

PATTERNS OF CARING:  
A STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

by

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(ABSTRACT)

There is a long standing and widely held expectation that school is to be a caring place (Goodlad , 1984). This expectation is supported in the philosophies of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Dewey and in the psychological theories of Maslow and Erickson. Contemporary scholars (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Martin, 1986; Noddings, 1984) advocate that school not only be a caring place, but that caring be integrated into the curriculum allowing students to care for themselves and others. However, we have little empirical information about how caring is communicated and understood in the classroom.

The purpose of this study was to learn about caring in the classroom through the perspectives of teachers and students using a theoretical framework of symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969) and qualitative research methods (Erickson, 1986; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Spradley, 1980) to achieve this purpose. Through participant observations, interviews, and document searches, the researcher studied teacher-student relationships in the classrooms of a male seventh grade teacher and a female first grade teacher.

The results of the study suggest that teachers not only talk about caring for students, but also are able to communicate caring through a variety of verbal and nonverbal behaviors. In caring teacher-student relationships, the use of humor enhances students' feelings of connectedness with school. Finally, there is evidence that caring is neither easy nor flawless. There is an indication that further research is needed to examine how caring relationships contribute to student learning and affect student and teacher feelings of connectedness and efficacy.

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to those individuals who made it possible, the teachers and students at Hill Crest Elementary School. Although fictitious names have been used throughout the document, the people, their interactions and relationships are very real and vibrant. I am indebted to Joan Carr, Richard Deaton and the fourteen student informants for their willingness to participate in the study and to share their perceptions of themselves and their teacher-student relationships. The study on caring is richer because they were willing to talk about the joy, pain, and frustration of their caring. I am grateful for the openness with which I was received in each classroom and for the trust that Joan, Richard and the students invested in me.

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"The teacher who walks in the shadow of the temple, among his followers, gives not of his wisdom but rather of his faith and his lovingness. If he is indeed wise he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind."

Kahlil Gibran, The Prophet

Gibran's reflections on teaching speak to the process that this research has involved. I consider myself fortunate and privileged for not only have I learned about caring through research, but through caring relationships which have encouraged and supported this work. I, indeed, feel as though I have been led to the threshold of my mind" and I gratefully acknowledge those who were a part of the process.

First, I wish to thank the members of my doctoral committee, Drs. Rosary Lalik, Jerry Niles, Jim Garrison, Larry Weber, and Vicki Fu. I feel privileged to have studied with each of these teachers and to have my research informed by them.

In the fall of 1985, I began this journey as a student in Rosary Lalik's course Reading Research. The richness

of that experience led me to extend my work and remain as a full time student. Consequently, Rosary became my major professor and committee chairperson. My associations with Rosary have been rich and varied for she has been my teacher, supervisor, mentor, friend, and advisor. She has challenged me with her questions, supported me in my uncertainty, and allowed me to "agonize" in order that I might grow. Our work on caring has been stimulating and exhausting; joyful and painful; uncertain and purposeful; and, above all gratifying and rewarding. I am deeply grateful to Rosary for her time, patience, and especially for her commitment to caring and to scholarship.

I became acquainted with Jerry Niles in 1974, when he became my advisor in my master's program. Jerry's enthusiasm for learning and his regard for learners influenced my decision to return to graduate school. The graduate assistantships with Jerry have provided opportunities for me to learn about higher education through advising and teaching. I thank Jerry for his example in caring and for the opportunities he has provided.

In my work with Jim Garrison, I began to think about reconstructing a primary school and caring became a topic. Jim raised many important questions and shared articles which supported or advocated caring as a dimension of schooling.

From our frequent conversations in the hall or at the coffee pot, I learned the value of playing with ideas and I thank Jim for his insights and help in this project.

The methodology of a study is guided by the nature of the inquiry. Although my work is qualitative, it has been made richer by the contributions of Larry Weber, who thinks quantitatively but believes that affective dimensions of schooling are important to students' development. I am grateful to Dr. Weber for his time and willingness to contribute to a qualitative study.

With a background in social work, I have always been interested in the psychosocial problems of children. Therefore, including cognate studies in Family and Child Development permitted me to work with Vicki Fu in examining stress in children and developing perspectives on child therapy. An early component of my work was developing course for in-service teachers which dealt with stress in children and developing supportive learning environments. I deeply appreciate Vicki's help and support in this area and her willingness to serve on the doctoral committee.

I believe that in helping and educating children, we must learn how to work collaboratively across professions. Certainly, I have learned about different dimensions of caring from Lucy Moore and Dianne Jones-Freeman, licensed

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Finally, no document would be complete without those individuals who know about mainframes, formatting, and editing. In the final stretch, I could not have made it without the help of Bonnie Guthrie, Terry Stevers, and Ann Wilson. I thank each of them for being with me during the final moments.

In making my acknowledgements, I have left my family until last because they have been with me and loved me for such a long time. To my daughter, Robin, I say "thank you" for coaching me in statistics and for returning the laundry favors. She has taught me about caring from her childhood and we not only share a special mother-daughter relationship, but one of professional women as well.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

"The school is to be also, in the eyes of parents and students, a nurturing, caring place" (Goodlad, 1984, p. 63).

The epigraph above reflects the common expectation that the school is a caring place. Moreover, would we expect or want less for children? This long standing expectation comes from different sources. Not only do parents and students expect the school to provide affective support (Goodlad, 1984), so do philosophers (Dewey, 1917; Gutek, 1968, & Thomas, 1985) scholars (Martin, 1986; Mayeroff, 1971; Noddings, 1984, 1987) and classroom teachers (Jackson, 1968; Lortie, 1975). Nonetheless, we lack a clear understanding of what caring is and how it can be expressed in the classroom.

The bulk of contemporary research focuses on more rational dimensions of classroom experience such as the identification of teacher behaviors associated with increased test scores and the teachers' promotion of creative and critical thought. In empirical work, we tend to ignore caring, leaving the impression that it is either too trivial or too elusive to study. Pointing to this oversight, Shulman and Carey contend that the psychology of rationality will remain incomplete unless it incorporates an understanding of "the 'hot cognitions' or thoughtful passions characteristic of teachers and pupils" (Shulman & Carey, 1984, p.252). A need to understand affective dimensions of teaching, such as caring, was the impetus for this study.

### Purpose of the Study

Although caring is an affective dimension of human relationships, scholars (Fromm, 1959; Mayeroff, 1971; Noddings, 1984, 1987, 1988) have attempted to explicate a concept of caring. One way to understand caring is to view it through the eyes of classroom participants (i.e., teachers and/or students). According to symbolic interactionists, meaning is created, defined, and interpreted by individuals through their interactions with one another (Blumer, 1969). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to learn about caring in a K-7 school setting by asking two major questions: Was the classroom perceived as a caring place by teachers and students? If so, what were the patterns and expressions of caring as they were communicated and explained by the teacher and students? Several more specific questions guided the inquiry:

In what ways does the focal teacher talk about him/herself as a teacher?

In what ways do the students talk about themselves as students?

In what ways does the teacher talk about students, and how does he/she describe or explain his/her individual or group interactions with them?

In what ways do students talk about the teacher and describe or explain their interactions with him/her?

In what ways does the teacher talk explicitly about caring or not caring for students?

In addition to introducing the study, the purpose of this chapter is to present a discussion of philosophical and theoretical perspectives which support the schools' responsibility for affective development. Theoretical

descriptions of caring will also be discussed. Finally, consideration will be given to empirical studies of caring in the classroom.

### Philosophical Perspectives

Philosophically, school has been viewed as a place for fostering an integrated development of mind, heart, and body by Dewey, Pestalozzi, and Rousseau (Dewey, 1917; Gutek, 1968; Thomas, 1985). The learning environment and the experiences of the school are believed to contribute to the cognitive, affective, and physical development of students. Although the acquisition of knowledge is central to schooling, it is derived, at least in part, from experiences that involve doing, feeling, learning, and growing. Thus, from the philosophical perspectives of individuals like Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Dewey, a child-centered view of school emerges.

The child-centered view of education is explicit in the work of Rousseau (Gross, 1963; Thomas, 1985) who expressed a reverence for the childhood years and advocated nurturant environments which provide children with time and opportunities to grow, discover, and learn. These views are expressed in Emile when Rousseau wrote that "Childhood has its ways of seeing, thinking, and feeling which are all proper to it" (Emile, Book II, 1979, p. 90).

The idea that school is a caring place was a focal point in the life of Pestalozzi who believed that the learning environment should nurture emotional security (Gross, 1963; Gutek, 1969). Within a nurturing, supportive learning environment, Pestalozzi envisioned integrated growth which enabled children to think, to care for others, and to function autonomously and productively. Pestalozzi was a practitioner who believed that his affection for

students would foster their feelings of security and stimulate their innate facilities. In essence, Pestalozzi advocated, modeled, and practiced caring as a central part of his work with children.

Based on the thinking of predecessors such as Rousseau and Pestalozzi, Dewey (1917, 1969) developed a philosophical view which encourages a holistic education, providing time for maturation and fostering an integration of the cognitive, affective, and physical capacities of children. Thoughts, feelings, and actions are viewed as being important; Dewey considered "emotion and experience" to be vital components of the teaching/learning process (Dewey, J. & Dewey, E. 1962, p. 2).

### Theories of Integrated Human Development

Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Dewey viewed cognitive and affective development as integrated and inseparable. They saw each aspect of development as supporting or enhancing the other. The works of Erikson (1963) and Maslow (1970) are particularly helpful in considering the impact of socialization processes on human development and the evolution of individual autonomy. Central to both of these theories is the idea that caring is provided through interactions in interpersonal relationships.

Erikson positions five paired-personality characteristics within a chronological, psychosocial stage framework. By resolving conflicts, the individual moves toward each of the sequence of paired characteristics: trust vs. mistrust; autonomy vs. shame (doubt); initiative vs. guilt; industry vs. inferiority or identification vs. identity diffusion. Implicit in Erikson's theory is the interdependence of cognitive and affective growth, and the need to

provide experiences and support which encourage and enable the individual to move toward trust, autonomy, initiative, industry and identification. The direction in which an individual moves is determined, at least in part, by the availability of supportive adults and has direct bearing on student learning and performance.

The characteristics proposed by Erikson are significant in considering cognitive and affective learning. If the school age child, at the industry stage, is to experience success, it is important that he or she has achieved some degree of trust, autonomy, and initiative during preschool experiences. In the school setting, the interpersonal relationships with the teacher and peers, coupled with appropriate learning tasks, enable the child to work productively and to take pride in completing work. In contrast, if the child is given inappropriate tasks, inadequate support, and negative or demeaning feedback, the likelihood for feelings of inferiority increases. During this period of rapid learning, cognitive performance is integrated with affective experiences in ways which differentially affect the development of self-esteem and feelings of success.

Another view of the interrelatedness of cognitive and affective development is evident in Maslow's hierarchical ordering of human needs. Although Maslow ignores chronological age, he theorizes that the satisfying of basic needs is crucial in enabling one to move toward self-actualization. Among the needs considered basic are the physiological, safety, belongingness, and esteem needs which are integral parts of the process of becoming one's best self (Maslow, 1970). The concept of self-actualization or

best self is closely aligned with what Rogers (1983) terms a fully functioning person; one who is autonomous, self-directing and well-integrated as a thinking, feeling, and growing individual. The idea of becoming self-actualized or fully functioning suggests that student learning includes more than literacy skills and knowledge about the world; there must also be a growing awareness of self and others.

Dewey's (1917) description of the reciprocal nature of thinking and experience also reflects an appreciation for the affective dimensions of teaching. Dewey wrote "To 'learn from experience' is to make a backward and a forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence" (p. 140). This suggests an integration of cognition and affect in the context of experience. Or to use the words of Dewey (1962), "...the child's life is an integral, a total one" (p. 5)

Bandura (1986) relates human development to the social cognitive theory, emphasizing the individual's capacity to learn through observation and social interaction. Learning in the social context grows out of the ability of humans to use symbols and the cognitive powers of forethought and reflection. Not only is there an integration of cognition and affect, their development is tied to the social context in which learning is embedded. This view of human learning suggests that caring can, and does facilitate growth.

The view of the school as a caring place is not limited to the historical perspectives of philosophers and theorists; it is evident as well in the thinking of many contemporary scholars (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Martin, 1985, 1986; Noddings 1984, 1987, 1988; Sarason, 1985). In advocating that school be a

caring place, cognitive goals are not supplanted by affective goals; instead, the two must be integrated for optimal learning and development (Martin, 1986; Noddings, 1984, 1988). Martin (1986) proposes that the 3 C's of care, concern, and connection be considered of equal value to the basics of the 3 R's if society is to be composed of people who not only know, but are also capable of nurturing.

Similarly, proponents of caring expect educational outcomes to reflect caring. They view the concept of an educated person as one who not only knows, but cares (Martin, 1986). The integrated image of the knowing and caring individual is projected by Buscaglia (1986) who writes:

I'm not sure what the truly educated person is, but I'm certain he's not dependent upon years of formal schooling. We will have been only half educated unless we have acquired survival techniques, a sense of human dignity and worth, an appreciation of life, the ability to give and receive love, the knowledge of how to use our limited time wisely, and the determination to leave the world a better place for our having been in it. (p. 175).

Finally, the expectation that school be a caring place is evident from interviews with teachers (Jackson, 1968; Lortie, 1975). As these teachers talked about their work, frequent references were made to wanting to make a difference in the lives of students and to show them that teachers care. For example, one of teachers interviewed by Jackson observed:

When you've had a child who has been a severe problem and in some way you've reached him and done something for him, that's a real thrill. I just don't think there's another job that provides you with the depth of feeling that you have in a situation like this (p. 168).

While there exists a widely held expectation that school be a caring place, we lack a clear understanding of the role of caring in the lives of teachers and

students. One reason for this lack is the commonly held assumption that affective dimensions are too nebulous, elusive, and nonquantifiable to be examined carefully. Recent descriptions of caring, however, make this argument untenable.

### Theoretical Descriptions of Caring

Scholars have developed ideas about caring which help us to study it as a phenomenon (Fromm, 1959; Gilligan, 1984; Martin, 1985; 1986, Noddings, 1984, 1987, 1988; Ruddick, 1983). One way to clarify the concept of caring is to place it within relationships between two individuals. In defining caring, Mayeroff (1971) contends that "to care for another person, in the most significant sense, is to help him grow and actualize himself" (p.1). This definition suggests the facilitative teacher-student relationship described by Rogers (1983). In such a relationship, teachers express trust, acceptance, emphatic understanding, and prizing to help students learn and grow. Other characteristics of caring are described by Noddings (1984, 1988). She discusses caring in terms of its relational, receptive, responsible, responsive, and reciprocal aspects.

#### Caring as Relational.

Noddings (1984, 1988) characterizes caring as relational, as a connection in an encounter between two people who are affectively aware of each other. She proposes that "In every human encounter, there arises the possibility of a caring occasion" (Noddings, 1984, p. 13). Thus, in teaching, the focus is narrowed from a general caring for students to specific interpersonal relationships with individual students. The context of the situation determines

if it is a "caring occasion" and the extent and depth to which caring is expressed and maintained. For example, a student approaches the teacher with a particular problem or question. Perhaps the problem is a forgotten homework assignment or a question about a math problem. It is within this specific relationship between the teacher and student that a "caring occasion" may emerge. The nature of that caring is not predetermined, but arises out of situation as the teacher listens and attempts to understand the perceptions of the student (Noddings, 1984).

#### Caring As Receptive.

The relational aspect of caring also includes receptivity which makes one individual available to another. For the teacher, being receptive includes providing space, time, and patience that encourage students to communicate. However, receptivity goes beyond being available; it includes perceiving and understanding the experience of another (Noddings, 1984; Mayeroff, 1971). This suggests that in the receptive state a teacher may communicate the respect and trust that allows a student to share fully and freely of him/herself (Rogers, 1983). Thus, the student who comes to the teacher with the problem or question can also be aware that the teacher is receptive and approachable.

#### Caring As Responsible and Responsive.

The idea that caring is responsible means that one individual is accountable and ready to respond to another. Contrary to a sense of duty or obligation, responsible caring is viewed as voluntary and genuine (Fromm, 1959; Noddings, 1984). Although responsibility is a part of professionalism, it

does not imply a sterile duty to the caring teacher whose expertise, responsibility and concern guide responses to students (Sarason, 1985).

To be responsive is to act on behalf of another. In responding, one is not seen as being guided by a given set of rules, but by an intuitive, spontaneous, and genuine sense of caring (Noddings, 1984). This suggests that in responding to a student, a caring teacher gives appropriately within the context of the situation.

If caring is receptive, responsible, and responsive, then does it require knowledge? Fromm (1959), Mayeroff (1971), and Noddings (1984, 1988) contend that it does. According to Fromm, knowledge guides caring and contributes to responsible responses. A more explicit view is provided by Mayeroff (1971) who maintains that caring requires declarative and procedural knowledge or knowing that and knowing how. Using declarative knowledge suggests that the caring teacher is able to understand the student, assess his/her needs, and determine how best to promote or enhance the student's growth. Procedural knowledge is utilized as the teacher acts to respond to the student appropriately. An example of caring and knowing teachers is provided by Yonemura (1974) who writes "Many of us recall teachers who brought out the best in us: who cared about what we knew and, through this caring, enabled us to build and extend our knowledge" (p. 64).

In considering caring as responsive and requiring knowledge, there is reason to believe that a caring teacher values academic work and is committed to helping students learn and to become their best possible selves (Holmes Report, 1986; Sarason, 1985). If caring is helping another to grow and

actualize him/herself, then to the caring teacher, academic learning is a vital part of the process.

Another way to look at the knowledge that responsiveness involves is to consider caring in the context of problem-solving. Noddings (1984) hypothesizes that human consciousness may operate in lateral modes which include rational and receptive-intuitive thought. The lateral view of consciousness provides an alternative to the vertical framework which depicts rationality in a hierarchical position to affect or emotion. In the lateral view, it is possible to imagine a flexible, back and forth movement of thought which permits an individual to problem-solve in the mode that is the most appropriate and effective. For example, a teacher may reflect on a problem in a very objective, analytical fashion and then use the intuitive-receptive mode in choosing how to respond. Thus, a caring teacher is not seen as responding simply with warm feelings, but with forethought and reflection that are characteristic of a knowledgeable professional.

Thinking about caring as a component of receptive-intuitive thought allows us to move beyond the notion that caring requires a "warm heart and little intellect" (Noddings, 1988, p. 10) to consider the possibility of "multiple intelligences" (Gardner, 1987, p. 187). In proposing that there may be many facets of cognition, Gardner proposes that individuals may possess different forms of intelligence. One form which appears applicable to caring is interpersonal intelligence which Gardner defines as "...the ability to understand other people: what motivates them, how they work, how to work

cooperatively with them" (p. 190). Thus, caring is not characterized as simply feeling; caring is also knowing and responding.

### Caring As Reciprocal.

The final and perhaps most important aspect of caring is reciprocity (Gilligan, 1984; Noddings, 1984). This aspect is present insofar as both participants give and receive. Reciprocity is spontaneous and genuine and may be communicated without being specific or clearly visible to an outsider.

To illustrate reciprocity in the teacher-student relationship it is helpful to imagine a student struggling to solve a difficult math problem. As the student works, he/she frowns, makes frequent erasures, and finally puts his/her head on the desk. In caring, the teacher may choose to respond in several ways. A smile or a hand on the student's shoulder may suggest the teacher's support or confidence in the student; a verbal comment may offer assistance. In any case, the student recognizes the teacher's interest, concern, or expression of availability. The teacher is there and the student feels valued. If the math problem is not a test item, the teacher may ask the student to talk through his/her thinking on the problem or the teacher may offer to work an example. But what does the student give? According to Noddings (1984), students may reciprocate with a "gift of responsiveness". That responsiveness may be a quick grin, additional effort, or an elated "I've got it." Observing a student's interest, willingness to work, or growth can provide intrinsic rewards for the teacher.

Reciprocity may begin with the student. The student working with the math problem could initiate interaction with the teacher. Regardless of the

origin, reciprocity in caring becomes cyclic as the teacher and student engage in interaction and the process of giving and receiving.

### Opportunities for Observing Caring

Noddings (1988, 1984) proposes that caring is expressed through modeling, dialogue and confirmation. Consequently, each of these facets will be examined as opportunities for observing the expression and the communication of caring by teachers.

According to Noddings (1984), caring can be expressed and communicated through modeling. In modeling, the teacher provides examples of verbal and nonverbal behaviors. During the school day, the teacher consciously and unconsciously models behaviors which may be interpreted as caring or noncaring by students. Modeling may occur in the way that the teacher chooses to respond to students' work, behaviors, attitudes, and classroom interactions. For students this is especially important since "where novel forms of behavior can be conveyed effectively only by social cues, modeling is an indispensable aspect of learning" (Bandura, 1986, p. 20). Modeling can be a powerful and effective means of facilitating cognitive and affective learning.

Classroom dialogue is an opportunity for the expression of caring. Dialogue occurs during presentations, group discussions, and informal conversations. Although classroom dialogue is generally content-based, Noddings (1984, 1988), contends that caring teachers remain open to the interests and questions of students. Openness in dialogue implies that there is an element of spontaneity in which the teacher listens, receives, and

perceives issues and concerns that have importance to students. This is not to suggest that content is unimportant; rather, the student is to be valued more than content (Noddings, 1984; Rogers, 1983). Consequently, classroom dialogues provide an opportunity for listening and discerning expressions of caring among the participants.

Confirmation is affirming or validating students so as to provide them with images of themselves at their best. Noddings (1984) refers to confirmation as "attributing the best possible motive" (p. 193). In this sense, confirmation is perhaps the most important expression of caring as it enhances and builds confidence and self-esteem in students by providing them with visions of themselves at their best. It is important that the image of a best self be realistic and attainable in terms of the student's aptitudes and abilities. Confirmation is provided through the teacher's responses and feedback in written and verbal evaluations.

To illustrate the importance of confirmation as a facet of caring, it is helpful to consider an example. Imagine that a student has asked the teacher to examine the contents of a written report. As the teacher listens to the student share his/her work, the two of them look at portions of the written document. It may become evident to the teacher that the student has relied on copying large portions of other texts rather than synthesizing information. One response is for the teacher to tell the student that the report is unacceptable and must be done over or given a low grade. Although this response could be interpreted as a caring one, it lacks confirmation. In seeking to confirm a student, the teacher may choose another alternative in

responding. For example, the teacher may reflectively consider the inexperience and background of the student, the difficulty of the task, and the purpose of the assignment. In this instance, the teacher can respond genuinely to the student by saying "I believe that you have worked hard on this report and it shows that you have been reading. Let's look at some ways that you might share more of your own ideas rather than just those of others. Could you talk with me about what ideas really interested you as you read?" For whatever reason the student may have copied texts, she/he now has an image of what Noddings (1984) terms his/her best self which is intended to be reasonable and attainable.

### Outcomes of Caring

#### Effects of Caring on Teachers.

There is empirical evidence which suggests that caring for students enriches and rewards teachers in their work experiences. In interviews with teachers, Jackson (1968) and Lortie (1975) found that teachers not only prized interpersonal relationships with students, but they received intrinsic rewards as well. Two common themes in the interviews were the sense of mission or purpose that the teachers felt, and the commitment that they had to influencing the lives of students. As these teachers spoke affectionately of their students, they often cited the joy that came from finally reaching the student who at one time had seemed lost academically or emotionally. In fact, three-fourths of the teachers in Lortie's study indicated that their primary source of job satisfaction was derived from intrinsic rewards such as those which stem from

interpersonal relationships with students. According to Noddings (1984), seeing the responses of students renews and re-energizes teachers.

### Effects of Caring on Students.

There is reason to believe that the affective support of teachers enhances the cognitive development of students (Bandura, 1986; Erikson, 1963; Maslow, 1970). To consider the potential empowerment that caring may provide for the learner, it is helpful to reflect on Noddings' (1984) interpretations of the impact that caring can have. For example, she contends that:

It accepts, embraces, and leads upward. It questions, it responds, it sympathizes, it challenges, it delights. (p. 67)

The one cared-for sees the concern, delight, or interest in the one-caring and feels her warmth in both verbal and body language.... (p. 19).

When the attitude of the one-caring bespeaks caring, the cared-for glows, grows stronger, and feels not so much that he has been given something as that something has been added to him. (p. 20).

There is evidence that students as learners appear to profit from working with teachers who are enthusiastic, approachable, and nurturing. This idea is evident in the summation of interviews with adolescents by Csikszentmihalyi and McCormack (1986). Those students reported the influences of teachers who were themselves enthusiastic about learning and who were nurturing to students as learners.

With younger children, warm, caring teachers provided the acceptance and nurturance that enabled minority students to improve reading test scores (Jordan & Tharp, 1979). In this instance, teacher behaviors were modified as an intervention strategy to restore the emotional security that Hawaiian

children had experienced in their early homelife. As a part of the intervention, the teachers demonstrated warmth and acceptance by providing the students with smiles, hugs, praises and encouragement. Strong interpersonal relationships between the teachers and students evolved, and the emotional security that the Hawaiian children had experienced in their homes was recreated in the school environment. Jordan and Tharp report that "The warm and affectionate climate for the teacher and child is felicitous for their engagements in mutual tasks" (p. 280).

Apart from the effects that caring may have on the general population of students, consideration needs to be given to the number of students who are at risk academically because of psychosocial problems (Brenner, 1984; Elkind, 1981; Holmes Group, 1986; London, 1986, 1987). The nature and effects of psychosocial problems vary enormously in terms of duration, severity, and impact; however, the commonality of the problems is that they have the potential to thwart the intellectual, emotional and/or physical development of children. Among students who are at risk are those children who are adversely affected by the critical factors of child abuse, exploitation, neglect and the discord of dysfunctional families.

The loss of significant adult support affects many school age children (Brenner, 1984; Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Garmezy, 1983; Rutter, 1985). This trend is due, in part, to the changing family structure which reflects more working mothers and a greater number of single parent families. In thinking about the lack of adult support, empirical studies on loss and separation describe the detrimental effects which children may experience (Garmezy,

1983; Rutter, 1983; Wallerstein, 1983). To illustrate the consequences, divorce provides an example of an issue that impacts the lives of a broad spectrum of children. From a longitudinal study on children of divorce, Wallerstein makes these observations:

Approximately half of the children who attended elementary school experienced a serious disruption in concentration and their ability to learn. Many reported that they failed to make sense of the teachers' instructions because they were absorbed in thinking about the divorce. Additionally, their capacity to play was gravely impaired during this period. (p. 287)

Wallerstein also found that, in some cases, the support of a caring teacher enabled children to regain a focus on their school work and to function more effectively.

As students in schools struggle to cope with adversity that may exceed their cognitive understanding and their emotional ability to cope, feelings of helplessness may develop as they find themselves lagging behind academically. Missing out on learning produces feelings of isolation and Brofenbrenner (1986) exhorts that schools must not become "academies of alienation" for students. This suggests that caring may be an appropriate intervention for many children. In fact, Brofenbrenner elaborates further that "Caring is surely an essential aspect of education in free society; yet we have almost completely neglected it" (p. 435).

### Realities of the Classroom.

Although teachers value the affective dimensions of teaching, the complexities, interactions and the day-to-day demands of the classroom often divert attention from affective goals. In fact, Goodlad (1984) observes that school goals indicate "a dominant commitment to cognition and subject matter" (p.67). This thrust is evident in the attention that is given to standardized test scores. Certainly, mastery learning is another example of the focus on teaching skills, testing, reteaching, and retesting (Shannon, 1984). The limitations that may grow out of a focus on cognitive outcomes are reflected in Dewey's (1962) statement that "...we are so anxious for the results of growth that we neglect the process of growing" (pp. 4, 5).

What happens in classrooms that diverts teachers' attention from affective goals? First, it is helpful to consider that other than in school, one does not find large, highly interactive groups occupying limited space for long periods of time on a daily basis (Jackson, 1968). For the teacher, there is isolation from peers (Lortie, 1975; Shulman, 1987), complex demands from a diverse group of students, and frequent and rapid interpersonal interactions. Added to these issues is the demand for accountability as well as the lack of adequate time for planning, collaboration and continued professional growth (Wildman & Niles, 1987).

For the student, the limitations of the classroom are evident in other ways. The limited physical space and the necessity for classroom organization restrict students' physical movements and social interactions with peers at a

time when activity, growth, and peer relationships are central components in their lives.

The complexity of the classroom is aptly described by Duffy (1982) who says:

In short, the classroom is an incredibly complex and restrictive environment. Teachers have limited amounts of freedom and flexibility; they must routinely work with resource shortages, deal with complex (and often unconsciously created) social relations and fend off multiple and conflicting expectations while simultaneously putting forward the image of a cool professional who has the classroom and children's learning under control. (p. 361).

The question is not only how do teachers survive in this complex setting, but how do they manage to meet their own professional expectations as well as those of administrators, parents, and students? One explanation is that teachers develop routines for efficiency and management behaviors which allow them to maintain a flow of activity with the use of commercially prepared teaching materials (Duffey, 1982; Shannon, 1987). These adaptative strategies have resulted in descriptions of teachers as planners, technicians, and managers who interrogate, check, and monitor (Durkin, 1979). Although there is evidence that automatizing routines frees expert teachers to focus on more important and perhaps more humane issues (Berliner, 1986), this technical view of teachers does not portray the affective dimensions of teaching such as caring. In fact, Shulman (1987) cautions that "We must be careful that the knowledge-base approach does not produce an overly technical image of teaching, a scientific enterprise that has lost its soul" (p.20).

### Significance of the Study

In view of the many challenges which educators face, the descriptions of contemporary scholars on different ways of knowing (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, Tarule, 1986; Gardner 1987; Martin, 1988) suggest that we need to expand our questions to include in what ways do students and teachers perceive themselves as being connected or alienated with learning, each other and/or the school. Could we increase student learning by better understanding how feelings of connectedness impact learning?

One way to learn about connectedness is to examine caring. While theoretical descriptions of caring are available, we need empirical descriptions of classroom caring. The value of empirical studies which provide rich descriptions of the expressions and understandings of caring teachers and the factors which contribute to their developing and maintaining caring attitudes should enlarge our knowledge about this concept and its manifestations. Such knowledge should be useful in understanding how to create learning environments that are responsive and supportive to students as learners.

Another reason for examining affective dimensions of teaching, is that "richly developed portrayals of expertise" contribute to our collective wisdom of practice (Shulman, 1987, p.1). Certainly the lives of professionals, such as teachers, need to be portrayed in ways that allow us to know and to understand them better. Shulman contends that "Perhaps the most enduring and powerful scholarly influences on teachers are those that enrich their images of the possible: their visions of what constitutes a good education, or

what a well-educated youngster might look like if provided with appropriate opportunities and stimulation" (p.10).

The images of teachers as technicians and managers, although valuable, provide a limited perspective of a profession that is highly interactive and interpersonal. In considering this limitation, there exists the possibility that caring may be one of the critical features of what Shulman (1987) refers to as the soul of teaching. It is this possibility that challenges, implores, and even compels us to examine the concept of caring empirically.

## CHAPTER II

### METHODS

#### Introduction

Throughout this chapter the process of conducting the study will be described. The description will focus on the purpose, theoretical and research perspectives, the procedures for selecting participants and for collecting and analyzing data. The steps taken to enhance the dependability of the study will also be discussed. ( An overview of the research process is provided in Table 1.)

#### Purpose

The purpose of the study was to learn about caring by examining the perspectives and interactions of two teachers and their students in a K-7 elementary school setting.

#### Theoretical and Research Perspectives

In developing a framework for the study, I adopted a theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism. According to symbolic interactionists, we create meaning through our interactions with others. In the course of interacting, we and others assume roles, interpret the intentions of others and define their meanings. In short, we construct meaning through social encounters with others (Blumer, 1969).

**Table 1**  
**Overview of the Research Process**

<b>Theoretical Perspective</b>	Symbolic Interactionism
<b>Research Model</b>	Qualitative (Ethnographic Methods)
<b>Selecting Context</b>	Accessible Receptive Supportive
<b>Selecting Participants</b>	Years of experience Credibility Interpersonal skills Grade level Gender
<b>Data Sources</b>	Participant Observations Interviews Sociometric Questionnaire Tuckman Rating Scale Written Documents Researcher's Journal
<b>Data Analysis</b>	Categorical Analysis Comparing/Contrasting Categories Semantic Relationships Recurring patterns and Themes
<b>Final Report</b>	Participant Vignettes Narrative Descriptions Hypotheses Implications for Research & Practice

Similarly, as depicted in Noddings' (1988) assertion. "in every human encounter there arises the possibility of a caring occasion," caring, too, is socially communicated. Consequently, we can learn about caring by examining how it is expressed and understood in the teacher-student relationship. I selected methods consistent with Blumer's discussion of meaning:

Reality exists in the empirical world....It is to be discovered in the examination of that world....Methods are mere instruments designed to identify and analyze the obdurate character of the empirical world. (p.27)

Rather than depend on predefined forms of caring, I created empirical images of caring as it was understood and explained by teachers and students. To learn about caring, I attempted to get close to teachers and students and to discover from their perspectives if and how caring was expressed.

Two ways of establishing closeness and learning about these perspectives were utilized by consistently and extensively observing and talking with the teachers and students. These tools, participant observation and interviews, are frequently used to examine questions like those raised in this study (Bogdan & Bilken, 1983; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Spindler & Spindler, 1982, 1987; Spradley, 1980). Further, the research tools were appropriate for the symbolic interactionistic perspective of the study (Blumer, 1969; Jacobs 1988). As illustrated by Goetz and LeCompte (1984), these methods are quite helpful when we wish to create rich description:

The purpose of educational ethnography is to provide rich, descriptive data about the context, activities, and beliefs of the participants in educational settings (p.17).

The ideal of ethnography is to describe participants, setting, and circumstances so clearly that the image reproduced constitutes a verbal photograph (p. 23)

### The Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted in a small, rural school division in a mountainous area of a southeastern state. In selecting the site, I chose a school that was accessible, receptive, and supportive of the research project (Dobbert, 1982). Getting close to the lives of teachers and students required that travel distance was reasonable, that entry could be gained at the divisional and school levels, and that teachers and students were willing and interested in participating in the project.

#### Teacher Participants.

In selecting the teacher participants, I considered several factors. One of these was years of experience. Since learning to teach is a complex process that matures over a period of five to seven years (Nemser, 1983), I chose participants who had taught a minimum of seven years. One reason for using years of experience as a criteria was that many management routines become automatic for the expert or experienced teacher (Berliner, 1986). Therefore, it is believed that the experienced teacher is able to pay attention to other dimensions of teaching, such as interpersonal relationships .

In addition to years of experience, professional credibility and interpersonal skills were also used as criteria. To implement those criteria, I asked the principal and the elementary supervisor to identify teachers whom

they considered outstanding in their academic successes and in developing strong interpersonal relationships with students. I chose these as criteria because caring teachers are believed to be knowledgeable and responsive to students' academic, social, and personal interests and needs (Noddings, 1984, 1988). Although interviewed separately, the principal and supervisor recommended the same four teachers.

The selected teachers taught the first, third, sixth, and seventh grades; the primary teachers were women and the middle school teachers were men. At that point, I began preliminary observations to become familiar with the school, classrooms, students, teachers and routines. During that time, I observed the four recommended teachers and seven additional teachers to determine if those recommended met the selection criteria. From the observations, I learned that the teachers recommended did meet the selection criteria.

The final selection criterion was the teacher's ability to articulate thoughts and feelings. Since the purpose was to understand the meaning that caring has for the participants, it was important to work with teachers who were able to reflect on their own thoughts, feelings, and actions (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Smith & Poland, 1976). On the basis of the preliminary observations and informal conversations, I found that the four recommended participants were receptive, conversable, interested, and willing to share their work, time and classrooms.

Of the four teachers, two were selected as focal teachers while the other two were ancillary teachers, selected to protect the mortality of the study in the

event that a participant should drop out (Huck, Cormier, & Bounds, 1974). Since no teacher withdrew, data were collected from all four; however, consistent with the original design, data from only the two focal teachers will be presented.

In selecting the two focal teachers, grade level and gender were considered. In order to increase the chances for finding variation in the patterns and expressions of caring, it was important to consider both the primary and middle school levels. Including results from a male and female participant also provided perspectives on caring from both genders (Martin, 1985, 1986; Noddings, 1984, 1987, 1988; Ruddick, 1980).

#### Student Informants.

Using the background information provided by teachers, I started observing students. That is, I considered students who represented a variety of backgrounds in terms of achievement, social relationships, and socio-economic backgrounds. Later, as I observed specific teacher-student interactions, I asked students to explain the meaning that certain interactions with the teacher had for them. Throughout the data collection process, I monitored the selection of student informants to ensure that perspectives had not been omitted. For example, in addition to including students who were successful and unsuccessful academically, I also included informants with whom the teacher felt particularly close, as well as those with whom the teacher did not feel as accepting as he/she would like to be. Finally, I used information collected from a socio-metric questionnaire to be sure that both popular and isolated students were included. Using these criteria increased

the chances of including students who did not view the school as a caring place.

### Procedures

After gathering the preliminary information to ascertain the selection of the participants, I met with the two focal teachers, Joan West and Richard Deaton, and the principal, Mrs. Rose. Both the principal and the researcher provided explanations of the study. As the researcher, I talked about the literature descriptions of teachers as technicians and managers and explained my interest in examining other realities in the classroom, particularly from the perspectives of teachers and students as they interacted. I invited them to help me understand what was happening in their classrooms in terms of teacher and student interactions. I explained that I would use a variety of information-gathering techniques such as participant observations, interviews, audio and videotapes, and questionnaires.

When observations began, the teachers introduced me to their students as a former classroom teacher and provided time for me to talk with the classes about how I would be working in their classrooms. I explained to the students in each class that I wanted to learn about their classrooms and their interactions with their teachers through their eyes. To do this, I would be in the classroom each day, recording information and chatting with them about their interactions. (Further information about the researcher's perspective is provided in Appendix A.)

### Participant Observations.

The first step in understanding the lives of teachers and students was to become a participant-observer during the school day. Initially, I conducted general observations focusing on classroom organization and teacher-student interactions. During this phase of data collection, I spent approximately three hours a week in each classroom for five weeks. Arriving before school began, I spent the morning with Joan West's first graders. Fieldnotes were recorded for a minimum of an hour, and I also interacted with students as they shared their stories with me or talked with me about their work. During this time, I also went with the group to the cafeteria and ate lunch with students. At 12:20, I met Richard Deaton's seventh graders in the cafeteria and sat at the teacher's table with Richard. I then spent the afternoon in his seventh grade classroom and joined the group for their physical education period. Again, I recorded fieldnotes for a minimum of one hour and later helped individual students with assignments.

After these five weeks of observation, I chose to follow each focal participant for the entire school day. At this point, I spent three intensive weeks, arriving before school began and staying after the school day ended. Of these three weeks one week was spent with each of the two teachers. During the other week, I was with Joan during the morning and with Richard in the afternoon. I continued to record fieldnotes for at least one hour daily and also to write descriptions of specific teacher student interactions which occurred at other times. The interactions included verbal and nonverbal exchanges which occurred during class and at other points in the school day,

such as in the halls before or after school. During interviews, the significance and meanings of the interactions were explicated by participants.

At the end of each day, fieldnotes were typed and expanded to include more descriptive detail. The researcher's understandings from writing and rereading fieldnotes guided the interview and observational plans for the next day. (The time frame of the study is depicted in Appendix B.)

## Interviews

### Teacher Interviews.

From mid March until early June, I conducted eight semi-structured interviews with each focal teacher. Although the interviews had specific purposes, they were also conversational in that emergent topics or information was discussed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Spradley, 1980; Tesch, 1988). Each interview, which lasted from forty-five minutes to an hour and a half, was audiotaped and later transcribed.

The first interview was an expressive autobiographical interview (Spindler & Spindler, 1987) which provided a framework for the interviewee to talk chronologically about his/her life or career. I used this strategy to encourage teachers to talk about themselves, their decisions to teach, their memorable teaching experiences, and where they saw themselves in ten years. The open-ended questioning encouraged the teachers to express their feelings about themselves, their work and their students. These interviews were conducted in the teachers' classrooms on a teacher workday and were designed to encourage the development of rapport and trust between the teachers and me.

The next two teacher interviews focused on students. First, I asked each teacher to talk about students in terms of their academic work, social interactions, and socio-economic background. Listening to the teachers talk without records or notes provided information on how well they knew their students and on their tenor in talking about individual students.

Joan West talked about all of the eighteen students in her first grade classroom, while Richard Deaton talked about selected students. Since he worked with sixty-six students in a departmentalized setting, I randomly marked ten students on a seating chart. Then, I asked Richard to confirm that they represented a variety of backgrounds. As Richard talked about students, he made suggestions about particular students whom I might want to observe. At least three of those were students with whom he did not feel that he was as accepting as he would like to be.

The next interview about students focused on evaluation and what the teacher tried to communicate to students and parents in grading and/or written comments on students' written work, progress reports and report cards.

Another interview was designed to help teachers discuss their understandings of their intentions and interactions in the classroom as they viewed a videotape of themselves and their students. I conducted the interview as the teacher watched the videotape and selected interactions which were salient to him/her. The teacher stopped the tape and talked retrospectively about what was happening. For example, as Richard viewed

himself turning away from a student without answering him, he wondered aloud how often he did that to students and how it caused them to feel.

During the other four teacher interviews, we discussed specific interactions or issues that emerged in their classrooms. For example, I asked Richard to elaborate on his feelings regarding friendships with students. In Joan's case, we talked about the intensity of her engagement with individual students. The final interview occurred on a teacher workday at the end of the school year. The purpose was to have each teacher reflect on his/her thoughts and feelings about students and the school year.

To enlarge and confirm information provided by participants and to include perspectives of others, I also interviewed the principal and elementary supervisor, Mrs. Rose and Ms. England. The interview strategy was to have each individual talk about how she would describe the teacher, his/her teaching, and their interactions in the classroom. Since the first grade teacher, Joan West, had a parent volunteer who worked in her room once a week, I also interviewed the volunteer, Mrs. Brown, using the same interview format.

### Student Interviews

Based on information from observation and recommendations from teachers, I interviewed key student informants. The purpose of the interviews was to provide a basis for understanding how students perceived themselves, their teacher, and their interactions with the teacher. I avoided using instructional time to talk with students and scheduled interview times that were satisfactory to the teacher. Typically, student interviews were audiotaped and later transcribed. Exceptions included brief conversational exchanges with

students in informal settings such as the hall, cafeteria, or during an outing. In these cases, I recorded notes after leaving the students.

Recognizing the difficulty that first graders had in articulating their thoughts, I used several strategies to provide them with a more tangible basis for talking about their views of the teacher. First, I had each student draw a picture of him/herself with the teacher. Then I asked the key informants to talk with me about what they had drawn. My questions were designed to help students elaborate on their pictures. A second technique that I used with first graders was role play. In this technique, I worked with a group of three students and asked each child to take a turn being the teacher, Mrs. West. With no further directions or practice time, I videotaped each student during his or her role play. Then, I interviewed students about their thoughts and actions. Later, Joan West viewed the tapes and talked about her perceptions.

#### Semantic Differential Teacher Rating Scales.

One way to learn about students' perceptions of the teacher was to use the Tuckman Teacher Feedback Form (Tuckman, 1985). There are two editions of the instrument, one to be completed by teachers, administrators, and supervisors, and another one to provide feedback from students on teaching style. Each edition of the Tuckman contains paired adjectives which comprise particular clusters or dimensions of teaching style. The form for teachers and administrators includes the dimensions of creativity, organized demeanor, dynamism, and warmth and acceptance. The student edition also includes these dimensions and a fifth one, flexibility. In learning about caring in the classroom, warmth and acceptance was an important dimension to consider.

First, I talked with the teachers and secured their permission to have the Tuckman completed by the principal, supervisor, and themselves. Without explanations of any of the terms, I asked each teacher to do a self-rating. Later, ratings of the teachers were done by Mrs. Rose and Ms. England. I deferred talking with the participants about the results until after the field work was concluded.

In the seventh grade, the sixty-three students completed the Student Tuckman Teacher Feedback Form (Tuckman, 1985). I arranged a time with Richard Deaton for me to administer the form when he was out of the classroom. Briefly, I explained to students that this was another way to help me to understand how they viewed their teacher. After giving each student a copy of the form, I completed two examples with them before asking them to complete their rating. I read the thirty paired adjectives orally as the students marked the forms. Students responded anonymously.

#### Sociometric Questionnaires

In the context of this study, it was important to include student participants for whom the classroom might not be a warm or accepting climate. To identify such students, I talked with teachers, and also collected sociometric information (Evans, 1962; Northway, 1967) on all students. In each of the classrooms, I asked students to complete a questionnaire which asked them to write first and second choices of a partner for a social, academic, and sports activity.

### Written Documents.

In addition to the procedures already described, I examined the school's self-study report and teachers' written comments on students' papers, progress reports, and report cards. I also purchased a copy of the school yearbook.

### Photographs.

To capture the setting in a enduring form, I took photographs of the classrooms and building (Bogdan & Bilken, 1982). I used a 35mm Canon AE-1 camera and Kodak black and white 400 ASA film.

### Researcher's Journal.

The final data source was a researcher's journal (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) in which I recorded thoughts, feelings, concerns, and questions. Notations were made on a daily basis during fieldwork and periodically during the final analysis. The journal writing assisted me in developing questions and in identifying problems, and insights.

### Data Analysis

Although the procedures for data collection and analysis are discussed separately for the purpose of clarity, the two processes occurred concurrently with analysis continuing through the completion of the writing process. In order to begin making sense of, or understanding the information collected, I adapted analysis strategies from several sources (Bogdan & Bilken, 1982; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1984; & Strauss, 1987).

The data analysis was primarily inductive and involved working playfully and systematically. Early in the study, I used the constant comparison strategy with which I began to generate categories from the data sources and to compare incidents to determine their appropriateness and durability during subsequent interviews and observations (Glasser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987).

Initially, I used the research questions to search for categories or labels which were "in vivo" in nature (Strauss, 1987). I derived categories from the terms that the participants used to describe themselves, each other, and their interactions. I then compared incidents from the fieldnotes and interviews to determine if they were consistent with these categories or if they actually belonged in new categories. For example, during interviews and observations, I began to derive descriptors for perceptions of the teacher. In Richard Deaton's case, the terms of "friend", "father figure", "role model", "leader", "problem solver", and "teacher" became evident. Working to understand how the teacher and/or students used these terms generated additional questions and guided inquiry.

Using participants' terms or phrases to develop categories was important to the symbolic interactionist perspective of the study, as the terms were derived from the data itself. The value of using participants' or in vivo terms is illustrated by Strauss (1987):

Imagery is useful insofar as the analyst does not have to keep illustrating the code in order to give it meaning. Its imagery implies data that have sufficient meaning....In vivo terms have a very vivid imagery, inclusive of much local interpretative meaning.... They

also have much analytic force since the actors do use them with ease and with sufficiently precise meaning (pp. 33, 34).

Consequently, the terms used by teachers and students were laden with meaning and became the sources for creating images of caring as it existed in these particular classrooms.

An important part of the analysis process was "peer debriefing" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In becoming an insider, there was the danger of losing a researcher's perspective and of trying to attend to too many issues in the setting. To avoid this, I talked regularly with a colleague and met with the study's advisor. During these sessions we discussed strategies and issues that emerged in the field. I particularly sought to avoid asking leading questions and I considered questions about what I was doing and why.

After the fieldwork concluded and the tapes had been transcribed, I worked with the complete set of data sources. Since understanding perspectives of the participants was central to the study, I highlighted and color-coded the interview transcripts to indicate ways that the teacher talked about him/herself, students, interactions, and caring or not caring. Student interview transcripts were also coded in the same manner. Next, I highlighted fieldnotes by colors to depict teacher movement, teacher-student interactions and my observations. The use of highlighting was a part of categorizing information and helped me to become more closely acquainted with the transcripts and fieldnotes.

Next, I used families of codes suggested by Bogdan & Bilken (1982) to group descriptions of the context, participants, events, and participants' ways

of thinking about people and school. This step involved rereading the interview transcripts and the fieldnotes and constructing categories on large sheets of paper. Using these data displays, I began to identify, compare, and enlarge the categories generated during earlier analysis. I continued to focus on terms that the participants themselves used. For example, with Richard Deaton and his students, humor was an important dimension of the classroom. However, their terms included "teasing", "picking on", "cutting up", and "joking". Through continued observations and questioning, categories were enlarged, double checked, revised or related to other categories.

At this point, relationships across categories became evident. In other words, there were similarities which began to connect or to tie categories together to shape particular themes or patterns. Across interviews with Richard, his students, the principal and supervisor, and participant observations, the uses of humor were chunked into a pattern of "joking around." Although at first it appeared that humor was a way of breaking the monotony of school routines, continued probing and analysis led to the discovery of other uses of humor. For example, humor was a way the teacher and students communicated, and Richard used humor more frequently with those students with whom he felt closer and more caring. The use of humor also allowed some students to perceive Richard not only as a teacher, but also as a friend in whom they could confide.

As an additional check, I combed the data sources again using the semantic relationships created by Spradley (1980) to see if categories other than those I derived intuitively could be found. According to Spradley, nine

semantic relationships enable the researcher to discover cover terms or categories and their included or related terms. The relationships are strict inclusion, spatial, cause-effect, rationale, location for action, function, means-end, sequence, and attribution. I searched the data for categories and although no new categories were derived, the analysis was helpful in checking and reorganizing existing categories (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

#### Written Documents.

Categorical analysis was also conducted for information obtained from written sources. As categories were developed, report cards, progress reports, and written communication from the teachers, parents and students were used to enlarge, confirm or disconfirm the categories. Pictures of the students informants in the school yearbook were used in conjunction with descriptions in fieldnotes to describe the participants.

#### Photographs.

The accuracy and completeness of the written descriptions of the setting were checked by the photographs which I had made of each participant's classroom and other locations in the building. (Photographs of the two classrooms and seating charts are provided in Appendix C).

### Researcher's Journal.

The data analysis also included categorical analysis of the journal in which I recorded comments, ideas and questions which I had during the field experience.

### Scoring the Tuckman Teacher Feedback Forms.

In scoring the Tuckman forms, each of the four dimensions on the teacher/administrator form is scored from 1 to 43 with the latter being the highest score. On the student edition, each of the five dimensions has a possible score of 100. Each edition is scored using the formula designed for the instrument. (Copies of the two Tuckman editions and summaries of the results are included in Appendix D and the results are discussed in Chapter IV.)

### Sociometric Questionnaires.

The sociometric questionnaires completed by the first and seventh grade students were tabulated and charted. I created a matrix for each class which showed the names of all students, their choices, and the students by whom they were chosen. Finally, at the bottom of the matrix, I indicated the number of first and second choices each student received and the total number of people by whom the student was chosen. (The sociometric questionnaire and data for each class is included in Appendix E.)

### Constructing Vignettes

At this point of analysis, there were several data-based patterns constructed from categories which allowed me to develop assertions to explicate descriptively. The final patterns were those which had the most data linkages or connections and were supported across data sources. To illustrate the patterns, I wrote narrative vignettes or stories derived from the data sources and analysis.

Although a vignette is a story, its value extends beyond storytelling. In fact, a vignette brings life to the themes by presenting excerpts from fieldnotes and interviews which illustrate the data from which analytical constructions are derived. Thus, the vignettes are artistic forms composed by the researcher to help the reader develop a sense of being there (Erickson, 1985; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; & Spradley, 1980).

The vignettes were extrapolated from the data to stimulate mental images of caring. The creation of images is based on the work of Eisner (1988) who proposes:

Art can be said to be that activity concerned with the creation of images of feeling. The situations, people, and objects we encounter are never without affect. Classrooms, schools, teaching episodes, students struggling to learn, others resisting learning, are emotionally charged slices of life....To try to comprehend the ways in which people function and the meanings the events in their lives have for them and to neglect either seeing or portraying those events and meanings is to distort and limit what can be known about them (p. 17).

Thus, the vignettes were crafted as forms of art to portray the lives of the teachers and students and the explanations and understandings which they gave to their interactions.

While subjectivity was recognized, objectivity was neither ignored nor sacrificed in crafting or writing the participants' stories. First, objectivity was reflected in the fact that the stories belong to the participants. The interactions, voices, and understandings came from the teachers and their students. Second, each vignette was based upon a wealth of data sources collected across an extensive amount of time and from a variety of sources. In constructing the vignettes, I viewed the range of explanations provided by different participants and selected those which offered the clearest explanations and illustrations. The events were presented chronologically; however, the participants' voices were inserted at points where they best illustrated a theme. Following this pattern, I composed a vignette for each teacher and his/her students. Each vignette was organized into scenes to organize and clarify descriptions of the setting, the participants and their interactions; consequently, the vignettes were stories told by the participants, reconstructed and presented by the researcher, and coanalyzed by the reader.

### Writing the Final Report

In writing the final report, I made several choices which were guided by concerns about the clarity, accuracy, and coherence of the document. I also chose to use a personalized voice in writing the document as the use of "I" and "we" reflects the research approach of the study in at least two ways. First, the personal voice recognizes my presence as a research instrument engaged in facilitating, eliciting, and analyzing the understandings and meanings that the participants gave to their intentions, actions, and verbalizations. Second, the use of "we" is intended to evoke in the reader a feeling of being there (Bogdan

& Biklen, 1982; Denzin, 1978; Dobbert, 1982; Eisner, 1988; Erickson, 1986; Goetz & Lecompte, 1984; Jacob, 1988).

Next, I chose to provide indepth detail to allow the reader to become a coanalyst as he/she examines the range of evidence upon which the analysis has has been based. Consequently, the use of "we" acknowledges the presence of the reader as he/she examines, questions, and constructs meaning from the text.

In providing the indepth detail, I chose to present the findings as vignettes as a way of creating images of caring from the perceptions of the teachers and students. Finally, I generated hypotheses as outcomes of the study.

### Trustworthiness

The value of any inquiry hinges on how much confidence can be placed in its dependability or trustworthiness. Therefore, it was important from the conception, until the completion of the study, to consider factors which would contribute to learning about caring in similar settings and to presenting the study as accurately, truthfully, and fairly as possible.

Using suggestions from Lincoln and Guba (1985), I addressed three basic questions about dependability and trustworthiness. First, is the study transferable? The use of symbolic interactionism as a framework indicates that the study was not intended to reach across teachers, classrooms or schools. The patterns and expressions of caring were derived from the explanations that participants gave to their interactions with each other. Thus, the findings of the study are idiosyncratic and contextually dependent. However, transferability is possible to the extent that the context and research process

are described and presented in detail so as to allow other researchers to use similar methods to examine patterns and expressions of caring in other contexts.

The second question is how credible or believable is the study? This question was addressed throughout the description of the data collection and analysis sections. Additionally, I reported my background and experiences to reflect the perspectives that I brought to the study. I spent intensive time in the setting and observed students and teachers in a variety of situations. I confirmed interpretations from observations and interviews, adding the perspectives of others and cross-checking across data sources to determine pattern consistency (Denzin, 1978). Finally, I met regularly with the study's advisor to discuss ways to elicit and understand the perspectives of the participants.

The final question is how were the images, patterns, and expressions of caring confirmed or verified? One way was to construct a matrix on a large sheet of paper on which I listed the related research questions and the names of the participants. Next, I reread all transcripts and recorded the participants responses which dealt with each question. Then, I reread the vignettes and highlighted on the matrix the examples that were used to construct the vignettes. This allowed me to consider how extensively data had been used and to determine how complete the vignettes were. (Tables 2 and 3 provide data exemplars for the patterns of caring which were derived across participant perspectives.)

**TABLE 2 - RICHARD DENTON  
EXEMPLARS FOR PATTERNS OF CARING**

<b>Patterns</b>	<b>Working Hard</b>	<b>Joking Around</b>	<b>Being Friends</b>	<b>Problem Solving</b>	<b>Being Available</b>
<b>Richard</b>	I think I do a good job. I work hard at it.	Can pick at each other.	Consider myself a friend.	Being able to help them with problems.	Go into hall to be available, cafeteria.
<b>Principal</b>	Excellent math background. Initiated pre-algebra.	Can joke around and stay in control.	Concerned about being friends.	Innate ability to spot problems.	
<b>Supervisor</b>	Sacrifices for students. Teaches organization and study skills.				Goes out of his way for students aura of tolerance.
<b>Micky</b>	Teaches well: enforces discipline.	Smiles if he's joking.	Just friends.	I love "Mr. D".	Can trust Mr. D will help me out with problems.
<b>Chuck</b>		Jokes around with us just as much as you joke around with him.			
<b>Kim</b>	Learned more in his class than all the years of school.		Treats us like we're his friends.	Understands problems.	
<b>Sam</b>	Helps with work problems.	Gave me a piggy back ride.	Pretty good friends.	Helps you sort your problems out.	You can depend on him being there.
<b>Ann</b>	Help us understand our work better.	Jokes around about a lot of things.			
<b>Dee</b>	A real good teacher.	Funny things he does: he's still a kid inside.		Tries to work out problems.	
<b>Mindy</b>	Puts everything into his work.		We're one big family.		
<b>Ray</b>		He's got a good sense of humor.			He's not taking sides.

TABLE 3 - JOAN CARR

EXEMPLARS FOR PATTERNS OF CARING

	Loving to Learn	Getting Close	Being Positive	Helping Each	Making a Difference
<b>Joan</b>	I love to learn; to making learning exciting to children.	I just get very close to them [children].	Discipline with love, that's my philosophy; I find more success in [being positive].	Two [children] working together make a lot of difference.	I made a difference with a lot of children.
<b>Ms. Rose</b>	Every child involved in some kind of activity.	They all feel secure and good about themselves.	Finds a positive way to put it.	Social interactions among children are extremely important.	Opportunity to go through that classroom [child] has truly been lucky.
<b>Ms. England</b>	Constantly looking for ways to learn; children actively engaged in learning.	Genuine love for children.	A very positive way; never negative and never punitive with that child.	Students corresponding with students.	Children leave a lot of confidence in themselves.
<b>Ms. Blair</b>	Keeps children interested in things.	Talks to them; puts her arm around them.	Relating to children with a big heart and a lot of feeling.	Children are real good to work with each other.	One of my child's happiest school memories will be first grade.
<b>Scott</b>		She puts her arm around my head.	You're doing good work, Sam. Keep it up.	Remembers all the times I was helping people.	
<b>Wayne</b>		I give her a hug.	She puts the wrong word in and we laugh.	She lets me do stuff for her.	Now, I'm real good at it [story writing].
<b>Cindy</b>	She'll talk real excited.	My body feels happy when she sits beside me.	[Biggest part of first grade] I haven't gotten fussed at.		
<b>Jim</b>		She says she loves us.	Mrs. Carr helps us, loves us, tells us things.	Sometime, I help her.	
<b>Whitney</b>			She sounds good when she yells.	I'm doing her lunch money.	

Prior to completing the final draft, I met with each teacher and asked him/her to read the text with these questions in mind: Is it true? Is it fair to you and others? Is it clear and accurate? Is anything missing? Has your anonymity and that of the students been adequately protected? What questions or concerns do you have? After each teacher read the document, we discussed the questions above and I audio-taped our conversation to document their responses. Later, Richard and Joan returned the sections of Chapters III and IV with their written comments. I then edited the chapters to incorporate participant suggestions regarding incidents or descriptions which appeared unclear to them. For example, Richard corrected descriptions of the facility and faculty. Joan questioned the significance of a lunchroom interaction, and I added detail to allow the reader to determine that this was an example of teacher-student humor. Joan provided information on descriptions of the room and bulletin board.

Both teachers were concerned that the descriptions depicted their classrooms as activity-centered, but not necessarily instructionally oriented. Although no changes were made in the vignettes in response to this concern, it is important to note that the study focused on teacher-student interactions and the meanings that those interactions had for the participants. Therefore, instruction was not depicted as significantly as the interpersonal relationships of the teacher and students.

The vignettes were also read by a colleague unfamiliar with the study to determine if the patterns could be explicated clearly by readers. Each vignette was read by two individuals who marked four to six major patterns from a list

of ten patterns. Since terms from the data were used in developing the list, all of the terms had significance. Therefore, the purpose was to determine how clearly the major patterns had been presented. In Richard's vignette, both readers identified four of the five patterns. In Joan's vignette, one reader identified three while the other reader identified all five patterns. (Copies of the teachers' and readers' responses are included in Appendix F.)

## **CHAPTER III**

### **IMAGES OF CARING**

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present specific patterns of caring which were derived from data analysis. The patterns are communicated through vignettes or stories which were crafted from information across all data sources to provide specific descriptive evidence of the participants, their interactions, and the meanings that teachers and students gave to their interactions, thoughts, and feelings. Each pattern was derived from data sources i.e. fieldnotes, interviews with participants and corroborative persons, and the Tuckman Teacher Feedback Forms.

The first vignette is about Richard Deaton, the seventh grade teacher. Richard's story is told in five scenes. The first scene describes a class fieldtrip and the second an outing at a student's home. The two scenes are used to introduce the community, school, classroom and participants. In the third scene the classroom is depicted. The fourth scene centers around a highlight event of the participants' school year, the Awards Program and Dance. Finally, the last scene depicts Richard as he talked about himself and his students during an interview.

The second vignette tells the story of Joan West, a first grade teacher. The first scene is a portrait of Joan's classroom and her interactions with students. In the second scene, key student informants share with us the

drawings that they have made of their teacher and themselves. The final scene provides a retrospective view of the way that Joan talked about herself and her first graders during an interview.

The patterns of caring are implicit in the participants' stories and are explicated explicitly in Chapter IV.

## **RICHARD DEATON, TEACHER AND FRIEND**

### **VIGNETTE #1**

#### **Scene One: Becoming Acquainted**

Our research journey begins as we drive into Hill Crest, the county seat of a rural community, in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Although Hill Crest has been primarily an agricultural area, changes are evident as a growing number of individuals move their families here to take refuge from city life. In many cases, these individuals continue to work and to maintain professional ties in outlying cities while their children attend school in this rural setting. Stopping at the only stoplight, we make a left turn and pass the courthouse. This building is a hub of the community as it houses many County offices, including the sheriff's department. Driving a short distance, we ascend a hill and pass the play areas of Hill Crest Elementary School to park in the crowded school parking lot.

Standing outside, we pause and notice that for the most part the building is an old two story structure. The lighter colored bricks on each end of the structure indicate that at least two additions were added to the original building. The school's history reveals that the main building was erected in

1939 and served as a high school until 1962. At that time a new high school was completed, and Hill Crest Elementary School was organized. Thus, the old building was converted to a grade 1-7 elementary school in 1962 and a kindergarten annex was later added.

The school is the largest elementary school in the division and has an enrollment of 472 students. The students are divided into three classes at grades K, 1, 3, 4 and two classes at grades 2, 5, 6, 7. In addition, to the twenty classroom teachers, the faculty also includes a librarian, two LD resource teachers, three special education teachers, a preschool teacher, a Chapter I teacher, and part-time teachers in physical education, music and speech pathology.

Walking into the building, we are immediately confronted with remnants of the high school years. Lockers line the sides of the main halls and a gymnasium with an old, inoperative scoreboard reminds us of earlier years. Standing in the main hall of the first floor, we survey our setting. If we were to turn either left or right and proceed down the hall, we would walk past the classrooms for grades 1-4; if we walked forward, we would pass the office, gym, cafeteria, special education classrooms and the exit through which we can reach the kindergarten building. If we ascend the steps at the left, we will be on the second floor where the library and classrooms for grades 5-7 are located.

Initially, we stop at the office to greet the principal, Mrs. Rose, a petite, gray haired woman in her early sixties. Throughout the study, we will encounter Mrs. Rose bustling through the building as she interacts with

students, reads the stories taped to the hall walls, checks with custodians, volunteers or other school personnel, and joins teachers in the cafeteria for lunch or coffee. Although the school does not have an assistant principal, Richard Deaton, the seventh grade math, science and physical education teacher provides administrative assistance in response to Mrs. Rose's requests.

Climbing the stairs to the second floor, we think of the day ahead of us. Richard has invited us to go on a field trip to a historical site with the two seventh grade classes. We look forward to the bus trip and to opportunities to listen and to talk to students.

As we pass the teachers' lounge and turn into the doorway on the left, we hear Richard talking with his students about his expectations for their conduct on the trip. Richard, a slender man in his early thirties, is standing at the front of the room. His thick reddish hair parts slightly in the middle and covers his forehead. A moustache and full beard partially conceal his face, so his smile is even more evident in his eyes than it is on his mouth. The hair and beard are neatly trimmed, suggesting an organized demeanor. He is dressed casually in tennis shoes and jeans with his shirt tail hanging loosely on the outside. Seeing us in the doorway, Richard smiles warmly and asks if we're ready. We nod affirmatively while he continues to talk with the students about how long the trip will take, where they'll eat lunch, and how the tour will be conducted.

As we await departure, we recall that Richard is in his eighth year of teaching in the same school that he attended as a second grader. In fact, he

feels that it was his second grade teacher who most influenced him to become a teacher. Seated beside her desk, Richard frequently ran errands for the teacher. Now the bearded man at the front of the room teaches in his boyhood school and values being able to live and to work in his native county where he now lives with his wife and two young children.

Looking around the classroom, we notice that it is very ordinary in many respects. The thirty-five desks are lined traditionally in rows and Richard's desk is to the right of his lectern which stands in the front center of the room. Blackboards extend across the front wall and commercially-produced bulletin board materials portraying athletes from different sports are displayed on the walls and bulletin board. Seeing the commercial materials reminds us of Richard's description of himself as "the least creative person in the world."

Looking at the rear of the room, we notice the high lab table still in place from the years when the room was used as a high school science lab. The tables and the window sills now contain plants and seed cups. Butted against the front and side of the lab table are small tables with six computers for students' use. Near the door, is a table covered with a hamsters' cage, assorted books, and plants. The high ceiling reveals the age of the structure, as does the glass transom over the doorway.

Finally, the time has come to depart for the field trip; we'll get acquainted with several students on the bus. However, we find ourselves waiting again as Richard goes to get the small bus which he will drive. Soon he drives up and joins us outside the school. Approximately twenty students, mostly boys, gather about Richard asking if they can ride his bus. Richard looks over the

group and selects several students to join those he had already selected earlier. Fifteen students scramble to their seats; only two are girls. Recalling our propensity for motion sickness, we feel relieved to know the front seat directly behind the driver's seat has been reserved for us.

As the bus pulls out of the school parking lot slowly, students talk excitedly to Richard, whom they frequently refer to as "Mr. D." Can they play their cassette tapes in the player mounted above the driver's head? Mr. D. agrees but reminds them that they will have to take turns. The two girls across the aisle from us quickly negotiate a first turn and soon we are jolted by the music from the film "Dirty Dancing" erupting from the speaker. Smiling, Mr. D. glances at the girls in the rear view mirror while reaching up to lower the volume. The trip is underway.

Mr. D. concentrates on his driving as he maneuvers the small bus behind the other bus load of seventh graders. Occasionally, he glances in the mirror or chats with a student who has moved to the front to squat beside the driver's seat and to talk with him. Soon Mickey plops himself down beside us on the front seat. He leans forward to chat with Mr. D. and pours him a cup of coffee from a thermos. Mickey, who talks incessantly, is wearing a gray corduroy cap, knit shirt, jeans, and tennis shoes. His brown hair falls across his forehead as he describes himself as "just a whacky, wild guy" who gets along with everyone. Mickey proudly reports to us that he has had the same girl friend for three days. He confides, "Looks aren't always important, just their heart. The heart's gotta be good, too." In a moment, Mickey jumps across the aisle to arm wrestle with Chuck. Throughout the trip he frequently rejoins us

to chat and to share our Lifesavers. Mickey disclosed another dimension of his temperament. "I have a fiery temper; just get fired up like that and then I'm okay."

Chuck, Mickey's arm wrestling opponent, is a tall, reddish haired boy who is admittedly sports-minded. He likes challenges and characterizes himself as stubborn. For the yearbook, Chuck was voted the "most intellectual seventh grade boy" by his classmates. He converses with us about school and himself. "Well, you know, I was born with a brain and some people are just smart, and they don't have to work hard and everything....So, I don't know, I guess I'm a smart student." Chuck shares that he would like to go to West Point as he hears that it is really "tough."

Chuck glances down at his hightop tennis shoes and expresses his approval of our choice of brand. Popular with his classmates, Chuck acknowledges that he talks a lot and gets into trouble because if "something is going on I end up taking part."

Sitting directly across from us is Kim, a dark haired girl with braces. She and a friend are singing along with the "Dirty Dancing" lyrics. Kim sings and has taken dancing lessons for several years. Her classmates chose Kim as the "most talented seventh grade girl." As we talk with Kim, we sense that she is "older." However, we recognize that this is due to her dress, poise, and use of cosmetics. She is articulate as she talks about adolescence being a "hard age." In fact, she explains, "It sorta' feels good that I know that I'm finally on my way to being half way mature or something, but it is still sorta' hard to go through it 'cause you never know how to act....I'm always torn between acting

stupid and acting grown up. I just don't ever know what to do. So, I'm always confused."

Finally, we reach our destination and the seventh graders pile out of the bus to stretch and to consume voraciously their bagged lunches. We step out into the crisp, cold air and then retreat back into the bus to eat our lunch. Mr. D. sits sideways in the driver's seat and chats with us and the few students who remain on the bus.

At 12:30, we join the other students, teachers, and parents on the historical grounds of a Civil War site. As we stand in front of the Information Center, Mr. D. and Mrs. Gilley assign the students to small groups and suggest that we take different routes during our tour to avoid overcrowding. Mr. D. assigns a group of eight boys to go with us and we begin by heading toward the gift shop and restrooms. The afternoon is spent walking in and out of buildings and examining artifacts on the historical grounds. As we stand examining homes, food items and weapons, we suggest to our group that it might be fun to try to imagine what it would have been like to have lived during this period. Not overly impressed with the history of the site, the boys chase each other, laugh, play with sticks; a couple of them even turn flips as we walk about.

One of the shortest boys in the group, Sam, has already purchased a souvenir which he proudly displays. Sam is a short, freckled youngster who grins as he explains, "I'm a prankster and I always like to be laughing." Later, Sam enjoys a prank when he gets Mr. D. to give him a piggyback ride back to the parking lot. We see them smiling and laughing as they approach the

parking lot. When we ask Sam about this, he explains that he jumped on Mr. D.'s back and asked him for a ride. Then, he decided to tell his friends that he had hurt his leg. Sam confesses, "I was just playing a joke on everybody. I told everybody that I fell in a hole, got my foot caught and hurt my leg."

When the groups finish their tours, they return to the parking lot, our designated meeting place. Some students find leftovers from lunch and start eating again. We find a spot on the curb and sit down to observe the energy and interactions of the students. There are boy-girl conversations, frolicking in the grass and parking lot, and bursts of laughter. Soon we learn there is a problem: the other bus driver went for lunch and hasn't returned. A long, impatient wait follows as students realize that the delay means that they will now have less time at the shopping mall, the next planned stop.

Sitting on the curb, watching and listening to students, we learn more about them. Ann and Dee are two friends who are often seen together. Ann's family has moved frequently, and after an absence of two years, she had recently returned to Hill Crest Elementary. Although Ann describes herself as liking to "joke around a lot and make people laugh," she strikes us as quiet and timid. According to Ann, she makes "okay grades." Recently, Mr. D. moved her to the second math group after she began to have difficulty in the first group. Since then, she has done better in math.

In contrast to Ann's small stature, her friend Dee is tall and slender. Last year, Dee was selected to take the SAT Test because she had done well on a standardized test in English. She makes mostly A's and describes herself as shy. Her classmates voted Dee the "quietest seventh grade girl."

Seated on the curb near us are Mickey and his girl friend. She holds his head in her lap as he playfully leans back against her. Turning to us, she asks if we think that she looks like Jennifer Grey, the star of "Dirty Dancing." Surprisingly, we do notice a resemblance.

Finally, the driver pulls into the lot with the small school bus and the group cheers loudly. Mr. D. clarifies the reason for the delay as a misunderstanding about departure time. Soon everyone is aboard and seated as the buses pull out for the final stop, the shopping mall, before the return trip to Hill Crest.

During the drive, the conversations of students indicate that a problem has developed between two girls who are supposedly best friends. Later, another girl becomes upset with things that were being said and approaches Mr. D. to ask him to do something about it. Since this student regards Mr. D. as somewhat of a father figure, she expects him to be able to intervene.

Finally, when we reach the shopping mall, Mr. D. repeats his instructions that students are to walk about in groups of four. Then he stands in front of the bus and talks about the problem with a small group of girls, including the two disgruntled friends. Later, Mr. D. confided that he had tried to help them talk with each other, but learned that the problem involved accusations about the girl's parents and was more serious than he realized initially.

We stroll across the parking lot with some of the students, who disperse once inside the mall. Briefly, we spend some time window shopping and observing the groups of students at various locations. Mickey passes us holding hands with his girl friend. Prior to leaving, we spot Mr. D. with a small

group of students in the pizza parlor. The four of them are sitting at the table waiting for their food. We stop to say that we've enjoyed the day, but must abandon the bus for a ride to our hometown. We remind Mr. D. we will rejoin the group in the classroom on Monday morning.

### Scene Two: Friday Afternoon Volleyball

Several days later we talk with Mindy in the hall. She is having a "cook out" at her home on Friday after school and invites us to join the group. She confides that she has invited all of the students in her homeroom for hot dogs and volleyball, and that Mr. D. has said he will be there. Happily, we readily accept Mindy's invitation.

We meet Mr. D. in the parking lot after school and follow him to Mindy's house. When we arrive, we are greeted warmly by Mindy's mother who escorts us through the house to the living room. Mindy is seated at the piano with a friend. We learn that she will be in a recital the following day and, at her mother's urging, she plays "Alley Cat" for us. As we listen, we remember that Mindy has been voted the "most intellectual girl" by her classmates. That isn't surprising since she has made all A's and feels that these grades will help her to get into college. Mindy describes herself as hard working and willing to ask questions when she doesn't understand something. She speaks appreciatively of her school experience, "I like school, and I like my teachers....Just being with other kids my age and being able to meet different people."

Prior to gathering in the Florida room for hot dogs, several of the fourteen students play football in the front yard. In the frequent and often rough

tackling, Bobby manages to get grass stains on his new designer jeans, and he comments that his mom "is going to kill him." Bobby's dark hair, eyes, complexion and warm smile contribute to his popularity with girls. He tells us that he likes sports and doing hard things. As he talks about school, he says "Well, it's not that easy...If you're like me, I'm not that good in school." Later, Bobby reveals that he enjoyed talking with us and invites us to a graduation party.

It's late Friday evening, and after hot dogs and another game of volleyball, we express our appreciation and depart, while Mr. D. and the students continue laughing and playing on the front lawn.

### Scene Three: A Portrait of the Classroom

As we arrive at school and climb the stairs to the second floor, we are greeted by the sounds of students talking and slamming locker doors. When we reach the top of the steps, we notice Mr. D. making his way down the crowded hall with a handful of pencils. Before he reaches the classroom, three girls approach him and begin talking. Mr. D. listens without smiling and turns to go with the girls toward Mrs. Gilley's classroom. At that point, the smallest girl, Marsha, becomes tearful and encircles her arm around Mr. D.'s back. Without stopping, he puts an arm around her shoulder and continues down the hall. According to one of Marsha's friends, Marsha broke a figurine she had brought for Mrs. Gilley. With Mr. D.'s assistance, the girls discuss the problem and decide that no one should have hurt feelings because the incident was accidental.

Entering Mr. D.'s classroom, we find students milling about, talking with each other. Shortly they begin to drift toward their desks. One student steps to the back table, picks up the almond colored coffee pot and leaves the room. Soon he is back. He measures the coffee into the basket and plugs the pot into an outlet. We chat briefly with students who approach. Several are interested in knowing if we will either help or talk with them today. One or two ask how we enjoyed the trip. Because the room is filled with student desks, we decide to sit at the rear of the room at the hamster table near the door. The hamsters, Dixie and Rebel, belong to a student who, with the help of friends, cares for them daily.

As the 8:45 bell sounds, students are seated and the room becomes quieter. Mr. D. strolls through the door. He moves to the back table, pours a cup of coffee and walks slowly to the front of the room. Students chat with each other and with Mr. D. as he walks by. He smiles, making brief, inaudible comments. Standing behind the lectern, Mr. D. waits without speaking. As the talking continues, he says, "I'm ready to begin." When the room becomes silent, he assigns the questions at the end of the science chapter and goes to his desk to take the attendance and lunch count.

As we sit watching, we are reminded of how Mr. D. talks about himself as a teacher:

I have more of a structured classroom where I lecture and they listen....I know that it gets boring, but that's just the way I teach....So every time I can joke around or say something funny just to make sure they're listening for one thing; but, to make it more enjoyable for them. It breaks the monotony of things.

Well, I'm well-liked by students which I think is important even though some teachers wouldn't feel the same way. I think I do a good job. I work real hard at it. I guess the only time you'll ever see me sitting at my desk is the first five minutes of school when I'm doing attendance....I'm one who feels like for the hours the students are here I need to be working. So, I'm always up roaming about the room, helping them out.

Soon after completing the morning routines and sending the attendance and lunch count to the office, Mr. D. slides his chair back and returns to stand behind the lectern. As he opens a book, he directs students to turn to page 455 and asks, "What is ecology?" Multiple responses erupt simultaneously from students. As types of biomes are discussed, a student offers "taiga" as an example. Mr. D. asks for a definition of "taiga" and when Joey responds there is some uncertainty. Moving to his desk, Mr. D. picks up a dictionary, checks the definition, and confirms that Joey is correct. Joey laughs, pats his chest and remarks boastfully, "We're geniuses."

Mr. D. leans restfully against the blackboard with his hands behind him on the chalk tray. We watch him interact with the various students. It is interesting to recall the ways that students have talked with us about Mr. D. For example, Mickey said, "He enforces discipline. If you get out of line he'll call you down, and he'll make you remember what you shouldn't have done."

In a drawling voice, Chuck expresses a somewhat different view:

When Mr. D. tells you to do something, he'll make you do what he tells you to do. So, he gets a lot more respect than everybody else....I think he is unfair; but, of course, I probably think everybody is unfair at times.

The ecology lesson continues as Mr. D. asks how many students have seen the TV commercial which uses an apple to show portions of the Earth.

Using the apple in the commercial as an analogy, he challenges students to think of the Earth as supporting life for four billion people. As students start sharing ideas about expanding resources through using ocean resources, Mr. D. listens and maintains eye contact with each speaker. Sometimes he nods and smiles slightly. Following the discussion, he calls on students to read portions of the text orally.

At this point, Mr. D. strides back to the closet, stands on one foot and begins to change into another pair of tennis shoes. Then he picks up a ball and turns to face the class. "How many would like to play prison ball?" In response, students enthusiastically shoot their hands into the air. Mr. D. closes the closet door and walks quickly to the classroom door. He calls the class to line up and they file out of the room chatting with each other as they fall in line behind him. Once they are in the hall, the group moves quietly, single file toward the gym.

We join the group downstairs in the gym and watch as they form rows without any directive from Mr. D. Two boys are designated to lead calisthenics. As the teacher watches and counts, the students move through the exercises even when Mr. D. playfully counts erratically.

Soon the prison ball game begins with the class divided into two teams facing each other. Observing from our position near a wall, we learn that this is a fast-paced game in which players try to hit an opposing player thus sending him/her to prison. The prison is the outlying area of the gym floor behind the opposing team. The only way to be freed is to catch a ball thrown by a teammate. Many of the girls do not share the boys' enthusiasm for prison

ball and run quickly to the outer edge of the court to avoid getting hit by a fast moving ball. Although they do not leave the game, they make little apparent effort to engage in the action.

Mr. D. obviously enjoys the game, frequently catching, throwing and dodging the ball; he grins playfully when the ball misses him and when he scores a hit on an opponent. When Ray and Mr. D. are both hit by the same ball, Mr. D. sends Ray to prison, but immediately throws the ball to him, thereby bailing him out.

For Mickey, prison ball is his favorite game. He eagerly expresses these sentiments, "You get your frustrations out. Actually, you can hit somebody and not get suspended for it." He laughs and adds, "It's fun. Once you hit him [Mr. D.] you know he's going to get you out, but you get him out until he gets the ball and gets back."

As the game continues, a student comes over and sits on the floor beside us. When we speak, he reveals that he has a headache. Suddenly, Mr. D. hits Sam with the ball behind the knees and, as his legs buckle, Sam drops to the floor. In a minute, the first game is over and, as the teams change sides, Mr. D. walks behind Sam and gently uses his foot to give Sam a lift from the backside. Sam turns and smiles. As they stroll side by side across the gym floor, Mr. D. puts a hand on the back of Sam's head. The two turn briefly toward each other, grinning broadly.

At the end of the session, the class lines up at the gym door, and Mr. D. leads the group back upstairs. When he learns that the student with a headache has gone to the restroom, Mr. D. turns abruptly and makes his way

into the restroom. The students move about, stopping at the water fountain or restroom and then amble casually into the classroom.

Waiting for math class to begin, we reflect on the various ways that other students describe Mr. D. Mickey believes that, "He teaches well...helps me with things I couldn't do." Mindy feels that Mr. D. goes beyond what other teachers might do. When asked to explain this, she replies:

He makes sure that if we don't understand something like doing our homework at home, he says that we should call and ask him....He tries hard to make sure that students learn things and he puts everything he has into his work.

Dee feels that Mr. D. understands her shyness and says: "Well, he explains stuff real easy where you can understand it. It's not like you're getting confused. He takes it real slow, and he works with you if you don't understand it."

In reflecting on her experiences in Mr. D.'s room, Kim elaborates by comparing this year with years past: "...I've learned more in his class than I have in all the years of school. I mean cause it's made me try harder, and I've had more of a challenge....He has new ideas and he doesn't always do the same thing." Kim's words evoke our memory of sitting with Ann on the grassy outfield of the ball field as she explained:

Well, I used to think that he was real mean, but now he's one of my favorite teachers....I don't really know, I guess his attitude when I first came here....[ I felt] Unwanted in his class....Now it's totally different.... Now every time I get a bad grade or something, we'll just go out in the hall and talk about it....he helps us understand our work better.

After a short break, students return to their seats. Mr. D. returns the ball to the closet and changes from his gym tennis shoes to his classroom

sneakers. As math begins, Mr. D. instructs Group Two to take out their homework and to check it as a student calls out the answers. Mr. D. then slides the lectern across the floor and begins to review with Group One the characteristics of polygons. He calls on Chuck and then smiles and says, "I don't know why I called on Chuck when I said perfect squares." Immediately, multiple giggles escape from those students who grasp Mr. D.'s good-humored pun. He proceeds to call on students to provide examples of polygons. When Chuck responds, he mispronounces parallel as "parawell." As the lesson progresses, Mr. D. continues to use Chuck's pronunciation of "parawell", each time looking at Chuck and grinning.

After giving Group One their assignment, Mr. D. returns to Group Two and works examples of the homework that they have just checked independently. On the chalkboard Mr. D. writes vertically the problem  $7 \text{ and } 11/12 \text{ minus } 3$ . Using input from the students and writing rapidly, he talks through a set of steps for solving the problem. After working other examples, he makes an assignment. Then, he tells the group that, "You may get Mrs. Linkous to help you." After several minutes, several students join me at the back table to ask questions or have problems checked for accuracy.

Soon it's 11:45 and time to change classes with Mrs. Gilley. As the afternoon group enters the room, we remain at the table and talk informally with students. Today, we are going to videotape a role play session of the Quest program, an instructional program which deals with adolescent life skills.

Mr. D. explains that today's session will be videotaped as a way of allowing him to look at the interactions which occur during class. As we move to the side wall near Mr. D.'s desk with our camcorder, he encourages students to participate normally. Then Mr. D. chooses two groups of four students to role play families at a dinner table. Each family is represented by the father, mother, and an adolescent son and daughter. Mr. D. instructs the first group to imagine that they are a family that solves problems agreeably, and the second group is asked to model a family that disagrees.

The groups enjoy ad-libbing and hamming up their portrayals of family life. Frequently, bursts of laughter erupt from the audience. Following each role play session, Mr. D. elicits discussion about ways to solve problems and about how the students' families resolve their problems. Multiple responses follow as students, sometimes jokingly, share. One student reveals that when he was grounded, he slipped out of his bedroom window. Another boy soberly reports that his stepmother has not whipped him since an incident which occurred several weeks ago.

Soon it's lunch time. Mr. D. moves quickly to the front of the room, opens his desk drawer, and distributes lunch tickets. He casually flips tickets to several students seated at the rear. When Mr. D. moves to the door, the students follow him out and continue to talk and laugh until they reach the hallway. From there, they proceed quietly toward the lunchroom.

In the cafeteria, we join Mr. D. at the teachers' table where he routinely sits facing his class. Today, he chats affably with a secretary and teacher aide;

the light conversation centers around the seventh grade field trip. Mrs. Gilley and two sixth grade teachers are seated at the other end of the long table.

When lunch is over, Mr. D. carries his tray to the return area and turns to tell his class that it's time to leave. As he stands watching the students dispose of their food scraps and trash, he is soon surrounded by three girls and two boys who are smiling and talking. One of the girls puts her hand on his shoulder and stretches up to whisper something to him; he listens and smiles.

After lunch, Mr. D. explains that both seventh grade classes will practice for the Awards Assembly in the auditorium this afternoon after students return from band. During the thirty minute band period, some students remain in the room for a study hall. Mr. D. and Mrs. Gilley meet in the teachers' lounge to plan how they will coordinate their efforts for the awards program. Certificates will have to be made out, and the program will need to be typed. In addition, grades will have to be averaged to determine winners of the achievement awards.

Shortly after 1:30 the groups meet in the auditorium. The risers are in place for the students to stand on during their singing performances, and the session begins with students practicing the processional march. Mr. D., who plays the piano without reading music, takes his position at the piano. As the group sings, he perches on the back of a folding chair with his feet resting on the chair bottom. As he accompanies them, he nods his head intermittently and gives verbal directions. He and Mrs. Gilley express hope that the final performance will be more polished than the practices.

The group leaves the auditorium, noisily climbing the stairs to the second floor. The noise continues as they go to their lockers to collect books and materials to take home. Many students are talking loudly and teasing each other playfully. Finally, when they are seated in the classroom and waiting for the dismissal bell, Mr. D. says soberly:

Tomorrow bring all of your books and coats. I'm not having this much noise during locker break. I asked you three times to be quiet. Tomorrow you'll also have homework. Darrel, turn around in your seat....(When Darrel does not respond, Mr. D. repeats the directive more firmly.) Darrel, turn around. (Darrel responds at this point.)

In the few minutes that remain of the school day the students sit quietly at their desks; when the bell rings, they remain seated until Mr. D. instructs them to leave. On his way out of the room, Darrel grins and tries unsuccessfully to make eye contact with Mr. D. Mickey, the last student to leave the room, playfully flips a rubber band at Mr. D.. When it flips into the air, Mr. D. catches the rubber band, blocks the doorway and shoots Mickey on the chest with the rubber band as he tries to get out the door. Both laugh. Later, Mickey explains that he had wanted to make Mr. D. laugh since he'd "been mad all day." In fact, Mickey observed, "I figured he would laugh. I could tell he was starting to get a smile on his face."

Since it is Tuesday afternoon, we decide to stay after school for the pre-algebra group. Mr. D. developed a ten week session about four years ago when he realized that students going into algebra in high school needed more preparation. Although the program is not funded by the school, Mr. D. feels

that there is a real need for it; consequently, he teaches the class voluntarily from 3:30-5:00 each Tuesday without monetary compensation.

The pre-algebra students have brought chips and pretzels for snacks, and Mr. D. allows them to purchase drinks from the teachers' lounge. The class begins with students checking their work from last week. Mr. D. asks for an answer to a problem and inquires, "How many got that?" Chuck is sitting on the front row with his feet on the bottom of the lectern. Occasionally, the lectern slides slightly. Mr. D. takes his foot and lifts Chuck's foot off. Both smile. Later, when Chuck moves the lectern again, Mr. D. quips, "I'm going to break your leg in a minute."

There is laughter throughout the session. Mr. D. stands, nibbles pretzels, puts two pretzels under his upper lip and allows them to hang there like a walrus's tusks. Mr. D. joins the class in laughter and interacts with each student by inviting the students to share their answers.

As he starts to explain coordinates, Mr. D. turns to the board and pulls down a screen containing a coordinate graph. On the graph he draws two intersecting lines. He uses the term "origin" as he touches their point of intersection. There is a lot of laughter from the class as a student supplies a word that is inaudible to us. Later, Mr. D. clarifies by saying that Joey substituted "orgy" for the word "origin".

After next week's work has been explained, Mr. D. turns to erase the board and almost drops the eraser. He juggles the eraser playfully, catches it, and then looks at the pretzel that he is holding. He says, "I got my pretzel

chalky." He looks at it, nibbles it and remarks, "That's good." Once more the laughter erupts.

It's 5:00 as the pre-algebra session ends with Mr. D explaining the students' assignment for next week. As we make our departure we recall the many interactions that have transpired in the course of a school day, and we recall what Mr. D. said about wanting to be available to students:

I probably have my priorities mixed up because I almost value that part [interacting] more than the academic part of it. I know my job is to teach, to give them more knowledge in a certain area; but, at this age, they are so confused. Going through adolescence, all the changes. I feel that you've got to almost overcome those emotional blocks before they can grasp a lot of the other.

Their minds are going to stay on their problem until they find some resolve or some way of working it out.... I think it [interacting] is almost as important because if you don't get them in the right frame of mind, they are not going to achieve as much academically.

Mr. D.'s thoughts remind us of conversations with students. In talking about how she sees Mr. D., Kim explained:

Well, he's special because he's just different. You know. He treats us like...uh...you're older.... and he sorta' understands the problems that we're going through right now...it's a hard age to go through and he sorta' understands the problems. He just talks to us and stuff and treats us like we're his friends instead of his students. So, he's more of a friend than a teacher....cause like after school is out, he talks to you just like he's our age and everything.

Sam, who earlier was knocked to his knees during the prison ball game, described his relationship with Mr. D.:

[We are] Pretty good friends, I guess....You can go to him and talk to him, and he'll know sorta what you're talking about. And he can help you out and tell you how to sort your problems out. He's just someone who's there that you can depend on being there for you. Someone who will listen to you.

Mickey explained the aggressiveness in prison ball, "...he gets me and I go over there and slap him on the shoulder. Just friends."

Dee remembered her feelings about interacting with Mr. D. in extracurricular settings. Once, when they stopped for pizza after the SAT testing, she saw:

...a whole different side of him from being in school...up there, he's just like us. He's still a kid inside, but on the outside, he's just a teacher who is worried about whether you're going to learn all this stuff or fail. But when you get him outside the school, he's just like we are. He's just a teenager....he's like a dad to me, my second dad."

As the day ends, we make plans to talk with Mr. D. in more depth about his views of students and his relationships with them.

#### Scene Four: Awards, Recognition, and Dancing

A highlight of the year is the annual Awards Assembly and Dance. The event is held in the evening so that parents can attend. As we stand at the auditorium entrance, we note that tennis shoes, T-shirts, and jeans have been abandoned in favor of sport shirts and ties for boys while the girls flit about in a colorful array of dresses. Plans have been made with Mr. D. for videotaping the program for students; we take our seats on the front row near the piano.

As the processional music begins, the families and friends stand to watch the seventh graders march in and take their places at the front of the auditorium. Once everyone is seated, Mrs. Rose extends a welcome. The ceremony continues with music, poetry, and the presentation of awards to students. Several student participants are recognized. Chuck, the future West Point cadet, receives the spelling award; Kim, the grown up and talented

adolescent, is recognized for her work in science, and our hot dog supper hostess and pianist, Mindy, is the recipient of the Math Award. One of the two citizenship awards is presented to Sam, the grinning prankster and piggy back rider on the field trip.

After the promotion certificates are presented, the seventh graders sing "We Are the World." As the recessional begins, we slip to the rear of the auditorium and videotape each student as he or she moves down the aisle. As we look through the viewfinder, we reflect on the practice sessions and the teachers' frustrations at poor timing and slurred lyrics. Then we remember the laughter at humorous incidents. Seeing Betty march out, we remember Mr. D. playfully pounding out the "Bridal March" and mischievously asking, "Is that what you want to hear?"

After the program, we stand in the hall waiting for the dance to begin. Surveying the group, we note that Mickey is absent. Mr. D. had known that Mickey could not attend the dance, but he is puzzled by his absence from the assembly.

The auditorium is almost empty and music is erupting from the open cafeteria doors. As we approach the double doors, we see that the cafeteria has been transformed with crepe paper, balloons, and a sound system, all installed by supporting parents. The overhead fluorescent lights are off and candles provide the lighting. On the long refreshment table two cakes are inscribed with the theme, "We Are the World." Two mothers are busy behind the refreshment table, while a dad operates the stereo system.

Inside we stroll about chatting with students, congratulating those who received awards and complimenting others on their appearance. Soon we stand near the refreshment table and talk with Mrs. Rose and Mrs. Gilley. Mrs. Gilley reports that Mr. D. is furious because two boys have rubbed French onion dip on his face, hair, and shirt. When Mr. D. arrives, he has removed his coat and tie and is wiping his beard with a paper towel. Although he is annoyed by the student conduct, he has already retaliated by smearing one of the instigators with a facial application of onion dip. He smiles and moves about, conversing with parents and students.

Before the evening ends, Mr. D. is in the middle of the floor doing a dance routine with four of the girls. He is on the far end of the line of performers and laughs when the group is applauded by the onlookers. Gradually, parents arrive to take students home, and we make our departure as the clean up process begins.

Mr. D. unlocks the office for us to retrieve our video equipment and helps us load the car. He talks about his impressions; the evening did not seem quite as special as in years past, and he's concerned that it did not mean as much to the students. In Mr. D.'s view, there was lack of feeling and emotion in the students' singing and attitude toward the evening. He remains puzzled by Mickey's failure to attend the Awards Assembly which he describes as the highlight activity of the year.

During the long drive home, we think about the evening and the feelings that Mr. D. had expressed several weeks ago:

I guess always the last month or so of school. We get ready for the seventh grade graduation ceremony. Just going through all of those rehearsals and practicing the music and things for it. And then getting the awards ready for them. Those are always real special times, and it never fails that I cry the last day of school or get real emotional and they do, too. You wouldn't expect seventh graders, especially boys, to show any emotion, but I remember one year there wasn't a dry eye in the seventh grade. They were all in tears.

A glance at our watch reminds us that it is almost eleven o'clock and at eight thirty in the morning, another school day will begin.

#### Scene Five: Conversations With Richard Deaton

This afternoon the classroom is empty, and the building is strangely quiet. The students have evacuated, and the last bus has pulled from the parking lot. We are sitting beside Richard Deaton at student desks in front of the television to talk with him about his interactions with students as we view video recordings of school events. We show videos of a softball game during physical education and a classroom lesson on family living from the Quest Program.

Richard has never been videotaped and expresses some apprehension about viewing himself in front of a class. While we sip Cokes, Richard elaborates on those feelings:

It's hard for me to interact with students in front of a group. more so than talking one to one. I feel real comfortable just sitting and talking with them one to one or two or three in a group....I feel much more comfortable with a small group than having a whole group listen to my response ....I try to be a good role model for them.

Richard refers frequently to those students who are fun to talk with because of their sense of humor. For example, he says that Mickey "has a grown up sense of humor.... I don't know, there is something about him that

makes it hard to get mad at him.” In fact, Richard shares the way he uses humor:

....Sometimes I'll get carried away with humor; sometimes the students do, and it's a little hard to get back on track. But I think it's easier now that they know me well, to know when I'm through cutting up and then get back to business...I guess that's one reason I like the seventh grade...that's about my level of humor.

Discussing his use of humor, Richard talks about the interests of seventh grade students and the fact that their humor is often suggestive as was the case when Joey substituted "orgy" for "origin". Richard recalls his own thoughts and feelings when he was their age. He explains his tolerant views:

I put up with a lot more than I like too, and a lot of times I pretend that I don't hear it....They already have these thoughts and they're saying them to each other, and I can't stop that. So, there's not much use to stifle it when they say it in front of me....I just see it as being more a part of them or being able to communicate with them.

Richard controls the viewing of the tapes so that he can look at interactions with students and talk about those things that seem most salient to him. As the video plays, Richard stops the tape at a point when, as a part of a discussion on families, a student refers to a whipping by a step-parent. Richard discloses that during a previous Quest lesson, the boy had cried when he talked about a whipping that he had received at home. Then, Richard explains how he sees himself relating to troubled students:

I can handle it better sometimes when they're not laughing. I'm not as good a laugher with them as a sympathizer when they're crying or when they're real sad. So when he cried (the student on the video), I think I handled it real well and showed him how much I cared by just listening to him and trying to get him to talk more.

Richard selects "caring" as an adjective to describe himself as a teacher. In fact, he feels that he communicates to students that he cares by:

....just taking time out, stopping what I'm doing long enough to listen no matter how impatient I get...I guess physical contact shows that I care....I guess the ones that I physically touch more, I do probably think more of them or like to be around more. Some like Sam and Mickey.

In a wistful tone, Richard acknowledges that he is hesitant and cautious about responding to touching or making physical contact with the girls as he does not want his actions to be interpreted as inappropriate. He regrets being unable to respond spontaneously without risking miscommunication.

Richard continues to watch the video of the softball game, and he laughs at the missed plays and the playful interactions. During the game, he pitched for both teams. As he sees a student calling to him from second base, he questions if he had ignored the student or turned away from him. This leaves him wondering how students view him:

But I do care what young people think about me, and I think they care about what their teachers think about them. [We ask Richard how he communicates caring to students.] The caring? I can tell you times that I don't feel like I do a good job. There are a lot of times they come up to me and I just don't have time to listen. I think it depends on the group and the situation and the different kids. Some of the kids are fussing all the time about something and they come and complain about everything. You tend not to listen to them; as often as someone who never talks to you.

In talking about Ray, Richard comments that the other students do not like him and adds:

His bathing habits or grooming leaves a lot to be desired. I think that is one reason I feel like I sorta' brush him off....He's real nervous and picks up on the kids not liking him....But he is one that worries me.

As we listen to Richard's remarks, we reflect on Ray's explanation of an odor which he explained was caused by someone putting something on his jacket during science. According to Ray, Mr. D. was a help,

..But they know that if they get caught doing that [name calling] in Mr. D.'s class, Mr. D. will get very mad at them. He don't much like stuff like that....It makes me feel pretty good because I know that he's not taking sides and all.

Richard continues to talk about his interactions with students, explaining that he and Bobby had gotten "off on the wrong track." He attributes the problem, at least in part, to Bobby's "arrogant attitude" and the fact that at one time the girls were "worshiping everything he [Bobby] said." Richard expresses concern that the girls were even keeping up with his work for him. Richard's comments remind us of Bobby's explanation for the problem, "...I got on the bad side of him the first of the year....I still work; it just hasn't been all that much fun."

According to Richard, the "turning point" in this relationship had come when Bobby's mother came to talk about a paper that Richard had made Bobby write. The topic was on chewing gum. After repeatedly asking Bobby to spit his gum out, Richard told him to write a single page report. Bobby completed the report, but Richard characterized it as sarcastic in tone and subsequently required a five page report. At this point, Bobby's mother expressed her disapproval of what she saw as an unfair situation.

Recently, the problem reemerged when Richard rode the bus for a kindergarten field trip. During the trip, Bobby's little sister had told Richard that Bobby was really glad that Mr. D. would not be teaching that day as he

didn't like him. Richard decided not to talk with Bobby individually about the problem, but instead simply not to "let it bother him."

As our conversation continues, Richard inquires whether Mickey had talked with us about missing the Awards Assembly. When we admit ignorance, Richard reveals that he did inquire about Mickey's absence. Initially, Mickey had said that his grandmother became ill but later, when Richard inquired about the grandmother's progress, Mickey reluctantly admitted that he made up the story. He confided that a family argument resulted in his absence. As Richard recounts Mickey's story, his eyes become teary: "I get upset when I know what some of these kids have to go through."

We recall Mickey's description of himself as a "wild, whacky kid." We also remember several other unpleasant incidents. Each resulted in punishment for Mickey. At one point Mickey drew a knife from his pocket and threatened another boy. When Richard learned of the incident, he reluctantly reported Mickey to Mrs. Rose.

Thinking back to that incident, we remember how hurt Richard had appeared and the shock that he expressed. In fact, Richard said at the time, "It makes me wonder if I should become a principal if things upset me this much." We had been in the room when Mickey returned from the principal's office. He looked dejected as he made his way to his seat on the front row.

Richard brings us back in touch as he shares a telephone conversation that he had with Mickey's mother. She had called today because she wanted Richard to know that 'she thought every kid needed a teacher that he could respect and love....and that Mickey had done nothing but talk about me [Mr.

D.] since he got home from school that day.” Richard acknowledged that this had really made him feel good because “working with kids a whole year and seeing them everyday, they’re almost like your own kids.” He said the call was important to him because he had been feeling depressed about school being over.

In talking about his depression, Richard picks up an envelope from his desk and remarks that he had saved it for us to read. Feeling a little hesitant and uncertain, we begin to read. We learn that the letter is from a former student who is graduating from high school. She wrote to convey bitter memories of Richard’s comparison of her to an older sister.

You probably don’t remember, years ago, asking my sister, Mary, what was wrong with me, asking her why I wasn’t as smart as she was. I’m sure you think this is petty and childish, but there is nothing childish about pain. I want you to know how badly those words hurt me.

As we finish the letter and return it back to Richard, he tells us that five years ago during a high school visitation he had seen the older sister. He recalls:

It’s hard to make conversation so I was just saying something off the top of my head about why don’t you get your sister on the ball or something so she’ll make straight A’s like you did....I had no intention or meant that hurtful.

Richard’s personal hurt is even more evident as he explains that after finding the letter on his desk and reading it:

I was at the point at first that I didn’t want anyone to see. I was ashamed thinking that...well, I know if I had hurt a student that bad, I don’t think I would want to stay in this profession. That was going through my mind that maybe it’s time I should get out altogether....

As we sit listening to Richard, we recall his hesitancy about participating with us in the study and his uncertainty about being videotaped. In the intervening weeks, we have shared many experiences with Richard and his students. Now, we sense the honesty, intensity, and openness of this teacher.

Richard concludes by revealing that he shared the letter with the elementary supervisor. Their subsequent conversation allowed him to resolve the feelings that the letter evoked. Although he doesn't plan to respond to the student, he reveals that he would have told her that he appreciated her letting him know because "it might make me be more careful what I say the next time."

Today, is our final visit with Richard, and we talk about many aspects of the year. As he relaxes on his chair behind the end of the year paperwork on his desk, he elaborates on some of his feelings:

It's just a need inside me, I guess, that I want to be cared for, and I'd like to care for them.

It's always rewarding to think that they've learned something, and I can see that they've progressed. But I think that the friendship was the most rewarding. Just being able to be important in the lives of a few of them.

Articulating his feelings about teaching, Richard says, "I just like it so much, the joy of it."

The school year has ended. Although the seventh graders are officially on their way to high school, Richard looks forward to having some of them drop back by next year just to say hello.

Richard's future is uncertain; he has applied for the principalship and has already had one interview. Mrs. Rose, surprisingly, had announced her

retirement about six weeks ago earlier. Thus, next fall, Richard may not climb the stairs to the classroom on the second floor as the seventh grade math, science, and physical education teacher. With all the uncertainties that he has expressed, Richard may walk into the main entrance, just as we did, and go straight to the principal's office as the school's new administrator.

As we discard our Coke can and walk out of Hill Crest Elementary School to our car, we recall Richard's laughter as he thought about wearing his white tennis shoes with the three piece suit attire of a principal.

## **JOAN CARR: TEACHER AND ROLE MODEL**

### **VIGNETTE #2**

#### **Scene One: A First Grade Day**

Before the first bus delivers its load of students, we arrive at Hill Crest Elementary School. Entering the building, we meet Richard Deaton on his way to the cafeteria for his first cup of coffee. Instead of going up the stairwell to Richard's room, we turn right and stroll down the primary hall surveying the student work that which frames the entrance to each classroom. Near the end of the long hall, we pass an exit and turn right into Joan Carr's first grade classroom.

The room is dark and quiet so we take a moment to examine the surroundings. Colorful tissue paper kites hang from the ceiling. Although the children's desks are in traditional rows facing the blackboards, they are paired so that two children can sit side by side. On the top of each desk is a marked and ragged piece of tagboard labeled with a child's name.

As we unpack our note pad and pencils, we choose to sit in the green vinyl armchair in the reading center. Peering in the cage on the top of the bookcase, we notice that "Squeaky" the gerbil is still asleep. The bookshelf contains several animal books, and the bulletin board above it identifies the characteristics of mammals, insect, birds, reptiles and amphibians. At the end of the bookshelf stands a tree with construction paper leaves and a stuffed animal nestled on a limb near the tree's trunk. At the back of the room, clean aquariums await the arrival of any amphibians that the children might bring to school.

Beside the classroom door there is a bulletin board for calendar activities and twelve Teddy Bear classroom helpers who perform daily chores such as going to the office, watering plants, feeding Squeaky, and heading the line when the class leaves the room. In addition to observing birthdays, there is the question, "Who lost a tooth?" with large cut out teeth below.

On the front border above the blackboard are the manuscript alphabet cards, a typical display in a first grade classroom. Just above the cards there is a number line which stretches across the wall, goes above the door facing and continues across the side wall above the bulletin boards.

Joan's cluttered desk is located in the front corner of the room near the windows. Plants, including seed cups planted by the children, adorn the window sill. Looking across the back of the room, we see the two small tables for reading groups, a computer in the corner, and the folding closet doors which cover most of the back wall. The tile floor bears marks from broken crayon tips and sliding student chairs. The empty room appears cluttered; we

do observe that there is little storage space for keeping files, materials, and the varied supplies that are a part of a first grade classroom.

We see patches of yellow as the buses drive past the window before stopping to unload the children. First, we hear voices. Then, children race into the classroom. Seeing us, they stop and ask if we are going to spend the day with them. As we are chatting, Joan Carr, the teacher arrives. She is followed by other students. As Mrs. Carr places her briefcase on her desk, she looks back, smiles and says, "good morning".

Looking at Mrs. Carr, we notice her striking features. Her thick, black hair touches her collar and frames her dark eyes and skin. Today she is wearing a red sweater, and a coordinated print skirt accentuated with a red sash and red shoes. Black beads, earrings and bracelets add to her colorful image. As she begins to converse with the small group of children who surround her desk, Mrs. Carr sits down in her chair and looks at each child as he/she speaks. She listens, she frequently smiles and nods her head.

When the 8:30 bell sounds, Mrs. Carr stands at her desk and tells the children to be seated. After giving them time to get into their places, she explains that the covers for their animal booklet need more work as they should be neat and interesting. After using several animal pictures to give them some examples, Mrs. Carr returns to her desk.

Mrs. Carr pauses, asking Jim to check his desk for some missing work. After scrambling in his desk, Jim delivers some papers to to the teacher's desk. They talk softly and Mrs. Carr asks if he would like to start over. Jim nods his head affirmatively and accepts a new sheet of construction paper.

Mrs. Carr looks about the room to check attendance; she asks students softly for their lunch money. We notice Vivian, one of the Teddy Bear Helpers, moving about the room watering the plants. When the morning routines are complete, Mrs. Carr dispatches two Bear helpers to deliver the lunch envelope and the roll to the office. With the morning paper work finished, Mrs. Carr stands and walks to the center of the room. Surveying the children still coloring on their animal booklet covers she says, "I see some beautiful pictures. I knew you could do it."

At that moment the classroom door swings open and three women enter. We recognize Mrs. Blair, the volunteer who helps in this room each week. She announces that today is National Teacher Appreciation Day and that the school volunteers are recognizing the teachers. Mrs. Carr smiles as she accepts the helium filled balloon with "Hang In There" written across it. Tied to the end the balloon string is a small plastic bag of homemade cookies which immediately attracts the interest of the children. Another volunteer hands the teacher a cup of coffee. As they start to leave, Mrs. Carr gives Mrs. Blair a hug and she smiles. Some of the children ask Mrs. Blair if she will be back later today. She explains that she will be with them on Thursday and says "Thank you for wanting me," as she turns to leave. Then she adds, "Be nice to your teacher today."

Still smiling, Mrs. Carr calls the Calendar Bear to the bulletin board. The teacher and student lead the class through the morning routine of putting the date in the designate place and repeating the date together. Then Mrs. Carr asks how many days have they been in school. The class resounds with a loud

"159" which the teacher, standing in a chair writes on the number line on the wall. Stepping down, she picks up the chalk and writes "180 - 159" on the board and asks a student how many days of school are left. As he begins to subtract, he omits a step. Mrs. Carr laughs and says, "Jan, you've gotten so smart that you've gotten ahead of yourself." Together, they complete the problem and put "21" on the board.

As Mrs. Carr directs the children to clear the tops of their desks, Les announces, "Mrs. Carr, you forgot my tooth." The teacher smiles and replies, "Les, I'm glad you reminded me." With a marker she writes Les' name on the tooth with May written across it.

Returning to the front of the room, Mrs. Carr says that she needs to have a real quick lesson on something that she had hoped she would not have to do. In fact:

We have known for a week that Whitney was getting glasses.  
..Some people need glasses to help them see....You know what happens to people when someone makes fun, they don't want to wear their glasses anymore. We need to try to help make people happy, not make them feel bad. Our job is to take care of our classmates.

After reminding the children of how proud of them she has been for their kindness to the two students who join them for math, Mrs. Carr begins the morning's work:

Laughing is a very healthy thing to do. Last week when we wrote about our mothers, I read Vivian's and it made me want to cry. Today we're going to think about Mom or Grannie again. Think about something that your mom does that makes you laugh. I'm first! My mom makes me laugh when she dances with my children.

The children then take turns as several describe things that their mothers do which make them laugh. Stories are shared about moms who tickle, swing children, and even fall in the pool. Mrs. Carr invites every child to share, but we notice that Jim and Scott do not participate. When Mark finally gets his turn, Mrs. Carr comments, "Mark, thank you for waiting."

Next, the teacher raises the screen that is covering the blackboard and reveals the incomplete sentence "You made me laugh when...."? Then she adds, "Now don't tell me you can't think of anything. You did a super job last week." After a reminder that they are also to draw a picture of their mothers or grandmothers making them laugh, Mrs. Carr heads for the reading table at the rear of room.

Soon she calls the Horses, her lowest level of first grade readers, to the table. Cindy, Wayne, and Jim are in the group of five students. The children are working on a skills page and substituting beginning consonants. As they work, Mrs. Carr puts an arm around Jim who is seated next to her and whispers "sh-sh-sh." When an answer is given out of turn, the teacher responds, "I'm getting sad because I asked you not to answer for someone else."

As the reading group continues, Jim remarks that all the words rhyme. In response, Mrs. Carr smiles and tells the group, "Jim answered my question before I asked it." When Wayne gives an appropriate response, he receives a verbal "very good."

As we turn to watch the students who are writing about their mothers, we notice that several are up moving around. Another student is at Whitney's

desk and they are engaged in a conversation through expressive eye, head, and hand movements. Mrs. Carr stops her reading group to remind them, "You're forgetting to use your whisper voices." The talking continues. Next, the teacher turns to Les:

Les, you go up and put five minutes on the board. Mrs. Carr is trying not to say much because you're working together. That's fine. But you're not using your whisper voices.

Les leaves his seat and follows Mrs. Carr's instructions. Mrs. Carr calls Whitney back to her side and puts an arm around her waist while a student in the reading group finishes his task. Then she turns to Whitney and talks quietly with her. Shortly, Scott, another one of the loud talkers, is called back in the same way.

When reading group is over, Jim returns to his desk. We notice that he is approaching the writing task reluctantly, so we pick up a chair and go over to sit beside him. When we ask Jim about his work, he responds dejectedly:

I can't think of anything. My mom doesn't make me laugh. She mostly makes me mad. (How do you feel when you're mad?) Sad. (Why?) She hollers at me. I get into trouble for things my brothers do.

As a solution to his dilemma, Jim decides to draw his picture first. Patiently and carefully he draws a picture of the swimming pool at Jellystone Park. Then, he adds a large drawing of Yogi Bear and puts several people in the swimming pool. We ask Jim if one is his mother. He points to the two figures at the end of the pool and says "either one."

Looking at Jim, we see a youngster with blond hair reaching to his shirt collar. His colorful shirt has large blocks of blue, red, yellow, and green and

hangs outside his faded green jeans. His drawing is complete, but he stares at the blank paper on which he is to write. Finally, he gets up and walks to the back of the room where Mrs. Carr is seated. We hear Jim use the word "holler" and watch as the teacher puts an arm around him and squats in a position that allows her to look up at Jim. After the two of them talk quietly, Jim returns to his seat, but still does not write. Finally, Jim writes two sentences, but still maintains that his mom doesn't make him laugh because she "hollers" at him.

At this point Mrs. Carr is moving from desk to desk as the children share their papers with her. When she reaches Cindy's desk, the teacher asks Cindy to stand next to her as she sits down in the student chair and listens to Cindy read. Before Mrs. Carr gets up, she turns to the class and makes the observation: "Mrs. Carr is not real happy with so much running around." Several children remain out of their seats talking with each other.

We walk back to our favorite green chair and find that Cindy and Jane are working hard on a task. A small folding stool has been set up on the carpet and Cindy has a Kleenex wrapped around her fingers. With Jane seated on the stool, Cindy proceeds to wiggle Jane's loose tooth with her tissue covered fingers. We inquire if the tooth is loose enough and Jane nods "Yes". As the operation continues, Amy comes back to assist. When her efforts cause Jane to jerk back and report that it hurts, Cindy and Jane put the stool up and move to Mrs. Carr's desk at the front of the room. Here the efforts to pull the tooth continue. Noticing what is taking place, Mrs. Carr sends Cindy and Jane back

to their desks with her comment "The tooth isn't ready yet, and the dentist's office is closed."

The morning passes quickly. When Mrs. Carr announces that it is time to get ready for lunch, we glance at the clock; it is 11:00. The teacher hands out lunch tickets and calls the children to line up according to the rows of students who are the quietest.

Going down the hall, Mrs. Carr pretends that the seam in the hall flooring is a circus highwire and challenges the group to make believe that they are walking a tightrope. Soon, all eighteen first graders are tiptoeing in a straight line, led by their teacher, down the middle of the hall.

In the cafeteria, while the children move through the lunch line, we prepare ourselves a salad from the staff salad bar. Cindy brings her tray through the line and stops in front of Mrs. Carr who takes the milk off the tray. Cindy is allergic to milk, but cafeteria policy requires that milk be put on each child's tray. Later, the teacher comes to the table and hands Cindy a cup. "I just took your water with me." Cindy and Mrs. Carr smile at each other, and Cindy playfully shakes a finger at her teacher and reprimands, "you bad girl."

Mrs. Carr always eats with her class and sits between different children each day. We are seated with Jim across from Mrs. Carr and Whitney. We learn that Jim's birthday is June 11; he'd like to celebrate by going to McDonald's, his favorite eating place. As Whitney opens her mustard packet, mustard squirts on Mrs. Carr's tray. Both smile and begin to wipe off the mustard. When Whitney's hand accidentally touches her teacher's hand, she

gets more mustard on Mrs. Carr. At this, the teacher pulls her hand back and laughing remarks, "It's dangerous to sit near you."

Mrs. Rose, the principal, comes to the table to tell Mrs. Carr that she has a phone call. We offer to take the class back to the room after lunch. At the end of the lunch period, we supervise the students as they discard trash and return their silverware and trays to the appropriate area.

When everyone is finished, we lead the line of children back down the hall. Once we're in the classroom, we use the time to talk with the children about who we are, and what we'll be doing in their classroom. We share that, although we have taught other grades, being with first graders is a new experience. In fact, they can help us by letting us see school through their eyes.

Soon Mrs. Carr joins us in the room and leaves the lights off to give the children a few minutes to rest before math. Row by row they take turns going to the restroom which is located just around the corner from their classroom. When David, one of the students being mainstreamed in math from special education, comes in, the teacher asks the children sitting near the windows to come and sit on the floor near the overhead projector. Turning the projector on, Mrs. Carr uses some acetate shapes to review squares, cones, triangles, and rectangles.

As the children respond, some of them become loud and interruptive. Mrs. Carr turns off the projector and says calmly, "When you are finished with your talking and playing, I will discuss the shapes. If you are listening, then you can help." When the noise ceases, she flips on the projector switch and

continues with the lesson. She mixes several of the shapes and calls on the group to identify how many of each shape they now see. As the counting begins, so does the debate. As children disagree as to how many triangles they see, Mrs. Carr allows them to come up to the screen to count as they point them out. Vivian is standing beside the teacher and puts her arms around her. Mrs. Carr looks down at Vivian, smiles, and puts an arm around her.

Next, Mrs. Carr instructs the students that when she turns off the projector, she would like for them "to tiptoe back to your seat and find your page." When Scott immediately starts to get up from the floor, Mrs. Carr retorts firmly, "Scott, sit back down!" Turning off the project, the teacher first dismisses those children wearing tennis shoes and then those who are wearing shorts. Finally, Mrs. Carr goes over the directions on the page which asks the children to color each kind of shape a particular color. When they set to work, she walks up and down the rows giving individual help.

Jerry turns around to Jim's desk, and they begin shoving the math book and crayons. Soon Mrs. Carr comes over and kneels between the two boys. Looking at each of them she says, "Keep your hands to yourself. I am tired of seeing you two act like babies." While the teacher is still kneeling, Alice approaches her from behind and leans on Mrs. Carr's shoulder. As soon as Mrs. Carr responds to her question, Alice returns to her desk.

As she checks their math pages, Mrs. Carr encourages individual children to work on their animal booklets while they wait for other students to finish. At 1:30 she gets the class ready to go outside by having them to put their work

away. Mrs. Carr calls the rows of children who have put their desks in order, and soon other students quickly finish getting ready. Twice each week, the class has physical education with Mrs. Kirk, the physical education teacher for grades K-5; today, it is Mrs. Carr's turn.

We follow the line of boys and girls to the playground and watch them race across the field to the swings, merry-go-round, and jungle gym. Several children run back to hand Mrs. Carr their jackets to hold while they play. Standing where she can see everyone, Mrs. Carr allows the children to choose how and what to play. Several students, especially the boys, choose to chase each other. Whitney joins in a chase with Les; Jim and Wayne also like running after each other. Scott walks across the field with a taller friend as they go toward a picnic table.

Mrs. Carr, still holding the jackets, chats with another first grade teacher. They are discussing their surprise and disappointment at the departure of a central office staff member. Although this has not been true for her in other school divisions, Mrs. Carr talks about the sense of loss that she is experiencing since she has learned that two significant administrative leaders are leaving at the end of the year.

At 2:00, Mrs. Carr raises her arm in the air to signal that it is time to stop playing. Gradually, the children begin to wind down and to come to Mrs. Carr for their jackets. As soon as everyone is in line, she leads the group back into the building. The children are still feeling playful and are talking and laughing. While they take turns getting drinks of water from the fountain in the hall, Scott goes after the milk and juice.

Once the group is back in the classroom, Mrs. Carr moves the 16mm projector into place. While Scott distributes the beverages, the teacher explains that while "you're having juice, we'll pretend that you're at the movies." Going to the blackboard, she writes "a-m-p-h-i-b-i-a-n". When someone recognizes the word, Mrs. Carr inquires about the amphibians they have studied. Quickly, they review facts that they have learned about the frog, salamander, and toad. Before starting the film, the teacher allows those who would like to sit at the front on the floor to take their places. When Jerry starts laughing, Mrs. Carr speaks to him. Jerry replies that Mark is making him laugh. In response, Mrs. Carr asserts "Jerry, no one is making you laugh." Then, Jerry gets up and decides that perhaps he should sit in another desk. Mrs. Carr acknowledges his move, "Good idea, Jerry. That's very grown up."

During the film, Mrs. Carr sits in an empty student's desk. Alice comes back and joins her by sitting on the desk top and resting her head on the teacher's shoulder. After the film, Mrs. Carr guides the students in a discussion of what they have seen. The lesson concludes with the discussion of several true/false statements which Mrs. Carr projects on the board with the overhead projector.

After the science lesson, the children clean up their work areas and get their coats to go home. Once everyone is seated, Mrs. Carr shares some highlights from the school newspaper which some of them have purchased for a nickel. She reads poems that have been written by Scott, Wayne, and four other students. She adds that there were other good poems, but not enough room in the paper for all of them.

Next, Mrs. Carr asks, "Who can tell me something they learned today?" Jim volunteers, but has forgotten what he planned to say. Jerry learned about Kathy's salamander; Buddy learned how to write better, and David learned to put words together. Just then the dismissal bell rings, and Mrs. Carr calls for the three quietest rows of students to line up. When only two rows are ready, she closes the door and waits for everyone. Soon order is restored and the children march out in a line to the buses. Mrs. Carr stands smiling at the outer exit and touches each child on the head or shoulder to say good bye.

The students are gone, but the day isn't over. Mrs. Carr returns to the deserted classroom to make preparations for tomorrow.

### Scene Two: Ice Cream and Reflections

As we again make our way down the hall to Joan Carr's classroom, we sense that this is indeed a special time of year. It's June 1, and there is only one more day of school. The walls along the hall are being stripped of their art work and stories as children busily help their teachers to bring the school year to a close.

Reaching Joan's room, we hear children's voices and laughter. The ice cream party is already in progress, and the children are watching a videotape of the "Velveteen Rabbit". A mother at the back table fixes our ice cream and cake, and we sit down in our usual green chair to watch the video. Soon Wayne and another child join us, each perching on a chair arm.

Joan is moving about the room, busily finishing the book that the children have written for Mrs. Rose as a retirement gift. When she learns that Mrs. Rose isn't available to come to the classroom for her surprise, Joan takes the

book, her camera and two girls out of the room with her. Before leaving, she stops the videotape and tells the class what she will be doing.

Finishing our refreshments, we look around the room and think about the ways that we have worked with these students. In addition to our sharing books with them, the children have read their stories to us, we have helped them to find lost items and spell unfamiliar words. Then we think about how they have helped us to understand them and their relationships with the teacher. Glancing about the room, we spot our student informants and remember our previous talks with them. We sat outside on the steps at the exit and talked with each of them about their drawing of themselves with the teacher.

We recall Scott's drawing (See Figure 1) of Mrs. Carr and himself. As Scott shared his picture, he explained:

Well, here's her desk and the chair is supposed to be back behind it. And here's this thing coming out (points to the position of the sliding arm rest). And here's the trash can. And here's me and there's Mrs. Carr, with a dress on. (What's in between the two of you?) My desk. She's at my desk talking to me. (Okay, we'll make believe that Mrs. Carr is at your desk, and she's talking to you. What's she saying?) 'You're doing good work, Scott. Keep it up and stuff like that. She stands at my desk and says, 'Beautiful little boy and you do beautiful work and just try to stay off people.' (Can you give an example of staying off people?) Not do mean things to people. Like going... (Blows rapidly through his lips to create a motor sounding noise) in somebody's ear or making a face or picking on them or hitting them and stuff like that.

(When Mrs. Carr comes to talk to you, how does she talk?) Well, she puts her arm around my head. (Can you think of why she might do that?) Because she likes me. (How do you know that?) Because every time she does that she says, 'you're a bright little boy, Scott.' (What happens to you when she says that?) Well, I start feeling good and, uh, my brain remembers all the times that I



Figure 1 Scott's Drawing

was helping people and spelling a word for them. Like if they were reading, I'd give them a word.

We also remember seeing Wayne with his dark skin, hair and eyes, and listening to him explain his drawing. (See figure 2).

See, we was [sic] writing stories. I need one word and I comed [sic] up her and I said, "Mrs. Carr, I need come," and the teacher wroted that on a piece of paper....And I got two balloons on there and up here, it's got "I love you." (Why did you put that?) 'Cause I love Mrs. Carr'. (Can you talk about ways that you show that you love her?) 'Yeah, you can give her flowers and give her a hug. You can give her a kiss. I gave her a hug two times. A kiss one time.'

On the back it says, "You are nice. You are funny." (Can you tell how she's nice?) She let's me go get stuff for her.... And she does stuff for me too. (What does she do for you?) She helps me make words. She used to help me make stories. Now, I'm real good at it, and she don't [sic] need to help me any more.

(How is Mrs. Carr funny?) She makes mistakes on a piece of paper and we laugh at her, and she laughs too. And she fixes it and puts another wrong word in there and we keep on laughing....

(What are these red things? Point to picture.) They're like diamond earrings I gave her. Something like that. Only, I didn't really gave [sic] them to her....(Why did you put smiles on the faces?) Cause I like to see people happy. I don't like to see them sad and crying.

Turning, we spot Cindy still engrossed in the "Velveteen Rabbit". Mrs. Carr describes her as the shyest child in the class. Although soft-spoken, Cindy talked about her picture. (See Figure 3)

This is Mrs. Carr and this is me. And she gave me a sticker because I did good work....(What are you doing here?) I'm sitting here and acting with other people over here. Mrs. Carr is sitting there looking at them to see if they're doing good work, and she's smiling because they are.

(You wrote that she is pretty? Can you give ways that you see her as being pretty?) She wears pretty clothes. And she looks pretty when she come [sic] to school and I hugged her. And that makes me feel good because she is pretty....And she cares for us. (Can you tell some ways that she cares for you?) Because she says, '

**Stamps**

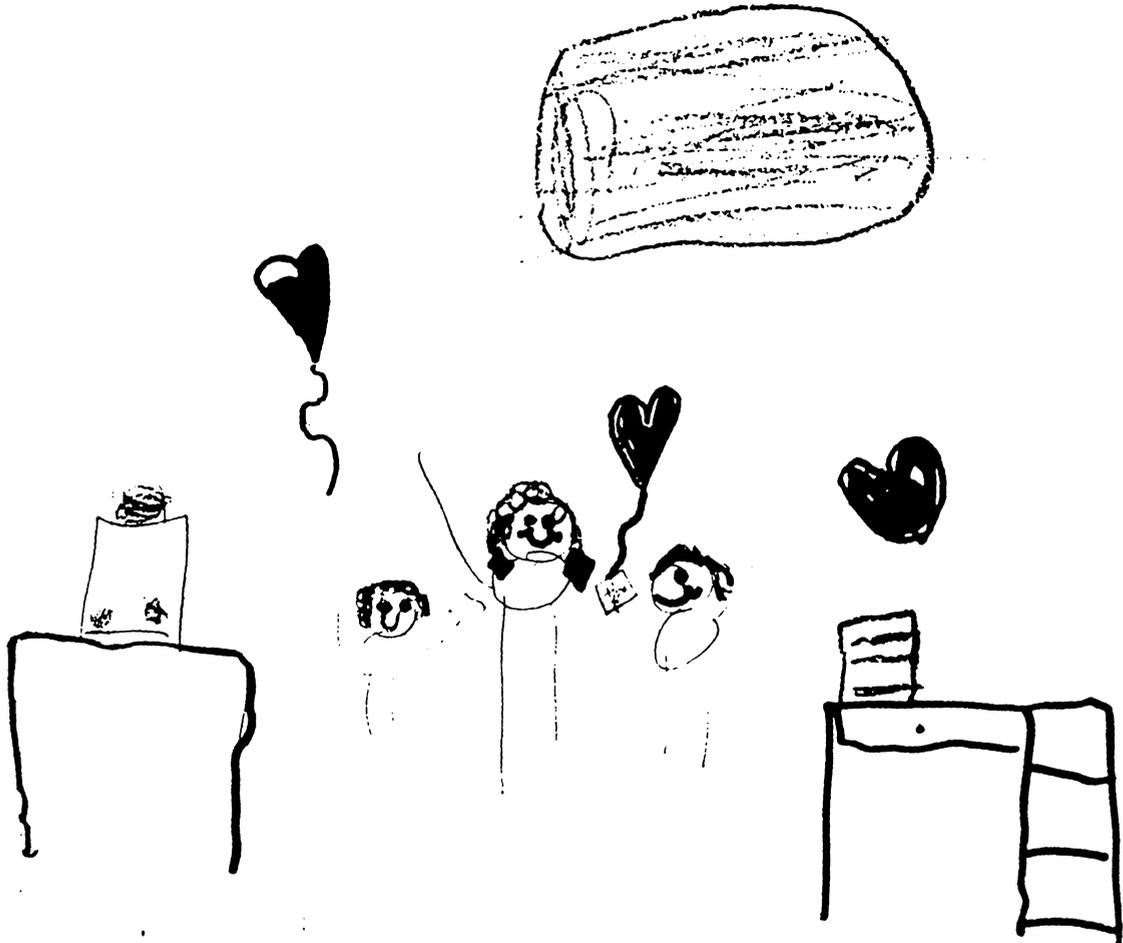


Figure 2 Wayne's Drawing



Figure 3 Cindy's Drawing

you look pretty, too, Cindy. And I say thank you.... She says that she cares for me a lot...

(Would you like to share anything else about your picture?) I think I did good on it....There's one thing I didn't do right. (What's that?) I didn't put no arms. (Have you just noticed that?) Un-huh.

We remember Jim as well and how distraught he was the day that he came to school with a new haircut that he had not wanted. We remember his explanations of his picture. (See Figure 4)

Well, she helps us on things, and she says she loves us. (Has she ever said that to you?) Yes. (what's it like for a first grader to be told that his teacher loves him?) It's not really that bad. All she does is tell you. (What are your thoughts?) It tells me that she cares for us. (Help us understand the word care.) Care means that you care about something or somebody. (How do you show that?) Help them with things. Tell them questions and answers.

(Look at her face. What do you see?) She has black hair on her head. She has brown hair, and she always has a smile. Right here is Mrs. Carr (points to the figure) looking at my paper that I'm doing. And here's me right here, writing on my work. (If that were really Mrs. Carr and this picture could talk, what do you think she'd say to you?) She'd probably be saying "good work". But she couldn't say anything because I had her mouth (drawn) shut. (Pretend) Good work. (What would you think then?) Sometimes I would probably say she cares for me.

Finally, we notice Whitney sitting on top of her desk. She has removed her long sleeve blue blouse and stuffed it inside the desk. Whitney is wearing a peach colored tank top, stone washed jeans, and white high top tennis shoes. On her upper right arm, she has a rabbit sticker tattoo. Remembering how dramatic Whitney can be, we think of her description of her picture (See Figure 5)

Here we're doing lunch money and none of the other kids have gotten in yet. (So it's just you and Mrs. Carr?) Yep. And I'm doing her lunch money, and I've got two roses. (Where did you get the roses?) Well, you see, every day we go down in the trailer park and

Mis (hogs us) and (loves us) and  
tells us togs

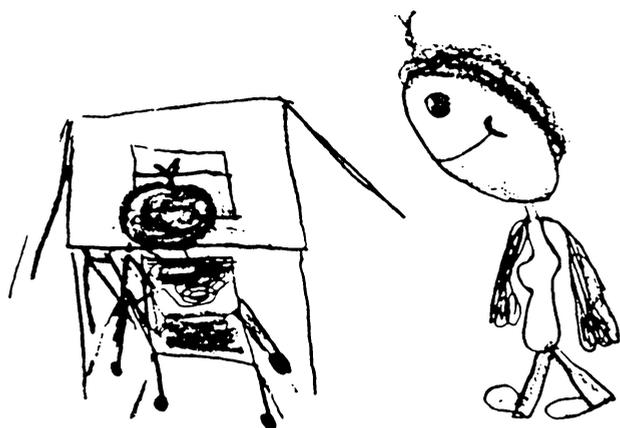


Figure 4 Jim's Drawing

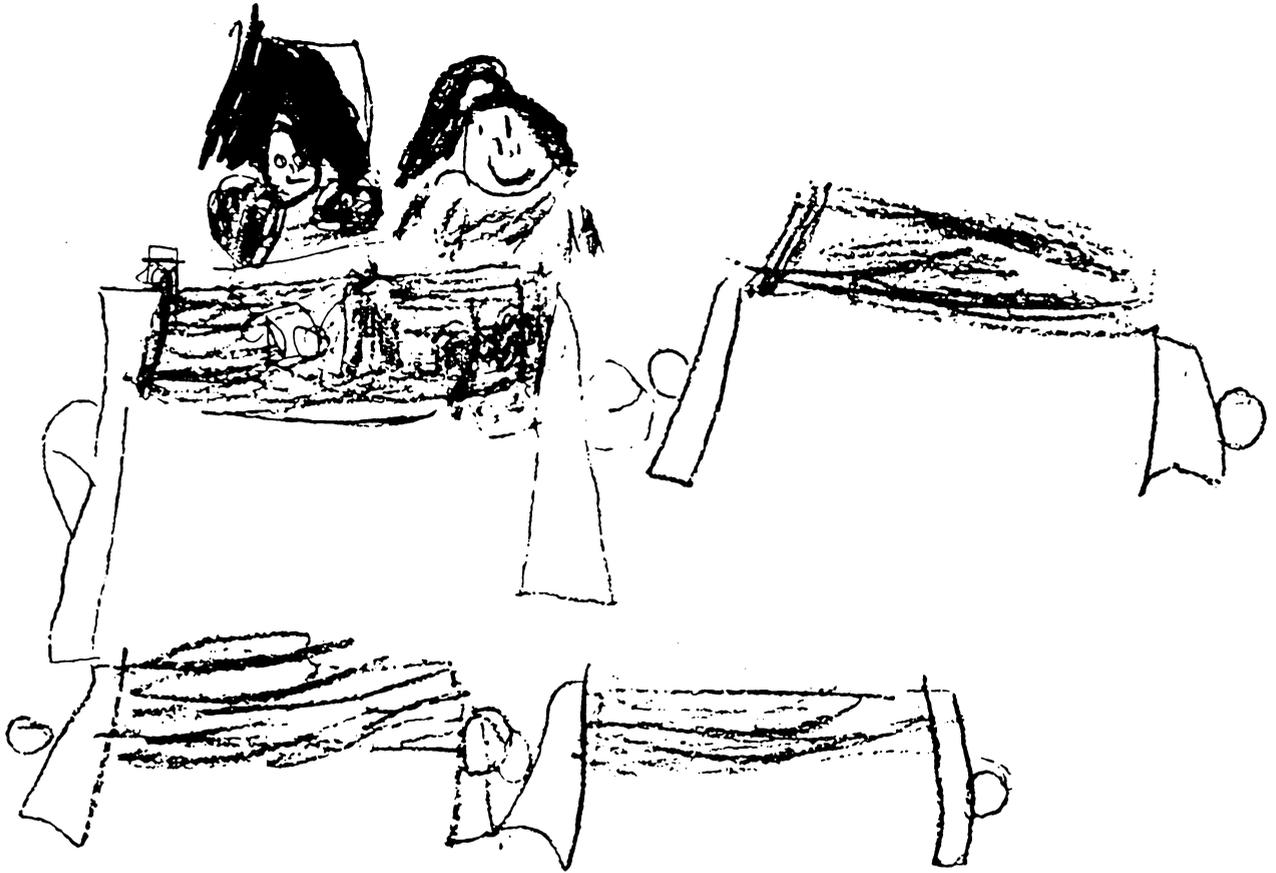


Figure 5 Whitney's Drawing

go in the woods, and we find a lot of roses. (So you brought the roses?) Yes, but I've never really brought any because they've got a whole bunch of poison oak around them. (You drew them there because...) Because, like them because I brung [sic] her yellow daisies. (Could you talk about why you bring flowers?) Well, I brung a lot of them because it was for experiments. And I brung [sic] some for Mrs. Carr's birthday, but she wouldn't tell none of us how old she was.

(On the back you wrote beautiful. In what ways is Mrs. Carr beautiful?) Well, she's got a nice voice, and she's got a whole bunch of pretty dresses that she wears all the time. (How is her voice nice?) Well, she sounds good when she yells too. (Repeat Whitney's statement) Yeah, and my favorite dress that she wears is that blue one. It's got the short sleeves and it's puffy. (What makes her voice sound good when she yells?) She goes ' I don't yell at you, but when you get me mad. You're supposed to be listening, but you don't listen.

Mrs. Carr returns with the two little girls and tells the class how pleased Mrs. Rose was with their gift to her. She will be by later to see them. The class votes on whether to see another videotape or go outside. The majority rules and out they go. As we say good bye, we get requests for hugs. So, rather than delay their going out to play, we stand at the door and give our hugs.

Now the room is empty again. Still thinking about the students' portraits, we remember how Joan Carr described these children during her second conversation with us. Joan shared that Whitney and Jim had moved to the area after the school year began. In the beginning, Whitney had not gotten along well with the other children; she felt that students were picking on her. Whitney had been retained the previous year in the first grade because of absenteeism. Joan described Whitney as "one who has the motherly instinct, has the other children read to her, very independent, very mature." Whitney

arrives at school very early and is often tired during the day. Yet, "she loves to write stories, she is reading beautifully, and she loves to help other people."

When Jim came to Hill Crest School in November, he wasn't reading. His record contained comments about his lack of readiness in reading and writing. Joan talked about working with him individually and how quickly he learns. Joan describes Jim's mother as being "real proud of him." She had sent Joan a note about his report card saying how proud they were of his work.

Finally, we remember the progress that Joan described in Wayne and Cindy. Wayne has been working with the speech pathologist and Joan moved him back a reading group because "we were pushing him too fast and too hard...now he is moving along at a good pace." At the beginning of the year, Cindy was "insecure" and would cry. According to Joan, she "has since gained a lot of security, she feels better about her self...always finishes her work and does a real good job...." Now the children prepare to leave their teacher and the first grade.

Ice cream and reflections. Leaving the quiet first grade room, we walk up the hall and mentally begin to plan our last interview with Joan about her school year.

### Scene Three: Looking Back With Joan Carr

The children have left school for the summer, and today Joan Carr is getting her first grade room in order. When we enter the room, we find Joan busily sorting materials and considering how to store them until next fall. As usual, she greets us with a smile and finds a spot at the reading table for us to sit and to reflect on the school year.

First, we chat with Joan about her weekend. Her son, the oldest of her three children, has just graduated from high school and out-of-town grandparents are visiting. Another family highlight includes having a daughter finish the seventh grade and to receive recognition for winning the Young Author's contest.

This marks the end of Joan's fourth year of teaching first grade at Hill Crest Elementary School. She joined the faculty here after teaching five years in another school division. In spite of feeling tired, Joan is "proud of being a teacher." In fact, she sums it all up "I'm doing this because I love it."

Earlier, Joan told us that originally she had not planned to major in education, but a course in child psychology changed her mind. While doing a case study on a child, she became "fascinated with children and mostly the workings of their minds." Joan doesn't see herself happy doing anything just now "other than working with children....I'm just really excited about what I'm doing."

As Joan talks, she makes frequent references to learning. In addition to loving children, Joan admits "I've always loved to learn." She elaborates:

You know there are so many exiting things in the world, and so many wonderful things our minds can do if our energies are channeled in the right direction.

Joan wants her children to love learning, too. In her words:

It's my goal to make learning exciting for children. To make them want to learn, to make them understand there's so much in the world to learn and how we can grow as a person by learning....I want them to have fun learning.

One dimension of teaching that Joan values is creativity. She defines a good teacher as a creative teacher, and then adds, "I think creativity is the core of education." Joan explains that in her view creativity means taking what one has and making it fit the needs of a class and making it interesting.

In thinking about teaching, Joan indicates that there are two things that she could use. First, she would really like more time. She doesn't want to be a teacher who just stands up and lectures or teaches lessons from textbooks. She would like to have time to put into practice the new things that she learns. "I like to make things and have things for the children to be a part in...I like for them to be a part." The idea of making things leads to Joan's second wish as a teacher. She feels that in order to organize her room more effectively, she needs storage space.

Joan describes herself as an emotional individual who gets personally involved with her children as she works with them. Consequently, she explains:

I feel a real need for the children to feel close to me and secure. I think in order to have a learning atmosphere the children have to be comfortable and feel that I understand and that we understand one another. Before I can work with my children, I need to understand them and I need to know them.

When we ask Joan how she sees herself relating with children, she responds quickly and positively:

I feel good about my relationships with children....I don't look at my children the same way, and I don't expect the same thing from all children.

I don't think that I've ever had a student that I could say that I didn't like. If there was [sic] student who had a personality or characteristics that bothered me, then that was a challenge to me to find out something about that child that I could really like....You know, I just really feel there's a way to reach every child and I don't think you can reach that child unless you are personally attuned to his feelings and what makes him react.

Joan attributes part of her success in working with children to the fact that she elicits the support of parents. She believes that parents are supportive because they know that she really cares about their children. For Joan, working effectively with parents requires a "let's do this together" attitude. A highlight of Joan's career came when she was selected by her teacher colleagues and PTA parents as the school's outstanding teacher.

Since time is a crucial element for Joan, we had asked her to preview at home the videotape of her class before she talked with us. As we sit reviewing the tape with her again, we ask what were her immediate reactions to seeing her classroom in action. After laughing about her surprise at how cleverly some of the children went about eating snacks without her noticing, Joan talks about the movement in her classroom:

...if we had carpet, I don't think I would notice the noise as much....Looking at the tape kind of reinforced the feeling that I have that the children were actually working....I like the idea of their interacting with one another....Cindy went and asked Scott something and Scott was more than glad to help her...I think that's a learning experience for both of them.

The videotape included Joan working both with the whole class and with individual students. Although she recognizes that both whole groups and individual instruction are important, she especially enjoys working with individual students:

I love the mornings for doing that [working individually]. Some days I do reading, and we'll have a writing activity ...and I will work with individuals. I feel so good after those mornings because I feel like I have accomplished more and learned more about these children than I could possibly learn in fifteen reading groups.

But when you sit down with that child, you see what he has written and he reads it back to you. Then you see what concepts he's weak on or what he's strong at...and you can deal with them right then. To me that is the greatest learning tool there is, you know, to first help the child discover his own mistake.

Joan sees all children as being successful. She attributes their successes to several factors. First, Joan believes that feeling secure enables children to take chances and to learn from their mistakes. Secondly, Joan allows the children to see her as a feeling person who makes mistakes, gets angry, but still loves them. According to Joan, "You've got to have that human element. You've got to look at this child as a total person with feelings."

Finally, Joan believes that there is a relationship between caring and learning:

...I don't think a child will learn half as much if he doesn't feel that closeness and care that you really care about him.

..that's why a lot of my children are successful because they really care, and they know I care and we're doing it together.

For Joan, respect in the classroom is an important element. She doubts that it is learned by "being harsh on children or being demanding." Joan describes earning respect as a "whole demeanor" which includes showing respect to children. In order to earn the respect of children, Joan feel she

must "behave in the way I want them to behave. You know, I can't expect anything of my children that I'm not going to do myself."

During previous talks, Joan disclosed: "I want to make a difference in children's lives." Even now she makes a reference to her desire to make a difference in the life of even one child. Turning to Joan, we ask, "Did you make a difference this year?"

As Joan starts to give a response, tears begin to flow freely from her eyes. Mixing laughter with her tears, she says, "How silly." It takes Joan a few minutes to regain her composure and she talks briefly about her own quest for an education. Then, she returns to our question:

I think it's a sin to waste a mind, and I really feel like I made a difference this year with a lot of children. I saw a child like Cindy, who was so shy and withdrawn that everything made her cry. By the end of the year she was just as confident as anybody.

Joan continues to give examples of children with whom she feels she made a difference. There was Les who learned to write legibly and to read beautifully and Buddy, the physically handicapped child, who had made real strides in spite of his disability. For Joan:

It's a challenge to me....those children who have the greatest problems. Those children who are discipline problems are the ones who are a great challenge....

Yes, Joan Carr believes that she has made a difference in the lives of her first graders. In thinking about herself as a teacher, she concludes:

I might get where I want to go, but maybe will never be exactly what I want to be. Because the more I learn, the more I want to do. You know, the more classes I take, the more observing I do, the more things I find out about, the more things I want to do with my children. So, I probably will never reach my ultimate goal. I guess maybe to be a better teacher, I just need to keep growing.

Looking about Joan's room, we see how much work remains to be done. Although report cards are finished, there are still cumulative folders to do. We know Joan is frequently the last teacher to leave the building, and we don't want to delay her further. In fact, we offer to help with some of the clean-up tasks, and although Joan is appreciative, she declines our offer.

As we walk to our car in the almost empty parking lot, we realize that our field experience is over.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **PATTERNS AND EXPRESSIONS OF CARING**

The purpose of this study was to examine two central questions which asked if the classroom were perceived as a caring place, and if so, what were the patterns and expressions of caring? Using the data, the vignettes in Chapter III presented how the classrooms were viewed by the participants. Since the patterns were implicitly communicated in the vignettes, the purpose of this chapter is to discuss each pattern explicitly. The patterns represent major ideas derived from the data.

In labeling the patterns, I chose to use words or phrases which were used by the participants across or within data sources. Deriving in vivo labels was consistent with the theoretical framework of the study. Identifying specific patterns does not imply that they have definite, well-defined boundaries. Since the patterns represent dimensions of human behavior, they are interwoven and interacting.

In each teacher's classroom, there was a general theme which cut across the patterns and provided a holistic view of how caring was operationalized in that particular classroom. The theme and related patterns are discussed separately for each teacher.

## **RICHARD DEATON: WAYS OF BEING THERE**

Looking into Richard's classroom through the vignette in Chapter III allowed us to see how Richard and his students perceived themselves and their interactions. With few exceptions, they saw the classroom as a caring place. Richard worked at "being there" for students and communicated this idea in many ways.

The ways in which Richard was "there" were major ideas recurring across data sources. They were supported by an analysis of the information provided by Richard, key student informants, Mrs. Rose, Ms. England, and the results of the two editions of the Tuckman Rating Scale (Hyman, 1975; Tuckman, 1985).

### Working Hard

One way in which Richard communicated "being there" was by "working hard." As a teacher, Richard saw himself as having definite professional responsibilities; his job was "to teach, to give them more knowledge in a certain area." To do this, Richard took pride in organizing his classroom and in being perceived as demanding by his students. In the views of the principal and the elementary supervisor, Richard was an excellent teacher and a model of organizational skills. The self-ratings and those of the principal and students on the Tuckman Teacher Feedback Form (Hyman, 1975; Tuckman, 1985) confirmed that Richard's teaching demeanor was well organized.

In working hard to "be there" for students, Richard demonstrated a willingness to do more than his job required. He often stayed late after school and was willing to talk with students and parents by telephone in the evenings. The after school pre-algebra the class was an outgrowth of his concern about

students being adequately prepared for algebra next year. Since the program was in its fourth year, it was obvious that the lack of financial compensation did not alter Richard's desire to better prepare students in math.

The fact that Richard worked hard at teaching was supported in my observations and by the conversations that I had with his students. Mindy, who scored a 96 on the final test in the pre-algebra class, commented that Mr. D "puts everything he has into his work." For example, she related that he told the class to call him at home if they had trouble with their homework.

In working hard as a teacher, Richard's style was consistent. From his lectern at the front of the room, he presented material, worked examples at the board, asked students for answers, responded to questions, and gave assignments. When students were involved in written work, he helped them individually at their desks or at one of the computers.

During instructional time with the two seventh grade sections of more than thirty students each, Richard worked to include all students in the interactions related to the lesson. For example, in asking questions or for answers to math problems, he called on each student. He was also comfortable with allowing students to give multiple responses to his questions. Often quieter students joined in, giving answers in unison with other classmates.

Richard's organizational skills were supported in the high ratings he received from his principal, elementary supervisor, and students on the organized demeanor dimension of the Tuckman rating scale. In fact, Ms. England, the elementary supervisor, was the school's principal the first year

that Richard taught. Therefore, her perceptions of Richard covered a seven year period and included seeing him as providing "loving discipline" and as a role model for students in "organizational and study skills."

### Joking Around

Another dimension or pattern of "being there" was "joking around." Richard and his students frequently referred to their "cutting up, picking on each other, and joking around." Their use of humor, however, was more than an attempt at breaking the monotony of school; humor was a way of communicating. For Richard, joking around with students was one way of getting "on their level." In doing this, he did not relinquish his control as a teacher. In fact, the rules for using humor were generated by Richard. He chose when to permit and when to limit playfulness in the classroom.

Rather than appearing shocked or disapproving, Richard chose to be accepting of the silly, sarcastic, and sometimes suggestive expressions of humor. Recalling his own thoughts and feelings when he was a seventh grader, Richard considered students' humor as a natural part of their adolescent development. Although he sometimes ignored students' comments which he viewed as inappropriate, Richard tried not to stifle their expressions of humor. It was important to Richard that he communicate to students that he understood them. Consequently, accepting and using humor was one way to communicate that he understood and cared.

Although "joking around" occasionally occurred during instructional time and elicited laughs from many students, humor was used more often with individuals or small groups of students in informal settings. Frequently, these

incidents were initiated by a small circle of students who felt comfortable in approaching their teacher teasingly. Richard admitted that he joked around more with the students who were closer to him. In fact, he disclosed that Mickey was a favorite student and that he had a "soft spot" for him because of Mickey's ability to use humor.

It was obvious that Richard enjoyed his playful interactions with students. At times, Richard's humor with boys had some elements of slapstick comedy. There were playful exchanges of hitting, chasing, or throwing objects. Once, when Chuck almost fell asleep in class, Richard casually aimed an eraser at Chuck's desk. His shot misfired and the eraser dusted another student lightly on the head which brought laughter from the class members.

The fact that Richard joked around more with boys than girls was recognized by Kim who explained: "He picks on the guys more because girls, most of us, can't take it." As an example, Kim talked about the playful and rough exchanges that occurred during a prison ball game in the gym.

Although Richard was at times teasing and playful, he maintained the respect of students. The principal, Mrs. Rose, believed that this was the "mark of a truly excellent teacher....as he can laugh and joke with them and yet stay in control." Certainly, humor was a contributing factor in Richard's students rating of him as "bubbly", "lively," and "modern" on the Tuckman rating scale (Tuckman, 1985).

### Being Friends

The third pattern of caring in Richard's classroom was "being friends." Richard enjoyed teaching, but he valued his one to one relationships with students. Associating with students was important to Richard, in fact, he commented, "I consider myself a friend. They need that at this age, especially." Establishing good communication meant that he and the students could "pick at each other and....talk with each other when they need someone to talk with." Thus, humor and friendship were interrelated and interactive.

According to Mrs. Rose, the principal, Richard's ability to establish close relationships with students was one of his major strengths. Neither Richard nor Mrs. Rose could articulate why or how friendship was so important to him; but, they recognized that he was both a teacher and a friend to his students.

Student informants referred to Richard as a friend. In fact, Dee, Sam, Mickey, and Kim talked about Richard as seeming more like a friend than a teacher. Central to their feeling of friendship was the fact that they felt Richard recognized and understood their problems as adolescents. The students felt that they were allowed to incorporate their personal lives into their school lives. Richard did not expect them to leave their need for attention, their playful actions, their interests in the opposite sex, or their problems outside of the classroom door. "Being friends" signified that he understood and accepted them.

The perception that Richard was accepting of students was supported by the ratings that students gave him on the Tuckman Teacher Feedback Form (Tuckman, 1985). On the semantic differential, twenty-seven students rated

Richard as very accepting, twenty-two rated him as somewhat or slightly accepting, and four students felt that he was critical. Seven other students indicated that he was equally positioned between being accepting and being critical.

### Problem Solving

Another dimension of caring was "problem solving." One purpose of the Quest program was to help students to develop problem solving skills.

Richard enjoyed this aspect of teaching and believed that helping students with problems was necessary if students were to learn:

Their minds are going to stay on their problem until they find some resolve or way of working it out. So, I think it [problem solving] is almost as important because if you don't get them in the right frame of mind, they aren't going to achieve as much academically.

According to Richard, the most frequent problems involved boyfriend/girlfriend relationships, and he did not discount their importance to the students. At times students came to Richard with problems which involved their families. Often these problems involved divorce, step parents, or single parents. Richard viewed his role as listener and asker of questions to help students consider possible solutions. Sometimes he was a "sympathizer" who said "I'm sorry." Richard's emphatic understanding of the students' lives meant that he shared their hurt. Twice when he talked with us about students, his voice broke and his eyes brimmed with tears.

The use of humor and of being viewed as a friend seemed to foster feelings of rapport and trust which were important factors in solving problems. This is illustrated by Mickey, "I can trust Mr. D. will help me out with my

problems....He's sorta' like a father figure to me, I reckon. I can talk to him and tell him things I wouldn't tell other people." Other students used the term "father figure" in describing how they viewed Richard's relationships with them.

One explanation for students' willingness to seek Richard's help with problems was that he listened and was accepting. The principal and supervisor each described Richard as accepting and nonjudgemental with students. Mrs. Rose provided examples of Richard's working with students to solve problems:

He also has the ability of not being judgemental with the children and that really comes out in the Quest program....he has a way of being able to throw questions back at them....he gives the opportunity [for students] to talk and interact with each other. He is there, and he is interacting through his questions.

### Being Available

The final pattern of caring in Richard's classroom was illustrated in his movement outside of class. In the morning and between class, he often moved about in the hall as a way of "being available" to students who wanted to come to him. Sometimes these were students who were not a part of the "joking around" or "friends" patterns. For example, there was the girl who approached him crying because a friend accused her of breaking a figurine. When Richard went with her to investigate the problem, the girl's arm encircled his waist. Richard responded by placing his arm on her shoulder as they turned to go to the other seventh grade classroom. Since this student was in the learning disabilities resource classroom for a major part of the

school day, her connection with Richard was primarily through his pattern of "being available."

Richard also went to the cafeteria in the mornings when students were having breakfast. Although he also talked with students who interacted with him frequently, being available outside of the classroom was primarily to allow students who were shy or more private to talk with him or to seek his help.

For Richard, being available involved listening, maintaining eye contact, and understanding. Richard was also receptive to physical contact as he felt that some students needed touching. For a student feeling hurt or dealing with a problem, Richard listened and sometimes put his arm around the student's shoulder. When progress was made or good news was shared, there was occasionally a hug or a pat on the back. For Richard, touching communicated caring. However, he used discretion, particularly with female students, to avoid miscommunicating his intentions.

In wanting to "be there" for students, Richard communicated that idea in several ways. He worked hard to help students learn, and he used humor to break the monotony and to help the students perceive him as being on their level. Richard considered himself a friend to students; he wanted to be involved in their lives and to assist them with problems. Finally, outside of the classroom, he made himself available to students who might want or need to talk with him.

The question of how inclusive the patterns of caring were in Richard's classroom bears consideration. For example, the patterns most accessible to all students were "working hard" and "being available." Richard genuinely

wanted the students in his classroom to learn and to feel able to come to him with their problems although not all students were willing to do so. Initially Ann felt "unwanted" in his classroom, and she attributed that to Richard's attitude. Later, as the year progressed, the teacher-student relationship changed and Ann came to view Richard as one of her favorite teachers. There was at least one student, however, who remained isolated or at least on the periphery of these two patterns of caring. Bobby knew that he was not one of Richard's "favorite people" and even Richard acknowledged that he had not talked to Bobby individually and had decided not to let the problem "bother him."

Another pattern which was accessible, but engaged in by fewer students was "problem solving." Only a small circle of students frequently sought Richard's help by sharing confidences or problems. In many cases, these were students who also interacted with Richard by teasing or joking. The vast majority of students did not take the initiative.

There were two patterns in which a small number of students regularly engaged in interactions with Richard. These patterns were "joking around" and "being friends." In fact, those students who engaged in joking around with Richard seemed to feel a bond with him which they described as friendship. The use of humor made Richard seem more like one of them and more accessible and approachable. For example, Dee was quiet and shy, but she viewed Richard as: "He's just like us. He's still a kid on the inside, but on the outside he's just a teacher who is worried about whether you're going to learn all this stuff or fail."

In considering the patterns of caring, we need to recognize that the interactions within patterns sometimes were perceived differently by the student and by the teacher. Richard recommended that I include Ray and Ann in the study as he felt that he was not as accepting of them as he was with other students. Although this was true from Richard's perspective, Ray and Ann felt cared for and accepted by Richard. Perhaps the fact that neither of these students were chosen by their classmates for any of the three activities on the sociometric questionnaire contributed to their feeling cared for by Richard. Another explanation is that the use of humor in this classroom facilitated feelings of warmth and acceptance.

Another example of the different interpretations by the teacher and student was highlighted by a letter that Richard received from a former student. Although Richard felt that their relationship was a caring one, the student wrote of the hurt that she felt because Richard had made a remark which she construed as a comparison to an older and brighter sister. As Richard struggled to understand the girl's letter, he went back to his school yearbook and read what this student had written to him as a seventh grader. Richard summarized her thoughts as "You've been a great teacher. I've really enjoyed being in your class." Hearing what happened in this relationship suggested that caring relationships can be fragile and that miscommunication can alter perceptions and responses.

According to the data, Richard strove to be caring, but his caring was neither easy nor perfect. He felt depressed when students did not reciprocate in ways that he expected. He felt hurt when he saw them hurting. He could

not, and did not, care equally for all the students in his classroom. Richard's caring had those human qualities that made his caring less than perfect. Yet, the data suggest that Richard did strive to "be there" for his students and to be caring. In fact, he confessed, "It's just a need inside me, I guess, that I want to be cared for and I'd like to care for them."

The five patterns which I have described were major ideas recurring across data sources. They were supported by an analysis of the information provided by Richard, key student informants, Mrs. Rose, Ms. England, and the results of the two editions of the Tuckman Teacher Feedback Form (Tuckman, 1985). (Table 3 provides exemplars for each of the patterns according to the data sources.)

### **JOAN CARR: DOING IT TOGETHER**

The vignette in Chapter 3 depicts Joan's classroom as a caring place. Corroborative data from the principal, supervisor, and parent volunteer suggest that the descriptions of Joan and her interactions with children are consistent with their observations of her over the last four years. Neither Ms. England nor Mrs. Rose could ever recall seeing or hearing her express negative attitudes toward children. In fact, Ms. England referred to Joan's room as a "caring, positive environment." According to Mrs. Blair, the weekly volunteer, "Joan's classroom develops into a family..." Additionally, responses on the Tuckman Teacher Feedback Form (Tuckman, 1985) supported the view of Joan's classroom as a caring place for students.

In Joan's classroom, as in Richard's, there was a theme which cut across the patterns of caring and depicted a holistic view of the interactions between Joan and her students. The activities in this classroom centered around the theme of "doing it together." Within this thematic framework, particular patterns are evident.

### Loving to Learn

In doing things together, Joan worked with students in ways which reflected her beliefs about herself, her teaching and her children. First Joan viewed herself as a learner; she was also perceived as a learner by Mrs. Rose and Ms. England. In fact Joan spoke of three loves: "I love to learn....I truly love children...I love teaching."

Next, Joan's beliefs about learning shaped how she approached teaching and how she interacted with children. Joan described her teaching goals:

It's my goal to make learning exciting for children....I not only want them to learn, I want them to have fun learning.

My primary goal is to make children want to learn; not just to teach them math or reading, but to get them excited about learning. I think the only way to get children excited about learning is to get excited yourself.

In her efforts to help children love learning, Joan first wanted to help them feel secure and to feel special in some way. Further, Joan wanted children to have an active part in the classroom. Although Joan used whole group, small group and individual instruction, she worked to involve children as active participants. In describing what they would expect to see in Joan's classroom, both Mrs. Rose and Ms. England noted that they would expect to see children actively engaged in a variety of activities. According to Ms. England, "I see

self-worth, positive self-image and very strong readers and writers....every one of those children thinks of himself/herself as a writer and a reader.”

In the classroom, there was evidence that children felt good about themselves as readers and writers. Frequently, they sought me out to ask if they could read their library books or stories which they had written to me. Wayne expressed confidence when he revealed, “She [Mrs. Carr] used to help me with stories. Now I’m real good at it....” Wayne and six of his classmates had their poems published in the April edition of the school newspaper, and Wayne beamed when Mrs. Carr read his poem to the class:

I like the puffy clouds.  
I like the flowers.  
I like Sunday.  
I like Friday.  
But best of all, I like happy people. (Wayne)

Joan read the other six poems and noted that only a few of their poems could be published because of the newspaper’s limited space. Joan added that she wished there had been room to use all of their poems as she felt that they were all quite good.

Another observation was made by Mrs. Blair, the parent volunteer, who commented, “She keeps children interested in things; she has an excellent ability to change.” Change was important to Joan. She believed that children need to learn to be flexible and she allowed them to make choices. The children could choose to work somewhere other than at their desks, they could decide when to go to the restroom or to get water, and they could move about, talking and helping each other.

Joan voiced her rationale for wanting change to be a part of her classroom: "I want my children to learn to be flexible. I don't want them to think there is only one way to do something." Being flexible meant being able to make mistakes. Joan sometimes playfully allowed children to "catch her" in mistakes as she wrote on the board. In doing this, she complimented students for being so observant and acknowledged that everyone makes mistakes. Along with wanting children to feel secure and to be flexible, Joan wanted them to be "willing to take chances and willing to try something new."

Joan frequently talked of being "fascinated with the mind" and of her respect for learning. She included former professors, colleagues, and her students in those conversations. For example, Joan reflected:

I admire them [learned people] so much, and this little fellow, Les, impresses me as somebody who's going to be that way one of these days. He has a memory you won't believe. He knows so much already for a young mind; and you know, he can retain it.

Joan saw all eighteen students as learners. In fact, she mused:

I always hope that when my children leave here [the classroom], that they leave with those attitudes. Those attitudes of pride and caring and of wanting to do their best and loving to learn.

### Getting Close

The second pattern, "getting close" was expressed in different ways. First, Joan wanted the children to feel close to her as she believed that it built security and encouraged children to take risks. Joan was a nurturing teacher, and saw nurturance as a part of the process of teaching the "whole child." Mrs. Blair expressed her view of Joan as "I see her relating to the children with a big heart and a lot of feeling...a touching, feeling person."

As a touching, feeling person Joan used physical closeness with children. They were very comfortable in standing close to their teacher, hugging her or sitting in her lap. The children frequently initiated these contacts. All eighteen children were recipients of Joan's touching. Sometimes she simply patted a back or put an arm around a child who was reading to her. There were occasions when she took a child's face in her hands as she looked at, or talked with, him or her. Touching in this classroom had maternal overtones and was a contributing factor in helping the children to feel secure.

In addition to touching children, Joan also became close to them in other ways. When working with individual children, she either sat in a student chair or squatted to be on eye level with that child. Joan explained this by saying that she felt that it could be "intimidating" to children to have someone always towering above them. As she approached a child at eye level, she also maintained eye contact and seemed engrossed in their conversation. Often she was not distracted by other children waiting for her or by visitors coming into the room.

Frequently, a child would slide onto Joan's lap as she worked with another child. Without being distracted from her work, Joan subtly responded by placing her hand on the child or shifting her legs so that the child could sit more comfortably. Joan believed that children learned from listening to each other's questions about their work. Therefore, she was comfortable in letting three or four students gather around her as she worked with a student. The students stood watching and listening but usually did not interrupt. Once Mrs. Rose came into the room and chatted with a child who was watering a plant.

Mrs. Rose raised questions about the plant's growth and several moments passed before Joan realized that the principal was in the classroom.

Listening to Joan's explanation of why she moved and worked with children in certain ways provides a clearer explanation of why getting close was important in her classroom:

You know I'm at their level [eye level] and then we can talk and work on this thing together. That just works beautifully for me. That way I move around from place to place and they'll crowd around me. Sometimes when we have movies or whatever, I'll sit with them or they'll come and sit on my lap. And that's fine with me....I want them to feel like we share this, we can do this together....I want them to respect me and know what I expect of them, but I don't want them to feel like I'm some strange inhuman creature.... I want them to know that I have feelings too, and I understand how they feel....

### Being Positive

One way that Joan established feelings of closeness with children was by "being positive." This pattern of caring was particularly evident in the feedback that Joan gave to children. In responding to children, Joan chose to recognize the positive aspects of children's work and behavior. According to Joan, being positive simply worked well for her and allowed her to accomplish more with children.

In being positive, Joan modeled the behaviors that she expected of the children in her classroom. In other words, "I behave the way I want them to behave." In addition to positive verbal feedback on their work, children also were recognized for being considerate or helpful to others. Although there were times when Joan honestly acknowledged, "I'm starting to get a little irritated," she followed with a "thank you" or "I knew you could do it."

There were rare incidents in which Joan was less positive. For example, when Jim and Jerry were shoving items on Jim's desk, Joan observed "I'm tired of seeing you two act like babies." Still she attributed their misbehavior to their actions and did not label the boys as babies. Interestingly, Jim's explanation was that they were not acting like babies; they were "fighting."

Being positive was a part of helping children to grow in confidence and to feel good about themselves. Wayne approached Joan with "Mrs. Carr, I tried and tried and I can't do it." Later that morning, Joan reminded the class that she had heard that bad word [can't] several times. Several students echoed with "I'll try." To this Joan smiled and responded, "I like that word better."

In preparing students to write a story, Joan frequently engaged students in brainstorming sessions. During one of these sessions, Joan responded, "I'm hearing new ideas. That's what's so wonderful about those marvelous brains you have. Lots of you have different ideas." Joan provided time for all the students to give responses and maintained eye contact with each child as he/she shared an idea.

In talking about her observations of Joan, Ms. England, the elementary supervisor noted that Joan had "patience galore." She described a highlight of Joan's teaching:

I think she promotes a positive self image, and I think those children leave her room feeling good about their accomplishments....It's not false praise that she gives; it is genuine praise.

A similar observation was made by Mrs. Rose, who saw Joan's interactions with children as, "Beautiful. The best way I can describe it is it's fantastic. The way she moves so smoothly through the classroom and all of her interactions always have a positive note to them."

### Helping Each Other

The interaction patterns in Joan's classroom led to a pattern of "helping each other." This pattern evolved from Joan's modeling and her belief that children learned from each other. Working individually with children was one way that Joan modeled helping. She also recognized children's helping behaviors with each other and with her; she described the behavior and voiced her appreciation.

One way that Joan encouraged helping was by allowing children to be responsible for classroom jobs. The Teddy Bear bulletin board designated Bear helpers for a variety of tasks, and every child participated. Providing this responsibility meant that sometimes the plants were overwatered or that water was spilled on the floor. Many of the children, however, saw themselves as helpers and as recipients of the teacher's help. The word "help" was used frequently as the key informants talked about their drawings of themselves and Mrs. Carr.

The children also helped each other. Often they read their stories or books to one another. Sometimes they answered questions about an assignment. At times, they attempted more serious helping tasks such as wiggling a loose tooth. Cindy approached that particular task with the

expertise that led her to wrap her fingers in a tissue before putting them in her classmate's mouth.

Although Joan observed silently, she monitored the helping activities of children and intervened if they became too playful or distracting. Encouraging children to help one another was a part of Joan's instruction:

...I think a part of education is learning to understand one another and learning to care about one another. I don't think education is just academic....I always hope that when my children leave here that they leave with those attitudes. Those attitudes of pride and caring and wanting to do their best and loving to learn.

### Making a Difference

Ultimately, Joan wanted to make a difference in the lives of her children. In addition to her fascination with the working of a child's mind and her belief in teaching the "whole child," Joan talked about wanting to "make a difference" in the lives of her first graders.

In order to make a difference, Joan worked in several ways. First, she wanted to know and to understand each child. Secondly, she regarded children with special problems as a challenge and made conscious efforts to find something about those children that she could like. A third way that Joan worked to make a difference was to recognize and to praise progress. Joan did not feel that she could have the same expectations for all children. Therefore, she measured progress in terms of a child's growth as an individual rather than by how well he/she performed in comparison to his/her classmates.

Another way that Joan worked to make a difference in the lives of children was by eliciting the help and support of parents. On several occasions parents or grandparents came into the room and Joan acknowledged them warmly and positively. She also sent interim progress reports home during each six weeks. In these notes she communicated areas of progress and ways in which children could improve. Joan saw parents as her allies in helping their children to learn.

Parents or grandparents seemed to feel comfortable in coming into the room to pick up a child or to retrieve a forgotten lunch box or jacket. Joan met them with a smile and greeted them warmly. When Bill's grandmother came at the end of the day to take Bill home, Joan did not see her enter the room. On seeing her standing at Bill's desk, Joan went over to Mrs. Drake and said warmly, "I didn't see you. I wanted to send you a thank you note. You were so much help last week." As the grandmother smiled, she and Joan encircled their arms around each other's waist.

Joan not only wanted to make a difference; she believed that she did. She saw herself as accepting and loving of each child. Other data supported Joan's belief. Her principal felt that a child who had been in Joan's classroom was "truly a lucky child." Joan's acceptance of children with problems was confirmed by Ms. England; in her interview, the supervisor referred to a child in Joan's room one year who had been extremely difficult to handle. In her view, Joan had "patience galore" with him. Mrs. Blair, the parent volunteer, felt that Joan had a special ability to diagnose problems in children and to respond to them appropriately.

In discussing what she liked about teaching with Joan, she replied, "The challenge and satisfaction that I get from seeing a child grow. I don't think there's anything more exciting than to see the light [a confused child understanding a task]."

Joan, Mrs. Rose, and Mrs. Blair expressed a common concern about the time that Joan invested in her teaching. In addition to having strong commitments to teaching, Joan also had strong commitments to her family; there were times when she felt that she needed to give less time to teaching and more to her family.

Joan's commitment to teaching was visibly evident. First, she was very student focused. When she arrived in the mornings she went directly to her classroom and she remained with her children throughout the school day. There were no visits to the teachers' lounge or lunches at the teachers' table in the cafeteria. Joan used the lunch period to sit with children and learn more about them individually. After school, Joan remained in her room to check students' work and prepare for the next school day. Although she received colleagues warmly and chatted with them, I did not see Joan visiting other teachers in their classrooms either before or after school.

In her demeanor, Joan was quiet and poised. She seldom initiated interactions with her colleagues or with me. Although she was always warm and receptive with her peers, Joan's enthusiasm seemed to emerge when she worked with children. Her feelings became evident in her facial expressions, verbalizations, and body language as she engaged with students. When Joan listened to a child, she appeared absorbed in what the child was saying; it was

as if Joan were totally with him/her and no one else. Although there were many ways in which Joan worked to help students develop positive self images, her most powerful efforts may have been in the way that she was able to receive and respond to children as individuals.

The descriptions of the patterns of caring confirm the energy that Joan devoted to her classroom in the process of "doing it together." She wanted to make learning exciting, to get close to her children, to be positive, to see children help each other, and to make a difference in their lives. However, none of these was easy. In fact, Joan confessed:

You know sometimes I get to the point, especially when I'm tired or I haven't been feeling well, when I keep thinking why am I doing this. I am so tired, you know. I don't know why I'm doing this and then something will happen. You know, even talking with you [the researcher] gets me excited....or having a student teacher or the principal may say something to me that gets me all excited again. And then I realize that I'm doing this because I love it. Because, it's a challenge!

### Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to depict the patterns of caring explicitly which were derived from the data. In each classroom, the teachers, students, and interactions were very different. The patterns and expressions of caring reflected the personalities, goals and needs of the participants.

The story of each classroom is like a tapestry into which teacher-student interactions are woven each year. Like threads, the participants vary in size, color, and texture. The meanings of teacher-student interactions are the patterns created by the interwoven threads. On each of the classroom

tapestries, the patterns bear similarities and yet provide clear, recognizable differences.

Examining each tapestry more closely, we notice that the threads are woven differently. Some threads are interwoven tightly, while others connect loosely or hardly seem to connect at all. Even closer examination reveals that as in any hand woven fabric, there are slubs or imperfections. The two teachers, Richard Deaton and Joan Carr, strive to be caring and respond to being cared for by their students and colleagues. As in all human endeavors, and especially in human relationships, however, perfection is an unattainable goal.

## CHAPTER V

### FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

In the previous chapters, I have described the purpose of the study, its methodology, and what I learned about caring from the interactions of the teachers and their students in a seventh and first grade classroom. In this chapter, I will examine the findings by presenting four tenable hypotheses. I will also relate the findings of the study to descriptions of caring in the literature and raise unanswered questions which have implications for research and practice.

#### Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1: In caring relationships teachers not only talk about caring for students, they act to communicate caring through their verbal and nonverbal behaviors.**

As Richard and Joan talked about their work, caring emerged as an integral part of the way they perceived their work and their relationships with students. In addition to talking about caring, both teachers acted in ways to communicate their thoughts and feelings to students.

First, Richard and Joan told students that they cared about them. In Richard's case, he typically conveyed his caring when a student was sharing a problem. Frequently, his expressions of caring were made individually and privately. When students shared home situations which were hurtful, Richard listened and responded. For example, one student cried when he talked with Richard about his responsibilities at home with a physically ill single parent.

In that case, Richard conveyed that he "was sorry that his home situation was making him that upset." He added, "I think I got it across to him that I do care about him.

Richard also communicated his caring by praising students. When he later discovered that the boy who cried had a "beautiful voice," Richard told him how well he sang and asked the student to help with practicing the music for the Awards Assembly. In another instance, Mindy made a 96 on the final pre-algebra test. Richard talked with her in the hall and told her that his helping just one student had made all of his after school efforts in the class worthwhile. Then, he encouraged her to continue in her achievements.

As Joan talked with first graders, she publicly stated that she cared about them. Both Joan and her children talked about loving and being loved. As Joan confided, "I tell them [the children] I love them....and I care about what they do." The children received positive feedback both as a group and individually for their work, behaviors, and willingness to help each other.

In working with first graders, Joan acted caringly in the things that she did for the children. She smilingly replaced loose hair ribbons, helped fasten trousers, looked at pulled teeth, noticed new outfits, and comforted hurt or sad children. In the cafeteria, Joan opened catsup packets and milk cartons, cut up pieces of meat, and helped to clean up splatters and spills. Whenever Joan engaged with children, she frequently knelt or bent down in order to be at eye level with them and to avoid appearing intimidating because of her height.

Another way in which Richard and Joan communicated caring to their students was in physical contact. Both teachers felt comfortable with touching

students by placing a hand on their heads, arms, or shoulders. Frequently, they did so in response to students making physical contact with them. Each teacher believed that touching communicated caring, and that some students needed this contact more than others. At times, the teachers' physical contact with students was playful and in jest. On other occasions, a hand or arm reached out to comfort or to reassure.

Richard and Joan sought ways to help their students solve problems. Both teachers saw problem solving as a part of their teaching role and as a way of helping students to be able to focus their thoughts on school tasks. Frequently, Richard and Joan expressed concern for students' well-being; they communicated their caring by being available, listening, and offering their understanding and/or help.

Finally, Richard and Joan communicated caring for students in the ways that they went about their work. As teachers, they were concerned about student learning and they worked to make the school day profitable for students. Richard and Joan were willing to extend their working day to plan activities for students or to check work. Richard provided an after school class to help students with pre-algebra. He and Mrs. Gilley planned field trips, programs, and outings to add to students' school experiences.

Using activities to involve students required that Joan do after-school planning often until late in the evening. On occasion, Joan returned to school late at night to finish tasks which she had not had time to do.

Mrs. Rose and Ms. England referred to the time and energy which Richard and Joan invested in their teaching. They saw both teachers as

establishing strong interpersonal relationships with students and as providing loving discipline within their classrooms. Richard and Joan talked about caring and their students, principal and supervisor perceived them as communicating such caring in both their verbal and nonverbal behaviors.

**Hypothesis 2: The use of humor in the classroom facilitates caring relationships between teachers and students.**

Humor was an important factor in each of these classrooms and contributed to students perceiving the teacher as caring and accepting of them as individuals. With the seventh graders, humor was characterized in a variety of ways. There was subtle teasing to which some students added suggestive overtones characteristic of their adolescent age. At other times, the teasing was playful and shared with the entire class. For example, when Chuck mispronounced parallel as "parawell," Richard continued the geometry lesson, making playful references to "parawell."

On some occasions, Richard enjoyed playing pranks on students. When he took Mickey to the principal's office to share a joke Mickey had told in class, the outcome wasn't as Richard anticipated. Mrs. Rose knew the answer to the riddle and responded by saying she saw nothing wrong with it. Mickey relished seeing Richard's prank backfire. Another example of Richard's use of pranks came when he played a few bars of the "Bridal March" for a female student during an Awards Assembly practice.

Before and after school, as well as during physical education, the humor was sometimes expressed in loud, playful, aggressive actions. This was

particularly true between male students and Richard as they played prison ball. The students were comfortable with playfully making physical contact with Richard, such as slapping him on the shoulder.

Richard believed that his use of humor was a factor in students perceiving him as a friend and as someone who understood them. Although there was evidence that the use of humor contributed to the overall view of warmth and acceptance in this classroom, there was also evidence that humor was shared more extensively with those students with whom Richard felt close through the course of their interactions.

In Joan's first grade classroom, humor was integrated into the teaching-learning processes. Joan's children perceived her as a nurturing, maternal figure who used humor gently to show children that she, too, made mistakes. Consequently, Joan deliberately made errors on the blackboard and allowed children to catch her. As they laughed, Joan reinforced the idea that making mistakes was part of being human. When a student pointed out that Joan failed to use a capital letter to begin a sentence, Joan laughed and commented, "Picky, picky. Just like a teacher."

With first graders, the use of humor contributed to helping them feel secure and comfortable in the classroom. An example of how humor helped with those feelings was when Cindy, the shyest child in class, felt comfortable teasing her teacher. When Joan forgot and kept Cindy's cup of water on her tray, Joan came to the table and handed the water to Cindy saying, "I just took your water with me." Although shy, Cindy playfully shook her finger at Joan and retorted, "You bad girl."

Joan saw her first graders learning how and when to laugh. She wanted them to recognize the difference in laughing with people and in laughing at someone. In her use of humor, Joan was modeling appropriate ways for children to use humor in the classroom and with each other. In allowing the children to discover the teacher's mistakes and to laugh with her, Joan encouraged the children to see her as human and as accepting of their mistakes.

Humor in Richard's and Joan's classrooms was used and understood in different ways. In both classrooms, however, humor facilitated the development of caring relationships between the teachers and students.

**Hypothesis 3: Perceiving the teacher as one who cares for them increases students' feelings of connectedness with their learning and school.**

Interviews with student informants shared a central theme. Perceiving the teacher as caring about them enhanced students' feelings of belonging and feeling of connectedness with learning in the context of the classroom. In Richard Deaton's classroom, seventh grade informants frequently made references to Richard's part in helping them to understand their work. The students also talked positively about school. The exception was Bobby, an outsider in Richard's classroom. Both teacher and student were aware that their relationship was not positive. In fact, Bobby was the only student who said, "I'm not that good in school." However, there were contradictory feelings because Bobby also described himself as liking to do "hard things and to figure things out." When I asked Bobby what he looked forward to the next

year, he replied, "High school and getting out of here." Bobby was athletic and well liked by his classmates, especially the girls. Yet, there was evidence that he felt alienated in Richard's classroom. In contrast, Ray was ostracized by his peers, but felt accepted and connected with his teacher. Although he seldom did his work in Mrs. Gilley's classroom, Ray made passing grades in Richard's math and science classes.

Richard's rating on the Tuckman (Tuckman, 1985), supported the concept that administrators and a vast majority of his seventh graders viewed warmth and acceptance as a dimension of his teaching style. Additionally, student informants in the study articulated that feeling accepted and understood by their teacher helped them to feel positively about their work and school.

Helping first graders verbalize their perceptions of their relationships with the teacher was more difficult. Initially, their verbalizations focused on Mrs. Carr being "pretty and nice." However, when they drew themselves with their teacher and talked about what they were doing in the picture, the students began to talk about helping, learning, and receiving praise. Soon evidence of positive feelings about school, their teacher and themselves emerged. Sam's explanations of his feelings when he was praised by Joan illustrate what appeared to happen:

Well, I start to feel good...and my brain remembers all those times that I was helping people and spelling a word for them...

Whitney was able to contrast her views of school. The year before Whitney had been retained as a first grader in another school. According to Whitney "those teachers had really put it on me." In clarifying what this meant,

Whitney explained that the teachers had tried to change her from being a left-handed writer to a right-handed one. As she talked about that year, her tone was sharp and bitter.

Whitney demonstrated her feelings of connectedness when she role-modeled her teacher on a videotape. In my instructions, I simply asked Whitney to pretend that she was Mrs. Carr teaching a lesson. With this in mind, Whitney serendipitously taught a creative writing lesson which incorporated instructions on manuscript writing, solving a verbal math problem on bees, and writing a story about bees which had a beginning, a middle and an end. When the teacher viewed Whitney role-playing, she saw Whitney as imitating many of her teacher behaviors, such as speaking plainly, giving examples, and trying to get students to think of ideas.

On several occasions Joan shared her feelings about Whitney and how pleased she was with Whitney's progress. She described Whitney as a child with "street knowledge" which exceeded her chronological age. Whitney's grandfather brought her to school around 7:00 in the morning, and they waited in the car until Whitney could enter the school building. Whitney frequently ate breakfast in the car and napped before school began; there were times when Whitney slept during class. One morning as she slept soundly on the carpet in the reading center, two classmates started shaking Whitney to wake her up. Seeing them, Joan told them to let Whitney sleep as it was very difficult to learn when one was so tired. Whitney's feelings of acceptance were evident in the way she talked about her feelings toward the teacher, school, and herself.

In Richard's and Joan's classrooms most students felt that their teacher cared about them and they talked about the teacher, school, learning and themselves in positive ways, thereby indicating feelings of connectedness.

**Hypothesis 4: Communicating caring in the classroom is neither easy nor flawless.**

The data derived from teacher-student interactions in Richard's and Joan's classrooms support the hypothesis that their caring was neither easy nor flawless. There is evidence that in caring, these teachers worked hard and knew their students both academically and personally. Richard and Joan also reflected on their interactions with students and were vulnerable in their relationships with students.

Although Richard and Joan found their teaching and interactions with students rewarding, they consciously worked to maintain rapport and to provide effective instruction. In addition, students, administrators, colleagues, and parents perceived them as teachers who were caring and who worked hard and demonstrated these behaviors in the time and energy which they invested in their teaching.

In caring about students, these two teachers demonstrated both content knowledge and knowledge about students as individuals. During the background interviews, Richard and Joan talked about students academically and personally. They discussed academic strengths and weaknesses, students' relationships with peers, and socio-economic background. Richard

and Joan also were aware of personal issues in students' lives which contributed to their being successful, distracted or sad.

Neither Richard nor Joan perceived themselves as treating all students the same. Although they worked at being fair in grading and in discipline, both teachers recognized individual differences in students and based their responses to students on the information and knowledge they had about them.

There were times when the teachers reflected on what was the significance of their interactions for students. When Richard viewed himself on the videotape turning away from a student who was trying to approach him, he stopped the tape and pondered:

... I wonder if things I don't think of are important if I turn them off real quick, don't answer them or ignore them. I wonder sometimes how much it bothers them....you don't think how important it might be to listen to them at that point.

Making decisions about students was not always easy. When Richard reported the serious misconduct of a student to the principal, he struggled with his feelings. The student had pleaded with his teacher not to report the incident. Although Richard was "shocked" and felt that Mickey really had not meant to be threatening to another student, Richard felt the matter had to be reported to the principal. Since the incident occurred near the end of the school year, Richard questioned "how he [Mickey] will remember me."

Another example of Richard's thinking about his impact on students came after he had graded a cumulative math test. When the scores were lower than he anticipated, Richard questioned if his teaching had been a factor, or if students had stopped working and caring since it was so close to the end of

school. In examining those issues, Richard admitted. "That's always in the back of your mind when you give a comprehensive or a cumulative [test] and they don't do well. You wonder how much you have done to help them along."

There were also times when Richard fought back tears when he reflected on students' personal problems. When he received the letter from a high school senior expressing her hurt over something he had said years ago, Richard struggle with feelings of guilt.

Richard's caring was not easy, and he also recognized to some degree that it was not flawless. He realized that there were some students whom he cared more or less about than others. Richard confided that he had a "soft spot" for Mickey, but that he found it difficult to relate to Ann, Ray, and Bobby.

In the self-contained first grade classroom, Joan's reflections were a part of the instructional process. As she worked throughout the day, Joan watched children's responses and made decisions about providing feedback on their work and behavior. In doing this, Joan asked students to finish or to make corrections of their work, to return to their desks, or to stop talking.

Additionally, she sent progress reports home at three week intervals and talked with parents about how to assist their children. Making decisions about reading groups, sick students, retentions, referrals and a variety of other student needs required that Joan consider her interactions reflectively.

The two teachers in this study were aware of their own vulnerability in their relationships with students. Richard and Joan wanted their students to respond to their caring reciprocally. Each teacher talked of the satisfaction

that came from seeing a student grow. Richard referred to growth as seeing something "blossom." For Joan, growth meant watching a child "see the light."

With the seventh graders, Richard found the feelings of friendship extremely gratifying. He valued the one-to-one contact with students, but lacked a clear understanding of why his associations with students were so important to him. At one point he thought perhaps working with students of this age "helped him to feel young." As Richard tried to understand the significance that caring relationships with students had for him, he wondered:

I don't know if that's something I need. Maybe that's why, or maybe this is a profession in which you get some rewards like that...where students do appreciate you or like you....But I do care what young people think about me.

In seeing children as a "personal challenge," Joan disclosed that "it would devastate me if I thought that a child didn't like me." When we reconsider Joan's efforts to accept, understand, and nurture children, this is not an unrealistic statement. On two occasions, tears flowed freely as Joan talked with me at the end of a long school day about her students and her teaching.

In each of the two classrooms, data supported Richard's and Joan's commitment both professionally and personally to their work and to their students. Teaching was not easy and these teachers became especially tired at times because they came early or stayed late to do extra things for students. Each of these teachers talked about his/her work, students, and colleagues in ways that denoted caring. Although Richard and Joan wanted to care and to be cared for, they recognized that caring was neither easy nor flawless.

### Findings, Literature Descriptions, and Unanswered Questions on Caring

Using the four hypotheses derived from the data in this study, I will discuss how they relate to descriptions of caring in the literature and pose several unanswered questions.

Although we talk about caring as simply feeling, scholars depict caring as active and as promoting growth in another individual as well as in oneself (Fromm, 1956; Gaylin, 1976; Mayeroff, 1971; Noddings, 1984; Sorokin, 1954). Furthermore, scholars avoid passive descriptions of caring by describing caring as a kind of interpersonal relationship created by the participants.

Although this study depicts caring as active within the teacher-student relationship, there is much that we do not know. How do teachers learn to be caring? Do they operate intuitively or do they reflect on personal experiences in caring?

In teacher education programs, there is an assumption that individuals who choose to teach also have qualities which will enable them to be caring professionals (Sarason, 1985). If, indeed, pre-service teachers enter teaching as caring individuals, how are they able to sustain their caring in the workplace of the school? Although we know that teachers value interpersonal relationships with students (Lortie, 1975; Jackson, 1968), we need to enlarge and to enrich our understanding of how teachers develop and sustain caring relationships with students.

Literature descriptions depict caring as being relational, receptive, responsive, responsible and reciprocal. Although these dimensions were not studied discretely, the perceptions of the participants support that these are

viable dimensions of the teacher-student relationship. The study also found that humor facilitates caring relationships between teachers and students. In examining the teaching style of a male secondary teacher of low achieving readers, Dillon (1985) summarized, "Perhaps it is not the what that students learn in school, but the who they learn it from and how that teacher facilitates learning" (p. 245-246). Research and the practice of teaching could profit from in-depth descriptions of how successful teachers work with students to facilitate learning.

The finding that perceiving the teacher as caring for them increases students' feelings of connectedness with their learning and school is widely supported in the literature (Brenner, 1984; Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Csikszentimihalyi & McCormack, 1986; Jordan & Tharp, 1979; Rogers, 1961, 1980, 1983; Wallerstein, 1883). Although there continues to be a focus on the cognitive outcomes of schooling, we still neglect to examine and to enlarge our understanding of the students' perceptions and experiences in school, especially those perceptions which relate to the affective dimensions of students' development (Blatcher, 1981). As researchers and educators search for ways to reduce the incidents of substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, and suicide among students, we need to ask how these issues relate to students' feelings of alienation in school. Furthermore, recognizing that there is a common agreement that school is to be a caring place, we need continued inquiry to learn and to understand how schools become vibrant, nurturing workplaces for students and what factors contribute to students' feelings of connectedness.

Since caring is a basic human quality, there is a tendency to perceive caring as easy, gratifying and perfect. Scholars (Mayeroff, 1971; Noddings, 1984) argue otherwise. In fact, they contend that caring is difficult and at times hurtful. If we consider literature descriptions of caring as a process which helps others to grow and to become self-actualized, then we must recognize that caring is neither easy nor flawless.

The data in this study depicted Richard Deaton and Joan Carr as striving to be caring in their relationships with students. Because they cared about the children in their classrooms, Richard and Joan worked hard at being effective, caring teachers. In doing so, they struggled to understand students, questioned their approaches and strategies, and wrestled with feelings of inadequacy and fatigue. Although there were times when Richard and Joan were elated or reenergized by the responses of their students, there were also times when they felt devastated, particularly Richard in his work with adolescents. Again, we know little of how these teachers sustained their caring.

Gaylin (1976) challenges that in our quest for technical knowledge, we must also "cling to caring" as a vital part of our humanity. Yet, how can we cling to that which we are so reluctant to try to understand? As we enlarge our knowledge and understanding of research methodology, we are also able to enlarge the scope of our inquiries.

In conclusion, Eisner (1988) expresses a challenge which is applicable to our efforts to improve educational research and practice, especially in the affective domain:

I hope we will even learn how to see what we are not able to describe in words, much less measure. And through the consciousness borne of such an attitude, I hope we will be creative enough to invent methods and languages that do justice to what we have seen. Finally, I hope that through such work, through the primacy of experience and the expansion of our method, our politics will become a liberating force for understanding and enhancing the education process (p.20).

Although Eisner is addressing the research community, his challenge is applicable across institutions, professions and individuals. For embedded in our humanity are those diverse qualities which compel us to learn, to create, and to care for ourselves and others. Knowledge is power not because it defines us, but because it liberates us cognitively, affectively and physically to become all that we are and to find power and strength in our connectedness with one another.

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Appendix A  
RESEARCHER'S BIOGRAPHY

### **Researcher's Biography**

In a qualitative inquiry with focuses on observations and interviews, the researcher is naturally a primary tool in conducting the study. Therefore, it is important to include a description of my background and perspectives as a researcher.

Although I began my career as a social service worker in child welfare, I was a classroom teacher in grades 2-5 for twenty-one years. To some individuals, this may indicate that I have a strong bias because of my background of experiences in the elementary school setting. However, Blumer (1969) argues that familiarity with a setting is vital to avoid overlooking important information for which a novice might not look. Actually, I believe that my experience as a teacher contributed to the rapport and trust that I was able to build with the teacher and student participants. Being a teacher made me aware of the importance of instructional time and the lack of release time for teachers. Therefore, I respected the teachers' schedules, time, and working relationships with students. Consequently, I avoided interrupting instruction or requesting interviews when teachers' schedules were busier than usual. I also volunteered to assist teachers by doing paper work or working with individual students.

Although I was familiar with an elementary school setting, my years of experience had not provided me with opportunities to observe other teachers or to talk with them about teaching for extended periods of time. The descriptions that Lortie (1975) provides of the isolation of classroom teachers adequately described my own professional experiences. In addition to not

having opportunities to observe other teachers, I had no experience in interacting with seventh or first grade students. Therefore, I became a curious and inquisitive observer. In fact, I enjoyed and looked forward to learning from the students. Our interactions were casual, and we talked about topics which were of interest to them, as well as questions which informed the study. As I watched, listened and raised questions, my goal was to understand their perceptions of themselves, the teacher and their interactions.

Furthermore, I feel that my interest in the counseling process facilitated the rapport and trust that I had with the participants. I found it easy to accept and value participants, and I worked to practice "empathic understanding" (Rogers, 1980, 1983). In addition to being influenced by the work of Carl Rogers, I also audited EDAE 5672, a course in the theories and techniques of counseling.

In learning how to conduct a qualitative inquiry, I first was a student of Margaret Eisenhart's in her course, Ethnographic Methods. After conducting a pilot study, I continued to study relevant books and articles. Still another valuable source of learning came from opportunities to attend presentations by scholars engaged in qualitative research. In January 1988 and 1989, I attended the Qualitative Research in Education Conference at the University of Georgia. Certainly, hearing presentations by George and Lousie Spindler of Stanford University, Judith Goetz of University of Georgia, Robert Bogdan of Syracuse University and Stephen Ball of King's College at the University of London enriched my thinking. When I attended these two conferences, I was first in the process of designing the study and later engaged in final analyses.

These presentations, as well as individual consultations with Judith Goetz and Robert Bogdan, informed the methodology.

I would be less than honest if I said that I did not have a bias toward caring. I value people and opportunities to establish caring relationships. However, because I am a professional and a learner, I consciously sought to maintain the symbolic interactionist perspective. Thus, my task was to understand the perspectives of the teachers and students, not my own views. Undoubtedly, the study's advisor, Rosary Lalik, was instrumental in helping me to sort, examine, and distinguish my views from those of the participants.

Finally, after being as thorough and accurate as I knew how, I shared the written reports with Richard and Joan. In a way, my task has been to create images of their relationships with students and then share the products with them to determine the accuracy, fairness, and completeness of those images. Our continued conversations about the work have led us to recognize that although we value our work and relationships, our final commitment is to be real. Therefore, we have presented the vulnerable and human aspects of ourselves as we engaged in learning about caring.

Appendix B

TIME FRAME OF THE STUDY

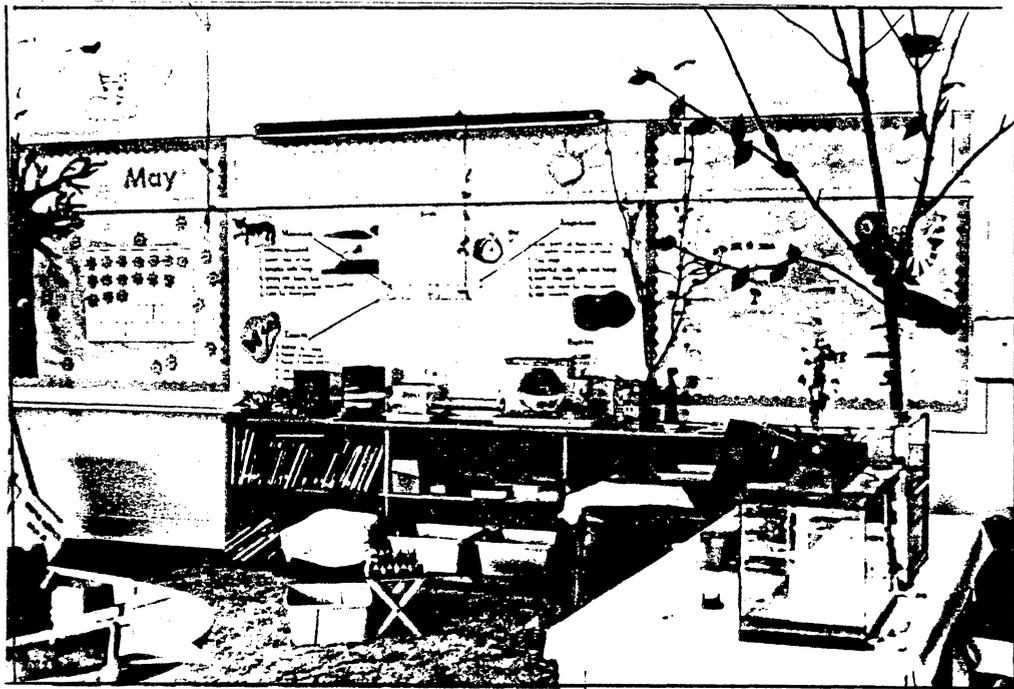
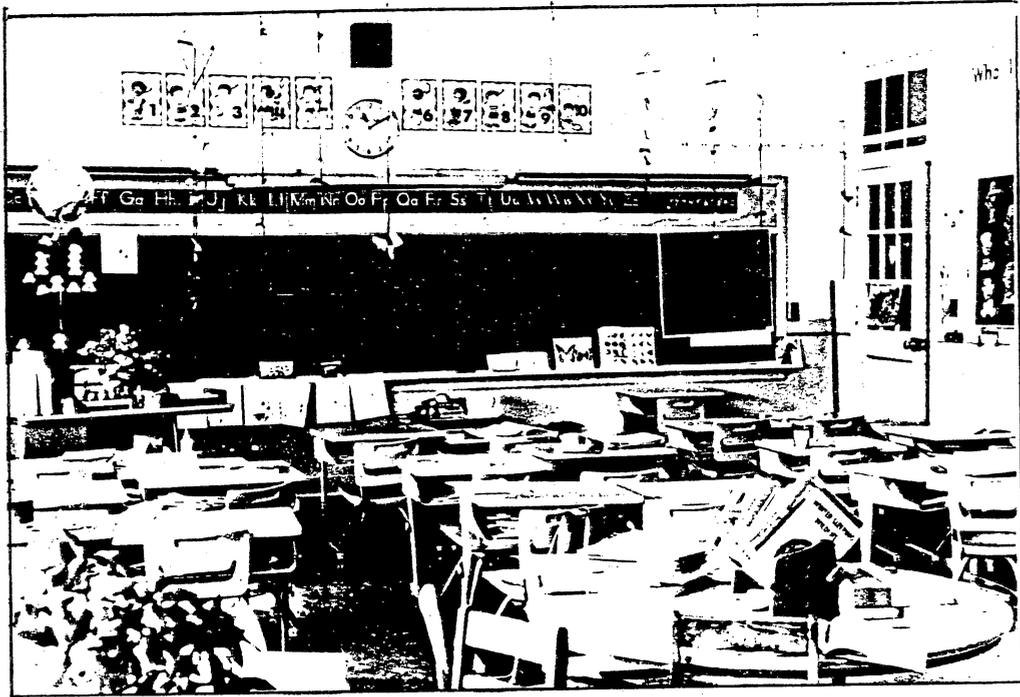
### TIME FRAME OF THE STUDY

WEEKS	DATES	ACTIVITY
1 - 4	February 2, 8, 26, 22	Preliminary observations in selecting participants.
5	March 9, 12	Initial meeting with principal and focal teacher. EAI interviews.
6 - 8	March 16, 17, 21, 22 28, 29; April 13, 14	Four half day participant observations in each focal and ancillary teachers' classroom.
10	April 22	All day seventh grade field trip.
11	April 25-29	Full week in Richard Deaton's classroom.
12	May 2-6	Mornings in Joan Carr's classroom; afternoons with Richard Deaton.
13	May 9-13	Full week in Joan Carr's classroom.
14	May 16-21	Two full days with each ancillary participant.
15 - 17	May 23-June 1	Field trip with ancillary teacher, Awards Assembly, Ice cream party, selected observations of varied activities, and interviews.
	June 6	Final interviews with focal teachers.

Appendix C

CLASSROOM PHOTOGRAPHS AND SEATING CHARTS

Photographs of Joan's Classroom



Seating Chart - Joan Carr's First Grade



Board  
Front

*Scott	Amy
--------	-----

John	Jane
------	------

*Wayne	Alice
--------	-------

Vivian	Jerry
--------	-------

Jill	Mark
------	------

Buddy	David
-------	-------

*Jim	*Cindy
------	--------

Justin	Kathy
--------	-------

*Whitney	Les
----------	-----

Back

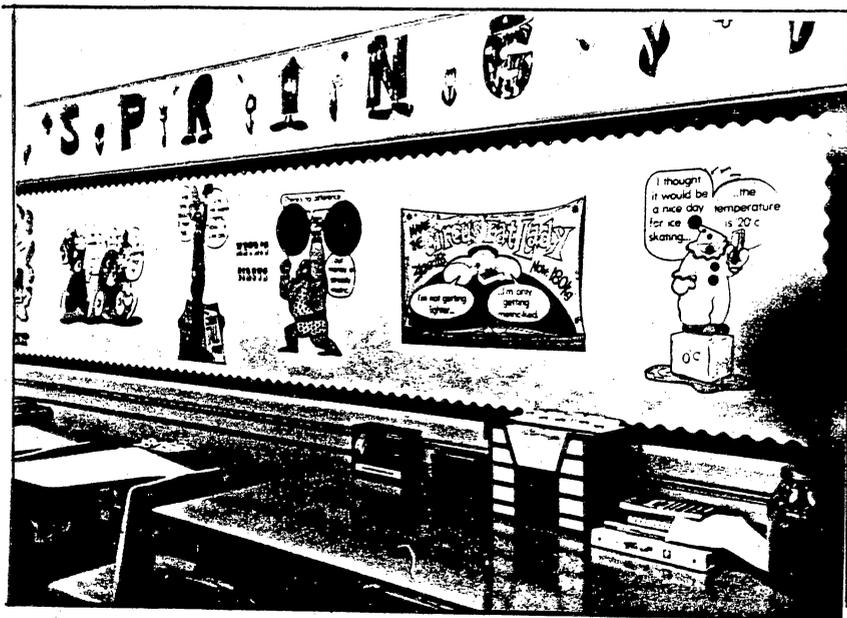
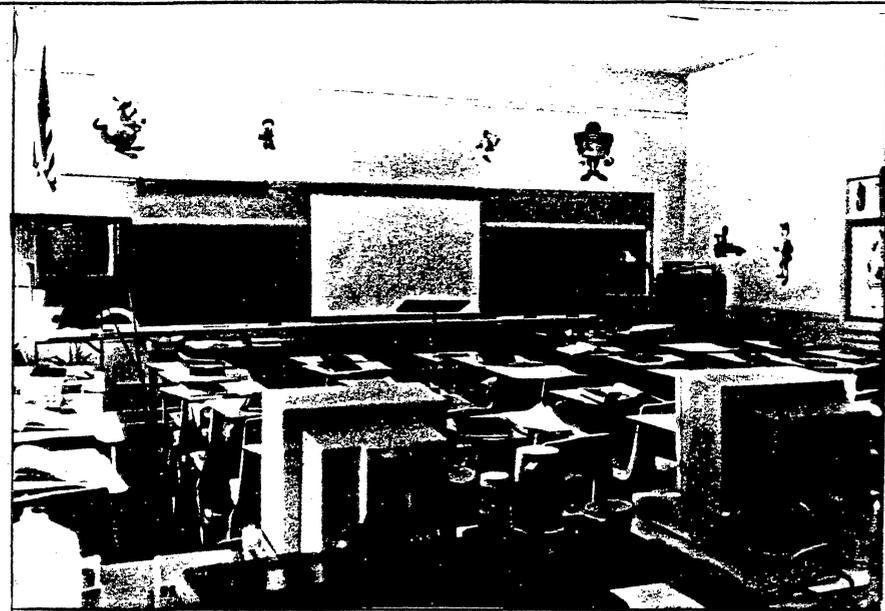
N = 18

Back

N = 33

\* = Key Student Informant

Photographs of Richard's Classroom



## Seating Chart - Richard Deaton

Group 1			Front	Group 2		
Ashley	*Mindy	Emily	Daphene	Martha	Judy	Sherry
Debra	Shelby	Star	Bret	Alan		Sid
Tracy	Jenny	Doug	James	Mike	Jeff	Bernie
Tom	Charles	April	Susy	Sonny	Turner	Bret
Derek	Jack	Bud	*Bobby	Toby	Pete	

N = 33

\* = Key Student Informant

Seating Chart - Richard Deaton  
11:40-3:15

Group 1			Front	Group 2		
Sally	*Kim	Mary	Mickey	Mern	Ed	Brad
Katie	Steve	Marie	*Dee	Cathy	*Ray	Martin
Jill	*Chuck	Sharon	*Ann	David	Ralph	Jess
Melody	*Sam	Steve	James	Maria	Doris	Robin
Melvin	Marcus	Terri	Diane	Tim		
Back						

N = 33

\* = Key Student Informant

Appendix D

TUCKMAN RATING SCALES AND RESULTS

**Tuckman Teacher Feedback Form**

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
1. ORIGINAL	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	CONVENTIONAL
2. PATIENT	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	IMPATIENT
3. COLD	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	WARM
4. HOSTILE	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	AMIABLE
5. CREATIVE	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	ROUTINIZED
6. INHIBITED	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	UNHIBITED
7. ICONOCLASTIC	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	RITUALISTIC
8. GENTLE	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	HARSH
9. UNFAIR	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	FAIR
10. CAPRICIOUS	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	PURPOSEFUL
11. CAUTIOUS	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	EXPERIMENTING
12. DISORGANIZED	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	ORGANIZED
13. UNFRIENDLY	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	SOCIABLE
14. RESOURCEFUL	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	UNCERTAIN
15. RESERVED	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	OUTSPOKENT
16. IMAGINATIVE	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	EXACTING
17. ERRATIC	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	SYSTEMATIC
18. AGGRESSIVE	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	PASSIVE
19. ACCEPTING (People)	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	CRITICAL
20. QUIET	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	BUBBLY
21. OUTGOING	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	WITHDRAWN
22. IN CONTROL	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	ON THE RUN
23. FLIGHTY	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	CONSCIENTIOUS
24. DOMINANT	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	SUBMISSIVE
25. OBSERVANT	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	PREOCCUPIED
26. INTROVERTED	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	EXTROVERTED
27. ASSERTIVE	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	SOFT-SPOKEN
28. TIMID	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	__:	ADVENTUROUS

- 7 = Very
- 6 = Somewhat
- 5 = Slightly
- 4 = Equal
- 3 = Slightly
- 2 = Somewhat
- 1 = Very

(TUCKMAN, B. 1985)

**Teacher, Principal, Supervisor Tuckman Ratings of Richard Deaton**

**WARMTH AND ACCEPTANCE**

	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
Patient	PS	T						Impatient
Gentle	P	S	T					Harsh
Accepting	PS	T						Critical
Cold						T	PS	Warm
Hostile						T	PS	Amiable
Unfair							TPS	Fair
Unfriendly						P	TS	Sociable
Total Score (43) - Mean (34.7)								

**ORGANIZED DEMEANOR**

	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
Resourceful	PS	T						Uncertain
In Control	P	TS						On the Run
Observant	P	S	T					Preoccupied
Capricious						S	TP	Purposeful
Disorganized							TPS	Organized
Erratic						S	TP	Systematic
Flighty						T	PS	Conscientious
Total Score (43); Mean (39.7)								

T = Teacher; P = Principal; S = Supervisor

7 = Very  
 6 = Somewhat  
 5 = Slightly  
 4 = Equal  
 3 = Slightly  
 2 = Somewhat  
 1 = Very

**Teacher, Principal, Supervisor Tuckman Ratings of Joan Carr**

**WARMTH AND ACCEPTANCE**

	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
Patient	TPS							Impatient
Gentle	TP	S						Harsh
Accepting	PS			S				Critical
Cold							TPS	Warm
Hostile							TPS	Amiable
Unfair							TPS	Fair
Unfriendly						TP	S	Sociable
Total Score (43) - Mean (41)								

**CREATIVITY**

	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
Original	TPS							Conventional
Creative	ST	P						Routinized
Iconoclastic		P	S	T				Ritualistic
Imaginative	TPS							Exacting
Inhibited							TPS	Uninhibited
Cautious						P	TS	Experimental
Timid				P	S		T	Adventurous
Aggressive				TS	S			Passive
Total Score (43); Mean (38.6)								

T = Teacher; P = Principal; S = Supervisor

7 = Very  
 6 = Somewhat  
 5 = Slightly  
 4 = Equal  
 3 = Slightly  
 2 = Somewhat  
 1 = Very

**Teachers' Overall Tuckman Ratings****Richard Deaton**

	Teacher	Principal	Supervisor	Mean
Warmth & Acceptance	38	42	42	40.7
Organized Demeanor	37	43	39	39.7
Creativity	17	23	26	22
Dynamism	19	24	24	22.3

**Joan Carr**

	Teacher	Principal	Supervisor	Mean
Warmth & Acceptance	39	42	42	41
Organized Demeanor	41	43	36	40
Creativity	40	37	39	38.6
Dynamism	25	14	17	18.7

Total Score on Each Dimension = 43

**Teacher Feedback Form for Students**

Example:

MY TEACHER IS:

A: FUNNY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SOMBER
B: UNFAIR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	FAIR

MY TEACHER IS:

1.	DISORGANIZED	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	ORGANIZED
2.	CLEAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	UNCLEAR
3.	AGGRESSIVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SOFT-SPOKEN
4.	CONFIDENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	UNCERTAIN
5.	COMMONPLACE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	CLEVER
6.	CREATIVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	ORDINARY
7.	OLD FASHIONED	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	MODERN
8.	LIKEABLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	"STUCK-UP"
9.	EXCITING	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	BORING
10.	SENSITIVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	ROUGH
11.	LIVELY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	LIFELESS
12.	ACCEPTS PEOPLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	CRITICAL
13.	SNOBBY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	MODEST
14.	CONFUSED	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	ORDERLY
15.	STRICT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	LENIENT
16.	IN CONTROL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	ON THE RUN
17.	TRADITIONAL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	ORIGINAL
18.	WARM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	COLD
19.	RUDE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	POLITE
20.	WITHDRAWN	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	OUTGOING
21.	EASY GOING	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	DEMANDING
22.	OUTSPOKEN	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SHY
23.	UNCHANGABLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	FLEXIBLE
24.	QUIET	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	BUBBLY
25.	AWARE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	FORGETFUL
26.	"NEW IDEAS"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SAME OLD THING
27.	IMPATIENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	PATIENT
28.	UNCARING	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	CARING
29.	DEPENDENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	INDEPENDENT
30.	UNPLANNED	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	EFFICIENT

(TUCKMAN, B. 1985)

## Student's Tuckman Rating of Richard Deaton

		WARMTH AND ACCEPTANCE							
		7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
Likeable	37	10	6	5	2	0	1	Stuck up	
Accepts People	27	11	11	7	1	2	1	Critical	
Snobby	2	0	1	16	11	19	11	Modest	
Warm	17	19	10	10	3	1	1	Cold	
Rude	0	1	3	8	9	18	22	Polite	
Impatient	3	3	4	20	2	15	14	Patient	
Uncaring	2	0	2	4	8	8	37	Caring	
		ORGANIZED DEMEANOR							
		7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
Disorganized	1	0	0	4	8	21	26	Organized	
Clear	26	16	10	8	2	0	0	Unclear	
Confident	29	16	6	7	2	2	0	Uncertain	
Confused	0	0	1	5	9	31	15	Orderly	
In Control	22	18	8	11	0	0	2	On the Run	
Aware	28	22	3	6	0	1	2	Forgetful	
Unplanned	1	0	1	10	5	16	28	Efficient	

7 = Very  
 6 = Somewhat  
 5 = Slightly  
 4 = Equal  
 3 = Slightly  
 2 = Somewhat  
 1 = Very

Seventh Grade Students' Tuckman Rating (Tuckman, 1985)

Appendix E  
SOCIOMETRIC QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESULTS

## Student Sociometric Data

Grade 7				Grade 1	
Name	# Choices Received	Name	# Choices Received	Name	# Choices Received
Chuck*	27	Mindy*	25	Justin	22
Melvin	19	Turner	23	Scott*	17
Kim*	18	Bobby*	20	David	13
Dee*	16	Jack	20	John	13
Katie	16	Derek	16	Jane	12
Sally	15	Ashley	12	Amy	10
Martin	13	Star	11	Wayne*	8
Sharon	12	Tom	11	Vivian	7
Tim	12	Sonny	9	Kathy	7
Marie	11	Tracy	8	Mark	5
Terri	10	Bernie	7	Whitney*	5
Cathy	9	Bud	7	Cindy*	4
Mario	9	Debra	7	Les	3
Marcus	8	Daphene	7	Buddy	3
Sally	7	Jenny	7	Jill	3
Steve	7	Emily	6	Alice	3
Brad	6	Sid	6	Jim*	2
Ed	5	Susy	6	Jerry*	2
Jill	5	Alan	4		
Mickey*	4	Mike	4	N = 18	
Mary	4	James	4		
Mern	4	Jeff	4		
Steve	1	Bret	3		
James	1	Shelby	3		
Doris	1	Sherry	3		
Jess	1	April	2		
Mark	0	Toby	2		
Ray*	0	Charles	2		
Ann*	0	Martha	1		
Diane	0	Doug	1		
David	0	Pete	1		
		Burt	0		
N = 31		N = 32			

\*Key Student Informant

**Sociometric Questionnaire**  
**Grade 7**

**READ EACH QUESTION BELOW AND INDICATE YOUR FIRST AND SECOND CHOICE FOR EACH**

1. Another class field trip is being planned, who would you choose to sit with on the bus?  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. You have just been assigned a difficult math/science project to complete with the help of a partner. Who would you choose to work with you?  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. You are the captain of the P.E. team for the week. Who would you choose to be on your team?  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. You have a personal problem and would like to discuss it with someone who will understand. Who would you want to talk with about the problem.  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Sociometric Questionnaire  
Grade 1**

1. Who would you invite to go to the circus,  
with you?  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. You may choose someone to work with you on/  
math or reading a story. Who would you  
choose?  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. You are a captain in P.E. Who would you  
choose to be on your team?  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. You have a secret. Who would you share  
it with?  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix F

TEACHERS' AND READERS' RESPONSES

## Participant Responses

Researcher's memo to Participants:

This is the section I spoke with you about on the phone. Please give it a reading and write briefly your reaction to the accuracy and fairness of this [Chapter 3] and other section, [Chapter 4]. Is anything missing?

Thanks.

Richard's Response

Reading these chapters makes me want to go back to the classroom! It is satisfying to that you, the "subjective" researcher, observed qualities of caring that are very important to me. At times I felt that I wasn't reaching the kids, but your comments have reassured me.

In my "old age", I accept the fact that I can never reach 100% of the students, but as I looked over the research, I still blame myself for not being more sensitive to those few who rated me as critical. I wonder if there were things I would have done to be more caring, or perhaps I was insensitive at some critical point in their lives.

Your research appears to be both fair and accurate (except for the error which listed my afternoon group during the morning). I was a little concerned in reading the first sections that my class might be viewed as mostly play and no work. Your summation in Chapter IV eliminates that concern, as you stressed my expectations of the students and the organized manner in which I taught.

My only other concern is that my "quotes" make me sound stupid -- but no one is purrfect [sic]!....I really like the outcome....

(Mr. D)

Reading this material brought back many pleasant memories. It aroused strong feelings, brought into focus the primary facets of my philosophy of education and made me feel successful when I realized that the goals that I seek to accomplish were evident in my classroom. To me, a successful classroom must have understanding, a mutual respect and admiration, excitement, a love for learning and a lot of patience. I need to read something like this, annually, as the year winds down and I begin to feel frustrated. For through the children's eyes, I can realize my successes and failures. Thank you for helping me to take a look at me and my children and really putting into perspective what we are really all about.

(Joan Carr)

## Patterns of Caring

**Richard Deaton**

From reading Richard's vignette, what patterns are evident in his classroom?  
Please indicate the major patterns with a check.

	Reader #1	Reader #2
"Looking Around"	_____	_____✓
"Being Available"*	_____✓	_____✓
"Feeling Disappointed"	_____✓	_____
"Working Hard"*	_____	_____✓
"Being Friends"*	_____✓	_____✓
"Getting Even"	_____	_____
"Problem Solving"*	_____✓	_____
"Joking Around"*	_____✓	_____✓
"Getting Angry"	_____	_____
"Lecturing and Learning"	_____	_____
Number of correct responses	4	4

\*Patterns presented in the vignettes.

**Joan Carr**

From reading Joan's vignette, what patterns are evident in her classroom? Please indicate the major patterns with a check.

	Reader #1	Reader #2
"Making a Difference"	_____	_____✓
"Reading Together"	_____	_____
"Getting Close"	_____✓	_____✓
"Joining Together"	_____✓	_____✓
"Being Positive"*	_____✓	_____✓
"Solving Problems"	_____	_____
"Loving to Learn"	_____✓	_____✓
"Writing to Learn"	_____	_____
"Working Independently"	_____✓	_____
"Helping Each Other"	_____	_____
Number of correct responses	3	5

\*Patterns presented in the vignettes.

**The two page vita has been  
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