sarcasm.[419]

Her criticism was often directed to their voices. On occasion, however, J. made comments about gesturing and movement...

"You've got to move fast and use the whole space of the stage," she tells them.[420]

For J., being expressive, was obviously important, not only because it was more convincing to the audience, but because it tapped into their creativity: "When called upon to be creative," J. stated, "students have to think about ways of presenting like in drama and improv."[421] True to the intent of the ALP, J., in her use of the phrase 'ways of presenting', was likely referring to broadening the repertoire of expressiveness. She saw that her role was to encourage students "to really *see* or *feel* or *hear* the world around them, ensuring that the palette with which they create expands" (Richards and Milligan, 1998, p. 82). In doing so, they would enrich the landscape of their experiences, adding new depths of colour and hues as the vignette shows...

A. slowed her reading tempo but continues to read in a dull, lifeless voice. J. interrupts her again. "You are a good actress," she tells her, "Put more life into it:'You see Paris tonight'," J. demonstrates with a voice rich with passion and romance. A. laughingly imitates her.[422]

J. knew that 'expanding the palette' opened the gateway, breathing life into experiences once locked in the silent confines of convention. It pushed back the boundaries of thought and of word...

You see the wheat fields over there? I don't eat bread. For me wheat is of no use whatever. Wheat fields say nothing to me. Which is sad. But you have hair the color of gold. So it will be wonderful, once you've tamed me! The wheat, which is golden, will remind me of you. And I'll love the sound of the wind in the wheat... (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 60).

Nurturing Creativity

As foreshadowed in the previous section, creativity, to J., was a mainstay of the program. The program description in the school hand-out introduced in Chapter 2 affirms her point of view. Data in this cluster indicated the conditions that J. set up to encourage creativity among her students.

J. confirmed this emphasis in her presentation to parents referring to the ABC's of the program, also appearing in the hand-out:[423] A=Academic excellence; B=Broadening of horizons; C=Creativity. But J. sensed that there is much more to creativity than describing a program as such. It also went beyond designing a creative program. Creativity effected everything she did as a teacher. "Being creative effects the key elements of teaching. I find that I am a better teacher because I am creative," I was told.[424]

Spurred by the last statement, I pressed on. I wanted to find out what J. did that made her, at least in her eyes, a better teacher. What mattered to her as a teacher was evident. J. thought of herself as a better teacher, not only because she was being creative, but because she was able to bring creativity out in her students. When I asked her how she felt a teacher accomplished this, she responded...

The teacher needs to provide a secure environment where everyone has a chance to shine; to be a star....Students need to be able to explore their own ideas. You encourage them to go farther, try something differently.[425]

At first glance, her words seemed to carry a certain connotation. They implied that creativity already lived in the student waiting for the right environment, the right moment, to be released. In this context, the teacher as provider seems to take a passive role, giving the students, as said earlier, a wide berth for expression. I initially dismissed this viewpoint as being somewhat off the mark. I preferred to think of the teacher as having a more visible presence in the process.

Some writers caused me to revisit my thoughts. I soon realized that teachers could be too well-planned and too present. Kessler (2000) cautions that "as teachers, we often prove our competence and responsibility by good 'planning'. But our own creativity -- and the creativity of our students -- may be at odds with even the best of plans" (p. 100). Creative thinking often defies logic, a view J. shared. "Pure logic to me is a non-creative process,"she once told me.[426] Creativity defies predictable formulas and connections. It involves metaphor, Ward, Smith and Vaid's (1997) interpretation of Rothenberg's notion of 'Janusian thinking', that is, "simultaneously holding in mind two opposing concepts" (p. 6). In their view, creativity builds on the potent attraction of difference or opposing energies Donaldson (1992) describes as " like a binary poison -- or a magic potion -- two inert elements combine to produce something of frightening potency" (p. 223).

Perhaps we should not be surprised at the power of the creative process: how it fuses together two opposites with astounding results. The process is all-consuming, drawing the creator in. Creativity cries out for, in Kessler's (2000) words, a form of immersion: a "getting lost in what we are doing" (p. 101). But the losing is not only confined to the creator. The mentor is also swept into the vortex. Gardner (1993) concludes that creative individuals he studied relied on emotional support and intellectual understanding during their 'eureka' moments: "As a psychologist interested in the *individual* creator", Gardner writes, "I was surprised by this discovery of the intensive social and affective forces that surround creative breakthroughs" (p. 43). The mentor must offer suggestions, but not too soon. For a time, the wise mentor stands back, rendering silence.

In keeping with Gardner (1993), J. took, what I call, a 'guardedly visible' role, encouraging what was potentially there and bringing it to full flower. She would agree that creativity can be nurtured, but with the right conditions. "You need to use different approaches that appeal to different kinds of intelligences -- visual, spatial, kinesthetic," she

declared.[427] She aligned with Gardner (1991) who argues that schools can stimulate creative thinking, but only if revision is made to many current curricular practices. That is what J. seemed to have in mind when she agreed to take on the program...

> The notion of experiential emerged from the original concept of the program which was considerably more sports oriented with wilderness and canoe trips. Experiential within that context meant hands-on or a physical application to what they were learning. When I was asked to take over the program I was invited to introduce more cultural and artistic experiences. Our field trips comprise of visits to museums, plays, etc., rather than ventures requiring physical skills.[428]

For J., her mandate was clear. She had a certain kind of program in mind. Creativity, she knew, would not automatically happen. It needed to be nurtured. Nurturing creativity meant offering support for what the students did. J. continuously showcased the students' work on the classroom bulletin boards...

> I take a few minutes to peruse the display on the bulletin boards–all work done by the students, book covers and kites. The kite designs in particular catch my eye. I see a kaleidoscope of colours, greens, fuchsias and yellow. Some of them capture a traditional Oriental theme; others are decidedly more modern and Occidental.[429]

Showcasing also involved singling out a creative work to classmates or to a colleague...

> J. shows the class a yellow portfolio folder on which is drawn a beautiful butterfly. "Be sure to finish decorating your portfolio before you pass it in on Wednesday."[430]

> The class in general created their coat of arms on paper but this particular student created his with wood. An excellent job. "I must show this to his art teacher," J. tells me.[431]

But J. had a sense that while showcasing contributed to creativity, the students needed more. They needed knowledge from which creativity flowed. Creativity requires 'know how', that is, knowing the rules of the game and how to apply them. J. knew she had to help the students "activate the widest range of creative processes" and to move these processes "from inside the head to an outward public reflection of the soul" (Colvin and

Bruning, 1989, p. 330). To express creatively, students had to have something to say and the skills to say it. Students needed to be prepared for that. J. gave me a glimpse of the process...

> They have to learn what the elements are of the fantasy but I try to do it in an exciting way. We learn to express the senses through detailed description and the whole idea of incorporating description in the fantasy world they are going to create.[432]

During my visits I saw snapshots of students preparing for creativity, such as when they were introduced to writing a dialogue. Later I observed students practising writing paragraphs in which they explored expressing emotions...

> I look at the board and notice the following written:

> Mad (angry)

> Sad   "Her suitcase was packed and she was ready to leave"

> Glad

> A female student sitting close to me explains that for three days they are to write a paragraph exploring each of these emotions. Each paragraph must start with the sentence indicated above: "Her suitcase was packed..."[433]

Preparing involved letting the students know what was expected of them. They were capable of producing work of quality and J. let them know that. Their poetry drew a barrage of responses that were much to the point : "Punch line could be longer... very creative... political... a sad topic... That is not an original. Please write your own... Did you compose that on your own? Very, very good."[434]Her comments were direct, yet without malice. Respect was always present, even when she felt compelled to correct or push them.

Nurturing creativity also entailed breaking down barriers, helping students see their own creative potential. Neçka (1992) surmised that an effective mentor sets up conditions for "weakening internal censorship" (p.127) often one of the strongest inhibitors of creative expression. Being flexible or, in Bateson's (1987) terms, leaning towards an "uncommitted potentiality for change" (p. 505) is essential. It was clearly evident in this classroom. On one occasion, for example, J. had set aside a time in the class for students to design the backdrop

for their fantasy poems. As the students worked, J. played a Mozart symphony explaining that "We'll be going to a Mozart concert next month."[435] Later in the same class...

> J. turns off the music to indicate they are moving on to something else. "Aw, don't turn off the music," a couple of students protested. J. gives the students a chance to vote on whether they wish to continue with the work they are doing at present or to do another activity. The majority of the class elect to continue working on their poems. "Good choice," J. states after the fact.[436]

The question of internal censorship is a logical lead-in to the question of 'external censorship'. Contrary to what is sometimes believed, creative expression needs to define itself within boundaries, Parnes'(1975) notion of "channeled freedom" (p. 242). Constraints breathe life into creative thought by embodying it, giving it form. Even when the creative act strives to break boundaries, it requires something to break *from*. The creator breaks through established rules by logically establishing others (Perkins, 1988). As the twentieth-century composer Stravinsky declared, "The more constraints one imposes, the more one frees one's self of the chains that shackle the spirit" (as cited in Gardner, 1991, p. 224).

J. recognized the link between creativity and constraint. As discussed earlier, J. was transparent about letting students know what they were expected to do. She referred to these expectations as "boundaries for them to push against."[437] Boundaries were often presented as criteria or stated rules as exemplified when...

> J. mentions that the board game the students are to create must be three-dimensional in design.[438]

At the same time J. was cognizant of the perils of setting up too many restrictions. She gave the students leeway to explore their own ideas. At the Open House, for example, students created their own advertisement jingle, incorporating visual effects, poetry and music. As I enter the classroom that evening I noticed the students who were a part of that presentation...

> Three female students are dressed in long dresses; one is dressed as a man; another as a computer. 'The computer' is wearing a silver box with tables of different designs of clothes. On her head is a beret. I joke with J. about a "French computer". J. laughs, "Makes you wonder what we are teaching them here!"[439]

By nurturing creativity, J. gave her students another view of what knowledge is. She did not dismiss the knowledge her students had derived from their experiences. She nurtured not only understanding experience, but expressing experience. In providing such an environment, J. helped her students arrive at the realization that...

> The work of art-- by which I mean the act of creation-- does not follow an unalterable schedule but is a journey that unfolds. The relationship of the maker to the work is not that of lecturer to listener, but to a conversation between the worker and the work (Eisner, 1998, p.84).

...And so the conversation continues.

Sharing

The data clustered under this heading showed that J. was aware of the communal aspects of learning and made efforts to act upon it. To begin with, she believed that she needed to share the learning experience with her students as reflected in her words, "I run a child-centered program with many interactive elements which, I believe, makes the student feel like a partner (junior) in the learning process."[440] As I revisited these words, I reflect upon the ways in which this belief was acted upon in this classroom. Students played not only an active, but an interactive role. Generally speaking, the classroom ran in a collaborative rather than competitive mode and there was a deliberate leaning to appreciate differences (Clark and Clark, 1994). Students felt secure about seeking help from their peers as well as from their teacher. At the same time, J. aimed to provide an environment where individual students could be challenged. To reiterate, her goal was to find a balance between competition and collaboration.

Overall, I felt that the balance had been successfully achieved. Student comments certainly confirmed this. My overall sense was that students were very happy in this class. Their responses were positive, in some cases, glowingly so. 'We are all in this together' was the often-voiced refrain.

The data affirmed that students were acknowledged for what they brought to classroom discussion and were encouraged to share their ideas and expertise with each other as explored previously. Classes were designed so that students could spend the time working with each other productively. J. provided the criteria to keep students focused and to ensure that students remained on task. She kept a pulse on what they were doing.

'Keeping a pulse' meant having a sense of group dynamics and working with it accordingly. J. was aware that when it came to human interaction 'like' attracts 'like': that left on their own students would group themselves accordingly...

> She states that the students work well in groups although she notices with interest that in informal situations, a kind of self-selection occurs. They cluster according to gender and image. Sensing that I need further explanation, particularly with the latter criterion, she says that students who view themselves as part of the 'in-group' tend to group together: "coolboys" tend to bond with "coolboys."[441]

I understood this dynamic only too well. In spite of the span of decades that separate me from my high school years, I still remember what it felt like not to be a part of the 'in crowd'. I couldn't belong because I had the dubious distinction of being 'the brain' and a 'PK' (preacher's kid) making me uncool on both accounts. I remember (with amusement now) how I agonized over this reality at the time, being pulled between being true to myself and wanting to fit in, knowing deep inside that I never would. I marvel at the miracle of the passing years: how I have learned that fitting in cannot happen until I accept who I am.

In some respects J. also knew what it was to be an outsider. As a child she had moved with her family to Vancouver from her native country, France. She recalled going to school unable to communicate in English and what that felt like.[442] Because of her own personal journey, she knew first hand the alienation of being out of place and what this dynamic did to the classroom community. That is why, I contend, she felt particular empathy for her student who had recently arrived from northern Europe. J. would likely align with Alvermann's (1995/1996) view of the adolescent penchant for 'talk-alike' groups and the social hierarchy reflected in their construction. As Alvermann states, "issues surrounding adolescents' needs for peer approval and acceptance cannot be ignored, especially when the possibility exists for those who are less outspoken to feel cast aside by their more outspoken peers" (p. 288).

The implications of this dynamic became particularly clear to me during the student interviews. J. worked with me setting up the groups to balance outspoken with quieter peers. In hindsight, I wonder whether or not it may have been better to have configured them differently. In one group, I noted that one student dominated the conversation...

> [I have been thinking about the various groups I have interviewed to date and the "mix" of these groups. The last two interviews I feel have not been as successful as the previous ones. The interview last day was lopsided because one of the students

monopolized the conversation. I don't think that was intentional on his part. In fact, I am certain that he is unaware of the imbalance. However, he is such a dynamic individual that the other students were eclipsed by him].[443]

Would it have been better in retrospect if I had, as Alvermann, Commeyras, Young, Hinson and Randall (1995, April) suggest, matched dominant with dominant; less dominant with less dominant? My own experience led me to think so...

[I can't help but wonder how the group dynamic would have panned out if the group had remained intact as originally planned, namely I. and R. instead of P. and K. Interestingly, because of the shift, the entire group was so subdued that P. took on a somewhat dominant role, a role I suspect he would not have taken had he been grouped with more exuberant colleagues. Perhaps the last minute changes gave him the chance to shine].[444]

Yet in the daily life of her classroom, J. was sensitive to the possibility of addressing this dynamic. She worked at creating an environment where everyone gets to be a star. She insisted on forming the groups and changed them regularly reasoning that she wanted students to adapt to working with different people. Students were fully aware of her position and seemed receptive to the change. "Change is a good thing," one informed me, "You have to learn to get along with different types of people."[445]

Placing students in close proximity to one another encouraged them to share views and to be exposed to other visions of the world. Through these close encounters, students were pressed to move beyond the 'talk alike' syndrome and were drawn in to Jardine's (1998) notion of a 'common ground of understanding'. Common ground transcends like identities for likeness of place rendering each party the same. That is, "a true conversation seeks out a common ground (if we were both simply different, conversation would not be possible) in the midst of a recognition of difference--it is a dialogue, not a monologue" (Jardine, 1998, p. 63). True conversation introduces other imaginings.

But the students were not the only ones engaging in dialogue. So did J. She engaged because she positioned herself, not only as one who teaches, but as one who learns. I remember her words, "You're always learning even after all these years".[446] This utterance was significant. She understood that "a learning community can help us see both barriers and openings to the truth that lives within us" (Palmer, 1998b, p.77). J. knew that whereas 'like' spoke readily to 'like'; 'like' was unlikely to stimulate growth. Growth required dialogue,

moreover, dialogue of differences. Through dialogue, both teacher and student could recognize commonality. They could arrive at the realization, as a student declared, that 'we are different, but not *that* different' after all.

Opening

J. created a feeling of openness in the classroom through modeling. She lived out the adage 'actions speak louder the words'. She knew it was one thing to talk about 'being open', but another matter entirely to *be* open. She used the analogy often in phrases like 'the classroom as an open window' and 'opening up to students'. She could not expect students to be open if she was not willing to take the path as well. She could not be a bystander removed and detached from what she was teaching.

J. admitted that she did not always hold this view. There was a time when she thought of her classroom as a "closed box,"[447] as an entity removed and isolated from the world outside. But that was then and views can change. J. was living proof of that. She aimed to make what students learn "relate to the real world,"[448] to bring out not only the world outside but to bring out the world within, to explore their own "original way of looking at everyday things."[449] Keeping herself in tune with the students' world outside of the classroom seemed a logical place to start. J. admitted to me, not without a hint of amusement, that "I like childish things. I make a point of seeing child-oriented movies so that we are able to relate to each other."[450]

J. practised 'opening the window', embracing both 'letting in' and 'letting out'. On occasion J.'s group shared activities with other students. She collaborated with colleagues on cross-curricular projects such as the travelogue spoken about in previous chapters.

'Letting in' also embraced members of the wider community. Guests were invited into the classroom in person or, as in the case of the WIER program, electronically. Parents were recognized as an asset to the class. Activities were developed in collaboration with the resources available during a particular year as she described...

> I find that the kinds of things we do depends on the parents who can be a resource. One year I had one student whose father was a lawyer. He came in and taught the class about law. We built a theme on law using mystery stories relating to law. Last year a museum in Montreal had a display on flight. Using the museum as a resource we did a unit on flight since there seemed to be an interest in town on the topic. We built kites and explored the history of flight.[451]

J. was always thinking of new ways to make use of what was 'out there'. During my follow-up visits in the second year, guests were brought in from the television industry to teach the class about production writing and filming.[452],[453]

J. expanded the borders of the classroom by taking students out for field trips considered to be an integral part of her program. Her rationale for participating in these adventures was expressed as follows...

> I feel strongly that culture is not considered an important element in many Canadian schools. Therefore one of the ALP mandates is to go on field trips every few weeks to absorb the flavour of the city (Montreal) rather than the suburbs and to sample some of the cultural activities offered by a big city such as museums and concerts. To prepare the students we do activities in the class first so that they have some idea of what to expect and how to behave in a cultural milieu which is a very important consideration.[454]

The treks outside were not treated as separate from, but rather as an extension to, what was done inside. Before seeing a live production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, for example, the play was studied in class.

I experienced opening first hand. J. was receptive to my presence in the classroom. She seized our conversations as learning moments: opportunities to think more about what she was doing and how to do it better. She was always there to support what I wanted to pursue. She saw to it that the students completed their personal reflections and, as already indicated, assisted me throughout the student interviews. She took a genuine interest in what I was looking at and what I was finding. As I noted after one of the interviews, J. seized the event as a 'learning moment'...

> [I enjoyed engaging in these conversations with J. She is so willing to share her ideas on issues raised in the questions. But she is also willing to take them beyond and add another dimension to them. I notice how she uses the interview as a 'learning opportunity'. At one point J. alludes to how great the questions are: "They make me think about what I am doing. They're super!" She approaches everything with such enthusiasm].[455]

On more than one occasion J. solicited my advice or an answer to a question (in front of the students, I might add) as illustrated in this example...

After A.'s presentation, J. wonders out loud if the amount of time allotted for each presentation is too long. "We don't want to bore the parents," she tells the class. Seeking advice, she turns to me, "What do you think?"[456]

Her openness and receptivity to what I could possibly contribute to the class highlighted one of the dilemmas I encountered as a researcher. At times I felt caught between maintaining my role as observer and being a participant. The pull intensified the longer I stayed. Staying meant feeling at ease with the environment and feeling accepted. Getting immersed, tossing aside my gaze as the researcher, was so enticing. I had to pull myself back.

That having been said, I had a glimpse of what openness and receptivity can do. It turned this particular classroom into a community of acceptance, a place where students felt 'welcomed in', where they could "feel, [are] seen and heard for who they really are" (Kessler, 2000, p. 23). It was a fertile ground for Greene's (2000) vision of a "we-relation...when people communicate in such a fashion that, by means of their communication, they feel as if they are experiencing an occurrence together" (p. 273). It took them all in new directions, of seeing possibilities and expanding horizons. A student summed up what was taking place in this classroom with the words, "With her we do things I have never done with other teachers."[457] The window had been opened.

Enjoying

J. was emotionally engaged with her students. "I want to turn my students on to learning; to excite them," she explained during one of our conversations.[458] I wanted to delve more into this. I wanted to explore what J. did to incite her students to learn. True, she encouraged them, but what was the dynamic of encouraging that left such an imprint upon them?

J. was impressed with student initiative, and was overt about it. After collecting names throughout the school of students who were interested in editing a board-wide publication of students' literary works, J. returned to her classroom. I noted that...

She appears to be quite pleased that it went well. She shows me a list of students who signed up to be editors for *Fledglings*. "There are seventeen in all," she notes enthusiastically, "sixteen of whom come from the ALP!" she adds proudly.[459]

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J. was especially impressed when students showed the courage to try. After one class, she spoke about the new student from Europe referred to earlier in this chapter...

> "I was bowled over today when he participated in that scene," she chirps with a big smile. "This is the first time I have ever heard him speak in front of the class!!"[460]

J. articulated her praise to students individually. I witnessed this on a number of occasions. In preparation for the Open House, students were being organized for various activities. J. singled out a male student, "T., I hope you are able to come. We need your bubbly personality!"[461] On another occasion, a female student had just finished reciting a poem she had selected and memorized. J. commented on the superb job she had done.[462]

J. also expressed her appreciation for her students collectively. As already shown, on one occasion students were being quickly moved from one activity to another. "Today we are doing many things," J. told the class, "But I know you can handle it."[463] During an exercise in which students had to write a description about an inanimate object, J. checked to see how the students are doing. "Some of you are budding artists," J. informed them. "You are making the item come alive."[464]

While these expressions of 'being impressed', undoubtedly helped as one student had claimed to "bring the animation out of us,"[465] there was something more that sparked their enthusiasm. The number of compliments recorded in my data was not generous. J. used them sparingly. Yet, as shown in the previous chapter, students felt that this class was a great place to be. They felt affirmed and were 'drawn into it' as one student had stated. I found myself asking: What was it, in spite of her limited displays of affirmation, that made the students feel this way?

The key, I argue, lay in the enthusiasm, even more broadly, the joy emanating there. It did not appear in isolated incidents but pervaded everything that was done. I marveled at how lucky these students were. Sadly joy is not a frequent presence in many classrooms. As educators we have turned learning into such a formidable business that we have squeezed the joy out of it. One of the students expressed this point well when she talked about her expectations for the ALP, "I was concerned that things would be so serious. I wondered if people would have a sense of humour!"[466] In her own way the student was voicing Weaver and Cotrell's (1992) call for enjoyment in our spaces of learning, spaces where both teacher and students emit in Kessler's (2000) words "radiance of joy" (p. 75). It aligns with hook's (1994) thoughts about classroom eros, "a force that enhances our overall effort to be self-

actualizing, that... enables both professors and students to use such energy in a classroom setting in ways that invigorate discussion and excite the critical imagination" (p. 195).

A student, who I felt was one of the most reflective in the group, talked about 'eros' as a 'good' feeling. "She puts good feeling into the class," he informed me.[467] Eros, 'the erotic', is profound to learning: profound because it has to be lived in the learner. In Lourde's (1984) words, "It cannot be felt secondhand" (p. 59). And because it is felt, it empowers, kindling the fires of action; fuelling the belief that we can make a difference. "Recognizing the power of the erotic within our lives," states Lourde (1984), "can give us the energy to produce genuine change within our world, rather than merely settling for a shift of characters in the same weary drama" (p. 59). To her students and to me, J. lived eros in her classroom. She exuded joy and her students lived it with her.

J. practised classroom eros and from it brought forth engaged pedagogy (hooks, 1994). J. talked about engagement in terms of being interested, even excited. "I project that excitement to my students," she declared.[468] J. engaged because she enjoyed. She practised with joy and the students received it as fun. I recall relaying to her that the students described her as being 'a fun teacher' and how they associated learning with fun. J. was thrilled with the comments. She expressed at that time how essential it was that children love to learn. Later, J. reflected that "we tend to find pleasure out of things we are interested in."[469] But it was clear to me that J.'s pleasure and enjoyment transcended things, even knowledge. She found joy in people, especially the people entrusted to her care. She voiced it to me on several occasions as exemplified in the following...

> She is so excited about the class enthusiasm for this play and speaks again about how much she enjoys this group.[470]

Beyond what was said to me directly, it was difficult to provide evidence for this joy. But it was palpable. It appeared in the care J. took to prepare her lessons, appealing to the interests of each student. It appeared in her efforts to get to know each of them, building activities that celebrated and challenged. It was lived moment by moment in the way she relished conversing and sparring with them, reveling in their humour and their points of view. Everyday was a new beginning and a new discovery, for herself as much as for her students. As with Pagano (1988), she recognized that to be a 'true teacher'..."passions must be joined to the pursuit of wisdom" (p. 13)...

"I'd like to," the little prince replied, "But I haven't much time. I have friends to find and so many things to learn" (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p.60).

To J., learning was a passion and a passion to be shared.

Teacher as Animator: A Summary

The data clustered under the categories of involving, nurturing creativity, sharing and enjoying pointed to J.'s role of an animator. J. not only piqued student interest in learning what was being offered in the program, but nurtured them into believing they could. The data also affirmed J.'s own perception of her position in the classroom. When I raised the question about how she perceived her role, she stressed that she wanted to be thought of as an 'animator'. To revisit her words, "I want to turn my students on to learning; to excite them".[471] Being an animator breathed life into the teacher role and, I argue, demanded a deeper level of participation, both on the part of the teacher and the students. 'Animator' speaks of passion and energy. Interestingly, some of the students felt the same way. "She's like a cartoon," quipped one when I questioned them on the meaning of the term. I recall that the comment elicited gales of laughter from his peers. "She jumps all over the place."[472] A colleague elaborated, "She brings the animation out of us. She is more animated than an animator."[473]

The student's choice of the word 'cartoon' carried much meaning, probably even more than he realized at the time. While J., as facilitator 'brings to', J., as animator 'brings out'. The process speaks to shared participation discussed in the previous chapter. As a facilitator, J. lead to what is 'out there'. In her role as animator, she awakened what is 'in there'. She freed the students to blossom and to 'come forth'. The flower thirsts for water but still has a beauty all its own.

Students, as they reminded me, blossomed not only because they could express, but could express creatively. Such expression, as established, required boundaries, without rigidity. J. understood this. She opened the classroom to the world by venturing out and inviting in. Through her actions, she modeled sharing and collaboration. Above all, J. exuded joy and passion for what she was doing. In so doing she was instrumental in building the participative tone of the classroom.

Of her roles, J. identified herself first and foremost as an animator. She wanted to engage her students and to cultivate a passion that would last a lifetime. Her role was not

only to lead, but to awaken; not only to bring them to what was to be explored, but to bring out what was already there...

> *Hear that? Said the little prince. We've awakened this well and it's singing (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p.69).*

...And the awakening brought them to other ways and to other worlds.

Teacher as Conductor

My thinking about J.'s role lead to another question: What supported and sustained J's role as both facilitator and animator? J. not only participated in what was to be learned in this classroom, but she participated *with* the students. In the previous chapters, I indicated that student participation was supported by a sense of structured openness. In like mind I was curious to know what contributed to J.'s ability to sustain the delicate balance or even paradoxical relationship between freedom and boundary explored up to this point.

During my visits I caught a feeling of movement, a surging forward that energized. It carried the teacher and the students in a spirit of anticipation. I do not want to suggest that the participants were focused on the future. On the contrary, there was a 'nowness' about the learning, an immediacy that drew them in, even as it carried them to the next moment. This 'forwarding immediacy', as I call it, was palpable and deserved to be acknowledged. As I struggled to find the appropriate metaphor to describe what I saw, I was pressed, as I have done before, to turn to that which is most familiar to me: that is, the musical arts. My search took me back to my life as a musician, of a choral conductor to be exact. The term was very much a common ground for me. I knew the language. I spoke the words of tempo, rhythm and dynamics, but most importantly I have lived and felt them, and I might add, still do. I sensed their presence in this classroom.

The words brought me to the person directing them. I recall during one session of being so taken with J.'s ability to direct all the 'goings on' that I was compelled to write: "At times she appears to be more of a symphony conductor than a teacher in the traditional sense."[474] In my view, J. fulfilled her role as the conductor, at least within the context of this study, by orchestrating action for change; setting the tempo, rhythm and dynamics of the action; and, leading. As the data showed, J. took on the role of a conductor by establishing in

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a class a feeling of forwarding immediacy. Like the musical arts that inspired this concept, forwarding immediacy carries various dimensions I have identified as 'projecting' or moving through time, 'peaking and lulling' or quality of time, and 'taking the lead' or structuring time. The first data cluster is projecting.

Projecting

Like the musical arts, there was an awareness in this classroom of movement through time. The data reflects that J. was conscious of time making direct reference to it as shown...

J. checks the time. "There is no time left for writing," she announces to the class.[475]

I was conscious of a 'now-ness', of being present in the moment. At the same time, I had an anticipation of what was to come: an expectation, in Erickson's (1995) words of what would happen in the "'next' next moment" (p. 22). Time was continuous, yet temporal, an underlying pulse forever present, forever foreshadowing, swirling in a perpetual dance of moving onward. Time, as in music, was the lifeblood, the energy. In the study site, time presented itself in two dimensions, as external timing, pacing from the beginning to the end of the school year between class sessions; and as internal timing, ebbing and flowing, tensioning and releasing, within class sessions.

External Timing

In J.'s classes, there was a global feeling of pacing coupled with a strong sense of direction. I did not interpret a student's use of the descriptor 'spontaneity' to mean classes were conducted haphazardly. On the contrary, as already established, they were very well thought out. J. had a overall picture of what was to be done which gave a feeling of continuity from one session to another. At the same time, she admitted that she liked to have enough flexibility in her plans to change things from one year to the next...

I guess as teachers we feel that there should be continuity in what we do. This causes a conflict when we think about changing things from one year to the next. I think we are worried that it doesn't sound 'professional' when we state we do things because we like them. I try to keep flexibility in my plans.[476]

J.'s concern with not sounding professional took me back to her first interview in which the issue had surfaced. I had asked her how she chose her themes. She had prefaced her response with the comment "maybe I shouldn't say this but I choose the themes I like and that I think the kids will like."[477] J. declared that she had no problem determining what was valuable to learn, yet she felt she had to justify her point of view. In reaction to this obvious need I wrote ...

[I find it amusing that J. has to apologize for using her own preference for selecting themes. Why is it that teachers feel they have to mistrust their own instincts about the kind of things that are interesting to learn? In my view it is rather unsettling that professional educators feel unsure about making decisions about what is worth learning. I wonder where they pick up that message?].[478]

The issue resurfaced during the second interview. At the time I commented that it is rather compelling that educators are reticent to admit that they build a curriculum upon what they want to do, rather than upon strict adherence to Ministry guidelines. After all, what are these guidelines but someone's ideas? Why do we not apologize for following them? Yet in spite of her need to apologize, J. trusted her own instincts. She relied on, in Eisner's (1979) words, her own "educational connoisseurship" to determine what the curriculum would be.

What does this have to do with tempo? I argue everything. J. was on to something when she spoke so assuredly about doing things that she liked to do. She had a sense that passion was the time keeper in her class because it energized. In the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson (as cited in Weaver and Cottrell, 1992), "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm" (p. 430). Because what she did was more than a job, she exuded what one of the students described, as "an up and at it"[479] feeling to her classes. She approached her work with joy. Work merged with play evoking Moffett and Wagner's (1993, January) idea of turning play into "a serious learning 'method'" (p. 32). Her passion flowed out to her students. They immersed in its wake as reflected in their words of the previous chapter.

In J.'s classes there was a feeling of being anchored in the 'now'. Her classes exuded what Kinchelo, Steinberg and Villaverde (1999) refer to as "the power of the present moment" requiring her "to be receptive, to listen for presence, to pay attention to what is here" (p. 113). Her curriculum was anchored to the avant garde, to current events in the community as in the flight theme. But there was also sense of building, of using the present to prepare for the future, the 'now to come'. I recall J.'s discussion about how various

learning experiences were building blocks for more challenges. J. was continuously preparing students for the subsequent now. One technique she used was to foreshadow...

J. reminds the class that their couplets are to be ready for this coming Friday.[480]

J. employed her skills in connection to time.

To a musician, time is not only a moment of 'frozen experience' as Pinar et al.(2000, p. 581) suggest, but a series of moments moving collaboratively and purposefully to others. With a musician's intuition, I felt purpose in J.'s classroom. Most importantly, the students were aware of it as well. Reflecting back to student comments about the class, they related to this sense of purpose and were obviously pleased to be privy to it. They defied the assumption, criticized by Goodman (1992) "that children aren't interested in knowing why they should attend school, or that even if they are interested it is really none of their business" (p. 127). J. made it their business. In an artistic sense, as a connoisseur, J. opened the student's eyes to see things that she could see (Palmer, 1998b). J. made it possible for them to see connections. It was not enough that she approached her work purposely. She generated this sense of purpose in her students.

J. built classroom experiences through purposeful, strategic planning shared with her students. She aligned curricular experiences to enhance student thinking, independent of her own. "I like the students to take an imaginative leap," she admitted.[481] J. would agree that to take such a leap students had to "reflect on their own thinking and learning performance and use that self-knowledge to alter their processing" (Alexander and Murphy, 1997, p. 31). But J. was also cognizant that to take that leap required planning. As much as she believed in the potential of her students, she would admit that, in Frein's (1998) words...

> although we can never prepare students to produce imaginative work, we can prepare them for the attempt"...[and that]..the best practice...involves watchfulness, alertness, and a taking-seriously of the practice in question as well as an understanding of *the point of* the practice" (pp. 48-49) [italics added].

J. not only drew students into that alertness, that connection to the now of the learning moments, but cultivated an understanding of *why* they needed to be connected. Because of that they felt energized to join in, sparked by the tempo of what J. set out to do.

Internal Timing

J.'s classes were energizing. 'Energizing' in a musical sense is connected with rhythm, a filling in of the spaces between the pulses. She admitted to me on the first day of my visit that she preferred to teach in English because the students were much more comfortable in that language and the class moved faster. The busyness was constant.

J. was in a continuous state of moving and expected her students to keep up with her. Since J.'s penchant for fast pacing was always anchored in the curricular activities students had a sense of what was next. During one class, early in the session, J. scanned the class with a smile and said, "We are moving at breakneck speed," as she lead the class into correcting their work.[482] J. often embedded her references to pacing in the directions for an activity as depicted in this scenario leading up to an improv session...

> "Make sure your words are written in big letters," J. reminds the class. "Hurry guys, we don't want to take all day! Remember–big letters!!" She repeats this to some of the class members as she peeps over their shoulders.[483]

At first the fast pacing caught me off-guard. I was not versed in seeing classes conducted in such a way. "The rhythm of the class is so fast today. I can barely keep up with it", I entered in my notes.[484] The number of references I made to the words fast or its synonyms (about 12) was telling. I had been trained to pace things more slowly especially with younger students. Even with older students, the idea, pedagogically speaking, still stayed with me, countering Freiberg and Driscoll's (1996) view that "students are impressed with high energy teaching" (p. 142). J. certainly adhered to that doxology. Overall, her pacing was faster than what I usually have seen in core curricular situations, such as an English language arts environment. But familiarity emerged from the strangeness. I sensed Marcus's (1998) notion that "what was incommensurable is brought into relationship or at least contact" (p. 392). I related to what I was seeing, juxtaposing it against my own experience as a choral director. In that context the fast pacing always worked successfully. Here, I appraised, was a teacher applying that pacing to general classroom practice and it worked.

J. conducted her class with not only an exuberant internal rhythm, but a perpetual 'in-tuneness' keeping students focused on what needed to be done 'now'. In my first interview with her she explained why: "I like things exciting, with movement, short enough with brisk rhythm."[485] And brisk it was. There was a sense of moving not only away from something,

but a moving 'to'. J. used phrases like 'getting on with' or 'moving on' to express her intent. In one class, for example, after spending a few minutes discussing various housekeeping items, J. quipped, "Enough of that. We have to get on with the work we must do today."[486]

To maintain the fast pace, J. had mastered the art of what Freiberg and Driscoll (1996) call transitions, that is, management routines occurring at the beginning of or during a lesson as the class moved from one activity to another (p. 77). As a rule, J. used two techniques to ensure that the transitions ran smoothly. At times she used directives as in...

J. declares, "We are moving on to another phase of the lesson."[487]

Or, as suggested earlier, she used questions...

Without any further discussion, J. leads the class into a discussion of a hero. She leads into the discussion with the question,"Who would you classify as a hero?" a female student responds, "Superman."[488]

There was little time wasted in her classes. I noted that as soon as she introduced a topic she quickly immersed the students into it.[489] Or, if things went off track ...

J. skillfully veered it back to the original focus.[490]

Even though there was a sense of 'moving on' in this class, J., in Freirian sense, was watchful of each moment. Teacher talk time, as already discussed, was kept to a minimum, yet during that time, she expected undivided attention using directives, questions and 'reminds' as illustrated in the following snapshots...

J. directs the class's attention to what is written on the board.[491]

J. grabs his attention by asking, "P., do you see me?"[492]

J. reminds the class that there are some more questions remaining.[493]

Activities and their placement in the session reflected this expectation. J. took a commanding lead in directing the action as illustrated in a synoptic snapshot of the events in my second log of field notes (the verbs are italicized for emphasis)...

10:55 am:	J. *reminds* the class that when the bell rings that is a symbol to start to work
	J. *indicates* that 'conflict groups' leave for a short practice (5 minutes).
	J. *asks* the remainder of the class to work on punctuation sheets
	(Conflict groups return to class)
11.01 am:	J. *leads* class into correcting work
	J. *directs* the class to the conflict presentations
	J. *offers* constructive criticism after each presentation
11:10 am	J. *introduces* the next exercise involving editing
	J. *instructs* students to find an editing partner and work with them
11:20 am	J. *circulates* from table to table checking progress
11:32 am	J. *directs* the class back to their own seats with a clapping of hands and use of the 'teacher voice'
	J. *reaffirms* why the editing exercise is valuable (short discussion follows)
	J. *reminds* class of assignment due
11:34 am	J. *indicates* for another 'conflict group' to give presentation.[494]

The vignette, while class specific, is representational of what happened in most of the classes I attended. There was a sense of inner timing, Udine's notion of "the essential characteristic of Life: movement ...a feeling that all living creatures are constantly consummating their own internal rhythm" (as cited in Langer, 1957, p. 227). J. was tuned in to the shifts in rhythm tailoring the curricular activities to it. As a result, each class was characterized by undulating moments of tension and release: a time for bringing together and a time for letting go. Rhythm interfaced with tempo, defined and was defined by it. "Rhythm," declares Bagby (1999), "requires stillness, requires the absence of sound...The duration of unsounded sound between beats determines a rhythm's essential character" (p. 46). As much as students seemed to enjoy 'doing', they also enjoyed 'being together' in the doing, even if their individual pacing differed. The occasion, described earlier, when the students were working to the strains of a Mozart symphony comes to mind. One student had a sense of J.'s alignment with their pacing phrasing it as 'knowing us so well'. The comment

spoke not only of the student's awareness of an individualized, internal rhythm, but J.'s ability to build curricular activities that took that rhythm into account.

'Letting go' regulated the movement of students, both physically and mentally, between one activity to another. As already discussed, it was not unusual to find groups of students simultaneously engaged in different activities. The activities while related thematically, drew on different skills, forming what I call 'layered learning events'. Through these, J. gave the students space to think and cheered them on.

But 'letting go' also had a futuristic ring to it, a recognition of *when* to move on. J. showed continuous awareness for what was to follow, a feeling of moving into the future. She knew exactly how much time to allocate for each learning experience, directing them on to another activity as soon as interest began to wane...

J. signals that the discussion time is over.[495]

J. had a sense of tempo and rhythm, of pulse moving from one class to another and within each class. She set the pace but from her students took her cues...

That night I didn't see him leave. He got away without making a sound. When I managed to catch up with him, he was walking fast, with determination. All he said was "Ah, you're here." And he took my hand (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p.78).

Peaking and Lulling

There was a presence in the class, not only of sound but of sound nuanced by quality. The dictionary defines 'quality' as "a peculiar and essential character" (Merriam-Webster, 1983). What is implied in this definition is that to determine the quality of something, I must regard it as possessing features that distinguish it from something else. Because quality needs juxtaposition as a point of reference it is always contextualized, even if I am not consciously thinking of that other quality. In music language, one quality is dynamics, that is the degree of loudness or intensity. When I say, for example, that the music is loud, I am implying that I have a concept of what 'not loud' is.

Understandings of quality are relative and, at some point, highly subjective. When J. commented that she liked her class to move in a brisk rhythm, I had some sense of what she meant even though there might not have been some disagreement if we had insisted on metronomic precision. Musically speaking, there is often a cross-relationship between

qualities. Perhaps unsurprisingly, dynamics link with rhythm; the more frantic the rhythm, the louder the sound. Anyone who has spent time in a classroom is well aware of this relationship. I have often found that the busier the class, the louder the noise. This classroom was no exception. Quiet and noise were not constants but rose and fell according to the movement of the activity. That is why I have identified the data falling within this cluster as peaking and lulling.

J. was aware of this phenomenon. She was sometimes pushed to keep it in check. I noticed this occasionally when the students were working on a skit or engaged in peer editing...

> The noise intensifies as some of the males students jostle with each other. J. does not make any attempt to stop them although a look from her and they refrain from getting into it...J. quietens the class.[496]

I also noted it during a transition between a high energy activity such as improv, and a more subdued activity such as a discussion...

> It is rather hard to hear what is transpiring because the noise level has increased. J. calms the class by asking a few questions...[497]

What is especially telling about peaking and lulling is how infrequently I referred to it in my field notes. I noted that J. made reference to noise only on occasion. As stated earlier, students were often placed unsupervised in adjoining spaces to practice or do work on the computers, yet rarely did J. feel the need to quieten them. Only one exception appeared in my notes...

> Outside we hear a clamour. The voice of a male student is particularly audible. J. looks at the class somewhat perturbed. "Is that K.?", J. asks the class incredulously. "Yes," they reply, "That's K." J. rushes out to see what all the commotion is all about.[498]

Correcting the noise happened minimally partly because of how J. perceived it. My sense was that she made a clear distinction between productive and non-productive noise, showing a high tolerance for the former. Interaction was a high priority in her classes and she

understood that interaction without noise was impossible. Learning that was enjoyable was far more important to her. She was conscious, however, that not everyone shared her point of view. It appeared that other teachers complained about the noise emanating from her classroom as I noted in the following caption...

> As J. passes by me she mentions something about closing the door and the reaction of the other teachers to the noise.[499]

J. recalled in her presentation to student teachers how one of her colleagues would periodically tiptoe to her door and close it, commenting: "Being creative today are we, Mrs. W.?" It was clear that J. was not in agreement with her colleagues, at least with the way that noise played out in her classroom.

The issue resonated with me. I encountered a similar experience when I was teaching music at an elementary school. I had started a recorder group that practised one morning a week prior to the first bell. Over time the group had developed into a respectable recorder ensemble playing Renaissance madrigals and other selections of the period. I was so proud of their accomplishments. Unfortunately, this sentiment was not shared by some of my colleagues who viewed the instruments as little more than noise-makers. One insisted on closing my door during every rehearsal. Obviously what is sweet music to one, is not to another. But I defended my belief that these students could create beautiful music and that the recorder was a legitimate instrument worthy of the effort.

I identified with J. because I saw parallels in our journeys. I sensed that the opposition she encountered to the noise was most likely a smoke screen for other issues to be discussed in the next chapter. J. reminded me of Barone's (1993) take on Bloom's notion of the 'strong poet', that is, "someone who refuses to accept as useful the descriptions of her life written by others. Instead, the strong poet is a strong storyteller, continuously revising her life story in the light of her own experiences and imagination" (p. 239). J. was a strong poet. She refused to comply with what others felt a competent teacher should be. She lived by her own convictions.

The notion of strong poet spilled out into the classroom and had major implications for the noise issue. J. was intent on defining and re-defining her own identity. She realized that developing a sense of 'Who am I?', that state of being, also meant in Sarbin's (1997) words, "being-in-place". Her construction of identity was imprinted *en situe* with those she encountered there. She would likely agree with Sarbin that "construction ... arises in dialogue" (p. 69). It was through interaction that she constructed her identity, just as the

students constructed their own. There was a sense of partnership in the classroom with a conscious playing down of teacher authority. Students felt they had freedom, as suggested in Chapter 4, not only with a legitimate voice but with legitimate voices. They did not feel compelled to 'sound out', to rebel, because they did not feel silenced. "Silencing," according to Fine (1991), "is about who can speak, what can and cannot be spoken, and whose discourse must be controlled" (p. 33). The class did not appear to have one strong poet but many. Students articulated, as voiced in the interviews, that they could speak their own mind without fear of retribution.

Because they had the freedom to be strong poets, the students tempered their own behaviour. There was little need to demand attention because it was freely afforded to them. Noise was rarely an issue in this classroom, I argue, not because students were controlled, but because they were *in* control. I came to this realization during one session taught by a substitute teacher in which the students were being organized to read through a play. As noted earlier in Chapter 4, as soon as the activity began the students quieted down automatically.

The dynamics of this classroom were not determined by one to the detriment of the others. It was a communal determination, a shared "coming to know of the self" (Barone, 1993, p. 242); an unfolding of life expressions resonant and new.

Taking the Lead

In spite of attempts to create a 'child-centered' classroom, J. set the pace through leading. In the world of music, a conductor is called to lead. Experience has taught me that while I must remain open to suggestions, it is up to me to make the final decision. Ehmann (1968) comments that "the director should express himself with brevity, clarity, and logic and always direct the attention to essential matters" (p. 209). Ehmann assumes that the director has the knowledge and know how to determine what these matters are.

Likewise, the teacher is what I call the curricular leader. And perhaps this is what was so refreshing about this classroom. Unlike many of her colleagues, J. chose to take a proactive role in determining the curriculum. In spite of all the rhetoric about a student-centered curriculum, the classroom, in many instances, is not even teacher-centered. "Increasingly," claims Goodman (1992), "teachers are becoming disenfranchised from their work; that is, the conceptualization of curriculum and learning is separated from those who actually teach" (p. 128). Teachers are often the mouthpiece for someone else's wisdom.

As much as J. regarded herself as the facilitator and animator, she recognized that as such she had to take the lead. She had to be, in many respects, the curriculum decision-maker. The onus was ultimately left with her to provide the guidelines that paved the way for 'creativity rather than chaos.'[500] She realized that if students were to take the imaginative leap she had to direct by sharing her expertise. Sometimes sharing took the form of criticism presented as a directive...

> J. offers constructive criticism. She reminds the actors never to turn their backs to the audience and not to block one of the other characters.[501]

At other times J. posed the criticism as a question...

> The exchange continues until J. interrupts, "What is wrong with this scene?"she asks the class.[502]

J. did not mince words. She was clear when she felt something need to be improved. Like Miller (1995) she wanted them to "work consciously within and against accepted forms" (p. 26), to build what they knew and to push beyond.

On occasion expertise took another form, that of "power to influence or command thought, opinion or behaviour" (Merriam-Webster, 1983). J. thought of her class as student-centered and for the most part acted upon this belief. At times, however, she exercised what I call 'directive leadership'...

> The issue of judges is raised by a couple of students but this is unilaterally squelched by J.[503]

Directive leadership was particularly evident when she felt that behaviour needed to be corrected...

> J. corrects him and states that he must not interrupt and be sure to raise his hand before speaking.[504]

For reasons already discussed, the students overlooked this directness. If it was mentioned at all, they were matter-of-fact about it, treating it as if it was all a part of what teachers do. They were very bright and articulate and in some ways wise beyond their years.

Yet the complicity they demonstrated about certain disciplinary matters spoke to me of how thoroughly they had been enculturated. No one questioned it. One student may have been trying to get at it in his comment about 'teachers judging you by how you do in school', but that was it.

Students spent more time, on the other hand, talking about J. as having curricular leadership. I observed that the students made minimal reference to the curriculum per se, and preferred to talk about their involvement with it. They made reference to their interaction with what they were learning, and, even more importantly, talked about their understanding of themselves as learners. Moreover, they were very aware of who helped them arrive there. They were very articulate about J.'s expectations. They not only accepted the challenge, but welcomed it. To them it was a sign of how J. valued and believed in them: how she expected them to go beyond because she knew it was within their grasp.

Perhaps most significantly, the students understood that their teacher did not teach to content, but taught them, even as she learned with them. She reached out to them in Lopez-Caples's thoughts (1989) "through a search for the achievement of self-knowledge ...[that is] to reexperience him or herself as a whole, to reconnect to their first 'child-self'" (p. 103). In cultivating belief in their own uniqueness, she returned them to Pinar et al.'s (2000) idea of the 'secret place', "one's intimate and private world" (p. 439). The secret place is a literal, yet super-literal location nuanced with its intersubjective and textured modalities. The students saw the specialness of that place: that it was an essential space for seeking, then reclaiming as their very own.

Teacher as Conductor: A Summary

J. did not use the word conductor when she talked about her role. The word emerged from my observations. I saw, as already explored, evidence of J. as facilitator and animator, but I saw more. The descriptors facilitator and animator represented the moments of setting up, preparing and awakening. But there was something else at play here: those temporal, immediate moments unaccounted for, yet very real. The word conductor spoke to me of J.'s role in giving direction to the movement in the classroom from temporality to temporality, future from present from past. Under her lead, life unfolded there as melding frames of time with its varying pace and rhythms, ebbs and flows, highs and lows. Through her expertise she was able to shape the peaks and lulls. Under her watchful gaze she was instrumental in shaping the participative tone of this classroom.

In her role as conductor, J. was the thread binding 'was-ness' to be-ing to be-coming. It gave to the observed, to quote Polanyi (1969), a kind of 'sense-reading'... "an inkling of a meaning" for those immediate classroom moments for which we "must grope desperately for words" to describe (p. 187). The data affirmed what I was seeing, and my interpretation of my seeing. Through the data I related my seeing in the best way that I could.

J. also revealed something else. She revealed herself as an artist, Eisner's (1998) take on having as her subject matter "the qualities of things of direct experience" (p. 73). Lodged in the 'now' moment, learning was lived as temporalities rather than constants; possibilities rather than preconditions. The teacher-as-artist carved out a path for the student-as-artist. J. wove together the strands of 'bringing to' and 'bringing out', of opening and structuring for what each could do...

> *"One must command from each other what each can perform," the king went on (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 31).*

Each moment edged them closer to what they could be.

Teacher as Synergist

What then can I conclude about J.'s role in this classroom? Combining the key descriptors of facilitator, animator and conductor spoke to me of action, of relationship and of the tone or dynamics of the classroom. But is also spoke of something more. It spoke of connection and of change. J. practised education in the true sense of the word, 'to lead out'. Learning for her was not entombed in one particular place, or one particular time. It was continuously on the move, reflecting Grumet and Stone's (2000) thoughts on "setting up a contrast between here and there, making 'there' the goal and object of effort and interest" (p. 187). It was in a constant state of transacting and transforming, embracing Bruner's (1990) interpretation of Markus and Narius' proposal that "we think not of *a* Self but of Possible Selves along with a Now Self" (p. 42). 'Self," according to Diamond (1999), " is more verb than noun, more process than entity" (p. 196). Yet self, while flexible and dynamic, is seamlessly anchored to the essence of who we are. While our concept of self changes, our essence remains: fixed, identifiable and unique (Weedon, 1987). Learning welds these realizations fusing thoughts and actions deeply within our souls.

My reflections on the Self signaled that while I had identified three components of J.'s role, the remaining data clusters suggested something more. They raised questions about the catalyst that pushed J. to be a facilitator, animator and conductor and, in many respects, defined these roles. It caused me to reflect upon a term that most aptly described what I was seeing. The term 'synergist' came to mind simply because it encapsulated, not only the teacher's roles evident in this classroom, but something beyond. After some thought, I concluded that a synergist is the essence of the teacher beyond the roles discussed thus far. I felt that the significance of the term would be revealed through the data clustered into two headings, namely: 'wanting to do it well' and 'extending beyond'.

Wanting to Do it Well

J. set standards for both her students and herself that demanded the best. Her willingness to be open did not discount her desire for doing well. I saw evidence of that. The Open House was an event that confirmed that observation. I noted that in J.'s classroom quite a bit of preparation went into the event...

> I arrive a little late to the class because I have been delayed at another. As I enter as discreetly as possible J. is talking to the students about preparations for the Open House slated for November 28th. She is soliciting students to be available for presentations in the room particularly in the early part of the evening.[505]

The extent of the preparation was clearly evident to me when I entered the classroom that evening...

> The room has been arranged to accommodate the events of the evening. Tables have been moved. Many of them are tipped on their side in the corner to create an off-stage space for the actors. A Greek theatre has been erected in the corner by J.'s room. Masks of sadness and happiness festoon the display.[506]

As I was seated waiting for parents to appear, I noted that "J. appears to be nervous as she bustles around doing last minute preparations."[507] A few minutes later, I recorded that "time is pressing on. It is now 7:30 (pm) and few people have entered the room. J. looks worried."[508] As if by magic, parents appeared in large numbers and the evening was a

success. However, at the time I was at a loss to understand the effort that went into the event. The reason became apparent to me with time, and will be pursued in Chapter 6.

Regardless of the reason, it did not take me long to discover that concern for doing a good job was pervasive in everything J. did. She did not take a laissez-faire approach to anything, from the maintenance of the learning space to the organization of the 'learning events'. Her actions were driven by strong convictions. As J. wrote in her personal reflections...

> I have a great many beliefs. I feel [that] students should do as many activities as possible for audiences other than the teacher and for purposes other than getting marks.[509]

Students were aware that the teacher was not satisfied with them just getting by. The demands for doing well were overt. Interestingly, the students talked about these demands as proof that she cared about them. "The projects make you think," S. penned about the course.[510] "She has a different way of teaching," declared M. about her teacher. "She gets your attention and gets you involved."[511]

J.'s concern for doing well extended into this study. Whatever I asked her to do was done more than willingly. She wanted to be helpful. The scenario concerning the personal reflections was a case in point...

> She shows me her notes on her own reflections about the ALP. She asks me if what she has written is "what I am looking for". A glance through the writing tells me that what she has done to date is quite factual but reveals little about her own feelings as a teacher of the program. I ask her if she would delve more into that.[512]

One of the qualities I admired about J. is that she did not demand any more from her students than what she demanded of herself. Just as she expected her students to put forth their best effort she wanted to do the same. Her high expectations at times caused her some anxiety as evident in the first formal interview shown in Chapter 2. Her nervousness contrasted with the ease with which she conducted her classes. Remnants of Belenky et al.'s (1986) words came to mind: "Nice girls fulfill other people's expectations" (p. 206). No matter how masterly J. had perfected her craft, she evoked now and then a sense of uncertainty -- that maybe she was not good enough and would be held accountable for that. I more than empathized with her. I understood, reflecting on Steinem's (1992) likening of the

female spirit to "a garden that had grown beneath the shadows of barriers for so long that it kept growing in the same pattern, even after some of the barriers were gone" (p. 3). On a woman-to-woman level I identified with her. In spite of our differences, we shared in Sarbinian sense a common quest for identity. We knew because we had lived it -- these struggles to acknowledge ourselves for what we could offer our corner of the world. I could name her fears, and in doing so was moved to offer her support.

J. strove to do her best because in the truest sense she felt that it would bring about change. She also sensed that it was not an insular, nor isolationist act (Greene, 2000). It was a mutual drawing out, binding the learners in Bruner's (1996) thoughts into a "textual community" (p. 57). 'Wanting to do it well' pushed her to act upon her various roles.

As I delved deeper, the data spoke to not only of a push to do well, but a push for something else. It spoke of a desire to go beyond doing, to a state of being I have identified as 'extending beyond '.

Extending Beyond

I reflect back to the definition of the word 'role' discussed earlier and the implication for 'functional relationship' nested in its meaning. Such a relationship requires the construction of boundaries and is, therefore, an intellectually-driven agreement. What appeared to be different in this classroom was the desire to create a relationship that went beyond a 'working agreement'. There was an affection between J. and her students surpassing what we usually expect of people playing out such roles. The human being was seen behind the role. J. took it upon herself to show the students who she was, to expose her humanity with all its magnificence and its challenges. Paradoxically, her role, she decided, was to let them see her *beyond* her role. She had learned along the way Banner and Cannon's idea that "what teachers do cannot be distinguished from who they are" (as cited in Philips, 2002, p. 346). The data showing this notion clustered into three categories: being vulnerable, loving, and being human.

Being Vulnerable

J. was not afraid of showing her vulnerability. She had an idea that opening up had to be reciprocated. She understood with hooks (1994) that she need not request vulnerability from her students unless she showed her own. She knew that to delve deep into the self required breaking open. It was also a necessary prerequisite for creative expression. In answer to my question 'How does a teacher create a creative classroom?' part of J.'s

response was that she had to "be willing to be vulnerable; and open up to students."[513] But she also realized that openness unto itself was not sufficient. She needed to create an environment where openness thrived. "Students do not need to feel afraid to express themselves," she continued. "They need psychological safety."[514] Her thinking aligned with writers who argue that creativity depends upon a favourable environment set up by the mentor as much as the qualities of the mentor herself (Amabile, 1996; Sternberg and Lubart, 1995a,b).

Opening up required time. I lived it in this study. I saw it unfolding as I became further immersed in the life of this classroom. At first J.'s interaction with me was polite and strictly professional. She appeared to be ever conscious of my role as a researcher and chose her words carefully, even though I felt she wanted to show me what she really was about. I could sense her desire to reveal the constraints and frustrations she encountered as she went about her daily business. I felt the pulls and noted them. They appeared in a general discussion about a colleague's teaching approach...

[I have a feeling J. is perturbed by the teacher's opinions but is exercising caution about venting her feelings about the matter].[515]

And later when I showed her the interview questions being asked an administrator...

[I can sense that these questions have triggered a need to make a few comments but that she is debating with herself about whether or not she should say what she feels like saying. She approaches the subject guardedly, choosing her words carefully].[516]

I appreciated her hesitation. I felt the same way. I found myself continuously wondering how close I should get. I had spent many years in the classroom, yet in this context and under these circumstances I felt I had to keep some distance. I accepted myself as Vidich and Lyman's (1998) notion of the "unacculturated stranger" (p. 78), even as I tried to interpret what I was unravelling. I was forever cognizant that with the releasing of each thread, more lay tightly wound beneath. And I would not be able to unwind it all. As time went by, however, I noticed our interaction changing. There was less of an effort on both sides to make a good impression. More and more she inquired about my views on what I was observing, and started to open up to me about her concerns. The openness enriched the data.

But there were significant turning points in our relationship. As already intimated, it was evident to me by my ninth visit. During our discussion after the class session, she

explained that why one student left the program because he found it to be too demanding. "I don't think I assign too much work, do you?" she inquired obviously seeking assurance.[517] A few minutes later during the same interaction she made overtures to seek out information about what I was seeing. I noted...

> J. asks me now that I am getting to know her better if it is changing how I view the data.[518]

Such incidents were significant moments in my study. They highlight a moving away from polite, surface interaction to something deeper.

Loving

The data supported my sense that what existed among the people in this class transcended a working relationship. It was evident in the interaction between J. and the students and the way they talked about each other. J. enjoyed being with her students. That point was discussed in the previous section on 'Animator'. How did this enjoyment translate on a human level? Few overt examples come to mind, but it showed in the way J.'s eyes lit up when she talked about them. It showed in her aspirations for them when she referred to how some in the class were blossoming. It also showed in her acceptance of who they were at the moment, reminiscent of the unconditional bonding between parent and child. I remember one moment in particular when she declared to them, "I take the time to go though your work and circle the spelling errors because I love you and I want you to learn to write English properly."[519]

I had never heard a teacher declare her love for her students before. It caught me off guard, and being unfamiliar to me was rather unsettling. I questioned its sincerity, as one in such a situation may be apt to do. I was living hooks' (1994) words: "teachers who love their students and are loved by them are still "suspect" in the academy" (p. 198). But the more I attended this class, the more it became real to me. It was not a prefabricated type of love. J. did not look at her students with rose tinted glasses. As affirmed by the students, she knew them. She knew their capabilities and their limitations. She knew them not as perfect kids, but as kids who could strive for perfection, even as she celebrated their striving. She believed in them, loving them in their learning. Teaching for her, to borrow Pagano's (1988) thoughts, was "an act of love", that is, the means "to unite two loved objects -- the student and the word" (p. 10). She loved to teach because she loved to learn.

As much as she treasured learning, it did not supercede her care. She had visions for what they were to become, but lived daily in their right to be. She blended "ways of knowing with habits of being" (hooks, 1994, p. 43). She practised her craft as a 'sacramental educator', teaching "in a manner that respect[ed] and car[ed] for [their] souls" (hooks, 1994, p. 13), just as she cared for her own.

Being Human

J. did not shy away from humanizing herself before her students. They responded in kind. "This is a good class," J. informed me, "They care about you as a human being not only as a teacher."[520] She prefaced the statement with reference to how the students had presented her with a card prior to her trip to Europe. She was obviously touched by this gesture. J. was open to her students about who she was beyond the teacher role. I recall the time, for example, she related to the students about her own life such as having a cute teacher in Grade VIII.[521] I recollect, although not included in my notes, snippets of conversations in which she divulged information about her husband or another family member. J. believed that the teacher-student relationship was different now than it was in the past...

> Students are aware that you have a life out of school. I talk about this to them. They feel comfortable enough to respond with humour. A sense of humour is a saving grace today... They see us more as human, although there are times when I have to take on the teacher role to correct them. A child made a comment the other day that was hurtful and I told him as such. He was rather surprised that I have feelings too. But all in all we have a warmer relationship than what we used to have with students. I think that students today like you for what you are and not what you pretend to be.[522]

J.'s words were rife with meaning. As with Cooper and Olsen (1996), she recognized that she had *learned to become* a teacher. Yet there was much more to her than the role and she felt it was important for the students to see that. She recognized the multiplicity of identities through which she saw and was seen, Scheibe's (1995) thoughts about *being-in-place*. The student who commented about teachers judging youth according to academic achievement astutely touched on this. Likewise, J.'s reference to 'having a life out of school', addressed the general tendency of students to see a teacher rather than an adult who teaches. J. wanted to show them that she was far more complex: that she, like them, had not

one identity but many. Like Mullen (1999), she realized that "identity is like a cultural collage, variously arranged and glued together" (p. 150), piece edged against piece, multi-layered, complimentary yet often incongruent. She looked at her relationship with the students as something organic and dynamic, far beyond the tenets of theory crowding the landscape of her teacher training (Cooper and Olsen, 1996). J. saw that the building of multiple identities was a communal effort, O'Neill's (1989) sense of a "living cohesion...an immutable union between children and adults" (p.50). That is why, I surmise, dialogue and interaction were key in her classroom practice.

But in her reflection, J. was saying more. She was concurring with Britzman's take on (1991) 'stereotypical images' through which teachers have been historically viewed. She resisted these images which Cooper and Olsen (1996) claim, "do little to encourage 'real' living relationships between human beings" (p. 83). In her phrase 'they like you for what you are', J. was suggesting Scheibe's (1995) idea of 'self' or fact of *being*. The words aligned with Borysenko's (1999) juxtaposition of the human *being* with the human *doing* --"a matter of who we are rather than what we do" (p. 259). J. wanted her students to not only recognize her multiple identities, but to see her for the kind of person she was. Beyond that she wanted to show herself to them in her incompleteness, as a human being still journeying to become (Greene, 1995b). J. chose not to hide behind her identities which educators so often do, safely cocooned behind position and title. She chose to enter into the risky business of showing her vulnerabilities, to share feelings as well as intellect. J.'s willingness to show her 'human-ness', I argue, contributed to the synergy in this learning environment.

Teacher as Synergist: A Summary

The teacher's role of synergist fused what she did in her various functions as a teacher. It spoke to her action of bringing out in her individual students not only a sense of Self-as-Learning Individual, but a sense of Self-as-Learning Community. In a sense, it was the thread that linked both assigned and shared participation. J.'s view of her role not only brought her students to what was 'out there', but brought out what was already within. Her quest to interact with her students beyond the functional role of teacher moved them to another level of connection. She lead them to Torres-Guzmán's (1992) notion of 'cognitive empowerment' described by Nieto (1994) as "encouraging students to become confident, critical thinkers who learn that their background experiences are important tools for further learning" (p. 404). As a synergist, J. brought out more. She made immeasurable contribution

to the participative tone observed and felt in this classroom. J. brought out not only a knowledge of learning, but a passion for learning. She took her students on a quest for meaning-making far exceeding the boundaries of time and place.

Teacher as Authoritarian

Life, however, is complex with contradictions and this classroom was no exception. As much as J. intended to overcome the restrictions that adherence to role brings to a working environment, there were moments when role dominated. For example, in spite of proclaimed adherence to the child-centred classroom, there were moments when practice did not align with intent. In keeping with the trustworthiness of my observations these inconsistencies merit acknowledgment. I have called this overall category, Teacher as Authoritarian. It is described by the following data clusters: determining knowledge, remaining partial, and 'teaching us a lesson'.

Determining Knowledge

While I witnessed some elucidating discussions in this classroom, certain assumptions still seemed to play out. One concerned the source of knowledge. In one of the interviews, J. stated that, "It is important for the students to hear another viewpoint. I find that for me personally I am in a better mood, not having to be the sole depositor of all information".[523] Her choice of words, 'depositor of knowledge' struck me particularly when I revisited the interviews on audiotape. I am intrigued why I did not pick up on her statement; why I didn't highlight it for further exploration. In hindsight, I wondered what her perception of knowledge was and the implications of her perception upon her practice. It is obvious to me now that I must have been concentrating on other things at the time. It intrigued me because such reflectivity had not been a part of my professional life. A sorry revelation but true.

In spite of admissions to creating a child-centered learning environment, this was not always the case. As discussed in Chapter 4, while students had choices in what they were to do, J., by all accounts, decided what the students were to learn. She appeared to be comfortable with this practice. Students seemed to accept this situation. No one questioned it. They seemed to retain the assumption that that's the way it is. I do not know whether or not any of the students had ever raised this issue with her. I have no record of it. The notion

of child-centered, sometimes referred to as student-centered (Vibert and Shields, 2003), carries social implications to be discussed further in Chapter 6 and Chapter 8.

Remaining Partial

While the teacher refrained from displays of favoritism, shades of it surfaced. J. had a high regard for all of the students in her class and designed a program to accommodate their various strengths and abilities. By and large she was successful in meeting that intent. There were moments, however, when neutrality was not always practised. I recall one occasion...

> J. talks to me about story writing and how T's latest story is 'heads over 'the others. The rest of the class notices the quality of his writing as well and marvel at this ability.[524]

In response to this comment, I wrote ...

> [In reflection, I think about J.'s comment about how the rest of the class has noticed T.'s superior writing ability. I wonder if the students have noticed this ability on their own or have picked up messages given in class. I have noticed a few times that students, in spite of what is said by them to the contrary, are not always treated equally...].[525]

Wondering whether or not this observation was colored by my own perceptions, I tried to explore this dynamic in the student interviews. Not wanting to lead the students, I tried to get at the idea by building a question around the student response 'nobody's perfect' introduced in the second interview. I found, however, that if there was any resentment toward perceived preferential treatment, it did not appear in what the students said. One student suggested that maybe some of her colleagues wanted to shine more so than others. She put a positive spin on the comment, however, by declaring that it's good that everyone's different. I concluded that while students were aware of the superior talents of certain colleagues, they felt sufficiently affirmed for their abilities so that it was not an issue. That having been said, I realized that while I had acquired a substantial image of the dynamics in this classroom, certain moments were not as clear as others.

The problem manifested itself in moments when I felt pulled between my role as researcher and classroom participant. J., I sensed, may have had some inkling of the turmoil I

was experiencing. In turn, I understood that her ultimate allegiance was to her students and what she could do with them. On one occasion, caught in the throes of handling many tasks at one time, she voiced her frustration expressing that "She needed two teachers here", alluding to "why I am not able to assist her...that I just sit there and write."[526] I can remember being rather taken aback by the comment at the time, taking in my reflection the defensive stance of "wondering what was motivating such a comment."[527] I realize now that the incident reflected the degree to which she wanted to do what was best for her students, and how overwhelmed she sometimes felt about this responsibility. Yet at the time, the comment did little to assuage my feelings of torn loyalties.

'Teaching us a Lesson'

There were moments when certain disciplinary action by the teacher seemed to counter her philosophy. I remember my reaction when J. assigned lines to students who failed to complete their homework. Somehow this form of punishment seemed peculiar to a learning environment filled with such positive energy. I reflected at the time...

> [I have to admit that I am rather taken aback by J.'s use of this tactic for punishment. Such a waste of time! I somehow expected something more creative and beneficial for the students].[528]

'Line writing' as a form of punishment was applied on several occasion, but unfortunately I overlooked pursuing it with her. The students appeared to be unconcerned rarely noting it in the interviews. One seemed to think that it was a part of the more demanding features of the ALP. When asked to comment on a comparison a colleague had made between the ALP and the regular program, he responded...

> I think that in the regular program if you do not do your homework, you are given another chance. In the ALP, if your homework is not done, you are given lines and have to do more homework. [529]

At the time, not all members of the interview group agreed with his observation, although there was a student in another group who collaborated with his point of view. The question 'What do you do about making mistakes?' triggered this response...

You definitely 'take your punishment'. You don't try to get out of it. The teacher gives us extra homework or gets us to write lines to 'teach us a lesson'. If she sees us repeat it she gives more work, but she doesn't give us such big punishment that we resent her for it. It's just enough to 'teach us a lesson.'[530]

In his response the student seemed to be of the opinion that the punishment was warranted and fair, and applied with the students' best interests in mind. I remain non-committal at this point. And while I do not wish to make what well might be a mountain out of a mole hill, the mole hill may suggest something. It may suggest a conflict between Sylwester's (2000) notion of viewing the classroom as "a womb" or as an "independent social organism". Sylwester's view brings me to question whether the primary role of the teacher is to enculturate and protect, or to support independent mastery of problem-solving skills (pp. 47-49).

For me conflicts between these two views surfaced particularly in the punishment issue. I wondered how much input the students had in determining the boundaries. To reiterate, there was an expressed desire to run a child-centered classroom, and in some cases it was. In other ways, however, the classroom was decisively teacher-centered. The students seemed to accept J.'s decisions on these matters simply because over the years that is what they had known. In fact, for many, teacher decision-making provided the safety and security they felt they needed. For a couple, even this was not enough. I recall J.'s thoughts introduced earlier:"You want to encourage students to think for themselves and unfortunately, the system does not develop that capacity in them." How prophetically these words played themselves out! Her concerns about some students, when expressed, focused on the difficulty she felt they were experiencing in 'fitting in', not on their behaviour...

J. continues talking about specific students, acknowledging that this particular program is not for everyone. "C. doesn't belong in this program. He needs more structure. And K., he is very bright but unfocused". I tell her that I've noticed that while K. still seems to be a kind of 'outsider' in the class, he seems to have become more comfortable throughout the course of the year. "An interesting observation," she responds.[531]

That having been said, J. had managed to successfully carve out an approach which seemed to work for at least most of the students and for her. I concluded that because the students encountered so many positive experiences in this classroom, they were inclined to

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diminish what might be perceived as the negative or inconsistent: that constraints were one of the boundaries that spurred them on.

The Teacher's Role: A Synthesis

My study confirmed that J.'s role varied from one learning situation to another. She gave direction while simultaneously encouraging freedom. She took a leap of faith from the technology of her craft to a place where rules did not apply. In so doing, she transformed teaching practice from a science to an art (Eisner, 1993). Teaching as an art cultivates the "I", that "inwardness" Palmer names (1998b) without which "real education cannot happen" (p. 27). But "I" does not stand in isolation. In Sarbin's (1997) sense, J. had learned about "I" through connecting with others, constructing a wholeness, not readily discernible, but forever present. As a master teacher, J. carried the lantern casting a light to illuminate the way.

J. brought the art of teaching to her practice. "Practice," according to Carlgren (1996), "is about doing" (p. 28). Teaching as a craft is fine-tuned through action. J. learned to teach through doing the kinds of things she felt she needed to do. Simplistically speaking, J. practiced her craft through the roles of facilitator, animator and conductor. As a facilitator, J. brought the students to what it is to know. In that role, she made learning possible by setting up the conditions that encouraged assigned participation. But practicing her craft was also about being an animator: that is, bringing out, connecting the knowledge out there to what the students already knew. As animator J. encouraged the students to engage in shared participation. J.'s practice of teaching also embraced 'bringing together'. In her role as a conductor she orchestrated the action in the class, fusing together her role as facilitator and animator. She set up the conditions that made the students want to engage in both assigned and shared participation.

J. as a facilitator, animator, and conductor epitomized teacher-in-practice. But, as she knew, good teaching involves more. Good teaching not only requires action, but seeing and knowing the action. It demands stepping outside of the functional role and reflecting upon what is valued and why. It asks, in Socratian fashion, to know the Self, to explore identity and its implications for a person who learns.

J. in her role as synergist bridged the gap between practice and reflection. She fused action with thoughtfulness. She was the catalyst between bringing to, bringing out and bringing together. As a synergist, J. was instrumental in creating participative tone in her classroom. She moved her students from reaction to proaction; to think about not only how

to do, but how to do differently. She moved the unconscious into the conscious, turning what the students knew into 'personal knowledge', fusing, in Deweyian sense, what they learned with personal experiences.

J. had a sense that reflection, not only effects what we do but, at a deeper level, shapes who we are. We cannot learn and stay the same. Learning is, to coin Eisner (1998) a "mind-altering" process. It changes the way we think, therefore, imprints upon who we are. I not only change, but can "feel the effects" of change (Langer, 1988, p. 4). Most of what I learned in school has been lost to memory, but one teacher's comment has stayed with me: "Educated is the kind of person you are after much of what you have learned has been forgotten". I do not know the source of that quote, but I believe it to be true. I am not the same person I was when I began this journey. I think differently, therefore I *am* different. J. admitted she did not think about teaching and learning in the same way at the twilight of her career as she did in the beginning. The change altered who she is and what she did.

But change is not finite. In spite of the desire to do things differently, there are always relapses to what is known best. At times, J. slipped back into the authoritarian role in large part, I suspect, because that is the way she encountered learning in her youth. This role with its shadings of favoritism and more punitive measures of discipline may have contributed to the participative resistance demonstrated by some of the students.

That having been said, change, by J.'s own admission, did occur leaving its mark on her doing and being. The essence of being human, as Borysenko (1999) reminds me, extends beyond my faculty to think. It connects what I think with what I feel. In essence, I am not only conscious of 'being' but feel being. Being is as much a sensory as it is an intellectual experience. Being human is holistic, Johnson's (1999) view of 'holy' or "more at whole" (p. 105). Its roots are deep, obscured, in Kantian sense, in the soul. J. knew that to change meant to be in touch with the wholeness. Learning, if it was to be profound, needed to compliment not fracture. It needed to connect, not isolate. J. reached beyond the confines of role. It was in her capacity of being human that she ultimately connected with her students.

Conclusion

J. had, in her professional life, fused Borysenko's (1999) notion of doing and being. She wished to be seen not only as a do-er, but even more importantly as a be-er. In short, she wanted to be seen beyond her role. To J. the goal of learning was to improve upon what it meant to be human, to develop, in Welty's (1985) words, "an abiding respect for the

unknown in a human lifetime and a sense of where to look for the threads, how to follow, how to connect, finding in the thick of the tangle what clear line persists" (p. 212). She was able to accomplish what she did with the students because she, in the students' words, reached out and related to them. Reaching out, opening the window, transcended the intellect. It meant embracing what it was to be human with all its wonder, and with all its contradictions...

...And your friends will be amazed to see you laughing while you're looking up at the sky. Then you'll tell them, 'Yes, it's the stars; they always make me laugh!' And they'll think you're crazy. It'll be a nasty trick I played on you...(de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p.78).

In doing so, she opened them to it all.

For me this is the loveliest and the saddest landscape in the world. It's the same landscape as the one on the preceding page, but I've drawn it one more time in order to be sure you see it clearly.

de Saint-Exupéry (2000)

In this, the sixth chapter, I focus on my final research question: What classroom conditions and contextual factors shape what transpires in the learning environment? Simply put, I wanted to probe what had an impact upon participating beyond what was identified in Chapters 3, 4 and 5. As I show, context and its companion, conditions, played a vital part in shaping what took place there.

To give clarity to my investigation, I needed to establish an understanding of what was implied in the question. For example, what understanding did I derive from the word 'conditions'? The dictionary offered a number of definitions, the most plausible for my purposes being "something essential to the appearance or occurrence of something else; a prerequisite" (Merriam-Webster, 1983). According to this definition, a condition is a precursor for something else, be it a state of being or an event.

The word 'condition' surfaces in recent literature about school performance assessment (Guskey, 2000; McCombs, n.d.). Smith and Sturge Sparkes (1999) describe conditions as "characteristics ... that act as enablers allowing students to reach desired levels of achievement" (p. 6). In the classroom, conditions are those factors that support the 'desirous outcomes', most noteworthy, academic success.

But I also realized that something else beyond conditions was present. That 'something' I understood to be context, discussed briefly in Chapter 2. My question 'What is context?' took me back to the dictionary. Merriam-Webster (1983) provides two definitions: "the parts of a discourse that surround a word or passage and can throw light on its meaning; the interrelated conditions in which something exists or occurs". The definitions carry two inferences: that context is not only the environment in which something is nested, be it word or action. More importantly, it has bearing upon *my understanding* of that word or action. In short, it gives meaning. My thoughts took me to Mishler's (1979) paper 'Meaning in context: Is there any other kind?' in which he reflects on the rhetorical complexion of his title...

The irony in the question - an irony carried by the fact that you hear it as rhetorical and I intend it as such - involves a paradox that will serve as a point of departure for this essay. One side of the paradox is that we all know that human action and experience are context dependent and can only be understood within their contexts: that is why the question is rhetorical (p. 2).

Context, at least from Mishler's perspective, is a given. It is omnipresent in all action. Derived from the Latin word *contexere*, context means to 'weave together' (Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 1992). Building on van Maanen's (1995) thoughts, context is more than the ground or backdrop. The contextual strands weave around the action and assign meaning to it. Yet, while context always exists, it is forever in a state of flux. Context is not a constant. It is organic. It is in Lerner's (1996) view plastic and 'temporal', fused in changing relation to "the ecology of human behaviours and development" (p. 781). Context is forever bound to perception. It situates behaviour as seen by the beholder. Like de Saint-Exupéry, the landscape in which we play out our lives can be sad and it can be lovely. It depends. It always depends.

About Conditions and Context

To deepen my understanding of conditions and context, I needed to find links between the two. Conditions, in my view, are nested in context. As in the case of this study, both existed at the 'chalk face'. Yet conditions were things over which both the teacher and the students could, to a large extent, have direct bearing upon. Context, on the other hand, was far more ubiquitous and embraced things over which the study participants may have had less impact, if at all. While the teacher, for example, was not able to exert influence upon certain contextual elements, she could determine her reaction to them. Her reaction surfaced in the conditions emerging through the data in the previous chapter. While writing this section, I was reminded of Wang, Haertal and Walberg's (1993) thoughts on proximal and distal factors. The scope of this study confined me in large part to the proximal, that which was close to the teacher and to the students. But I was forever aware of the distal, that which was less apparent in the daily occurrences in the classroom but nonetheless had bearing upon what happened there.

From my standpoint, it seemed logical to pursue conditions. After all, they had direct influence upon learning. Since both students and the teacher had a say in them, it stood to

reason that the conditions present in the classroom were often, although not always, driven by conscious thought. The teacher set up the conditions that maximized student learning. Since they were hers for the choosing she could change and revise them as she saw fit. J.'s pedagogical approach was a case in point. As explored in this chapter, J. made a conscious decision to change her teaching approach, a decision driven by her need to enhance the learning experiences of her students.

As I moved into the murky waters of context, things became less clear. If context included those things over which the teacher had minimal impact, if any, why would I as the researcher want to consider it? How could looking at context shed more light on my understanding of what I had seen? To answer these questions, I looked to Andrews (1991). I needed to recognize context as a 'collaborator of meaning', that is...

> the context in which human lives are lived is central to the core of meaning in those lives. Researchers should not, therefore, feel at liberty to discuss or analyze how individuals perceive meaning in their lives and in the world around them, while ignoring the content and context of that meaning (Andrews, 1991, p.13).

The literature affirmed my suspicion that the issue was not clear-cut. If I were to explain what I was seeing, I needed to acknowledge that interpreting was not a description of action in isolation of, but a description of action in relation to, its surroundings. In Greene's terms (1998), interpreting "is about contextualized meaning" (p. 384). To look deeper into an event, I needed to look at its parameters. The parameters, if examined carefully, shed further light on what I was seeing, bringing to the fore, borrowing Murphy's (1997) phrase, 'polysemies' or 'multiplicities of meanings' (p. 236). Polysemies not only enriched the language I used to describe what I saw but deepened my insights and my interpretations.

Context, I now understand, was not only about looking at what surrounded the actions of those I was observing. It was also about looking at me, the observer. "Reality", states Barone (1992), "resides neither with an objective external world nor with the subjective mind of the knower, but within dynamic transactions between the two" (p. 31). I did not act as interpreter outside of what I had observed. I was also a part of it. I gained insights into what I saw in my study site, not only because I was physically present, but because I had to qualify my presence. What I observed not only related to me but related to me in a certain way. I needed to reflect on the values and biases I brought into my research environment, acknowledging that the lens of my seeing was forever tempered, never neutral.

In Tennyson's (1842) words 'I am a part of all that I have met', not only in what the meeting brought to me, but in what I brought to it. I carried as much into the site as I took away.

My analysis, I argue, gained more credibility when I placed who I am within it. As I committed my thoughts to paper, I was constantly expressing the immediate and the personal. I created and re-created my research context, a context forever fluid, forever changing. In Richardson's (1998) thoughts I was always in process, always evolving within my inquiry, finding out not only about my topic, but about myself. I have come to the realization that the personal is never a singular and isolated event. Like Taylor (1989) the self emerges from many sources and many evolutions -- many contexts as it were. My understanding of the data spoke of the past, a past interpreted and still being interpreted, even when I cease writing. It spoke not of one point in the past, but of many. It continues into the present, and foreshadows what will unfold in the future.

My writing not only presented someone else's past, but my own. As Schwandt (1998) suggests "we do not simply live out our lives *in* time and *through* language; rather, we *are* our history" (p. 224). The past has shaped who I presently am and how I interpret my world, even as I struggle to open myself to other histories and other interpretations. Ultimately, I am not the same person I was when I began this journey.

But I also believe that other forces in the many contexts of my life have left and are still leaving their mark. I do not always live proactively. As much as I would like to think that I am, to quote Henley's (1920) *Invictus*, "the captain of my fate", I am not always. Events touch my life to which I can only react, but it is through these occurrences that I have learned some of life's most profound lessons. The recent passing of both of my parents comes immediately to mind. To quote Denzin (1989), "Many times a person will act as if he or she made his or her own history when, in fact, he or she was forced to make the history he or she lived" (p. 74). I cannot always determine what my history will be. The best I can do is to determine what I have learned from it. Like J., I have learned that I will be always confronted with events over which I have no control. What I can do is turn them into conditions, things over which I can have influence, or at best, exercise wisdom.

And so I turned to my data to give me a clearer view of context and conditions in the study. To guide my thinking, I thought about context models I had encountered to date. Smith's (1997) 'nested layers' portrait (conceived from the thoughts of Bosker and Scheeren, 1994) resonated with me (See Figure 5). It initiated my thinking about my data. It helped to clarify what I was seeing.
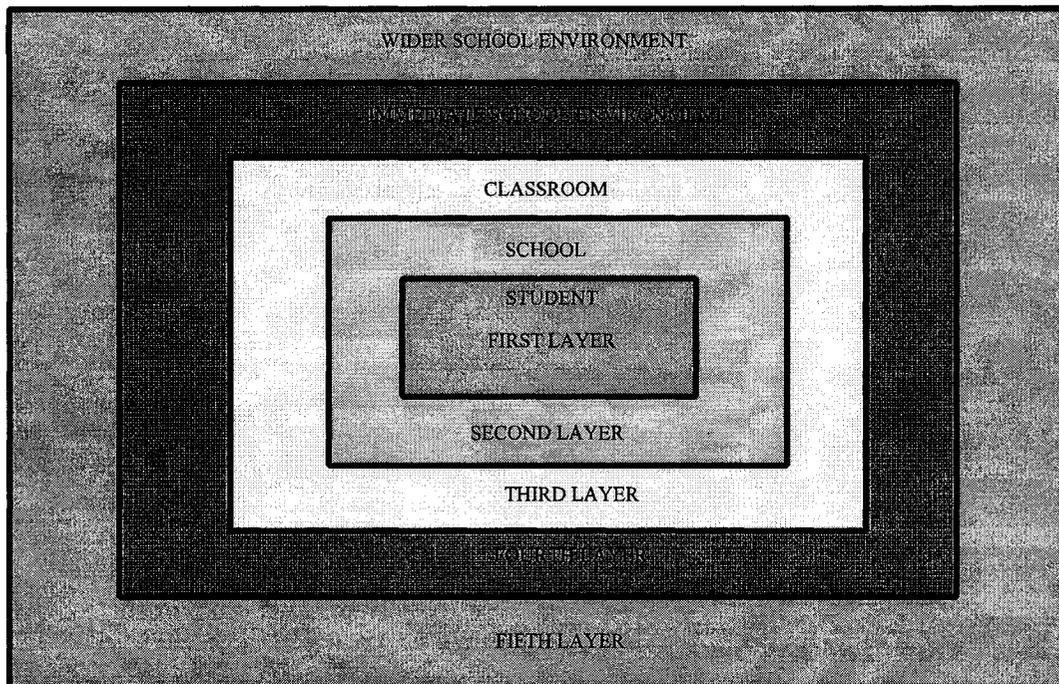
Figure 5: Smith (1997) Nested Layers of School Context

Context as Layers

In keeping with the 'nested layers' concept, my thoughts about the context of my study site started at the macro level of the school and its wider environment and moved inward to the micro level of the classroom. In so doing, I adopted Reissman's (1993) stance of taking an "outside inward" approach (p. 174). I looked at the data that answered the previous three research questions but now through the lens of research question #4. For example, I returned to the data that responded to notions of participation but now from the perspective of identifying the contextual elements and conditions that had an impact upon participating. In addition to my data, I used what I had learned about the school from the reports written for the *Student Engagement* project, the interview with the administrator, and the various inserts in my artifact collection. As I moved inside the layers, I started to unravel, using Bosker and Scheeren's (1994) terminology, 'contextual effects' and their influence on my study participants.

I soon discovered that Smith's model, while with its merits, did not represent what I saw. Like a compass it pointed me in the direction I wanted to go, but failed to provide the

landmarks detailing the journey. The nested layers model did not reflect what the data revealed. Context did not present itself in neat, discrete layers. Rather, the layers wove together. To remain faithful to my data, I decided to look elsewhere. Like Hodder (1998), I found that "in conjunction with and inseparable from the identification of context is the recognition of similarities and differences" (p. 123). Another site, I realized, would present the contrast I needed. It would serve as a kind of 'counter site', bringing to focus things yet 'invisible to the eye', or at least things seen differently. When positioned beside the primary site, the counter site brought into focus things I had not noticed, or, if I had, showed them with greater clarity. The secondary site particularized what I had already observed. After my first visit to the secondary site, for example, I wrote in my reflective memo...

> Every now and then there are art exhibits along the corridors, but quite frankly, I have seen more impressive exhibits in 'regular' schools. [There does not appear to have been a lot of care gone into displaying students' work. Something seems to be amiss here, but, of course, I can't put my finger on it yet!].[532]

My visit to the secondary site increased my appreciation for the efforts that J. made to acknowledge student work through displaying what they had done and keeping the display areas up-to-date...

> [The teacher] mentions that tomorrow the class will make displays to set upon the bulletin boards that border the room. [I have already noticed that the bulletin boards are bare at the moment]. Part of the display will show some of the field trips the ALP class has recently made such as attending an opera.[533]

To the students, the act of displaying their work was not only an attempt to care for the learning environment but an act of confirmation of their efforts. It was a way of valuing what they did and of acknowledging them as partners. Students, I noted, spoke about maintaining the physical appearance of the classroom in terms of 'we'. One student suggested, for example, that during the Open House "*we* attracted some new people into the program because they could see how neat and organized everything is" [italics added].[534] 'We' was a recurrent referent in the student lexicon. In one interview alone it appeared seventy-seven times. In my view, student use of the pronoun signaled an understanding of community, a feature of this classroom to be explored later in this chapter.

At first glance, the data did not show the whole picture. Stepping back from the immediacy of the classroom, however, the data presented itself in layers, even if these layers were not cleanly defined. First, at the macro-level, the data revealed the school in terms of a physical structure, then in terms of a society or community. At a deeper level, it presented the school not in terms of a community but a satellite of communities. The classroom, therefore, typified a community. Further probing of the data showed the classroom not as a homogeneous entity, but as a layer within the school comprised of communities of its own.

Layer I: The Physical Context

On the surface, context appeared in terms of physicality, something seen and touched -- nested spaces definable by brick, concrete and glass. In the report for the *Student Engagement* project, I began my description of the school (identified as QC2) with the following...

> QC2 is located in serene surroundings, an area best described as vintage suburbia. The houses, while not pretentious, are well maintained and tastefully landscaped. The school building is large but not out of proportion with the landscape of grass, shrubs and trees. Brick and mortar are pleasantly flanked by open spaces. There is a circular driveway in front of the school and a large parking lot across the street (Sturge Sparkes and Smith, 1998, p. 139).

As suggested in the description, the school building mirrored the community around it: well-established, middle-class suburbia. Yet the unusual design of the school spoke of a history, of the incremental expansion of the community that surrounded it ...

> Apart from its size, the unusual design of the building is eye-catching. It appears to have been erected in stages. The architecture reflects the different times in which these additions took place (1962, 1968 and 1970). The overall effect, startling at first glance, gives the entire structure an air of unpredictability (Sturge Sparkes and Smith, 1998, p. 139).

Perhaps, in reflection, the predictability played itself out in the building itself. In the *Student Engagement* project we noted that, in spite of its large size, the school did not have

the ambiance of a large organization (Sturge Sparkes and Smith, 1998, p. 171). Specific spaces in the school were more welcoming than intimidating as depicted in this description...

> Near the resource centre is the upper-level foyer where students can congregate in clusters of four's and five's. Students sit at the picnic tables which have been placed there. This is a key meeting area (Sturge Sparkes and Smith, 1998, p. 140).

The classroom, the site of my study, was a tangible location, a specific place carved out in the school with its predictable boundaries of walls, floors and ceilings sketched in Chapter 3. In my mind's eye I relived that space. I recall, even now, my impressions as I first entered it. I noticed the absence of desks. My observation echoed a student teacher, who according to J. had exclaimed "No desks!" upon entering the room for the first time.[535]

I noticed more. J.'s area, though not large, duplicated what I observed about the school in general. Although it had that predictable institutional look, the space was well organized and well maintained. Like the larger building and the surrounding community, the classroom evoked a feeling of being cared for. Care, as I discovered, suggested other things. In Moore's (1998) words it suggested "life in a body" (p. 246): that the love of the mind, that which is invisible, is not incongruent with the love of the body, the visible. The physical context showed an understanding that mind and body are not contradictory but complementary. One nurtures the other. 'That which is essential may be invisible to the eye' (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 63), but tending to the visible can open the eyes to seeing with greater reverence.

But as I sifted through the data, I found it difficult to focus solely on the physical. Because I had spent considerable time in that space my memory was flooded with a myriad of things. As in a drama, the 'physical' loomed as a shadowy backdrop to the human interactions I encountered there. The desert may have given an exotic appeal to de Saint-Exupéry's story but was not my primary reason for returning to it.

Neither could I deny my relationship with the physical. It anchored the temporal, aligning it in human terms to what I remembered as being real. As I wrote this section I re-lived the setting. My feet tripped along the asphalt driveway and over the concrete steps into the open foyer. My memory was flooded with the sights, the sounds, the smells of the school as I headed up the stairs to the classroom. The sensory took me back to my years of being a teacher. All the emotional tugs and pulls re-surfaced. I still connected with the sensory, even as the thinking I was immersed in at that time had long escaped me. The physical was the backdrop, a concrete point of reference. The lived memory of the physical

remained anchored in my sensory experiences, even though I attempted to transcend them in my interpretations.

And yet transcend I must. The visible limited even as it defined. To derive deeper meaning I had to go beyond the surface, reflecting back to de Saint-Exupéry's (2000) words. I needed to look at context beyond the physical, to move into 'metaphysical' realities. To quote Wolcott (1990), I needed to grapple with a world less "ready made" (p. 147). If I were to adhere to qualitative interpretation, I had to relinquish my certainty about what is true. I needed to acknowledge that which constructed my seeing and the seeing of others. My understandings of context brought to and derived from this study asked me to not only address the 'I' in my interpretation, but to acknowledge that which was shared.

Context, I soon realized, was more than physical location. It extended beyond a space where a teacher and her students met. When I thought of this particular classroom I was drawn to the quality of the meeting. It was a space of *being*, Hopmann and Künzeli's (1997) reference to a "place of individual and shared experiences" (p. 262). Context superceded the physical, even as I was fully aware of its presence. The space was like many of the classrooms I had known in the past. Thus, I carried into it certain expectations and assumptions. The familiar, while comforting, swayed my seeing. Because it colored my vision, there was a danger of exercising Marcus's (1998) declaration of "academic colonialism" (p. 392); that is, imposing on others what I was seeing. To glean what I could, I had to step back and engage in an "othering" of my own world (Fuchs, 1993, p. 108), Clandinin and Connelly's (1998) view of "experiencing (or re-living) the experience" (p. 160). I was forever cognizant of the impossibility of removing myself from it entirely: that what I had lived could not be re-lived. Something always made it different...

> *"That's another thing that's been too often neglected," said the fox. "It's the fact that one day is different from the others, one hour from the other hours" (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 61).*

The past is personal, even in my perception of that which is physical. I arrived at this juncture of the journey fully aware that "personal experience is all the experience we ever have" (Beauchamp and Parsons, 2000, p. 7). Life as lived is fluid. Days, minutes and seconds are not lived the same way. Nor are they recounted in the same way. My view of what I have experienced alters with the passage of time.

Temporality aside, something binds me to others. When I talk about a sensory memory of the classroom, others can relate, even if they cannot feel what I am feeling at any

given moment. They feel, they experience, and through this we establish a commonality, a way to communicate and to share. As I embarked upon this research endeavour, I realized that context was not so much about the physical environment as a *way of thinking about* it. As shown in Chapter 4, students talked fondly about the way in which the classroom was maintained. But their understanding did not stop there. In their eyes taking care of the physical had deeper meaning. It indicated care of other things, things less visible but nonetheless just as real.

Like the students, my reflections about what I saw transported the tangible. I saw layers more temporal and fluid. I related to Lerner's (1996) thoughts on "the ecology of human life...the structure and function of interlevel relations over time" (p.781). The classroom was a frame of mind in which smaller, more specific frames played out. Context was not static, but dynamic, fleeting and forever changing, reminiscent of Lerner's suggestion of "relative plasticity" (1996, p.782). It shaped as it was shaped, and, for that reason, warranted thoughtful consideration.

Layer II: The Organizational Context

The question 'What lies beyond the physical?' framed the next contextual layer. What were the intangible features that made the school a school? I thought of shared purpose, structure and systems. Certainly these elements existed in the classroom, the focal point of my study, and, from what I had observed, existed in varying forms in the school at large.

My questions directed me to look at articles speaking to this issue. A few in particular resonated with me. Sergiovanni's thoughts on 'school as organization' were insightful. Borrowing on the term introduced by the sociologist Tonnies, Sergovanni (1994b) speaks of organization as having the characteristics of a *gesellschaft* (society)...

> In *gesellschaft*, rational will is the motivating force. Individuals relate to each other to reach some goal, to gain some benefit. Without this benefit the relationship ends. In the first instance, the ties among people are thick and laden with symbolic meaning. They are moral ties. In the second instance, the ties among the people are thin and instrumental. They are calculated ties (p. 219).

Elements of *gesellshaft*, especially in terms of goal orientation, were clearly defined in the ALP classroom. I had commenced my discussion with J. on this issue with my

understanding of an enriched environment, an environment I had understood, "where students are expected to perform at a more advanced level than students in the regular stream". J. decisively replaced the word 'advanced' with 'broadened'. In her view, the goal of the program was to 'broaden' the learning experiences of the students, especially from an artistic and cultural perspective. J.'s words affirmed the school's policy on *Enrichment Programs* distributed to parents...

The students' horizons are broadened by reaching beyond the classroom in two ways:

a. by cultural outings which are an integral part of ALP curriculum

b. by participatory activities such as photography, debating in Québec Nationals, and working on Internet projects both in the class and in the computer lab.[536]

The word 'broaden' was significant. It implied, in both a literal and metaphoric sense, going outside of the envelope while applauding the merits of the envelope. It meant accepting other sites as spaces of learning in tandem with the classroom. Borrowing Cummin's (1986) term, it spoke of an 'additive' approach to learning: to add to; to build upon rather than to negate. In Hanley's (1998) words it meant keeping "an open mind as we explore our options and attempt to go beyond what we know (without throwing away the past)" (p. 180). In his interview, G., the administrator, elaborated on what was stated in the policy by explaining how the cultural outings were fused with the in-class curriculum. He used the following example...

Last year the students attended an opera at the Place des Arts. Before going they learned beforehand the story of the opera, the background of the opera and the social and cultural events of the time. They did not simply go to the opera. The event was integrated into what they learned in the classroom. Parents are very comfortable with that.[537]

Sergiovanni's notion of *gesellshaft* was also present in the ALP and its relationship with the rest of the school. I argue that the *Alternative Learning Program* existed essentially because of rational will. When I asked the administrator 'How the ALP came to be?' he responded that "the program was initially offered as a marketing tool to attract students."[538] This comment substantiated information shared with me in the previous project. I had been

informed that the ALP (among other programs) was introduced in the school "to counteract competition with private schools" (Sturge Sparkes and Smith, 1998, p. 161).

Being identified as a marketing tool proved to be a double-edged sword. True, teachers such as J. had the opportunity to work with academically strong students and derived much pleasure from that. Yet the marketing element carried its own set of issues evident as the class prepared for the Open House...

> [J.] mentions that tomorrow the class will make displays to be set up on the bulletin boards that border the room. (I have already noticed that the bulletin boards are bare at the moment). Part of the display will show some of the field trips the ALP class has made like attending operas, etc. J. alludes to giving the parents a 'good impression' of the ALP. She also mentions in passing (and I hope I get this right) that students in Grade VI and their parents attend this as well.[539]

As raised in the previous chapter, making a good impression seemed to be the driving force behind preparing for the event. During one class J. asked for a show of hands to indicate the number of students who planned to attend. Their response triggered the following reaction...

> J. does not appear to be very pleased with the possibility that only a few students would be present. She cautions them that "it will not look nice" if there is only a small turn-out.[540]

The seemingly obvious need to impress piqued my curiosity since at the time I was only becoming aware of what was at stake. Noting J.'s comments I wrote...

> [I can't help but wonder what is motivating this obvious concern to impress parents. Is concern for the status of the ALP and its survival driving this preparation? I would like to attend this Open House to get a greater sense of what it involves. Maybe the answer will surface there].[541]

Promoting the organization by program highlighting spoke of *gesellshaft*. In this form of social structure, people were bound by common goals. However, in this particular organization some members appeared to be more influential than others in sustaining the organization, an issue evident to some colleagues. One teacher from the regular stream, for

example, alluded to "the high profile being placed on the French program and the ALP during the Open House."[542] Tensions between those involved in the ALP and the remainder of the school, I witnessed, did not exist only among the students. G. admitted that streaming generated its own set of problems, but added that the school had *no option* but to continue organizing students in this fashion."[543] [Italics added].

The term 'no option' was insightful. I was informed that the idea for an enriched program such as the ALP was, in the administrator's words, 'parent generated'. In keeping with the credo of an organizational society, the school exercised the rational will to respond to the concerns of certain groups of parents who were looking for a more challenging program for their children. In G.'s words...

> I need to offer a variety of programs that answer our community's demands and parents' expectations. The ALP has a powerful appeal to certain parents.[544]

Following Bernay's notion of public relations (see Kowalski, 2000), the school engaged in a "two-way symmetrical" model whereby it integrated "its actions and attitudes with those of its publics and the actions and attitudes of its publics with those of the organization" (Kowalski, 2000, p. 7,9). In return the school benefited by attracting a certain calibre of clientele, thereby guaranteeing, at least in some respects, its survival.

Meeting the demands of the market had implications within the school and in the ALP classroom. Individuals, such as J., were aware of the 'something' outside of the organization sustaining it: hence, the importance she placed on the Open House. Word of mouth proved to be an effective promotional tool. During one exchange, J. mentioned to me, "I hear that many students want to enroll in my program next year, about 180, I believe". She elaborated by stating that parents whose children are currently in the program are "singing its praises and spreading the word to others".[545]

Undeniably, the presence of such a program generated some negative effects of class streaming. It surfaced in student references to being called "nerds" and in student-generated comparisons of themselves to others as shown in Chapter 4. Streaming, as we had discovered in the *Student Engagement* project, seemed to, even in small ways, pit teacher against teacher, especially when it involved programs with a selective clientele. Some teachers were of the opinion that these programs tended to be consumer, rather than educationally, driven and that their presence in the school eroded the attention paid to 'regular stream' students (Sturge Sparkes and Smith, 1998, p. 163).

In my own study, I found that the separation between teachers of select and non-select groupings was not as simplistic. J. made reference to successful collaborations with colleagues outside of the ALP. Because her approach differed from the norm, she was generally misunderstood by colleagues, even those in the ALP. J. alluded to a colleague (in the program) who regarded certain components of her curriculum as 'fluff'.[546] This comment along with more indirect references made since the beginning of the school year prompted the following reflective insert ...

> [I sense that J. feels that she is diametrically opposed to the views held by the other ALP teacher. References to that teacher's views have surfaced a number of times since my visits began in September.... She has already mentioned about how her debating schedule has been thrown off. At the beginning of the year they had agreed to exchange students for debating and public speaking. Now J. has discovered that public speaking was covered before Christmas. I can tell by her body language that J. is not happy with how things have panned out].[547]

Interestingly, at the end of the same class session, J., as if reading my mind, disclosed her feelings about the issue...

> I am finding that I am continuing to work by and large on my own because the other teacher and I do not agree philosophically on what we should be doing.[548]

J., I discovered, considered herself to be an outsider. She ran what she called "a one woman show."[549] I recall her suggestion that colleagues did not understand her because she chose to do things differently. Like her students, J. came to the realization that taking a different path is not without its risks.

Evidence came to light from both the *Student Engagement* project and my own research to suggest that as far as organizational context is concerned the school displayed elements of *gesellshaft* or society. It also showed that something else existed beyond. While the organization functioned as a society it also operated with a sense of community. The Community Context, as the next section is called, existed in the school at large and in the English language arts classroom.

Layer III: The Community Context

(a). School community

As already established, elements of *gesellshaft* were present in the school context. J. did not always agree with her colleagues. And because she had the freedom to operate her own show, the school had characteristics superceding a society. J. was not unilaterally bound to rules imposed upon her, but conducted her professional practice with rules, to a large extent, defined by her. By granting J. such freedom, the school reflected in adherence to Sergiovanni's (1994b) lexicon, notions of *gemeinschaft* (community) displaying the following...

> In *Gemeinschaft*, natural will is the motivating force. Individuals relate to each other because doing so has its own intrinsic meaning and significance. There is no tangible goal or benefit in mind for any of the parties to the relationship (p. 219).

In the school there was a will to build an environment conducive to serving the students' best interests. A sense of community, therefore, was created through instilling "hope for the common good" (Somerville, 2000, p. xvi). The "unwritten curriculum," a teacher informed me in the *Student Engagement* project, "is an integral part of it all -- dignity and respect of human beings are at the heart of the process" (Sturge Sparkes and Smith, 1998, p.158). A colleague described the school as "a professional place with a heart" (Sturge Sparkes and Smith, 1998, p.172). This description complimented Sergiovanni's (1994b) differentiation between school as community and school as organization...

> In communities, we create our social lives with others who have intentions similar to others. In organizations, relationships are constructed for us by others and become modified into a system of hierarchies, roles, and role expectations (p. 4).

The word community with its roots 'commune' speaks to "opening into each other" (Merriam-Webster, 1983). The concept reflects Noddings (1992) views about 'caring.' "When I care," she writes, "I really hear, see, or feel what the other tries to convey" (p. 16). Opening requires courage. It requires stepping away from fear, of being transparent about what and who you are, in a collective as well as individual sense. It means in McClintock's way of thinking leaning into, not shrinking from, that which is different (Palmer, 1998a, p. 26).

Care, in terms of community, means being open or responding to. After visiting the secondary site, I grappled with defining the descriptor 'openness' as expressed in my reflective memo shared in Chapter 2...

> An artistic environment opens up to the world. People feel invited and welcomed into the school and into the world of the learners who in turn share in their learning. This welcome includes parents and others in the community. Precaution needs to be taken to insure student safety but this can be done without shutting others out....[550]

Caring in the form of receptivity, however, is merely the first step. Like Noddings, I see caring in terms of 'being in relationship with', of reciprocated *action*. Caring reflects the human need for binding and for connection, and beyond that, acting upon what is commonly understood. In a school founded on the values of *gemeinschaft*, individuals are bound by a 'natural will' to care, not only for learning, but for the learner...

> *"It's the time you spent on your rose that makes your rose so important."*

> *"It's the time I spent on my rose...," the little prince repeated, in order to remember.*

> *"People have forgotten this truth," the fox said. "But you mustn't forget it. You become responsible forever for what you've tamed. You're responsible for your rose...." (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 64).*

The study site reflected these values. Time was spent on the roses. The focus of the caring, however, widened or narrowed depending on the speaker. To the administrator, it reached outside the boundaries of the school to the wider community of which it was a part. It surfaced in the way the administrator spoke about respecting the opinions of elementary teachers when selecting students for the ALP and about collaborating with parents to monitor student progress.

A number of teachers I spoke with during my school visits saw themselves as nurturers. They first and foremost saw their students as human beings and tried to tend to their needs on that basis. Expressions of caring surfaced when they talked about their relationship with them, as the example illustrates...

A teacher needs a sense of humour - you have to care about what you're doing. We have to respect students and fellow teachers. Kids know when you care (Sturge Sparkes and Smith, 1998, p. 155).

Some of the students I interviewed showed an understanding of the basic principles of caring: that 'caring for' begins with the self. To these students caring means taking responsibility for their own successes. Their realization of this rule was reflected in their words...

It's not up to the teachers to make us learn. It's up to ourselves (Sturge Sparkes and Smith, 1998, p. 143).

Teachers give us the opportunities. The onus is on each student to take them (Sturge Sparkes and Smith, 1998, p. 143).

The student seemed to have a sense that a precursor for reaching out is reaching in, nurturing the self. The embracing of both supports Kessler's (2000) linking of autonomy and intimacy. In her view these concepts are not polemic, but complementary...

The more we encourage young people to strengthen their own boundaries and develop their own identity, the more capable they are of bonding to a group in a healthy, enduring way (p. 24).

Beyond expressing their view of self love, I argue, the students were also pointing to the notion of community. Community is only possible if Kessler's notions of autonomy and intimacy exist in balance. Intimacy, unchecked, smothers and controls. Autonomy, on the other hand, can slip into unbridled individualism, Somerville's (2000) interpretation of Kingwell's thoughts on the 'eternal now'. Trapped in the present, humans lose the capacity to respect, a word derived from the Latin 'to look back on'. Somerville surmises that "respect is the mechanism through which we remember ... it requires us to see ourselves in a larger context than just ourselves" (p. 7). Individualism, it appears, takes *gesellshaft* to the extreme.

Most organizations, even those largely adhering to the principles of community, Sergiovanni (1994b) claims, are neither pure *gemeinschaft* or *gesellshaft*, but a mixture of both (p.13). Schools, he suggests, lean more on the side of *gemeinschaft* (community). Yet even in such organizations remnants of *gesellshaft* abound creating tensions within.

Tensions were evident in the study. Some of J.'s concerns arose not so much from her classroom but from the context surrounding it. To reiterate, the school displayed elements of a community. Ideas and ideals were shared. But there was also dissonance. After a considerable amount of time spent at the school, I concluded that all the professionals wanted students to learn. Disagreement arose in realizing that intent.

As raised in the previous chapter, J.'s view of her role changed over the years. The teacher role she had practised in the past conflicted with her sense of self and how she viewed learning. Her journey into reflection pushed her to re-think what she did. She engaged in her own investigation, venturing outside the box and into, as Hubbard and Miller Power's (1993) describe, "the complicated and messy process" of classroom inquiry (p.xvii). As J. evolved as a pedagogue, so did her relationship with many of her peers. In the past, some were open to sharing ideas but she informed me, "I find I get less ideas from colleagues now."[551] As J. discovered, growth segregates as much as it enriches.

But growth has another significant characteristic. Those open to it seek out others of similar ilk. Like attracting like extends beyond Alvermann et al.'s (1995) findings about students. J. sought out colleagues who shared her views. Surprisingly, most of these colleagues were not attached to the ALP but were in other departments such as the ITT (Introduction to Technology). She spoke very highly about these colleagues and the quality of their work.

J. was particularly perturbed about the tendency of educators to overlook excellence in their own profession. Her views were most notably triggered by an in-school event celebrating a teacher's achievements unrelated to the profession. I noted at the time that J. "is obviously not sold on this overture by the school."[552] She continued by extolling the accomplishments of another colleague: "He is probably one of the best teachers in the system," she explained, "And it will probably be a long time before he is recognized for his outstanding work."[553] The words spoke to me of more than a failure to recognize excellence in teaching. It spoke of conflict with some of the practices adhered to in the school context.

The surfacing of such conflicts brought me back to notions of community. In my view, J. displayed an 'insider-outsider' dynamic. Understandably, determining who was 'inside' or 'outside' depended on the viewer. Nonetheless, from my perspective, it was present. Some teachers, such as J., crossed department boundaries to connect with colleagues. I did not have data to support my intuition. Yet, I strongly suspect, as surfaced in the *Student Engagement* project, that it had to do with commonality in professional philosophies. Sergiovanni's notion of school as community as appealing as it is, I argue, is rather simplistic. It presents a surface view of the social dynamics that occurred in this site.

Enomoto's (1997) view seems to be more appropriate. She extends Sergiovanni's metaphor by referring to schools as "nested communities", a term she explains that "acknowledges the many varied communities that exist within schools and how these entities might be conflicting" (p. 513). The school portrayed in my study was not comprised of one community, but of many. These multiple communities seemed to have, as the data showed, impact upon participant behaviour.

Disagreement with certain practices in the larger community turn individuals inward. They expel energy where it can have the greatest impact. That is what I believe J. decided to do. She turned context into conditions. She focussed her attention where she felt she could make a difference. By and large, J. regarded her classroom as a separate community and took pains to create it as such. I argue that this was the point J. was making in her reference to her program as a 'one woman show'.

J.'s relationship with her students went beyond a 'professional-client' contract. Her classroom was a place where people learned. Beyond that, it was a place of relationships, of bonding. In a more 'micro' sense, her classroom realized Sergiovanni's (1994a) elaborations on what a community is... "Members of a tightly knit web of meaningful relationships, [having] a common place and [who] over time come to share common sentiments and traditions that are sustaining" (p. 218).

Sergiovanni's thoughts raised more issues about what a community entails. It directed my gaze back to the classroom and to the dynamics I observed there. Epstein and Sanders (2000) propelled my thinking. Their proposition that "new directions for studies about community start from the inside out" (p. 294) spoke to me. It generated more questions: What was it about this classroom that exuded a sense of community? What were the elements or conditions that formed that 'common place'?'

(b). Classroom Community

My visits left me little doubt that caring emerged from the 'common good' established in her classroom. This belief was expressed in J.'s written reflection...

> We all learn differently; we all have different interests. What we do have in common is the desire to enjoy ourselves and the need to succeed and have our moment of glory.[554]

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In these words J. was expressing her view of community. To her it was an environment in which differences were celebrated without losing sight of what both she and her students shared.

To the students caring was the quality of the relationship they enjoyed. One student credited J. with creating a community environment with the words, "the teacher finds something we have in common".[555] The student echoed J.'s sense of commonality and what effect that had on life in the classroom. It spoke of Greene's (2000) sense of the 'we-relation', those "face-to-face relationships that enable persons to be open to one another" (p. 273).

But the student's words said something more. He intimated that commonality was something not to be given to them, but something they already had. The teacher's role was not to create commonality but to tap into what was already there. His appraisal of the situation reflected Dewey's (1938) view that "individuals are parts of a community, not outside of it" (p. 54). In an earlier comment the same student delved further into Dewey's words. "Cooperation," he informed me is achieved through "combining efforts."[556] He voiced Dewey's thinking that "it is not the will or desire of any one person which establishes order, but the moving spirit of the whole group" (p. 54). In this classroom, I felt that spirit. I felt the synergy that sustained momentum. It showed in the energy and enthusiasm both the teacher and her students had for what they were doing, and the seemingly effortlessness with which they moved from one activity to the other.

While Dewey's view of the group dynamic has merit, the sense of community, I argue, fundamentally flows outward from the Self. Community happens because individuals seek it out. Community is an essential part of the dialogue by responding to the identity question "Who am I?". The response to such a question is ultimately context-dependent (Sarbin, 1997, p. 69). Yet it is the Self who sees the value of the connection and initiates the dialogue. Connecting unfolds from within.

Life reinforces this reality. As I write this section I reflect on Christ's teaching to 'Love Thy neighbour as Thyself' (*The Holy Bible*, Matthew 22 vs.39). Jesus did not have formal training in psychology, but he had a profound understanding of the human spirit. The kind of love to which Christ was referring is that sense of self-worth that must be in place before the human person can respond to the worth of others. It is the same psycho-emotional, even spiritual condition, Steinem (1992) names as "intrinsically-located" value...

Without that feeling of intrinsic value, it's hard for children to survive the process of failing and trying again that precedes any accomplishment. It's harder still to enjoy successes once we achieve them or to support the successes of others (p. 67).

Steinem's thoughts were echoed in my interviews with the students. My question 'How do you feel when you do well?', elicited the following comment from one of the respondents, "It's good for self-esteem knowing that you can do well".[557]

Sergiovanni's notion of *gemeinschaft* does not originate with the group but with the Self. A productive, yet caring community is a collective of productive, caring individuals. Caring that is healthy and resilient requires autonomy, a sense of self, as much as a sense of others.

Gemeinschaft is a safe place: a place where people feel secure to connect. Students sensed this about their classroom. They were strongly attached to the room not only as a place to learn but, even more telling, as a place to 'commune'. Students were inclined to 'hang out' there during their lunch breaks. This phenomenon presented itself to me during a number of my visits. J. had mentioned this tendency in passing, but it did not register with me until I had witnessed it. On one occasion I wrote...

> I am struck by the activity in the room even though this is the lunch hour. Students are gathered at the tables or clustered around the computer stations working on what appears to be assignments.[558]

On the first occasion of my noting, I had not given it much thought, thinking that students were using the time for academic 'catch up'. However, by the third documentation when heeding Wittgenstein's (1968) advice "don't think, but look" (p. 31), it became clear that these 'gatherings', while work related, satisfied a social need....

> J. is busy doing last minute preparations for the upcoming class. I locate a chair in my usual spot at the back of the room. Various students greet me with comments like, "Hi, you're back!". The room is very busy even though it is their lunch hour. Female students congregate in the main room playing cards mostly. (J. and I joked about their activity earlier on with comments like, "They're preparing for the Casino!"). Male students cram into the computer room sharing the terminals. (The scenario reminds bemused J. of a black hole.) It looks like they are playing computer games.[559]

Students sought out the classroom not only as a place to do, but, more telling, as a place to be. Something other than academic goals and aspirations bonded them -- a likeness of spirit as well as of mind. Their gatherings reminded me of Jardine's (1998) notion of 'lived-experience', that is the "deeply *conversational* nature of life" as it is actually lived with its irresolvable and potent "family resemblances" and "kinships" (p. 26). There was something familial about the space, even protective, reminding me of Sylwester's (2000) notion of "the classroom as a womb" (p. 47). One of the students alluded to that kind of space when she spoke about the classroom as a place where "we can get excited about things and feel really comfortable being that way."[560] She felt emotionally and psychologically safe to be herself, and spoke with assurance that her classmates felt the same way. Their room was a place in which, as a colleague expressed, they felt they could 'loosen up'.

Like a family, these students 'really got to know each other'. They felt accepted and were free as a student wrote, to be themselves. There was an understanding that nobody's perfect, an understanding that released them from being self-conscious or hyper-sensitive about proving something. Because of their acceptance of one another, I found an overall receptivity to 'mistake making' and to less-than-perfect behaviour. In Kessler's (2000) words the students saw life in this classroom as a "*meaningful* connection [including] respect and care that encourages authenticity for each individual in the group" (p. 22). Sergiovanni (1994a) would concur.

Authenticity opened the door to seeing the uniqueness of each community member. A number of the students I interviewed showed marked maturity in this regard. Mitchell (1992) asserts that the ability of adolescents to recognize that "he or she is similar in some ways to most people, yet different in some ways from all people" indicates the presence of a healthy self-identity (p. 120). Overall, I found in this classroom a 'no matter what' acceptance of each other expressed in both word and in action.

In familial terms, I felt a level of caring not always found in classrooms populated by that age level. Perhaps what was unique about this group was not so much the caring, but the willingness to admit it as with J.'s admission to the students that she wanted them to do well because she loved them. This display of affection was reaffirmed in the student interviews. Students talked about 'pulling together'; of 'helping each other'; of 'everyone wanting everyone to do well'.

But I found in my interactions with them, that members of this classroom community, understood another dimension about caring: that in Noddings' (1992) view "caring is a way of being in relation, not a set of specific behaviors" (p. 17). It was evident during the lunch hour gatherings. They carried being in relation into their work. By their own admission a

feeling of opening up and helping permeated their learning experiences. It was revealed to me in the way students assisted a colleague who had difficulty answering questions directed to him about the plot of a short story.[561]

The event stood out because it occurred when the class was being taught by a substitute teacher. Students informed me further along in the study that (compared with J.) substitute teachers were "much more traditional and not as flexible"; that they treated them "like they could not figure things out for themselves."[562] One student was of the opinion that "we can see the difference in the way things are done when we have a substitute teacher."[563] I noticed the difference as well, writing in reflection about this particular session...

> [It appears to me that this entire session operates from the premise that answers are either 'right' or 'wrong'. I heard no 'wrong' answers being given, just answers that were more congruent with the context of the story than others. Little attempt, however, was made to make students aware of the significance of contextual meanings].[564]

In contrast to J.'s practice, the approach I was observing was considerably more prescriptive and teacher-dominated. It emulated Nystrand's (as cited in Gamoran, Secada and Marrett, 2000) description of 'monologic instruction' in which classroom interaction is predominantly one-dimensional. "Even when students recite", explain Gamoran, Secada and Marrett (2000), "they are following a script that has been laid down by the teacher" (p. 57). Monologic instruction was evident during that session. In my notes I indicated that the teacher-directed exercise about the plot of a short story consisted of questions that were "close-ended and fact-oriented". The questions invited cryptic responses which the students gave without much thought.[565]

When juxtaposed against each other, the difference in teaching approaches was obvious. I surmised that if students had not been exposed to another way of learning, they would not have seen the difference, but they did. Interestingly, students noted the difference collectively. A number of them referred to it in different interview sittings. From the researcher's perspective, it was not so much their awareness of the situation, but their ability to analyze it that I found most intriguing. Together they had arrived at "intersubjective knowledge", Kincheloe, Slattery and Steinberg's (2000) sense of "understandings of a social vein shared by a group of individuals" (p. 281). The students not only saw the difference but had the confidence to talk about it: a confidence, I might add, refreshingly devoid of arrogance or sense of entitlement one might expect from students of that calibre.

The 'assisting the classmate' incident, furthermore, epitomized for me what happens in a community when its way of doing things is under siege. It adopts the stance, in Sylwester's (2000) description, of an "independent social organism" (p.48) rallying to its own defence by protecting the people and the traditions that are meaningful to it. Values are no more precious than when they are perceived to be threatened. In that incident the students were doing more than assisting their classmate. They were defending a way of learning that J. had opened up to them: a way that attenuated teacher authority and bolstered student autonomy.

Defence of the community brought to mind boundaries and the part they play in community building. Boundaries may be visible or invisible but they are there, defining a geographic location and a common front. But the boundaries of community supercede geography. An individual may leave a community, but its tenets are inescapable. Community defines who we are. It is an indelible part of our identity. Indeed, as the Newfoundland author, Ted Russell (1972) so aptly articulates: "You can take a man out of the Bay but you can't take the Bay out of the man" (p.22). We seek community out, not only to satisfy a need for reciprocity, but a need for self-verification. Bennet (1984) identifies this quest as a "spiritual hunger". In his words, "[it] starts really with this necessity for us 'to belong', to have a place, to feel that we are not isolated, that there is something beyond our own psyche which is not a stranger to us, which is not outside of us" (p.4). We not only live in community, but are community.

Students sought out the classroom, not only because like attracts like, but because it was a part of how they perceived themselves. Under the aegis of its boundaries, they were less of strangers to each other, but even more importantly less of strangers to themselves. In the words of Chopra (1997), "Other people are mirrors of your own love. In reality, there are no others, only the Self in other forms" (p. 308). In this community, students to paraphrase one of them, could not only be themselves, but could accept who the Self was.

That having been said, being accepted and belonging in this classroom had its contractions. J. worked diligently to create a classroom environment that responded to the needs of these young adolescents. But as discussed in Chapter 4, neither was a given. It was something earned. Like all communities the classroom adhered to certain norms, expressed or tacit, to which all members were expected to comply. Interestingly it was in this area of classroom practice that J. took a more decisive role. Excelling in the admission test was not the only criteria for determining suitability to the program. Classroom ethos was as much social as academic. Students were expected to be, in Ferguson's (1995) terms, well qualified

intrapersonally. As J. had pointed out to me not every successful entrant fitted into the program.

Some students expressed awareness of what was expected of them. One informed me that "you can stay in [the program] as long as you are not fooling around."[566] In his own way, the student had a sense of 'social capital', Gamoran, Secada and Marrett's (2000) notion of "trust, expectations, shared understandings, and a sense of obligation" (p. 51) that characterized the affiliation. A colleague seemed to have even more acute awareness of 'social capital' in his 'teachers judge you by what you do in school' comment. Both students were insightful in their understanding that schools ultimately placed primary value on achievement. Perhaps these students saw the connection (while not voicing it) that schools reflected the attitudes of the social context surrounding them (Bourdieu, 2000). They may have had a sense of Grumet's (1988) thinking that schools with their democratic ethos of social mobility "based on achieved rather than ascribed characteristics, belies the actual commitments of the upper and middle classes to retain their class status" (p. 21).

Without becoming entrenched in the social issues Grumet raises, I cannot refute its applicability to this particular study site. It was clear to me that the ALP as viewed through the English language arts component represented the values found in large part in the community it served. I suggest that these were the realities these students were articulating, and even, in their own way, challenging.

My explorations in this aspect of community lead me to another realization. I recognized that a space protects, not only by what it allows in but what it shuts out. Interestingly, the lunch hour 'minglings' discussed earlier were frequented only by students in the ALP group. Rarely did I see students in the mix who did not belong to the program. Students were aware of the separation and expressed some concern about it. A couple suggested that the chasm was exacerbated by 'misguided' expectations for behaviour, especially on the part of adults: "People expect that because we are in the ALP we are more quiet and respectful. They tend to compare us with others in the regular program."[567] The comment affirmed another classmate's point of view that "we are regular kids like everyone else but some people expect us to behave in a certain way".[568] I noted at the time that he did not specify who exactly these 'people' were but I suspected he meant the teachers.

I raised these issues in the interviews because of cues surfacing in a couple of the personal reflections. The questions obviously touched a nerve. Responses, as previously indicated, spanned the continuum from defending the intelligence of non-ALP colleagues to accusing them of jealousy. The passion the question elicited reflected sensitivity to what I have already identified as the perils of privilege: that is, the students' recognition, even

tacitly, of the "effects of school structure [ie. streaming] as a major mechanism by which schools reproduce in the next generation the inequalities in powers and resources of the adult generation" (Cohen, 2000, p. 269). No matter how fervently the students tried to convince me that they were just regular kids, we both had a sense that *that* was not the case, not in their eyes, nor in the eyes of fellow students or teachers. In a reflective piece written early in my research I struggled with this reality...

> [I am sitting in the bus station waiting for the bus to the school. I have been toying over in my mind what exactly I should be looking for in the ALP class. An issue which keeps resurfacing is what it is about this specific program that separates it from what is considered to be in the school the 'regular program'. I have a sense from teachers' comments that there is a perception that this program is superior and attracts superior students. I can't help but wonder what it is about the program in question that gives it such status. I gather that the children are accepted into the program which gives it an exclusionary flavour from the outset. Is this how we rate superiority by who it excludes?][569]

The selective status of the program set the group apart, creating an 'us and them' dimension to the school culture that was bound to surface during some point of the conversation. It was undeniable that such a dynamic created what was in Enomoto's (1997) view the classroom as a community.

I discovered over time, however, that the classroom was not the unity it first seemed to be. The 'us and them' division that played out in the students' relationship with peers outside of the program did not hide the social strata within. Individualism and the struggles it generated were evident as will be shown in the section that follows.

(c). Classroom Communities

Ongoing tension between cooperative and individual interests surfaced during class sessions. A proponent of cooperative learning, J. saw merit in individual competition as acknowledged in her personal reflections discussed in Chapter 5. More importantly this credo was exercised in classroom practice. Her mission was to make 'everyone a star'. Yet it was clear that in activities such as improv and acting, a few students had acquired 'star' status and were awarded more air time than others. The incident, described in Chapter 4, involving a student who was less skilful in acting than some of his colleagues still comes to

mind. I admired his courage for volunteering in spite of his own awareness of his limited talent. At the time I reflected ...

> [The student was very brave to take on the challenge knowing full well that he does not have skills in this area as the other two students who went before him. I feel that he should have been given much more credit for the attempt].[570]

I am not certain whether or not J. was conscious of this seemingly inequitable treatment. It was evident to some of the students, however. They were less than enamoured with it, expressing their displeasure in various forms of behaviour indicated in earlier chapters.

With the exception of a few blatant incidents I observed, the imbalance of attention was largely based on conjecture. During the interviews, a couple of students made what I call oblique reference to the truth with comments like "maybe there are some who want to shine more than others,"[571] or in drawing comparisons between their learning style and that of class stars. These admissions were insightful because they revealed political savvy. I found it particularly interesting that before an interview, one student asked me if they had "to tell the truth."[572] I had spent a fair amount of time with the students at that point. Yet in spite of the relationship we had built, I sensed their cautiousness, especially at the beginning of the interviews. Presenting a common front seemed to surpass any individual concerns they might have been harboring. They seemed to recognize that while the ALP learning environment was not always perfect, it was far better than most and warranted their undivided loyalty.

But another dynamic surfaced in 'pulling together'. J. discovered that 'talk-alike' students sought each other out. But talk-alike, I discovered, did not confine itself to students who shared common interests as the term implies. Something deeper played itself out. It was also a question of power. Students experienced Grumet's (1995b) notion of "the hazards of uncensored expression in the classroom" (p. 4). Even when students were free to express their views, freedom did not play itself out equally. Some dominated the conversations primarily because classmates (knowingly or unknowingly) granted them permission to do so. After one interview session I noted...

> [In reflection, I did not feel that this interview was in synch as much as the last one. T. was a very dominant figure and the others had the tendency to recede, no matter how much I tried to draw them in. Some good points were raised by the girls, but these points were sometimes lost because they did not speak out clearly].[573]

Speaking out, in my estimation, revealed more of a lack of confidence than a lack of something to say. T. was a force to reckon with displaying such self-assurance that in my view his colleagues let him take over. In making such a statement I did not want to undermine T.'s abilities. T. raised many insightful points and expressed them admirably. His colleagues' reaction to that ability, however, signalled an interesting phenomenon. I was reminded of hooks' (1994) connection between mastery of language and domination. The dynamics that played themselves out in that particular interview brought clarity to what I had observed in the classroom as a whole. T.'s domination could not be explained in gender terms. I noted that the speaker who compared his own skills to T.'s was male as was the student who complained covertly about T.'s supremacy as *the* class performer. All in all, I detected that some of the students felt that T. was the standard against which the rest of them were being measured. It was no surprise to me when J. mentioned about T.'s superior writing skills that she added that the rest of the class marvelled at his ability. In my reflective piece that followed the comment I wondered what this blatant admiration would have on the rest of the students. I stated...

[...Messages do relay to the class who have superior talent in various things and I can't help but surmise what this does to students who feel they are not as proficient].[574]

As I wrestled with the equity issue I had to face the question of whether or not J. was conscious of its relapses. I used the word 'wrestled' honestly and purposefully. I felt uncomfortable pursuing it. But in the name of research, I knew I must, even though it was easier to avoid it altogether. As 'unresearch-like' as it may appear, I wanted to believe that J. was *not* conscious of these occurrences. She possessed so many qualities of a superior pedagogue that I did not want to raise the spectre of this possibility. And, at the risk of forfeiting any researcher detachment, I had a high regard for her on both a professional and human level. I preferred to think that it was not evident to her: that she, like so many of us, was blinded to, in Lorde's (1984) words, the insidiousness of the "master's tools" (p. 112). I preferred to think that she had been so thoroughly inculcated by them that she was unaware that, even as she might critique them, she also perpetuated them. As Gallagher (1999) articulates...

What needs to be highlighted is that while "how we do it in school" is recognized in this textbook and others as exhibiting the values of the dominant culture and is regarded as problematic, it is never disrupted or replaced as the norm (p. 79).

As educators we embody, in hooks' (1994) words, the "colonizing mind-set" (p. 46), not because we consciously choose it, but because we have yet to be, in Freirian terms, "conscientized" to the conditions of the embodiment. As we teach, we unknowingly teach to the dominant power (Kincheloe, Slattery, and Steinberg, 2000), engaging in Gallagher's (1999) words "an exchange of gazes" (p. 69). We assign greater worth to those who do school best. Undoubtedly, this is what one student was trying to get at when he talked about teachers tending to 'see your character in your work'. The comment was insightful particularly because the speaker appeared to be one of the class 'stars'. Perhaps he was not entirely comfortable with the position. Privilege, he may have already learned, carries a price. Only when we see what the structure has done to us can we set out to dismantle it, first from within...

> *"Then you shall pass judgment on yourself," the king answered. "That is the hardest thing of all. It is much harder to judge yourself than to judge others. If you succeed in judging yourself, it's because you are a truly wise man" (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p.32).*

Seeing the 'beam' in our own eye is the most profound victory of all.

In spite of some relapses of favouritism, however, J. worked hard to create an inclusive environment. She was aware that inequalities applied to social status and gender as well as to abilities: that 'cool boys', when left on their own, bonded with 'cool boys'; 'cool girls', with 'cool girls.' She countered these tendencies by building a curricular experience that drew on the variety of talents students brought with them. Students were aware of her efforts in this regard as expressed in words like "Everyone is the best at something. There is always that someone does well"[575] and "Everyone is the best in at least one thing we do in class."[576] Regularly-changed work groups were the mainstay of classroom organization and J. was continuously vigilant about matching students with complementary abilities.

The ALP classroom typified other classrooms as encapsulated communities, not only for the dynamics within but also for the dynamics with-out. Aligning with Sylwester's (2000) metaphor, the classroom stood as a "created world surrounded by a leaky wall" (p. 69). Contextual reality brought influences into the classroom beyond J.'s control. When

students defended how learning was experienced in their classroom, they did not act in isolation. They exhibited Epstein and Sanders's (2000) notion of "overlapping spheres of influence" (p. 287) connecting the classroom with the world outside of it. Their defence extended beyond a way of learning to, in even broader terms, a *value* of learning. Parental influence prevailed, even if invisible (Coleman and Hoffer, 2000). It became apparent, particularly during the interviews, that connection with the ALP was in many cases generated from the home. As the administrator informed me, "There are strong family ties to the program."[577] A number of students, when asked how they found out about the program, affirmed his comment. Of the twenty-five students interviewed, five of them indicated that an older sibling had previously been in the program and that they had received strong encouragement from their family to enter it. P.'s response to my question of 'What were your expectations about the program?' was typical...

> I thought it would be a lot harder than the mainstream or regular program. My brother said it was harder. My mother said I should go in it because I am smart.[578]

Beyond what they hoped to gain from the program, some students conveyed an understanding of the less tangible benefits of learning. When I asked the last interview group 'How learning is viewed in your home?', one student responded...

> My parents are very strong about it. They want me to go in the best program they know of. They want me to succeed; to get far in life; to become something good.[579]

I was especially intrigued by the student's use of the words "to become something good". These words echoed a colleague who referred to his parents as wanting him to "become a good person" and even more interestingly, "gotta learn to be."[580] I realized that for some of the students, at least, learning was more than admission to a career with lucrative paybacks. True, the notion did surface, as suggested in Chapter 4. To a majority of the students, however, learning appeared to be a 'state of being' -- a sense of being turned into, as my former teacher had said, a certain kind of person. For the students who expressed this value, parental presence was strong.

But the spheres of influence were not confined to the home. I noted that some students received direct encouragement from an adult other than a parent. One student informed me that his "mother's friend talked about it and said how good it was."[581] Other students identified former teachers as being influential in their decision. Such spheres of

influence speak to Dreeben's (2000) notion of "value community...the consensual commitment to a set of values" not necessarily upholding "solidarity across (or within) generations" (p. 123). In these cases, the youth-adult relationship was bound by little except the common value shared or promoted. Yet as tenuous, or minimal, as the relationship was, the adults imprinted upon the lives of these students, taking them in a direction they may not have otherwise chosen to go.

Sylwester's metaphor of the leaky wall confirmed for me the reality of the classroom. No matter how resolutely the walls are erected they cannot shut out the outside world entirely. The best the walls can do is to create a superficial barrier between what is learned in school and what is learned elsewhere. The successful students are those who either see the connection or play the game -- whatever works. Some persevere. Others learn to care, but not too much. A few thrive (Beauchamp and Parsons, 2000).

The 'leaky wall' metaphor also furthered my insights. It signalled what made this particular classroom so special, at least in my eyes. The walls leaked not because of impossible demands on the construction, but, I would suggest, because J. *deliberately designed them that way*. She saw links between Sleeter and Grant's (1991) notion of 'reified learning', that is the learning usually associated with school, and 'regenerative learning', the learning usually associated with the students' cultural community. As she wrote...

> When I began my teaching career, I believed that my classroom was sacrosanct. No one interrupted my lessons. But in time I began to view the classroom not as a closed reified atmosphere in which intellectual pursuit could take place, but as part of everyday life. Not a preparation for life but a part of life itself.[582]

For her the walls were at best figurative and certainly not absolute. The leaks flowed in two directions: in-out and out-in. The world came into the classroom just as the class sought out the world. J. made a concerted effort to be in touch with what students viewed as crucial to their identity, their youth culture. Admitting half-humourously that she liked "childish things," J. successfully bridged the gap between, in Goodlad's (1983) words, the "disjuncture between elements of the youth culture on one hand and the orientation of teachers and conduct of the schools on the other" (p. 76). Defying what Garcia, Spalding and Powell (2001) spotlight as the ongoing trend in education, J. paid more than lip service to student interests and opinions. Her classroom was testimony to her belief in their entitlement of their own views.

J. rebelled against what is conventionally thought of as 'doing school'. As already discussed, she was fully aware that colleagues were critical about the way she conducted her classes. The words 'being creative' were directed to her on more than one occasion with less-than-complimentary overtones. She interpreted these incidents as showing lack of support. She surmised that some colleagues viewed her program as 'artsy' and regarded her classroom as a place "where we do not do serious things"; where "anything artistic is non-academic."[583] Nonetheless, she was resolute in her determination to forge ahead. She was almost dismissive of her critics stating that they either lacked understanding of what she was doing, or were unwilling to expend the energy required to change their own way of doing things.

What I found particularly compelling was J.'s confession that she did not always view teaching in this way. There was a time when the walls in her classroom were considerably more resistant to seepages: that indeed what happened inside was well protected from external interference. By her own admission, what occurred at that time was a far cry from what took place in her classroom later. The shift in self-perception was epitomized in her advice to a student teacher: "You are not the only one who can teach this."[584] I was curious about what had triggered this change. She was adamant that her teacher training had not prepared her for the task, nor had sown the seed for future growth. Not one course left an impression upon her except for one, an English literature course unrelated to pedagogy. What left a lasting impression upon her was *how* the teacher taught...

> The only good course I took was an English [literature] class. The teacher made it come alive. He was my inspiration. I used to cry in the class when he read a poem. It was kind of embarrassing really [she laughs].[585]

'Making it come alive' was key to J.'s admission. She realized that learning is, in Deweyian sense, what is experienced. In Schön's (1991) phraseology, as a "reflective practitioner", she knew that it was not enough for the program to be her experience alone. It had to be lived *with* her students. She had some notion that to be lived 'one size did not fit all'. Learning had to appeal, as Gardner (1993a) had realized, to different ways of knowing. To know spoke not of one community, but many. Learning in community demanded as one of the students had talked about an openness, the kind of receptivity Greene (1995a) frames as "a self-reflectiveness that originates in situated life, the life of persons open to one another in their distinctive locations and engaging one another in dialogue" (p. 380). At the same time, J. saw the need to create a learning context that transcended difference: binding the

students in communal spirit. Learning, she wanted them to realize, is a journey both solitary and shared.

Context as Layers: Conclusion

In the previous sections I sketched the contextual layers of the study site. Building on Smith's (1997) thoughts of school context illustrated in Figure 5, I presented through the data my interpretation of this concept. Description of context began with the school as a physical entity and spiralled more deeply into notions of society and community. Layers unfolded into layers, beginning with the school, then descending to the classroom. To identify the layers, I separated them. But separating the layers was problematic given that the data did not fit neatly into discrete sections. Left to its own devises, the data reflected the meaning of the word 'context': that is, to interweave.

The study affirmed for me that context is bound to perception. The physical structure formed the backdrop. Yet much of the essential attributes of context unfolded through relationships or, more specifically, interpretations of relationships. The words and actions of the study participants reflected this phenomenon. Their school was both society and community attributes which, in turn, played out in the classroom. But the words also showed that the classroom was not an isolated entity. The influences of the outside were always present, contributing to the dynamics seen and felt there.

I arrive at this point of my writing realizing that context, and all the tenets that define it, inevitably began with me. It was through my eyes that things were seen and reflected upon. My senses filtered and processed what was encountered. I determined what and what not to include. What was significant or not was at my mercy. The process heightened my quest to understand more profoundly the wisdom and anarchy of what it is to be human. In Houston's (1997) sense, the landscape in which the drama unfolded was never simply a landscape. It was what I have learned to purport it to be. It was what I brought into as much as what I took away. I could describe, analyze and synthesize because I could re-visit the past. In the truest sense, I re-cognized...

Look at the landscape carefully to be sure of recognizing it, if you should travel to Africa someday, in the desert. And if you happen to pass by here, I beg you not to hurry pass. Wait a little, just under the star! (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000)

"You're being unfair, my little prince," I said. "I never knew how to draw anything but boas from the inside and boas from the outside."

de Saint-Exupéry (2000, p. 72)

The discussion about context in Chapter 6 was not complete. Something in the classroom shaped the learning communities while connecting them. It was the backdrop to assigned and shared participation and the means through which participative tone, even participative resistance, was daily lived.

The backdrop was a key component of participating flushed out in Chapter 3: that is, the curriculum. I argue, however, that it was not only curriculum but a certain orientation of curriculum that defined what I saw there. I chose the word orientation purposefully. It spoke of a curriculum extending beyond the peculiarities of content, approach, and form. It was a curriculum that focused on the interaction between the learner and the learning experience, rather than on the mechanics of learning. In a nutshell, students always learned something, but the vision of the experience was rarely myopic. Curricular orientation escaped in Aoki's phraseology, "the tunnel vision of mono-dimensionality" (as cited in Pinar et al., 2000, p. 228). Because of its multiple dimensions, the curriculum called for, in my view, a 're-positioning' of both the teacher and the students. That is, it called into question the assumptions of identity and location defining the relationships there. Re-positioning, a dynamic of participating, played a pivotal role in shaping this classroom as a space for learning communities. For that reason, it demanded further attention.

Re-Positioning of the Teacher and Student as Learners

Within the curricular orientation designed primarily by the teacher, the learner became a new kind of classroom citizen. Under the aegis of the re-defined curriculum, both the teacher and the students participated at various levels through dual processes of immersing and emerging. I do not see immersing and emerging as being discreet or hierarchical. I cannot say that one is exclusively a prerequisite of the other. One builds on the other spiraling fluidly at will. As I will show in this chapter, through these processes the participants were exploring what it is to know and what it is to know creatively.

As shown in previous chapters, teacher/ student roles were blurred. J. did not see herself as a teacher, but as a facilitator and animator. Most importantly, J. saw herself as a learner...

> I also believe that learning can be enjoyable. To further this idea I share my enthusiasm *for what I am learning* and doing with my students [italics added].[586]

J. not only viewed herself as a learner, but had the confidence to share it with her students. In partnership, they were actively engaged in their learning. In keeping with May's (1991) thoughts, to understand participation, I needed to look beyond the most visible, that is, the curriculum and move from the 'outside' in. I needed to look at learner interaction in and beyond the curriculum, that is, through what I have decided to call immersing and emerging.

Immersing

Immersing occurred when both the teacher and the students applied various tools for learning such as questioning and evaluating. In the literature this process is often discussed in terms of cognition.

Simplistically speaking, cognition is the means by which human beings acquire and use information. The human ability to cognize involves a vast array of processes. Through cognition, learners build a limitless variety of simple and complex concepts (Komatsu, 1992). These processes include storing and retrieving a multitude of specific and general memories, visualizing and transforming the world in finite detail (Finke, 1989), and mastering human language. The ultimate mystery of the mind far exceeds even these abilities. We not only acquire and use information but change and re-create it. Ward, Smith and Vaid (1997) suggest that humans are "prodigious builders of cognitive structures" (p.2). The mind not only understands, organizes, classifies, and communicates information, but uses information to generate new links and new interpretations.

Writers add to the discussion by expanding upon what they term 'metacognition'. Nelson (1999) defines metacognition as "the scientific study of an individual's cognitions about his or her own cognition" (p. 625); in short, 'knowing how to know'. Borrowing loosely from Nelson's (1999) description, I use the term 'metacurriculum'. It speaks to me of the bi-directional relationship between the learner and what is learned. In short, as I learn the curriculum, I not only establish some kind of relationship with what I am learning in the

immediate sense but am creating tools that will assist me to learn curricula I encounter in the future. I learn, to quote Nelson (1999), the "relational" as well as the "absolute" nature of the experience (p. 625) by developing "a feeling of knowing" (p. 626). Other than the isolated pieces of information I retain, the most significant long-term result of my encounter with any curriculum are the tools or strategies I take into the next formal learning environment. I leave the curriculum experience changed forever. My current interaction with the curriculum alters the way I see curricula I meet later on. Such thinking is encapsulated in *The Québec Education Program*:

> The students use various information sources and select from the information available that which best corresponds to their needs and interests. They *adjust* their knowledge on the basis of the new information, and use the information in various contexts [Italic added](Ministère de l' Éducation du Québec, 2000, p. 19).

The document reflects the relational quality of my curricular experiences. It acknowledges me as the agent. It also emphasizes the 'meta-ness' or 'about-ness' of my learning. Meta-cognition transcends curricular content or specific bodies of knowledge. It becomes a tool through which I ultimately learn. Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko and Mueller (2001) suggest that "metacognitive conversation" is an effective tool for developing literacy among secondary students. Such a tool, they claim, when applied to reading and reading processes, "demystif[ies] the invisible ways we read and make sense of texts" (p. 92).

My use of the term 'meta-curriculum' parallels meta-cognition. I argue, however, that the former is broader and is applicable to all contexts of learning. For me, 'meta-curriculum' refers specifically to the curriculum of the formal learning environment. But, as I am well aware, learning cannot be confined there. The human quest for knowledge cannot be contained or neatly packaged, no matter how much I attempt to do so in my search for understanding it.

The concept of immersing has been instrumental in furthering my understanding of what took place in this particular classroom. I saw glimpses of what students were building as strategies for learning highlighted as both assigned and shared participation. In a nutshell, these strategies were the means by which each student found out what is 'out there', the initial step to laying claim to what it is to learn.

J. recognized that to learn or to 'come to know' in the truest sense of the word was an act of immersion. It was a holistic surrendering. She had a sense that 'coming to know' reached further than what theories of knowledge could hope to ascertain. As McKinnon

explains, "We know things with our lives and we live that knowledge, beyond what any theory has yet theorized" (as cited in hooks, 1994, p. 75). To live knowledgeably transcends what we know. Knowledge is doing. It means seeing connections and acting upon them. It means filtering 'the knowing' into action. "All doing is knowing and all knowing is doing", the Chilean biologists and cognitive scientists Mataurana and Varela surmise (as cited in Senge, 2000, p. 37). To come to know is to act; to free oneself of the trappings of complicity and from the prisons of silence.

Some students had a sense of this. As shown in Chapter 4, the word 'doing' (or it's derivative) sprinkled their conversations when they talked about their learning. Even more importantly, the students knew *why* they were doing. They saw connections, I suggest, because in her classroom practice, J. "honored the nature of her true self" (Palmer, 1998b, p. 29). She responded not only to what she felt the students would be interested in, but what she, herself, found interesting. She willingly stepped outside of the known, venturing, as Hubbard and Miller Power (1993) suggest, in a "vision quest" (p.3) to find ways to relate to her students. In a dynamic bordering on the oxymoronic, J. drew the students in by focusing on what *she* liked.

Immersing was not externally applied in some detached, objective fashion. Learning was an act of rebellion against 'the oughts'. J. had a inclination to not only learn through doing with, but was drawn to what was pleasurable to learn. The belief that "we tend to find pleasure out of things that we are interested in"[587] drove curricular decisions. It breathed life into her own learning and spilled outwards...

> J. asks the students to return to their own seats. She reminds them that this is reading day. She holds up her book, Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace* that she is reading herself.[588]

But learning with extended beyond individual pursuit of knowledge. There was a sense of communal learning, reflecting back to Sergiovanni's (1994b) notion of *gemeinschaft*. J. had mastered the art of teaching the group, but simultaneously transcended it. In some sense she practiced, in Erickson's (2001) words, "the art of individual prescription" (p. 212). The 'I-ness' of the experience drew the students closer to an understanding of themselves as learners, and, in a twist of irony, closer to an understanding of each other. I do not think I have witnessed in any other classroom students who have had such a strong sense of both the individual and communal dimensions of learning.

Perhaps one of the most telling forms of connection occurred in the way assessment was practiced. It was not a lock-step, after-the-fact phenomenon, but a continuous companion to learning. J. affirmed Palmer's (1998b) notion that "grading represents power, and the question we should ask is not how to get rid of power but how to use it toward better ends" (p. 138). J. responded to her students who came to view assessment as a continuous endeavour.

The criteria for analyzing student work was a community effort, even in its construction. First and foremost, students were encouraged to record their response to someone else's work as illustrated in Chapter 3. Assessment was not an aftermath of the learning landscape but integral to it. J. did not simply mark student work. Assessment was a bi-directional, rather than a uni-directional transaction between teacher and student. It was done with rather than done to and practiced as a point of departure for dialogue. When asked about the benefits of approaching assessment in such a way, J responded....

> I feel it is very good. It helps them to think about how they can continue to improve. We discuss where they can go from here. Often times, I ask them to submit their first draft and the improved version to see where the exercise has taken them. It's something that is ongoing.[589]

Nor was assessment an act confined to dialogue between the teacher and the student. It was a journey walked with peers. Self-assessment was paired with shared assessment: student with student and teacher with student engaging in Manzo's (2002) notion of 'table talk'. J. describes the venture...

> I ask them to pair with a partner and engage in a kind of 'shared assessment'. They are asked to assess their own work and then their partner's with questions like: "How exciting was the work? How did it grab you?" We use two columns: their own assessment and their partner's.[590]

In the first year, as shown in Chapter 3, J. engaged in table talk with a student. By the second year of my visits, J. had expanded the activity to include two additional students. The vignette that follows shows what I observed at one such event...

> The writer, a male student, outlines his story. A male colleague questions him about the plot. "Good question," responds J. She comments on the line 'Every day the boy

gets asked the same question when he returns home. He responds with the same answer'. "I remember that part of the plot," states J. "It isn't very exciting". "But it's only a few seconds in the story," retorts the writer defending his work.

J. then refers to the Master Plan of the story. "Did you get that?" she questions the writer's peers. "No," they respond. "I didn't either," adds J. "And we are of different ages. How could you make this more interesting?" J. continues to query the writer about the plot. He defends it. She presses him to think it through: "Why the letters and the numbers? Remember this story is to be set for television. Why would the character want to know who was doing this?" The writer responds, "Part of mind games."

J. asks his classmates if they have any suggestions for him. Both make comments, but unfortunately, I missed them because the noise level surrounding me has raised a notch in the meantime.[591]

As the excerpt illustrates, there were short-falls in the procedure. The teacher tended to monopolize the discussion and the writer felt pressed to defend his work. At first blush, I wondered how much learning had really taken place. Looking beyond these shortcomings, however, I saw a learning opportunity untried in most classrooms. There was a deliberate use of what Thornburg (2002) calls, "'jamming' as a pedagogical model": that is, "new ways of approaching a problem that takes everyone by surprise" (p. 94). In short, I was witnessing engagement in Sawyer's (2004, March) form of improvisational performance (p.12). Realistically, neither the students nor the teacher were adept at assessing in such a way. There was an obvious need to fine-tune their technique. As any member of a jazz ensemble would attest, each performer must immerse himself in the know-how before pushing against it. Risktaking emerged from knowledge.

Assessment activities were seized as learning moments. Furthermore, there was more of an emphasis on what students could, rather than could not, do. As J. explains...

Many of the activities require initiative and leadership skills as the students must often plan and organize the learning themselves (with a little help from me). Moreover, the students are often asked to evaluate their performances in such areas as writing and oral presentations which develop their sense of self-analysis.[592]

J., in my view, shared Erickson's (2001) notion of "process assessment"....

Process and content are two different entities. Process is developed internally within each child; content is inert and exist outside of the child. Because of these differences, we should teach and assess process and content in different ways. But traditionally, we have treated them alike. We have called the processes of reading and writing "subjects". We have graded students in these "subjects" using a deficit model - emphasizing what they cannot do, rather than celebrating their accomplishments, and encouraging them along the path to the next stage of development (p. 161).

Overall, students viewed their learning as a journey signposted with accomplishments. In their discussions, the deficit model of which Erickson speaks was not a 'tour de force' in this classroom. Students knew what made each of them special. Their teacher saw them for what they were at that moment and embraced it. At the same time, she buttressed what was now with what was possible. She mastered the art of immersing her students in the two. What *was* fused with what was to come. It was this fusion, I surmise, that countered the resistance present in other spaces of learning. The merging sparked the beauty of enlightenment...

I've always loved the desert. You sit down on a sand dune. You see nothing. You hear nothing. And yet something shines, something sings in that silence... (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 68).

The beauty J. had bestowed upon her students was to awaken their view of themselves as learners. Self-analysis played a crucial role in the awakening. Their awareness prepared them for the journey -- a journey of their choosing. In keeping with Frost's (1916) famous declaration, they could be more inclined to take "a road less traveled by": a road that unfolded to other paths and to other possibilities.

Emerging

At the same time, the study participants were shaping and defining how they related to the curriculum experience. Each brought into the formal learning environment a vast repertoire of learnings enriching what transpired there. The data spoke to the existence of an 'inside-out' relationship, a form of engagement or 'connectedness' with learning (Smith et al.,1998). The term 'emerging' embodied my belief that because both the teacher and the students felt they had much to contribute to the classroom environment, they were confident

to share what they knew. They added to the dialogue simply because in Jardine's (1998) words, *"they [were] a living part of the classroom"* (p.9). The data supported this claim.

The process of emerging connected with participation as both an action and a quality which, like engagement, is an 'inside-out' phenomenon. As already intimated, a unique feature of this learning environment was the participative tone generated there. The data showed that both the students and the teacher were participating in the curriculum. What was even more telling, was their participation *beyond* the curriculum. The students were a dynamic entity; both individually and collectively. Even more importantly, they felt it. Their interaction with the curriculum was a multi-faceted series of events constantly moving and shifting even as they, as learners, were regenerating and changing their relationship to it. The movement was circuitous even as it was linear. The curriculum was the primary, although far from exclusive, means through which this movement occurred.

Learning had a process rather than product orientation. It was not measured in finite markings of beginning and end, but in temporal cadences. There was a receptivity to possibilities: that "often something else emerges from the process."[593] Learning had a 'moving toward-ness' about it. To J. the devil did indeed lurk in the details. In her eyes, what obstructed students from developing as independent, creative thinkers was not enough guidance but too much. As she explained...

> Traditional teaching seems to stifle rather than promote the creative flow so I try to enhance and stimulate original thought in a variety of ways. One of my methods is to be an animator for an activity. I let the students take over and conclude the work within a loose framework of guidelines.[594]

J.'s desire to relinquish the reins of control became apparent to me when I juxtaposed her pedagogical approach against another...

> I visited a class in the secondary site today. The session was an art class conducted in a traditional manner. Control was obviously a big issue with the kids constantly being 'shushed' even when they were painting. The kids were all instructed to paint the same thing and while the colours used were interesting, I felt that little room was left for individual creative expression. I guess the teacher was concentrating on skill development and hoping that creativity would kick in later.[595]

Control was not the only issue J. treated differently. She also impressed upon students the temporality of learning. Citing Arbuckle (2000), they had the fortunate opportunity to see themselves in the "domain of enduring change" (p. 326). J. heightened their awareness that "it isn't just knowledge but the *dynamics* of knowledge -- it's changing nature-- that is valuable" (Thornburg, 2002, p. 32). As one student informed me, change is a good thing. Knowledge was appreciated because it was in a constant state of impermanency...

> *"But what does ephemeral mean?" repeated the little prince, who had never in all of his life let go of a question once he had asked it.*
>
> *"It means, 'which is threatened by imminent disappearance.'"*
>
> *"Is my flower threatened by imminent disappearance?"*
>
> *"Of course." (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 47)*

Knowledge, while in a constant condition of change, was shared. J., in tune with herself, was the guardian of her own spirit, thereby teaching the students to be guardians of theirs. There was a strong sense of laying claim to the Self, recognizing Scott-Maxwell's (1983) notion of being 'fierce with reality'...

> You need only claim the events of your life to make yourself yours. When you truly possess all you have been and done...you are fierce with reality (p. 42).

J. practiced the art of her craft acknowledging the human person beyond the learning. She was fully aware that the person who learns is not confined to a particular time or space. Learning transcends location. The metaphor, the opened window, spoke to her. She responded to its call. In doing so she resisted what Greene (2000) identified as the trappings of 'insularity' (p. 278). Her classroom looked out into the world and the world looked into the classroom. Sergiovanni's (1994b) *gemeinschaft* transformed, not only the context of learning, but the learning itself. J. had shifted the boundaries.

Opening the window altered J.'s sense of meaning. She no longer viewed classroom knowledge as being separate from life knowledge. It was now a part of it. Yet as much as she worked at connecting the two, old ways of thinking did not readily relinquish their hold. On occasion, the students, even J., talked as if the two were discrete. It was evident in phrases

like "looking *out* into the world," [italics added][596] "reaching *out* to the outside world," [italics added][597] and "bring[ing] *in* new ideas" [italics added].[598] The vocabulary revealed (intentionally or otherwise) an insider's view cocooned from outside intervention. Old perceptions, I realized, are not easily replaced, even in the eyes of youth. But some of the students did pick up on J.'s expanding view of what it is to know. They articulated the awareness in words like "having the opportunity to get a world-based view of things" and "everything being learned made into one."[599] Some students were conscious of the dynamics of the looking. They saw that there were many things out there to explore, and that they were being opened to the seeing.

'Re-positioning in' underscored another significant feature of this classroom context. Knowledge was drawn out of rather than solely brought to. Students assigned meaning to their own experiences as well as to the experiences of others. They had learned to believe in the storyteller in their own heads (Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko and Mueller, 2001). They realized they were valued not only for what they acquired in the classroom, but for what they brought in. Bringing in called for self-investment, Thich Nhat Hanh's (1995) notion of "returning to ourselves" (p.10). The process connected each student with his or her own patterns of learning, heightening their awareness that 'everyone is the best at something'. In Ward's (1996) words, the students felt "acknowledged as a reality and not a projection" (p. 35). They were valued not only for being a potential, the possibility of what they could become, but for the possibility of what they *already were*. In Deweyian sense, 'bringing to' positioned the learners in the rawness of the ever-present now with its own nuances and tempos...

> We always live at the time we live and not at some other time, and only by extracting each present time the full meaning of each present experience are we prepared for doing the same thing in the future. This is the only preparation which in the long run amounts to anything (Dewey, 1938, p. 49).

Students were aware of this opportunity. They spoke of being able to express their own ideas or 'having a say in it'. They opened themselves to the experience of learning, not as an act of compliance to external requirements, but as an act of defining who they were. To them, their teacher cheered them on. One of the students articulated this accreditation, "She makes us want to become an 'I want to learn' person."[600] In these words, he acknowledged the teacher as being instrumental in the journey. He was also stating something else. He was expressing a profound understanding of what learning ultimately is. To him, learning was not

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limited by space and moment. It was the pursuit of a lifetime. The student's view echoed Diamond and Mullen's (1999) thoughts that the "work of a lifetime is to discover who we are" (p. 17). The student's words struck a profound chord with me. That is why I have used them in the title of my work.

Such was learning as it played out in this classroom. Knowledge garnered from outside had no greater significance than knowledge constructed from within. It was one and the same. There was a concerted effort to balance the two. As Houston (1997) explains, "You are both identity (who you are in your developmental life process) and holonomy (of the order of the whole). The structures of your being quite literally reflect the ongoing structures of the universe" (p. 194). The student's comment thus cited spoke of this understanding.

Being Creative

Being creative, I argue, requires both immersing and emerging. To reiterate, one of the assumptions brought into my study is that creativity is a desirable companion to learning. Some research suggests that while educators support the concept of creativity, it is less favourably looked upon in practice (Baloche, 1994; Goodlad, 1983). Cropley (1993) indicates that in ratings of the ideal student, educators tend to give fewer points to such traits as "independent thought", "curiosity", "risktaking", and "nonconformity" -- traits usually associated with the creative personality. Creative students are not easy to teach because they are prone to question. They are more likely to take 'intellectual risks' (Sternberg and Lubert, 1995b; Sternberg and Williams, 1996); and, to have, in J.'s words, "an original point of view of everyday things."[601] They infrequently have what Armstrong (1998) identifies as "caintophobia -- the fear of new things" (p. 50). Creative students tend to seek out what they view as original, and are willing to do what it takes to pursue it. These traits do not readily comply with traditional classroom management practices.

J., on the other hand, prized the creative spirit. Nurturing it was one of the fundamental aims of the Alternative Learning Program. She bristled at the mixed messages that undermined what she had developed. As established in the previous chapter, there seemed to be a wide appreciation for the type of clients the program attracted. Yet, in spite of the accolades directed to it, J. expressed that she was on her own. Lack of support, she elaborated, was seemingly prevalent among, at least some of her colleagues, who viewed her classroom as a place where serious things were not pursued.

I could empathize with her. As a teacher of music, I was confronted continuously with similar perceptions. I have stated more than once that what finally drove me out of the

classroom was not the indifference of my students, but the indifference of my colleagues. At the time the indifference gnawed at me, diminishing in my eyes what I did and what my heart told me. But that was then, and this is now...

I have since come to the realization that part of the problem lay 'within'. I had not fortified myself with sufficient knowledge to counter the uninformed notions of what is identified as 'the intellectual' and 'the creative'. Creativity, I now realize, is not alien to cognitive understanding, but embraces it. Some writers even suggest that creativity is none other than a part of the 'cognition continuum' (Feldhusen, 1995; Runco, 1993; Sternberg and Lubert, 1995a). Glenberg (1997) writes that the starting point for creativity is an 'embodied cognitive system', that is, a "meaningful interpretation of the environment" (p. 517). Creativity, emerges out of a complex system of cognitive conceptualizations or 'meshing' of contextualized understandings. Glenberg's notion of 'meshing' appears in the literature in other forms. Ward, Smith and Vaid (1997) talk about the link or 'structural connectedness' (Finke, 1995) between creativity and prior knowledge. In their view, "so much of creativity...depends on a thinker retaining information that has proven useful in the past" (p. 19). It seems highly unlikely that one may be creative without having developed prior understanding or know how.

Other writers suggest that creativity is less about quantity and more about quality. It is not so much about cognitive ability as a 'style' of applying it (Cropley, 1993; Gardner, 1993). Meaning materializes into creativity, not only from developing the ability to categorize, organize, even synthesize, but from 'meshing' or melding these ideas with life experience. The connection unfolds as shared communication, a network of openness, somewhat reminiscent of Moffett's reference to a "whole universe of discourse" (as cited in Tchudi and Lafer, 1997, p. 24). As J. discovered, the creative classroom has leaky borders. It is a place where, in J.'s words, "kids need to feel safe and secure without shutting others out."[602] As much as novels may wish to romanticize the artist as the isolate, being creative, I argue, is fundamentally a social act. It hopes not only to make a statement, but to make a statement *to someone*. Yet the dialogue starts first within the artist as observer and creator.

Ultimately, creative action emerges from the caverns of solitude. In these deep recesses, the creator strips away that which crowds the thinking and stifles the soul. The artist is transported to a new realm of consciousness, Csikszentmihalyi's notion of "the flow experience" (as cited in Scherer, 2002, September, p. 14). In such pursuits, the creator, like de Saint-Exupéry's pilot, is left with little choice but to submit to life's mysteries. The contemporary composer John Cage describes this phenomenon ....

When you are working, everybody is in your studio -- the past, your friends, the art world, and above all your own ideas -- all are there. But as you continue painting, they start leaving, one by one, and you are left completely alone. Then, if you are lucky, even you leave (as cited in W. Corbett, 1994, p. 97).

Under J.'s watchful gaze, solitude beckoned the student. Each was aware that 'everyone is a star'. Yet, at least some of them, were equally aware that *no* one was. One insightful student, in stating that everyone was special but 'no better than anyone else', showed this understanding. She realized that while each of them is a story in the making, collectively they are all part of a greater story. Such thoughts brought to mind a Hasidic analogy...

We need a coat with two pockets. In one pocket there is dust, and in the other pocket there is gold. We need a coat with two pockets to remind us who we are (Palmer, 1998b, p. 110).

The student had a sense that experiences, if they are to be rich and meaningful, needed to be both individual and shared. Solitude enhanced community.

The question remains why artistic activity, as Cage depicted, is a likely landscape for creative expression. Simply put, the arts offer a nexus for subjective and objective realities. The arts provide a place where, building on Cropley (1993), the creator unfolds on two levels, both inside and outside the work. "Art," states Alber (1999, July), "offers us something seldom seen in other content areas of the curriculum: an immediate emotional and intellectual response to other perspectives" (p. 10). In art we gather what we know and make anew. We lift from the accounts of our personal journals and find commonality. We take what J. referred to as 'an imaginative leap.' If we are to be creators of art, we go beyond knowing about. As Greene (1995a) states, "Knowing about, even in the most formal academic sense, is entirely different from creating an unreal world imaginatively and entering it perceptually, affectively, and cognitively" (pp. 379-380). Art invites us in. But the communion is not colorless, exact, or pristine. We take into it who we are.

Art not only asks us to fuse ways of knowing, it asks us to fuse them meaningfully. It asks the artist to reduce what is seen to comprehensible form. Ironically, art expresses freely within constraints. J. instilled in her students this irony. At the same time, she recognized the perils of providing too much. J. developed her teaching moments between these two

cornerstones, flexibility and structure. In her eyes, creativity emerged out of a balance between the two.

The point yet to be discussed is the medium through which creative expression came alive in this classroom. To Langer (1988),"Since a work of art is a single symbolic form presented to perception, it has to encompass all its elements without losing its unity of semblance and sense" (p. 45). The artist presents his or her ideas through unifying. Unity is achieved not by disregarding multiplicities, but by using symbolic representation to mediate and to connect. Symbolic representation appears in two forms: *discursive* (such as numbers, words, and musical notes) denoting a reality; and *non-discursive* or *presentational* (such as dance or paintings) representing their own reality (Davis and Gardner, 1992; Langer, 1953). Symbolic representation transmits ideas and impressions. It also shapes ideas and impressions. When I work with music notation, I not only use notes to say something but, in abiding by the rules of musical composition, give order to the statement.

But in committing the notation to paper, I also do something else. I not only state an idea and assign form to it so as to communicate the idea to others, I also express an emotion. The expressiveness is metaphoric. As Davis and Gardner (1992) state, "A symbol cannot literally be happy or sad; but when, for example, a drawing aptly expresses sorrow, we say metaphorically, 'that is a sad drawing'" (p. 101). Metaphor, commonly but not exclusively expressed through words, is a form of imagery. It ignites the imagination. "The essence of the metaphor," claim Lakoff and Johnson (1980), "is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (p. 5). The metaphor fuses subject and object, establishing a point of departure, or 'route', Merleau-Ponty's (1964) description of our encounter with the arts. Delving deeper, he describes such an encounter as "an experience which gradually clarifies itself, which gradually rectifies itself and proceeds by dialogue with itself and with others" (p. 25). But metaphor whether it is expressed through word, musical sound, movement or line, does not convey meaning out of context. Sound does not project meaning through tones moving in isolation. It moves in collaboration with many sounds to convey a unity of meaning, even multiple meanings, depending on what the listener draws from the event. In essence a metaphor is not simply a metaphor. It is, using Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) thoughts, a "metaphorical concept" (p. 6). While metaphor brings out the 'one-ness' in a work of art, it does not unfold in 'ones'. As in poetry, metaphors do not move through a word but through congregants of words, that is, through language.

Metaphors appeared often in the ALP English language arts classroom. They were explored by both the teacher and the students. Students used metaphor in their poetry relating to the theme, for example, 'Emotions of Colour.' It surfaced in their descriptive narratives

and in their subsequent discussions about the effective use of them. It found its way into their portfolio submissions as with this poem by T. entitled *Fantasy* (See Appendix F). When I first encountered the poem I discussed it with the author...

> [The poem] is reminiscent of a song from the Beatles' album *Abbey Road*. As if to read my mind, T. explains that his poem was inspired by the Beatles. I smile at the striking coincidence. I say to him, half in jest, half in earnest, "You should send a copy to Paul McCartney, but (as he walks away) make sure you get it copyrighted first!" He turns to me and repeats with a look more serious than humorous, "Yes, I'll have to get it copyrighted."[603]

I was struck by the ability of many of the students to transmit meaning through language. They knew what language was about. They knew the mechanics of it. But beyond that, what impressed me most was how well they knew themselves: how they could put their own stamp on what they chose to say. They had learned to use their own voices metaphorically. It sharpened their understanding of themselves and their relationship to the world.

As I reviewed my observations, I reflected upon Eisner (1998) and his view that 'thinking in imagery' (as in metaphor) is a place where creativity and cognition meet. "Understanding," he states, "depends on the child's ability to think by analogy and to grasp, often through metaphor, what needs to be understood. Poetry may indeed be closer to the more sophisticated forms of cognition than many people suspect" (p. 79). Metaphor, as a creative device, is the 'go-between' from the see-er to the seen. It is, to reiterate J.'s words, a means of expressing "an original point of view of everyday things."[604]

And that is what I found in this classroom: students being given the opportunity to express an original point of view of the ordinary. Ironically, that is what struck me as being not ordinary: students expressing *a point of view* (original or not!). I think the comment of one of the students of being able to express an opinion without fearing retribution summed up what was unusual about this particular learning space. J. was inclined to conduct her classroom after the fashion of the scientist Barbara McClintock, as "someone who understands where the mysteries lie, rather than someone who mystifies" (as cited in Palmer, 1998b, p. 106). Because this classroom was liberated from fear, students felt free to take risks, and to be creative. "Maybe we are more creative because we get to create our own stuff," one of the students informed me. "We want to do things a different way."[605]

If metaphor as a form of imagery is one of the vehicles of creativity, what is the fuel? I argue that it is the human capacity for feeling. I use the word both freely and guardedly, fully aware that I may be wading into a quagmire. The wisdom of Reimer (1992) and Langer (1988) have saved me from possibly drowning in the academic sense.

Simplistically put, feeling is experienced. It is that temporal, moment to moment "internal awareness of subjectivities" (Reimer, 1992, p. 36). We know feelings because we experience them. Yet feelings with their transitory nuances, shadings and intensities defy literal description. In Langer's (1988) view, feeling is a "verbal noun" (p. 7), a state of being rather than a condition of having. Nonetheless, in spite of the elusiveness of feelings, we have a human need to talk about them even if doing so tests our lexical abilities. We have brought into our linguistic repertoire words such as love, fear, anger -- broad, conceptual categorizations to express what we feel. To Reimer (1992) these categorizations, called 'emotions', are not 'within' feeling, but are 'about' feeling (p. 36). We struggle to reach an understanding about our emotional experiences (Somerville, 2004). Yet the words we have at our disposal for expression are limited. They often fail us.

Creativity is driven not only by the human need to express emotion, but by the need to understand it. Creativity is the meeting place for cognition and emotion (Bresler, 1994; Eisner, 1998; Lubart and Getz, 1997). Langer (1988) talks about creativity in terms of 'intellectual excitement'... "the feeling of heightened sensibility and mental capacity which goes with acts of insight and intuitive judgment, that the artist feels as he works, and later evokes in those people who appreciate his creation" (p. 41). It is through creative expression that we wrestle beyond relating about feeling to something rawer and deeper. It means in J.'s words discovering "emotional reactions that differ from the norm"[606] and "accepting things that you feel are strange to you."[607] To the students it meant "learning to express feelings in a rational way"[608] or having the "chance to express feelings very well."[609]

None of the students used the terms 'subjective/objective', yet in using language like 'opening up' and 'connecting with' I sensed their awareness of it. They expressed an awareness of the outer world and their relationship to it as reflected in the statement, 'she helps us to look out into the world'. What is implied in this statement is significant. The phrase 'looking out into' situated the speaker behind or inside. To review, it framed two worlds, one with-in; the other with-out. Houston (1997) talks about the creative act in terms of connecting these worlds. To her way of thinking....

> To restore the balance of nature between inner and outer worlds and to evoke the
> creator within, we must cultivate the vast untapped resources of the psyche. The key

to the depths lies in the world of imagery -- in the development and understanding of *inner* space and *inner* time (p. 134).

Following in Houston's foot steps, J. pressed her students to use imagery to explore their inner spaces and rhythms -- to reconnect with the poet within (Egan, 1997). In doing so imagery characterized the classroom landscape. What was seen represented something else. To get a rich portrait, I could not take my observations at face value. J.'s classroom was, in the words of Pinar et al. (2000), "inhabited more by generative metaphor than by scientific facts" (p. 501). Events were organic, constantly in a state of flux and in a form of germination. What unfolded was a constant flow of preparing, tended with thoughtful attention...

> *...the flower continued her beauty preparations, selecting her colours with the greatest of care and dressing quite deliberately, adjusting her petals one by one (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 22).*

There were many flowers in this classroom. As in de Saint-Exupéry's story, they were nurtured by a skillful, yet tender hand. And as revealed in de Saint-Exupéry's artistry, the focal points, the learner and the curriculum, even the classroom itself, always contained more than what had surfaced in my initial encounters there.

The Arts-Oriented Curriculum

The notions of immersing and emerging shed light on an important part of the equation yet to be addressed. These words do not tend to stand alone. Rather we think of being immersed *into* and emerging *out of.* The words imply not only a process and a relationship, but a process within and a relationship to some-thing. As much as J. described her classroom as being 'child-centered', the focus, I argue, was on the learner, but not exclusively. The subject also commanded attention. My journey to that realization has been circuitous. I question my interpretations and continue to do so. Yet I am resolved in this realization: that the lens of the learner was being polished, not for the sake of the polishing, but for the effect it would have on the looking and, ultimately, on the object of the gaze. In the words of one of her students, "She helps us to look out into the world. She prepares us to look for new things...for what we are going to bump into..."[610] J. desired to create a

connection between the learner and the world outside of the learner. Her declaration, "I try to make what they learn related to the real world"[611] affirmed this intent.

Such emphasis, I argue, is a good thing. Learning, if it is to challenge, needs to take us beyond present perceptions. While we might be entitled to our individual, even collective interpretations, they may not unwrap the mysteries. That is why we are continuously driven to them. The mysteries elude us, even as they taunt us. As Frost (1970) penned, "We dance round in a ring and suppose, But the Secret sits in the middle and knows" (p. 362). The mysteries buried in a body of knowledge, that is, the subject, lie quietly waiting to be unraveled. The subject entices us, refusing "to be reduced to our conclusions about it" (Palmer, 1998b, p. 105). It guards its secrets with utmost care...

> *I was surprised by the mysterious radiance of the sands. When I was a little boy I lived in a old house, and there was a legend that a treasure was buried in it somewhere. Of course, no one was ever able to find the treasure, perhaps no one even searched. But it cast a spell over the whole house. My house hid a secret in the depths of its heart.... (de Saint-Exupèry, 2000, p. 68).*

J. knew of the secrets. She prepared her students for them. Her notion of the essence of poetry, for example, revealed this awareness...

> Poetry is music. It is meant to be said aloud. Then it comes alive. I wanted them to learn it, to understand it. I feel that if they don't understand the poem the audience won't. I also wanted to expose them to learn the beauty of poetry. There's pleasure in memorizing a poem.[612]

J. had a sense of the merging point of knowledge: the knower and the known. To her, 'making something come alive' was key to unlocking the secrets. It was a way of connecting the viewer with what was being viewed: of "seeing the world in metaphors both in words and situations."[613] J. understood this, hence her description of poetry as music to be spoken and brought to life. When said aloud, poetry, in Davis and Gardner's (1992) words, pulls the performer into "a negotiated understanding, negotiated between two active constructors of meaning, the producer and the perceiver..." (p. 120). The metaphor, the vehicle for the negotiating, takes on Glucksberg and Keysar's (1990) notion of a 'dual reference', not only naming the comparison but appealing to common, yet tacit, understandings of the properties being ascribed. In a sense the metaphor invites both producer and perceiver to engage in a

kind of 'symbolic juxtaposition'. Negotiation, not only assumes shared experience, but assumes shared understanding of the experience, both sensually and cognitively.

'Negotiated understanding' does not come easily. That is why, I contend, some of the poetry readings I witnessed in the classroom were less than convincing. At times, it appeared that the students could not relate to what they were reciting. Neither could their colleagues...

> One of the students recites the poem *On Flanders Fields*. He has not learned the poem well and stumbles over the words. Near the end of the recitation a male colleague exclaims, "Is that from the Bible?" The remainder of the class giggles.[614]

As I noted at the time, no attempt was made, beyond a "scant reference to Remembrance Day, ...to delve into the significance of that famous poem."[615] In all fairness to J., this particular incident occurred during her absence. Maybe she would have handled the situation differently. I do not know. Nonetheless, the incident spoke to me of the necessity of preparing students for the negotiating. It also affirmed for me that as educators, we can assume very little. In spite of the shortcomings, however, there was a sense in this classroom of living the metaphor. The metaphor lived in the language arts discipline and in the curriculum designed around it.

I am still, even up to this point, ambivalent about what label I would assign to the curricular experiences I observed. J. used the word 'integrated'. I am reticent to use the descriptor because in the purist sense what I saw did not comply with it. Various authors concur with my point of view. Ulbricht (1998, July), building on Vars (1991), describes 'integrated' as "a 'fully fused' approach in which a single theme, topic, or problem is approached from many different disciplines" (p.14). Nissani (1995) talks about integration in terms of "uniting or meshing discrete elements"(p. 125). Kain (1993, December) acknowledges Shoemaker's attempts to discriminate between the terms 'interdisciplinary' and 'integration' by describing 'interdisciplinary' as "preserving discipline boundaries while 'integrated' eliminates them" (p. 317). If I remain faithful to these definitions, what I observed was neither integrated nor interdisciplinary. Crossing over discipline boundaries occurred minimally. It took place in isolated projects such as the travelogue in which students combined information associated with geography, mathematics and English language arts to describe a country they had chosen.[616] Even in that project little attempt was made to eradicate disciplinary boundaries. Information, for example, was still classified in terms of specific subjects. For that reason I argue that while smatterings of interdisciplinarity

may have taken place, the curriculum I observed stayed within the confines of its designated boundary, that is, English language arts.

While the learning experiences could, on the surface, be labeled as within the English language arts context, something beyond the discipline unfolded. While the events weighed in favor of the subject, they were, I argue, 'subject-oriented' rather than 'subject-centered' (or even 'subject-based'). The difference deserves further clarification. In my view, 'subject-centred' implies a specific location, a destination that is both definable and reachable. It has a definite point of ending or completion, a concrete goal. 'Subject-oriented' suggests a direction, a journey *towards* somewhere. The value lies in what is encountered along the way rather than what is met at the end. Like the little prince and his encounter with the three-petaled flower, the journey's finale is of "no consequence" (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 51). The defining moments are what is learned along the way.

The emphasis on the process made all the difference. It spoke to Doll's (1993) postulation of curriculum needing to have "the right amount of indeterminancy, anomaly, ...chaos, disequilibrium, dissipation, [and] lived experience" (p. 176). Freire's (1995) notion of the 'banking system' was not practiced. J., it seemed, got little satisfaction from filling student heads with discrete bits of information. To J., what was learned in the classroom was "a part of something going on outside."[617] There was a deliberate shifting away from Parson's (1998) notion of the 'cognitive paradigm' with its emphasis on "information processing" (p. 105). True, the Subject wielded its own power. There were rules and strategies that had to be respected. Yet there was a push to move beyond learning about. It was a movement to what Davis and Gardner (1992) call the 'symbol-system approach' (p. 101), a means of not only presenting reality, but of qualifying reality. Both student and teacher felt free not only to give facts, but to express how they felt about them. This freedom provoked the passion of teacher and student alike. The words 'fun', 'enjoy' and 'pleasure' surfaced frequently in the conversations. The excitement was palpable, an excitement for something simply stated by one of the students that, "English is fun!" The curriculum was not looked upon for its content as much as for the experiences the teacher and the students drew from it. It was the means whereby the adult and the adolescents could explore their relating through it. In short, it provided a context of being -- a 'within-ness'. Through the subject, learning took place in relation to oneself and in relation to others. The subject was the medium, through which, as one student phrased it, the students were welcomed in. The subject, namely, English language arts, was the curricular context for immersing into and emerging out of.

J. did not express a covert awareness of this bi-dimensional relationship. Yet I believe that she had a tacit, unarticulated, understanding of it. Many hours of thinking and writing have brought me to this point. Practitioners in the daily course of their duties do not have that luxury. But her awareness, like the Secret, lay in her words...

> I pick things that stimulate the imagination -- adventure, fantasy, and science fiction. I like to take the students beyond one way of thinking, to explore elements of factual and nonfactual thinking. I like the students to take an imaginative leap. I like exploring things that are imaginative, creative, and 'right off the rails.'[618]

J. approached curriculum as 'practica', Altwerger et al.'s (2004, January) terminology for "teaching opportunities that operate outside of school program constraints and encourage risk-taking" (p. 129). In keeping with Parson's (1998) view, she exposed the students to various literary genres, not only as something to think about, but something to think in. She wanted students to develop a "metalanguage", that is, "a language for talking about language, images, texts, and meaning-making interactions" (The New London Group,1996, p.77).

J. realized that to heighten student appreciation for English language arts she needed to immerse students in the mechanics of the discipline. Interestingly, in her own words she subsumed all the technical components of literacy under the term preparation as she stated: "I try to get them psychologically and literally prepared for the long writing. They become immersed in the theme."[619]. As explored in Chapter 3, students first learned about these components and engaged in solo and shared analysis about representative samples. But learning about English language arts was not enough. J. wanted the students to apply this knowledge to their own work; to engage in what she referred to as 'self-analysis.' The notion of preparing and trying are reflected in Frein's (1998) words: "Although we can never prepare students to produce imaginative work, we can prepare them for the attempt. The best preparation, it seems to me, involves watchfulness, alertness, and a taking-seriously of the practice in question as well as an understanding of the point of the practice" (pp. 48-49). Ultimately, J. wanted the students to emerge out of the process not only as individuals who knew about language but who could express *through* language.

But something else transpired in this classroom beyond notions of curriculum content. In keeping with the thoughts of Krug and Cohen-Evron (2000), the "dualism of content and pedagogy"...a separation between "[the] what and how" (p. 261) was absent. On the contrary, there was a blending of the two. Both moved in synergy. They were nuanced in

rhythm and tempo, rising and falling with what was being at that particular time. An undercurrent of energy carried the learning forward, spiraling and swirling through time and space. The curriculum lived as a "philosophy of experience" (Krug and Cohen-Evron, 2000, p. 261) connecting the internal and external worlds of the learner and the internal and external modalities of the subject (Parsons, 1998). The curriculum moved through the students as they moved through it in a continuous stream of ebb and flow. The languages of substance and structure found a meeting place.

My visits to the other site sharpened my understanding of this nexus. Juxtaposing the two sites, I saw a difference between a curriculum that is arts-based and a curriculum that is arts-concentrated. As I noted, it is possible to teach the arts as a discipline rather than as a form of creative expression. The sinuous treatment of the curriculum in the primary site spoke to me, not of integrated nor of interdisciplinary, but of arts-based. However, at the risk of splitting hairs, I was reticent to use the term arts-based for the same reason I avoided the terms 'subject-centered/subject-based'. I preferred to use the term 'arts-oriented' for reasons to be explained.

To produce imaginative work, J. encouraged students to try new ways to express themselves. I was informed, for example, that in a news report project, the students were invited to include an "artistic impression" that could have been done "in writing, drawing or music".[620] While there was some attempt to venture into other art genres, the classes I observed were, as already suggested, decidedly focused on forms of expression traditionally associated with the English language arts discipline. Minimal, if any, time was devoted to helping the students develop skills in other art forms. The inclusion of them in any project rested on the assumption that student know-how had been acquired elsewhere. Other art forms were present but in a peripheral sense.

Why, then, in spite of the clear lack of an arts presence, would I still describe what I saw as 'arts-oriented'? In my view it was the strides taken by the teacher to venture into the inner world of the learner. The mechanics of language were not being developed for their own sake, but for what they enabled students to do. J. wanted the students to find and to re-create meaning through, in her words, 'seeing the world in metaphors'. She viewed the curriculum, not in a purely cognitive sense, but in a symbolic sense -- as a means for delving much deeper by re-defining and expressing what it is to know in all of its dimensions. Language was not only a tool for gathering information but for connecting the knower with his or her internal and external worlds. She would likely agree with Moore (1998) who declared...

The arts play an important role in bridging the gap between fantasy and reality. They bring us to an imaginal space where emotions and meaning are real but the sensuous details are not literal...It is an in-between world that is neither fully interior or exterior, but it does provide a place where we can catch a glimpse of the figures and narrative themes that preoccupy the soul (p. 229).

My observations have spurred me to reflect upon my understanding of what an 'arts-oriented' classroom is. I have arrived at this juncture with the view that an arts-oriented learning environment is a context in which participants derive meaning from both their public and private worlds and learn to communicate these meanings meaningfully. Such an environment draws in and draws out. It fuses together holistically and dynamically. Blending the private and public worlds balances the two essentials of learning what Laveault (2002) refers to as "match" and "mismatch". In the arts-oriented learning environment, things connect, even as they differ.

The teacher, in this particular classroom, pushed the students, as she pushed herself, to live not only in the 'rawness of the now', but to unmask meaning through it. She opened them to always strive for connecting, even in the face of separating and defining. In Reimer's (1992) phraseology, they learned to discriminate between 'knowing of' and 'knowing within' realizing that to 'know within' "consists of a particular combination of involvements of the self with particular qualities of an encountered object or event" (p. 29). In a metaphoric sense, they were connecting with the world through particularizing in representational form how it appeared to them. It is in this capacity, I argue, that the English language arts course within the Alternative Learning Program donned its arts orientation.

Conclusion: My Re-positioning in the Research Context

In conclusion, one more piece of the context puzzle remained. I had to acknowledge that beyond the contextual layers that unfolded before me, what I was engaging had a context of its own. I brought into the effort my own contextual layers. Smith (1989) asserts that "investigators, like everyone else, are part of the circle of interpretation" (p. 136). As alluded to in Chapter 2, I lived the experience with the study participants. In addition to being transformed by the research itself, I brought something else. I not only described what I saw, but carried into my seeing my own way of viewing things, shaped by my own life experiences and influences. I not only derived meanings, but meanings that were

contextualized (Greene, 1995b). They were fluid and shaded. They changed as I was being changed. In my eyes, the study participants and I were in a constant flux of 'repositioning'. We were situated within a particular context of time and space, but never confined there. Nor could we be wholly defined by the roles that we played. The data spoke to me not only of what I observed in context but where I was situated in it. It delved beyond explicit knowledge into knowledge less overt, less explicable, but more profoundly intimate. It dialogued with the voices of my heart.

It was through this tacit knowledge that I came to know as Courtney (1997) states, "two things not one" (p. 40). I saw not only one concept or idea, but two. Ideas or concepts did not present themselves to me in isolation but in relationship, not only with each other but with me, the knower. I was not only aware of what I was seeing but had an acute sense of where I was *in relation to* it.

I discovered something more. I am drenched with the desire to connect with someone or something outside of myself, but need never lose sight of who I am. I have come full circle to discover the virtues of what Johnson (1996) calls "relational independence" or "full related selfhood" (p. 68). "The vision," Johnson continues, "is one of relational autonomy, which honors the inviolable personal mystery of the person who is constituted essentially by community with others" (p. 68). As in a hologram, the *Other* is imaged in the *I*, but the *I* looks to the *Other* to refine the reflection. Like the little prince, I leave this endeavour with a deeper realization, that...

"All roads go to where there are people" (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 54).

What I meet becomes who I am. As with Tennyson (1842), I roam with a hungry heart, and in passing through the many archways of life am changed forever. In every sense I am both Self and Other, 'a part of all that I have met'.

To live, yet to understand, demands a totality of 'presentness' in the moment. It means being inside and outside of the 'I'. The images of what I encountered in this study represented not only what I saw, but told me much about the 'I' who was seeing. Immersed in the images, the hologram is clear and complete.

*IT'S ALL A GREAT MYSTERY. For you, who love the little prince, too. As for me,
nothing in the universe can be the same if somewhere, no one knows where, a sheep
we never saw has or has not eaten a rose.*

<div align="right">

de Saint-Exupéry (2000, p.83)

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And now that I have reached the final pages of this writing I reflect upon what I have
learned. I realize that nothing is new and anything that could have been said has already been
done so. Yet the time had come to draw the strands of my research together and to present
them as a précis of what I have learned. I decided to summarize my findings in two sections:
The Research Process and Research Findings. The summary will preface a discussion of
implications for those who work in the field of education: the practitioner, the administrator,
the teacher educator, and the policymaker. I also felt compelled to revisit the conceptual
compass introduced in Chapter 1. I knew that my thinking had changed over time which had
to be reflected in the latest iteration. I was acutely aware that even though this rendition
closed the chapter it would not be the last. It never is. My findings simply stated what I had
learned at a given point in time. Like partial cadences in a sonata, they are temporary stop-
overs in a journey, perhaps meaningful signposts along the way. As with the horizon, the
final destination moves forever from my grasp reflected in the questions for further
investigation.

Yet I knew the process taught me something. I not only gained insights into my
particular study site, but through the process acquired understandings about research itself.
The section that follows embodies what I have learned.

The Research Process

1. More qualitative inquiry needs to be conducted in places of learning.

In my current position as a pedagogical consultant I have encountered a myriad of
questionnaires and surveys. I deduce that while there is merit in using such instruments to
collect information about learning environments, caution must prevail. As I have learned, it
takes time and a particular level of expertise to create a plausible assessment instrument.
Unfortunately, some surveys I have seen reflect neither. Even more seriously, they are

sometimes designed to promote a certain agenda. Constraints of time and other resources dictate that they become the *only* tools for investigation. And herein lies the problem. As flawless as these instruments may appear to be, they were designed with the intent of stripping away context, not only the context of the researched, but of the researcher. And, as has been reinforced in this study, context cannot be ignored (Guba and Lincoln, 1998; Page, 2000). Surveys cannot represent the whole story, but are often treated as if they do. Once committed to paper the findings suddenly become the 'whole' truth (Carey, 1989; Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). We credit them with having the persuasive power that "transcend[s] opinion and personal bias" (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998, p.7). Interpreters forget that the findings are biased, essentially because the instruments used to gather the data are.

Qualitative inquiry does not purport to be bias free. Rather, if conducted well, it is transparent about what these biases are. Furthermore, it aims to determine what *is* through description. In short, it enriches our understanding of quantity, not only by qualifying it, but by taking us beyond what numbers can show.

In my research, certain aspects of qualitative inquiry stood out. In review, I conducted my data analysis under the aegis of triangulation, the practice of verifying data through the convergence of different data sources (Miles and Huberman, 1998). Triangulation, at least in the initial stages of my study, made sense. The deeper I moved into my data, however, the less comfortable I was with the concept. The triangle, the root of 'triangulation', represents a three-sided form that is rigid and fixed. The data or 'empirical materials' I unraveled did not always fit neatly into three's as the metaphor suggests. Richardson (1998) confronts the issue by offering an alternative. In her view, "we do not triangulate; we *crystallize*" (p. 358). She explains that the crystal "combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach. Crystals grow, change, alter, but are not amorphous" (p. 358).

Richardson's suggestion holds much validity. It nudged me to think about the way I worked with my data. As much as I tried to triangulate, the exercise was more complex and layered. Data did not readily comply. There was always another way to interpret and to categorize. While Richardson's analogy appealed to me, I had reservations. In spite of its responsivity to light and shading, the crystal is a substance that is brittle and, in some sense, unforgiving. It responds to things that are visible. But, I asked, could it represent those things that, as the little prince had discovered, are essential, yet less discernible to the eye?

The question pushed me to think of an alternative. I needed to find something that had shape and structure, yet was multidimensional and fluid. I needed to find a metaphor that

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spoke to my attempt in Page's (2000) words, to "close the gap between experience and its representation"; to account for the "surplus of difference" that exists between text and what it describes (p. 26). In reflection, I wondered what I could use to represent not only what I saw, but what I felt: what could aptly account for the conflicting range of emotions – the passion, the joy and the frustration – I encountered there. I returned to my roots in the musical arts. I returned not only because of the level of comfort I found there but because music, as one of the art forms, moves beyond the boundary of words (Csikszentmihalyi and Schiefele, 1992). It thrives on the ambiguous and the implicit. It *expresses* quality (Courtney, 1997). Building on Fontana and Frey's (1998) thoughts, I did not crystallize; I polyphonized. In the world of music, 'polyphony' is a compositional form made up of a number of lines or voices. The voices share a common tonal centre. They move simultaneously, yet independently. They relay meaning through juxtaposition. Each voice is alternately figure and ground. The recurring dominant voice, the melody, plays with the subordinate voices, the countermelodies. Each repetition casts the voicings in a different light so that I, as the listener, feel that I am hearing them for the first time. In spite of its complexities polyphony still maintains spontaneity. It respects the craftmanship of the composer, but responds to the interpretations of the performer, both planned and unplanned.

As indicated in Chapter 2, I used different ways of collecting information that in harmony created a rich portrait of the site. As in polyphony, I sometimes used the same data on various occasions. Yet, the interpretation of the data depended on the contextual shadings that drew out the variances of meaning. The shadings depended upon not only what I saw and felt at the time of the data collection, but what I saw and felt during the analysis and the subsequent reporting. The strength of qualitative inquiry is that, like the art form from which the term 'polyphonize' was borrowed, it thrives on that which is less definable or explicit. And it is transparent about it.

2. Inquiry is as much an exploration of the researcher as it is the researched.

My investigation has been a journey of discovery, not only of the researched, but of me, the researcher. It has sharpened my self-identity, not only in terms of how I conducted my study, but in terms of what I chose to pursue. I discovered as with Mehra (2002, March) that "who I am determines, to a large extent, what I want to study" (p. 4). In spite of my years of pulling away, looking enviously at other professions that seemed to be much more glamorous and inviting, I have finally arrived at where I must be. I now see that the world of teaching and learning is at the core of my being. It is where I can give of myself most fully

and where I can continue to grow into who I am yet to become. My research mirrored who I am.

But as Sarbin (1997) reminds me, the construction of my identity does not happen in monologue. It "arises in dialogue" (p. 69). Wrapped in my identity are the biases that are a part of my psycho-emotional profile. The exercise pushed me to reflect upon them. I discovered that my biases are not uni-directional. They are bi-directional. They are derived from what I have learned, not only about my external world, but about the connection between that world and me. In short, my views are a result of knowledge acquirement: knowledge about and knowledge in relation to. I grew to understand that "for the I, the Thou is the only "context" in which anything else can enjoy vital existence" (Coleman, 1998, p. 47). And because context is dynamic, my biases were constantly being tested, forever being challenged by the experiences shown, even those being unaccounted for. I was nudged into thinking about events as they touched my life. I wrestled with them throughout. Shifting through them was the catalyst for self-examination. Knowledge 'out there' flowed into knowledge 'in here' and out again. As Mirochnik (2002) surmises...

> Knowledge would be a story that we created or a description that we invented as we *reflected back* on lived experiences in which problems that emerged for us were sensed and faced, weighed and tested, folded and unfolded, sliced, sectioned, sorted, and eventually solved (p. 29).

Knowledge becomes knowledge not simply because it exists, but because it 'problematizes'.

Knowledge presented itself in the biases I had towards the participants. I was always conscious of my own personal feelings towards them and how these feelings were tainting my interpretations. My personal feelings were, in part, a response to the manner in which the researched accepted me into their lives. At times, I found myself wondering if what I had observed as 'positive' was *really* positive or if it was my reaction to their openness and good will. In my musings, I confronted the perils of, using Lampert's (2000) phrase, "bringing the self into scholarly writing" (p. 91). I was relieved that I had chosen a form of inquiry that permitted me to do so. And that the transparency could add to the rigor I applied to my work.

Qualitative inquiry did not begin or end with my position as a researcher. It transcended the boundaries of that role. It touched deeper to my core. Through inquiry, I reflected upon my own practice and what I had, or had not, done in the classroom. In retrospect I saw my practice as having been seriously flawed, even though, according to colleagues, I was highly competent. Yet, except for isolated moments of enlightenment, I

recognized that too much of my teaching assignments projected something other than my "authentic self" (Doll, 2002, p. 118): that I had donned my role like a cloak, rarely exposing the self that lay within. I diligently used 'the Other' as a measuring stick for determining the events in my classroom. It was as if I needed the Other to affirm what I was doing. Unfortunately, the Other was too often everyone else but the students.

My ventures into qualitative inquiry opened my eyes to the folly of that perspective. My authentic self could only thrive in a classroom in which students could be authentic and real. My teaching would have been different if I had heeded the advice of the little prince that "only the children know what they're looking for" (de Saint-Exupéry, 2000, p. 65); if I had engaged in reflective inquiry: talking less and listening more. Had I approached my classroom as a qualitative inquirer, the students would have been people, not people who studied, but people who lived, just as I lived through, as well as beyond, my teaching. I now realize that living does not slip into neutral when people are learning. Learning is a part of living and living moves from moment to moment. It does not dwell in the past or in the future. Living exists in the ever-present 'now', the connector, the integrator of "merging wisdom" (Erdmann, 1998 p. 587). Yet while living is done in the now, it is not always understood there. I acquire deeper insights into my life through reflecting upon what has already happened. Through imposing the present upon the past, the frames become more transparent.

Qualitative inquiry has left its mark. It has challenged, shaped and re-directed my thinking, not only about teaching and learning, but about life itself. Like the pilot in de Saint-Exupéry's novel, I have re-learned that not all of life's events can be explained through logical reasoning and quantifiable calculations. Life shares only *some* of its secrets. Others watch silently, obscured from view. When I stumble upon them, blinded by my own seeing, I have little choice but to succumb to their tacit mysteries.

3. As the inquiry unfolds, intentions do not always match realities.

I arrive at this junction of the journey realizing that what I had set out to do did not always come to fruition. For one, what I thought I was looking at was not what I saw. This change, to be discussed more fully in the Research Findings, required some adapting. It brought me into an unsettled state that needed to be worked through.

During the inquiry process, I brushed up against restrictions, imposed by me as well as by others. Priorities had to be considered. My research, while of monumental importance to me, was not a high priority with others. There was always a limit as to what I could expect

from them. I could not keep disrupting their lives. Yet I needed their voices and their commitment. My study would have accomplished little if I had adhered to "singularity of our dialogue" (Luce-Kapler, 2002, p. 291). I could not remain faithful to my inquiry if I dominated the conversation. If I had, I would have tied the strands that much more readily, but would not have been loyal, in Bakhtin's (1981) persuasion, to the plurality of the discourse. I would have muted their texts with my own.

As carefully as I tried to interface with my data, I never escaped questioning my own research competencies. Positivistic shadows of proof and evidence lurked in the background. I found myself asking: When is enough *enough*? How far do I have to go to support my claims? (Page, 2000). Issues of trustworthiness continued to unsettle me. I tried to overcome the pitfalls by resorting to 'vraisemblance' Adler and Adler's (1998) notion of "a style of writing that draws the reader so closely into the subjects' worlds that these can be palpably felt" (p. 88). To that end, I presented my data in such a way that the reader could connect with the participants, thereby affirming the authenticity of my work. Yet I lived in fear that my work was incomplete, inconsistent or not rigorous enough; or that I had not meticulously accounted for every piece of information I had gathered. I wondered what my findings would look like if I had conducted my research differently; if, for example, I had collected data during a condensed block of time, rather than during once-a-week visits over a span of months. Above all, I wondered if I had fulfilled my obligation as a researcher-in-the-making.

4. Writing is not a linear act.

Through the course of my writing I learned an important rule: Never start with Chapter 1. To reiterate, my research focus changed as it went along. The path intended was not the path to be. Well into my writing, I returned to Chapter 1 only to discover that things had changed. In hindsight, the change was a positive turn of events. In keeping with the qualitative perspective (Guba, 1990; Guba and Lincoln, 1998), I could not lead the data or, in more current terms, the "empirical materials"(Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). I needed to, in Denzin's (1998) paraphrasing of Geertz, "take [the reader] into the center of the experience being described" (p. 316). But the taking had to be initiated through the data.

Yet I learned that writing, the channel through which I transported the reader, is a dialogic act. It keeps account, not only of conversations with and between others, but conversations with myself. Writing is an expression of "the dialogic self" (Josselson, 1994). As much as I needed to develop an emic relationship with the researched and become, in a sense, the conveyor, of their voices, I could not be lost in them. I needed to remain faithful to

my own, finding what Josselson suggests "those places in narrative where self is most clearly in dialogue with self" (p. 80). My writing needed to reflect the multiplicity of *our* voices. Censoring my own would have stripped away a vital textual layer. 'Un- situating' myself denied the other by shutting out my relating *with* them. In my accounts the Thou was represented, but always through the eyes of the I. I could not lose sight of my own imposition. Representation, as Denzin (1998) reminds me, "is always self-presentation" (p. 319).

But herein lay the dilemma. How close, I reflected, should I allow my writing to express what I felt, surmised and intuited, and still remain credible? At what point would my presence in the dialogue begin discrediting the speaker? The line, I discovered, was delicate at best.

I realized that my writing was inextricably wedded to my thoughts. I also realized that my thoughts changed. Change was not only brought about by immersing into my investigation but by life experiences that flowed around and through it. As I moved ever closer to finishing this thesis, I became more and more aware that boundaries were not as impenetrable as I had once thought. They were set only in my mind. To quote St. Francis, "What we are looking for *is* what is looking" (as cited in Houston, 1997, p. 192) [italics added]. I saw what I chose to see. Like Palmer (1998b), I saw that "if boundaries remind us that our journey has a destination, openness reminds us that there are many ways to reach the end" (p. 75). I chose the boundaries. The choice was mine to change them. Life with its peaks and valleys spilled out into the canvas of my writing. Ideas transformed through my writing washed back into other facets of my life. And so it goes...

Writing, I discovered, is not linear: it is circuitous. It is never finished. In spite of the editing and re-editing it will always remain a work in progress, as will its author. Like the inquiry, it may shed some light on the 'glass seen through darkly' (*The Holy Bible*, Corinthians1, 13:12). I have learned that I will always know only in part. But it is the journey *towards* that changes me forever.

The Research Findings

Through my research I arrived at the following realizations:

1. Participation, like learning, is multi-faceted.

At the beginning of my research, I intended to use the concept of participating simply as a gateway to creativity and to the type of curriculum that supported it. As my research

unfolded, I discovered that the gateway was key to my seeing. Participating emerged first in terms of student and teacher action. I found that active participation had a positive impact upon learning. My findings align with Thomson and Comber's (2003) view that through "active participation in knowledge production students would become more involved in learning the required and other curriculum, and would consequently learn more successfully" (p. 308). But my study revealed more. It revealed on a deeper level, what participating looked like. It revealed itself as more than action, but as an emotional attachment and investment. Peeling back the layers, I unraveled the emotional connection between the students and the teacher. My findings, I argue, contribute to what Earl and Sutherland (2003) identify as the indirect effects of classroom interaction: that is the "emotional aspect of schooling" (p. 337). My study described not only what emotional connection looked like, but showed the impact that this connection had on student learning. As Yoppolo (2002) writes, "Learning is framed within our relationship to others" (p. 458). I also found that to establish such a relationship, the teacher, in hooks' words, (1994) "transgress[ed] the boundaries" (p. 13). That is, in her daily interaction with her students, she went beyond the regime of role and showed a part of herself not readily transparent to students in other classroom settings.

My study indicated that participation moves along a continuum. It is context-bound. The data categorized as participative resistance showed that what looks like participation in one situation may not be regarded participation in another. Participative resistance mirrors participation. Simply put, it defines participation in a particular environment by showing what it is not.

2. The teacher and the students, not curricular course content, determine what learning is.

Some thinking abounds in education that curriculum is something that is determined outside of the teacher, and certainly, outside of the learner. The *Québec Education Program* (Ministré de l' Éducation, 2003) seems to suggest that *that* is the case. The document states that "in order to ensure that there is enough time for students to progress in their development of certain competencies and to construct others, it is important to target only essential knowledge" (p. 16). The document does not suggest who will establish the targets, but I assume they do not mean the student. As my study suggests, it is the teacher *in dialogue with* the learner who determines what is essential. Curriculum designers do not always share that view. An egalitarian perspective still exists of the external expert who determines what happens in classrooms (Gruenewald, 2002; Hadden, 2000). Pinar et al. (2000) warn that such thinking is antithetical to learning...

Just as it is not enough for teachers to work with a model of teaching in which they simply transmit a body of knowledge or a set of skills to students, just as it is not enough for students to regard learning as reproducing such content and such skills, so it is not enough for curricularists to view the object of their study as "out there", waiting to be described and represented to teachers as formulae and recipes (pp. 865-866).

The formal curriculum does not define learning. Learning defines the formal curriculum. Learning is born out of community and the individual's connection to it as portrayed in Vibert and Shields' (2003) notion of "the curriculum of life" (p. 234). Learning can only be negotiated by those who are actively engaged in it, on one side of the teacher's desk and the other. While the students and the teacher in the study, to quote Rudduck and Demetriou (2003), saw themselves as "self-as-learner" (p. 278), they also saw themselves as a collective: as 'selves-as-learners'. Reflecting back to Yoppolo (2002), learning flowed out of the self, but was nurtured and challenged in relation to others.

3. Curriculum is art rather than artifact.

Curriculum as art is constantly in a state of flux. It is, borrowing on the thoughts of Emery, Tiseo, and Llewellyn (2000), "production-based" (p. 10), or, to be more exact, 'in production-based'. As the teacher in my study showed, what is learned is always in progress. Returning to its etymological roots, currere 'to run the course' (Merriam-Webster, 1983), curriculum is a verb, not a noun. Looking at curriculum as a verb changed my understanding of what it is. If I think of curriculum as a noun, I view it as a product, textbooks to be exact. But to think of curriculum as texts representing someone else's thoughts, I argue, is to reduce what it can be. As Pinar et al. (2000) remind me, "it is an understatement to observe that curriculum is not simply those materials made by experts or by textbook writers, textbooks are the beginning" (p. 858). Curriculum as a noun is an artifact. Building on Hodder's (1998) ideas discussed in Chapter 2, an artifact is the "residue of human activity" (p. 113). The word residue suggests that which remains from the past. Meban (2002) asserts that when I think of curriculum as 'cultural artifacts', I think of it as a repertoire of "texts, assessment tools, projects, performances and artworks that reflect the purpose of a school's culture and the knowledge it values" (p. 9). Curriculum as artifacts may be rich with tradition, and valuable in that richness, but is not something that I can claim on a personal level. It remains 'out there'.

For me, learning in high school was very much about curriculum 'out there'. I remember to this day, decades later, what I felt in these classrooms. I learned what I was compelled to learn mainly because I wanted to please. I wanted to earn the required prerequisites to qualify for university. Yet as I sat in the classes my soul told me that something was not right. I felt strangely detached and disassociated from it all, as if I were the deficit in the equation. At the time I was unable, using Fine's (1987) language, 'to name' what the problem was. It has taken many years to discover that I was not the problem at all. The problem rested with the view my teachers held about us as learners. The curriculum was taught as the constant to which I, along with my peers, was obliged to adapt.

In many respects, I cannot hold my teachers completely responsible for their leanings. I believe they honestly felt they were doing the job they had been hired to do. Their shortcomings were born out of omission rather than commission. They were teaching as they had been taught. Now in hindsight, I see that my high school curriculum was a noun. Like my teachers, I, for too much of my teaching career, viewed it the same way. But that was then...

When I started to think of curriculum as a verb, I saw it as something that is done rather than something done to, Pinar's (1972) view of 'working from within'. "Curriculum," expresses Stinson (1985), "exists only as it comes through persons" (p. 17). 'Coming through persons' suggests the constructivist view of knowledge discussed in Chapter 5. Constructivism, according to the English Educational Resources Foundation (2003), advocates that "students develop their own understanding and knowledge of the world through a continuous process of building, interpreting, and modifying their representations of reality based on their experiences in the world" (p. 5). The verbs, building, interpreting and modifying are prominent in this definition. To act requires someone to be the act-or. To be architects of their learning, students must be do-ers rather than be done to. In short, they participate in their learning through immersing and emerging discussed earlier. Participation of this dimension, I argue, occurs within the context of curriculum as a verb.

Curriculum as a verb is not merely doing, it is the doing of *some-thing*. The some-thing is knowledge: knowledge in and knowledge about (Courtney, 1997). I use my know-how and understandings to connect with, to build on Henderson's (2003) thoughts "curricular wisdom" (p. 3). In short, I turn the curriculum into art, Clifford's (1984) description of "skillful fashioning of useful artifacts" (p. 100). Curricular pursuits are no longer a series of isolated persons, places and things to be memorized for externally-driven assessment. Instead, the pursuits become an arts-based, or, in my term arts-oriented, inquiry. Within the curricular context, I am the initiator. I learn, not out of fear for what I do not

know, but for the joy of discovering who I am and who I am in relation to (Diamond and Mullen, 2000). Curriculum as art invites the question posed by Pinar et al. (2000): "What do we make of this knowledge, which is to say, what do we make of the world, what do we make of ourselves"? (p. 858). When it takes the form of a question, curriculum is a verb. It unwraps. In Eisner's (2002) words, "the aim of the educational process inside schools is not to finish something, but to start something. It is not to cover the curriculum, but to uncover it" (p. 90).

Curriculum as art does not restrict knowledge. It welcomes whatever it takes to lean into the question. It is not constrained by the artificial barriers of subject. The barriers are simply portals to be crossed at will. I, as the learner, decide what it will take to push the inquiry further or deeper. In Lu's (n.d.) words, inquiry is "the laying bare of questions which have been hidden by answers" (p. 2). When curriculum is thought of as art, knowledge has no hierarchical value or pretense. I engage with the curriculum as a trialogue of subject, self and other. I choose. I probe. I synthesize. And I create.

4. The teacher in partnership with the students *is* the curriculum, almost.

In a curriculum course I took a few years ago, I was profoundly disappointed to hear novice teachers declare that they had no control over what was taught in their classroom. I disagreed with them then. I still do. In my view, the teacher has the ultimate say. The law may mandate what teachers are to teach but it is the teacher who translates the 'what' into actual learning experiences. The teacher in my study had a clear sense of what she was doing. I cannot recall any conversations in which she talked about curriculum in terms of texts. She talked about exploring. To her, the curriculum was whatever was brought to the learning. She talked about helping the students differentiate between facts and opinions and how important it was for students to express their point of view. Martin (2002) would support this approach. She states that "a truly creative and rewarding teaching performance -- the essence of teaching -- lies not in expressing oneself through teaching, but in facilitating the voices of the students as they make meaning of the world in a unique and personal way" (p. 309). In her eyes, the teacher's primary role is to provide the backdrop for student discovery of self-identity and self-expression. In essence, the teacher is the ground; the student, the figure.

To a great extent I agree with Martin. As my research showed, the teacher enhanced student learning by taking on a number of roles. I argue, however, that teaching cannot be creative and rewarding if the teacher takes his or her cues entirely from the students. The

child-centered classroom, as the teacher in my study called it, may not necessarily be a place for growth. There are times when student, even teacher, assumptions need to be challenged and provoked. As Vibert and Shields (2003) point out, schools often making the "strongest claims to student-centered pedagogy were located in and served professional and middle class communities" (p.233). I found this to be the case in my study. Even in a classroom where so many positive things were happening, social values were often tacitly perpetuated through a pedagogical approach that sanctioned student involvement, but a specific *kind* of involvement. From what I observed, these values were rarely subject to scrutiny and to debate.

I suggest that the problem is not that teachers express themselves but that *they do not*. Too often they play it safe by hiding behind textbooks and how to manuals, rules and propriety. Palmer (1998b) cautions that we, as teachers, cannot disregard the paradoxes in life: that we take something away when we engage in our profession "with partitions between thinking and feeling, personal and professional, shadow and light" (p. 64). Teaching is at its worst when it is detached and cloistered from life, including the life of the person who teaches (Romano, 2002). Ultimately, the teacher's disengagement affects the student. The teacher as technocrat rarely inspires and rarely gives students a burning passion for learning. A twelve-year-old student described such a teacher in these words: "She taught too much from the book and not enough from herself" (as cited in Rodgers, 2002, p. 237). J, who I would qualify in many respects as a master teacher, knew this only too well: Self as teacher cannot be separated from the Self as learner nor the Self as human.

As was the case in many respects in the study, the teacher as artist is the medium through which texts come alive and through which rules and propriety take on new meanings. The teacher as artist turns the classroom space into a place of 're-mything', a place in Rummel and Quintero's (2002) words where "new myths and metaphors are born" (p. 394). The teacher as artist de-mystifies and re-mystifies. But as emphasized in Chapter 7, de-mystifying requires moving from. The 'Subject' sets its own rules. It carries its own secrets. Like an artisan, we learn more by leaning into, rather than by resisting (Yoppolo, 2002). As Barrell (1991) declares, the teacher as artist is willing "to forego the insistence upon clear-cut behavioral objectives and predictable learning outcomes for the freedom to adjust and to explore new avenues with unpredictable outcomes" (p. 338). Simple answers are rare; and possibilities, the norm. The teacher as artist lives through teaching and teaches through living. In her hands, the curriculum is the palette through which this is done.

5. Students are just beginning to speak for themselves

In spite of calls to the contrary, democratization of the classroom remains an ideal that is practiced only on occasion (Vacarr, 2001; Vibert and Shields, 2003). In many of our schools students are still relegated to a doctor-patient kind of relationship. The teacher prescribes and the student ascribes. This reality was affirmed in my study when students talked about being able to express an opinion. They talked as if this was something new for them: that in the past they had never encountered such freedom. They made reference to this particular classroom as being different from any other classroom they had known. A student from another study echoed their sentiments:

> Being given the opportunity to write in a way I'd never written before and to draw on feelings that they usually don't draw on in a traditional classroom...was amazing. I felt like for the first time that I came into contact with a different part of myself (Pinar et al., 2000, p. 600).

The students in my study would have understood her words.

But giving students the opportunity to think and express is not enough. The weight given to their words is equally important (Gallagher, 2002). In too many of our classrooms Rudduck and Demetriou (2003) surmise, students are "presented as in a state of '*becoming*' rather than in a state of '*being*' actors in their own right" (p. 285). Where students are granted the opportunity to be heard, their words are politely received but rarely incite action. To do so would give cause to reflect on the power dynamic that exists in the classroom even in the language that is used there. As I showed, the power dynamic was less defined in the ALP classroom. Student suggestions were taken seriously and initiated change. The teacher would agree with Thomson and Comber (2003) who remind us that the metaphor we use to refer to youth, namely learners, pupils and students is misleading. In their view "they too can co-produce knowledge and can teach their teachers a thing or two about the way the world can and might work" (p. 322).

Thomson and Combers's words resonate with me. In my work as a consultant, I assist schools with developing and activating their success plans, their plan of action for identifying and measuring their goals for improvement (Assemblée Nationale du Québec, 2002, décembre). On more than one occasion I have asked practitioners to identify the members of their school community they wish to include on their 'success' team. The response is primarily the same: school personnel, sometimes parents and occasionally a

member from the wider school community. I am still disquieted by the reaction I receive when I suggest that students need to be represented in the group. I have not yet uncovered the reasons for the oversight, then subsequent reticence when attention has been drawn to it. Perhaps the perception is that students, especially the younger ones, will not have much to contribute to the discussion. Or that having them present may call into question the power wielded by adults in the education environment. I am not sure. All I do know is that in my discussions with students of all ages, I am humbled by their insights and their understandings. They may not be able to express themselves with adult vocabulary but they live and know their own reality (Shannon, 2002). They are present as well as future. Our spaces of learning need to become places where students are co-artisans with their teachers: where students shape as they are being shaped. We, as adults, cannot assume to know what they know and what they are experiencing. The little prince reminds us of that truth. The onus is on us as the adults to dialogue with, to listen to, and to respond. When we learn to act with, our lives are exponentially challenged and enriched.

6. Certain conditions and contextual elements must be in place to enhance student participation.

Student participation in this particular classroom thrived within an arts-oriented learning environment, I defined, in Chapter 7, as the context in which participants derive meaning from both their private and public words and learn to communicate these meanings meaningfully. In creating such an environment, the teacher invited student participation not only through the subject, but through her own involvement with the subject. The subject, while functioning as a language arts discipline, was not limited to the traditional concept of the discipline. Knowledge transcended both subject and classroom boundaries.

But as the study showed student participation in this particular setting was not only influenced by the subject or by the teacher. The classroom did not exist in a vacuum but was embedded in a context. And forces within the context had an impact upon it. In the world of qualitative inquiry context is everything. As described in Chapter 6, the word infers that all things are connected. Metaphorically speaking, to remove one fibre is to alter the fabric. Reviewing Mishler's (1979) thoughts, Miles and Huberman (1994) declare that "meaning is always within context and contexts incorporate meaning" (p. 102). Context defines, and is inevitably defined. Figure and ground live in symbiosis. They interweave.

Organizations as we know them are complex contexts; the school, in which the study classroom was nested, was no exception. The context of the school, as shown in Chapter 6,

could be thought of in two dimensions, as a physical space and as an organization. The physical environment does not live, yet its very presence can inspire. As reflected in the students' words, the structure in which humans conduct their daily tasks is not merely a shell defining space and providing protection. The condition of the shell tells the world how we feel about what we do. Most importantly it signals how we feel about ourselves.

The second dimension of context, the organization, is the symbiosis among human beings within the physical environment. It is the quality of the interactions that take place, not only within the walls of the building, but beyond. Human behaviours are interlocked through context. As Pinar et al. (2000) deduce, "it appears that behavior cannot be understood unless it is situated and framed contextually" (p. 782). Participation in the language arts classroom was not done in solitude. The participants influenced and were influenced. Immersing and emerging demanded action as the artist Bonnie Leyton (as cited in McClellan, 2002) points out about her work...

> My work is a subjective and personal statement of my experience of the social and political issues that touch my life. I am constantly trying to keep in touch with the world around me. I find myself needing to articulate my love of life and my passion to understand it through the visual symbols of art. It is often a struggle to excavate beneath the surfaces, but the emerging results give me a series of capturing another layer of my life (p. 44).

The arts-oriented curriculum as it played out in the study site could not be neutral. The fundamental aim of the teacher was to bring about change. Her approach was unique in that she was transparent about her intentions. She did not expect change to look the same for every student. The arts-oriented curriculum thrived in this particular classroom because the teacher nurtured her students not as one but as a collective of 'ones'. But she did not confine the change process to a specific space. It spilled beyond the boundaries of the classroom.

Student participation embodied flexibility within structure. Flexibility changed the walls of the classroom into latex borders. Structure was simply the vehicle to facilitate the movement. Flexibility within structure, revisiting Sergiovanni's (1994b) thinking, fused the best of *gelleschhaft* and *gemeinschaft*. In its new form, the will to achieve was shared by all, not driven by a few. The drive to achieve was tempered by a common good. Learning experiences were designed not in monologue, but in dialogue, revitalizing Lampert's (2000) call for a shared "language of practice" (p. 90). As encapsulated in the study, dialogue was largely confined within the classroom community, among the teacher and her students: that

within the school itself, the language of practice was not as comprehensive as it might have been.

The Conceptual Compass Revisited

I return to the conceptual compass introduced in Chapter 1, not only in my efforts to tie up loose ends, but more importantly, to review the direction the research process had taken me. As shown in Figure 6, the basic structure remains the same, but the elements are presented differently to reflect the changes in my thinking.
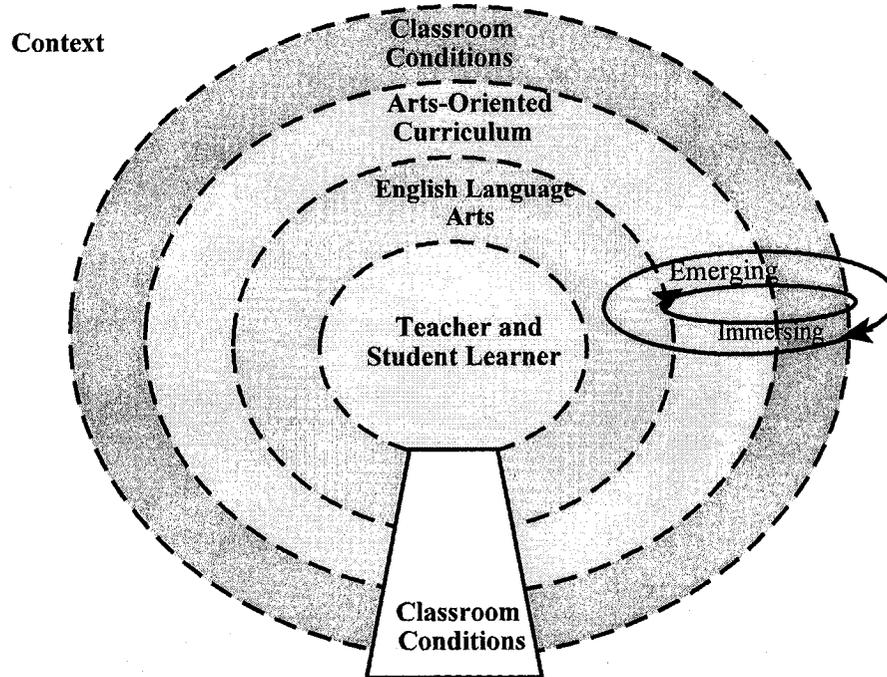
Figure 6. Strands of the Study: The Conceptual Compass Revisited

As in the first iteration, the concentric circles of the map are portrayed in broken lines to show the bi-directional flow among the various elements. The *Learner* is still placed in the core of the circles, but unlike the previous rendition, includes both the teacher and the student. The concepts of creativity and cognition are replaced with concepts of participating that unfolded in Chapters 3, 4 and 5. The arrow traveling toward the inner core of the circle

represents the process of *Immersing* as found in assigned participation and, in certain respects, shared participation. Moving from the inner core, the arrow represents the process of *Emerging* as manifested in shared participation and in participative tone.

The learner, both as student and teacher, participate through the curriculum. To illustrate this point, the *Teacher and Student Learner* is nested in the *English Language Arts Curriculum* and, then, more broadly in the *Arts-Oriented Curriculum. Classroom Condition*s, open in structure to reinforce the movement to and away from the *Learner,* are illustrated as a funnel across the circles. *Classroom Conditions*, as discussed in Chapter 6, are closest to the learner since these are, in certain respects, the contextual elements over which the learners can exert influence. I have placed *Context* in the outer circle, since, as also discussed in Chapter 6, there are certain forces at play over which neither the student nor the teacher have control. In the final analysis, even though they can be removed from the *Learner*, *Classroom Conditions* and *Context* have, as the study showed, a profound impact on the learner experience.

Implications for the Field

When all is said and done, the value of a study is measured by the impact it might have on the field to which it is related. For that reason, I wanted to present the implications this study may have on educational practice in its various dimensions. I begin with the teacher.

The Teacher as Arts-Oriented Inquirer

The teacher in my study was, in my view, an arts-oriented inquirer. She was practicing the philosophy of the *Québec Education Program* (the QEP) before it became policy. In keeping with the QEP, as shown, particularly in Chapters 3 and 5, J. built her curriculum around the strengths each student brought to their learning. She valued what they could offer and gave them the freedom to take their learning in various directions. As with any master teacher, she was ahead of her time at least within the education context of this province. She demonstrated the need for the pedagogue to revisit her relationship with the curriculum. She reclaimed her power to determine how curriculum would be played out in her classroom. Through her, I confirmed my thinking that to a substantial degree as already discussed, the teacher not only creates the curriculum but *is* the curriculum.

Within the QEP mandate, teachers are urged to re-think their role and the tenets of their practice. They are being asked to reaffirm themselves as professionals who have been

granted *the* most profound responsibility: that is, "to turn out autonomous people, capable of adapting in a world marked by the exponential growth of information, by constant change, and by interdependent problems whose solution requires expert, diversified and complementary skills" (Ministré de l' Éducation, 2003, Chap.1, p.4). The request is immense. Individual teachers cannot fulfil it alone. They need to reach out and build a community of practitioners: that is, to work in teams with common visions and shared goals (Advisory Board on English Education, 2003, September).

The strength of current curriculum reform, I argue, is that it is built on the supposition of in-practice dialogue. Curriculum is no longer *the* textbook. It is so much more. Once curriculum escapes the confines of a book and a teacher's guide, the possibilities are endless.

Teacher impact on the learning experience is profound. As the study showed, the teacher is always a learner. In too many cases, however, teachers pay lip service to that notion. Experience has taught me that some teachers not only disregard their own professional development, but are overtly hostile about it. More than once I have raised the question, 'Would you want to be operated upon by a surgeon who has not upgraded his or her skills since graduating from medical school'? I argue the same axiom must apply to pedagogues.

Yet, it is not the teacher alone who exercises influence upon the curriculum. The boundaries between teacher and student are continuously being re-positioned and challenged. The curriculum is designed in dialogue with, and in response to, the students. It is created in discourse, not only between teacher and teacher, but between teacher and student. In short, teachers need to think of themselves as arts-oriented inquirers. Teachers need to *talk less and listen more*. Students often do know what they want...if we only take the time to let them tell us.

The Administrator as Arts-Oriented Inquirer

While the administrator was not one of the study participants, she is a key figure in the school community. For that reason, the school administrator, like the teacher, needs to re-position her role as an arts-oriented inquirer. She sets the tone of the school, therefore, is an essential advocate of the curriculum context. She also needs to live by the axiom of talking less and listening more. The administrator is critical in establishing a climate that welcomes growth and change. She includes students and parents in discussions about what is going well in the school and where there is room for improvement. Under her guidance, members of the school community engage in discourse about the mission and vision of the school.

They recognize that the school is not only an organization of learning, but a learning organization. In community the mission and vision are not only embossed in text, they are lived and strived for.

The administrator plays a key role in the 'living and striving'. She sets up the conditions that nurture the arts-oriented curriculum. From the start, she cares about the physical environment of the school. She advocates with members of the governing board and the wider school community to make the school an inviting environment for learning. She regards herself as a pedagogue, but even more importantly as a learner (DuFour, 2002). She willingly takes an imaginative leap setting up time within the work week so that teachers can regularly dialogue with each other in cycle and cross-cycle teams. She creates a culture of learning, constantly nudging the pedagogues into professional development. She leads by continuously seeking out professional development for herself. The arts-oriented administrator keeps abreast of the resources that are available to facilitate teachers and students in their endeavours. She is relentless is her personal mission to support as well as to lead.

The Teacher Educator as Arts-Oriented Inquirer

Members of university education faculties play a critical role in the education of practitioners. They are instrumental in negating the positivistic view of teaching and learning perpetuated in many classrooms. They need to model pedagogical practice as an arts-oriented inquiry. More must be done to encourage student teachers with a penchant for the arts to carry that interest into their professional practice. Efforts must be made to link these students with teachers in the field who practice how this can be done.

The Policymaker and the Policy Promoter as Arts-Oriented Inquirers

The basic problem with policy is that what is intended is often not what is experienced. As with teachers and administrators, policy makers, those in government who introduce changes in the education system and policy promoters, school board administrators and professionals need to listen more to the practitioners, students and parents. We, outside the parameters of the immediate school community, cannot assume that we know what is best. We do not. We need to get out of the offices and into the schools, to engage in conversation with those who daily live the classroom. We need to create a community of 'doing with' rather than 'doing for'. We need to respond to the needs of the practitioners.

Like the teacher in the study, we need to approach the application of change within the condition of structured choice. The strength of the current curriculum reform is that it is founded on that premise. Policy makers and promoters must see to it that the principles advocated by the curriculum can be put into practice where it really counts: in the learning experiences for and with our students. We need to position ourselves purposefully as a groundswell of support. We must always be cognizant of basing our decisions on that intent and need to work tirelessly to that end.

Questions for Further Investigation

I believe that my study will contribute to the field of education research by identifying the dynamics of participating as it was played out in a particular learning environment. Current curricular reform in Quebec, however, is not designed only for classrooms with a select clientele. It aims for all. Given that the participants in the study site were a select student group, further research may be warranted to explore implications of participation for the general high school classroom. I suggest that the questions I used in this research study could be used to pursue such an investigation.

Other issues emerged from the study that may add to current understandings of participation. Student links between learning and fun is one such area. Questions related to this topic may be: What do students mean when they say that learning is fun? What makes learning fun? What implications does this view of learning have upon curriculum design? What implications does this view of learning have upon evaluation? Findings generated from these questions may provide further insights in how to build a learning environment that appeals to the adolescent learner.

The notion of the child-centered or student-centered classroom appears to have implications that were only touched upon in my study. Further investigation may be warranted to increase understanding of this issue. Possible questions for exploration may be as follows: Is the concept of child-centered synonymous with the concept of student-centered? If not, in what ways are they different? How does our notion of role impact upon the child? Are there parallels between the notion of the teacher role as a social construct and the student role? If so, what are they?

While my study took an in-depth look at context and its influence on student participation, more investigation is needed. As the study showed, the values of the wider community are reflected in the classroom. The following questions may flush out greater understanding of these values and their effects: To what extent do the values of the

community have an impact upon the participation of the adolescent learner? What dimensions of student participation transcend the values of the community? Findings from such research may provide insights into what contextual support is needed to enhance student participation in classrooms where students are less motivated to learn. Such insights could be pertinent given present concerns about the number of students who do not complete their formal schooling.

Epilogue 1

Just as curriculum is constructed, so are the lines that fragment curriculum into subjects. These lines are artificial at best. I think in subjects only because I have learned in subjects. Subjects may be necessary to learning the basics, but meanings can only be derived when I push back the boundaries of subject and see connections. I can only claim learning as my own when I have taken that which I have learned and derive my own meaning through it. Once I siphon the information through my own cognitive and creative resources it is mine. Otherwise, I am a mouthpiece for someone else's understandings. When knowledge is mine I can play with it. I can redefine the facts to represent other possibilities. I can create. I can inquire. I can challenge and debate. The number, the word, whatever symbolic form I choose, are simply different ways of expressing the world and my relationship to it. I use whatever I need to connect with others. And they with me. Then, only then, can I identify myself as an 'I want to learn' person.

Epilogue 2

The little prince invites me on a journey. He leads me into the unknown. He asks me to look another way. He turns my declarations into questions and challenges my assumptions. He shakes me out of my complicity. I do not always welcome the little prince into my life. His words offer little comfort. They exasperate. They enrage. Yet his presence enriches. He pushes me to dismantle the boundaries that restrict and protect. Beyond their unveiling I see anew. I learn through subject, self and other. The fox, the pilot, and the rose can enlighten, if I am only open to their wisdom. The circle, now complete, is never completed. The journey is always a beginning.... But *what* a beginning!

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Appendix B: Declaration of Informed Consent

Form A: School Consent

_____

          [Name of Principal]   [Name of School]

        I have been informed of the research study entitled "Participation in a Secondary Classroom: An Interdisciplinary Approach" which is being conducted from September 1996 to June 1997 by Carolyn Sturge Sparkes, in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Master of Arts. I have read and understand the abstract for the proposed study describing its purpose, nature and procedures.

        I agree to allow the individual so named access to the school generally and to the Alternative Learning classroom in particular to interview the teacher and students participating in this program, as well as to view documents relevant to the program under investigation. I understand, however, that consent to conduct this study in the class so mentioned will be also obtained from the teacher or other persons responsible for that class. Furthermore, written consent will be obtained from individuals for participation in interviews, focus groups and other means of data collection including permission to release documents or records containing information relevant to this study. In the case of the students, this consent will be obtained from a parent or other legal guardian.

        I agree that audio tapes may be used to preserve and review the data collected through interviews and focus groups and understand that the data collected by such means are to remain in their original form and used for the sole purpose of this study which is to provide anonymous extracts for communicating the findings.

        It is my express consent that information acquired in this school may be used as a part of the communique of the findings provided that the identification of the school and the study participants remains anonymous and confidential.

_____   _____
Signature   Date

I give my assurance that the information I receive will be used only for the purposes of this study as outlined in the terms and conditions specified above.

_____   _____
Graduate Student   Date

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Form B: Alternative Learning Program and Related Activities

[Name of Teacher]   [Name of School]

I have been informed of the research study entitled "Participation in a Secondary Classroom: An Interdisciplinary Approach" which is being conducted from September 1996 to June 1997 by Carolyn Sturge Sparkes, in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Master of Arts. I have read and understand the abstract for the proposed study describing its purpose, nature and procedures.

I agree to allow the individual so named access to the program for which I am responsible to interview me and participating students, as well as to view documents and records relevant to the program under investigation. I understand that written consent will be obtained from students individually for participation in interviews, focus groups and other means of data collection including permission to release documents or records containing information relevant to this study. In the case of the students, this consent will be obtained from a parent or other legal guardian.

It is understood that the person so named conducting the study will keep me informed of her visits to my classroom and I reserve that right to refuse access on any given occasion or to any aspect of the class that I feel is inappropriate.

I agree that audio tapes may be used to preserve and review the data collected through interviews and focus groups and understand that the data collected by such means are to remain in their original form and used for the sole purpose of this study which is to provide anonymous extracts for communicating the findings.

Signature   Date

I give my assurance that the information I receive will be used only for the purposes of this study as outlined in the terms and conditions specified above.

Graduate Student   Date

Form C: Parental/Guardian Consent for Grade VII Students of the Alternative Learning Program

_____
       [Name of Student]   [Name of Parent/Guardian]

I am a parent or guardian of the student named above. I understand that a study pertaining specifically to my child's class is being conducted from September 1996 to June 1997 by a graduate student as a partial fulfilment to the requirements of the Master of Arts. I have read and understand the information flyer that has been submitted by the graduate student regarding her personal study.

I understand that the student has received initial access into the class as a research assistant for the study called _Student Engagement in Learning and School Life_ and that data collected by the student may be used specifically for her graduate thesis.

I consent to my son, daughter or ward:

- being involved in discussions,
- being interviewed,
- answering questions and
- permitting the teacher to provide information about his or her academic work.

I give this consent with the understanding that:

- my son, daughter or ward will not be identified in the study findings.
- only the persons directly involved with this study (graduate student and faculty advisors) will listen to the audio tape recordings of the interviews and focus groups, but that anonymous excerpts of these recordings may be included in the study findings.
- I am free to withdraw this consent at any time.

_____   _____
Signature of Student   Date   Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

I give my assurance that the information I receive will be used only for the purposes of this study as outlined in the terms and conditions specified above.

_____   _____
Graduate Student   Date

Form D: Individual Consent

[Name of Interviewee]   [Name of School]

I have been informed of the research study entitled "Participation in a Secondary Classroom: An Interdisciplinary Approach" which is being conducted from September 1996 to June 1997 by Carolyn Sturge Sparkes, in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Master of Arts. I have read and understand the abstract for the proposed study describing its purpose, nature and procedures.

I agree to allow the individual so named to interview me about the Alternative Learning Program which is the focus of her study.

I agree that audio tapes may be used to preserve and review the data collected through this interview and understand that the data collected by such means are to remain in their original form and used for the sole purpose of this study which is to provide anonymous extracts for communicating the findings.

It is my express consent that information acquired in this interview may be used as a part of the communique of the findings provided that the identification of the school and the study participants remains anonymous and confidential.

Signature   Date

I give my assurance that the information I receive will be used only for the purposes of this study as outlined in the terms and conditions specified above.

Graduate Student   Date

Appendix C: Table of Data Collection Activities

Logs, Interviews and Memos	Date of Date Collection	Description of Data Collection	Follow-up
log01pcs.qc2	Wed., Sept 25, 1996	Collection of consent forms from school administrator and classroom teacher; Introduction to Class; Rhyming couplets; Punctuating dialogue; Beginning conflict presentations.	# of ALP classes per stream; philosophy of the ALP
log02pcs.qc2	Mon., Sept 30, 1996	Punctuations in Dialogue Presentations (con) Editing	Comparison of workload to regular stream.
log03pcs.qc2	Tues, Oct 8,1996	Replacement teacher-- discussion of poems "Emotions of Colour"	Further exploration of discussion with J. re student difficulty adjustment with flexibility of program
log04pcs.qc2	Wed, Oct 16, 1996	Replacement teacher-- peer editing; discussion on short story	*Red-Head League*: questions re follow-up; rationale for selection; concepts being developed
log05pcs.qc2	Mon, Oct 21, 1996	Replacement teacher-- elements of short story; recitations of selected poems	Purpose of poetry reading exercise
log06pcs.qc2	Tues, Oct 29, 1996	Preparing for writing of horror story	1. Is there a written policy on the ALP? 2. Who developed the policy? 3. Is there a copy available?

Logs, Interviews and Memos	Date of Date Collection	Description of Data Collection	Follow-up
log07pcs.qc2	Mon, Nov 4, 1996	Distribution of class portfolios; improv; discussion of short story	Questions raised above discussed with J.
log08pcs.qc2	Wed, Nov. 7, 1996	Replacement teacher-- play *Monsters are Due on Maple Street*	None
log09pcs.qc2	Tues, Nov 12, 1996	Debating practice; checklist for editing; selection of 'best' story from portfolio	'Encouraging students to think for themselves'
log10pcs.qc2	Wed, Nov 13, 1996	Silent reading; debating practice	Ways to prepare students for debating
log11pcs.qc2	Mon, Nov 18, 1996	Arranging for 'Open House'; features of the short story; intro to *The Frill*	Who decides what is the 'good' work and 'not-so good' work on the portfolios?
log12pcs.qc2	Mon, Nov 25, 1996	Submitting 2nd draft of story; improv practice; Freeze	None
log13pcs.qc2	Thur, Nov 28, 1996	Open House	Contextual issue of 'marketing'
log14pcs.qc2	Thur, Dec 4, 1996	Written work on *Midsummer Night's Dream*; checklist for story and analysis; book reports; intro of play	Book Report exercise--encouraging critical reading?
log15pcs.qc2	Mon, Dec 9, 1996	Play--acting it out (Scene); continue Book Reports	Degree of independence for managing class activities

Logs, Interviews and Memos	Date of Date Collection	Description of Data Collection	Follow-up
log16pcs.qc2	Wed, Jan 7, 1997	Play---acting out scene; questions on short story *Ms. Hinch*; checking on work; elements of debating	Balancing of activities; collaborating with other teachers; further clarification of elements of the program
log17pcs.qc2	Mon, Jan 13, 1997	Distribution of 'personal reflections' question and consent forms; play continues; emotions exercise; debating process	preparing students for Shakespeare; tensions?
log18pcs.qc2	Fri, Jan 17, 1997	Development of board game--group work	collection of consent forms for participation in study
log19pcs.qc2	Tues, Jan 21, 1997	Collection of consent forms and student personal reflections; Play---acting out scene; elements of debating; WIER program; debating groups	Formulation of initial interview questions based on personal reflections; Housekeeping for interviews (See list)
log20pcs.qc2	Thurs, Jan 30, 1997	WIER program; debating	Formulation of questions for administrator's interview based on observations; Housekeeping for interviews (See list)
log21pcs.qc2	Thus, Feb 6, 1997	Discussion with teacher re ALP philosophy	Housekeeping for interviews (See list)

Logs, Interviews and Memos	Date of Date Collection	Description of Data Collection	Follow-up
log22pcs.qc2/ intst01.qc2	Wed, Feb 12, 1997	Interview Student Group #1; learning about WIER; observing reading of mystery play.	Housekeeping for interviews (See list); giving students greater responsibility?; follow-up on student interview
log22apcs.qc2/ inad1.qc2	Wed, Feb 12, 1997	Interview Administrator	Note administrator's observations for further exploration
log23pcs.qc2/ intst02.qc2	Wed, Feb 26, 1997	Interview Student Group #2; discussion with teacher	Follow-up on interview; revising questions
log24pcs.qc2/ intst03.qc2	Tue, Mar 4, 1997	Interview Student Group #3	Follow-up on interview
log25pcs.qc2/ intst04.qc2	Mon, Mar 10, 1997	Interview Student Group #4; discussion with teacher	Follow-up on interview
log26pcs.qc2/ intst05.qc2	Wed, Mar 19, 1997	Interview Student Group #5; discussion with teacher	Follow-up on interview
log27pcs.qc2/ intst06.qc2	Mon, Mar 24, 1997	Interview Student Group #6; discussion with teacher; collection of teacher's personal reflection	Follow-up on student interview; Formulation of questions for initial teacher interview based on personal reflections;
log28pcs.qc2/ inte1.qc2	Wed, Apr 9, 1997	Teacher Interview	Follow-up on interviews

Logs, Interviews and Memos	Date of Date Collection	Description of Data Collection	Follow-up
log29pcs.qc2	Tues, Apr 15, 1997	Follow -up on interview with teacher; writing competition entrance; reading play; Fantasy poem; webbing	Could I incorporate this webbing exercise in my data collection? Formulate student interview questions based on previous student and teacher interviews
log30pcs.qc2/ intst07.qc2	Wed, Apr 30, 1997	Interview Student Group #7 (students selected from each group above)	Follow-up on interviews; building of webbing exercise fro student interview #7
log31pcs.qc2	Wed, May 14, 1997	Webbing exercise (follow-up for my data)	Follow-up on interviews
log32pcs.qc2	Tues, May 20, 1997	Examination of portfolios	Follow-up on interviews
log33apcs.qc2/ inte03.qc2	Mon, May 26, 1997	Complete 2nd interview with J.; student presentation	Follow-up on interviews
log34pcs.qc2	Mon, February 8, 1998	Begin observation to validate data collected the previous year	Focus on context and curricular experiences
log35pcs.qc2	Wed, February 25, 1998	Introduction to writing of storyboards for a television play; peer conferencing	Familiarization with peer conferencing process
log36pcs.qc2	Tues, March 10, 1998	Recitation of poems; exploration of fantasy story; introduction to a hero	Confirming of trustworthiness of previous data; Continuation of focus on context and classroom conditions

Logs, Interviews and Memos	Date of Date Collection	Description of Data Collection	Follow-up
log37pcs.qc2	Tues, March 17, 1998	Continuation of work on hero theme; introduction to the 'villain'; group work	Confirming of trustworthiness of previous data; Continuation of focus on context and classroom conditions;
log38pcs.qc2	Wed, March 25, 1998	Continuation of work on hero/'villain' theme; introduction of film analysis	Confirming of trustworthiness of previous data; Continuation of focus on context and classroom conditions;
log39pcs.qc2	Wed, Apr 1, 1998	Sharing of team designed games	Confirming of trustworthiness of previous data; Continuation of focus on context and classroom conditions;
log40pcs.qc2	Fri, Apr 24, 1998	Silent reading; evaluation of Media Project; completion of storyboards and introduction of scripts for a television play	Confirming of trustworthiness of previous data; Continuation of focus on context and classroom conditions; increase understanding of the story board
log41pcs.qc2	Fri, May 1, 1998	"Brickbats and Bouquets": peer evaluation of presentations; completion of storyboards; filming tips	Confirming of trustworthiness of previous data; Continuation of focus on context and classroom conditions; continuation of observation of group dynamics

Logs, Interviews and Memos	Date of Date Collection	Description of Data Collection	Follow-up
log42pcs.qc2	Thur, May 21, 1998	Student book reports; concept of onomatopoeia; writing of descriptive narratives	Confirming of trustworthiness of previous data; Continuation of focus on context and classroom conditions
log43pcs.qc2	Tues, May 26, 1998	Peer presentation: Building a Rocket; peer evaluation of presentation	Confirming of trustworthiness of previous data; Continuation of focus on context and classroom conditions; continuation of observation of group dynamics
log44pcs.qc2	Sat, June 4, 1998	Complete teacher interview #3;	Follow-up on interview
log45pcs.qc2	Thurs, June 9, 1998	Launching of rockets	Mixing informally with students
refmem01	Fri, May 25, 2001	Initial visit to secondary site	Familiarization with the learning context (primary site)
refmem02	Tues, June 5, 2001	Clarity of 'contextual elements'	Familiarization with the learning context (primary site)
refmem03	Wed, June 6, 2001	Observation of class; Clarity of 'contextual elements'	Familiarization with the learning context (primary site)
inte04.qc2	Wed, Feb 4, 2004	Follow-up teacher interview: focus on background	None

Appendix D: Interview Questions

Student Interview Questions

Version I

I. Background Information

1. How would you describe the ALP program in which you are participating?
2. How did you initially hear about the ALP at your school?
3. What was it about the ALP that made you interested in wanting to participate in it?
4. Tell me about the process that you had to go through to get into the ALP.
5. Describe for me your home environment in terms of attitudes towards learning.
6. Describe the connections you see between what you learn in school and what you learn outside of school.

II. General:

1. Tell me how you expected the ALP to be before you started it. What gave you that expectation? Who gave you that expectation?
2. In the personal reflections a number of you classmates said that when they were in Grade VI they anticipated the ALP to be very hard with a lot of work. Explain what you think this statement means.
3. How do you feel about the program now? In the personal reflections a number of students described ALP as challenging but not hard. Explain what you think this statement means. Can you give me some examples?
4. I have noticed that there are many activities in your English class. How do you feel about participating in them?
5. What activities in your English class do you feel that you do well? How do you feel when you are doing well?
6. How do you feel when you make mistakes? What do you do about this?
7. Tell me what you think about cooperation in the class. Give me an example. One of your colleagues describes the students in your class as being cooperative. Tell me what you think about this statement.
8. In many of the personal reflections Mrs. W. is described as a 'fun teacher'. What does this description mean to you? Can you give me some examples of how learning is fun for you? Tell me about how you feel about having fun and learning.

9.   In the personal reflections that you wrote for me on the ALP, a classmate of yours stated that in the program "you do things better than the regular program". Explain what you think this statement means.

10.   In these same reflections, one of your classmates stated that "the ALP gets more respect than the regular class". Tell me what you think that statement means.

11.   Describe how you feel about the ALP program overall.

Version II

I. Background:

1.   How did you initially hear about the ALP program?

2.   What was it about the ALP that made you interested in wanting to participate in it?

3.   Tell me how you expected the ALP to be before you started it. What gave you that expectation? Who gave you that expectation?

4.   In the personal reflections a number of you classmates said that when they were in Grade VI they anticipated the ALP to be very hard with a lot of work. Explain what you think this statement means.

II. General (ALP)

1.   How do you feel about the program now? In the personal reflections a number of students described ALP as challenging but not hard. Explain what you think this statement means. Can you give me some examples?

2.   Describe how you feel about the ALP program overall.

III. Specific (ELA course):

1.   In a previous interview a number of your classmates stated that as a class you "really participate in what you are learning". Tell me about what this statement means to you.

2.   I have noticed that there are many activities in your English class. How do you feel about participating in them?

3.   What activities in your English class do you feel that you do well? How do you feel when you are doing well?

4.   One of your classmates describes the English class as a "Nobody's Perfect class". What do you think that description means? How do you feel when you make mistakes? What do you do about this?

5. Tell me what you think about cooperation in the class. Give me an example. One of your colleagues describes the students in your class as being cooperative. Tell me what you think about this statement.

6. In many of the personal reflections Mrs. W. is described as a 'fun teacher'. What does this description mean to you? Can you give me some examples of how learning is fun for you? Tell me about how you feel about having fun and learning.

7. In a recent interview, a number of your classmates described Mrs. W. as "an active teacher". Tell me what this description means to you.

8. In the personal reflections that you wrote for me on the ALP, a classmate of yours stated that in the program "you do things better than the regular program". Explain what you think this statement means.

9 In these same reflections, one of your classmates stated that "the ALP gets more respect than the regular class". Tell me what you think that statement means.

Version III

1. Tell me how learning is viewed in your home.

2. If I asked you to use one word to describe your English class what would that word be?

3 Tell me how you view choice in your English class.

4. When I observe your class, I notice that your class is organized. Explain to me what organization means to you.

5. Your class has been described as a place where different learning styles are considered. Explain what this means to you.

6. How are themes used in your class?

7. Your teacher describes her role as being the following:
animator
facilitator.
Explain what these terms mean to you.

8. Tell me how you deal with challenges in your class.

9. Your teacher describes the class as being an 'open window'. What does that metaphor mean to you?

Administrator Interview Questions

1. How would you describe the Alternative Learning Program?

2. Describe for me how the ALP came to be.

3. What was the purpose(s) of the ALP?

4. Is there a written policy that governs the ALP? Who wrote this policy? Can you summarize this policy for me?

5. How does a student get into the ALP?

6. Are there any restrictions placed on student access into the ALP?

7. How are these restrictions determined?

8. I understand that some students for various reasons do not remain in the ALP. Can you explain for me the procedure followed to take these students out of the program?

9. In my discussions with J. she has used the word interdisciplinary to describe the type of teaching approach she uses. How would you describe this approach to parents?

10. I understand that this year there are two ALP groups at the Grade VII level. Would you describe the other ALP? How is this the same or different from J.'s approach?

11. In the personal reflections that students wrote for me on the ALP, a couple stated that in the program "you do things better than the regular program" and that "the ALP gets more respect than the regular class". Tell me how you feel about these statements. What makes you feel that way?

12. What do you feel are the benefits for students to be involved in the ALP? Can you give me some examples?

13. Are there any reservations or concerns about the program? Can you elaborate? Who is expressing these concerns? Can you provide examples?

14. How do you feel about the program? Explain.

Teacher Interview Questions

Interview I

I. General (ALP):

1. In the correspondence sent to parents, the ALP is described as interdisciplinary. Explain to me what this means within the context of the English and French courses that you teach.

II: Teacher Role:

1. In your personal reflections you describe your teaching role as that of a facilitator or animator. Tell me what this means to you. How does the term "child-centered" that you use to describe the programme relate with your view of your teaching role?

2.   Again in your personal reflections you state that one of the strengths of the programme is the "variety of themes that are introduced each year". Explain to me how the themes are selected.

3.   The second strength you identify with the programme is the use of a variety of teaching styles. What styles do you use? Explain to me how you determine when each style is appropriate to use.

III. Specific (ELA)

1.   I have noticed the rhythm and flow of activity in your class. Tell me your thoughts on this.

2.   In your personal reflections you refer to giving students the freedom to make decisions about their work. Tell me more about this.

3.   While it seems that students are given freedom to choose, you also use "a loose framework of guidelines". Explain to me what this means and how it works.

4.   Again in your personal reflections, you describe your class as "an open window". Describe what you mean by this analogy. How does this your "open window" philosophy play itself out in your class? Do you feel that your students are aware of this "open window" philosophy?

5.   In your personal reflections you state "I believe that students should see that learning can be challenging but still enjoyable". Describe how you feel that this belief is being realized in your English course.

Interview II

I: Specific (ELA)

1.   If I understood you correctly, each student has two portfolios (blue and yellow). On the blue folders all the work is included; in the yellow folder, the work the student identifies as his or her best. Is my understanding correct?

2.   In looking at the portfolios, I have noticed that work in the blue folders are assessed. What happens to the work in the yellow folders? Would you say that this is the main body of work that is assessed? If not, what else is assessed? How often do you assess? What criteria do you use? Other than you, is there anyone else who participates in the assessment process? Do students participate in the assessment process?

3.   I note that many activities in the class are geared to some form of group configuration. How do you gauge individual accountability in these instances?

4. How much of learning in your class would you consider to be project driven?

5. In your first interview you referred to a project in which students sent letters to a foreign country. Please clarify this project further. What was the rationale behind the project?

6. Remember in your interview I asked you how you select the themes to be explored. I found it intriguing that you almost felt apologetic for resorting to personal preference as the criteria for determining what will be learned. This reticence seems to be commonplace among professional educators. Describe where you think this reticence comes from.

7. I notice that in your interview your seem to use the terms 'unit' and 'theme' interchangeably. Do you think of these two as being the same?

8. I notice that one activity the students did earlier in the year was to select a poem, memorize it, present it in class and explain what the poem means to the presenter. what is the rationale behind this particular activity?

II: Teacher Training

1. Describe to me how you feel about your teacher training. Do you feel that it prepared you to work in a interdisciplinary environment?

Interview III

I. Defining Creativity

1. What in your view is creativity?

II. Creativity and Learning

1. What role does creativity play in learning?

2. What attributes do you feel that a teacher should have to create a "creative" classroom environment?

3. How do you feel that the teacher brings out creativity in her students?

III. Context of Creativity

1. What affects does the school context have on the establishment of the creative classroom?

Interview IV

1. Tell me what brought you into the teaching profession.

2. What life experiences have made an impact upon you as a teacher?

Appendix E: Table of Artifact Collection

Item	Assigned Number	Date Received
How well do you follow your direction?	artpcs01.qc2	September 30, 1996
Literature workshop	artpcs02.qc2	October 16, 1996
School Report	artpcs03.qc2	October 16, 1996
LPHS: Student Social File	artpcs04.qc2	October 16, 1996
Red-headed League	artpcs05.qc2	October 16, 1996
Memo to parents of students entering secondary one	artpcs06.qc2	November 27, 1996
Unit 13: Making a Case	artpcs07.qc2	January 8, 1997
A draft proposal: acceptable internet use policy	artpcs08.qc2	January 8, 1997
LPHS internet use agreement	artpcs09.qc2	January 8, 1997
Parliamentary Report: Clifford Lincoln	artpcs10.qc2	January 9, 1997
Personal Reflection	artpcs11.qc2	January 13, 1997
Desciption WIER (Writers in Electronic Residence)	artpcs12.qc2	January 30, 1997
Sample of English Test used for admission into ALP.	artpcs13.qc2	February 13, 1997
Class list-Grade VII ALP	artpcs14.qc2	February 13, 1997
Webbing Procedures	artpcs15.qc2	April 15, 1997
Fantasy Story: Description of Requirements for Assignment	artpcs16.qc2	May 14, 1997
Conflict and Plot: A Guide	artpcs17.qc2	May 14, 1997
Letter to Parents: Information re Tadoussac trip	artpcs18.qc2	May 14, 1997
Timetable of Tadoussac trip	artpcs19.qc2	May 14, 1997
Problem Solving Game: *The Intelligence Clock*	artpcs20.qc2	May 14, 1997
Lesson Plan form (for students)	artpcs21.qc2	May 14, 1997

Item	Assigned Number	Date Received
Sylvia McNicoll's Amazing Writing Tips	artpcs22.qc2	May 14, 1997
Fantasy Book Report	artpcs23.qc2	May 26, 1997
The Chestnut Stallion	artpcs24.qc2	June 11, 1997
Moving Out	artpcs25.qc2	June 11, 1997
The Unfinished Letter: WIER transaction: student sent	artpcs26.qc2	June 11, 1997
The Unfinished Letter: WIER transaction: author's response	artpcs27.qc2	June 11, 1997
The Unfinished Letter (revised): WIER transaction: student sent	artpcs28.qc2	June 11, 1997
The Unfinished Letter: WIER transaction: author's response	artpcs29.qc2	June 11, 1997
The Unfinished Letter (revised): WIER transaction: student sent	artpcs30.qc2	June 11, 1997
The Unfinished Letter: WIER transaction: student thank you to peers	artpcs31.qc2	June 11, 1997
WIER transaction: author's response to student's story	artpcs32.qc2	June 11, 1997
Poem: Fantasy	artpcs33.qc2	June 11, 1997
Story: Dragonsong	artpcs34.qc2	June 11, 1997
Book Report	artpcs35.qc2	June 11, 1997
Bossy Bessy: How to sheet	artpcs36.qc2	June 11, 1997
Joint Project: Géographie, English and Math (project description)	artpcs37.qc2	June 11, 1997
Information Booklet for Parents 1999-2000 (secondary site)	artpcs38.qc2	37035

Fantasy Book Report

Choose an interesting part of the story. A scene with a lot of activity or emotions.

1. Give the title of the book and its author.

2. Introduce the scene by giving a one paragraph explanation of what has happened prior to this section. Give some idea of <u>where</u> this is taking place and <u>when it</u> is taking place if this latter is important.

3. Take this scene and do either one section from **A.** or **B.**
   Please be sure to indicate which of the choices you are undertaking.

   A.
   1. diary entries
   2. series of letters between two characters
   3. a play

<u>note:</u> 4 letters: 2 to 4 diary entries : 1 to 1 1/2 pages of dialogue

   B.
   Rewrite the scene the way you would have liked to see it
   for a different outcome.

<u>note:</u> Make sure we know the original outcome

4. <u>Opinion:</u> Write a paragraph explaining why you liked or disliked this book.
   Do not just say, "It was great". Give specific examples of what you felt
   was good or rotten in the book.

Date due:

Work must be typewritten. Two pages single spaced.

English Heroic Cycle (five days)

Activity A: W.I.E.R. (make sure yellow folders are up to date) Write part of a story.

Activity B: Library, find a myth or heroic tale that you would like to read. Give name to Ms C.

Activity C: 1. Read a story from Thrust. "The Cardinald Spirit" page_____

   2. Answer questions #1 a, 1b, 3a, 3c, 4a, 5 page_____

Activity D: Work with Teacher. Bring comic books.

Activity E: 1. Using Superhero outline, develop own hero by answering the questions.

          2. When this is completed, either make a drawing of you hero or draw a comic strip involving your hero.

Rotation

|	Day 1	Day2	Day3	Day4	Day5
GROUP 1	A	B	C	D	E
GROUP 2	B	C	D	E	A
GROUP 3	C	D	E	A	B
GROUP 4	D	E	A	B	C
GROUP 5	E	A	B	C	D

Monday, April 14th 1997
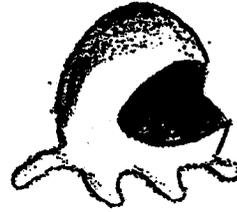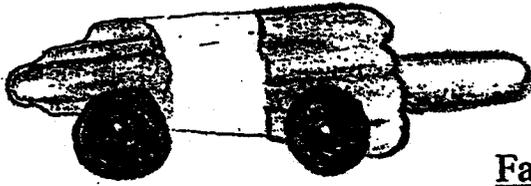
Fantasy

Let's take a stroll down buttercup lane
in a popsicle car or a rockinghorse train.
The rubberband man at the toll-bridge will say,
"Take a load off your shoulders, there's no charge today."

We'll stop by the beach where the the jellyfish screech
and the elephants swim in their trunks.
Home to the sweet suger sand castle fleet
and the sea where the fish are all drunk.
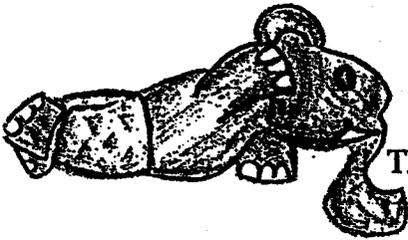
The king of the bed, with the marshmallow head,
takes a ride on a barbershop pole.
He zooms by the funky, giraffe tailor monkey
who drinks his champagne from a bowl.

A last goodbye kiss, all this we shall miss,
a handkerchief clutched, a world left untouched.

341
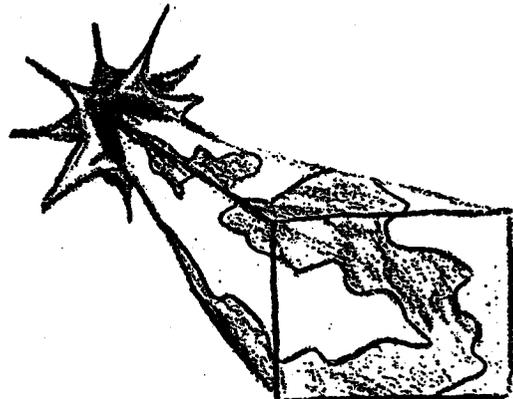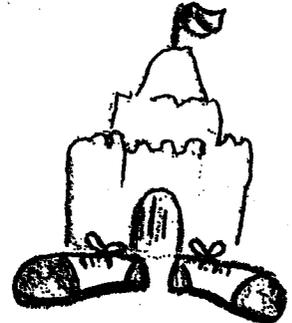
Appendix I: The Chestnut Stallion

2001
A Space Odyssey

Novel by:

Arthur C. Clarke

Book Report by:

Due: May 21, 1997

Introduction

In this scene, astronaut Frank Poole and First Captain David Bowman are traveling through space in a ship called Discovery. The mission began five years ago as "Project Jupiter", the first manned round trip to the greatest of the planets. The ship was nearly ready for the two-year voyage when, somewhat abruptly, the mission profile had been changed. Discovery would still go to Jupiter, but she would not stop there, not even slowing down. She would use the planet's gravitational field as a sling to throw her even farther away from the sun to the beautiful ringed planet called Saturn. For Discovery, this would be a one-way trip, and if all went well, they would be back on Earth within seven years, five of which would pass in a dreamless sleep while they awaited rescue by the still unbuilt Discovery II.

Among the five crew members, three will remain in an undisturbed sleep until their duties will be needed when the ship will enter her final orbit around Saturn. The sixth and last member of the crew is a machine named Hal (*H*euristically programmed *AL*gorithmic computer), the brain and nervous system of the ship. This computer is never, ever supposed to make a mistake.

Diaries

Log 86, First Captain David Bowman:

Today, as we traveled through the asteroid belt, we made our closest

encounter to any known asteroid. It had no name but was merely identified

by the number 7794 and measured fifty yards in diameter. Through the high

powered telescope, we could see that the asteroid was very irregular, and

turning slowly end over end. Sometimes it looked like a flattened sphere,

sometimes it resembled a roughly shaped brick. Its rotation period was

roughly over two minutes.

Log 99, Frank Poole:

Today is my birthday. My family had sent me a recorded message

through subspace wishing me happy birthday. As David and I were playing

a game of chess in the observation lounge, HAL's systems alarm went off.

He reported that the AE-35 unit on the Discovery would fail within seventy-

two hours. This is a small but vital component of the communication system.

It keeps our main antenna aimed at Earth and if the unit failed, we would

loose all contact with our home planet. HAL said that replacing the AE-35

unit was a pretty straight forward job and I being specially qualified for this

kind of job, was going to go outside of the ship and replace the faulty unit.

I got into "Betty" one of the three space pods of the Discovery. Once

outside, I parked "Betty" about twenty feet away from the ship, and in my

pressure suit, I replaced the faulty AE-35 unit. I was quite relieved when it

was all over. All accidents in space can be life threatening and I hope that

the rest of our journey will be smooth sailing.

Log 100, First Captain David Bowman:

Frank is furious. After doing a level 1 diagnostic on the first AE-35

unit, we have concluded that there was never any problem with it at all.

Frank is very upset for doing that work for nothing but we are also getting

scared. How could HAL have made such a big mistake? We have also been

noticing that HAL has been taking longer in answering simple questions and

sometimes not answering at all.

We really started to get worried when later on Hal's systems alarm

went off again. He reported that the second AE-35 unit that we installed was

going to fail within twenty-four hours! How could a unit which was

guaranteed for twenty years, fail within two days? This time we did not act

right away and decided to double check with mission control on Earth. They

reported that there was not a problem with the unit itself but in the

prediction circuits. As they were about to give us the procedures to follow, $\frac{10}{10}$

the alarm went off again. The unit had failed. HAL was right this time, but

the problem was that we did not know what to do next. The Discovery is

doomed!

Diary entries well written. We get this rising sense of doom as Hal starts to have problems.

Opinion

I can not say that I didn't like the book but I didn't really enjoy it

either. I found the starting of the book very slow and that in general there

was too much description. I think that the story should have been written in

a more straight forward manner. There were many chapters containing just

description which I found very boring. It was only after a hundred pages or $\frac{3}{3}$

so where some action started to arise. I recommend it to people who really

love to read science fiction and who wants to know every detail. I give it two

and a half stars.

$\frac{15}{15}$ *Great work.*

1. Artpcsob.qc2

2. Logspcs24.qc2, ref. #785

3. Logpcs26.qc2, ref.#809

4. Logpcs21.qc2, ref. #740

5. Logpcs26.qc2, ref. #815

6. Logpcs26.qc2, ref. #892a

7. Logspcs31.qc2, ref. #895

8. Logpcs34.qc2, ref. #963

9. Logpcs02.qc2, ref. #92

10. Logpcs02.qc2, ref. #112

11. Logpcs28.qc2, ref. #113

12. Logpcs28.qc2, ref. #846

13. Prst05.qc2

14. Prst25.qc2

15. Logpcs29.qc2, ref. #857

16. Logpcs26.qc2, ref. #805

17. Logpcs27.qc2, ref. #826

18. Intst02.qc2, counter #225

19. Prte01.qc2, ref. #12

20. Intst02.qc2, counter #314

21. Prte01.qc2, ref. #1

22. Inte01.qc2, counter #023

23. Inst07.qc2, counter #244

24. Logpcs23.qc2, ref. #784

25. Logpcs31.qc2, ref. #893

26. Logpcs29.qc2, ref. #882

27. Logpcs32.qc2, ref. #906a

28. Logpcs32.qc2, ref. #906c

29. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #53

30. Logpcs28.qc2/inrw1.qc2, ref. #833

31. Refmem.03, ref. #8

32. Refmem.03, ref. #1

33. Refmem02. ref. #4a-4f

34. Prst25.qc2

35. Prst04.qc2

36. Artpcs06.qc2

37. Inte2.qc2, counter #190

38. Inte1.qc2, counter #083

39. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #42

40. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #42

41. Prte01.qc2, ref. #5

42. Logpcs42.qc2, ref. #1096

43. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #325

44. Logpcs14.qc2, ref. #515

45. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #14

46. Logpcs28.qc2, ref. #8476

47. Logpcs27.qc2, ref. #830

48. Inst07.qc2, counter #175

49. Inst07.qc2, counter #175

50. Logpcs18.qc2, ref. #643

51. Logpcs03.qc2, ref. #144

52. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #319

53. Logpcs14.qc2, ref. #519

54.Logpcs03.qc2, ref. #145

55. Logpcs06.qc2, ref. #278

56. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. #453

57. Logpcs29.qc2, ref. #864

58. Logpcs03.qc2, ref. #126

59. Logpcs14.qc2, ref. #501

60. Logpcs14.qc2, ref. #509

61. Logpcs15.qc2, ref. #544

62. Logpcs19.qc2, refs. # 663-670

63. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #463

64. Logpcs19.qc2, ref. #666

65. Logpcs31.qc2, ref. #898

66. Logpcs02.qc2, ref. #79

67. Logpcs19.qc2, ref. #679

68. Logpcs32.1c2, ref. #907

69. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #461

70. Logpcs27.qc2, ref. #826

71. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. #450

72. Logpcs09.qc2, ref. #371

73. Logpcs29.qc2, ref. #858

74. Logpcs02.qc2, ref. #103

75. Logpcs18.qc2, ref. #631

76. Logpcs18.qc2, ref. #638

77. Logpcs18.qc2, ref. #632

78. Logpcs33.qc2, ref. #918

79. Logpcs02.qc2, ref. #107

80. Logpcs20.qc2, ref. #700

81. Logpcs20.qc2, ref. # 702

82. Logpcs42.qc2, ref. #2003

83. Logpcs02.qc2, ref. #87-96

84. Prte01.qc2, ref. #5

85. Logpcs03.qc2, ref. #137

86. Logpcs14.qc2, ref. #520

87. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #306

88. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #307

89. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #475

90. Logpcs15.qc2, ref. #554

91. Logpcs18.qc2, ref. #628

92. Logpcs03.qc2, ref. #132

93. Artpcs33.qc2

94. Logpcs29.qc2, ref. #870

95. Artpcs24.qc2

96. Logpcs03.qc2, ref. #138

97. Logpcs15.qc2, ref. #536

98. Artpcs35.qc2

99. Logpcs03.qc2, ref. #129

100. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. #439

101. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #14

102. Logpcs02.qc2, ref. #101

103. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #472

104. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #482

105. Logpcs15.qc2, ref. #556

106. Logpcs09.qc2, ref. #380

107. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #32

108. Logpcs06.qc2, ref. #266

109. Logpcs09.qc2, ref. #378

110. Logpcs03.qc2, ref. #121

111. Logpcs06.qc2.ref. #263

112. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. # 320

113. Logpcs15.qc2, ref. # 538

114. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #277

115. Logpcs10.qc2, ref. #415

116. Logpcs19.qc2, ref. #653

117. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #309

118. Logpcs09.qc2, ref. #348

119. Logpcs09.qc2, ref. #349

120. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #12

121. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #321

122. Logpcs09.qc2, ref. #408

123. Logpcs17.qc2, ref. #605

124. Logpcs03.qc2, ref. #134

125. Logpcs05.qc2, ref. #218

126. Logpcs05.qc2, ref. #211

127. Logpcs10.qc2, ref. #418

128. Logpcs06.qc2, ref. #250

129. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. #444

130. Logpcs14.qc2, ref. #532

131. Logpcs33.qc2, ref. #922

132. Logpcs19.qc2, ref. #657

133. Logpcs02.qc2, ref. #104

134. Logpcs08.qc2, ref. #334

135. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. #432

136. Logpcs33.qc2, ref. #915

137. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #314

138. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. #433

139. Logpcs24.qc2, ref. #790

140. Inst4.qc2, counter #98

141. Inst6.qc2, counter # 101

142. Prst07.qc2

143. Inst2.qc2, counter # 024

144. Inst3.qc2, counter # 102

145. Inst5.qc2, ref. # 179

146. Inst6.qc2, counter # 101

147. Inst2.qc2, counter # 225

148. Inst5.qc2, counter # 179

149. Inst2.qc2, counter # 225

150. Inst2.qc2, counter # 225

151. Inst6.qc2, counter # 101

152. Inst2.qc2, counter # 024

153. Inst1.qc2, counter # 238

154. Inst7.qc2, counter # 036

155. Inst4.qc2, counter # 269

156. Inst6.qc2, counter # 481

157. Inst7.qc2, counter # 135

158. Prst24.qc2

159. Prst06.qc2

160. Inst2.qc2, counter # 183

161. Inst1.qc2, counter # 127

162. Inst3.qc2, counter # 074

163. Inst5.qc2, counter # 130

164. Inst5.qc2, counter # 155

165. Inst5.qc2, counter # 155

166. Inst2.qc2, counter # 183

167. Inst3.qc2, counter # 074

168. Inst4.qc2, counter # 071

169. Inst4.qc2, counter # 071

170. Inst7.qc2, counter #307

171. Inst5.qc2, counter # 155

172. Inst7.qc2, counter # 307

173. Prst20.qc2

174. Inst7.qc2, counter # 030

175. Inst7.qc2, counter #030

176. Prst25.qc2

177. Inst1.qc2, counter # 245

178. Inst3.qc2, counter #360

179. Inst3.qc2, counter # 360

180. Inst6.qc2, counter # 070

181. Inst3.qc2, counter # 002

182. Inst2.qc2, counter # 073

183. Inst1.qc2, counter # 277

184. Prst10.qc2

185. Inst7.qc2, counter # 360

186. Inst1.qc2, counter # 258

187. Inst2.qc2, counter # 092

188. Inst2.qc2, counter # 173

189. Inst6.qc2, counter # 576

190. Prst14.qc2

191. Inst3.qc2, counter #441

192. Prst03.qc2

193. Inst3.qc2, counter #319

194. Prst23.qc2

195. Inst2.qc2, counter #540

196. Inst2.qc2, counter #112

197. Inst1.qc2, counter #228

198. Inst1.qc2, counter #228

199. Inst2.qc2, counter #024

200. Inst6.qc2, counter #222

201. Inst3.qc2, counter #175

202. Inst3.qc2, counter #175

203. Inst2qc2, counter #358

204. Inst6.qc2, counter #301

205. Inst2.qc2, counter #334

206. Inst3.qc2, counter #217

207. Inst5.qc2, counter #476

208. Inst3.qc2, counter #229

209. Inst5.qc2, counter #464

210. Inst5.qc2, counter #476

211. Inst3.qc2, counter #223

212. Inst6.qc2, counter #301

213. Prst03.qc2

214. Inst5.qc2, counter #301

215. Inst3.qc2, counter #236

216. Inst5.qc2, counter #476

217. Inst2.qc2, counter #358

218. Inst7.qc2, counter #240

219. Inst1.qc2, counter #197

220. Inst3.qc2, counter #223

221. Inst2.qc2, counter #290

222. Prst20.qc2

223. Prst13.qc2

224. Inst2.qc2, counter #183

225. Inst5.qc2, counter #291

226. Inst6.qc2, counter #222

227. Inst2.qc2, counter #263

228. Inst5.qc2, counter #354

229. Inst2.qc2, counter #136

230. Inst5.qc2, counter #084

231. Inst3.qc2, counter #041

232. Inst6.qc2, counter #094

233. Inst4.qc2, counter #351

234. Inst4.qc2, counter #321

235. Logpcs27.qc2, ref. #831

236. Inst7.qc2, counter #360

237. Prst22.qc2

238. Inst6.qc2, counter #162

239. Inst3.qc2, counter #139

240. Prst22.qc2

241. Prst22.qc2

242. Inst1.qc2, counter #235

243. Inst.qc2, counter #272

244. Inst5.qc2, counter #272

245. Inst6.qc2, counter #353

246. Inst6.qc2, counter #388

247. Inst1.qc2, counter #235

248. Inst6.qc2, counter# 388

249. Inst6.qc2, counter #388

250. Inst2.qc2, counter #431

251. Prst01.qc2

252. Prst.qc2

253. Inst6.qc2, counter #368

254. Inst4.qc2, counter #158

255. Inst3.qc2, counter #502

256. Inst2.qc2, counter #299

257. Inst3.qc2, counter #184

258. Inst3.qc2, counter #184

259. Inst6.qc2, counter #277

260. Inst2.qc2, counter #299

261. Inst6.qc2, counter #277

262. Inst1.qc2, counter #186

263. Inst2.qc2, counter #314

264. Inst3.qc2, counter #196

265. Inst5.qc2, counter #428

266. Inst5.qc2, counter #400

267. Inst1.qc3, counter #179

268. Inst5.qc2, counter #400

269. Inst5.qc2, counter #428

270. Inst3.qc2, counter #183

271. Inst2.qc2, counter #149

272. Inst5.qc2, counter #400

273. Inst5.qc2, counter #316

274. Inst2.qc2, counter #314

275. Inst5.qc2, counter #354

276. Inst3.qc2, counter #175

277. Inst3.qc2, counter #154

278. Inst3.qc2, counter #154

279. Inst7.qc2, counter #030

280. Inst5.qc2, counter #272

281. Inst7.qc2, counter #175

282. Inst5.qc2, counter #272

283. Inst7.qc2, counter #175

284. Prte1.qc2, ref. #3

285. Inst7.qc2, counter #036

286. Inst7.qc2, counter #036

287. Inst7.qc2, counter #036

288. Inst2.qc2, counter #431

289. Inst7.qc2, counter #135

290. Inst7.qc2, counter #036

291. Inst5.qc2, counter #256

292. Inst5.qc2, counter #256

293. Inst5.qc2, counter #272

294. Inst2.qc2, counter #225

295. Inst2.qc2, counter #358

296. Inst2.qc2, counter #358

297. Inst4.qc2, counter #193

298. Inst7.qc2, counter #036

299. Inst3.qc2, counter #360

300. Inst4.qc2, counter #329

301. Logpcs28.qc2, ref. #849

302. Inst7.qc2, counter #081

303. Inst7.qc2, counter #081

304. Inst7.qc2, counter #081

305. Inst7.qc2, counter #081

306. Inst7.qc2, counter #081

307. Inst7.qc2, counter #081

308. Inst5.qc2, counter #228

309. Inst5.qc2, counter #228

310. Inst7.qc2, counter #036, 244

311. Inst3.qc2, counter #122

312. Inst4.qc2, counter #329

313. Inst6.qc2, counter #353

314. Inst7.qc2, counter #081

315. Inst7.qc2, counter #081

316. Inst2.qc2, counter #358

317. Inst4.qc2, counter #193

318. Inst4.qc2, counter #358

319. Inst7.qc2, counter #081

320. Inst7.qc2, counter #081

321. Inst5.qc2, counter #508

322. Inst3.qc2, counter #196

323. Inst3.qc2, counter #478

324. Inst7.qc2, counter #244

325. Inst3.qc2, counter #358

326. Inst7.qc2, counter #244

327. Prst01.qc2

328. Inst7.qc2, counter #081

329. Inst3.qc2, counter #266

330. Inst5.qc2, counter #179

331. Inst5.qc2, counter #179

332. Inst3.qc2, counter #266

333. Inst3.qc2, counter #236

334. Inst5.qc2, counter #354

335. Inst2.qc2, counter #225

336. Inst3.qc2, counter #388

337. Inst6.qc2, counter #327

338. Inst3.qc2, counter #236

339. Inst6.qc2, counter #327

340. Inst3.qc2, counter #236

341. Inst3.qc2, counter #236

342. Inst5.qc2, counter #614

343. Prst11.qc2

344. Inst6.qc2, counter #532

345. Inst3.qc2, counter #388

346. Inst3.qc2, counter #502

347. Inst1.qc2, counter #258

348. Inst2.qc2, counter #461

349. Inst4.qc2, counter #306

350. Inst6.qc2, counter #481

351. Inst1.qc2, counter #245

352. Inst2.qc2, counter #482

353. Inst2.qc2, counter #482

354. Inst3.qc2, counter #388

355. Inst3.qc2, counter #388

356. Inte4.qc2, ref. #1

357. Inte4.qc2, ref. #3

358. Inte4.qc2, ref. #4

359. Inte1.qc2, counter #155

360. Logpcs14.qc2, ref. #521-530

361. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. #439

362. Logpcs09.qc2, ref. #350

363. Logpcs19.qc2, ref. #674

364. Logpcs19, refs. # 660-661

365. Logpcs14.qc2, ref. #497

366. Logpcs16.qc2, ref. #568

367. Logpcs10.qc2, ref. #411

368. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #468

369. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #7

370. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #278

371. Inte2.qc2, counter #087

372. Logpcs43.qc2, ref. #2019

373. Intst05.qc2, counter #428

374. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #9

375. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #76-77

376. Logpcs02.qc2, ref. #104

377. Logpcs37.qc2, ref. #1024

378. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. #449

379. Logpcs22.qc2, ref. #757

380. Logpcs02.qc2, ref. #73

381. Logpcs16, qc2, ref. #567

382. Llogpcs16.qc2, ref. #575

383. Inte2.qc2, counter #002

384. Inte2.qc2, counter #030

385. Inte2.qc2, counter #073

386. Inte1.qc2, counter #412

387. Logpcs17.qc2, ref. #612

388. Inst05.qc2, counter #316

389. Logpcs43.qc2, ref. #2007

390. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. #440-443

391. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #456-460

392. Logpcs16.qc2, ref. #560-563

393. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. #434-437

394. Logpcs29.qc2, ref. #862

395. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #17-27

396. Logpcs06.qc2, ref. #256-257

397. Prte01.qc2, ref. #1

398. Inte1.qc2, counter #023

399. Inte1.qc2, counter # 412

400. Loginst07.qc2, counter # 244

401. Inte1.qc2, counter # 412

402. Logpcs16.qc2, ref. # 588

403. Inte2.qc2, counter # 215

404. Logpcs21.qc2, ref. # 735

405. Inte1.qc2, counter # 252

406. Inte1.qc2,counter # 315

407. Logpcs15.qc2, ref. # 548

408. Logpcs42.qc2, ref. # 2000

409. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. # 452

410. Logpcs41.qc2, ref. # 1079

411. Logpcs09.qc2, ref. # 406

412. Inte2.qc2, counter # 215

413. Prte01.qc2, ref. # 9

414. Inst03.qc2, counter # 266

415. Inst05.qc2, counter # 353

416. Inst04.qc2, counter # 236

417. Inst03.qc2, counter # 299

418. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. # 15

419. Logpcs19.qc2, ref. # 655

420. Logpcs34.qc2, ref. # 957

421. Inte3.qc2, ref. # 2022

422. Logpcs22.qc2, ref. # 761

423. Artpcs06.qc2

424. Inte3.qc2, ref. # 2022

425. Inte3.qc2, ref. # 2024

426. Inte3.qc2, ref. # 2022

427. Inte3.qc2, ref. #2024

428. Logpcs17.qc2, ref. #622

429. Logpcs38.qc2, ref. #1028

430. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #479

431. Logpcs16.qc2, ref. #538

432. Inte1.qc2, counter #412

433. Logpcs17.qc2, ref. #599-603

434. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #11

435. Logpcs29.qc2, ref. #869

436. Logpcs29.qc2, ref. #875

437. Inte3.qc2, ref. #2024

438. Logpcs18.qc2, ref. #628

439. Logpcs13.qc3, ref. #487

440. Prte1.qc2, ref. #3

441. Logpcs40.qc2, ref. #1059

442. Inte04.qc2, ref. #7

443. Logpcs25.qc2, ref. #799

444. Logpcs25.qc2, ref. #801

445. Inst04.qc2, counter #193

446. Logpcs29.qc2, ref. #882

447. Inte1.qc2, counter #113

448. Inte1.qc2, counter #023

449. Inte3.qc2, ref. #2021

450. Inte1.qc2, counter #047

451. Inte1.qc2, counter #113

452. Logpcs35.qc2, ref. #964

453. Logpcs41.qc3, ref. #1072

454. Prte01.qc2, ref. #10

455. Inte2.qc2, counter #284

456. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #473

457. Inst07.qc3, counter #360

458. Logpcs21.qc2, ref. #734

459. Logpcs03.qc2, ref. #151

460. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #482

461. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #414

462. Logpcs36.qc2, ref. #1000

463. Logpcs16.qc2, ref. #584

464. Logpcs42.qc2, ref. #2000

465. Inst07.qc2, counter #244

466. Inst5.qc2, counter #040

467. Inst6.qc2, counter #353

468. Inte1.qc2, counter #100

469. Inte1.qc2, counter #023

470. Logpcs14.qc2, ref. #534

471. Logpcs21.qc2, ref. #741

472. Inst07.qc2, counter #244

473. Inst07.qc2, counter #244

474. Logpcs22.qc2, counter #768

475. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #480

476. Inte2.qc2, counter #215

477. Inte1.qc2, counter #083

478. Inte1.qc2, ref. #838

479. Inte1.qc2, counter #113

480. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #13

481. Inte1.qc2, counter #113

482. Logpcs02.qc2, ref. #78

483. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #302

484. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #304

485. Inte1.qc2, counter #212

486. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #10-11

487. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #17

488. Logpcs36.qc2, ref. #1010

489. Logpcs06.qc2, ref. #253

490. Logpcs36.qc2, ref. #1012

491. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #455

492. Logpcs08.qc2, ref. #346

493. Logpcs07.qc2. ref. #317

494. Logpcs02.qc2, ref. #65-111

495. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #49

496. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #45

497. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #318

498. Logpcs02.qc2, ref. #74

499. Logpcs01.qc2, ref. #74

500. Prte01.qc2, ref. #8

501. Logpcs-2.qc2, ref. #83

502. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #477

503. Logpcs06.qc2, ref. #250

504. Logpcs14.qc2, ref. #502

505. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. #429

506. Logpcs13.qc2, ref. #484

507. Logpcs13.qc2, ref. #486

508. Logpcs13.qc2, ref. #489

509. Prte01.qc2, ref. #11

510. Prst02.qc2

511. Inst4.qc2, counter #236

512. Logpcs21.qc2, ref. #733

513. Inst3.qc2, ref. #2023

514. Inst3.qc2, ref. #2024

515. Logpcs17.qc2, ref. #598

516. Logpcs21.qc2, ref. #737

517. Logpcs09.qc2, ref. #407

518. Logpcs09.qc2, ref. #409

519. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #294

520. Logpcs06.qc2, ref. #266

521. Logpcs06.qc2, ref. #254

522. Intel.qc2, counter #315

523. Intel.qc2, counter #252

524. Logpcs26.qc2, ref. #819

525. Logpcs26.qc2, ref. #820

526. Logpcs20.qc2, ref. #766-767

527. Logpcs20.qc2, ref. #768

528. Logpcs36,qc2, ref. #997

529. Inst04.qc2, counter #306

530. Inst03.qc2, counter #196

531. Logpcs21.qc2, ref. #741

532. Refmem01, ref. #15

533. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #466

534. Intst07.qc2, counter #081

535. Logpcs22.qc2, ref. #735

536. Artpcs06.qc2

537. Inad1.qc2, counter #003

538. Inad1.qc2, counter #045

539. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #466

540. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. #429

541. Logpcs12.qc2, ref. #467

542. Logpcs11.qc2, ref. #430

543. Inad1.qc2, counter #471

544. Inad1.qc2, counter #340

545. Logpcs21.qc2, ref. #739

546. Logpcs17.qc2, ref. #597

547. Logpcs17.qc2, ref. #598

548. Logpcs17.qc2, ref. #626

549. Logpcs21.qc2, ref. #737

550. Refmem.02, ref. #4d

551. Inte2.qc2, counter #284

552. Logpcs25.qc2, ref. #796

553. Logpcs25.qc2, ref. #796

554. Prte01.qc2, ref. #2

555. Intst03.qc2, counter #236

556. Inst03.qc2, counter #217

557. Intst04.qc2, counter #139

558. Logpcs23.qc2, ref. #770

559. Logpcs29.qc2, counter #858

560. Inst05.qc2, counter #316

561. Logpcs04.qc2, ref. #170

562. Logpcs26.qc2, ref. #814

563. Inst05.qc2, counter #179

564. Logpcs05.qc2, ref. #217

565. Logpcs04.qc2, ref. #162

566. Inst04.qc2, counter #351

567. Inst02.qc2, counter #482

568. Logpcs26.qc2, ref. #812

569. Logpcs03.qc2, ref. #115

570. Logpcs07.qc2, ref. #310

571. Intst05.qc2, counter #354

572. Logpcs23.qc2, ref. #780

573. Logpcs24.qc2, ref. #789

574. Logpcs26.qc2, ref. #820

575. Intst03.qc2, counter #154

576. Intst07.qc2, counter #135

577. Inad1.qc2, counter #186

578. Intst04.qc2, counter #033

579. Intst07.qc2, counter #005

580. Intst07.qc2, counter #005

581. Inst04.qc2, counter #006

582. Prte01.qc2, ref. #6

583. Inte3.qc2, ref. #2025

584. Inte1.qc2, counter #252

585. Inte2,qc2, counter #284

586. Prte01.qc2, ref. #9

587. Inte1.qc2, counter #023

588. Logpcs10.qc2, ref. #411

589. Inte2.qc2, counter #138

590. Inte2.qc2, counter #118

591. Logpcs35.qc2, ref. #981a-981c

592. Prte01.qc2, ref. #5

593. Inte2.qc2, counter #087

594. Prte01.qc2, ref. #8

595. Refmem03, ref. #2

596. Intst07.qc2, counter #360

597. Prte01.qc2, ref. #11

598. Prte01.qc2, ref. #7

599. Intst07.qc2, counter #360

600. Intst07.qc2, counter #244

601. Inte03.qc2, ref. #2021

602. Inte03.qc2, ref. #2025

603. Logpcs29.qc2, ref. #870

604. Inte03.qc2, ref. #2021

605. Intst06.qc2, counter #481

606. Inte03.qc2, ref. #2021

607. Inte03.qc2, ref. #2023

608. Intst06.qc2, counter #202

609. Intst07.qc2, counter #360

610. Intst07.qc2, counter #307

611. Inte01.qc2, counter #023

612. Inte2.qc2, counter #250

613. Inte3.qc2, ref. #2022

614. Logpcs05.qc2, ref. #208

615. Logpcs05.qc2, ref. #209

616. Inte1.qc2, counter #003

617. Inte1.qc2, counter #113

618. Inte01.qc2, counter #113

619. Inte1.qc2, counter #589

620. Inte1.qc2, counter #849