A Description of Student Response
Groups in the Writing Process of
Remedial Middle School Students

by

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Approval Sheet

Title of Dissertation: A Description of Student Response
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Abstract

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The purpose of this study was to describe what tran-
spires when remedial middle school student writers engage
in student response groups. The goals of the study were
to describe the patterns of revision and the patterns of
group interaction.

A field study approach was used to gather data during
a six week summer school session by examining students'
writings, observing student response group sessions, and
interviewing students. The data gathered from various
sources, allowing for triangulation, were analyzed to
determine patterns of revision and patterns of group
interaction.

Data were examined from two student response groups
through nine writing episodes. Writing episodes were
analyzed according to three time frames: 1) Respond-
ing to the First Draft of the Writing; 2) Writing the

Second Draft; and 3) Editing the Second Draft. Student interviews were analyzed to gain further insight into the process.

Findings are presented in the areas of revision and group interaction. Revision patterns that emerged are: a) students consider the flow of language as they compose; b) students view revision as including new information; c) writing is seen as a means of communication; d) students move from a focus on content to a consideration of mechanics; and e) students view their writing as malleable. Group interaction data revealed the following patterns: a) students' behavior is self-governing; b) group members possess fairly equal status; c) trusting relationships develop; and d) established guidelines for responding are followed.

This study suggests that student response groups can be beneficial in guiding students through the writing process. The process appears especially appropriate for adolescent students, as it allows teachers to capitalize on the natural development of peer group relationships. Teachers should model the response group process and carefully monitor the groups. Student response groups may be used to promote student involvement with the writing process and to make revision meaningful.

Several questions worthy of further investigation are raised through this study. Other researchers might study students of different ages, investigate the implementation of the process in content subjects, complete a qualitative analysis of writings, or examine the decision making process employed by students to gain a better understanding of the benefits of the response group process.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the State of Maryland students are being
required to pass the Maryland Functional Writing Test
prior to graduation. This emphasis by the Maryland
State Department of Education on writing has caused a
renewed interest in the development of student writing.
Recent research has also focused attention on the writing
process and on the implications for teaching writing in
the classroom (Sowers, 1979; Bissex, 1980; Calkins, 1979:
and Emig, 1971).

Writing has been described as a process involving
prewriting, drafting, and revising (Murray, 1980; Vukelich
and Golden, 1981). Although revision is seen as a key
part of the writing process, Murray (1980) claims that
students are not given opportunities for serious revision
in traditional language arts classrooms. Hennings and
Grant (1981) support Murray's belief that revision is an
integral part of the composing process. Experts elaborate
on the importance of revision by proposing that students
are likely to produce more polished pieces of writing when
classroom activities are provided which focus on the
revision process. These classroom activities should allow

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students to be directly involved in learning revision skills as they write (Hennings and Grant, 1981). Murray (1978) also recommends the direct involvement of children in the process of revision. One means of promoting student involvement and therefore improving the quality of writing is the utilization of student response groups. (Healy, 1980; Hennings and Grant, 1981).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to describe what occurs when remedial middle school students participate in student response groups. A description of the response process and conclusions about its role as a part of the writing process are provided. As well as focusing on the structure of group interaction, the goal of the study is to describe the way in which student response groups encourage students to revise their writing.

Significance of the Study

Findings from this study should provide a better understanding of how response groups can be used in the classroom setting to guide students through the process of revision. Findings might also give direction to the development of stronger inservice programs for teachers of writing. Finally, findings may provide input for developing writing curricula.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this study:

1.   What revision patterns emerge as remedial middle school students engage in student response groups?

2.   What characterizes the group interaction which takes place within the student response group setting?

In collecting data, conventional ethnographic procedures were followed. Two response groups were observed throughout a six week summer school session. Tape recordings were made of all response group sessions, and field notes, transcriptions of tapes, student response forms, and student writings were thoroughly analyzed.

Key Terms

Student response group – A group consisting of four students who respond to each other's writing by giving reactions, asking questions, and making suggestions for improvement. Involvement begins with the oral reading of the first draft and continues through the completion of the second draft.

Responses – Suggestions made by the response group members to the writers.

Revision – Murray (1978) defines revision as occurring at two levels. Internal revision involves the writer in seeing that everything is done to discover and develop what he/she is saying. External revision requires the writer to be concerned that everything is being done to allow for communication with others. In this study,

Murray's definitions are adapted to note content revisions and editorial revisions. Content revisions include all internal revisions and those external revisions which affect meaning. Editorial revisions include revisions which involve the conventions of the English language such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization and word usage.

Theoretical Basis

The basis for this study is rooted in the development of written speech and in the value of learning in a community. Written speech requires the transformation of idiomatic, abbreviated inner speech to a speech which explains everything in extreme detail and structures meaning (Vygotsky, 1962). This structuring of meaning can be enhanced by the response of significant others in a community setting wherein the child is free to experiment with written language and receives a maximum amount of feedback (Moffett, 1968).

Limitations

This study is limited to a particular student population and to unassigned writing topics. While this study is limited in population to allow for an indepth analysis of particular groups, subsequent investigations of other groups might yield different findings. Students were not assigned writing topics in the belief that better writing results when students independently choose topics. Again,

investigations based on assigned topics might offer
different findings.

This study focuses on the revision component of
the writing process as it occurs within the parameters of
the student response group. The researcher does not
deny that revision is a recursive process and fully
realizes that revision will occur during the writing
of the first drafts. In this study, revision is analyzed
from the time the first draft is read orally to the
response group through the completion of the second draft.

Basic Assumptions

1. Writing is a process and revision is an integral
part of that process.

2. A sense of audience is critical to the writing
process.

3. Teachers need instructional strategies which
will enable them to help students develop a process of
revision.

4. Cooperative learning and student involvement
are effective general learning strategies.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter I has introduced the reader to the purpose
and nature of the study. Also, research questions were
clarified.

Chapter II contains a review of literature regarding

the writing process, student involvement, and methods for studying group interaction.

Chapter III outlines the methodology used in describing what occurs as students engage in response groups. This chapter contains a detailed description of how data were gathered to gain an understanding about the response group process.

Chapter IV reports the findings of the study. Each writing response episode is described in detail. A summary discussion of the findings is included after each writing episode.

Chapter V summarizes the findings and conclusions reached through the study. The patterns of revision and patterns of group interaction which emerged within the student response group setting are discussed. Also included are suggestions for practice and questions for further study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of theory and research pertinent to the study of student response groups. There are three broad areas reviewed: (1) composing process theory and research, (2) cooperative learning, and (3) qualitative research methodology. The overview of theory and research leads to the understanding that writing is a recursive process which demands student involvement and that qualitative research methods are appropriate for studying student involvement with the complex process of writing.

Composing Process Theory and Research

The Writing Process

In a review of the writing process Vukelich and Golden (1981) discussed three accepted stages - prewriting, composing, and rewriting. Prewriting includes the intentions of the writer, the planning, and the organization of the piece. The composing phase often consists of planning, reorienting, and revising. The rewriting phase consists of altering, confirming, and developing the piece of writing further.

Commenting on the prewriting phase, Emig (1971) noted

the lack of time spent on prewriting activities in her study of twelfth-graders and the composing process. Haynes (1978), after citing studies conducted by Dow in 1973, Lagana in 1972, Radcliffe in 1972, Rippey in 1971, and Odell in 1970, concluded that beneficial results could be obtained by using prewriting experiences. These experiences could include discussion, role-playing, interviewing, debating, problem solving strategies, and any other activities which would allow students to obtain guidance from peers or from teachers.

Drafting, according to Murray (1980), is a better term than composing for the second stage of the writing process. In discussing the purpose of drafting, Murray stated that a writer drafts a piece of writing to find out what is going to be said. From this perspective, drafting a piece of writing becomes an exercise of discovery for the writer. The writer is involved in discovering all of the knowledge and details which are available to be shared.

During revision or rewriting, the writer interacts with the work to improve clarity and the flow of the work (Murray, 1980). A writer will begin by taking a broad view of the text, and then move on to editing, developing further, and reordering. During this phase the writer withdraws from the piece of writing and begins to look more

critically at the text.

For Murray (1980), writing is a process of discovering meaning. It is through rehearsing (prewriting), drafting (composing), and revising (rewriting) that meaning is discovered. Murray cited work by Sondra Perl conducted in 1979 to further explain this process. According to Perl, the writing process does not occur in a straight, linear fashion. Instead, writers are constantly working back and forth among the components of the process to develop a clear piece of writing. At times it may be necessary during composing to go back to some prewriting strategies to discover the best words or the most fitting means of expressing ideas. In this manner, writers view the text as a growing piece of art which may be changed and molded throughout the process.

Murray went on to explain that as the writer writes, he/she also reads with a critical eye. Writers need to read loosely at first, and then more critically as the writing is developed and polished. The forces of collecting, connecting, writing, and reading work for and against each other in the development of the piece of writing. These forces interact during each of the three stages of the writing process, and it is through this interaction that a piece or writing is produced (Murray, 1980).

In his review of literature related to the writing

process, Bob Lange (1980) summarized a model of discourse production developed by Kucer, which was presented at the 1979 National Conference on Language Arts in the Elementary School. Kucer's model focused on three decision points which occur during the writing process. Initially, predicting/perceiving/confirming decisions are made to formulate ideas about the topic, purpose, content, and depth of content of the writing. The second point in Kucer's model is ideating/integrating. At this point the content is expanded, constricted, and focused. The third decision point involves strategies of presenting/confirming in which sequences of sentences are generated from the text base which was created during ideating/integrating. Although Kucer's model does not detail every decision point made by a writer, it does provide certain parameters for viewing the writing process and the decisions made.

In an effort to gain a more thorough understanding of the composing process, Sowers(1979) undertook a study of a first grade student. She found that the student used the same process of writing - prewriting (talking, drawing), writing, and revising - as adults. Sowers also noted that the young writer needed to distance herself from the writing at times. In addition, Sowers observed that the young writer discovered meaning by thinking on paper. Sara, the first grade student observed, needed to write and draw

to discover the story. She did not begin with a plan of where her story was going or how it would end.

Bissex (1980) also studied one child's writing in an attempt to gain insight into the writing process. The child's writing development was observed for a period of five years, from the age of five through nine. Bissex observed three patterns of development which she named differentiation, decentration, and increasing realism. When Paul was first observed at the age of five, all words were run together; he later developed the ability to separate between words (differentiation). Paul also grew outward from a very egocentric view of the world as evidenced in his developing ability to present other points-of-view and in his development of more realistic writing.

In her attempt to gain an understanding of the writing process, Calkins (1979) studied a ten year old student, Rebecca. Calkins found that Rebecca grew to be more detailed and explicit in her writing. At first Rebecca's stories would unfold as she wrote and her writing would read as a string of thoughts. As she grew developmentally, Rebecca was able to focus more clearly and integrate her thoughts.

Calkins also noted the development of the ability to include in order to exclude. At the age of five, Rebecca was learning to include in her writing. Only after further development was she able to exclude. The develop-

ment of the ability to exclude and include may occur in different ways and at different rates among children, but Calkins claims that children learn first to include, and later to exclude. The ability to include and exclude, as well as the ability to focus clearly, are seen as prerequisites to being able to revise. Most children, according to Calkins, do not possess these abilities until third grade.

Further study of the writing developmental sequence was undertaken by Chittenden (1980). This sequence involves a development from fluency, to coherence, and finally to correctness. Fluency is defined as being able to put thoughts on paper without struggling. Once fluency is developed, a child can move on to coherent writing which is writing that makes sense to the audience. After the student has achieved coherence, he/she then is ready to work towards correctness, which Chittenden defined as mechanics of spelling, punctuation, and usage.

It is through studies such as those cited above that educators can develop a more thorough understanding of the writing process and the decisions student writers make. Since one of the focal points of this study is revision, the following section includes a summary of pertinent studies of revision.

Revision

Revision is a key part of the writing process; yet

most students are not given opportunities for serious revision of their writing (Murray, 1978). Murray described two forms of revision with which students need to become involved; internal and external. Internal revision involves the writer in seeing that everything is done to discover and develop what he/she is saying. During internal revision, the only audience is the writer whereas in external revision the writer becomes concerned with a greater audience. In this process the writer becomes concerned that everything is done to allow for communication with others. However, before teachers can help students become meaningfully involved in revision a better understanding of the process is needed.

In an attempt to gain insight into the process and the components of revision, Bridwell (1980) analyzed 6,129 revisions in one-hundred sets of students' drafts of an informative/argumentative essay. Bridwell's analysis revealed that students made four times as many revisions in-process as between drafts. Most frequently these revisions occurred at surface and word levels. Students were not making significant changes at phrase, clause, sentence or multi-sentence levels.

Similar findings were revealed in a study conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (Hennings and Grant, 1981). In this study, researchers examined writing samples of 2,500 nine-year-olds, 2,000

thirteen-year-olds, and 2,000 seventeen-year-olds and classified the types of revisions made. The findings showed that the students generally revised by substituting more appropriate words, by adding or deleting information, and by reviewing mechanics. Seldom did students attempt to improve the overall organization of their writing or attempt to clarify transitional ideas.

Faigley and Witte (1981) analyzed writings of expert adult writers, advanced students, and inexperienced writers in an effort to study revision. The advanced student writers turned out to be the most frequent revisers - making 282 changes per 1,000 words. Expert writers averaged 144 changes per 1,000 words. However, of greater interest than numbers of changes are the types of changes made. The inexperienced writers made an over-whelming percentage of surface changes; only 12 percent of their changes dealt with meaning. About 24 percent of the advanced students' changes were meaning changes and 34 percent of the expert writers' changes were meaning changes. Most revisions of all kinds were made between the first and second drafts of the writing.

The findings of Faigley and Witte lend support to Murray's assertion that revision is a key part of the writing process. Unfortunately, as shown by the recent studies cited, students do not seem to go beyond the sur-face of their writing to make extensive changes.

Student Involvement in the Revision Process

 After reviewing research in the area of revision, Hennings and Grant (1981) made the following recommendation for teachers, "...instruction in revision should involve children directly in the process so that children learn how to revise as they write" (p. 216). Student response groups have been recommended by teachers of writing as a means of promoting student involvement in the revision process, and thereby improving the quality of writing.

 Healy (1980) used student response groups successfully in her teaching situation. The members of the student response group were made responsible for giving reactions, asking questions, and making suggestions to facilitate revision of each group member's writing. Healy noted that when writings were revised in response groups that the students' writings contained more specificity of detail, more supporting examples, more transitional and introductory phrases, and that the final pieces of writing were more fluent and complete.

 Crowhurst (1979) also believed that students can benefit from using peer response to writing. Crowhurst arranged students of mixed abilities in groups of four or five and instructed them to say something positive about each piece of writing which was shared. Students were also to offer

suggestions for improvement to the writer. After studying fifth grade student responses, Crowhurst found that the student responders made encouraging comments, comments on content, and suggestions for improvement. Students at third grade centered their comments around spelling, punctuation, and poor handwriting.

The benefits of this strategy go beyond the realm of revision, according to Crowhurst. Student motivation seemed to increase when this strategy was used. The sense of a real audience of peers and their prompt and varied feedback benefited the writing. In addition to changes in writing skills, Crowhurst noted an emphasis on certain reading skills. Students were learning through reading each other's writings and they were receiving practice in reading critically with a clear and important purpose. These benefits led Crowhurst to conclude that writing response groups should be a part of the writing curriculum.

Graves' (1981) work also supported student involvement. In studying sixteen primary children involved in the writing process, he focused on revision. Graves' preliminary findings lend support to the claims of Crowhurst and Healy in that he found that peer audience had an effect on children's revisions and their use of new approaches to the writing process.

The use of peer audience through student response
groups should help develop a sense of community within
the classroom. Graves (1978) found that teachers who
were able to develop a type of community setting were more
successful in getting students to express themselves. The
community setting seems to relieve some of the worries and
tensions which are common in a writing class. Moffett's
(1973) work provided additional support for this type of
writer's workshop approach to the teaching of writing.
The foundation for the use of classroom groups and the
development of a community setting can be found in cooper-
ation learning research.

Cooperative Learning

The value of learning in community has been explored
in Slavin's research on cooperative learning. Slavin (1980)
defines cooperative learning as a classroom technique in
which "...students work on learning activities in small
groups and receive rewards or recognition based on their
group's performance" (p. 315). Several conclusions from
Slavin's research may provide the basis for the establish-
ment of student response groups. Some of Slavin's research
has focused on less structured cooperative groups. These
groups are defined as having high student autonomy and a
high rate of participation in decision-making. Slavin
noted that groups of this nature may be more effective when

students are involved in high level cognitive learning outcomes. That is -- outcomes which involve the identification of concepts, analysis of problems, judgment, and evaluation.

Bronfenbrenner (1970) agreed that the classroom group holds a great deal of promise for effecting change. American social science has established that the group has power in motivating goal-directed activity, but educators have not exploited this knowledge. After studying the American and Russian systems of child rearing and education, Bronfenbrenner (1970) concluded, "But, surely, the most needed innovation in the American classroom is the involvement of pupils in responsible tasks on behalf of others within the classroom, the school, the neighborhood, and the community" (p. 156).

Johnson and Johnson (1975) also recommended the use of cooperative learning in the classroom. They stated that education can be humanized by helping students develop interpersonal skills needed to cooperate with one another. Through cooperative interaction, inter-personal processes, which are important for learning, can be developed. In addition, cooperative goal structures promote a learning climate and cognitive and affective outcomes which make teaching more effective. Cooperative learning is recommended for instructional activities which involve problem solving, divergent thinking, clarification of problems,

decision making, or inquiring. During these experiences, students gain positive interaction with their peers through opportunities to share ideas and materials, to take risks, and to capitalize upon diversity among group members.

The research on cooperative learning provides a foundation for the establishment of student writing response groups, since writing involves the higher level cognitive outcomes cited by Slavin (1980) and the types of instructional activites named by Johnson and Johnson (1975). In addition to providing educators an opportunity to capitalize on positive group interaction and on the involvement of students, response groups provide an audience which is able to give immediate feedback to the author. This immediate audience response reinforces the purpose of writing as a means of communication (Moffett, 1968).

Qualitative Research

Graves (1981) recommended the use of case, experimental, and ethnographic procedures in the study of writing. In order to study the writing process, the researcher must become involved in the classroom where the writing occurs. Only by looking longer and more closely at children while they are writing will the researcher develop an understanding of the writing process.

Kantor, Kirby, and Goetz (1981) acknowledged the importance of ethnographic studies in the area of English education. As educators have become increasingly dissatisfied with the conventional experimental designs, they have looked for alternatives. This dissatisfaction, along with the failure of research findings to affect classroom practices, has created an interest in ethnographic methodology. Ethnographic studies involve descriptive, qualitative, naturalistic, and holistic approaches.

Kantor et al. (1981) stated that the traits of ethnographic inquiry are uniquely suited to investigating language learning and teaching. These traits include a concern with hypothesis generation and the process of discovery, an acknowledgment of the importance of context, a thick description of phenomena, the role of the researcher as participant observer, and an emphasis on meaning making. These five traits are not only the elements of ethnographic inquiry; they are also elements of English teaching.

Kantor et al. (1981) summarized by expressing faith in ethnographic research as a methodology of great promise. They place faith in ethnographic methodology because this methodology follows the strategies of English teaching and, more than any other method, is appropriate to the multi-dimensional aspects of language instruction. Ethnographic research allows researchers to develop theory

based on what is actually happening in the classroom, and it is accessible and credible with teachers.

Bogdan and Taylor (1975) described the qualitative method of participant observation as being characterized by a period of "...intense social interaction between the researcher and the subjects, in the mileu of the latter. During the period data are unobstrusively and systematically collected" (p. 5). The primary source of data collection in participant observation research is field notes. Bogdan and Taylor (1975) stressed the importance of accuracy, completeness, and the inclusion of much detail. Field notes should represent as accurately as possible everything that occurs during the observation session.

The field notes provide the most essential data in participant observation research, but other research methods can help to further one's understanding of the setting. Bogdan and Taylor (1975) recommended the use of open-ended interviews and written records as a source of information. By using field notes, interviews and document analysis, the researcher is able to study concepts which elude the quantitative researcher.

Participant observation research seems well suited to the study of the writing process. It allows the researcher to study children in the classroom environment

and allows for a thick description of a complex process. Research of this type should provide important background data in the formulation of theory and the development of better teaching strategies.

Wilson (1977) supported the use of participant - observation as a technique for obtaining an understanding of how humans interact with their natural setting. Since human behavior is influenced by setting and since human behavior has more meaning than observable facts, latent meanings can be found through participant - observation research.

Schatzman and Strauss (1973) provided a cogent summary of what the field researcher does after an area of interest has been identified. First, a site that contains people and activity bearing on that interest must be located. Then the researcher enters the site, establishes his/her role, and watches the people and their activity. The field researcher listens in order to make what occurs within the setting meaningful, records experiences, and converts the experiences into data. The data is analyzed in an effort to validate new understandings.

Gaining entry to the site and establishing an appropriate role are crucial first steps to the field researcher. Agar (1980) recommended procuring an introduction from a person or institution that is well thought of

by the group to be studied. The researcher must be aware of how his/her presence influences the group and must cultivate a role which will allow for data collection. Once the researcher has gained entry and established his/her role, data collection begins. Data is collected from the interaction of participants, interaction with the researcher, observation of nonverbal behavior, and analysis of records, artifacts and documents (Wilson, 1977).

Agar (1980) recommended using observation and interview when doing an ethnographic study. He recommends making talk the central source of data and pulling in other data to interact with it in a more dependent role. Data is collected through the compilation of field notes. "Field notes are ...the record of an ethnographer's observations, conversations, interpretations, and suggestions for future information to be gathered" (Agar, 1980, pg. 112). Agar warns that taking field notes which are too comprehensive can create a problem by interfering with observation time. But, they can be manageable when they are more focused in topic.

Once the data are gathered, they must be analyzed. Wilson (1977) advised using both inductive and deductive reasoning to develop theory. A comparative method is used where real data is tested against theory. The researcher searches for negative evidence, confronts it, and then probes to account for its existence. In this way, theory

can be developed.

An inductive research strategy to analyze data is described in Pelto and Pelto. They described this process as one beginning with, "...the empirical observations, developing and testing concrete hypotheses about them, and then linking those supportable hypotheses with other similar constructions or propositions, in higher-order, more abstracted systems" (Pelto and Pelto, 1970, p. 253).

The researcher must be careful when analyzing data. It is important to make sure that the data is interpreted in terms of the situation and that the sampling is representative. Through careful analysis, the researcher can arrive at what Wilson termed, "disciplined subjectivity" (Wilson, 1977, p. 258).

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This chapter outlines the specific procedures followed in describing what transpires when remedial middle school student writers participate in student response groups. Included are: selecting a focus, gaining entry, training the response group, response group sessions, data collection, and organization of the data.

Selecting a Focus

My interest in student response groups began when I participated in a summer institute sponsored by the Maryland Writing Project. During the institute I was involved as a working member of a response group. Discussions were held about the appropriateness of response groups in classroom situations.

When I returned to my position as a middle school language arts teacher, I incorporated response groups into my writing program. Initially, I struggled with the proper use of the group, but felt that the strategy was successful in helping students take a second look at their writing. I shared my successes and concerns with colleagues some of whom decided also to use response groups.

Although I felt the response groups were successful, I began wondering about the existence of research which would support my views. As I continued reading and studying recent research in the field of writing, I found little research which focused on describing what occurred during response group sessions. I was unable to locate any studies dealing specifically with middle school students.

At the time, I was teaching middle school students who were at the lower end of the academic scale. I was having moderate success using response groups with those particular students. In order to gain more insight into what happened as these students worked together, I decided to do an ethnographic study of student response groups of remedial middle school students.

Gaining Entry

Gaining entry to the school posed no real problems. Since I had previously taught at the school and still worked within the school system, it was easy to make contact with persons involved.

After receiving permission from the principal, I approached the two teachers who were responsible for the summer school program. I explained to them what I hoped to accomplish, and they both expressed a willingness to cooperate. Scheduling was arranged to allow me to work

with each group of four students for an hour per day throughout the six week summer school session.

The summer school teachers each asked for four volunteers from their classes to participate in the sessions. Students were told that they would be writing in student response groups and would be working with me. They were also told the nature of my endeavor. After volunteers were found, I began meeting with the students. The first task was to train students to work in response groups.

Training the Response Group

I trained the student writers to respond to another author's writing by modeling and leading the students through the process of responding to the first draft of two writings. The following procedure was implemented:

First Session

1. I read the first draft of a seventh grade student's writing to the response group.

2. I guided students through a discussion of the writing using the following questions which constituted the Student Response Form:

   A. What do you like best about the piece of writing?

   B. What questions do you have after listening to the reading of the writing?

   C. What suggestions do you have for the author?

3. The students and I discussed the relevance and useful-
ness of suggestions.

Second Session

1. I read the first draft of a seventh grade student's
writing to the response group.

2. The students and I completed Student Response Forms.
The completed response forms served as a basis for a
discussion of the writing.

3. The students and I discussed the relevance and useful-
ness of suggestions.

Students were advised that members of the response groups
were making suggestions for revisions. The writer had the
right to accept or reject suggestions without penalty.

Response Group Sessions

Following the training period, we were ready to begin
response group sessions. The following section outlines
the procedure which was followed as students worked through
each writing.

1. Students brought a first draft of a writing to
the group. This writing was based on a journal entry
which students were asked to keep during summer school, or
it was any other writing of the author's choice. Students
were required to skip lines on their papers - allowing room
for revisions to be added.

2.   Students read their first drafts to the group. Group members responded on a provided Student Response Form which included the following questions:

1.   What do you like best about the piece of writing?

2.   What questions do you have after listening to the reading of the piece of writing?

3.   What suggestions do you have for the author? After student responders completed their response forms, a discussion of the writing followed. Students shared the remarks orally while the author made notes and asked questions. The Student Response Forms were given to the authors for future reference.

3.   After all authors had a chance to gather group responses, second drafts were written. Open discussion was allowed during this time.

4.   Following the completion of the second drafts, students were given opportunities to edit each other's work. Each student had two others edit the writing for the proper usage and conventions of English. A form was provided with the following questions adapted from the Maryland Functional Writing Test, Writing Revision Checklist (Maryland State Department of Education, 1982):

1.   Did the author use complete sentences?

2.   Did the author:

capitalize correctly?

spell correctly?

punctuate correctly?

3.   Did the author use words correctly?

This checklist was provided as a guide only. Students helped each other through the editing process by discussing the writings. Student authors made changes on their second drafts as the papers were discussed.

Data Collection

Ethnographic research allows opportunities for personal insights, but those insights must be verified by some means. Denzin (1978) advocated triangulation, the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomena, as basic to participant observation research. The researcher needs to gather data through interviews, document analysis, direct observation, and observer participation. Through this triangulation of data, judgments are verified.

I have combined interviews, document analysis, direct observation, and observer participation in this study of student response groups. While attempting to describe and interpret what was occurring as the students worked together, I was a member in the setting. As I formed impressions I reviewed data from different sources to provide for verification. The following section outlines the specific procedures I followed in obtaining data.

1.   Copies were made of the first draft of the writings brought to the response groups.

2.   The entire response group session was tape recorded and direct observations were made by the researcher.

3.   Copies of the Student Response Forms, the first drafts of writings with the author's revisions, and the second drafts (before and after editing) were also made.

4.   Student writers were interviewed at the end of the response group sessions to discuss the suggestions of the response group. The interview questions focused on the Student Response Forms.

Organization and Analysis of the Data

After the data were collected, the information had to be verified and organized. I began by comparing and integrating tape recordings, observation notes, interviews, and student documents. This process allowed me to verify data by noting its presence in multiple sources. Data were then organized in a chronological manner, with an emphasis on the students involved with the study. This chronological description, which is contained in Chapter IV, allowed me to focus on how the response group members and the revision patterns changed during the six weeks of the study.

I then analyzed the chronological data and derived several patterns of group interaction and revision.

These patterns, once identified, were superimposed on the entire description of the response group sessions. I reviewed each writing episode, with a pattern in focus, and counted how often particular events occurred which would provide support for the development of the pattern. At the same time, I looked for negative evidence regarding the pattern. This analysis is presented in chart form at the conclusion of Chapter IV and in the discussion of patterns in Chapter V.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF DATA

Chapter Four presents an episodal description of two student response groups as members work through nine writings during a six week summer school session.

The description of each writing episode is divided into three time frames. First, the response group is described as students interact after the reading of the first drafts of each writing. Next, interaction which takes place as students work through the writing of their second drafts is described. Third, student responses are described as students are involved in editing each other's work. Finally, the individual student interviews which followed each writing episode are summarized.

Through the description and interpretation of what occurred as students engaged in each writing episode, the two basic questions of this study are addressed. The revision patterns of the remedial middle school students are discussed and the patterns of group interaction are identified.

Student conversation, which is vital to the understanding of the student response group process, is included

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throughout the description. Quotations from students and
the pertinent data are followed by reference notes which
refer to transcription books. Reference notes include
Roman numerals and letters, referring to transcription
books, and numerals which identify page numbers within
those particular books. The privacy of students involved
in the study has been protected by the use of fictitious
names.

All students who participated in this study had failed
to meet promotion requirements which had been established
for a middle school which housed sixth, seventh, and eighth
grade students. The students had paid a tuition fee to
attend summer school classes in language arts, reading, and
math. They were required to attend morning classes for a
period of six weeks and had to earn passing grades in all
classes before being promoted.

The students and I met for an hour daily during the
summer school session in a classroom situated near the
students' regular summer school classroom. The classroom
was used as a language arts classroom during the regular
school year. Rather than individual student desks, the
room was furnished with tables which could comfortably
accommodate six students. The students sat around one of
the tables and discussed the writings. After the initial
training session, I sat with the student response groups

and observed without participating with the students. I met with each group of students, separately, for an hour daily.

Student Response Group I
Description of Members of Group I

Before discussing the writing episodes of Group I students, it is important to become familiar with the group members. This group consisted of two sixth grade and two seventh grade students. All students had enrolled in summer school because of failure to meet requirements for promotion to the next grade.

Betty was the only female member of the group. She appeared for sessions dressed in tight jeans and revealing shirts with her sandy-colored hair falling over her heavily made-up face. She generally entered the room with Luke or George with whom she would share jokes and stories about her latest exploits. Although she was close to the boys in age, Betty's appearance and actions made her appear much older.

Betty had failed sixth grade because of her poor performance in language arts, reading, and science classes. She had a history of school failure, as she had previously been retained in kindergarten and fourth grade. In addition to these academic problems Betty, who had been living with her grandparents for two years, had adjustment problems.

These problems would come to a crisis point over the summer.

George, who from the first meeting showed an eagerness to work with the group, had failed four classes during the 1983-84 school year. He had failed to meet sixth grade minimum requirements in language arts, reading, social studies, and math classes. George had no prior history of school failure and there was no record of discipline problems. George was very self-assured and accepted responsibility for his actions. He explained that he had failed sixth grade simply because he had not done the work and had realized the consequences too late.

John, who the group called Toad outside of class, had failed seventh grade language arts, reading, and math classes. John, who in some ways actually resembled a toad, had curly dark, greasy hair, large eyes, and was short and stocky. He had always lived with his grandparents and had many mannerisms of a little, old man. John always appeared eager to please the group and me.

The fourth group member was Luke. Luke lived on a farm with his father and was at times tardy to class because of farm chores which had to be performed. His entrance into the room was often accompanied by the smell of manure. John mentioned this to Luke at one of the early sessions, but the odor was generally ignored.

Luke had failed seventh grade because of his poor performance in language arts, social studies, and math. He had, at his mother's request, previously been retained in third grade. Luke's level of writing competency was noticeably lower than that of the other students, but this did not appear to inhibit his group interaction.

I was anxious to find how students with backgrounds which included so many academic and personal problems would interact within a group. With their history of school failure, it was also difficult to predict how they would react to the writing tasks. As the following description will illustrate, it wasn't necessary for me to be so concerned because the students eagerly attacked their writing tasks and worked well as a group.

First Writing Episode - Group I

1. Responding to the First Draft of the Writing

   George's Writing

   George opened the response group session by enthusiastically volunteering to read his story, "My Friend Oscar". After reading the story a second time, at John's request, George stated, "I know something I did wrong already" (IA,3). Yet, George was not observed to make any changes on his first draft.

John began responding to the writing by praising George for the section where the fish talked. Luke added, "It rhymed a little - sounded funny" (IA,4). Betty also liked the rhymes George used. According the Betty "...(he) put it right in the story" (IA,4).

The students then began questioning George about the story. Betty asked George why he had chosen Lake Erie as the setting. Luke joined the conversation and explained to George that he couldn't fish in Lake Erie and then have the fish swim into the depths of the ocean. George, surprised at having missed this fact, exclaimed in acceptance of Luke's comment, "Oh yeah!" (IA,5).

Luke went on to explain that George's sentences did not flow well and that he had used a fragment. According to Luke, "He should not go one sentence to another...into a fragment" (IA,6). George made no reply to Luke. But, Betty stated, "I think it's pretty cool how he put it" (IA,6).

Other comments were made in regard to the addition of specific details. Betty wanted to know what kind of fish George had referred to in the story. In addition, John questioned George about

the three wishes he mentioned. George indicated that he would respond to both questions in his second draft.

Luke's Writing

The group moved directly on to Luke's writing as he leaned forward in his chair and eagerly volunteered, "Can I do mine now?" (IA,7). Luke read his story "The Three Wheeler I Own" through the first time without making any changes. At John's request, he then read it a second time.

In the middle of the second reading, Luke exclaimed, "Oh, wait a minute. Now I see where I messed up" (IA,7). He stopped reading, made some changes, then finished reading the story. Luke's changes involved the deletion of an introductory phrase and the addition of information to explain a character's actions.

George began the response by telling Luke that his writing was "...very understandable and clear. You could understand what happened" (IA,8). Betty and John hesitated before praising the writing. Finally, Betty said she liked, "When he was surprised about his dad getting him a three-wheeler" (IA,8). John added, "When he said it was a Honda" (IA,8). None of these praise comments evoked a response from Luke.

Interaction increased as students moved from praising the writing and on to asking questions and giving suggestions. George suggested that Luke combine several sentences which described a three-wheeler. He read three sentences from Luke's story then stated, "You could have put, 'It was a red Honda three-wheeler and it had a blue stripe'" (IA,9).

Most of the other suggestions and questions focused on a need for greater detail. Luke was asked what the size of the bike was, if he had asked for the bike, how many tanks of gas he used, where he rode the bike, and what time his dad came home. As each one of these questions or suggestions was given, Luke would promptly reply. In his reply, Luke either answered the question or said he'd include the information in his second draft (IA,8-11).

John's Writing

John volunteered to read his paragraph, "Friendship" next. He began making some changes immediately after he finished reading. These changes involved replacing two common nouns with pronouns. Following a request from Luke, John read his paragraph a second time. Betty then reached across the table, took John's paper, and

read the paragraph silently.

After some quiet time spent working on the response forms, Betty began the response to the writing by asking John the meaning of a particular section. Betty's question sparked a discussion among all the group members about losing friends. John finally asked, "How would you put that in words?" (IA,14). Luke offered a specific sentence, which John recorded on his first draft, and then the group moved on.

Betty stated that she liked, "...the whole story, because you put your words right - like a poem" (IA,15).

George also expressed an appreciation for, the "poetry of the story and the meaning" (IA,15). He then suggested that John expand the content of the writing by including how it would feel to be without any friends.

Luke agreed with the previous comments regarding the poetry of John's story. He suggested that John work with the story and write it as a poem. Luke shared an example of a rhyme he thought could be included (IA,16).

John made no reply to the suggestions offered by the group members. The only time he interacted with the group was during the discussion of friend-

ship. The remainder of the time he sat back in his seat, relaxed, and attentively listened to the group discussion.

Betty's Writing

The response group continued by listening to Betty's story. Betty, who was not enthusiastic about reading, began by telling the group that she had no title for the story. After Betty read the story once and added some words to the ending, Luke requested that she read it a second time. Betty muttering, "Oooh - I hate you," reluctantly agreed.

After the second reading, Betty tried to hurry the group by impatiently saying to different group members, "Done? Okay George, hurry it up! Okay, you guys done?" (IA,20-21). George was having trouble writing a suggestion, so Betty suggested that he give her story a title.

The boys ignored Betty's insistent prodding and continued working on their response forms. Finally in exasperation, Luke stared over at Betty and exclaimed, "Hey, I like writing these!"

George agreed with, "Me too!"

Betty petulantly mumbled, "I believe it" (IA,21).

Betty then looked over at John and directed

him to begin responding to her story. John said,
"I liked when she said George was a goof. And
did George have many jobs in Mexico?" (IA,22).
He then suggested that Betty call the story,
"George Cosby" (IA,22).

George and Luke broke into the discussion
about a title. Neither of the boys felt that
John's title was catchy enough. Yet, neither boy
was able to offer a suggestion for a different
title.

John then went on to suggest that Betty
describe George more. Betty sat back on her chair,
looked bored, and made no reply, but George des-
cribed his fictional self. This description brought
forth no reaction from any of the group members.

Luke continued the response by expressing
appreciation for the story George had written,
which Betty had included. He then suggested that
Betty think about how she went "...one sentence to
another" (IA,23). Luke ended his discussion of
the writing by suggesting as a title, "George the
Funny Guy" (IA,24).

The final responder was George. He stated,
"I liked when I came to Oakland because Mexico was
boring" (IA,24).

George then questioned Betty's choice of him
as a topic. Betty explained that she had chosen
George because he was the classroom goof. George
lived up to his reputation by suggesting a
ridiculous, but funny, title for Betty's story.
The session ended with everyone laughing at
George's humor.

2. Writing the Second Draft

Students referred to their response forms
often as they began working on their second
drafts. Authors and responders interacted
informally as they attempted to revise.

At one point, Luke requested the help of
John in working on the opening of his paper.
After much discussion, in which all group members
became involved, Betty offered a specific sug-
gestion to improve this particular section of the
writing. Even though he liked the suggestion,
Luke was reluctant to change. The group members
argued with him in an attempt to convince him to
change, but seemed satisfied that the final deci-
sion was the author's (IA,26-28).

Students also began to narrow the focus of
their remarks. Discussions were held relating to
run-on sentences, punctuation, and spelling.

These discussions were opened by the authors as they requested help from the group.

3. Editing the Second Draft

At this stage students began to proofread each other's papers. The suggestions became almost exclusively focused on the conventions of English. Genrally, suggestions related to hand-writing, punctuation, and spelling.

There was little discussion as to the correctness of the suggestions. If students were told they needed to make a change relative to the conventions of English, a change was made (IA,32-39).

4. Interviews

The student interviews revealed that although students considered the response suggestions, not all suggestions were followed. Reasons for not following suggestions varied among the students.

George made no change in response to Luke's concern about his "...go(ing) one sentence to another...made one sentence into a fragment" (IA,6). George felt that Luke was referring to his changes in topic, which he felt were appropriate for his style. When George was asked why he didn't change in response to Luke's suggestion, he emphatically stated, "Not my style. If it was Jack London,

might have changed. He's kind of slow. Not my style of writing" (IA,44).

It had been suggested to John that he should attempt to add more rhymes to his writing and possibly change it to poetry. John claimed to have tried, but stated that he couldn't make it work. "Didn't make sense. I have it in pen (on first draft). But it didn't make sense" (IA,53-54).

Students attended more to suggestions which required addition of detail than to those which focused on sentence structure. Addition of detail ranged from including specific information about time or place to more general description of characters or setting. Some changes were not made because authors decided that some additions simply were not needed, or they felt they had already included what was suggested (IA,49-58).

In general, students concluded that the response group had been helpful. Their reasons referred to the fact that the group pointed out what they did "wrong" (IA,45;50;54).

5. Summary - First Writing Episode - Group I

Students were very task oriented and generally relaxed as they worked through this first writing.

The only member who was recalcitrant was Betty, but by the writing of the second draft she began interacting more comfortably. Authors were comfortable enough to volunteer to read their stories and to ask questions of the group members.

Responses to the reading of the first drafts centered on addition of detail to improve descriptions and changes in sentence structure to correct fragments or to improve sentence flow. As the students worked on their second drafts, many of the responder's suggestions and questions were considered and actually followed. The focus of the group became narrower as students completed the editing stage where they concentrated on the mechanics of writing.

Second Writing Episode - Group I

1. Responding to the First Draft of the Writing
   Betty's Writing

   Students began by discussing Betty's writing, which she had nervously volunteered to read, about a Fourth of July celebration. After reading her story, Betty read over her paper and added the name of another 'friend' as Luke and John completed their response forms. George was absent, but the group continued without him.

   Luke began by praising the content of Betty's

writing. "I liked how you talked about the Fourth and fireworks and what took place" (IA,61). Luke looked over at Betty, but received no response, so he began questioning and offering suggestions.

First, Luke, wiggling in his chair and never looking at Betty, suggested a wording change from firecrackers and fireworks to "display of fireworks" (IA,61). He then suggested that a possible title for the writing be, "The Fourth So Short" (IA,61). Betty responded to these suggestions by smiling and pleasantly saying, "Didn't think of it" (IA,61), as though she was surprised at Luke's help.

John's praise was related to the wording of a section. He stated, "I liked when she said I hate to see the Fourth to go so soon" (IA,62).

Breakdancing then became the topic of conversation. After some informal discussion of the subject, it was suggested that Betty include more information about the topic. Specifically, the responders suggested that Betty include who was breakdancing, where they were dancing, and if she learned how to perform the dance (IA,62).

John futher suggested that Betty, "describe everything more clearly" (IA,62). He became more specific as he suggested that Betty include what

the firemen were doing, and what games were being played.

Betty gave no real indication to the group members as to whether she would include their suggestions. Except for the time she joined in the discussion about breakdancing, Betty was very passive.

Luke's Writing

The group moved directly on to Luke's reading of a story about a new colt. Luke made no changes as he read his writing for the first time. But, after reading it a second time at Betty's request, I noted that Luke did make changes on his paper. Luke added details to describe the setting and to explain actions of the characters more fully. Also, at this time he asked the group a question about the use of a pronoun, but received no response (IA,63).

At Luke's request, Betty began the actual response group session. In praising Luke's efforts, Betty noted that she liked, "...about one of the ponies had a colt and you saw a brown spot in middle of the field of ponies (IA,64).

This 'brown spot' then became the focus of discussion of the group. John and Betty wanted

Luke to state that the brown spot was a pony. Unwilling to change and seemingly convinced that they should understand this, Luke negotiated with the group by reading the particular section in question to the group again. This seemed to satisfy the group, as they moved on to other points.

John made a comment in praise of the writing as he stated, "I liked when you said the colt was is good condition" (IA,66).

John, as Betty had, also questioned what the colt was named. Luke had previously responded that the colt was as yet not named. John's other suggestions had to do with the addition of the word 'the' and changing the tense of rope by adding s or ed (IA,67).

Luke was very involved as the group responded to his writing. He interacted by reading sections questioned, by answering or explaining in response to questions or suggestions, and by generally directing the group.

John's Writing

John read his writing "Dale the Whale" to the group next. He made no changes as he read nor while he was waiting for the responders to begin.

John directed the group to begin by asking, "Which one wants to start?" (IA,68).

Luke eagerly volunteered to begin. His statement of praise was, "I like the singing" (IA,68).

Luke then went on to question John about several details. He wanted to know, "What was they (the audience) saying to him (Dale)?". He also asked, "What was the business that went downhill?" (IA,68).

The second question led to a lengthy discussion and negotiations session, as John thought this point was included. John read the section in question aloud, but did not satisfy the responders. Finally, Betty was able to convice John that he should make a change. She took his paper and said, "Right here Dale said after you left things started going downhill... He said how is business? You don't say singing business" (IA,70). At this point, John agreed to include 'singing' in the writing.

During this discussion, several other points were raised. Betty suggested that Ruddy be a female. This suggestion was declared unimportant by John. Betty also wanted to know where Ruddy

had gone. Luke then indicated that he wanted an answer to the same question. Again, this question sparked a lengthy discussion about who left and why the character left. John finally explained, "Because nobody wanted him (Ruddy) to sing" (IA, 69). Following more discussion, John agreed to include that explanation.

After this period of lengthy discussion, John brought the group back to task by asking Luke for suggestions. The only additional question Luke mentioned, about how long they had sung, was rejected by John.

John then indicated that Betty should continue. He specifically requested, "What did you like best about my story?" (IA,74). Betty replied that she liked the whale's singing.

In addition to this praise, Betty wanted to know why John wrote this particular story. Luke replied for John by stating, "It was funny. You wanted it to be funny like George's" (IA,75). John admitted this was true, and added that he didn't feel too successful. He wanted to have a lot of rhymes in the story, but was unable to carry through with the idea.

This completed the discusssion of John's first draft. Although George was not present at this meeting, the later reading of his first draft and the group's response will be included here for the purpose of continuity.

George's Writing

When George read his story to the group the responders listened attentively and laughed openly at sections. George stopped at one point, made some word changes, read over the changed section, and then finished reading. While George waited for the responders to begin, he read over his first draft and made two additional word changes. After he complied with John's request to read the story a second time, George stated, "I didn't spend enough time on it" (IB,84). Even though George stated his writing needed more of his attention, he did not read back over the story as the responders were completing their forms.

Luke volunteered to begin the response to George's story. After telling George what he liked about the story, Luke asked for explanations of why certain events occurred. Luke's comments focused on character motivation and the logic of the story. Luke stated, "Put in your story why he hit you... And what happened to your guns and

your knife? ....were they getting you ready
for the enemy?" (IB,85-86).

John also requested that George explain what
had happened to the weapons. John went on to
suggest that George "...try to explain stuff more
clearly. ...some people might not know what they
(terms) are" (IB,88-89). This suggestion illus-
trates John's awareness that writing is a means
of sharing information. George agreed that he
needed to follow this suggestion, but explained
that it would be hard to do so.

Up to this point, the discussion had been
among the male group members. Betty had been
sitting passively while the other group members
had discussed George's story. She was coaxed by
the boys into responding to George's story. Her
major contribution was to suggest a title, "George
Cosby - Adventures in the Foreign Legion" (IB,90).
George explained to Betty that her title might be
useful as he planned for this story to be the first
in a series of stories about mercenaries.

Throughout the response session, George replied
to each responder's suggestions or questions. At
times, his reply would go beyond what was necessary

as he would try to discuss the lives of mercenaries
in more general terms. Each time this occurred,
John or Luke would break into George's monologue
and bring the group back to task.

2. Writing the Second Draft

Betty requested help from the group as she
began to compose her second draft. She went over
the response forms carefully and after working at
one of Luke's questions asked, "How do I put this?"
(IA,78). Betty and Luke worked together in revising
her story in regards to this suggestion and addi-
tional suggestions of Luke's.

John, Luke, and George also used their res-
ponse forms as they worked through their second
drafts. They sometimes asked a responder to
clarify a point which had been made or they would
read to the responder a section of the writing
which had been revised as a result of a suggestion.

Group members also discussed correct usage
of punctuation. These discussions were in
response to specific questions by an author. John
was singled out by most group members when
they had questions regarding punctuation.

3. Editing

Spelling, punctuation, and handwriting problems were mentioned most often at this stage. As in the previous episode, students made suggested changes willingly. There was little discussion as to the correctness of the suggestions.

Students did branch out from the correction of mechanical mistakes into some different areas. The author's word choice or choice of phrasing was questioned and changed at several instances (IB,93;94;95;120;122). Students also discussed paragraphing and sentence structure (IB,95;122).

During the training session students had been provided with an editing checklist, but the only student who referred to the checklist was John. Each time he began to edit an author's paper, he would locate his checklist and begin to move systematically through the list. Then, after he was involved with the author's story, he would put the checklist aside and begin to suggest a variety of changes as he read through the story.

4. Interviews

Betty followed some of the suggestions of the response group, but not all of them. She changed the wording of one section because, "It (first

draft) didn't really sound right the last time, they way I had it" (IB,100). She also added some suggested details and a title. Betty used a title suggested by Luke because it seemed to summarize the point of her story (IB,101).

Some of the suggestions which were not followed were simply forgotten according to Betty. She claimed to have intended following additional suggestions concerning details or descriptions, but was confused by the oral discussion of ideas. Betty explained, "I told him...but I forgot to put it in here" (IB,102).

In general, Betty found the response group helpful. She explained the benefits of working with a response group in the following manner: "Cause half the time I just sit down and think. I can't think of nothing, and then they help me" (IB,105).

Luke also claimed that he benefited from working with a response group. He indicated that the group was most helpful in the areas of mechanics and the conventions of English grammar. Luke did not follow any of the group's suggestions relating to any content changes. He felt that the suggested information had already been included.

or the information was not related to his topic.

Both responders had suggested that Luke explain that the 'brown spot' was a colt, but Luke did not follow this suggestion. He indicated during the interview that they (responders) should have understood from what he had already written. Luke expected them to infer from what he had written that the brown spot was a colt (IB,106-107).

John considered each of the responder's suggestions as he completed his second draft. When deciding what changes to make, John considered his audience and the sense of the story.

Details were added about characters actions because John sensed that his reading audience might be confused. John explained the addition of detail by stating, "Because people might not know what you're talking about..." (IB,113).

In another section of his story, which both responders had questioned, John added more information to clarify the actions of one of the characters. He explained his reasoning by stating, "Made better sense" (IB,117).

George also considered a reading audience when he wrote his second draft. He added information to explain a character's action and defined some vocabulary specific to his story more com-

pletely in his second draft. George explained
the changes by stating, "People who don't read
that much or watch too many movies might not
know what they (vocabulary related to martial arts)
are" (IB,128).

Logic and sound were also important to George
when he was deciding which revisions to make. He
decided not to follow a suggestion to add content
about an oasis because, "...don't think they're
that big" (IB,126). Later, he changed the wording
of a section because it, "Didn't sound right"
(in the first draft) (IB,127).

George summarized the benefits of working
with a response group by stating, "Helped me point
out things I couldn't tell that was wrong with it"
(IB,131). He explained that the group had helped
him correct run-on sentences and had helped him
with some ideas.

5. Summary - Second Writing Episode - Group I

The group remained fairly task oriented
during this episode. George sometimes tried to
broaden the topic of discussion, but was brought
back to task quickly by either John or Luke.
Authors often directed the group, and they also
negotiated with the responders by questioning the

suggestions more frequently than they had in the previous episode. It's also interesting to note that John tried to imitate George's writing style as he developed his second story. This phenomenon was recognized, discussed, and accepted by the group.

Responders focused their attention on characterization, descriptions, and addition of details as they responded to the first drafts. There was interaction among group members as they revised and wrote their second drafts.

Authors used the completed response forms and also asked questions which initiated discussion.

At the final editing stage, students attended to the conventions of the English language. Sometimes they moved beyond discussing punctuation and spelling as they reviewed larger segments of the stories.

Third Writing Episode - Group I

1. Responding to the First Draft of the Writing

Betty's Writing

Betty was coaxed by George and Luke into opening the response session. She haltingly read her story about a trip to Atlantic City to the group. John requested a second reading of the

story, and Betty willingly complied. After the second reading, Betty reviewed her story and added words to clarify the setting. Luke directed John to begin the response to Betty's writing.

John complimented Betty on the last sentence of her story. He then requested more details relative to the setting and further description of the character's feelings about the trip.

John also suggested that the author, "... stretch or use exaggeration" in describing the trip (IB,136). He then suggested specific content to be used as a conclusion for the story. He stressed that the final sentence, which he had previously complimented, should be left intact.

Following John's suggestions there was an informal discussion regarding the story. Responders were confused as to whether the story was based on fact or fiction. Finally, the group realized that the author was trying to combine information about a previous summer trip with information about a recently planned trip which had not been taken.

After this lengthy discussion, John repeated his suggestion for a conclusion. He then looked at George and said, "George, come on, help me"

(IB,139).

George suggested the addition of more details
to clarify the time frame. This opened the dis-
cussion again relative to the time of the writing
and the type of information included. George
suggested that Betty, "Make stuff up about it.
Make it more exciting" (IB,141;144).

These remarks led to a lengthy discussion of
what material to include. Responders discussed
sharks, plane crashes, car crashes, and a Cheech
and Chong movie. John and Betty brought the group
back to task when they strayed too far. Betty
finally emphatically stated, "Just tell me how I
would end this" (IB,142). John responded by re-
peating his previous suggestions. Betty then
looked at the other responders and firmly stated,
"George, you have to help, too. Luke, so do you"
(B,143).

Responders then discussed and suggested
various titles for the piece. Luke then said, "Boy
this one's really going to be good now, Betty.
We're all working on it" (IB,147).

Luke continued by suggesting that Betty add
more information to describe the setting of the
trip and the actions of some of the characters.

His suggestion was followed by a group discussion
of the order of events in the story (IB,147-153).
As this discussion took place, John found it
necessary to bring the group back to task. He
stated, "Shh! This is not the subject" (IB,153).
At other times he would simply mention the
offender's name.

Luke then suggested that Betty read the whole
story again, stopping whenever he wanted to comment.
Betty did so, and Luke stopped her at various points.
He suggested that Betty add details to explain
what she did on the beach, where other characters
went, where they ate, and where they shopped. He
further suggested that a more complete description
of the setting be added and that a more logical
sequence of events be given (IC,157-160). During
this time, George and John had been collaborating
on a better conclusion.

George shared their idea for additional
information to be added to the conclusion. After
Betty accepted the suggestion, she was directed
to write the sentences down and draw an arrow to
the point where they would be included. John then
directed Betty to continue reading her story.

As Betty finished her reading, more details about characters and events were suggested. At the conclusion of this reading, Luke suggested that the last sentence be deleted because it wasn't logical. Other group members expressed their agreement. Betty then looked at the group and said, "Okay, now someone else go" (IC,166).

John concluded the response to Betty's writing by expressing his pleasure with the group. "One-half hour for Betty. Betty's writing should really be good" (IC,166).

Luke's Writing

Luke readily agreed to read his story to the response group. Luke read his new story, "The Horse that Played Shortstop", stopping periodically to change words. While the group completed their response forms, Luke reviewed his story and made one minor word change.

George began the response to the writing. His questions focused on the addition of content to explain events or actions in the story. He asked, "How did they steal the horse? Why didn't the horse bat the ball with his back legs?" (IC,170). Luke responded to each question and comment which was made. He continued to express himself as the other responders continued.

Betty complimented Luke on the general subject
of his story and the wording of some sections. She
then asked for an explanation of the horse's name
and the reason for choosing him as a ballplayer.
Finally, she suggested that the name of the team
be changed from Twenty-Eights to Apples (IC,172).

John was the final responder to the writing.
He questioned the logic of one section of the story.
After Luke explained his logic, John asked the gen-
der of the horse. Irritably, Luke replied, "A
boy. I don't think that needs to be in there"
(IC,174).

John continued by requesting information about
the success of the team. Luke read a section of
his story to prove that this had been included.
But John still suggested, "Put in there they won
every single game the horse was in" (IC,174).
Luke made no response to the suggestion.

John's next suggestion was to "...make more
suspense" (IC,173). George and John joined
together in offering several specific suggestions
for content addition to Luke. Luke listened
closely but made no comment.

John concluded the response to Luke's story
by stating, "Then check your paper for quotations.
Cause you have a lot of them in there. I read your

paper and you didn't have any of them in. That's all I got" (IC,176).

John's Writing

John read his story, "Jack Rabbit Killer" to the group. John had personalized the story by including the names of all group members, except George, in the story. Group members listened attentively and laughed aloud as the story was read. The exclusion of George was noted immediately by the group, and John was instructed to include him. After agreeing to read the story a second time, John told the group, "Now when you guys figure out a place to put George in, you guys holler. Oaky?" (IC,178).

During John's second reading, the group closely followed his instructions. They offered specific suggestions for including George, suggested specific details to describe the events of the story, and helped clarify the roles of various characters. The group members were very specific in their suggestions, as exact wording was offered and was written down by John on his first draft. Group members continued this cooperative, workshop approach to the story until Luke, who looked bewildered by the number of suggestions, asked the group members to share the response sheets (IC,177-184).

Luke reviewed his response sheet which contained mostly previously discussed suggestions, with John. He suggested that John make the story longer and directed him to read some more of the story aloud. John did so and then he and Luke discussed the possible addition of more information. John detailed some content he thought about adding, and then stated, "I need something. I need help" (IC,186).

George continued by sharing his response sheet. He questioned the logic of one section of the story. This question led to a group discussion of this point. Finally John said, "Okay, I'll read it all over with my changes (IC,187-189).

As soon as John began reading, George interrupted with a suggestion that would have changed the gist of the story. This suggestion led to irrelevant discussion among the responders. John firmly brought the group back to task by saying, "How'd we get off the subject of my story? Okay, are you guys done?" (IC,190-191).

John immediately began reading his story again, pausing at sections where character's roles, character's actions, or the logic of the story were questioned. These sections were discussed and

specific suggestions were offered.

Luke also suggested a different conclusion for the story. He asked John if he understood the groups suggestions. John said, "Yeah, I know what you mean. And I'm going to write some of that" (IC,194). He then asked Betty to share her response form.

After listening to Betty's responses, which had really been shared during the informal dis-cussions, John expressed a desire to finish reading his story to the group. John read his story, but no further suggestions were offered.

George's Writing

George made no changes on his first draft after reading his story, "My Days After the Foreign Legion". The group immediately questioned his ending. George negotiated with the group by explaining that this story was going to be con-tinued. He explained, "See you make more money out of it this way, like the comic books do and say to be continued. They're all caught up in the story by then" (IC, 198). George agreed to a

second reading for Luke. He was stopped twice
during the second reading and was asked to explain
some of the vocabulary he had used.

Luke was the first to respond to George's
story. He opened by expressing an appreciation
for the whole story. Following that he asked
some detail questions regarding characterization,
money, and setting. He also questioned the
logic of finding a house, as described in the
story, in the setting which was outlined
(IC,201).

George responded to each of Luke's ques-
tions, and continued to do so when Betty
responded. Betty summarized sections of the
writing she liked because of the wording. She
then requested more details regarding the charac-
ter's dealing with the police (IC,203).

Luke interrupted and questioned the logic
of a character's actions. He suggested an
alternative to George, who replied, "I never
thought of that" (IC,203).

John had very little to add in response to

the story. He began by citing particular
events which he liked. He then asked, "Did
you win any money?"

George replied, "No, not much - $5.00."

John instructed, "Put that in there."

George made no reply to John's suggestion,
but both of the other responders expressed
their feelings that the information was unneces-
sary (IC,204-205).

2. Writing the Second Draft

At the beginning of the session, John told
the group he was going to continue writing on
his first draft. He then stated, "If I need
help, I'll ask" (IC,206).

As the other two group members settled
down to work, John and George collaborated on a
conclusion to John's story. Specific suggestions
were discussed along with more general ideas.
Luke eventually joined the discussion by also
offering suggestions. The boys seemed interested
in being both logical and entertaining (IC,206-212).

Group conversation became intense again
when John asked for help on what George called

his "prologue". John was trying to imitate the type of wording George had used regarding a story continuation. Finally, John seemed satisfied with his efforts (IC,213-224).

John stated, "There it is. Now I'm going to read this. See if it makes sense" (IC,224). The group members listened to the reading, but offered no further suggestions. There was no additional group interaction as the writers completed their second drafts.

3. Editing the Second Draft

Spelling, punctuation, and handwriting concerns were discussed most often. Students seemed more argumentative during this session than they had been in previous editing sessions. Discussions became more intense when students were focusing on paragraphing and the use of quotation marks.

All students, except Betty, had included direct quotes in this writing. Editors carefully located speaker changes and suggested that the author use paragraphs and quotation marks approp-

riately (IC,231; ID,238-239). When two students
had problems settling questions, a third student
was often asked to mediate.

4. Interviews

Student writers carefully considered the sug-
gestions and questions offered by the responders.
They followed those suggestions which suited the
content and style of their stories. Generally,
they found the responders to be helpful.

Betty found the response group to be helpful
in, "...putting my words in right" (ID,245). She
followed many of the suggestions for addition of
detail to describe the time and setting. She also
revised the conclusion of the story in accordance
with the group's suggestions.

Betty did not follow the responders' sugges-
tionsto be more creative and to use her imagina-
tion to make the story more exciting. She explained,
"I can't think of nothing like that - making up
stories" (ID,244).

The interview with Luke revealed that although
he considered the responders' suggestions, he
really did not follow any of them. He explained
that the response suggestions were often off the

subject. At other times he felt that enough information had already been included to answer responders' questions.

Luke summed up his thoughts about this session by explaining, "...their ideas weren't that good. All the other ones they helped me out a lot and I used a lot of stuff. But breaking his neck, stuff like that, really didn't go along with it" (ID,251)..

John found this response session very beneficial. He was extremely pleased with his final story. John felt that his use of comedy and suspense made this story better than the first two he had written.

John considered each of the suggestions made by the responders. He followed suggestions which added humor or clarified the events of the story. Some suggestions were not included because John considered them to be inappropriate or he thought the information was already included (ID,252-256).

George found the response group to be useful in helping him deal with the logic of certain events in the story. He, as the other two boys, did not include additional information when he thought

he had already explained a situation to his audience. But, when the group indicated that events or character actions were not logical, George revised to clarify the situation (ID,256-261).

5. ## Summary - Third Writing Episode - Group I

Students interacted informally as they worked through this third writing. All group members became involved in working on larger sections of the story. John and Betty each insisted that the group members help revise portions of their stories. When the group members strayed from their focus on the writing, John was the member who brought them back to task.

In responding to the oral reading of the first drafts, responders focused on content revisions. They urged the writers to use their imaginations to expand content and to make the stories more suspenseful. Responders questioned the logic of story events and their sequence. Also, they collaborated in revising particular sections of the stories. Suggestions were first offered in general terms, then specific examples of how to make revisions were offered.

Betty was not present for any further group sessions. Initially, I was told that Betty was in the hospital due to appendicitis.. I later learned that she had run away from her grand-parents, was found in a nearby town, and was charged with breaking and entering. Subsequently Betty was sent to a juvenile detention center. The remaining group members never questioned or discussed Betty's absence within my presence.

Fourth Writing Episode - Group I

1. ### Responding to the First Draft of the Writing
   John's Writing

John made numerous word changes after reading his story to the group members. At their request, John read sections of the story to the responders a second time. He then reviewed his story and made further word changes as responders completed the response forms. These word changes simply entailed adding or deleting single words at various locations in the story.

Luke offered several suggestions to John. Some suggestions and questions focused on charac-ter actions or character motivation. John asked, "Why did you fight in China, then send C.I.A. after me? Why did you shoot the plane down?" (ID,264;266).

As Luke raised questions and offered sugges-
tions, John reviewed his story and made immediate
changes. He then read portions of the revised
story aloud and sought Luke's approval regard-
ing the revisions.

John and Luke worked together at rewording
an introductory sentence in one section of the
story. They also reviewed the story and made
sentence structure changes after Luke cautioned
John to, "Watch your run-on sentences" (ID,267).

At the end of Luke's response, John looked
at him appreciatively and stated, "Thanks, that
was a lot, Luke" (ID,269).

George's response focused more on the addition
of details to clarify the time element and the
setting of the story. Again, as George offered
suggestions and questioned events in the story,
John immediately revised on his first draft. If
he had trouble including a suggestion he would
ask for assistance. After making revisions,
John read the revised section to the group
members for their approval.

Group members spent a great deal of time
discussing ideas after George's final suggestion

to John. George had suggested, "instead of gory stuff in for laughs, have some practical jokes" (ID,276). John said he would consider all the practical jokes, which were subsequently offered, when he was writing his second draft.

Luke's Writing

Luke read his story to the group rather haltingly. This was really the second draft of Luke's story, as he had decided the first draft needed more work before it could be shared. He stopped at sections, re-read portions of the story, and made some word changes to enhance the flow of the story. As students completed the response forms, he sat quietly without making any further revisions.

George was the first to respond to Luke's story. He asked Luke two questions: "Why did they call his friend Fats the Chicken? Who were the six guys who pushed Fats in the river and why did they?" (ID,281).

Luke answered both questions and then stated, "I'll put that in there" (ID,282). But, he made no changes on his first draft.

When John responded, he offered several suggestions and asked questions. Luke responded to John by locating the section of the writing being discussed and making immediate changes on the first draft. John's concerns focused on addition of descriptive detail and identification of characters.

John then asked Luke to read the story again. Luke complied and stopped at three sections where the wording was still awkward. Luke rehearsed rewordings of the sections orally until the group was satisfied with his word choice.

At the end of the response to Luke's story, George offered a suggestion for another Police Academy tale. The group listened, but Luke gave no indication that he was going to expand on his story.

George's Writing

George's fourth writing was twenty-four pages long. Before he read the story to the responders, he requested that they try to help

him find an appropriate title as they listened.
George paused at several locations and made
word changes. These changes entailed the
deletion and addition of words, or rephrasing.

At the beginning of the response session,
George again asked for a suggested title.
Some discussion took place, but no title was
decided upon.

Luke responded first to George's story.
He opened by complimenting George on the whole
story. He then questioned some of the character's
actions. Although he persisted in his questioning,
George did not agree to any change.

Luke then stated, "I can't stand the last
part" (ID,290). George asked for an explan-
ation of Luke's displeasure. Luke explained
himself rather vaguely, and the subject was
dropped.

George then read a section of the story
prefaced by, "I didn't think you'd understand
this" (ID,291). Neither responder commented, but
George added additional words to clarify.

Luke's final suggestion was in reference

to the conclusion. He suggested that George conclude by explaining that the story events were really part of a dream. George decided to consider the suggestion, but explained that he was unsure how it would work with his epilogue.

Next, John responded to the story. He opened by listing several story events which he particularly liked. He then opened a discussion in which the group finally named a lake which was included in the story. They decided to name the lake, The Lake of the Unknown. This prompted George to title the story, "The Unknown" (ID,293-295).

John also asked a detail question regarding the army. George asked him for advice as to how to deal with the question. John gave a humorous response, which George liked and therefore included.

As a final remark, John questioned the logic of a section of the story. George explained the events and the character's actions. He made no changes on his first draft in response to John's final comments.

2. Writing the Second Draft

At the beginning of this session, George

sought reassurance from Luke. During the first phase of the response session, Luke had expressed his displeasure with the conclusion of George's story. George questioned Luke further, until he was satisfied that Luke really felt the ending was all right (ID,298).

Authors requested help from the group members as they composed their second drafts. Requests for help centered around paragraphing, spelling, capitalization, and correction of run-on sentences. The group members worked together to respond to questions which were asked.

3. Editing the Second Draft

Students were very task oriented as they edited each other's stories. As in all previous editing sessions, concerns were mainly focused around handwriting, punctuation, and spelling. Students also made changes in paragraphing and sentence structure. Sentence structure changes were suggested because of run-on sentences, sentence fragments, or the awkwardness of sentences.

Most of the time students made suggested editing changes without questioning the responder. When there was a disagreement between two parties, the third group member was called into the discussion.

4. Interviews

Luke considered each of the responders' questions and suggestions as he composed his second draft. He followed those responses which he felt would make his story better and those which were logical.

Some suggestions regarding addition of detail to further explain story events were not followed, because Luke thought he had already given enough information. Luke simply stated, "I thought he'd (the responder) know that" ,340;345).

Luke felt that working with a response group was generally beneficial. He explained, "I like to do it. It helps. Get to see where most of your mistakes are" (IE,346). Luke went on to state that it (response group) would be better if he knew more about it (writing).

John also considered the response group to be quite helpful. He stated, "Gave me a better story, that's for sure!" (IE,353). He then read sections of the story which he felt were improved because of working with the group.

The group's suggestions and questions were considered carefully by John. Some suggestions were not followed because they didn't make sense or the information had already been included. Other suggestions were followed because they made the events of the story more logical or they added humor to the story (IE,347-353).

In reviewing the six week experience of working with the response group, John reiterated his belief in the benefits of such an endeavor. He stated, "Think it's fun...Get a lot of laughs and a lot of funny things in the story" (IE,354).

George was the last student to be interviewed. As he composed his second draft and reviewed the response forms, he considered the suggestions and questions offered by the responders. His decisions as to how to use responders' ideas were influenced by clarity, logic, and humor.

Some sections of George's first draft were excluded from the second draft because he felt they

were confusing. New ideas were added because they were humorous. At times, no changes were made because George felt, "...it was pretty clear...most people know..." (IE,357). George carefully considered the responders' ideas, but only used those which he felt were most appropriate.

George felt that working with a response group was helpful. Even though this was the group's last meeting, he continued to talk of continuing his stories. When George was asked if he really planned to continue after the class was over, he replied, "I'd like to. I'll save all my drafts up until school starts probably" (IE,363).

5. Summary - Fourth Writing Episode - Group I

The group was more task-oriented while completing this fourth and final writing than they had been during previous writing episodes. Group members collaborated when particular sections of the writing posed problems. Authors were comfortable in asking questions and in seeking assistance from the group.

Responders focused their attention on content revisions when responding to the first drafts. They questioned the logic of story events and the motivation of different characters. Suggestions

were offered to make the content more humorous
or to revise the wording of particular sections.
Often group members worked cooperatively to
aid an author with revising.

As group members worked through the second
drafts, their focus began to narrow. They
attended more to the mechanics of writing.
Proper use of paragraphs, spelling, handwriting,
and punctuation were carefully considered.

Student Response Group II

Description of Members of Group II

Before detailing the writing episodes of Group II, the
group members will be described. The group consisted of
three eighth grade students and one seventh grade student.
All students, like those from Group I, were enrolled in
summer school because they had failed to meet the
requirements for promotion.

Connie, the youngest member of the group, had no
record of previous failure. She actually had received
passing grades for the period of time she had attended
seventh grade. Connie had been expelled from school
early in the second semester because she had been caught
twice within a six week period consuming alcohol while on
school property. There was no guarantee for Connie that
successful completion of summer school would lead to her

promotion to eighth grade. She still had to go through a hearing process before the board of education members in order to seek readmittance.

I was unsure how Connie's problems would influence her interaction within the response group. She quickly dispelled any fears I had by appearing on the first day of our session as an attractive, interested, rather shy, and cooperative young girl. Connie had some severe writing problems, but always worked diligently with the group.

Sally was an eighth grade student who had failed social studies, math, and related arts classes. She had also been expelled for disciplinary reasons. Sally had attempted suicide and was involved with drugs. Due to her severe personal problems, Sally was receiving counseling through a local agency.

Sally, who displayed some good writing ability, was prone to frequent mood shifts. She appeared in class the first day, heavily made-up, hair teased, and talking about the latest parties. I was immediately concerned about how seriously she would take the work. I would find that, although her moodiness sometimes made her difficult to work with, the group was able to deal well with her.

Lucy, who had failed eighth grade social studies,

math and reading, was the third group member. She was fifteen years old and was pregnant. Although I knew of her pregnancy prior to the group's first meeting, the pregnancy was not obvious until the third week of our session when she began wearing maternity clothes. I expected some reference to Lucy's pregnancy, but it was never mentioned during the group sessions. This lack of interest or curiousity may have been due to the fact that Lucy appeared very self-assured and displayed no sense of self-consciousness.

William, who was of above average ability and a previous candidate for the gifted and talented program, had failed social studies, reading, and language arts. In addition to his academic problems, William had a record of severe discipline problems. William's major problem was his lack of self-control and alcohol abuse. He had been receiving counseling for approximately a year because of these problems.

William was a handsome, athletic young man. He was always very polite, but began the summer with a rather sullen and withdrawn attitude. This attitude changed somewhat over the course of the study as William began to interact with the group more.

When I looked at the backgrounds of these four students, I felt that this group could be quite challenging. I was pleasantly surprised to find them to be extremely cooper-

ative. While each student had personal concerns and problems, the overall group functioning was seldom affected.

First Writing Episode - Group II

1. Responding to First Draft of the Writing

Connie's Writing

Connie opened the response group session by nervously volunteering to read the first draft of her story. She faltered occasionally during the reading, stopping once to change the word 'was' to 'saw'. At the request of Sally, Connie agreeably read the story a second time.

Sally began discussing the writing by focusing on the setting of Connie's story. She wanted to know from where Connie's sister had come and what road they were walking along. Sally further suggested that Connie describe the surroundings more. Connie had used the words 'scary surroundings', but Sally wanted to know "What kind of scary surroundings?" (IIA,1-2).

Sally went on to compliment Connie on the story. Sally thought that Connie had made the story sound good and that the story was really scary. Sally concluded with, "Sounds like she

put some time into it" (IIA,2).

William added that he liked the part where the storm started. William's questions, as Sally's had, related to the setting of the story. He asked where had Connie come from and where was she going. William then stated, "It sounded like it needed a better ending" (IIA,2).

Sally interrupted at this point and suggested that Connie could think of several ways to end the story. Specifically, she suggested that she may have gone after her sister or that they may have been having a party (IIA,3).

Lucy, the final responder, continued by praising Connie for her description of the setting and her good use of imagination. Her question was the same as Sally's, "How did your sister get at the bottom of the stairs?" (IIA,3).

Sally's Writing

The group, in a very business-like manner, moved right on to the discussion of Sally's writing. Sally read the first draft of her writing after stating to the researcher, "They already heard this, they helped me yesterday" (IIA,4). I was pleased to note that this informal work had occurred at such an early stage.

After reading the first draft of her story, which at this point was untitled, Sally made two changes. She inserted the words 'the' and 'here' at the conclusion of the story.

While completing her response form, Lucy asked Sally the weight of the cow. Sally promptly retorted that the cow weighed four tons, even though this information was not on her first draft (IIA,4). No further questions were asked as students completed their response forms.

Lucy opened the discussion of Sally's writing by complimenting her on the humor of the piece. Lucy then began questioning the logic of some story events. She wanted to know how the cow could be carried to the zoo when he weighed four tons. In a giggly voice, Lucy added, "You couldn't have carried it" (IB,4). Sally, sitting upright in her chair and looking bored, made no reply to any of Lucy's statements.

William's only contribution to the discussion of the writing was to ask Sally how much money was obtained for the cow. Sally emphatically replied, "I don't know!" (IIA,5). The group then listened to Connie's critique of the writing.

Connie opened by praising Sally's use of humor and her description. She continued by asking several detail questions. The questions were: "Who was the man?", "How did the cow get there?"; and "How did you and Cathy get to Broadford and to England?" (IIA,5).

The final question was argued by the three females, as William sat and reviewed his own paper. Sally clarified that 'they' took the cow to the New England zoo; she and Cathy had only taken the cow to a local zoo. At the close of these negotiations, the group moved on to Lucy's writing.

Lucy's Writing

Lucy read her story, "The Ugly Dog", to the group without any hesitation. She made no changes while reading nor while the students were completing their response forms. While working on the response form, Sally asked Lucy two detail questions. She wanted to know who got the dog and the dog's name. Lucy replied by stating that the story simply didn't say (IIA,7).

Sally opened the response to the writing by complimenting Lucy on her description of the dog and the setting. Connie would later state, in agreement with Sally, that Lucy had done a "Good job of dsecribing the dog" (IIA,8).

Sally asked once again for the name of the dog. Later in the response session Connie also asked for the dog to be named. At this later time, Sally suggested that the dog be called "Cletus" (IIA,9).

Sally also wanted to know what happened to the dog's ear and tail. Lucy explained, "Don't know what happened to dog's ear and tail. He just came out of the woods" (IIA,8).

This same point was raised later by William. William suggested that the dog could have been in a fight. Again Lucy wanted to know, "How would I know that?" (IIA,9).

Sally answered Lucy's question by giving the following suggestion, "Say you were having a pic- nic, saw dogs in woods, one laying there and another took off running. Then you'd know" (IIA,9). Lucy listened to Sally's suggestion, but made no comment.

William had two other suggestions for Lucy. First, he suggested that Lucy add to the story by telling what happened to the dog and John.

William's second suggestion dealt with character motivation. William asked, "Why did

he keep the dog with a torn ear and a tail missing?" (IIA,9).

In reply to William's question, Lucy stated, "Just because he liked it" (IIA,9). There were no further suggestions nor was there any further discussion involving Lucy's writing, so the group moved on to William's story.

William's Writing

William read the first draft of his writing, "Business as Usual". He made no changes while reading his paper the first time. But, after reading it a second time at Connie's request, William made three word changes. He changed 'look' to 'be', 'is' to 'was', and replaced 'the track' with the pronoun 'it!.

Sally opened the response to William's writing by stating that she liked the way he had described certain things. Sally followed by asking several questions about the story.

These questions brought out the fact that William's audience didn't have the background knowledge and the proper vocabulary to understand his story. Sally finally said, with Lucy expressing agreement, "I couldn't make sense of all that. I just didn't understand about that strip mine and the BMX race track" (IIA,11).

Connie continued by asking William two questions. She wanted to know the location of the mines and the name of the owner of the bull-dozer.

All questions asked by the response group members were answered by William during ensuing discussions. He very carefully explained the content of his story so his listening audience could comprehend what had happened.

After completing the response to William's writing, the group members began working on their second drafts.

2. Writing the Second Draft

There was little interaction as the group members worked on their second drafts. William, Lucy, and Connie spent more time working on their first drafts and using the student response forms than Sally. Sally went almost immediately to writing the second draft of her story.

Connie worked on adding more information to the conclusion of her story. This was in response to suggestions made by Sally and William.

3. Editing the Second Draft

At this stage students began to proofread each other's papers. Suggestions made related totally to the conventions of English. Suggestions

were made to correct punctuation, spelling, word usage, and handwriting errors.

When students were proofreading papers, the author would sometimes question his/her own adherence to writing rules. At other times the author would note errors on his/her own and make changes without any discussion taking place.

Little discussion was held regarding the correctness of suggestions made (IIA,16-26). Suggestions made were followed almost automatically.

4. Interviews

Student interviews showed that the writers did consider the suggestions and questions of the response group as they wrote their second drafts.

William was especially conscientious about following the suggestions of the response group. He followed all suggestions of the group, except one. He concluded our interview by stating, "At first this (story) sounded stupid, but then it sounded better" (IIA,34).

Connie considered each of the group's suggestions. She followed some suggestions, while others were discarded. Although Connie was unable to explain specifically how her choices were made, she did state, "I thought about it" (IIA,35).

Lucy also seemed to carefully consider each
of the suggestions she was given. When I ques-
tioned Lucy about why she included or ignored a
suggestion, she generally was unable to give a
reason. Only in one instance did Lucy give a
reason for including some information. She
stated, "It would be easy to put in, I guess"
(IA,41).

Many of the suggestions followed by the stu-
dents led to the inclusion of more details. Sally
noted this when she was asked if the group had
helped her. She replied, "They just told me to
put in more details" (IIA,30).

Two group members did work at changing the
conclusions of their writings. In both instances,
these changes were suggested through the response
group.

5. Summary - First Writing Episode - Group II

The group was very task oriented as they
worked through this first writing. They worked
their way through the writings by moving around
the table in a very business-like manner. Students
appeared to be comfortable members of the group.

The response group members narrowed their
focus as they worked through this first writing
episode. The group first focused on the content

of the writings by suggesting that details be added, that descriptions be made clearer, or by questioning the conclusions to the writings. Later the group narrowed their focus by considering the conventions of English.

Second Writing Episode - Group II

1. ### Responding to the First Draft of the Writing
   ### Connie's Writing

Connie opened the response session by reading the first draft of her writing. She hesitated frequently when reading the conclusion of the writing. While Connie waited for the group to complete their response forms, she looked over her story. The only change she made was to add the word 'and' in the last sentence. Sally and Lucy both looked over Connie's paper while completing the response forms.

Lucy opened the response by saying the story was interesting. She then asked what time the event happened (IIA,44).

Sally, who had been slouching in her chair and seemed in ill humor, quickly added her response. She also stated that the story was interesting. Sally then asked Connie what the noise was which was mentioned in her story (IIA,44).

At this time, Connie expressed her dissatis-
faction with this story. She stated, "I don't
like this. It's too similar to the last one"
(IIA,45). Connie turned down the opportunity to
work more on the first draft before working with
the response group, so William responded to the
writing.

William responded by asking five questions.
In addition to inquiring about what one of the char-
acters was doing and where some characters were,
he wanted to know why they acted in certain ways
(IIA,46).

William's questions opened a short discussion
of the time element in the story. William and Sally
thought the story had taken place at night. Connie
re-read the writing orally to clarify that the
story events had taken place early in the morning.
No further discussion of the time element was
held after the reading (IIA,46).

But, as a result of the second reading, Sally
opened further discussion of the noises which were
heard. This conversation only involved William
and Sally. Connie sat back and listened to their
discussion. Finally, she interrupted and explained
that her writing was a description of a real event.

She concluded by summarizing the story and her
reactions to the events (IIA,47).

Sally's Writing

Sally volunteered to read her piece next.
Immediately after reading her story to the group
she added a title, "Talking Hamburger". This
was the only change she made while waiting for
the group to begin responding. Sally sat and
played with a book on her desk and sighed loudly
several times while the other group members com-
pleted their response forms.

The group seemed to appreciate the humor
in Sally's writing. Connie and Lucy both compli-
mented Sally on writing an interesting story.
They both also went on to comment specifically
that they thought the story was funny (IIA,48-49).

Several details relating to the story were
discussed. These details included the cost of the
hamburger, who else purchased one, and how to
keep it from spoiling.

Two questions were asked which could have
led to the addition of more general content.
William asked, "Why would you want a hamburger
for a pet?" Lucy wanted to know, "What did every-
body do with hamburger they bought?" (IIA,49).

Sally interacted very little with the group as they responded to her writing. Responses she did make tended to inhibit rather than encourage responses.

William's Writing

William read his writing, "Weirdos in Space", to the group next. After reading his story he went back and added the words 'at me'. There was no discussion as the girls completed their response forms.

Sally opened the discussion by stating that she found the story interesting. She continued by saying, "I have questions. What's a zoomzanger. Where did the spaceship come from? Why did it take so long for it to blow up? Why ten seconds? What kind of people? Martians? How many in spaceship?" (IIA,51).

William indicated that he did not want to respond to any of Sally's questions. So, Connie stated that she had one additional question. She asked William what planet the characters were from. He responded, "Don't know" (IIA,52).

Lucy completed the discussion by indicating that she liked the story. She asked William what happened to the people who did not survive.

William replied, "They blow up into little bits"(IIA,-2). This tended to end the discussion of William's story, so they moved on to a discussion of Lucy's writing.

Lucy's Writing

Lucy was the last student to read her story to the response group. After she completed reading her story, Lucy read through her writing silently. During this re-reading, she made one spelling change on her paper.

Sally began the response to Lucy's writing. She opened by stating that she found the story interesting. Sally then asked two detail questions. She wanted to know how many kittens there were and their names. Sally concluded with, "That's all I've got" (IIA,53).

William's initial question, "...why didn't she say she already had a kitten?", brought forth a loud sigh from Lucy. William ignored the sigh and continued by suggesting that Lucy use more pronouns. He explained that she "...used kittens too much" (IIA,54).

Lucy did not seem to understand what William meant. She looked questioningly at the group and stated, "Pronouns? I used kittens" (IIA,54).

William made no response, but Sally explained by citing an example of how pronouns could be used in place of the common noun kitten.

Connie was the last to respond to the writing. She asked for further description of the kittens. In this description she requested specific information about looks, color, and names.

2. Writing the Second Draft

There was little interaction among the group members as they moved on to the writing of the second drafts. I noted that three of the four students used their response forms to make changes on their first drafts before moving on to their second drafts. Lucy did not use her response form, but she did go back over her first draft to make changes.

Sally was the first to move on to the writing of her second draft. While writing that draft, she asked for help on pronoun usage (I or me), word choice (booth or stand), and spelling (know) (IIA,55-57). She received help from Lucy or Connie in each instance.

Sally attempted to start a conversation with the group about a fight among some other female

students. She was unable to engage anyone in this conversation, so the topic was quickly dropped (IIA,56).

While Lucy, Connie, and William were writing their second drafts, they referred often to the first drafts of their writings. First draft papers were kept in a position where they could be referred to easily. Sally very seldom referred to her first draft.

William and Connie read back over their papers after completing their second drafts. Both students erased and made changes on their papers. Sally and Lucy finished their papers and immediately placed them in their writing folders without reading over them.

3. Editing the Second Drafts

William came into the group session seemingly excited to share some information with the group. After the students had gotten their writing papers and editing checklists out, William announced, "I used to have a big imagination. I was looking through some pictures and found this one story I started. It was pretty good" (IIA,60). I suggested to William that he might want to use the story for his next writing. William made no reply to the suggestion.

Students were then reminded that they needed to have two people edit their papers. They immediately began the task. Sally and William began to work together, while Lucy and Connie paired off.

Students attended to checking on the conventions of English grammar. Changes were suggested and followed relative to punctuation, handwriting, word usage, and capitalization. There was little discussion of the correctness of suggestions made. Students very willingly accepted the advice of those who edited their papers.

Sally did request the help of the group on the conclusion of her writing. Sally asked for help by saying, "Does this make sense to you?" (IIA,64). She then read the section to the group, shared her proposed change, and sought their approval before making that change (IIA,64).

At the conclusion of the editing session, Sally began reading over her paper. She then declared to the group, "No one got this" (a spelling error) (IIA,65). After Sally made this statement, all four of the group members looked over their papers one final time.

4. Interviews

Individual interviews were conducted the following day as some students worked on the first drafts of a new writing. Sally was not present for this session, nor was she involved in any further sessions. I found out later that she had run away from home and was charged with breaking and entering. As a consequence of these actions, Sally was eventually remanded to a juvenile group home.

The three group members who were interviewed, seemed to have given careful consideration to the suggestions and questions of the group. Their decisions to include or exclude new material were based on whether or not it would be logical to do so or how the new information would be helpful to the audience.

It had been suggested to Connie that she tell what her father was hunting and when the story took place. She added to her second draft that her father was hunting deer at 4:30 in the morning. When asked why she made this time change, Connie replied, "Because no one gets up and goes deer hunting at night" (IIA,71).

The group also recommended that Connie include what the noises were which she heard. Connie added to her second draft "...it sounded like people walking" (IIA,68), but would go no further. She indicated that the reader should be able to understand what had occurred.

Two response group members had asked William to explain some of the vocabulary used in his science fiction story. Specifically, they wanted to know what a 'zoom zanger' was. William inidcated that he really didn't know what a zoom zanger was (one could infer that it was a weapon) and that it was not important.for the reader to know anymore than he had already told (IIA,73).

William dealt with the rest of the group's suggestions in one of two ways. He either added the information requested or explained why he couldn't possibly do so. For instance, William had been asked to describe the people in the spaceship. He decided not to do so because, "I (character in the story) couldn't see them" (IIB, 77).

Lucy included all the suggestions of the group, except one from William. Lucy explained that she hadn't followed William's suggestion

because if she would have done so there would not have been a plot for her story.

All three group members perceived the response group as being helpful. They noted that the groups helped them to add more information to the stories.

5. Summary - Second Writing Episode - Group II

The group remained very task oriented as they worked through their second writings. One group member, Sally, did not appear as involved with the group. But, her lack of involvement did not seem to greatly hinder the group's efforts. They seemed intent on remaining on task and limited discussion to the writings.

The group began by considering addition of detail, character motivation, outcome of a story, and an author's overuse of a common noun. As they moved through the response session, the group's focus narrowed as they considered the conventions of English grammar. Group members felt the response group was helpful in assisting author's to add more information to their stories.

Third Writing Episode - Group II

1. Responding to the First Draft of the Writing

The group continued meeting with three response group members. Sally was not present

for any further meetings.

Lucy's Writing

Lucy volunteered to open the response group session by reading her story to the group. She made no modifications to her story during the oral reading or while the group members completed their response forms.

There was little group interaction as the students responded to Lucy's writing. She sat and listened to the questions and suggestions without making any comments.

Connie opened the response by stating that the story was "...good and interesting" (IIB,86). She continued by requesting a description of the cat,including the cat's name.

William thought, "The story was cute" (IIB,86). He then questioned the actions of the main character by asking, "How did you know there was something special about the cat?" (IIB,86). William concluded by asking for the cat to be described in more detail.

Connie's Writing

Connie volunteered to read her story next. She made no changes while reading, nor while waiting for the response session to begin.

There was no discussion among group members as they completed the response forms.

Lucy opened the response session by stating that she thought the story was interesting. She followed by asking questions about the lamp. Lucy was asking for further description; particularly, she wanted to know the lamp's age and its origin (IIB,88-89).

In addition, Lucy asked Connie to do more with the outcome of the story and character's reactions. Specifically, she asked, "What did you do with the genie when she granted the wrong wishes?" (IIB,89).

William responded by complimenting Connie on the use of humor. He also wanted a more thorough description of the lamp. Additionally, he suggested that Connie could describe the dog more completely (IIB,90).

This response was very similar to the response to Lucy's story. Responders read questions and suggestions from their completed response forms. There was no informal discussion of the story.

William's Writing

Following the response to Connie's writing, William began reading the first draft of his story to the group. William hesitated at some sections

while reading. After reading it a second time, at Lucy's request, William looked over his story and made some changes. He crossed out one sentence completely and made a word change.

Both responders expressed positive feelings about the story. Connie was very specific in her comments as she stated, "It was scary and gross. He made the cave sound good. He put time into it" (IIB,92).

Lucy questioned the actions of some of the story characters. She asked, "Why were the people screaming and why were they covered with blood?" (IIB,92). In addition, she suggested that William work on the story conclusion by telling what happened to him, the main character.

Connie also thought William could improve the conclusion. She indicated this by asking William, "And where was you walking to? And did you stay or try for help?" (IIB,92).

William followed up on these questions by stating, "I need to work on the ending" (IIB,93). This statement led to specific suggestions from the responders as to how the story could be concluded.

William listened to the discussion. Finally, he asked, "Would it be okay if I just wrote two stories? Like the second one continues."

Researcher, "Yes, maybe at the end of this..."

Lucy, "To be continued."

Connie, "Day One of the Mystery Walk" (IIB,94).

There was some laughter after Connie's final suggestion, but William made no response to the suggestions of the responders. This response to William's story ended the July 12th meeting of the response group.

2. Writing the Second Draft

When the session opened on July 13, the students began by reviewing their first drafts and using information from the response sheets to make changes.

Connie and Lucy discussed a suggestion offered by Lucy. Connie, looking at the response form, stated, "Genie? ...what do with genie? It's a good suggestion. But it's a dream."

Lucy replied, "I never thought about it being a dream"(IIB,95). Lucy's reply seemed to satisfy Connie, as she continued with her work.

There was very little other interaction while students worked from first drafts through the second drafts of their writings. There were only three additional requests for help, as authors requested help with spelling, capitalization, and comma usage.

3. Editing the Second Draft

Changes at this stage related to the conventions of English usage. As in the two preceding writing episodes, changes were mainly in the areas of punctuation, spelling, and handwriting. Additionally, there were two cases where word usage was changed and tenses were changed.

William also suggested to both writers that they change their paragraphing. He explained to Lucy that whenever the speaker changes a new paragraph should be started. Lucy listened attentively, then went through her paper and made seven changes in paragraphing (IIB,100).

4. Interviews

Lucy considered each of the responder's suggestions as she wrote the second draft of her story. She did not follow through with two of the suggestions offered. Lucy's explanation for not following through with those suggestions was,

"Thought about it, but didn't know how to get it in there" (IIB,104,106).

There was a noteable difference between the suggestions Lucy followed and those she did not. She followed suggestions for describing the cat and giving the cost of the animal. These suggestions could be followed by adding a few words. To follow the other suggestions, naming the cat and explaining how the author knew it was special, Lucy would have had to make more extensive revisions. It's important to note that her explanation showed that she wanted to revise, but that she didn't know how to do so.

Connie also included some suggestions, but not others. She included suggestions which dealt with the addition of more description and more detail. Connie's explanation for including these suggestions exemplifies her awareness of an audience. Connie explained her reason for adding the information, "It just tells the people more" (IIB,109).

Connie, like Lucy, did not follow suggestions which would have required more extensive revisions. These suggestions were those in which the responder was asking 'why' or 'how' some event had occurred.

Connie explained her reluctance to follow such suggestions by stating, "Couldn't fit it in... It was a dream, so really didn't know what happened to the genie" (IIB,110).

William did not follow any of the suggestions given by the responders. Those suggestions included 'why questions' and suggestions for revising the conclusion. William explained that the suggestions were not included because, "...that will be in the next one" (IIB,114,115,118). His explanation was based on the decision made at the end of the response group session to continue this story for the next writing. William further explained his decision by stating, "Just leaves them hanging - waiting" (IIB,119).

5. Summary - Third Writing Episode - Group II

There was little informal group interaction among the members. Students seemed more relaxed than they had in the previous two writing episodes. William, especially, seemed to relax and discuss his suggestions and questions at more length.

Fewer suggestions from responders were followed during this episode than during the previous two writing episodes. It may be that writers were finding the suggestions more difficult to follow

since responders had expanded from detail and description suggestions to suggestions which required more thought on the writer's part.

Fourth Writing Episode - Group II

1. ### Responding to the First Draft of the Writing

   ### Lucy's Writing

   Lucy opened the response session by reading her story, "The Dancing Flower", to the group. She occasionally interrupted her reading to make changes on her first draft. These changes were generally in word endings; adding or deleting 'ed' or 's'. After Lucy finished reading her story, she sat quietly as the responders completed their response forms.

   Connie began responding to Lucy by complimenting her on the story. She followed by asking Lucy two questions; the first of which requested the addition of simple detail. The second question focused on more general content addition.

   Connie asked, "And what did you do with the plant after you killed it?" (IIB,122). Connie was referring to the conclusion of the story when asking the preceding question. This was not a question which Lucy could answer in one or two words. She would need to make a more major revision.

There was no discussion about Connie's questions, so William began his response. He referred to a specific section of the writing which he particularly liked. William continued by asking several questions and making a suggestion.

The first two questions focused on details about the origin of the plant and its size. By asking his third question, William was seeking an explanation of why an event occurred in the story (IIB,122).

William's suggestion was, "...you could describe the plant more" (IIB,122). This suggestion sparked some discussion because Lucy requested that William be more specific. After discussion the plant description, Lucy continued the discussion by referring to questions asked by both responders.

Connie's Writing

After the conclusion of this discussion, Connie volunteered to read her story. Connie made no changes while reading her story. After reading her story and clarifying some information for Lucy, Connie looked over her paper and made two

changes. She corrected a spelling error and changed a word from singular to plural (IIB,124).

Lucy began the response session by noting some particular actions which she liked from the story. She then asked a question related to character motivation. Lucy asked, "And why did Cricket attack Timmy when he was laying on the pillow?" (IIB,126). Connie made no comment, so the group moved on to William's response.

William asked several detail questions related to the story. Connie listened to William's questions and then asked, "How can I put that in there?" (IIB,127). The group members seemed unable to assist Connie with her question.

William's Writing

William was the last student to read his fourth story to the group. His story was a continuation of the last writing and was titled, "Rocky Mountain Fun, Part 2". After reading his story, William made some changes while the girls completed their response forms. At two locations in the story, William added more description. He also combined two sentences and replaced a pronoun with a common noun.

Both girls questioned William about some of the characters in his story. They each asked, "...what is a cyclone?" (IIB,129-130).

William replied to this by reading words he had already added to his first draft. He read, "A ghost like creature" (IIB,129). William would later change cyclone to cyclops.

Each of the responders also asked why or how 'it' turned into a frog. They also asked who spoke inside the cave. To the second question, William responded, "A loud voice" (IIB,130).

Lucy commented that William could have ended the story better. Connie hinted at this same point when she asked, "and were the people happy to leave? How did you get out?" (IIB,130). William made no further comments regarding the questions or suggestions which were made. Therefore, the group began reviewing the suggestions and questions offered in preparation for composing their second drafts.

2. Writing the Second Draft

The group spent a great deal of time using the response forms and working on their first draft papers before writing their second drafts.

There was a lot of interaction initially; mostly instigated by Connie.

Connie requested help on a section of her paper where she was attempting to follow the responders' suggestions. She read the revised section to the responders and asked for advice. The responders signified their approval, and Lucy continued by offering a slightly different wording (IIB,132-133).

Connie also requested help with paragraphing. Lucy gave the requested help, and when looking over the paper noted that Connie needed further help. The two girls then worked together at correcting spelling, verb tenses, and punctuation. William was called on to offer advice whenever the girls were unsure of how to make the needed changes. After this intensive work on Connie's paper, the group members worked quietly at completing their second drafts.

3. Editing the Second Draft

The students seemed to work very diligently at editing each other's papers. There was more interaction during the editing session than there had been at this stage of the previous writing episodes. Authors asked for help at particular points, questioned some of the editor's sugges-

tions, and asked for explanations of some mechanical corrections.

Students suggested corrections mainly in the areas of handwriting, spelling, and punctuation. In addition, corrections were noted in verb tense, word usage, and sentence structure. In the area of sentence structure, sentence combining, punctuation to correct a run-on sentence, and word additions to correct an incomplete sentence were offered.

4. Interviews

The response group members did not view this session to be as successful as the previous group sessions. Few of the content suggestions which were made were actually followed.

The interview with Lucy revealed that she dealt with two of the group's suggestions. In reply to a question about how she made decisions regarding questions and suggestions, Lucy replied, "If I think it's easy to put in, I put it in" (IIC,154).

Connie followed none of the content suggestions made by the response group. She thought her story already sounded good and that some of

the information questioned was already a part of
the story. Connie stated, "They helped me with
paragraphs and stuff" (IIC,157). She did not
feel the group was very helpful with ideas.

William thought the group was more success-
ful in helping him. As a result of response
group suggestions and questions, he added more
description and more detail. William felt his
second draft was better because of the parts he
changed as a result of the group's work (IIC,160).

5. Summary - Fourth Writing Episode - Group II

As in all previous episodes, the group
members remained very task oriented. Group
discussion of the writings increased from previous
sessions. Writers requested help and questioned
suggestions given by responders. Connie and
Lucy interacted more informally, while William
acted more as an advisor.

Initially, responders' suggestions centered
around addition of details and more complete
descriptions. They also questioned character
motivation and the logic of the occurrence of
certain events. It was also suggested that the
conclusions of the stories required further
attention. Specific questions were asked and

suggestions were given to guide the writers.

As the group moved through the writing session, the responders focused their attention more specifically on the conventions of English grammar. Writers asked for help, questioned suggestions, and asked for explanations of suggested changes. This was the first time any editing changes had been questioned by the Group II writers.

The female students did not view this session to be as beneficial as they had previous sessions. Yet, William felt that the group had been more helpful with this writing than they had been with the previous three.

Fifth Writing Episode - Group II

1. ### Responding to the First Draft of the Writing

   #### Lucy's Writing

   Lucy volunteered to read her story first at this response session. She made no changes as she read, nor as the responders were completing their response forms. There was no group interaction during this time period.

   Connie was the first to respond to the writing. She noted that she liked the story and the banana. Her question, "Did the banana say

anything to you while you were eating?" (IIC,162), brought forth laughter from the group, but there were no other comments made.

William noted that he thought the story was funny. He continued by asking Lucy two detail questions. Lucy made no reply and asked no questions, so the group moved on to the reading of William's story.

William's Writing

After William read his story, he reviewed it and made several changes. By changing punctuation and adding words, he combined two sentences into one. He also added a comma after an introductory phrase and inserted some more descriptive words.

The responders questions focused on the actions of the characters involved in the story. Both responders wanted the actions of the characters and the consequences of those actions explained. Specifically, Lucy asked, "Why did the boy go to heaven if he drank? And why did the guard take a drink of whiskey if he was an angel and he was in heaven? I think the boy should have gone the other way and the guard should have too for taking the whiskey" (IIC,164-165). William made no reply,

so Connie continued with her questions and suggestions.

Connie also questioned the characters actions as she stated, "...why did he take his bottle to heaven with him and his radio? You should work on the part where they got stoned. And how did he change his ways?" (IIC,165-166).

Again, William did not respond in any way. He sat rather passively, listened to the response, asked no questions, and offered no explanations.

Connie's Writing

Connie was the last student to read her writing to the group. After reading her first draft, Connie made some changes while the responders completed the response forms. These changes were in the areas of word additions and word substitutions.

Lucy opened the response session by complimenting Connie on her story. She continued by suggesting that Connie add more information about the animals at the fair. Connie also suggested that the author describe the people and their actions more clearly.

William further suggested the addition of more detail and description. He asked, "How'd

you lose your money? What kind of games? And describe the zepper? (IIC,169).

Connie responded by describing the zepper to the group. She described how it worked and how she felt when riding. The responders indicated that Connie should include that description in her second draft.

2. Writing the Second Draft

There was little group interaction as students completed the second drafts of their stories. Students began by reviewing the response forms and working on their first drafts.

The only group member to seek advice was Connie. The group helped her with spelling and capitalization. In addition, they aided her in revising the opening of her story.

3. Editing the Second Draft

As in all previous episodes, changes at this stage of the process were primarily in the areas of spelling, punctuation, handwriting, and capitalization. Responders also noted a few instances where authors needed to add 's' or 'ed' to words.

Authors sought help from the responders regarding paragraphing. This led to several changes on papers regarding paragraph formation. A great deal of discussion occurred as group

members discussed the need for paragraphs at different instances.

4. Interviews

Lucy followed most of the responders' suggestions regarding her final writing. She explained that the suggestions helped make her story, "... sound better...make more sense" (IIC,187-189). At the conclusion of the interview, Lucy stated that she found working with the writing response group beneficial because, "...it helps the stories turn out better" (IIC,189).

Connie displayed an awareness of a reading audience when she explained her reasons for following a responder's suggestion regarding the addition of more description. She explained that the added description made it, "...sound better. And if a person was going to read it, they'd know what a zepper is" (IIC,192). She concluded by stating that the response group was helpful because, "You have someone to check over before you turn it in. You can catch your own mistakes"(IIC,193).

William followed very little of the group's advice on his final writing. He did add requested

information to explain the main character's actions. William explained that the group was helpful in aiding him to create a better flow of ideas. He further expressed his positive view of working with a response group by stating, "(Group Members) Help you with mistakes. Make it sound better" (IIC,197).

5. <u>Summary - Fifth Writing Episode - Group II</u>

The group remained very task oriented as they completed this fifth and final writing. Although there was not a lot of informal inter-action or general discussion, the group appeared relaxed. Authors asked questions and requested help in certain areas.

After the reading of the first drafts, responders centered on addition of detail, explanations of character motivation and actions, and addition of more information to describe events or characters. The only interaction during the second phase was in response to Connie's requests for help in spelling, capitalization, and paragraphing. Finally, the group, as in previous episodes, focused their attention on the mechanics of writing.

Analysis of the Data

A review of the descriptions of what occurred during the writing episodes and of the documents produced by the group members allowed several patterns of revision and patterns of group interaction to emerge. In the following section these patterns are introduced and support for their emergence is given in tabular form.

Revision Patterns Emerge

An analysis of the data yielded the following revision patterns:

1. The flow of language was considered as students composed.

2. The students viewed writing as a process of building on information.

3. Writing was viewed as a means of communicating with others.

4. Discussion of first drafts focused on the content of the writings.

5. The focus of discussion narrowed to include attention to mechanics as students completed their second drafts.

6. The students viewed their writing as malleable.

Pattern Descriptions and Examples

With the six revision patterns as a focus, I reviewed the data to locate supportive evidence as well as negative evidence related to each pattern. A description of each

pattern and an example of supportive evidence follow:

1. Flow of Language - Attention to smoothness and
continuity of words. ("Words right - like a poem.")

2. Inclusion/Exclusion - Addition of content
(inclusion) in contrast to the deletion of content (ex-
clusion). ("Put that in there."; "That shouldn't be there
if she wasn't going to go.")

3. First Draft Content/Mechanics - Attention to
detail, description, characterization, logic, larger
section of writing (content) in contrast to attention to
spelling, punctuation, handwriting, word choice (mechanics)
when working with the first draft. ("...put why she left
town."; "...check your paper for quotations.")

4. Second Draft Content/Mechanics - Attention to
content and mechanics (See description 3.) when working
on second draft.

5. Writing to Communicate - Utilization of language
as a means of sharing information with a greater audience.
("People might not know what you're talking about....")

6. Writing is malleable - Recognition that words can
be molded various ways. (Writing drafts show sentences
crossed out and arrows used to rearrange sentences.)

Guidelines for Reading the Tables

The tables on the following pages provide an overview
of the analysis of the patterns of revision. Each pattern
is used as a table heading with supportive and negative

evidence noted beneath. Evidence is given chronologically to give a sense of the development of the group. Numbers in the table indicate how often particular events were noted. Direct quotes are occasionally included to provide further support for the development of the revision patterns. These general directions for reading the tables should be clarified by the following example.

The first pattern, Flow of Language, begins with notations for Group I's first writing episode. During that episode two authors made changes following the oral reading of their stories. Three quotes from students are also given to provide further evidence for the development of flow of language as a pattern. The group can be followed through to the fourth episode where two authors made changes after reading orally, authors rehearsed revisions aloud, and revisions were read aloud. The tables can be read in this manner for each pattern and for both groups. By reviewing the tables, the reader should be able to see the development of the revision patterns through each group's writing episodes.

Revision Patterns - Group I

	Flow of Language	Inclusion/Exclusion	
		Inclusion	Exclusion
First Writing Episode (4 members)	Authors (2) make changes following oral reading, i.e.: - delete introductory phrase - add information to explain character's actions - replace common nouns with pronouns "It rhymed a little - sounded funny." "Words right - like a poem." "Should not go one sentence to another."	Add details to expand or describe (20) i.e.: - kind of fish - three wishes - describe bike - describe George	Author deletes three wishes
Second Writing Episode (4 members)	Authors (3) make changes following oral reading, i.e.: - add name of character - describe setting and character's actions "It didn't sound right the last time."	Add details to expand or describe (8) i.e.: - breakdancing - Fourth of July celebration - "Put... why he hit you ...what happened to guns...."	

	Flow of Language	Inclusion/Exclusion	
		Inclusion	Exclusion
Third Writing Episode (4 members)	Authors (2) make changes following oral reading, i.e.: - add words to clarify setting - add names of characters in dialogue	Add details to expand or describe (20), i.e.: - describe setting - explain events & actions - include new character - "Put that in there" - Add general content and characterization (See examples under First Draft Content.)	Delete last sentence - "That shouldn't be in there if she wasn't going to go."
Fourth Writing Episode (3 members)	Authors (2) make changes following oral reading: - add words (articles) - add transitional words - rephrasing - delete words Revisions read aloud. Author rehearses orally then revises.	Add details to expand or describe (12) i.e.: - time - setting - explain events Add general content and characterization (See examples under First Draft Content.)	"Instead of gory stuff..."

	First Draft Content/Mechanics		Second Draft Content/Mechanics	
	Content	Mechanics	Content	Mechanics
First Writing Episode (4 members)	Add details to expand or describe (20) (See examples under Inclusion/Exclusion.)	Change sentence structure (3), i.e.: – combine sentences – reorder words in opening	Clarity of one section discussed.	Handwriting (6) Spelling (5) Punctuation (14)
Second Writing Episode (4 members)	Add details to expand or describe (8) (See examples under Inclusion/ Exclusion.) Characterization (4), i.e.: – give name – make gender clear – "...put why she left town."		Opening questioned but declared acceptable for fairy tale.	Handwriting (10) Spelling (10) Punctuation (12)

	First Draft Content/Mechanics		Second Draft Content/Mechanics	
	Content	Mechanics	Content	Mechanics
Third Writing Episode (4 members)	Add detail to expand or describe (20) (See examples under Inclusion/ Exclusion.) Logic (7) -of information -of sequence General (5) i.e.: -"...stretch or use exaggeration." -content suggested for conclusion "make more suspense." Characterization (7), i.e.: -explain actions -clarify roles	"...check your paper for quotations."		Handwriting (10) Spelling (11) Punctuation (11) Capitalization (6) Paragraphing (3) Word Choice (8) - delete word - verb usage - add word

	First Draft Content/Mechanics		Second Draft Content/Mechanics	
	Content	Mechanics	Content	Mechanics
Fourth Writing Episode (3 members)	Add detail to expand or describe (12) (See examples under Inclusion/ Exclusion.) Logic (4) - of information General (2), i.e.: - add practical jokes - "I can't stand the last part." Characterization (7), i.e.: - why actions - identify	"Watch your run-on sentences." "Author asks, "Do I need a comma?"		Handwriting (22) Spelling (10) Punctuation (10) Capitalization (8) Sentence Structure (8) - wording - combine sentences - run-ons

Revision Patterns - Group I
(Continued)

	Writing to Communicate	Writing is Malleable
First Writing Episode (4 members)		Writing drafts show: -Words and sentences crossed out with revisions written above. -Arrows used to rearrange or insert new sentences Interviews reveal: -Many of responders' suggestions followed.
Second Writing Episode (4 members)	Interviews reveal consideration of audience, i.e.: -"People might not know what you're talking about..." -"People who don't read that much or watch too many movies might not know what they are." Student Comments: -"...some people might not know what they (terms) are."	Writing drafts show: -Words and sentences crossed out with revision written above. -Arrows used to rearrange or insert new sentences Interviews reveal: -Many of responders' suggestions followed.

Revision Patterns - Group I
(Continued)

	Writing to Communicate	Writing is Malleable
Third Writing Episode (4 members)	Interviews reveal consideration of audience, i.e.: - "Someone (reader) might think it's someone else." - "Everybody knows..." - "I expect them to understand that."	Writing drafts show: - Words and sentences crossed out with revision written above. - Arrows used to rearrange or insert new sentences. Interviews reveal: - Many of responders' suggestions followed.
Fourth Writing Episode (3 members)	Interviews reveal consideration of audience, i.e.: - "I thought he would know." - Most people (readers) know..."	Writing drafts show: - Words and sentences crossed out with revision written above. - Arrows used to rearrange or insert new sentences. Interviews reveal: - Many of responders' suggestions followed. Luke writes 3 drafts of same story.

	Flow of Language	Inclusion/Exclusion	
		Inclusion	Exclusion

First Writing Episode
 	
(4 members)
	Authors (3) make changes following oral reading, i.e.:
	  - add words
	  - delete words
	"She made it sound good."
	"It sounded like it needed a better ending."
		Add details to expand and describe (17), i.e.:
		 - scary surroundings
		 - dog's name
		 - describe race track
		 - identify characters
		Add general content and characterization
		(See examples under First Draft Content.)	

Second Writing Episode
 	
(4 members)
	Authors (4) make changes following oral reading, i.e.:
	  - add words
	  - spelling
	Re-read story to show clarity.
		Add details to expand & describe (20), i.e.:
		 - setting
		 - what was noise?
		 - cost of item?
		 - describe people, martians, spaceship
		Characterization (3), i.e.:
		 - explain why of character's actions	

	Flow of Language	Inclusion/Exclusion	
		Inclusion	Exclusion

Third Writing Episode
 	
(3 members)
	Author (1) makes changes following oral reading, i.e.:
	  - delete sentence
	  - change word
	
	"He made the cave sound good."
		Add details to expand & describe (11) i.e.:
		  - describe cat
		  - describe lamp
		  - describe dog
		  - what was done with genie?
		Add characterization (3).*	

Fourth Writing Episode
 	
(3 members)
	Authors (3) make changes following oral reading, i.e.:
	  - word endings
	  - spelling
	  - word usage
	  - combine sentences
	"Thought it sounded okay."
		Add details to expand & describe (16), i.e.:
		  - how long gone?
		  - house size
		  - who spoke
		  - how changed into frog?
		Add characterization (2).*	

Fifth Writing Episode
 	
(3 members)
	Authors (2) make changes following oral reading, i.e.:
	  - punctuation
	  - add words
	  - substitute words
	"Make it sound better."
		Add details to expand & describe (10), i.e.:
		  - kind of cereal
		  - describe taste
		  - other animals?
		  - describe people and actions
		Add characterization (3).*	

*See examples under First Draft Content.

	First Draft Content/Mechanics		Second Draft Content/Mechanics	
	Content	Mechanics	Content	Mechanics
First Writing Episode (4 members)	Add details to expand or describe (17) (See examples under Inclusion/Exclusion.) General content (6), i.e.: - conclusion - logic of events Characterization (9), i.e.: - why actions - how developed traits			Spelling (8) Punctuation (23) Word Choice (7) - tense - pronouns
Second Writing Episode (4 members)	Add details to expand or describe (20) (See examples under Inclusion/Exclusion.) Characterization (3), - explain why characters acted as they did	Suggestion made to use pronouns - "...used kittens too much."	Student re-writes conclusion	Handwriting (3) Spelling (5) Punctuation (8)

Revision Patterns - Group II
(Continued)

	First Draft Content/Mechanics		Second Draft Content/Mechanics	
	Content	Mechanics	Content	Mechanics
Third Writing Episode (3 members)	Add details to expand or describe (11) (See examples under Inclusion/Exclusion.) Characterization (3), i.e.: - explain why character acted as they did Outcome of story questioned (2)			Handwriting (5) Spelling (5) Punctuation (8) Word Tense (2) Paragraphing (2)
Fourth Writing Episode (3 members)	Add details to expand or describe (16) (See examples under Inclusion/Exclusion.) Characterization (2), i.e.: - explain why character acted as they did Work on segment (2)	Use of through-threw	Conclusion of story discussed.	Handwriting (9) Spelling (5) Punctuation (10) Word Tense (2) Sentence Structure (2)

	First Draft Content/Mechanics		Second Draft Content/Mechanics	
	Content	Mechanics	Content	Mechanics
Fifth Writing Episode (3 members)	Add details to expand or describe (10) (See examples under Inclusions/Exclusions.) Characterization (3) i.e.: - explain why characters acted as they did Work on segment (3)			Handwriting (5) Spelling (7) Word Tense (6) Capitalization (5) Paragraphing (5)

Revision Patterns - Group II
(Continued)

	Writing to Communicate	Writing is Malleable
First Writing Episode (4 members)		Writing drafts show: - Words and sentences crossed out with revisions written above. - Arrows used to rearrange or insert new sentences. Interviews reveal: - Many of responders' suggestions followed.
Second Writing Episode (4 members)	Interviews reveal consideration of audience, i.e.: - "Tell everyone (readers) what time it was." - "Does this make sense?"	Writing drafts show: - Words and sentences crossed out with revisions written above. - Arrows used to rearrange or insert new sentences. Interviews reveal: - Many of responders' suggestions followed.
Third Writing Episode (3 members)	Interviews reveal consideration of audience, i.e.: - "It just tells the people more." - "Just leaves them hanging - waiting."	Writing drafts show: - Words and sentences crossed out with revision written above. - Arrows used to rearrange or insert new sentences. Interviews reveal: - Many of responders' suggestions followed.

Revision Patterns - Group II
(Continued)

	Writing to Communicate	Writing is Malleable
Fourth Writing Episode (3 members)	Interviews reveal consideration of audience, i.e.: - "They would already know."	Writing drafts show: - Many changes made, primarily mechanics. Interviews reveal: - Two members did not follow many content suggestions. Did so when, "...easy to put in."
Fifth Writing Episode (3 members)	Interviews reveal consideration of audience, i.e.: - "And if a person was going to read it, they'd know what a zepper is."	Writing drafts show: - Words and sentences crossed out with revisions written above. - Arrows used to rearrange or insert new sentences. Interviews reveal: - Many of responders' suggestions followed.

Group Interaction Patterns Emerge

An analysis of the data yielded the following group interaction patterns:

1. Student behavior was self-governing.

2. Group members maintained fairly equal status within the group.

3. Trusting relationships were developed.

4. Guidelines established during the training sessions were followed.

Pattern Descriptions and Examples

With the four group interaction patterns as a focus, I reviewed the data to locate supportive and negative evidence pertaining to each pattern. A description of each pattern and an example of supportive evidence follows:

1. Self-Governing Behavior - Group is directed by action of its own members. ("Shh! This is not the subject.")

2. Egalitarianism - Group members maintain balanced positions, so leadership roles are not established by individuals. (Group members work collaboratively to revise.)

3. Group Trust - Individuals display belief or confidence in other group members and are willing to take risks with the group. ("I don't like this. It's too similar to the last one.")

4.   Functional Behavior - Group members work in expected manner following the guidelines for response group activity which were established during the training sessions. (Use response forms.)

Guidelines for Reading the Tables

The tables on the following pages provide an overview of the analysis of the patterns of group interaction. Each pattern is used as a table heading with supportive and negative evidence noted beneath. Evidence is given chronologically to develop a sense of the development of the group. Particular instances of behavior are cited and summary statements are included regarding student interaction. The following example should clarify these general directions for reading the tables.

The first group interaction pattern, Self-Governing Behavior, begins with notations for Group I's first writing episode. It was noted during that time that there was no discussion held not related to the writings and that one student followed up the discussion by requesting help. Similar events occurred during the second writing episode. During the third episode, students who strayed were brought back to task by other group members. Direct quotes are included in the chart to illustrate this behavior. At the fourth and final writing episode of Group I, there was no discussion held not related to the writings. The tables can be read in this manner for all

patterns and for both groups. By reviewing the tables, the reader should be able to follow the development of the group interaction patterns through each group's writing episodes.

	Self-Governing Behavior	Egalitarianism
First Writing Episode (4 members)	Student discussion followed by author asking "How would you put that in words." No discussions held not related to writing.	Authors volunteer to read. Authors follow request of group if second reading requested.

Second Writing Episode
 	
(4 members)
	Discussions followed by suggestions for authors.
	
	No discussions held not related to writing.
		Authors volunteer to read.
		
		Different authors direct, i.e.:
		    "Which one wants to start?"
		    "What did you like best..."

Third Writing Episode
 	
(4 members)
	When group discussion strayed too far students brought back –
	    "Shh! This is not the subject."
	    "How'd we get off the subject of my story?"
		Authors volunteer to read.
		Different authors direct i.e.:
		 –"Just tell me how I would end this."
		 –"Okay, someone else go."
		Students collaborate on revising section.
		When editorial revisions questioned, third party mediates.

Fourth Writing Episode (3 members)	No discussions held not related to writings.	Authors volunteer to read. Students work collaboratively to revise. When editorial revisions questioned, third party mediates.

Group Interactions Patterns - Group I
(Continued)

	Group Trust	Functional Behavior
First Writing Episode (4 members)	Share concerns, i.e.: "I now what I did wrong already." "Wait a minute...I see where I messed up." Authors ask for help, "How do I put that in words? "Would this be a run-on sentence?" Students volunteer to participate.	Follow established guidelines for response group process. Use response forms.
Second Writing Episode (4 members)	Share concerns, i.e.: "I didn't spend enough time on it." Authors ask for help, i.e.: "How do I put this?" "What do you want me to do here?" Students volunteer to participate.	Follow established guidelines for response group process. Use response forms.

Group Interactions Patterns - Group I
(Continued)

	Group Trust	Functional Behavior
Third Writing Episode (4 members)	Share concerns, i.e.: "I need something. I need help!" "George, come on, help me!" "If I need help. I'll ask." Authors ask for help, i.e.: "...I'm going to read this. See if it makes sense." Students volunteer to participate.	Follow established guidelines for response group process. Use response forms.
Fourth Writing Episode (3 members)	Share concerns, i.e.: "I don't know..." "You guys can help me figure one (title) out." Authors ask for help, i.e.: "Is it all right?" -spelling -paragraphing -run-on sentences Students volunteer to participate.	Follow established guidelines for response group process. Use response forms.

Group Interaction Patterns - Group II

	Self-Governing Behavior	Egalitarianism
First Writing Episode (4 members)	No discussion held not related to the writing.	Authors volunteer to read. Authors follow request of group if second reading requested.
Second Writing Episode (4 members)	Student attempts to start off-task conversation, "Did you see how mad Chris was yesterday? Did you see she almost got in a fight?" No one from group responds.	Authors volunteer to read. Authors follow request of group if second reading requested.
Third Writing Episode (3 members)	No discussion held not related to writing.	Authors volunteer to read. Authors follow request of group if second reading requested. Group works collaboratively to revise one student's conclusion.
Fourth Writing Episode (3 members)	No discussion held not related to writing.	Authors volunteer to read. Authors follow request of group if second reading requested. Group works collaboratively to revise one student's conclusion.
Fifth Writing Episode (3 members)	No discussion held not related to writing.	Authors volunteer to read. Authors follow request of group if second reading requested. Authors work collaboratively on segments.

	Group Trust	Functional Behavior
First Writing Episode (4 members)	Students volunteer to participate.	Follow established guidelines for response group process.
Second Writing Episode (4 members)	Share concerns, i.e.: "I don't like this. It's too similar to the last one." "I used to have a big imagination." Authors ask for help, i.e.: -pronoun usage -spelling "Does this make sense?" Author explains story, "This really happened.....It scared me." Students volunteer to participate.	Follow established guidelines for response group process. Use response forms.
Third Writing Episode (3 members)	Share concerns, i.e.: "I need to work on the ending." Authors ask for help, i.e.: "Is it okay if I just wrote two stories?" "What do with genie?" Students volunteer to participate.	Follow established guidlines for response group process. Use response forms.

Group Interaction Patterns - Group II
(Continued)

	Group Trust	Functional Behavior
Fourth Writing Episode (3 members)	Authors ask for help, i.e.: "How can I put that in there?" Reads revised section and then asks, "Would that make it better?" Help requested on spelling and paragraphing. Students volunteer to participate.	Follow established guidelines for response group process.
Fifth Writing Episode (3 members)	Authors ask for help, i.e: "Does that sound okay?" "Should that be my title - then start?" "Should this be a new paragraph?"	Follow established guidelines for response group process.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter includes a summary of the study followed
by a discussion of the findings. The findings are discussed
in relation to the patterns of revision and patterns of
group interaction which emerged within the student response
group setting. Also included are suggestions for practice
and questions for further research.

Summary of the Study

Two groups of remedial middle school students partici-
pated in the study. All students were attending summer
school because of failure to meet minimum requirements
for promotion. In addition to academic problems, many
students were experiencing problems with personal adjust-
ment.

The students, all of whom volunteered to participate
in the study, and I met on a daily basis. Students were
asked to come to the response group sessions prepared to
share a first draft of a writing. Rather than writing in
response to assigned topics, the student writers were able
to expand on ideas from journals, which they were keeping
in their regular summer school language arts classes, or
were able to write about any topic they chose. At first

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some students seemed uneasy with having self-selected topics, but at no time was a student unprepared to work with the group.

Data for this study were obtained from documents produced during the writing response group sessions. These documents included first drafts of writings, second drafts of writings, and student response forms. Extensive records of student response group sessions were kept throughout the study. Sessions were tape recorded while the researcher was also taking notes. Students were interviewed at the end of each writing episode to further verify the information gathered.

In analyzing the student response group process, I looked for the patterns of revision which developed as students read and discussed first drafts, composed the second drafts, and edited second drafts of writings. At the same time, there was a focus on discerning the characteristics of group interaction.

Discussion of Findings

Patterns of Revision

As a result of analyzing the data the following revision patterns emerged:

1. The flow of language was considered as students composed.

2. The students viewed writing as a process of building on information.

3. Writing was viewed as a means of communicating with others.

4. Discussions of first drafts focused on the content of the writings.

5. The focus of discussion narrowed to include attention to mechanics as students completed their second drafts.

6. The students viewed their writing as malleable.

Each pattern is discussed briefly in the following section.

Flow of Language

The student writers considered the flow of language as they were composing. This consideration of flow was most evident when the first drafts of the writing were read to the response groups,for student authors began revising during the reading or immediately thereafter. Revisions at this stage involved word additions, word deletions, or rewording to improve awkward phrasing. The sound of the spoken word clearly helped authors focus on improving the flow of words.

Robert Zollner (1969) and Terry Radcliffe (1972) have also noted a relationship between sound and writing. Their studies focused on the use of sound during prewriting. Both researchers found

that speaking aloud to another student helped authors to discover and clarify ideas for writing.

Cooper and Odell (1970) found that published writers used sound in a different manner. Rather than using sound as a means of eliminating misplaced modifiers or correcting punctuation, they found that mature writers were concerned with the oral qualities of their writings. The published writers were concerned that the volume, speed, and inflection were appropriate for their audience.

Even though I did not observe the remedial middle school students using sound in the same manner as that described by Zollner, Radcliffe, and Cooper and Odell, the sound of students' writing did play a role in revision. The remedial middle school students used sound to improve the flow of the words in their stories.

Inclusion and Exclusion

Writing is more a process of building on information than deleting excess. This phenomenon was observed throughout the course of the study as student responses and subsequent revisions allowed for the inclusion of new information far more frequently than the deletion of existing information.

Both groups of students focused on addition of detail, more thorough description, and more complete characterization. It was seldom suggested that any material be deleted from a story.

The concepts of inclusion and exclusion of information were noted by Calkins (1979) in her study of a young writer. According to Calkins, the development of the ability to exclude and include may occur in different ways and at different rates among children, but children learn to include before learning to exclude.

The response group sessions followed a pattern similar to that described by Calkins. Only near the end of the six week study did students begin to discuss exclusion of any information already contained in the writings. It was difficult for authors to deal with the deletion of large chunks of information from their writings.

Writing to Communicate

From the first session students viewed their writing as a means of sharing information with others. This was evident in their consistent consideration of whether additional information was necessary to clarify meaning or if existing information needed to be

reorganized for clarity. When authors used specialized vocabulary, which could potentially interfere with comprehension by readers, terms became better defined as a result of the response group process. This phenomenon was present even though I had not mentioned an audience.

This awareness of an audience shows that students began viewing their writing as a way of sharing information with others. Moffett (1968) recognized that this phenomenon occurs. He viewed audience response as a means of reinforcing the purpose of writing as a means of communication. The student response group appeared to provide a natural, realistic audience for the writer to consider.

First Draft: Focus on Content

Responses and discussions regarding the first drafts of writings focused on the content of the stories. Early in the study, students tended to concentrate on addition of detail to clarify or to describe events of the stories. Those concerns remained throughout the course of the study; but as the study progressed, students began to develop their responses further.

Later in the study, responders began to question

and to discuss the logic and sequence of story events. Characterization also became more of a concern. In this regard, the logic of a character's actions and a character's motivation were analyzed. Responders also focused on particular sections of the writing and worked as a team in revising those sections. Sections of the writings revised were openings, whole paragraphs and conclusions.

These findings are similar to those noted by Healy (1980) when she used student response groups. Healy found that writers who participated in student response groups used more specificity of detail, more supporting examples, and more transitional and introductory phrases. Healy also found that final pieces of writings were more fluent and complete. Similar findings were noted by Ritchie (1983) in his study of ninth grade response groups.

In contrast to these findings, a study conducted by the National Assessment of Education Progress (Hennings and Grant, 1981) revealed that students seldom attempted to improve overall organization of their writing or attempted to clarify transitional ideas. Bridwell (1980) and Faigley and Witte (1981) also found that most

student writers made superficial changes. Seldom were significant changes noted at phrase, clause, sentence, or multi-sentence levels. The researchers expressed concern with this superficial revision.

The studies cited and this study indicate that student response groups are beneficial in aiding students to go beyond the surface level of their writings and to become more involved in meaningful revision.

Second Draft: Narrowing the Focus of Revision

As students were writing their second drafts, the focus of revision began to narrow. There were still discussions regarding openings, paragraphs, and conclusions of stories, but students also began attending to the mechanics of writing.

By the time students were reviewing second drafts, attention was focused almost entirely on the conventions of English grammar. Student comments centered on handwriting, punctuation, spelling, word usage, and use of paragraphs.

This narrowing of the focus has been described by Murray (1980) in his discussion of revision. Murray described a writer as moving from the position of viewing the text broadly to the point of editing,

developing further and reordering. Murray explained that writers need to read loosely at first, and then more critically as the writing is developed and polished.

The eventual adherence to the conventions of English is necessary to allow for ease of communication. But, by focusing on the mechanics as the writing becomes more polished, student authors kept the mechanics in perspective and the mechanics were less likely to interfere with fluency. This allowed the writings to be developed as defined by Chittenden (1980) in her developmental writing sequence. That is, writings developed from fluency, to coherence, and finally to correctness.

Writing is Malleable

Students saw that their writing could be molded in a variety of ways. The drafts of the writing showed that students used arrows to reorder words, phrases, or paragraphs. Sections of stories were struck out and revised phrasing was added. In general, students were willing to treat the drafts as work in progress. They realized they could change their writing, but they were still adding on, not deleting.

This willingness to view writing as malleable is important to the development of writing ability.

Pere (1979) observes that writers need to view the text as a growing piece of art which may be changed and molded throughout the writing process. Writers need to accept this view of writing if they are to become involved with the process of revision.

Patterns of Group Interaction

The patterns of group interaction which emerged are:

1. Student behavior was self-governing.
2. Group members maintained fairly equal positions with the group.
3. Trusting relationships were developed.
4. Guidelines established during the training sessions were followed.

The next section of this chapter includes a brief discussion of the patterns of group interaction.

Self-Governing Behavior

Throughout the study both groups maintained a high degree of self-governing behavior, but this behavior was maintained according to different styles. Initally, members of both groups operated in a very business-like manner. There was little conversation that was not directly related to the piece of writing being discussed. Group II maintained this throughout the course of the study, while Group I relaxed and became more informal.

Group I students were more likely to work as a team to revise a portion of an author's story. At times this informality would lead to divergent conversation. But, if conversation became too lengthy, a member of the group, usually the author whose writing was being discussed, would bring the group back to task.

Ritchie (1983) also noted changes in conversational behavior as students worked in response groups. She observed that members of a ninth grade response group moved from business-like conversation to more casual conversation as they worked together for a semester.

Egalitarianism

Even though some students developed specific roles, generally group members maintained fairly equal positions within the group. I had expected some group member to establish leadership, but this did not occur on any permanent basis.

In analyzing this association of group members, I focused on the organization of members within the group and the hierarchy which I expected to evolve. These patterns of relationship among group members can sometimes be revealing to the field researcher as they lead to a better understanding of the group culture (Hall, 1959).

There was no clearly defined hierarchy estab-
lished in either of the response groups. Neither
group had an individual who clearly developed into
a group leader. Instead, different members assumed
leadership responsibility at different times.
Generally, the author of the piece of writing being
discussed would guide the group. This leadership
role was relinquished to the next author whose writ-
ing was discussed.

Members of both groups did begin to rely on par-
ticular individuals to help with editorial revisions.
Group I members looked to John and Group II members
sought advice from William when questions relative
to the conventions of English were raised.

Also, members of Group I were observed to rely on
George's advice when questions were raised regarding
content revisions. Responders reacted very positively
to George's writings and the wealth of ideas he was
able to share. They recognized the value of his flu-
ency and often requested his assistance in developing
their own ideas further.

Members of both groups sensed the importance of
preserving the equanimity of the group. This equa-
nimity was sometimes preserved through negotiations.
Negotiations   occurred   most   frequently   when

suggestions were offered which authors deemed unacceptable. Authors found ways of modifying or disregarding the suggestions, therefore avoiding any disturbance of the group members.

Group Trust

The increase in the number of questions asked throughout the course of the study shows that trusting relationships were developed. Group I students relaxed and asked questions informally, while Group II students maintained a more formal demeanor.

The response group setting provided students with opportunities to interact positively with their peers. Moffett (1973) observed that a community setting such as this seems to relieve some of the worries and tensions which are common in writing class. Johnson and Johnson (1979) have also observed that there is more support for risk-taking when students are given opportunities to work cooperatively.

Functional Behavior

The guidelines established during the training sessions were adhered to very closely. Students continued the process of reading first drafts, completing response forms, discussing first drafts, composing second drafts, and editing second drafts.

This format guided the group throughout the course of the study. If members began to deviate from the guidelines another group member, usually the author whose writing was being discussed, would remind the deviators of the established process. This helped govern the group and assisted in keeping the students on task.

Suggestions for Practice

Educators might consider using writing response groups if their goals are to promote involvement of students with the writing process and to make revision more meaningful. Response groups appear to be effective in assisting students with revision as they are analyzing problems, making judgments, and completing evaluations.

Teachers who decide to implement the response group process need to systematically monitor the groups. This can be accomplished by tape recording groups, joining response group sessions, reviewing response forms, or by comparing first and second drafts of student writings. Through this monitoring teachers can determine which groups need assistance or which groups would benefit from a change in student composition.

Teachers need to be careful when monitoring groups and judging the effectiveness of the divergent conversation which occurs as students interact within the response group setting. During such conversation, students may be

exploring ideas for future writings or clarifying ideas. Groups need to be given a chance to develop and students should have the opportunity to initially monitor themselves. It may be necessary for teachers to join troublesome groups and to model proper behavior, but first the group should be given the opportunity to solve its own problems.

As noted in this study, students revised by including new information, but seldom did they delete any material. Students may need assistance in developing the ability to exclude. It may be helpful to involve students in a whole class response to papers which contain inappropriate material which should be excluded. Students need to develop an understanding that excluding material also helps develop better writing.

Classroom teachers of writing need to continually model the response behavior they want student writers to develop. During conferences with students, teachers should be praising efforts, questioning authors, and offering suggestions for improvement. By modeling this behavior they will be reinforcing the goals of the response group.

The students involved in this study, remedial middle school students, are the type of students who teachers are sometimes reluctant to allow to participate in group activities where there is less teacher direction. Yet, these students were successful in using the response group

process to enhance their writing and to practice group social skills. The remedial students' successful use of the response group process will hopefully lead other teachers of remedial students to consider using response groups as a teaching strategy.

This writing response group process seems especially appropriate for adolescent students. During adolescence children move toward greater independence and greater freedom from the authority of adults. Adolescents turn to peer group for approval and encouragement (Alexander and George, 1981). The implementation of the student response group process allows teachers to capitalize on and direct this natural development.

Persons responsible for developing inservice programs for teachers of writing might include training in use of student response groups. Just as teachers of writing need to write in order to develop an understanding of the writing process, teachers who desire to implement writing response groups need to participate in such groups in order to understand their operation. Such participation allows educators to understand the risks involved and how response groups develop as a community.

Finally, as writing curriculum is developed, educators may want to consider inclusion of writing response groups as a teaching strategy. There is enough recent research to convince educators that to develop writing ability students need to view writing as a process. The writing

response group will help students develop such an understanding and will facilitate writing growth.

Questions for Further Research

1. Do the patterns of development revealed in this study appear in studies of writers of different ages who engage in student response groups?

2. Would a different classroom environment yield different findings?

3. What effect, if any, would assignment of topics have on the findings?

4. One student began modeling the writing form of another member of the response group. What different writing formats will students experiment with when working with response groups?

5. What decision-making process is employed as students decide which response suggestions or questions to follow?

6. Is there a difference in student attitude toward writing when students engage in writing response groups?

7. What is the qualitative difference in final writings between students who work with a response group and those who do not?

8. Can student response groups be successfully implemented in other content subjects?

9. Do the patterns of development revealed in this study appear in studies of other remedial students? If so,

can the elements of the student response group process
which most directly effect this development be identi-
fied?

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