A COMPARISON OF FIFTH-GRADERS' ORAL AND WRITTEN STORIES

by

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(ABSTRACT)

Prior research in children's writing (Sawkins, 1971; Graves, 1973 and 1981; Calkins, 1980, and Giacobbe, 1982) has not offered a comprehensive analysis of both oral and written stories. My study, therefore, identified and analyzed the differences between eighteen fifth-graders' oral and written stories. I also conducted interviews to determine students' perceptions of their preferred composing situation and particular story preferences.

Among the findings were that these students' oral stories were longer than their written stories. The simplest narrative pattern, "situation + problem + solution" (King, 1979:3), was the most prevalent structure. All the students used active voice in both types of stories, with the majority using simple past tense. The students showed a preference for first person point of view in their written
stories, but a majority used third person in their oral composing. Most students developed their stories with primary settings relating to home and school, and the number of major characters was fairly consistent in both types of stories. Girls, however, used more minor characters than boys. These students preferred the written composing situation. All the students took some time to think about their stories before composing; however, girls used more written plans than boys. Students also used drawing to enhance their written texts but not their oral ones. The majority of students chose their written stories as better than the oral ones. Both trained adult raters and other fifth-grade raters agreed that the written stories were better.

These findings are fairly consistent with conclusions reached in prior research, except those of Sawkins (1971). The differences center on planning strategies, interview skills, and story quality. Sawkins found that most of her fifth graders did not have the complete story in mind before they began composing and proceeded to compose without first having made notes. I reported, however, that my fifth graders indicated they had the complete story in mind before composing and some of them chose to write plans before they began. Although Sawkins (1971) believed that her
fifth-grade boys responded better in an interview situation than her girls, I found all students in this study to be articulate and willing to talk about their individual composing processes. Finally, Sawkins reported that girls wrote compositions which were judged to be of high quality, while her boys wrote lower-quality compositions. Evaluators, however, agreed that my fifth-grade boys' stories were good, while rating the girls' stories lower.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this dissertation has involved the efforts of committee members, students, friends, and family. Each of the members of the committee has not only assisted me with the research but also fostered my intellectual growth during the past four years. Dr. Robert Small has been an inspiration to me from the time I took my first course in English Education in 1973 until now. Any contributions I may make to the profession will, I hope, be a tribute to the kind direction he has provided. Dr. George Hayhoe is appreciated for his careful reading of the proposal and final manuscript, and for his consistent support and encouragement. I am grateful to Dr. Rosary Lalik for her insight and concern with issues related to children's writing. Dr. Richard Murphy has asked probing questions about the subject of my research and helped me through the rewriting stages of both the proposal and final manuscript. Without the guidance and faith of Dr. Patricia Kelly throughout my graduate study, I could not have completed the dissertation. She motivated me to do composition research, showing me through her own work the connections between theory, research, and practice. Dr. Kelly's counsel and friendship have made my graduate study a pleasurable and rewarding experience. She graciously
accepted the role of mentor, and for this I am forever grateful.

I owe a special thank you to the elementary students who composed stories during the study and the fifth graders who served as raters for the stories for willingly sharing both their time and their thoughts. Their enthusiasm and concern about writing encouraged me to complete the research.

My fellow graduate students have supported me through each phase of my graduate study. They have shared both good and bad times, and have always been there when I needed them. During my graduate work, I was fortunate to be surrounded by such talented individuals as Don Stowers, John Swope, Herb Thompson, Charlotte and Jim Sellers, and other fellows in the Southwest Virginia Writing Project. I deeply appreciate their friendship and continued support.

Both my late father, Charles F. Pauley, and my mother, Mary B. Pauley, taught me to value education and granted me the freedom to pursue my own interests. I learned from them that dreams can come true.

Finally, my husband, Mack, and son, Noah, gave me the support I needed to finish the dissertation. Their patience, devotion, encouragement, and pride in my accomplishments have made this experience worthwhile. They
are very special individuals, and I hope they know how important they are to me.
DEDICATION

To my father, Charles F. Pauley.
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Although recent composition studies have provided insight into children's writing, the results have offered little direction to teachers for developing strategies for writing instruction. Elementary teachers often use language arts methods texts to guide their teaching of writing. One popular approach based upon material in such texts is to take advantage of oral language skills that students already possess to help them make the transition into writing. Because many teachers feel that oral language is closely related to written language, they use numerous classroom activities to emphasize that written expression is simply speech written down.

For example, beginning in kindergarten, individual students are invited to create and tell numerous stories orally. As their handwriting develops, student writers are encouraged not only to create and tell stories but also to write them. By the second grade, most students have had experience in generating both oral and written narratives. In fact, Virginia's Standards of Learning Objectives (SOL's) state that second graders "will tell and write a brief personal or fictional narrative" (1981:5). Such state guidelines encourage teachers to continue the practice of having students create oral and written stories throughout
elementary school. Virginia's SOL's prescribe that fourth
graders "will use visual and specific oral and written
language" (1981:10), and teachers may have their students
create oral and written stories to meet this objective.
Many fifth-grade teachers still encourage their students to
create both oral and written stories as a way of reinforcing
those skills embedded in the fourth-grade objective and of
preparing their students for the sixth-grade Virginia SOL
objective which states that students "will create brief
narratives" (1981:13).
Moffett encourages language arts teachers to use a
combination of both oral and written composing activities
because he views improvising as "learning to compose without
going through the slow processes of putting things on paper
and waiting for delayed reactions" (1983:120). Students
composing orally get fast, relevant feedback from peers,
constantly adjust their oral language expression in response
to the feedback, and learn new vocabulary, story structures,
and ideas from their peers. In this way students expand
their verbal repertoire, which teachers believe also helps
students' written language expression.
Because oral activities are used to enhance writing
development in many language arts methods textbooks on the
premise that written expression is simply speech written
down (Chambers and Lowry, 1975; Rubin, 1975; Kean and
Personke, 1976; Tiedt, 1983; Quandt, 1983, and Moffett and
Wagner, 1983), the practice of having elementary students create both oral and written narratives is prevalent in the language arts classroom. However, while teachers recognize the relationship between oral and written language, they should be aware also of the basic differences between these two communication modes.

Research has pointed to differences in oral and written language expression. For example, Newman and Horowitz (1965) conclude that although writing and speaking can represent each other, that fact should not be taken to mean that they are aspects of each other. Writing and speaking share in the manifestation and communication of language. Otherwise they are fundamentally and essentially different—as modes of verbal formulation and expression, as indicators of different psychological aspects of the person, and as channels of communication (p. 164).

Researchers emphasize three ways in which oral and written language expression differ (Harpin, 1976; Emig, 1977; Olson, 1977; Barritt and Kroll, 1978; Higgins, 1978, and Kroll and Lempus, 1981). First, oral language develops both earlier and faster than written language. Second, oral language provides the opportunity for speakers to receive immediate feedback from their listeners; however, with writing, individuals must attempt to predict the delayed response they will get from their audience. Finally, because speakers are more fluent than writers, they can focus their full attention on their intended message while writers must concentrate not only on their message but also on the
physical act of writing to convey their message. The physical act of writing may impair meaning--ideas run ahead of expression.

Many teachers, unfortunately, recognize only the similarities between oral and written language, and ignore the basic differences. If teachers are going to continue using oral activities to build writing skills in their language arts classrooms, such as having students create both oral and written narratives, the differences between these two products and their generation need examining, particularly at the upper elementary level where relative maturity of handwriting skills no longer impedes written expression.

The practice of having fifth graders create both oral and written stories provided me with the opportunity to observe eighteen fifth graders' generating both oral and written stories and to examine the differences between them. Other studies of children's writing (Sawkins, 1971; Graves, 1973 and 1981; Calkins, 1980, and Giacobbe, 1982) have provided language arts teachers with little information about the practice of encouraging students to create both oral and written stories. While teachers acknowledge the similarities between oral and written language, they have had no information about the quality of fifth-graders' written stories in relation to their oral stories. They are working under the assumption that oral composing helps to
refine writing skills. Teachers assume that their students prefer the oral composing situation because the physical act of writing does not interfere with the intended message; however, no data was available to teachers about which composing situation, telling the story or writing the story, fifth-grade students might prefer. Virginia's SOL's reflect the traditional classroom practice of having students create both oral and written stories, but fifth-grade teachers could only speculate as to whether their students' written stories were comparable to their oral stories or whether students preferred one composing situation over the other.

This study offers a more complete picture of fifth-graders' oral and written stories than prior research. Furthermore, I have compared my findings to conclusions by others in prior research, thus expanding the existing developmental framework.

Studies of Children's Writing

This section reviews the designs, procedures, and findings of studies related to the subject of this investigation, the differences between oral and written stories and the processes used to generate them.

Composing Processes of Young Children

Three major composition studies have enhanced our understanding of the composing processes of elementary-school children. Margaret Sawkins (1971) interviewed fifth-
grade children about their recollections of their writing approaches. Donald Graves (1973) explored the writing processes of a group of second graders, gathering data through a case study approach, the analysis of large samples of writing, and classroom observation of children writing. The third study, by Lucy Calkins (1980), investigated the rewriting strategies of sixteen third graders by expanding Graves' data collection procedures.

The main focus of the earliest of these studies (Sawkins, 1971) was to investigate the procedures used by selected fifth-grade children when writing narrative compositions. Sawkins also attempted to identify procedures which were unique to good and poor writers. Data were collected from interviews held the day before and the day after the children wrote assigned compositions, as well as from notes and drafts produced by the children when they wrote their papers.

Sawkins reached several conclusions related to the procedures fifth-grade children follow when they write (1971:120-21). She found that her writers tended to consider elements of content before they began writing and while they were writing, and, for the most part, proceeded with writing without first having made notes or an outline. Most of the fifth-grade writers did not have the complete story in mind before they began writing but made the story up as they went along and decided on the ending about mid-
way through the composition. They appeared to give very little thought to choosing words for a particular purpose, to structuring the sentences they were writing, and to the paragraphing they used.

The selected fifth graders tended to ask the teacher for help with spelling but did not ask for other kinds of help even though they were aware of problems with content as well as with punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing. Most of Sawkins' writers proofread after writing the first draft in order to check the mechanics of writing and, to a more limited degree, matters of content. Those writers who chose to rewrite did so in order to produce a neater appearing paper rather than actually to revise their writing.

Sawkins also described the differences between good and poor writers (1971:121-22). Her good writers tended to be concerned with the content of written expression, with organization within the story as evidenced by concern for and use of paragraphs, and with the function of beginning and ending sentences. Her poor writers tended to focus on the mechanics of writing, particularly spelling, punctuation and capitalization; encountered more problems when writing; and recopied their compositions more frequently than the good writers.

In addition, sex differences related to written composition and verbalization about the writing process
emerged in Sawkins' study (1971:122). She found that her boys tended to write compositions which were generally of low quality and the girls tended to write compositions which were usually of high quality. While the boys responded adequately in an interview situation, the girls varied in their ability to respond to questions concerning their written expression. Therefore, she concluded that the ability to discuss or answer questions about the writing process does not insure the quality of the product.

Graves (1973) explored the writing processes of a group of second graders, gathering data through a case study procedure, analyzing large samples of writing, and observing children's writing in classroom settings (1975:228). The five-month investigation involved ninety-four children from two formal and two informal second-grade classrooms. Graves established the following criteria to identify formal and informal classrooms (1973:24):

**Formal**

1. No more than 30 percent of the activities in the entire school day were chosen by the child without individual or group direction from the teacher.

2. No more than 30 percent of a teacher's time in a total day was spent with groups of children smaller than five in number.
Informal

1. No less than 65 percent of the child's activities in the entire school day were chosen without individual or group direction from the teacher.

2. No less than 55 percent of a teacher's time in a total day was spent with groups smaller than five in number.

He drew conclusions about the writing processes of selected second-grade children, which are relevant to this study in two major areas: learning environments and sex differences (Graves, 1975:235-236). When the children were given the choice of whether or not to write and what to write about, they wrote more often and at greater length than when specific writing assignments were given. Results of writing done in the informal environments demonstrated that the children did not need motivation or supervision in order to write.

Although the girls wrote more often and at greater length than did the boys in formal environments, whether the writing was assigned or unassigned, the boys wrote more than girls in informal environments on both assigned and unassigned work. In either environment, unassigned writing was longer than assigned writing, and environments that required large amounts of assigned writing generally inhibited the range, content, and amount of writing done by the children.
Graves noted, however, that the flexibility of the learning environment and the degree of student choice are not the most useful determiners of how the individual child writes. He concluded that the individual child's writing developmental level is the best predictor of writing process behaviors and therefore transcends the importance of environment, materials, and methodologies in influence on the child's writing.

Graves (1975:235-36) also found that writing behaviors were related to the writer's sex. He observed that his second-grade girls wrote longer products than did his second-grade boys in either formal or informal environments. However, the boys in either learning environment wrote more unassigned writing than the girls. Graves also discovered that the selected boys seldom used the first person form in unassigned writing, especially the "I" form, unless they were developmentally advanced. Unassigned writing seemed to provide an incentive for the boys to write about subjects not normally found in teacher-assigned work.

Graves noted that the teachers in his study did not usually assign work that included themes from secondary and extended territory, the areas most used by boys in unassigned writing. He defined "secondary territory" as the metropolitan area beyond the child's home and school, and "expanded territory" as the area beyond the secondary, which would include current events, history, and geography on a
national and world scale. In unassigned writing the boys wrote more about themes identified as secondary and extended geographical territories than did the girls. The only second-grade girls who wrote about these areas were developmentally more advanced than the others. The girls tended to write more about primary territory, which is related to the home and school, than did the boys.

Graves' study revealed that second-grade boys are more concerned than are girls with the importance of spacing, formation of letters, and neatness in their writing to express their concept of "the good writer." Second-grade girls, however, stressed pre-thinking and organizing qualities, emphasized feelings in characterizations, and gave more supporting illustrations in their writing. Graves also concluded that the case study design is an effective means for studying the composing processes of student writers.

In 1980, Calkins examined the rewriting strategies of sixteen third graders by expanding Graves' case study approach with observations and collected writings, interviews with the students, and administration of a simulated rewriting exercise to each student. She concluded that third graders in her year-long study could be grouped according to four kinds of rewriting: random drafting, refining, transition, and interacting. She described the specific rewriting behaviors that characterized each group
Random Drafting. These children wrote successive drafts without looking back to earlier ones. Because they did not reread and reconsider what they had written, changes between drafts were not based on a thoughtful weighing of options. Instead, rewriting appeared to be a random, undirected process of simply generating a whole new text.

Refining. For some children, rewriting meant refining what they had already written. These children copied a piece over and over. They changed spellings, neated penmanship, and added a few lines. But their subject and voice were determined by the first draft. Rewriting was a backwards motion of refining a draft rather than a process of discovery.

Transition. These children moved between periods when they refined drafts and periods when they abandoned drafts, continually beginning new ones. They sometimes appeared to be Random Drafters, but they were closer to being Refiners. Like Refiners, these children looked back to assess and refine old drafts. But unlike Refiners, they were not content with their earlier drafts. When Transition children abandoned old drafts and new ones, they showed a restlessness which led them to become Interactors.

Interacting. For these children, revision resulted from interaction between writer and draft, between writer and clearly visualized audience, between writer and evolving
subject. They reread to see what they had said and to discover what they wanted to say. There was a constant vying between intended meaning and discovered meaning, between the forward motion of making and the backward motion of assessing.

Calkins' description of children's rewriting strategies and the two other major composition studies preceding hers provided some understanding of the writing processes of elementary school children. These studies, however, did not investigate the nature of the students' oral composing processes in relation to students' written composing processes. We cannot discern from these studies whether or not students' first drafts are similar to an oral rendition, in other words, speech written down.

**Developmental Stages in the Composing Processes of Young Children**

Two composition studies have noted the developmental stages in the composing processes of young children. Mary Ellen Giacobbe (Graves and Giacobbe, 1982) examined the writing development of first graders enrolled in her class by interviewing them about their writing during the last six months of the school year. Donald Graves (1981) explored the writing development of sixteen children, eight first graders and eight third graders, in a longitudinal two-year study funded by the National Institute of Education (NIE), by interviewing the individual students and their teachers,
observing the children in the act of writing, and reviewing video recordings.

Giacobbe (1982) wanted to find out how ten first graders' concepts of their composing processes changed during the last six months of the school year. The selected first graders were representative of the low, middle, and high performance levels of writing among her students. During the six-month period, she interviewed the individual students before and after they wrote, asking them the following pre-established questions (1982:497):

**Before They Wrote**

1. What are you going to be writing about?
2. How are you going to put that down on paper?
3. How did you go about choosing your subject?

**After They Wrote**

1. How did you go about writing this?
2. What are you going to do next with this piece of writing?
3. What do you think of this piece of writing?

She also asked additional clarifying questions when necessary.

Giacobbe reported findings from a detailed analysis of two children, representing the low and high performance groups, in terms of the three areas of questioning she used to monitor developmental change: "information, process and standard" (1982:498). Before the children wrote, they were
asked about their individual choices of topic and how the
topic was going to be expressed in writing. The information
the student writers used in their writing developed during
the last six months of the school year from a non-specific
idea of their subjects to a more concrete idea. The
children also moved in their thinking from limiting
themselves to a single option of how a topic might be
written about to realizing that they had a variety of
strategies for developing and writing about a topic.

During the six-month period, the children became more
articulate about what composing processes they used when
they wrote and when they revised (Giacobbe, 1982:498-99).
The student writers moved from an awareness of an exhibited
external behavior like drawing to an awareness of the
internal process of thinking that they used when writing
about their topics. The student writers also developed a
sense of what could be done with their first drafts: they
moved from seeing first drafts as completed written products
to the more advanced levels of revising and editing the
material.

After they wrote, the children were asked how they felt
about each piece. The students set "standards" for their
writing in a developmental pattern: from "feeling" that the
writing was good or bad to introducing certain criteria by
which their writing might be judged, such as including a lot
of information or giving enjoyment to others.
Although Giacobbe's study provided valuable information concerning the writing development of first graders, Graves' investigation represents the largest single endeavor in studying the developmental stages of young children. The findings from the two-year research study funded by the NIE have been presented in several reports (Graves and Calkins, 1979; Graves, 1979a; Graves, 1979b; Graves and Calkins, 1980; Graves, 1982). These findings have also been submitted in the final report of the research project (Graves, 1981a). Graves placed primary emphasis upon gathering data when children were actually writing. Using naturalistic observations, interviews, and video recordings, he gathered data from eight first graders and eight third graders during the two-year study.

Findings concerning the developmental changes in the various components of the composing processes of young children (grades one through four) have been recently summarized by Kay Moss from the many individual research reports and the NIE final report. She noted the developmental changes within these components of the composing processes of young children: topic choice, pre-ideation, drawing, revision, and focus (1982:19-21).

**Topic choice.** Children move from complete self-reliance to reliance on outside resources for help with topic information. Graves (1979b) reported first-grade writers develop varying types of delays when selecting a
topic. One type includes no delay; the child immediately draws then writes. A second type involves a short delay of about two minutes, after which the child writes then draws. Another type includes a longer delay, five to ten minutes. Although the child is aware of audience, he or she is unable to make rapid appropriate choices of topic for that audience. The last type involves little delay because the child is aware of a variety of choices and consequently able to select quickly a topic for the audience.

Pre-ideation. Graves and Calkins (1980) concluded that children advance from an inability to plan ahead to complete ideation at the story level. They discovered that children moved from not having the complete story in mind before they began writing and making the story up as they went along, to having the complete story in mind before they began writing.

Drawing. Graves reported that all the children at some time during the study used drawing prior to writing as a rehearsal for text (Graves, 1981a). He found that the use of drawing occurs at two levels in first grade children: prior to writing as a rehearsal and after writing to describe the content. He also discovered that first graders felt the content did not always dictate drawing.

Revision. Graves and Calkins (1979) reported that revision occurs at different levels: during the prewriting stage, on paper to review content, orally, unconsciously to make sentences smoother, deliberately when a child circles
awkward phrases, and internally without overt accompanying language. Graves also found that a child's revision patterns are shaped by a variety of circumstances such as word stability, newness of the revision procedure, audience response, and purpose of the writing (1979b). He revealed that children's capacity for revision is demonstrated by revision in other media forms (drawing, painting, and so forth), ability to write a series of leads about the same subject, and demonstration of crossing out, arrows, and so forth, that show that words are temporary (Graves, 1979b).

Focus. Graves (1982) revealed that children progress through several levels of problem solving. These levels are spelling, motor/aesthetic, conventions, topic information, and revision.

The findings from these studies generated by the two-year research project supported Graves' earlier conclusion regarding developmental factors and the writing process which identified two distinctive types of writers, reactive and reflective (1975:236). Children identified as reactive showed erratic problem-solving strategies, the use of overt language to accompany prewriting and composing phases, a need for immediate rehearsal in order to write, rare contemplation or reviewing of products, a lack of a sense of audience when writing, and an inability to use reasons beyond the affective domain in evaluating their writing. Children who were identified as reflective showed little
rehearsal before writing, little overt language to accompany writing, periodic rereadings to adjust small units of writing at the word or phrase level, a growing sense of audience awareness and the ability to give examples to support their reasons for evaluating writing.

These investigations have attempted to describe the developmental stages in the composing processes of young children. Both Giacobbe's and Graves' studies have helped to further our understanding of the writing development of young children; however, these studies did not investigate the differences between students' oral and written stories. Therefore, teachers could only speculate as to the developmental changes in the various components of children's oral and written composing processes.

Comparison of Young Children's Oral and Written Stories

Only one study has investigated the differences between students' oral and written stories, Helen King's "Story Tellers, Story Writers: A Research Report" (1979). King asked twenty-three third graders in three different classrooms to write a story about a lion and a tiger. Two weeks later she asked the same children to tell her a story about a lion and a tiger. The third graders were selected for the study on the basis of proficient handwriting skills because King did not want the students' handwriting to hinder the creation and writing of the individual stories. King's analysis of the oral and written stories revealed
that the children used several definable narrative structures in their stories, which King identified as Type A, B, C, D, and E narrative structures (1979:3-4).

**Type A.** This narrative pattern is relatively simple and consists of a single line best described as "situation + problem + solution" (1979:3). Perhaps significantly, this pattern was used in the majority of written stories (61%) but much less often (39%) in the oral stories. Although other patterns were used frequently in the oral stories, Pattern A was the most prevalent structure in the oral as well as the written stories.

**Type B.** This structure consists of a repetition of the problem until a solution is found: A needs help or information and goes to B who doesn't help; A then goes to C who doesn't help and finally to D who does help; a solution is found. In the case of "The Little Red Hen," a well-known example of this structure, A ends up depending on A. The equally well-known "Three Billy Goats Gruff" is a more sophisticated version where A, the smallest goat, hands the problem on to B who hands it on to C who solves it. None of the written stories used this structure which is so prevalent in young children's literature, and only a few (9%) of the oral stories used it. This narrative structure was the least used by the children.

**Type C.** The twist in "Androcles and the Lion" is a familiar example of this story pattern which depends on a
reversal for its plot to be resolved. This reversal-technique was rare in the children's stories and, where it occurred, was usually immediately traceable to the "lion and mouse" stories heard by children at a previous time. When it did occur without reference to this immediate model, it occurred in the written rather than the oral versions.

**Type D.** This structure consists of a more or less complicated series of events connected indirectly rather than being directly caused by a previous event. For example, a third grader in the study wrote this Type D story:

> Once there was lion he was always bragging that he was so tugh once he got in a fight with a tiger the lion got so beat up he was in bed fo five days. That night he made plans to beat up the tiger. That morning he acted like a big deal so he got beat up again and again day after day. one day he got a thorn in his paw and said yow! The whole jungle shook so hard it blew the top off huts and people got noked and tiger got noked and he got beat up this time (King, 1979:4).

Few examples of this structure were found in either mode--13% in the oral stories, 9% in the written.

**Type E.** The fifth narrative pattern presents a complex series of events that are directly related to each other. One third grader in the study told this Type E story:

> In 1837 there was a rich man. One day he was going around in his horse and buggy and he saw a wild tiger. His wife started fainting and the children started screaming and the horse started bucking. And the horse was so close to the buggy it got tipped over. And everyone in it died. And the horse ran free. And started calling the tiger names because he killed his master. And then the tiger got mad and started chasing the horse. The horse hid and the tiger ran right past him. And then the horse started running the other way.
And he caught up with a herd of wild horses and pretty soon he became a wild horse too. One day tiger caught up with the horse that called him names. This time the horse doubled back and the tiger kept on running. The horse got back with his friends and then the horse was caught and tamed again. He was sold to another rich man except this rich man was mean and he killed the man. His wife and children were nice, though. But the horse ran away anyway and made friends with the tiger (King, 1979:4).

Few examples of this structure were found in either mode.

King's analysis of the selected third-graders' oral and written stories also revealed several other findings. She discovered that her children's oral stories were, as a group, longer than their written stories. The children's syntax seemed to fit the pattern of maturity suggested by the Hunt and O'Donnell T-unit analysis of third and fourth graders' writing. A T-unit, Minimal Terminable Unit, developed by Kellogg Hunt (1964), is the shortest unit grammatically acceptable as a sentence: any complex or simple sentence would be one T-unit, but any compound or compound-complex sentence would consist of two or more T-units (Hunt, 1970:4). The mean number of words per T-unit in King's study (8.46 in oral stories and 8.49 in the written ones) was essentially the same as that found by Hunt and O'Donnell.

The difference in T-unit lengths between the two modes was not statistically significant. However, the boys composed longer T-units than the girls in the oral telling of stories, while the girls wrote longer T-units than the
boys. King suggested that this fact may indicate that girls are culturally more school/performance-oriented.

King also reported that the use of major and minor characters was fairly evenly distributed throughout the stories in both written and oral forms. Generally, the stories with more complex events and solutions used more minor characters. More oral stories than written stories ranged over structures with more complex events. King concluded that oral story telling caused more problems for many children than did the written form because they believed that oral stories must be based on other people's stories and should be performed before an audience, and because of the problems associated with individual students losing their train of thought.

The Research Problem

Although several major studies relating to how children write have been completed, only one (King, 1979) directly addressed the differences between oral and written stories. Because language arts methods texts propose using students' oral language to build writing skills and because only limited information comparing elementary students' oral and written stories is available, I designed this study to identify and analyze the differences between the oral and written stories produced by eighteen fifth-grade students in an academic setting. I also observed the students'
composing processes in both types of situations and interviewed them about their composing preferences.

The data generated provided answers to the following research questions: 1) Are there differences between fifth-graders' oral and written stories in terms of fluency and syntactic complexity?; 2) Are there structural differences between fifth-graders' oral and written stories in terms of narrative structure, tense, person, territoriality, and characterization?; 3) Are there differences between fifth-graders' preferences in composing in oral or written form, illustrating stories, selecting composing materials, planning strategies, and revising process?; and 4) Are there differences between fifth-graders' oral and written stories in terms of the quality of the students' composing?

The study also has generated data that explored the differences between boys and girls in relation to each research question. I have compared my findings when applicable with other studies of children's writing and offered possible instructional strategies drawn from my conclusions. However, because only eighteen fifth-grade students participated in the study, I have made no attempt to generalize the findings of the study.
I have organized the research procedures into three main sections. The first describes the particular student writers and their academic environment. The second section explains the data collection procedures, and the third section details the analysis procedures.

The Writers and Their Environment

I selected fifth-grade students for the study because these students were accustomed to generating both oral and written narratives. Since kindergarten, they had been encouraged by their language arts teachers to use their oral language skills to build their written language skills. I also selected fifth graders because they are enrolled in the last grade in the elementary program of the school system used in this study.

The eighteen fifth-grade participants in the study had been asked by their teacher to produce both oral and written stories to satisfy their weekly creative writing assignments. The oral and written stories generated for this study served as their creative writing assignments for the respective weeks. In this classroom the fifth graders' weekly creative writing assignments were never graded but were collected in individual student folders and used to
introduce students to composing as a process and to working through the stages of the process--prewriting, editing, and revising. The students recorded their oral stories on tape and listened to them in their reading groups. Every fifth grader chose his or her best writings at the end of the school year and compiled them into a writing booklet.

The students in the study were enrolled in a single fifth-grade class at an elementary school in the Montgomery County (Virginia) Public Schools. Ten boys and eight girls participated in the study. At the beginning of the study, all the students were eleven years old, and none was repeating the fifth grade. Because Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University is located only three blocks from the elementary school involved in this study, the neighborhood's residents are mostly university personnel. Therefore, all the participants in the study came from middle to upper-middle class homes. Eleven of the students' fathers were university professors. There were sixteen white students, one black student, and one Iraqi student involved in the study.

The eighteen students' individual SRA (Form 1/E) performance profiles received eight months prior to the study indicated a range on the Total Reading test from the 30th to the 99th percentile. The mean percentile for the eighteen students on this test was 90 with a mean of 89 for the girls and 91 for the boys. On the Educational Ability
Series, which measures verbal ability, the performance profiles indicated a range from the 40th to the 99th percentile. The 80th percentile was the mean for the eighteen students on the Educational Ability Series with a mean of 79 for the girls and 81 for the boys.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected in three general phases from the first week of November 1983 to the third week of February 1984. I observed in the classroom prior to collecting data. Phases One and Two involved collection of students' oral and written stories and brief interviews following each composing situation. During Phase Three, I conducted follow-up interviews to determine students' composing and story preferences.

Observation Prior to Data Collection
(November 2-November 23)

Prior to collecting data, I met at least weekly during November 1983 with the classroom teacher to discuss the procedures for carrying out the study. I had already established an ongoing working relationship with the fifth-grade teacher by serving as a volunteer teacher's aide in her class weekly during the previous school year. In November, I also observed the fifth-grade students' two-hour language arts class on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. This three-week observation period allowed time for me to
become a routine part of the academic setting and gather information concerning the individual students' testing and educational history.

At the beginning of the observation period, the teacher introduced me. "I would like you to meet Mrs. Wagner. She will be in our classroom this year. When she is here, she is interested in learning more about how fifth graders write. She will be writing some of these things down. Once in a while she may ask you some questions." After the first week of observation, the students began sharing their writing with me.

Phase One (December 5-December 16)

I chose a split-halves approach in collecting the oral and written stories for the study, so during this part of the study, nine of the eighteen students were invited to create and tell orally a story about a dog during their two-hour language arts class. The other nine students were invited to create and write a story about a dog. There were five boys and four girls in each group of nine. The topic and directions for both the oral and written stories were purposely general in order to minimize the effects of the assignment. The oral stories were tape recorded and then transcribed; distinctive oral elements, such as "uhs" and "okays" were removed from each text. When transcripts were made, the students' handwritten stories were also typed.
The students and I used a study room adjacent to their classroom to insure privacy and quiet as they told or wrote their stories. Each student writer was seated at a conference table with a tape recorder positioned on the table top. In addition to the tape recorder, writing materials were available for their use: lined and unlined paper, lead and colored pencils, blue- and black-ink pens, crayons, and felt-tip markers. A tape recorder was not used with the students who were requested to write their stories in longhand.

I sat in a chair to the left of the conference table and asked each student, "Tell me a story about a dog" or "Write me a story about a dog," depending upon the composing situation. Clarifying statements requested by the students concerning the assignment were general and minimal.

When a student was ready to begin an oral story, I turned on the tape recorder and served as an attentive listener, occasionally noting any relevant information. I recorded such information as beginning and ending times for each story, comments or questions individual students made, individual choice of composing materials, and observable student problems or composing patterns associated with the assignment. For the students who wrote their stories, I simply became an unobtrusive observer and recorded the pertinent information.
At the conclusion of each story, I invited each student writer to discuss briefly (no longer than ten minutes) the telling or writing of the story. I began each interview with the question, "How did you go about creating the story?" and asked further clarifying questions such as "Could you talk about this some more?" and "Can you give me an example of this?" when necessary. These brief interviews following both the oral and written compositions were tape-recorded and later transcribed. These transcripts provided data concerning individual students' perceptions about telling and writing their stories, and aided me in clarifying recorded observations.

Phase Two (January 9-January 20)

Three weeks after the students had created their oral or written stories, they were invited again to create a story about a dog. However, this time the nine students who had told their stories orally during Phase One were asked to write. The other nine students, who had written their stories during Phase One, generated oral stories during Phase Two. I chose the same assignment for both Phase One and Phase Two so that the effects of the assignment would be minimal. The same data-collection conditions present during Phase One were also present during Phase Two.
Phase Three (February 6-February 17)

Two weeks later, the students were requested to reread carefully the typewritten copies of their own oral and written stories and to respond in writing to these questions: "Is there one story you like better? If so, why?" and "Is there one composing situation, telling the story or writing the story, you like better? If so, why?" The students were requested to rate their own stories using the descriptive scale: 1=Fair, 2=Good, 3=Very Good. They were told that they might rate their stories the same if they wished and still say they liked one story better. For example, a student could rate both stories as fair yet select either one as the preferred. Criteria for making these choices were explained in terms of the story characteristics (plot, theme, setting, characters, writing style) they had been introduced to and accustomed to using in their language arts and reading classes during the school year.

I then interviewed the students about their individual written statements to aid me in clarifying their personal comments and to gain further insight into their perceptions concerning the creation of oral and written stories. Each interview was tape recorded and later transcribed.
Analysis Procedures

The collected data were analyzed in three stages: 1) a product analysis of the individual oral and written stories; 2) an analysis of students' perceptions of the oral and written composing situations and their own oral and written stories; and 3) an analysis of trained raters' assessments of each student's two stories and other fifth-graders' assessments of the stories.

Stage One. The students' oral and written stories were examined to determine the total number of words, sentences, words per sentence, T-units, words per T-unit, T-units per sentence, and subordinate clauses in each story to assess fluency and syntactic complexity. These findings are reported in mean scores, comparing the oral and written stories and boys' performances with those of girls.

Every oral and written story was examined for its narrative structure and categorized according to King's (1979) five types. Rather than discard the stories which did not correspond to one of the narrative patterns King identified, a separate category was established for those few stories. Once these data were collected, categorical percentages were established and comparisons made between the oral and written stories, and between boys' and girls' choices of structure within the two writing situations.
I checked each oral and written story for present or past tense, first or third person, Graves' (1973) primary or secondary territory, and major and minor characters to assess other structural differences between the stories. These findings are reported in percentages, comparing oral and written stories and boys' performances with those of girls.

I also examined accompanying drawings and materials used by the students in creating each oral and written story to assess the differences between fifth-graders' oral and written stories in terms of illustrations and composing materials. I reported these findings in percentages, comparing the oral and written stories and boys' and girls' choices of drawing and composing materials.

After completing Part One of the analysis, I compared the individual findings within Part One with each other; and when it was applicable, I related these findings to those from other studies of children's writing.

**Stage Two.** I had encouraged students to talk about their stories immediately following each composing situation (either telling or writing a story) and again two weeks after completing both stories. These interviews provided information about the nature of the individual students' perceptions of the composing situations. Examination of the taped discussions revealed each student's preferred composing situation and his or her concerns and needs when
composing in both oral and written form. Student comments were categorized under composing factors and classified into these broad categories: preferred situation, illustrations, composing materials, planning strategies, and revising processes. The categories were derived from the students' comments. The taped discussions also helped me clarify my recorded observations of the students during the composing situations. I drew comparisons of students' preferred composing situation and between boys' and girls' general preferences in those particular composing situations. I reported these findings in percentages and summarized them descriptively.

During the final interviews, students were also requested to select which of their stories (oral or written) they liked better. Once the individual fifth-graders' quality preferences (the oral or written story) were collected, comparisons were made between the students' quality preferences and the preferred composing situation (telling or writing the story). Relationships between the students' preferred composing situation and preferred stories are reported in percentages and summarized descriptively.

**Stage Three.** To assess the differences between fifth-graders' oral and written stories in terms of the quality of the students' stories, I used both trained adult raters' and fifth-grade raters' forced-choice selections of the paired
stories to determine whether these fifth graders would rate their stories the same as teachers and other fifth graders. Once the oral and written stories were collected and typed, I paired each student's oral and written stories and asked three other graduate students who had worked with fifth graders and were interested in children's writing to read each pair and select which they felt to be the better of the two stories.

A training session preceded the forced-choice selections of the trained raters. I selected five pairs from earlier samples of fifth-graders' oral and written stories and asked the three readers to establish reader reliability by arriving at a consensus on the criteria for selecting the better stories. The Glazer Narrative Composition Scale (GNCS; see Appendix A), designed by Joan Glazer in 1971 to assess the quality of children's narrative compositions, was used as a guide to help the readers establish the criteria for their selections.

The GNCS consists of eighteen scales responding to elements of plot, theme, setting, characterization, and style. A narrative may be scored 1, 2, or 3 on each scale, depending on how much of the scale element is present in the narrative, with the highest possible composite score being 54. Glazer devised the scales on the basis of a review of literary theory and criticism, previous research in children's writing, an examination of previous composition
scales, and an analysis of a large number of children's narratives from grades four through six. Glazer's correlation of narrative scores by three judges using a quick-impression Q-sort and three different judges using GNCS resulted in a correlation coefficient of .80. Interrater reliability among three judges in Glazer's study was .83.

When my readers arrived at a consensus on the criteria for selecting the better stories using the Glazer scale, I then selected five pairs from among the eighteen pairs and asked the three readers to establish 1.0 interreader reliability on the five pairs by using the GNCS. Once 1.0 interreader reliability had been established, the three readers continued the process for the remaining pairs. The readers did not know which were the oral or which were the written stories. Distinctive oral elements had been eliminated from the oral stories when they were transcribed. Following the selection of the better story from each pair, each reader wrote a short statement explaining why the story they had chosen was better. These written statements reflected each reader's estimate of the importance of plot, theme, setting, characterization, and style in the fifth-graders' stories.

When each of the eighteen pairs of stories had been read and the choices of the better stories made, I interviewed the readers about their written statements to
aid my understanding of their choices. Data are reported in percentages and summarized descriptively. These findings were compared with the writers' preferences from Stage Two of the analysis.

In order to check the students' perceptions of their own writing with other fifth graders' views of these stories, I selected a single fifth-grade class at an elementary school in the Roanoke County (Virginia) Public Schools. Each of eighteen students read the paired oral and written stories and selected which he or she believed was the better in each pair. The student raters asked to participate in the study were completing a short story unit and writing their own stories as a culminating activity. These fifth-grade raters were also members of peer evaluation writing groups in their language arts class and thus accustomed to evaluating each other's writing.

Each of the fifth-grade raters read three pairs of stories. Therefore, each of the eighteen pairs was read by three different student raters. Each fifth-grade rater was asked to read each pair and respond in writing as to which was the better of the two stories. The students were also requested to rate the individual stories in each pair using the descriptive scale: 1=Fair, 2=Good, 3=Very Good.

I allowed the students to apply the criteria they had developed in their own peer evaluating writing groups for rating the individual stories. These criteria included
story characteristics, such as plot, theme, setting, characters, writing style. They were told that they might give both stories in a pair the same rating and still select one story as better. When each of the eighteen student raters had read three pairs of stories and made the choices as to the better stories in each pair, I briefly interviewed each of them about their written statements to aid me in understanding their choices.

The results are reported in percentages and summarized descriptively. These findings were compared with the trained raters' assessments of the individual oral and written stories and each writer's preference from Stage Two of the analysis.
This study identified and analyzed the differences between the oral and written stories produced by eighteen fifth-grade students in an academic setting. I report my findings in the form of specific answers to the four research questions and compare the findings when applicable with those of other studies of children's writing.

Fluency and Syntactic Complexity

I examined the students' oral and written stories to determine total number of words, sentences, words per sentence, T-units, words per T-unit, T-units per sentence, and subordinate clauses per story (see Appendix B) to assess fluency and syntactic complexity. I have reported a summary of these findings in Table 1.

The students' oral stories, averaging 293 words, were longer than their written stories, averaging 258 words. King (1979) also found her third-graders' oral stories were generally longer than their written stories. The fifth-grade boys in my study composed longer products than the girls, averaging 321 words per oral story as compared to the girls' 258 words, and 262 words per written story as compared to the girls' 253 words. Graves (1975), however, found his second-grade girls wrote longer compositions than
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average:</th>
<th>Total Words</th>
<th>Total Sentences</th>
<th>Words Per Sentence</th>
<th>T-units</th>
<th>Words Per T-unit</th>
<th>T-units Per Sentence</th>
<th>Subordinate Clauses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fifth-Grade Students</td>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>Written</td>
<td>Oral Written</td>
<td>Oral Written</td>
<td>Oral Written</td>
<td>Oral Written</td>
<td>Oral Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N=18</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys N=10</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls N=8</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
his second-grade boys. Because one boy in my study wrote a story of 1255 words, twice the number of the longest story composed by a girl, it seemed apparent that this one composition was skewing the mean. When I disallowed that story, the mean score for the boys' written stories became 217 words, which paralleled Graves' finding that girls wrote longer products than boys.

My fifth graders used an average of 22 sentences in both types of composing situations, but the sentences were longer in the oral stories, averaging 13 words per oral-story sentence as compared to 11 words per written-story sentence. The stories also differed in the number of T-units--oral stories averaged 31 T-units and written stories averaged 26 T-units. Syntactic development as evidenced by the stories corresponded with the maturity pattern of 9 words per T-unit reported in the Hunt and O'Donnell studies (1970). The words per T-unit in both oral and written stories were essentially the same (9.1 in the oral stories and 9.3 in the written stories). The students also used few subordinate clauses, an average of 4 per oral and written story.
Structural Differences

Narrative Structure

Each oral and written story was examined for its narrative structure and categorized according to King's (1979) five types. I have reported these findings in Table 2. King's narrative pattern A, "situation + problem + solution" (1979:3), was the most prevalent structure, appearing in 50 percent of the fifth-graders' oral and written stories (see Appendix C for an example of pattern A). Forty-four percent of the oral stories and 56 percent of the written stories used narrative structure A. Furthermore, boys' and girls' preference for pattern A did not differ. King (1979) also found pattern A to be the most used in her third-graders' oral (39 percent) and written stories (61 percent). Like King's third graders, my fifth graders used pattern A more in their written stories than in their oral stories.

King (1979) found that her students rarely used narrative types B and C. Pattern B consists of a repetition of the problem until a solution is found, while pattern C depends on a reversal for its plot to be resolved. None of my fifth-grade stories revealed these narrative structures.

I found King's narrative pattern D, a series of indirectly connected events, in 25 percent of the fifth graders' stories (see Appendix D for an example). However, this pattern was used more often (39 percent) in the oral
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative Structure</th>
<th>N-36 Total Stories</th>
<th>N-10 Group</th>
<th>Oral Stories N-10</th>
<th>N-8 Group</th>
<th>Written Stories N-10</th>
<th>N-8 Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>(50%) 18</td>
<td>(44%) 8</td>
<td>(40%) 4</td>
<td>(50%) 4</td>
<td>(56%) 10</td>
<td>(60%) 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>(0%) 0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>(0%) 0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>(25%) 9</td>
<td>(39%) 7</td>
<td>(50%) 4</td>
<td>(30%) 3</td>
<td>(11%) 2</td>
<td>(10%) 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>(14%) 5</td>
<td>(61%) 1</td>
<td>(10%) 1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(22%) 4</td>
<td>(30%) 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>(11%) 4</td>
<td>(11%) 2</td>
<td>(10%) 1</td>
<td>(12%) 1</td>
<td>(11%) 2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The numbers in parentheses represent percentages.
stories than in the written stories (11 percent). Furthermore, boys' and girls' choice of this narrative structure was similar for both types of stories. Although King (1979) also found some examples of pattern D in both composing situations, her third-grade students used the pattern less frequently than my fifth graders—in 13 percent of their oral stories and in 9 percent of their written stories.

King's narrative pattern E, a series of directly related events, appeared in 14 percent of my fifth-grade oral and written stories (see Appendix E for example). Pattern E was revealed in 22 percent of the written stories but in only 6 percent of the oral stories. Although boys' and girls' use of pattern E in the oral stories was similar, 30 percent of the boys' written stories revealed pattern E as compared to 12.5 percent of the girls' written compositions. King (1979), however, found few examples of narrative structure E in her third-graders' stories.

I categorized 11 percent of the fifth-graders' oral and written stories as Type F, descriptive narratives. Although these stories were narratives, they did not fit any of King's identified patterns. For example, one student began her Type F narrative with the opening line "This story is about a dog named Cocoa" and ended her narrative with "That is the story of Cocoa" (see Appendix F). While the student identified her writing as a story, she essentially described
her dog rather than using an ordered series of events to express her ideas.

Other Structural Features

I examined each oral and written story further to identify structural differences between fifth-graders' oral and written stories in terms of their use of present or past tense, first or third person, Graves' (1973) primary and secondary territory, and major and minor characters (see Appendix G). I have reported a summary of these findings in Table 3. All the fifth graders used active voice in both their oral and written stories with the majority of the students, both boys and girls, selecting past tense, simple form.

When all of the stories were analyzed as a total group, 56 percent of the students showed a preference for using first person point of view in their written stories but a majority (67 percent) used third person in their oral composing. Boys differed from girls, however, in the point of view selected for the written stories. Girls used first person in 75 percent of their written stories, but 60 percent of the boys chose third person. This finding corresponds with Graves' 1973 study which found second-grade girls preferred using first person point of view in their writing.

Graves (1973) also concluded that his second-grade boys wrote more about secondary territory, an area beyond their
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage:</th>
<th>Tense (Present or Past)</th>
<th>Person (First or Third)</th>
<th>Territory (Primary or Secondary)</th>
<th>Characters (Major or Minor)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>Written</td>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>Written</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fifth-Grade Students</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N=18</td>
<td>6% Present</td>
<td>22% Present</td>
<td>67% 3rd</td>
<td>44% 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>94% Past</td>
<td>78% Past</td>
<td>33% 1st</td>
<td>56% 1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys N=10</td>
<td>10% Present</td>
<td>20% Present</td>
<td>70% 3rd</td>
<td>60% 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90% Past</td>
<td>80% Past</td>
<td>30% 1st</td>
<td>40% 1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls N=8</td>
<td>5% Present</td>
<td>25% Present</td>
<td>63% 3rd</td>
<td>75% 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100% Past</td>
<td>75% Past</td>
<td>37% 1st</td>
<td>25% 1st</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
home and school, while his second-grade girls used more primary territories relating to home and school more often. As a group, the majority of my fifth graders, 67 percent of the oral composing and 56 percent of the written situations, developed their stories with primary settings. The assigned topic about a dog lent itself to primary settings. Like Graves' students, the girls in my study used more primary settings, in 88 percent of their oral stories and 75 percent of their written stories, than secondary. The boys used primary settings in only 50 percent of their oral stories and 40 percent of their written stories. When these students wrote about secondary territory, their story topics ranged from the legendary Big Foot and Abominable Snowman, the history of World War II, the California gold strikes, and a yellow fever epidemic, to a variety of science fiction and fantasy topics which included living in a futuristic world and visiting a mystical land by riding in a flying shoe.

Although the number of major characters was fairly evenly distributed throughout the oral and written stories, the number of minor characters differed. The complexity of plot development in the written stories required more minor characters. Thirty-nine percent of the oral stories featured minor characters, but 55 percent of the written stories had them. The girls, however, used more minor characters in both the oral (50 percent) and written (62
percent) situations than the boys, who used them in 30 percent of their oral and 50 percent of their written stories. King (1979) also found her third graders used more minor characters in their more complicated stories. Both boys and girls used an average of two major characters in their oral stories but decreased to one major character in their written composing situation. The topic dictated at least one major character, a dog. Eighty-three percent of the oral stories contained a dog as one of the major characters, while 17 percent had a dog as a minor character. The written stories were comparable, with a dog appearing as a major character in 89 percent of the stories and as a minor character in 11 percent of them.

Composing Factors

During interviews immediately following each composing session and again two weeks after completing the stories, I had encouraged the students to talk about their writing. Although Sawkins (1971) believed that her fifth-grade boys responded better in an interview situation than her fifth-grade girls, I found all the fifth graders in this study to be very verbal and willing to talk about their composing processes. I began each composing session interview with the question, "How did you go about creating the story?" I asked further clarifying questions when necessary. I also attempted to clarify any observational data I had noted
during the composing situation, such as comments or questions students made during composing, or particular problems students encountered. The purpose of the final interview was to determine the individual students' preferred composing situation and story preference.

Preferred Situation

Two weeks after students had composed both stories, I gave them typescripts of their stories. In that interview, I asked, "Is there one composing situation, telling the story or writing the story, you like better?" The majority (72 percent) of these students preferred to write rather than to tell stories (28 percent). Boys and girls did not differ in their individual composing preferences.

The students who enjoyed telling stories rather than writing them, however, believed that oral stories were easier to compose because the physical act of writing did not hinder the composing process and telling a story did not take as long as writing one. One student commented, "I like telling the story because you don't have to write it." Another stated, "Telling the story is more fun because I don't like to write. It takes too long!" Others also reported that they liked to hear themselves: "I like using a tape recorder. It's fun to hear myself on tape."

The students who preferred to write stories rather than tell stories stated their preference for the written composing situation in terms of difficulty with oral
composing. King (1979) also concluded that oral story
telling caused more problems for her third-grade children.
My students found it hard to think while they were composing
orally. The majority of them reported the biggest problem
associated with composing oral stories was losing their
train of thought during the oral composing. One student
commented, "I like writing the story better because I have
trouble telling my thoughts to other people by talking."
Another classmate stated, "I can't talk and think at the
same time!" Many of the students also commented that they
did not feel comfortable telling stories because they could
not compose at their own pace. "Writing the story down is
much better because you have more time to think out the plot
and make the story make sense. You don't feel rushed!"
noted one fifth grader. Once the tape recorder was turned
on, these students did not want to turn it off; and when
they did pause to think, I observed they usually forgot
where they were in the story. The written composing
situation provided a greater sense of control over their
individual composing processes. They could stop, think
about, and reread sections of their stories at their own
pace.

Illustrations

None of the students chose to draw in the oral
composing situation; however, the majority (56 percent) used
drawings to accompany their written stories and viewed the
illustration as enhancing the text. Twenty-two percent of the students stated they just did not like to draw and therefore drew in neither situation.

Most students (78 percent) responded that their oral stories did not need accompanying drawings. Both boys and girls felt that their voices accomplished what a picture would—to further describe characters or to emphasize main events in their stories. With their voices they could convey an attitude about a character or emphasize portions of the plot. One student explained, "I never draw pictures with my oral stories; my voice says it all." Graves (1981) also found that his first graders believed their stories did not always need drawings. Although his conclusion was based on only written composing situations, it seems apparent that most students base their decision to illustrate or not to illustrate their stories, oral or written, on some evaluative criteria.

Of the 56 percent who used drawings with their written stories, girls chose to draw more frequently than boys. Sixty-two percent of the girls illustrated their stories while just half of the boys did so. Of the students who drew, all but one chose to draw after they had finished writing. The one exception drew before he began writing. Graves (1981) found first graders drew prior to writing as a rehearsal, and after writing to describe the content. However, the student who elected to draw prior to writing
did not use his picture as a rehearsal for writing. When the drawing was finished, he viewed it as a complete visual story and then proceeded to write a different second story.

Both boys and girls used illustrations because they felt a part of their written story was lacking. Their drawings gave in-depth descriptions of the main characters, emphasized important events in the story, or visually told their entire story. One student wrote a story about her dog, Happy, but did not physically describe Happy in the story. She drew a detailed picture of Happy to accompany the writing because she wanted the reader to know what her dog looked like. Another student used an illustration to emphasize the main event in his story—a dog was killed with a spear and his master hanged at midnight because they stole from local townspeople. Therefore, the fifth graders who used illustrations saw drawing as an essential part of the composing process that led to a more complete product.

Composing Materials

There was essentially no difference between boys' and girls' choices of drawing or writing materials. All the students preferred to draw on white, unlined paper, and the majority of these students used a lead pencil and felt-tip markers to make their illustrations. Only one student used crayons to draw. After talking with the students, I discovered that felt-tip markers had not always been available to them and because of the newness the students
tried them; otherwise, they would have used crayons. All the students elected to write on loose-leaf notebook paper, with 61 percent of them using a lead pencil and 39 percent using a blue- or black-ink pen.

Planning Strategies

During composing, I observed and noted students' planning strategies. I also asked students how they created their stories. These students took from four minutes to twenty-five minutes to compose their oral stories, averaging ten minutes. Boys' and girls' oral composing time was similar. All the students, however, wanted time to think about their oral story before the tape recorder was turned on. Thirty-nine percent of the students, 20 percent of the boys and 63 percent of the girls, wrote plans (see Appendix H for an example) prior to recording their individual stories, while 61 percent sat quietly from thirty-five seconds to four minutes to think about their stories before recording them. The girls used more written plans than the boys for the oral composing.

While the average composing time for an oral story was ten minutes, written composing time averaged forty minutes, with a range from fifteen minutes to ninety minutes. Less than half the students took time to write plans (see Appendix H for an example) before they began composing; however, all the student writers took some time, thirty seconds to three minutes, to think about their stories
before they began writing them. As with the oral composing situation, more girls (63 percent) again used written plans than boys (30 percent). Furthermore, all the students who wrote plans for their oral composing also made notes for their written stories. One student wrote a plan for his written situation but had not used written notes during his oral composing. Sawkins (1971), however, found that while her fifth graders considered elements of content before they began writing, they, for the most part, proceeded with writing without first having made notes or an outline.

All the students indicated they had the complete story in mind before they began composing it. However, 28 percent of the students said that they had changed the tentative endings of their stories during the telling or writing situation. The decision to change the tentative endings occurred in the oral and written composing situations equally. Unlike these fifth-graders, Sawkins (1971) found that most of her fifth graders did not have the complete story in mind before they began writing but made the story up as they went along, and decided on the ending about midway through the draft.

My students also indicated that the content of both the oral and written stories was more important to them than the oral presentation skills or writing skills associated with the composing situation. They viewed both their oral and written stories as first drafts; therefore, the content of
each of their stories was their primary concern. When questioned about the subject of their stories, the majority reported they relied on personal experience for both stories. Many of the students used their own pets as main characters. Those students who did not rely on personal experiences used books and magazine articles about dogs which they had read and movies and television programs that depicted dogs which they had seen but adapted these materials for their own purposes.

The majority of the student comments during both the oral and written composing situations focused on the topic that they were assigned: they did not like it; they found it limiting. They repeatedly asked if the story had to be about a dog. As the students realized they had to use the same topic for both their oral and written stories, I received comments from students like "This is a boring subject!" and "Do we really have to use this topic again?" Boys and girls equally disliked having this topic being imposed on them.

Students also considered each composing situation as an opportunity to create a new story. Only two students, a boy and a girl, used the first story they composed as a basis for their second stories. One student was in the writing situation first and telling situation second; the other student was in the reverse situation.
Revising Processes

The most observed student problem associated with oral composing was students' losing their train of thought while telling their stories; therefore, students who wanted to edit and revise their stories while composing them found it easier in the written situation than the oral situation. Only two students attempted to edit while telling their oral stories. Both added details about characters that they had forgotten to mention. Another student waited until the end of the oral story and then tacked on additional details about the characters. The majority of the students reported they did not want to "correct" their oral stories because the audience could hear their "mistakes." All the fifth graders did some editing or revising of their stories while they were writing them. They changed spellings, corrected various grammar and punctuation errors, neatened penmanship, added details to highlight characters and events, and modified introductions and conclusions while drafting their stories.

Because the students viewed their stories as first drafts, they asked if they could revise them. Like Giacobbe's (1982) first graders, these fifth graders had standards for their stories. They not only considered the stories in terms of characteristics such as plot or characters, but also in terms of potential for revision and the quality of the finished product that could result. The
fifth-grade teacher did provide time for the students who wanted to revise one or both of their stories. All students chose at least one of their stories to revise, although these revisions were not included as a part of this study. In this classroom, every fifth grader chose his or her best writings at the end of the school year and compiled them into a writing booklet. After revising, all the students chose at least one of the stories they had composed for the study for inclusion in their writing booklets.

**Story Quality**

Forced-choice comparisons of the stories by the fifth graders, trained raters and other fifth-grade raters were used to assess the differences between the oral and written stories in terms of the quality of the students' composing. In addition, each story was ranked as (1=Fair, 2=Good, 3=Very Good) at the time of the forced-choice selection. The results of the quality assessment are reported in Table 4.

**As Determined by Subjects**

The majority of the students chose their written stories (56%) over their oral stories (44%) as the better liked of the two stories they had composed. Boys and girls did not differ in preferring the written to the oral stories. Using the descriptive scale, students rated 36 percent of their stories overall as fair, 47 percent as
<table>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1=Fair</td>
<td>2=Good</td>
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<td>13 (36%) 17 (47%) 6 (17%)</td>
<td>18 (50%) 17 (47%) 1 (3%)</td>
<td>19 (53%) 15 (42%) 2 (5%)</td>
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<td>Boys' Total Stories N=20</td>
<td>6 (30%) 12 (60%) 2 (10%)</td>
<td>7 (35%) 13 (65%) 0 (0%)</td>
<td>10 (50%) 10 (50%) 0 (0%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls' Total Stories N=16</td>
<td>7 (44%) 5 (31%) 4 (25%)</td>
<td>11 (69%) 4 (25%) 1 (6%)</td>
<td>9 (56%) 5 (31%) 2 (13%)</td>
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<td>Total Oral N=18</td>
<td>9 (50%) 7 (39%) 2 (11%)</td>
<td>11 (61%) 7 (39%) 0 (0%)</td>
<td>10 (56%) 7 (39%) 1 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys' Oral N=10</td>
<td>4 (40%) 5 (50%) 1 (10%)</td>
<td>4 (40%) 6 (60%) 0 (0%)</td>
<td>6 (60%) 4 (40%) 0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls' Oral N=8</td>
<td>5 (63%) 2 (25%) 1 (12%)</td>
<td>7 (88%) 1 (12%) 0 (0%)</td>
<td>4 (50%) 3 (38%) 1 (12%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Written N=18</td>
<td>4 (22%) 10 (56%) 4 (22%)</td>
<td>7 (39%) 10 (56%) 1 (5%)</td>
<td>9 (50%) 8 (45%) 1 (5%)</td>
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<td>Boys' Written N=10</td>
<td>2 (20%) 7 (70%) 1 (10%)</td>
<td>3 (30%) 7 (70%) 0 (0%)</td>
<td>4 (40%) 6 (60%) 0 (0%)</td>
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<td>Girls' Written N=8</td>
<td>2 (25%) 3 (38%) 3 (38%)</td>
<td>4 (50%) 3 (38%) 1 (12%)</td>
<td>3 (63%) 2 (25%) 1 (12%)</td>
</tr>
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good, and 17 percent as very good. While students judged their oral stories as 50 percent fair, 39 percent good, and 11 percent very good, they judged their written stories higher: 22 percent fair, 56 percent good, and 22 percent very good. Boys rated the majority of their stories as good (60 percent), with 30 percent as fair and 10 percent as very good. Girls, however, rated their stories lower than boys: 44 percent fair, 31 percent good, and 25 percent very good. The majority of both boys and girls rated their written stories higher (good or very good) than their oral stories. Students' written comments following their choices of preferred story and preferred composing situation revealed that these decisions were made independently of each other.

As Determined by Trained Raters

An analysis of the trained raters' assessments of the individual oral and written stories revealed that they agreed with both the students' story preferences and ratings. Like the students, the trained raters in paired forced-choice selections preferred the students' written stories (78 percent) over the oral stories (22 percent). Using the descriptive scale, the trained raters judged 50 percent of all stories to be fair, 47 percent to be good, and 3 percent to be very good. More boys' stories, however, were judged as good (65 percent) than girls' stories (25 percent). Although 6 percent of the girls' stories received a very good rating and no boy's story received the highest
rating, the majority (60 percent) of the girls' stories received the lowest rating compared to 35 percent of the boys' stories. This finding differed from Sawkins (1971), who reported her fifth-grade boys tended to write compositions judged as lower in quality than those of her fifth-grade girls.

The raters judged the students' written stories higher than their oral stories. They gave a majority (61 percent) of the oral stories the lowest rating and 39 percent a good rating. No oral story was marked as very good. However, 56 percent of the written stories were judged as good and 5 percent as very good. There was essentially no difference between the boys' oral and written stories in terms of quality. The girls' written stories, however, were rated higher than their oral stories.

As Determined by Other Fifth-Graders

An analysis of other fifth-graders' assessments of the individual oral and written stories revealed that they also preferred the students' written stories over their oral stories. Sixty-one percent of the written stories were selected by these student raters to be the better stories in each of the eighteen pairs, while only 31 percent of the oral stories were selected by the fifth-grade raters to be the better stories in the total pairs.

Like the fifth-grade writers and trained raters, the fifth-grade raters also rated the stories using the fair,
good, very good descriptive scale. These findings are reported in Table 4. The student raters judged 53 percent of the stories as fair, 42 percent as good, and 5 percent as very good, results highly consistent with the trained raters' judgments. The majority (56 percent) of the oral stories received the lowest rating, with 39 percent marked good and 5 percent very good, ratings fairly consistent with both the writers' and the trained raters' assessments. Half of the written stories received fair ratings from the fifth-grade raters while 45 percent were judged good and 5 percent very good. Like the trained raters, the fifth-grade raters judged none of the boys' stories as very good, but rated half the boys' stories fair and the other half good; the boys' oral stories, however, generally received lower ratings than their written ones. The majority of the girls' stories were judged as fair (56 percent) with 31 percent marked as good and 13 percent very good, results fairly consistent with the trained raters' assessments. The student raters saw essentially no difference in quality between the girls' oral and written stories.

The written comments on the rating sheets revealed that the fifth-grade raters had clear, well-defined criteria for their judgments. For example, a good rating was supported by the following comment: "I like this story because I knew that the dog was old and going blind in one eye. He (the writer) didn't run his sentences together. I could
understand what was going on in the story. One problem with the story was that he repeated sentences and that he needed more description of the dog.” In contrast, another student offered more advice in support of a fair rating: "I liked Henry being different, but what does Henry and Scooter look like? There should have been some paragraphs. Needed setting description." A fifth-grade rater wrote the following comments about a very good rating: "I liked the way you (the writer) exaggerated the story. You worked up to the climax and had a very good plot. I liked the way you got to the point." Even though ratings were not always consistent for individual stories (each story was judged by three student raters), the student raters viewed the task as an opportunity to respond to the writers, pointing out areas of strength and weakness.

Summary

The three groups that evaluated the oral and written stories found the written stories to be better than the oral stories. The student writers selected their written stories (56 percent) as better than their oral stories. They also rated their written stories higher than their oral stories. The trained raters preferred the students' written stories (78 percent) to the oral stories and also judged the written stories higher than the oral stories. The fifth-grade raters chose the written stories (61 percent) as better, also rating them higher than the oral stories.
The student writers, trained raters, and fifth-grade raters agreed that the majority of the boys' stories were good, while rating the majority of the girls' stories lower. While both the boys and girls judged their written stories higher than their oral stories, the trained raters saw essentially no difference between boys' oral and written stories, but did rate the girls' written stories higher than their oral stories. The fifth-grade raters, however, agreed with the student writers and ranked the boys' written stories higher than their oral stories but discerned essentially no difference between girls' written and oral stories.

The fifth-graders' individual oral stories (39 percent) and written stories (44 percent) that were preceded by written plans were judged essentially the same in quality as the other student stories composed without written plans. All the evaluators rated the stories preceded by written plans as fair or good revealing a quality distribution similar to the total stories. None were rated as very good. The differences in quality noted between the boys' and girls' total oral and written stories were also revealed in their stories that were preceded by written plans.

An examination of stories of students who preferred the oral composing situation (28 percent) rather than the written situation revealed that of the five students, three boys and two girls, who preferred the oral composing
situation, only one of the boys' oral stories and one of the girls' was selected by the student composers, trained raters, and fifth-grade raters as the better liked story in the individual pairs. This follows the pattern established by the three groups when they evaluated the total stories preferring the students' written stories over their oral stories.

A Comparison of Charles and Keith

Because these fifth graders were heterogeneously grouped, there was a wide range of ability among the students in my study. These students' performance profiles indicated a range from the 40th to the 99th percentile on the Educational Ability Series. Thus, I identified the lowest scoring student, Keith, and the highest scoring student, Charles, on the Educational Ability Series, and analyzed the differences between their stories to present a more complete picture of the range of fifth-graders' oral and written stories (see Appendix J). Other students in the study scored the same as Keith and Charles on the Educational Ability Series; however, Keith and Charles were representative of the extreme ability levels.

At the beginning of the study, both boys were eleven years old and in the fifth grade for the first time. Both lived approximately three blocks from the elementary school and came from white middle to upper-middle class homes. The boys' fathers were university professors. Keith ranked in
the 40th percentile on the Educational Ability Series, while Charles ranked in the 99th percentile. Charles had been identified for the Gifted and Talented Program in the county.

**Fluency and Syntactic Complexity**

Both the students' oral stories were longer than their written stories; however, Charles' oral and written stories were both longer than Keith's. Charles' oral story was 535 words while his written story was 196 words, compared to Keith's oral story of 139 words and written story of 73 words. Charles used 16 sentences in his written story compared to Keith's 6 sentences, and Charles also used more sentences (30) in his oral story than Keith (11). Both students used 12 words per written-story sentence; however, Charles used 18 words per oral-story sentence compared to Keith's 13 words.

The boys' stories also differed in the number of T-units--Charles used 41 T-units in his oral story and 19 T-units in his written story, while Keith used fewer T-units, 16 in his oral story and only 7 in his written story. Charles used more words per T-unit in his oral story, unlike Keith who used more words per T-unit in his written story. Keith's oral composing revealed 9 words per T-unit as compared to 12 words per T-unit in his writing; however, Charles' oral story disclosed 13 words per T-unit while his written story revealed 10 words per T-unit. Both the boys
used more subordinate clauses in their oral stories (Charles used 8 and Keith 3) than in their written stories (Charles 1 and Keith 0).

**Structural Differences**

Keith preferred the simpler narrative pattern A, "situation + problem + solution" (1979:3) for both his oral and written stories, while Charles chose to use the more complicated narrative structures, pattern D, a series of events related indirectly, for his oral story, and pattern E, a series of events related directly, for his written story. Both the fifth graders used active voice in their oral and written stories, choosing simple past tense. The analysis showed that Charles preferred using third person point of view in both his stories, while Keith used third person in his written story but first person in his oral story. Although Keith developed his stories with primary settings, related to home and school, Charles chose secondary settings, including territory wider than home and school situations, for both his stories. The use of major characters was fairly evenly distributed throughout the boys' oral and written stories. Both students used two major characters in their oral stories but chose only one major character in their written stories. Charles used more minor characters in his oral story (3) than his written story (2), while Keith elected to use more minor characters in his written story (4) than his oral story (2).
Composing Factors

Charles preferred to write his stories rather than tell them: "I like to write stories because you don't have someone looking at you." However, Keith preferred to tell stories "because you don't have to write." These two students chose not to draw in the oral composing situation; however, both boys drew after their written stories to enhance the text. The boys preferred to draw on white, unlined paper, and Charles used a lead pencil and felt-tip markers to make his illustrations, while Keith used only a lead pencil. Both boys chose loose-leaf notebook paper to write their stories on; however, Charles preferred a blue-ink pen, while Keith used a lead pencil.

Charles and Keith both complained about the topic--they found it very limiting. They both took some time to think about their stories before they began; however, these two boys chose not to write plans prior to composing. Because Charles and Keith viewed both their oral and written stories as first drafts, they asked to revise them. Both students decided to revise their written stories and placed them in their writing booklets at the end of the school year.

Story Quality

Both the students chose their written stories as the better liked of the two stories they had composed and rated their written stories higher than their oral stories. Charles rated his written story as very good and his oral
story good, while Keith rated his written story as good and his oral story fair. Both the trained raters and fifth-grade raters agreed with the boys' preferences and selected the written stories as the better stories. However, the trained raters and fifth-grade raters rated both Charles' oral and written story as good and marked both Keith's stories as fair.

Summary

Many of the differences between Charles' and Keith's oral and written stories reflect the total group of fifth graders; however, several differences between the two boys should be noted. In the area of fluency and syntactic maturity, Charles composed longer stories, used more sentences, and employed more T-units in his stories than Keith. Both the boys used more subordinate clauses in their oral stories than their written stories, a feature not reflected in the total group.

Three structural differences between the boys' stories also need to be recognized. Keith preferred the simpler narrative pattern A for both his stories, while Charles chose to use the more complicated narrative structures D and E for his stories. While both boys used third person in their written stories, Keith chose first person point of view for his oral story, unlike Charles who used third person. Keith also preferred using primary settings for his stories as compared to Charles' preference for secondary
settings.

The boys also differed on composing preference. Charles liked to write stories, while Keith liked to tell stories. Furthermore, the evaluators chose the boys' written stories as the better liked of the two stories; however, Charles' stories were rated higher than Keith's.

Discussion of Findings

In this chapter I have reported my findings in the form of specific answers to the four research questions which examined differences between fifth-graders' oral and written stories in terms of fluency and syntactic complexity, structural features, preferred composing situation, and quality of the students' composing, and have compared these findings when applicable with other studies of children's writing. I have summarized the findings from my study that directly relate to conclusions reached from other studies of children's writing in Appendix I. Some of my findings were consistent with other studies of children's writing, and some differed.

A comparison of results from studies of children's writing indicated that both third- and fifth-grade children compose longer oral stories than written stories. King (1979) found that her third-graders' oral stories were longer than their written stories, and I reached the same conclusion with my fifth graders. This finding may reflect
the basic differences between oral and written language 
expression. Because oral language evolves earlier and 
faster, these students may feel more comfortable with their 
oral language skills than with their written language 
skills, resulting in longer oral products. Speakers are 
more fluent than writers; therefore, they can focus their 
full attention on their intended message while writers must 
concentrate not only on their message but also on the 
physical act of writing to convey their message. For young 
writers the physicality of the writing process probably 
causes written stories to be shorter than oral stories. 
Although both Charles' and Keith's oral stories were longer 
than their written stories, Charles, the higher scoring 
student on the Educational Ability Series, composed longer 
stories than Keith, the lower scoring student. Perhaps this 
finding indicates that Keith's writing ability is developing 
at a slower rate than Charles' highlighting the possibility 
that the fifth-grade level is a transitional period, where 
students, particularly boys, are developing in writing 
ability at different rates.

These fifth graders also used few subordinate clauses, 
an average of 4 per oral and written story. Teachers are 
working under the assumption that oral composing helps to 
build writing skills; however, my study indicated that 
fifth-grade students are not using any more complex sentence 
structures in their oral stories than in their written
stories. Perhaps this finding reveals that oral composing is not making the contribution towards building writing skills that teachers assume. However, both Charles and Keith used more subordinate clauses in their oral stories than their written stories, a feature not reflected in the total group. The two boys use of more subordinate clauses in their oral stories may reveal a level of sophistication in students' oral stories that teachers tend to overlook and not capitalize on when they use oral composing to help build writing skills.

King reported her third graders predominately used the simplest narrative pattern A "situation + problem + solution" (1979:3) in developing their stories. My study was consistent with King's in reporting that pattern A was the prevalent narrative structure in the majority of the fifth-graders' stories. These students may have relied on narrative pattern A because it offers them a well-defined organizational pattern that they can easily follow. Fifth graders have perhaps outgrown pattern B which is prevalent in young children's literature, and the reversal-techniques in pattern C may require a level of sophistication that fifth-grade composers have not reached. Since narrative structures D and E also represent complicated narrative patterns, a series of events connected indirectly or directly, fifth-grade composers probably feel the most comfortable with narrative structure A and use it as the
predominant pattern to develop their stories. When students chose pattern D, it was used more often in their oral stories perhaps because the structure lends itself to oral language expression. Students, telling a story, tended to ramble through a series of indirectly related events with many digressions. Pattern E when used, however, was revealed in more of the students' written stories than oral stories. This difference may have occurred because the written situation gave students more control over a complicated narrative structure. Because more fifth-grade boys than girls used narrative pattern E, the boys appeared to be experimenting with a mature pattern of story development. These differences in narrative structure were also revealed in Charles' and Keith's stories. Keith preferred narrative pattern A for both his stories probably because it offered him a well-defined organizational pattern that was easy to follow, while Charles chose to use pattern D for his oral story, and pattern E for his written story, perhaps reflecting Charles' desire to experiment with more mature patterns of story development.

Graves (1973) discovered that his second graders drew prior to writing as a rehearsal, and after writing to describe content. My findings, however, indicated that the one fifth-grader who drew prior to writing did not use it as a rehearsal but saw the finished illustration as a complete visual product. The other fifth graders who drew after
writing used their illustrations to provide further character description or to emphasize main events in their stories. Like the total group, Charles and Keith chose not to draw in the oral composing situation; however, both boys drew after their written stories to enhance the text. As with Graves' second graders, some of my fifth graders felt that their writing did not always dictate drawing when the writing itself fulfilled their purposes. These findings may indicate that older children do not use drawing for prewriting but instead use it to make up for deficiencies they discern in the writing.

Studies of children's writing have also examined students' planning strategies. Sawkins (1971) found that most of her fifth graders did not have the complete story in mind before they began composing and proceeded to compose without first having made notes or an outline. I reported, however, that my fifth graders said they had the complete story in mind before they began composing, and some of them chose to write plans before they began. Both Charles and Keith said they had the complete story in mind before they began composing; however, they chose not to write plans prior to composing. I could not determine the composing factors influencing these findings; however, one explanation for students' writing plans and determining plot development prior to writing, might center on the prewriting activities such as brainstorming introduced to these fifth graders as a
Both King's (1979) third graders and my fifth graders agreed that the biggest problem associated with oral composing was losing their train of thought while telling their stories; therefore, the majority of the students preferred the written composing situation rather than the oral composing situation because they felt writing provided a greater sense of control over their individual composing processes. The students' short term memory may have prevented them from effectively storing and organizing the information during oral composing, while the written situation provided them with a visual structure to deal with the information. In the writing situation, students could reread their text in order to regain the logical flow of their thoughts. This need for visual cues as a way of handling short-term memory deficits may also explain why some students chose to write plans before they began composing in both the oral and written situations. Charles did prefer to write his stories rather than tell them; however, Keith preferred to tell stories "because you don't have to write." This finding may reflect Keith's uncomfortableness with writing and further enhance the possibility that Keith and Charles are developing in writing ability at different rates. It may also indicate to teachers that oral composing is more appropriate for use with younger children and children, like Keith, who are less
verbally proficient than with more mature students like Charles.

Studies of children's writing have reported that revision is an important component of students' individual composing processes. Giacobbe (1982) discovered that her first graders had self-imposed standards for their writing. I also concluded that my fifth graders had established criteria for evaluating their stories, and their judgments about their writing were somewhat consistent with trained raters' and other fifth-grade raters' assessments of their writing. These findings may reflect the students' awareness of the writing process and their involvement in peer evaluation writing groups in their language arts class. Students also may be using criteria for story structure derived from their reading to evaluate their own stories. Because the students viewed their stories as first drafts, they revised them both during and after the composing sessions. Charles and Keith revised their drafts accordingly. Calkins (1980) also reported that her third graders revised during different stages of the composing process.

Other studies of children's writing have revealed major differences between boys' and girls' writing. These studies have concluded that girls tend to perform better on school-initiated writing tasks than boys. However, I found that the boys in this study wrote stories of higher quality and
with more mature patterns than did girls. Also the analysis of Charles' and Keith's stories revealed that Charles' stories were rated higher than Keith's and he used more mature patterns perhaps reflecting the possibility that the fifth-grade level is a transitional period, where students, particularly boys, are developing in writing ability at different rates. Perhaps my overall findings are an indication that boys at the fifth-grade level have matured and reached the same developmental stage as girls, enabling the fifth-grade boys to perform as well on school-initiated writing tasks. Graves (1973) found that second-grade girls wrote longer products than the boys and used first person point of view more in their writing than second-grade boys. My findings paralleled Graves' finding that girls wrote longer products than boys and revealed that both fifth-grade boys and girls showed a preference for using first person point of view in their written stories but a majority used third person in their oral composing. The majority of the girls, however, used first person in their written stories while the boys preferred third person which corresponds with Graves' findings. Girls' predominant use of first person in their written stories may indicate they feel more comfortable acknowledging their writing than boys. When these girls used first person in their writing, they identified themselves as a character in the story while the boys used third person perhaps because they did not want to
identify themselves. Fifth graders may prefer using first person in their written stories but third person in their oral composing for much the same reason. In the oral situation students receive immediate feedback from their audience and, therefore, may be less willing to accept ownership of their compositions than in the written situations where students can only predict audience response. The immediacy of the audience during oral composing may cause many students to feel uncomfortable with their compositions and to expect criticism from their audience. Third person allows the students during oral composing the opportunity to distance themselves from their audience to perhaps avoid criticism. Because the audience is more distant during the written situation and, therefore, feedback is not immediate, students may feel more comfortable using first person and identifying themselves with their writing. Graves also reported that second-grade girls use more primary settings than secondary settings, which were preferred by the boys. I discovered, however, that there was essentially no difference in these boys' preference for secondary or primary settings because the topic lent itself to primary settings. While Keith developed his stories with primary settings, Charles chose secondary settings. This finding may reflect Charles' efforts to expand the topic. My study indicated that fifth-grade girls used more minor characters in their stories than
the boys. But, my study also revealed that the fifth-grade boys used more complicated narrative patterns, for example, a series of events that are directly related, in developing their stories than girls. These more mature patterns may explain why boys' stories were rated higher than the girls'. Sawkins (1971), however, reported that fifth-grade girls wrote compositions which were judged to be of high quality, while her boys wrote compositions which were judged to be of low quality. Evaluators, however, agreed that the fifth-grade boys' stories in this study were good, while ranking the girls' stories lower.

Because my findings do contradict Sawkins' (1971) conclusions about fifth-graders' writing, further explanation is needed. It is possible that, because Sawkins' study contained more subjects than mine, her study might be more representative of fifth-grade development. However, there is also the possibility that the fifth-grade level is a transitional period, where students, particularly boys, are developing in writing ability at different rates.

Perhaps my fifth graders and Sawkins' students were not comparable in general ability. Her fifth graders were homogeneously grouped with a mean I.Q. score of 105, while my students were heterogeneously grouped with the 80th percentile as the mean score on the Educational Ability Series. My students' performance profiles indicated a range from the 40th to the 99th percentile. Therefore, Sawkins'
fifth-grade students were average, while my students were above-average in intelligence. If the fifth-grade level is a transitional period, where students are developing in writing ability at different rates, more studies conducted with a variety of fifth-grade populations might provide more conclusive results.

The consistent findings between the studies of children's writing suggest implications for teaching children to write, which I discuss in Chapter 4, while the inconsistencies in the related findings emphasize the need for further research in children's writing. I suggest possibilities for future research in children's writing in Chapter 4.
In this chapter, I have summarized my findings in relation to the research questions. Drawing on these results, I have explored some of their possible implications for teaching children to write and also offered some suggestions for further research.

Summary of Findings Regarding the Research Questions

Are there differences between fifth-graders' oral and written stories in terms of fluency and syntactic complexity?

The students' oral stories were longer than their written stories, averaging 293 words, with the written stories averaging 258 words. These fifth graders used an average of 22 sentences in both types of composing situations, but the sentences were longer in the oral stories, averaging 13 words per oral-story sentence as compared to 11 words per written-story sentence. The stories also differed in the number of T-units—oral stories averaged 31 T-units, and written stories averaged 26 T-units. However, the mean number of words per T-unit (9) was essentially the same in both types of stories. Students used few subordinate clauses, averaging 4 per oral and
written story.

Are there structural differences between fifth-graders' oral and written stories in terms of narrative structure, tense, person, territoriality, and characterization?

King's narrative pattern A, "situation + problem + solutions" (1979:3), was the most prevalent structure of these fifth-graders' stories, while narrative structures B and C were not used at all. Pattern D, a series of events related indirectly, was used in more of the students' oral stories than written stories, while pattern E, a series of events related directly, was used by the students in more of their written stories. All the fifth graders used active voice in both their oral and written stories with the majority of the students using simple past tense. When the stories were analyzed as a total group, the students showed a preference for using first person point of view in their written stories, but a majority used third person in their oral composing. However, boys differed from girls in the point of view selected for the written stories. Girls preferred to use first person while the boys chose to use third person more frequently. The majority of these fifth graders developed their stories with primary settings, related to home and school, rather than with secondary settings, involving territory wider than home and school situations. The number of major characters was fairly evenly distributed throughout the oral and written stories.
Both boys and girls used an average of two major characters in their oral stories but decreased to one major character in their written composing situation. The complexity of events and solutions in the written stories required more minor characters. The fifth-grade girls used more minor characters in both their oral and written stories than the fifth-grade boys.

Are there differences between fifth-graders' preferences in composing in oral or written form, illustrating stories, selecting composing materials, planning strategies, and revising process?

The majority of these students preferred to write their stories rather than tell them. The written composing situation provided them a greater sense of control over their composing processes. They could stop, think about, and reread sections of their stories at their own pace. None of these students chose to draw in the oral composing situation; however, the majority used drawings to accompany their written stories and viewed them as enhancing the text. The girls used more illustrations than the boys to further describe characters or emphasize main events in their stories. All the students preferred to draw on white, unlined paper, and the majority of these students used a lead pencil and felt-tip markers to complete their illustrations. Loose-leaf notebook paper and a lead pencil were the preferred writing equipment among these fifth graders.
The average composing time for an oral story was ten minutes, while it took forty minutes for the students to write their stories. Most of these fifth graders complained about the topic—they found it to be very limiting. All the students took some time to think about their stories before they began composing them; however, girls used more written plans than boys. These fifth-grade students indicated they had the complete story in mind before they began composing. The most observed student problem associated with oral composing was individual students' losing their train of thought during the telling of their stories; therefore, it was easier for the students to edit and revise during the written situation. In their written stories, these fifth graders changed spellings, corrected various grammar and punctuation errors, neated penmanship, added details to highlight characters and events, and modified introductions and conclusions. These students viewed both their oral and written stories as first drafts and asked to revise them. The fifth graders had standards for their stories. They not only considered the stories in terms of characteristics such as plot and characters, but also in terms of potential for revision and the quality of the finished product that could result.
Are there differences between fifth-graders' oral and written stories in terms of the quality of the students' composing?

The majority of the students chose their written stories as the better liked of the two stories they composed and rated their written stories higher than their oral stories. Both the trained raters and fifth-grade raters agreed with the students and selected the written stories as the better stories, also rating them higher than the oral stories. Furthermore, the fifth-grade writers, trained raters, and fifth-grade raters agreed that the majority of the boys' stories were good, while rating the majority of the girls' stories lower.

Implications for Teaching

It was impossible for me to complete this study without developing some ideas about its importance for language arts teachers. The results of this study suggest several implications for teaching children to write.

Since the fifth graders preferred writing their stories to telling them, teachers might need to rethink their use of oral composing activities in the language arts classroom in the later elementary grades. Beginning in kindergarten, teachers encourage their students to tell stories orally rather than write them because the physical act of handwriting is slow and difficult for most younger students.
However, as the students' handwriting develops, teachers provide more opportunities for their students to write their stories rather than tell them. Because Virginia's SOL's encourage teachers to have students create both oral and written narratives during the second, fourth, and sixth grades, most students by the late elementary grades have generated numerous oral stories and are ready to attempt other oral communication skills, such as learning to give clear, understandable oral directions and mastering public speaking techniques so essential to oral reports or dramatic readings. Therefore, teachers of older elementary children might review their use of oral composing activities in the language arts classroom and adjust them to meet the needs and concerns of their students.

Because my students had typescripts of both stories, they saw them as first drafts and asked to revise them, demanding specific feedback on both their oral and written stories. If language arts teachers continue to have their students create oral stories in the upper elementary grades, they should provide the students with the same, specific feedback they give the students' written stories. Students need clear purposes for creating oral stories and they need constructive audience response. If teachers provide the appropriate feedback for both their students' oral and written stories, they must also provide time for their students to revise them. Transcribed oral stories can be
treated as written products and revised more easily.

The majority of the fifth graders did not like the topic I had selected and imposed upon them. Deciding on what to say is probably the hardest and most important part of writing, and teachers should be aware that by taking this responsibility away from their student composers they are also taking away the opportunity for students to be fully committed to their writing. Teachers should allow children freedom to choose topics and help children expand their ideas, encouraging them to write about topics they care about. When teachers impose topics on student composers, the writing becomes more school-initiated and less student-initiated resulting in writing to which students are not totally committed (Graves, 1973).

Because the majority of these fifth graders used the most common story structure, past tense, and third person to write their stories, students should be encouraged not only to write about personal experiences and concerns but also to use various modes, present tense, and first person when appropriate. Teachers need to use a variety of writing activities with their students that encourage the use of these structural features.

Because these fifth graders viewed drawing as an essential part of the written composing process that led to a more complete product, language arts teachers, particularly at the upper elementary and middle school
levels, need to continue allowing children's writing to be accompanied by their drawings. Teachers should give these older student writers the freedom to draw and should view their students' illustrations as an important part of the writing. Since these students used illustrations because they felt a part of their written story was lacking, their drawings could provide a basis for revising their writing. Teachers could ask students to revise their writing according to the additional information given in their illustrations.

These fifth-grade students had standards for their stories, and their own assessments of their stories agreed with the evaluations of both the trained raters' and other fifth graders' who assessed the stories. Teachers should encourage their students to set standards for their own writing and for peer evaluation. When teachers feel confident that students will assess their writing appropriately, student feedback can become part of the revising and editing process.

I learned about the composing needs and concerns of these fifth-graders when I asked them to talk about how they went about creating their oral and written stories. Writing conferences with students should be a component of teaching children to write in the language arts classroom. Not only do such conferences provide an opportunity for students to receive appropriate feedback about their writing, but also
conferences allow teachers to learn more about the composing needs and concerns of their individual students.

Suggestions for Further Research

Although recent composition studies provide insight into children's writing, teachers still have unanswered questions concerning children's writing. The possibilities for future research in children's writing are nearly limitless. The following ideas suggested from the findings of this study are only beginnings for further research:

1) A longitudinal study of intact groups of children progressing through grades K-5, which examines the differences between students' oral and written stories, and the composing behaviors related to those stories to discover the particular composing differences that are exhibited at different maturity levels, could more clearly define developmental patterns. Even developmental studies which examine children's stories and composing behaviors in grades K-2 or 3-5 might be desired compromises for the ideal longitudinal study. Also a similar study needs to be completed at the middle school level where students are still being encouraged by their teachers to create narratives.

2) Because I discovered a great deal about students' composing processes during my interviews with them,
a study which examines the use of writing conferences within the language arts classroom to determine whether teacher-pupil conferences enhance the writing process might have implications for language arts teaching practices.

3) My study revealed some elements of students' planning and revising processes, but more studies of children's writing processes need to investigate the effect of the children's writing processes on their written products.

4) Studies of children's writing thus far have concentrated on looking at the composing process and on analyzing the written products. However, none have investigated the reading/writing connections. For instance, do good and poor readers have the same writing processes?

5) In doing this study, I looked at several language arts methods texts, but a comprehensive textbook analysis of classroom language arts texts would provide a broad view of not only the kinds of writing activities available for teachers to use with their elementary students but also the kinds of oral language activities used to enhance writing.

Writing is an integral part of a child's total language development. Because of this interrelatedness with reading
and oral language, we must continue to investigate the relationships rather than focusing primarily on single components of language development.
REFERENCES CITED


Moffett, James, and Betty Jane Wagner. (1976). Student-


APPENDIX A

GLAZER NARRATIVE COMPOSITION SCALE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>1</th>
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<td>C. Internal Logic</td>
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<td>D. Inclusion of Detail</td>
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<td></td>
<td>E. Ending</td>
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<td>II. THEME</td>
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<td></td>
<td>III. SETTING</td>
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<td>IV. CHARACTERIZATION</td>
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<td></td>
<td>V. STYLE</td>
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<td>C. Word Usage, vocabulary</td>
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<td>D. Dialogue</td>
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<td></td>
<td>F. Unusual Elements</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
GLAZER NARRATIVE COMPOSITION SCALE

I. PLOT

A. Originality

1 - The story is a retelling of a known story, or has obviously been copied.
2 - The basic idea and development of the story might be expected from intermediate grade children.
3 - The basic idea and development of the story show a new outlook, original thought.

B. Beginning

1 - Beginning is not particularly interesting, gets the story off to a slow start.
2 - Beginning is interesting, may be a stereotyped format.
3 - Beginning is intriguing, gets the reader into the story immediately.

C. Internal Logic

1 - Story lacks coherence. Story does not have a plot. Events are told in sequence, but without a cause and effect relationship. There is an unexplained conflict in the logic of the story.
2 - Events of the story are related logically, with some cause and effect.
3 - Events of the story are clearly interconnected by a cause and effect relationship.

D. Inclusion of Detail

1 - Very little detail included.
2 - Fair amount of detail.
3 - Much detail, adding to the development of the plot.

E. Ending

1 - Lack of closure. Lack of reasoning for specific ending. Trite ending.
2 - Ending follows logically from the story.
3 - Ending follows logically from the story, is clever, succinctly stated. May be a surprise ending.

II. THEME

1 - Story does not have a theme.
2 - Theme is stated as a moral at the end of the story, or is summarized in the concluding statements.
3 - Theme is an integral part of the story.
III. SETTING
1 - Time and place are indicated in general.
2 - Time and place are given specifically.
3 - Time and place are given in descriptive, sensory terms.

IV. CHARACTERIZATION
1 - Characters are identified by a name, noun, or pronoun with no further description.
2 - Characters are described physically, psychologically, or both.
3 - Characters are described physically, psychologically, or both, and act in accordance with the description given.

V. STYLE
A. Title
1 - There is no title. The story and title do not match.
2 - The title is very general and tells little about the story.
3 - The title is interesting or clever, builds desire to read the story.

B. Sentence Structure--Fluency, Variety
1 - Sentences are short or choppy. The same pattern may be repeated. Lack fluency.
2 - Sentences read without noticeable breaks, and there is some variety in pattern.
3 - There is a great variety of sentence patterns, some rather complex. The composition flows freely.

Sentence Structure--use of connectives
1 - "And" is used to create run-on sentences. One connective, such as "then" or "so" is used extensively and with little intrinsic meaning.
2 - The same connective is used repeatedly, but with meaning.
3 - Connectives are used logically and create a smooth transition.

C. Word Usage--vocabulary
1 - Common, fairly general words are used. The same words may be used repeatedly.
2 - Accurate, precise, but not unusual words are used.
3 - Vivid, descriptive words are used.

Word Usage--figurative language
1 - There is no figurative language at all.
2 - Common idioms or often-used figures of speech are used.
3 - Original figures of speech, appropriate to the situation, are used. New expressions are introduced.

Word Usage--names
1 - Characters are not named, are referred to by a common noun.
2 - At least one character is named, using actual names.
3 - Names are created for an imaginary creature, or to match a character.
   Unusual names are used.

Word Usage--pronouns, verb tense
1 - Two different pronouns are used to refer to the same antecedent.
   There is a confusing change of verb tense.
2 - For the most part, pronoun usage and verb tense are consistent with the meaning of the passage.
   Some verb inflections may be omitted.
3 - For the entire story pronoun usage and verb tense are consistent with the meaning of the passage.

D. Dialogue
1 - No dialogue is used.
   The dialogue is stilted or unnatural.
2 - The dialogue advances the plot, is natural, and is appropriate to the character speaking.
3 - The dialogue advances the plot, is natural, is appropriate to the character speaking, and is particularly clever or effective.

E. Emotional Quality
1 - No emotion is mentioned or indicated.
   A single word denotes emotion.
2 - Emotion and reaction to emotion are shown.
3 - Emotion is a basic part of the story, perhaps affecting the plot.
   An unusual depth of understanding of emotion is shown.

F. Unusual Elements
1 - The story is told in direct narrative.
2 - The story employs some literary device which increases its effectiveness. Examples are:
   An unexpected element
   Special punctuation or capitalization for emphasis
   Repetition of words or phrases
   Unusual point of view
   Special format or form
   Aside to reader
   Humor, exaggeration, sarcasm
3 - Not available in the source.
### APPENDIX B

**FLUENCY AND SYNTACTIC COMPLEXITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fifth-Grade Students</th>
<th>Total Words Oral</th>
<th>Total Words Written</th>
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| GIRLS N=8            |                  |                     |                      |                         |                         |                           |                |                |                             |                             |                         |                             |
| Stecy                | 410              | 731                 | 18                   | 58                      | 22.8                    | 12.8                      | 35              | 63              | 11.7                        | 11.8                       | 1.9                      | 1.1                       |
| Marilyn              | 90               | 181                 | 8                    | 15                      | 11.3                    | 12.0                      | 9               | 17              | 10.0                        | 10.6                       | 1.1                      | 1.1                       |
| Debra                | 130              | 208                 | 14                   | 22                      | 9.3                     | 9.5                       | 16              | 22              | 8.1                         | 9.5                        | 1.1                      | 1.0                       |
| Mary                 | 117              | 99                  | 5                    | 10                      | 23.4                    | 9.9                       | 19              | 12              | 6.2                         | 8.3                        | 3.8                      | 1.2                       |
| Judy                 | 313              | 238                 | 30                   | 78                      | 10.4                    | 8.5                       | 36              | 29              | 8.7                         | 8.2                        | 1.2                      | 1.0                       |
| Susan                | 120              | 133                 | 18                   | 10                      | 6.7                     | 11.3                      | 20              | 14              | 6.0                         | 9.5                        | 1.1                      | 1.4                       |
| Bridget              | 651              | 115                 | 61                   | 13                      | 5.7                     | 4.7                       | 79              | 14              | 8.2                         | 4.4                        | 1.3                      | 1.1                       |
| Carolyn              | 235              | 309                 | 19                   | 30                      | 12.3                    | 10.3                      | 24              | 17              | 9.8                         | 8.4                        | 1.3                      | 1.2                       |
| HEAN                 | x 258.3          | x 253.3             | x 21.6               | x 23.3                  | x 12.7                  | x 10.1                    |                  |                  |                             |                             |                         |                             |
| TOTAL N=18           | x 293.1          | x 258.3             | x 21.9               | x 21.8                  | x 13.2                  | x 11.2                    |                  |                  |                             |                             |                         |                             |
Hello! I am a dog. When I grow up to be a big German Shepherd I want to be scientist.

I have discovered the mythical land of the Ponks. They are dear little creatures and speak my language. I am the only one who knows about their experiments and the underground world.

It is a shame that they don't like people. They speak of people as Ponkkillers. One said, "They trampled my dear little brother."

I told him, "It is because he was lying down and Ponks are only the size of a book." He only grumbled.

Everyday I go to the Ponks' villages. There I am greeted and treated well. All was swell until a human found their village. He was bad and was going to show them to people for money. Something had to be done! He had to be stopped.

The Ponks made a large hole. There I had to lead the human. I was scared. I gave him a bite on the leg and carried him to the pit.

Once he was in, the lid was put over the pit. Some wondered what to do then. I told them, "We could make the hole larger and make him live there. We could make him food, give him a bed, and a place to sit."

So the mean man had a nice home. He began to even like
the Ponks and me. The end.
Once there was a dog named Hatband, who lived with his master, Adam, on a steamboat on the Mississippi. The steamboat, named Uncle Tom, was on the river when yellow fever struck Baton Rouge. This is how they lived those 2 months, on Uncle Tom.

Hatband and Adam had been racing each other through the boat when Mama stopped them, saying it was time for lunch. Running just as fast as they had minutes ago, they sped to the dining room. "I'm starved," said Adam to Hatband. Giving some horsemeat to the dog, Adam then fixed himself a peanut butter sandwich. Wholfing it down, he fixed himself another.

After lunch, Hatband ran outside while Adam went upstairs, to see Dad steer the boat. When he got there, his Dad told him, "Adam, yellow fever struck Baton Rouge, I'm not sure how long we have to stay on Uncle Tom." Adam's first concern was for his dog.

"Do we have enough food for Hatband, and what about Mama, have you told her?"

"Yes, I have, and she's sure we have enough food."

The week passed with no news of anything. But on Monday Hatband started barking like crazy. Adam saw what he was barking at, another dog! Swimming as fast as he could, he was about 30 feet behind the boat. "Steer the boat a little to the right, Dad!" said Adam.

"Why?" Dad replied.

"There's a dog out there!!"

"What?!!?"

"I said there's a dog out there!"

Slowly the boat turned, and Adam reached out for the dog. He grabbed the shivering dog and quickly gave it to Mama, who started a hot bath for the dog. "How did he keep up with us?" said Dad as he came down the stairs. "He was just determined," said Mama, as Hatband came in and started to nuzzle the dog in the big bathtub. Suddenly Adam recognized the dog. "It's Avia!" he said, as he remembered
the dog.

"Well, I'll be darned!!" said Mama.

The next month came quickly. There was news that the yellow fever was easing up a bit. Avia and Hatband quickly became friends.

One night Adam woke up to some quiet whimpering. Carefully he got out of bed and tiptoed toward the sound. In the corner of his room was Avia, with five little puppies. "Mama, Dad, she had puppies; Avia, she had puppies!!"

"What?" said Dad.

"She had puppies, five of them!" Adam explained, as he ran into his parents' room.

His father quickly got out of bed and went into Adam's room. There, laying close to their mom, were four, but now five little puppies. Two were spotted, one was splotched with brown, and two were all black, with little patches of white on their chest and their tails and rumps.

It took the rest of the month to ween the puppies off of milk. So Mama began feeding them puppy mush. Adam thought it was so funny when one of the puppies fell into his bowl of mush.

The months passed quickly on Uncle Tom. Adam wished they didn't, because the two months he spent on that boat were the best in his life. He hoped he'd get stuck on a boat again, with lots of dogs.
APPENDIX E

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE E

Once upon a time there was a dog named Wilbur. Wilbur was a race dog who had won the final race in 1983, 1982, 1980 and 1972. Wilbur was a nice dog with black fur and two white spots on his back. Wilbur's next race was next week. He had to practice very hard for if he won this race he would be in the finals again in 1984. The 1984 race would be the best race yet. The reason this race is going to be the best race yet, is the dog that wins will receive a year's supply of dog food no matter how fast the dog eats it. The race is only two days off. Now Wilbur had to really practice but he would only practice for one day because the last day he would rest. Finally, it was the day of the race. Wilbur got up early in the morning so he could stretch and eat a good breakfast. When Wilbur got done eating they went to the place where the race was being held. When they got to this place he heard the gun shot; he was the first one to hear the sound so he got a head start. At about the middle of the race, another dog came up side to side; the other dog went ahead of Wilbur. It was nearly the end of the race and Wilbur had a little bit of energy left. Wilbur went as fast as he could and went flying past the dog that went by him. Wilbur got closer and closer to the finish line. Now it was only feet away.... W I L B U R had WON. The next few days Wilbur took it easy, and ate some of his food that he had won. Wilbur was a famous dog now. He thought of taking it easy for the rest of his life but he was only five years old and had a long life to live.

The next race was the 1985 race. It was going to be a hard race because they had a new dog in the town where Wilbur lived. The dog's name was Ron. Ron was supposed to be a fast dog. When it was time for the race there was a war in England and America. Because of the war the race was cancelled. The President had to get five dogs to carry messages. Ron and Wilbur were picked because they were so fast. Ron and Wilbur were taught to get through bushes, lakes, thorns, and last but not least, they were taught to get through heavy gun fire. Now they were ready for the real thing. The next day the dogs were put on a boat to sail to England. It took two days to get to England. While they were on the ship they were fed very good and slept most of the way. When they got to England, Wilbur was still asleep, but when Wilbur heard the horn he was up in five seconds. "Well, it looks like its time to carry messages captain to captain," said Wilbur. Wilbur had been waiting for this; he knew that it would be hard work, but he thought
that he would like it better than racing against other dogs. That night they were took to a place where there was a lot of grass that was taller than he was and hard to run and walk through...Then all of a sudden they heard a loud sound; it was a gun shot. Then they heard about fifty gun shots. It was time to go to work. Every dog was split up; every dog was took to a captain. The captains were very nice. It was about another week before Wilbur was sent to take a letter to a different captain. The captain's name was "Captain Click". On the way he met an American soldier with a dog. The dog was Ron. Wilbur couldn't believe his eyes. He asked what had happened, to him. The soldier said that the dog had been shot in the stomach; the man also said that Ron would probably die in another hour or two. Wilbur stayed overnight with Ron. The next day Ron was dead. There was nothing he could do now except to roll him into the river. That night Wilbur started off to Captain Click's headquarters. It was only a couple of miles by sunrise so he thought he would go ahead instead of going to sleep now. Wilbur got there about seven o'clock and gave the letter to Captain Click. He read the letter and fed Wilbur some Dog Chow. When Wilbur finished eating he went to the dog bed and took a long nap. In his nap he had a dream; his dream was about Ron and the soldier. Wilbur wished he could pay the man back for trying to save Ron. Then he woke up and knew that he would never be able to pay the man back so he got it out of his mind and tried to forget about the man and Ron but he could not. The next day Wilbur was sent back to Captain Click with a letter that said: 'If you think you will be able to move the men up and move the Japanese back to the Mississippi River, I think we can win the War thanks to these dogs.' The next day a dog came to replace Wilbur for an entire year so Wilbur could go home and rest for about an entire year, for Wilbur had been in the army for several years.
This story is about a dog named Cocoa. This story is part fact, part fiction. Cocoa was a little, black curly dog. She loved hot chocolate so we named her Cocoa. We had her when we lived in an apartment building called Carlton Scott. She was a very funny little dog. She also used to jump over child safety gates. On our apartment building there was a wall. It had little square holes in it. Cocoa would always stick her head through one of the holes. Her favorite food was Cycle 1 and 3. Her favorite drink was cocoa. She always used to crawl under the blanket on my bed and would go to sleep. I always used to put doll clothes on her and put her in a baby carriage. I remember the day we got her. All of the puppies were curly just like her. There were white, brown, and gray, curly puppies. Cocoa was the only black one. We picked her out because since I was little, I pulled tails and ears. All of the other puppies snapped and growled when I did this. Cocoa seemed to understand that I was just a little girl and didn't know better. This is the story of Cocoa.
## APPENDIX G

### STORY STRUCTURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fifth-Grade Students</th>
<th>Tense (Present or Past)</th>
<th>Person (First or Third)</th>
<th>Territory (Primary or Secondary)</th>
<th>Characters (Major or Minor)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>Written</td>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>Written</td>
<td>Oral</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BOYS N=10</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>3rd to 1st</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchell</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>20% Present</td>
<td>70% 3rd</td>
<td>60% 3rd</td>
<td>50% Prim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>80% Past</td>
<td>30% 1st</td>
<td>40% 1st</td>
<td>50% Sec.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GIRLS N=6</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gisly</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marilyn</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridget</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolyn</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40% Present</td>
<td>25% Present</td>
<td>63% 3rd</td>
<td>75% 3rd</td>
<td>85% Prim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100% Past</td>
<td>75% Past</td>
<td>37% 1st</td>
<td>25% 1st</td>
<td>22% Sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL N=16</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60% Present</td>
<td>22% Present</td>
<td>67% 3rd</td>
<td>47% 3rd</td>
<td>67% Prim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94% Past</td>
<td>78% Past</td>
<td>33% 1st</td>
<td>56% 1st</td>
<td>32% Sec.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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APPENDIX H
WRITTEN PLANS FOR STORIES

Example #1: Written Story

true story
poodle
mean
lonesome I think
mom
dad
tore up
everything
one day
gone
we bought
bone
we
brought
it home
we give
it to him
and he got
it stuck down
into dads lazy boy
chair
all the time
and tore a great
big hole in it
he chased
our cats and made
him mad
and he chase them so much we had
to get rid of him
the end

Example #2: Oral Story

Scratching, Shotgun, Open, Commodore, Fur had, Mop-like,
bath, sleep, fire, jump out, take bag, blowaway ashes, walk
for day, very tired, make shelter, walk more, come to ice,
fall under, freeze over, blow-out, get over ice, run into
bear, it swats dog away, unload barrels in its head, its
dead, dog is okay, use bear for food, sleep, walk more, run
into glacier, slide into crevice, catch snowshoe, throw to
dog, pull up, walk rest of day, next morn, wolves find us,
pin me down, hear growl, leg feel warm, blook, wolves being
torn apart, dog gets bitten some, wrap up, limping along, both very, very tired, hears hum, finds icebreaker, gets on, Happy dog alive, happy he is alive, happy going home.
### APPENDIX 1

**STUDIES OF CHILDREN'S WRITING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5th Graders</th>
<th>1st Graders</th>
<th>1st-2nd Graders</th>
<th>2nd Graders</th>
<th>3rd Graders</th>
<th>5th Graders</th>
<th>Oral &amp; Written</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Fluency & Syntactic Complexity

1. Oral stories longer than written stories.
2. Boys wrote longer products than girls.

#### Structural Features

1. **Narrative Structure:**
   - A most used. Oral (44%), Written (56%). B and C (0%). D Oral (13%), Written (11%). E Oral (12%), Written (22%). F Oral (11%).
   - Boys used E more than girls.

2. **Used first person in their written stories:**
   - Girls (75%).
   - Boys (60%).
   - Used 3rd person in their oral stories.

3. **Wrote more about primary settings:**
   - Girls used more primary than secondary settings; boys no difference between primary and secondary stories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral stories longer than written stories</th>
<th>Girls wrote longer products than boys</th>
<th>Boys seldom used first person in their writing</th>
<th>Boys wrote more about secondary territory while girls wrote more about primary territory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX I (Continued)

**STUDIES OF CHILDREN’S WRITING**

|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

4. Girls used more minor characters in their stories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3rd Graders</th>
<th>5th Graders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5. 56 percent used illustrations. One student drew before writing - saw it as a complete visual product. Others drew after writing, used to describe content. 44 percent chose not to draw - did not like to draw, or felt written stories complete without illustrations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3rd Graders</th>
<th>5th Graders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

6. Some students used written plans, oral (38%, written 44%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3rd Graders</th>
<th>5th Graders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

7. Majority of the students chose written situation. Biggest problem associated with oral composing was losing their train of thought.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3rd Graders</th>
<th>5th Graders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>King (1979)</td>
<td>King (1979)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Both boys and girls responded equally well in an interview situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3rd Graders</th>
<th>5th Graders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>King (1979)</td>
<td>King (1979)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Used more minor characters in their complicated stories
- Drew prior to writing as a rehearsal, after writing to describe content. Some students felt writing did not always need drawing.

- Majority of students proceeded without first having made notes or an outline
- Biggest problem associated with oral composing was students losing their train of thought

- Boys responded better in an interview situation than girls
## STUDIES OF CHILDREN'S WRITING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral &amp; Written</th>
<th>3rd Graders</th>
<th>5th Graders</th>
<th>3rd Graders</th>
<th>2nd Graders</th>
<th>1st-2nd Graders</th>
<th>1st Graders</th>
<th>5th Graders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

9. All the students indicated they had the complete story in mind before they began composing.

10. Students had standards for their stories.

11. They wanted to revise their stories because they saw them as first drafts. Students revised during and after drafting the stories.

### Story Quality

12. Evaluators agreed that the boys' stories were good, while ranking the girls' stories lower.

Most students did not have the complete story in mind before they began composing.

Revision occurs at different levels of the composing process.

Boys tended to write compositions which were of low quality, while girls wrote compositions which were of high quality.
## APPENDIX J

### COMPARISON OF CHARLES AND KEITH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Words</th>
<th>Total Sentences</th>
<th>Words per Sentence</th>
<th>T-units per T-unit</th>
<th>Words per T-unit</th>
<th>T-units per Sentence</th>
<th>Subordinate Clauses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral Written</td>
<td>Oral Written</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Educational Ability Series:**
- **Charles:** 99th percentile
- **Keith:** 40th percentile

### Tense

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Oral Written</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
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### Person

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<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>3rd</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
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<td>3rd</td>
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### Territory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>Sec.</td>
<td>Sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
<td>Prim.</td>
<td>Prim.</td>
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### Characters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>2 Maj.</td>
<td>3 Min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
<td>2 Maj.</td>
<td>4 Min.</td>
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### Illustrations

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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>None After</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
<td>None After</td>
<td></td>
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### Composing Materials

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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
<td>No Plans</td>
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### Narrative Structure

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
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<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
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<td>A</td>
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### Story Preference

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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
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### Composing Preference

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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
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### Revision Preference

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
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<td>X</td>
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### 5th Grade Raters Preference

<table>
<thead>
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<th>5th Grade Raters</th>
<th>Oral Written</th>
<th>Written</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
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### Trained Raters Preference

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<tr>
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### Other 5th Grade Raters Preference

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<tbody>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
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<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
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### Rating

<table>
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<th>Written</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The vita has been removed from the scanned document