

**EFFECTS OF LEARNING LOGS
ON HIGH SCHOOL LITERATURE ACHIEVEMENT**

by

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(ABSTRACT)

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the learning log, a reader-response journal, as an instructional tool in the study of literature. One hundred high school seniors participated in this study over the course of a year.

Random sampling was used to assign the students to two groups -- an experimental group and a control group. The variable was the learning log. Group A kept a learning log on A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens, and Group B did not. An objective exam was administered to both groups immediately following completion of the study of the novel. Several months later, Group B kept a learning log on 1984 by George Orwell and Group A did not. Again, a follow-up test was given to both groups. Statistical analysis indicated that the learning log did make a difference in students' exam scores. At the end of the year, another exam on these novels was given to both groups and statistical analysis on this

data indicated the learning log was particularly effective in delayed testing.

A major portion of the study also included case studies to examine the variety and patterns of student responses in the learning logs. Based on textual analysis, it appeared that high-achieving students wrote responses which were predicting and analytical; average students wrote responses which were more comparative and associative; and lower-achieving students wrote responses which were questioning but not probing.

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I also want to thank those involved in the 1987 Southwest Virginia Writing Project. Without this special group of teachers, I would never have truly believed in myself as an effective, quality educator or recognized my potential to influence change in my school and community.

Finally, without the financial assistance and unwavering love, support, and encouragement of my parents, I would not have been able to continue my education at Virginia Tech. Thanks, Mom and Dad.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
TITLE PAGE	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	7
CHAPTER 3 MATERIALS AND METHODS	11
Grouping Process	11
Data Collection	13
Analysis of the Data	15
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	17
Analysis of the Learning Log	17
Analysis of Objective Test Data	22
Mini-Case Studies	27
Mary	28
Jim	31
Mike	35
Karen	39

	Page
Janet	41
Kevin	42
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS	44
REFERENCES	50
APPENDICES	52
Appendix A	53
Appendix B	57
Appendix C	62
Appendix D	63
VITA	65

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
1 - Scores of 50-Question Objective Exams	23
2 - Scores of 25-Question Objective Retest Exams	24

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
1 - Guidelines for Learning Logs	14
2 - Mean Scores on Objective Exams	25

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"Familiar paths traced in the dusk of summer evenings may lead as well to prisons as to innocent, untroubled sleep." Let us all note well the wisdom of Camus' words lest we become complacent and allow ourselves to be trapped in that which is familiar.

The above quotation, taken from the learning log of one of my high school seniors, reminds us that change is good; indeed, change is necessary in our society. In education, particularly, it is the responsibility of every teacher and administrator to be open to change, to new ideas, which will help our students grow as lifelong learners.

My primary goal as an English teacher is to encourage my students to read frequently, think critically, and share their ideas effectively. I want my classroom to be a fun forum for the give-and-take of reader and writer responses where students learn that there is no single "right" analysis of a literature text. By stimulating students to read, discuss, and write about personal experiences and use their knowledge, I can and believe, make their reading of literature a more meaningful process for them (Berthoff, 1982; Bruner, 1966; Fulwiler, 1982).

However, our high-technology, high-speed society offers students numerous instant sources of entertainment and

alternatives to reading, sources which challenge every educator who shares my vision of the language arts classroom. Many students find the video stores' supply of film versions of the novels assigned in their English classes more appealing than the original work, or they may select options other than reading the original work such as compact plot summaries and comic book versions of classic literature. Consequently, what could be valuable enrichment sources become instead substitutes for the book itself. Many students will boast that they have made it through high school without ever reading a complete novel, and not reading is a tragedy.

This tragedy can be remedied if students are allowed to become active participants in a novel, finding their own meaning from the text (Britton, 1975; Iser, 1978; Moffett, 1981; Rosenblatt, 1984). I use "writing-to-learn" techniques, activities which provide students opportunities to think and focus and elicit thoughts while writing, in the study of literature to promote enjoyment, understanding, and imagination. As students express their ideas, viewpoints, and questions about their reading, they gradually possess ownership of their knowledge, eliminating the spoon-fed interpretations memorized for a single exam and then quickly forgotten (Britton, 1975; Berthoff, 1981; Marshall, 1988; Belanoff, 1987).

The primary writing-to-learn approach that I use is the learning log, a journal of reader responses. In the study of high school literature, the learning log provides the students with the opportunity to internally monologue, actively participate, with the novel (Berthoff, 1981; Britton, 1975). Tentative at first as to whether the students would respond, I now look forward to exciting, stimulating, thought-provoking, and critical insights. Each new school year, each new class, and each new novel reinforces my belief in the value of the learning log activity. This making of meaning (Berthoff, 1981) is evident in student responses over the past years to works by Henrik Ibsen, Albert Camus, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Franz Kafka. When typical seventeen-year-olds share ideas representative of those in the following passages, it is impossible not to be caught up in the challenge of uniting reading and writing (Newkirk, 1986). (All excerpts in this chapter are presented as the students wrote them. They represent unedited, first-draft writing.) One student, in a learning log on A Doll's House, wrote:

... Ibsen broke a lot of unwritten rules in the theater of his era. His portraits of women who dared to face suicide challenged discrimination that was the core of society. Ibsen allowed his female characters to act honorably. Hedda Gabler shot herself in the temple to avoid a public scandal and Nora considered suicide rather than bring shame to her husband. Perhaps suicide is Ibsen's equalizer? ...

Another student, a more avid reader, wrote:

... In The Ballad of the Sad Cafe, Carson McCullers puts forth a theory of love and its acceptance or denial. McCullers suggests that there are two types of people -- the lover and the beloved. In A Doll's House, Nora is unable to grow as the beloved and rejects this version of love. She says that Torvald needed someone to love, the power of the lover. Whereas, in Hedda Gabler, Hedda's dislike and disapproval of being the beloved are more evident and forceful ...

One student, possibly anticipating my compare and contrast essays, wrote about The Stranger:

... Meursault mentions he always liked to wash his hands at midday. Is this some type of psychosis because his hands are dirty like Lady Macbeth's? ... Like Dostoevsky, Camus makes significant use of the darkness on the stairs and landing. There is a smell as of death rising from the well hole and blood throbs in his ears. This is the perfect lead-in to a murder. In the last sentence, a single phrase stands out. "Through the sleep-bound house the little plaintive sound rose slowly, like a flower growing out of the silence and the darkness" (Camus, p. 42). Does this mean that whatever comes next, through whatever ordeal of crime and guilt and trial that may occur, in the end a new life will emerge, much like Raskolnikov's rebirth in Crime and Punishment? ...

One socially-conscious student wrote:

... The scene with old Salamano and his ancient dog is much like the abused wife who stays in the home and does not report her husband ... and the odd little woman reminds me of people who know exactly what they want and are always in a hurry because their lives run on a schedule. She does nothing during the day but listen to radio programs, yet this is the whole purpose of her life, and she rushes to achieve her weekly goal. This symbolizes how society is always rushing to do things that are "important" yet never achieve anything with real meaning. Appropriately she is called "the little

robot," implying mindless activity and pre-programmed actions ...

One student who never spoke out in class wrote forcibly about Crime and Punishment:

... Raskolnikov says that he murdered the pawnbroker not for the money he stole from her, which he never used; rather he murdered her to see whether he had the right. The right to do what? To judge? To murder? To compare himself to men like Caesar? Raskolnikov wrote that all men were divided into the "ordinary" and the "extraordinary." "Extraordinary" men were above the law. There are many problems with this theory. First, are the "extraordinary" people physically or mentally "extraordinary?" Do they have to have a certain IQ? What would happen once all the "ordinary" people were killed off? Would the "more extraordinary" have the right to begin to kill the "less extraordinary?" What if a person is neither academically gifted nor athletically talented, but a nice person? At what age should a person be deemed "ordinary" or "extraordinary?" These questions are asked assuming that the basic notions of morality, humanity, and proper behavior are ignored. These are obviously arbitrary boundaries set down upon our actions, but they have been accepted for the past few centuries with little deviation ...

Another student touched me with his response, which I will always remember, to The Metamorphosis:

... Kafka's Metamorphosis represents his view of the world, and this view both startles and frightens me. As I read The Metamorphosis, I wondered how many Gregors there were and how many there will be. History records those outstanding individuals who must be recognized, but what about the billions of people whose lives passed and were unnoticed? This may be the crux of what Kafka was trying to get the reader to realize; the unnoticed, ignored, seemingly useless lives that had passed. Every one of those people was immortalized by Kafka through Gregor Samsa. Even though Kafka didn't answer my question, I attempted to answer it on my own. Those billions of people, were they happy when they died?

This is important because man's purpose is to achieve contentment, and the only way to do this is through having a purpose and being accepted. Gregor's life contained neither. His supporting his family is one of the most noble and admirable past-times, yet he was supporting a family which could be self-sufficient. For this reason, he was about to rebel. Those Gregors in history who worked not for themselves, but for others, may have had more purpose than Einstein, Shakespeare, or Napoleon. Man's worst fear is insignificance, and to overcome it, he needs to be wanted as an individual ...

Responses such as these from the school years 1985-1986 to 1987-1988 compelled me to examine and document the learning log as a complement to the study of literature. I had always evaluated the learning logs based on each unique, individual student, noticing, however, that students rarely missed questions on tests from novels about which they had written in their learning log and that material and ideas from those texts were retained throughout the year. Although I had never given objective exams in literature, I was confident that there would be a difference between the scores on such an exam of students who kept a learning log on a novel and students who did not. It was my hope that, in addition to case studies, armed with conventional statistics based on my hypothesis that students who kept a learning log on a novel would perform better than students who did not, I could make those firmly entrenched in the traditional literature curriculum look for change and give writing the stature it so richly deserves.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Originally my premise for using learning logs in the classroom was based on the theories of Rosenblatt, Vygotsky, and others who have studied reading and the role of the reader in the text. I hoped that through linking experiences to the text, students would draw on their prior knowledge, promoting complex processing to stimulate sensory perceptions.

This reader-response-based theory is supported by research in reading, especially by the psycholinguists and studies of reading interest and responses to literature. It is important what the student brings to the text, as the student is ultimately the maker of knowledge (Rosenblatt, 1984). If reading is experience, not information, literature must be personally significant. As Rosenblatt (1984) states:

All the student's knowledge about literary history, about authors and periods and literary types, will be so much useless baggage if he has not been led primarily to seek in literature a vital personal experience. (page 59)

The students must be active learners for the exchange between the reader and text to yield meaning and knowledge (Iser, 1978). This connection broadens the possibilities for teaching; as reading becomes a process of engaging, making

inferences, and associating (Berthoff, 1982; Moffett, 1981; Fulwiler, 1982).

Coming to terms with a literary text is a process of moving from the tentative to a more detailed inquiry (Marshall, 1988). Vygotsky (1962) calls this process "inner speech," the interaction between speech and thought, each fostering the development of the other. James Britton (1975) explores this same connection through "expressive writing." Often this writing is for the sake of communicating with oneself, to work out ideas alone. It is this making function of language which is the basis for writing-to-learn techniques. Writing demands this active participation and allows the readers to talk to themselves, to work through an understanding, and develop their interpretive strengths (Rosenblatt, 1984; Britton, 1975; Berthoff, 1982). Emig (1971) views writing as a continuing cycle involving both sides of the brain in analyzing and synthesizing knowledge to make meaning. Writing becomes a means of promoting cognitive development, a heuristic for understanding, where students discover what they have to say. This discovery, in turn, provides a progressive understanding of the text which promotes more enthusiastic class discussions and more comprehensive essays and papers.

I observed this new confidence when students kept learning logs, but it was not until spending a summer at the

Southwest Virginia Writing Project that I became committed to the theories of the Writing-to-Learn proponents. Berthoff, Emig, Britton, Fulwiler, and many others became "friends" who share my belief that the connection between reading and writing is a bridge between conceptualization and understanding. We do, indeed, find meaning through the exploration of language, allowing us to generate thoughts (Britton, 1975; Berthoff, 1981; Emig, 1971; Fulwiler, 1982; Moffett, 1968; Vygotsky, 1962). Journals, thus, become an instructional tool, a tool which supports Moffett's assertion that when students use any language activity, their skill at others will be reinforced.

Journals allow students to find meaning through their language and include a wide range of cognitive activities. They possess strong instructional validity by encouraging students to make connections (Bruner, 1966), to use all the language modes (Emig, 1971), and to write to learn (Britton, 1975). Growing in popularity and usage, the journal is a way to experiment with ideas, to clarify, and to interact. The role of the journal is much greater than simply the recording of information; it is an attempt to get students to think for themselves and take responsibility for their learning (Fulwiler, 1982). In a journal, a student can develop ideas, be creative, and learn freedom of expression. Students often become thoughtful and critical, taking their ideas to a

greater depth and acknowledging the literature as a means of shaping concepts of their world.

Learning should be goal-oriented and purposeful. In the sometimes sterile high-school literature curriculum which includes the study of great literary classics, the student learning logs invite self-evaluation. As Probst (1987) states:

Exchange with the text can become for the reader a process of self-creation. The entire process -- responding, correcting errors, searching for the sources of the response, speculating about the author's intent, and weighing the author's values and ideas against ones' own -- culminates in a sharpened, heightened sense of self. (page 21)

Berthoff (1982), too, acknowledges the importance of the reading/writing connection:

Composing is best nurtured by interpreting texts as well as experience. A course in composition that includes reading offers the best chance of encouraging students to explore for themselves their own abilities and grow in capacity, practical and intelligential, as a result. (page 7)

My use of learning logs, reader-response journals, is an attempt to make reading, writing, and learning personal for each student. Only when literature becomes significant can the students form lifelong habits and realize that great literature can truly belong to them.

CHAPTER 3

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study focuses on the 100 high school seniors at Father Lopez High School in Daytona Beach, Florida, for the 1988-1989 school year. Father Lopez High School is a private, regional high school drawing students from as far north as Flagler Beach, south to New Smyrna Beach and Edgewater, and west to Deltona. The students are from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds; included in the population are whites, blacks, Hispanics, Indians, Vietnamese, and Europeans who came from backgrounds ranging from the highly professional family to the welfare family. Although using one school provides a limited sample, my classes contained a greater cross-section of students than any neighborhood school could offer for this type of study.

Grouping Process

Two groups were necessary for this research question -- a control group and experimental group. To increase equivalence between the two groups and control inter-subject differences, random assignment was used to place the 100 students in these two groups. Each student was assigned a

three-digit number; and from a Table of Random Numbers, I selected fifty numbers. Those students possessing corresponding numbers were assigned to Group A. The remaining students were assigned to Group B. Therefore, each of my five classes contained some students from each group, though not in equal numbers. After looking carefully at the students in Group A and the students in Group B with the guidance counselor, I was satisfied that ability, motivation, and other factors were randomly distributed throughout each group. This procedural design was accomplished at the beginning of the school year so no bias on my part existed. Group A kept a learning log on A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens; Group B did not. Several months later, Group B kept a learning log on 1984 by George Orwell; and Group A did not. This replication allowed me to analyze data from two studies across the entire population. Students were not, however, told about the learning logs until November because I needed time to establish an easy rapport with the students, which would, as I later told them, produce, in Romantic terms, "the spontaneous overflow of human emotion." It also took the first few months to un-teach the notions of "right" versus "wrong" as applicable to a literary text and to convince the students that their ideas were as valid, if not more valid, than mine. I also had to be careful to schedule each of the learning logs during a time frame free

from the extracurricular demands of high school seniors. Thus, A Tale of Two Cities was due in November/December and 1984 in March/April.

Data Collection

In the first part of my study, I looked carefully at the student responses, wrote personal replies to the questions the students raised, discussed the logs with the students in individual conferences, observed class discussions, and reviewed essays written about the novel. When I explained what I would be looking for in their learning logs, the students found my instructions rather amorphous, elusive, and disquieting. Expecting a definitive assignment, they found the idea of talking to me on paper difficult to grasp. I distributed a handout which provided guidelines to follow (Figure 1) as they read the novel. I wanted them to write down any description they particularly liked, discuss any character they found interesting, ask questions of the author or me, record what they thought would happen next, or share a similar personal experience. I proceeded to lecture on the author -- his life, works, style, themes, and the history of the era in which he was writing. We compared each author with other influential authors of the period and discussed the novels and text materials. I made myself available

After each chapter of your novel, include a discussion/analysis of your ideas and thoughts about the book. You may want to comment on:

- What you enjoy/dislike Why?
- Which characters you like/hate Why?
- What you think might happen next or what should have taken place
- What you would ask the author
- What personal experiences it brings to mind
- What you found the most interesting/least interesting

REMEMBER: This is an informal conversation between you and me about the book! It is your journal, so feel free to be candid, critical, thoughtful, analytical, philosophical, comparative, or none of the above. Make it yours - uniquely so!

Figure 1. Guidelines for Learning Logs

before and after school and during lunch to help students who were having problems getting started on their logs.

The second part of my study followed the Randomized Subjects, Post-Test Only, Control Group Design as defined by Ary (1985). After the study of each novel, students from Group A and Group B took a 50-question objective examination. I ordered the tests (Appendix A and Appendix B) from a testing service to avoid my personal biases and "teaching to" a test. Upon receiving the tests, they were reviewed for appropriateness and content validity by several educators. Based on length, experimental design, and population diversity, I concluded the study to possess reliability, enhanced by a test-retest effect. The retest portion of the study involved approximately twenty-five objective questions about each novel as part of the final examination (Appendix C and Appendix D) June 1, 1989. These tests were also ordered from the same testing service.

Analysis of the Data

In December I collected the learning logs from Group A and administered an objective exam on A Tale of Two Cities to all 100 students. I did not grade these exams until June to avoid being influenced when reading the learning logs. In April I collected the learning logs from Group B and, again,

gave an examination to students of both groups. These exams on 1984 were filed away with the exams on A Tale of Two Cities. From late January until early May, I read and responded to the learning logs with no knowledge of the students' test scores. After the students had an opportunity to read my responses, I collected the learning logs for content analysis.

As part of the final examination on June 1, 1989, I included twenty-five objective questions on A Tale of Two Cities and twenty-five objective questions on 1984. I later removed those pages from the exam and scored each one as a separate test. At this time I also graded the original exams on both novels and recorded all four scores for each student. I calculated the means of the scores of all 100 students on each exam, then I found the means for Group A and Group B. I calculated the standard deviations and performed a t-test to determine if the difference between groups was statistically significant.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is divided into three sections -- Analysis of the Learning Logs, Analysis of Objective Test Data, and Mini-Case Studies. The first section examines the type and pattern of student responses in the learning logs as well as student evaluations of the learning logs as an instructional tool. The second section documents the statistical data for each of the four exams given and discusses the results of the analysis. The third section presents six case studies -- three on the learning logs of A Tale of Two Cities and three on the learning logs of 1984. In each study is a brief biographical sketch of the student, followed by excerpts from the student's learning log, a discussion of the student's objective exam scores, and an example of the student's post-learning log writing. (All excerpts in this chapter are unedited, first-draft writings.)

Analysis of the Learning Log

In this study, I read 100 very different learning logs from 100 very different students. Many adapted quickly to the idea of thinking on paper while others found it difficult

to resist the impulse to give the usual, often required, plot summaries.

It was interesting as well as significant to observe the processes employed by each student to make meaning from the text. When I began reading the learning logs, I was looking for unique ideas and insights and evidence of understanding of major story elements. After reading approximately ten learning logs, I went back to the guidelines I had given the students and started reading the logs over again. I had noticed a recurring pattern of responses from students of different levels of ability which continued throughout the 100 learning logs. I made these judgments on these different levels of ability based on my observations throughout the year, assessing the students' performance in my class and others.

I discovered that my lower-achieving students usually described strong feelings about a particular character or scene. For example, one student wrote:

... If I have one peeve through this book, it is the way Dickens is always describing Lucie's forehead. Will she crack nuts with it between wrinkles or what? ...

Another student commented:

... Tellson's Bank is described as a gloomy, old-fashioned place. It gives me a spooky feeling and the bank appears to be unfriendly ...

One young man wrote:

... I loved it when Winston and Syme started talking about yesterday's hanging. Syme liked to see the feet

kicking and a blue tongue hanging out of the prisoner's mouth. So would I! ...

These same students, likewise, asked many somewhat superficial questions of me in their logs. For example, several students mentioned:

... I wonder why Winston can't seem to remember his past ...

Or:

... What is Orwell's obsession with Communism? Does he think we're going to be overrun or something? ...

There were also questions which included:

... What is Dover Mail? ...
... How do ghosts fit into the story? ...
... Why did they ask if Dr. Manette's original profession was shoemaking? ...

On the other hand, my more average-achieving students discussed personal similar experiences and often compared the text to another book or movie they had enjoyed. These responses were often the most fun to read and provided me with a good picture of the students' interaction with the text. One student wrote:

... I can just see Charles promising to take care of and love Lucie. It is so touching. I hope someday someone will talk to my dad like that ...

Another student commented:

... Parsons' kids are real devils. They remind me of my niece and nephew with their spy games and eavesdropping ...

One student shared this with me:

... Miss Bowman, when Mr. Eckert saw me reading 1984, he told me "The Book" was like The Revolution Betrayed by Trotsky. Why are there phrases like the Declaration of Independence? ...

One student who had just been accepted to Loyola University wrote:

... I'll bet Hate Week is like Mardi Gras! ...

My highest-achieving students consistently made predictions, became analytical and probing into the psyche of the characters or author, and often compared and/or contrasted the work to other works read in class or works by the same author. One student predicted:

... They talk about people being set free after they were taken to the Ministry of Love. I wonder why. Was that to inflict further torture on them through life? Winston says, "They are corpses waiting to be sent to their graves." I bet this will happen to him ...

Another suggested:

... I have the feeling that Winston is going to get snagged. I think when he learns the rest of the nursery rhyme, that will be the end for Winston ...

One student showed attention to detail when he commented:

... When Charles Darnay told the story about the prison cell in the Tower of London, Dr. Manette seemed really upset. I wonder if this will be significant later? ...

My favorite responses were the thought-provoking questions and analyses. One student wrote:

... The generic name Victory is so contradicting. Victory over what? Themselves? Or the self? ...

One student questioned:

... For Winston the difficulty seems to be in the mutability of the past. If he can't count on the past, how can he believe in the possibilities of the future? ...

Another wrote:

... When I look at the society in 1984 I automatically think of Meditation 17. Is anyone still involved in mankind? Does anyone care? ...

One student observed:

... Dickens is relating the occurrences of the day, inspiring a revolution, to the manipulations of two tangible beings -- a woodman and a farmer. Fate is connecting the framework of revolt. That is, the tribulations and cruel gestures of the aristocrats are building up an underground network of oppressed people instead of causing them to cease their "pestilence." Death, caused by the same aristocrats, is fertilizing the call to revolt ...

This type of intellectual curiosity allowed these readers to relate the text to the world.

I also asked students to write evaluations for me of the learning log as a complement to literature. Overwhelmingly, the students declared the learning log "too hard" and "too time-consuming." One student even wrote as a critique, "It made me think the whole time I read the book." Very few students replied that they had actually enjoyed the assignment, but the majority of their anonymous comments included such responses as, "I felt like a part of the book," "It made me read differently," "I actually saw the

characters," "I will do it for other books," and "I really knew the book." Many students even said it wasn't fair to take the exam on the book they didn't keep a learning log for because they didn't know it as well.

Analysis of Objective Test Data

The test scores of all 100 students on the A Tale of Two Cities and 1984 exams given after class study of each novel are presented in Table 1. Additionally, Table 2 illustrates the test scores of the 100 students on the 25-question objective exams on each novel administered as part of the final examination in June of 1989. Figure 2 is a bar-graph representation of the means for all 100 students and the means for Group A and Group B on the two major exams as well as the retest of these novels at the end of the school year.

From this data it appears that the learning log did make a difference. The students in Group A scored 86.88, above the 84.39 whole group mean on the exam for A Tale of Two Cities; whereas, the students in Group B scored 81.9, below the whole group mean. The students in Group B, on the other hand, scored 82.1, above the 75.83 whole group mean on the exam for 1984; whereas, Group A scored 69.56, below the whole group mean. The null hypothesis, that the learning log made no difference in students' scores, could be rejected since

Table 1. Scores on 50-Question Objective Exams

Exam Scores on <u>A Tale of Two Cities</u> (December 1988)		Exam Scores on <u>1984</u> (April 1989)	
<u>Group A</u>	<u>Group B</u>	<u>Group A</u>	<u>Group B</u>
92	82	66	66
94	88	50	91
96	58	82	42
84	66	76	72
94	96	82	98
80	93	28	96
98	92	86	96
84	86	72	90
84	88	56	94
88	72	78	72
98	90	86	86
88	54	46	82
98	84	78	94
86	90	80	94
86	90	72	90
90	92	52	90
80	88	78	72
98	54	88	76
82	88	56	94
76	88	40	80
86	72	68	80
78	90	72	84
92	62	82	44
88	78	52	64
94	86	76	84
90	68	92	70
78	90	54	96
78	88	46	96
88	78	70	72
64	100	42	100
80	92	56	86
82	84	58	96
90	66	76	84
86	90	68	94
100	84	88	76
96	82	78	76
86	84	88	84
92	82	78	66
90	92	82	92
70	62	52	80
80	78	66	92
100	68	100	80
92	100	88	100
80	66	52	40
96	86	96	92
86	96	78	86
86	84	92	80
92	78	78	66
88	96	50	92
60	74	48	78

Table 2. Scores on 25-Question Objective Retest Exams

Questions on <u>A Tale of Two Cities</u> on the final exam (June 1989)		Questions on <u>1984</u> on the final exam (June 1989)	
<u>Group A</u>	<u>Group B</u>	<u>Group A</u>	<u>Group B</u>
100	84	88	52
78	84	64	92
96	70	88	68
100	76	72	92
88	92	64	100
74	72	40	100
100	76	76	96
88	76	88	96
80	72	60	88
100	62	68	72
92	88	72	92
84	60	44	72
100	72	72	100
98	78	92	88
88	76	88	78
92	96	84	100
88	88	68	100
100	64	92	72
84	84	72	90
80	76	40	98
76	56	44	84
82	80	76	88
96	48	92	68
84	62	56	56
84	72	72	76
94	64	92	80
68	84	60	92
80	72	60	76
96	92	72	80
56	96	52	100
92	88	80	84
84	92	60	100
96	72	76	76
96	96	76	96
100	64	88	68
100	80	76	76
92	88	76	72
96	76	82	84
96	86	84	100
92	56	60	76
80	82	72	88
100	72	92	84
96	96	92	100
86	60	60	48
100	84	92	80
82	76	72	76
92	76	86	72
92	68	86	88
80	88	52	92
52	92	40	92

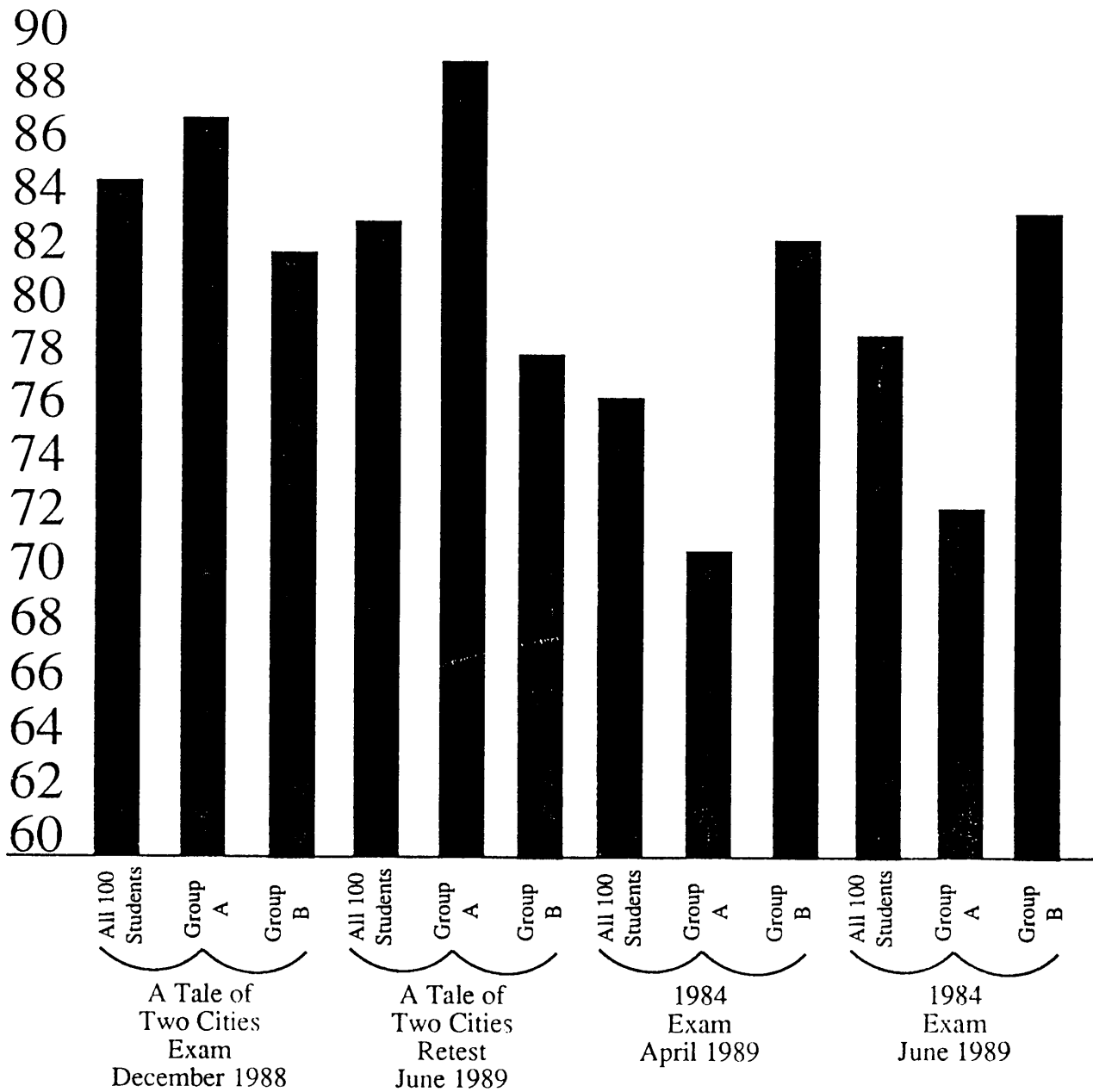


Figure 2. Mean Scores on Objective Exams

the means of Group A did not equal the means of Group B. To determine if this difference was statistically significant and not a chance occurrence, I performed a two-tailed t-test for each exam. The critical value of t with 98 degrees of freedom at the 95% confidence level was 1.6; at the 99% confidence level it was 2.36. On the 50-question objective exam for A Tale of Two Cities, the t value was 2.364; on the 50-question objective exam for 1984, the t value was 3.78. Therefore, the variable, the learning log, was responsible for the difference between groups and appeared to be an effective instructional tool.

On the retest exam for A Tale of Two Cities, the t value was 4.45; on the retest exam for 1984, the t value was 3.74. Again the difference was statistically significant. It was important to note the increase in the retest effect on the exam for A Tale of Two Cities. These results supported a study by Wotring and Tierney (1981) that indicated the learning log is particularly effective in delayed testing. The original exam had been given in December and the retest exam in June. Students keeping learning logs for A Tale of Two Cities retained the information throughout the year. The associations, predictions, and questions as well as the physical act of writing their thoughts must have enabled students to more readily retrieve the information from long-term memory. Although this effect was not seen in the 1984

exams, in this case, there was only a one-month delay between exams.

I believe the difference in the types of text had an impact on this study as well. A Tale of Two Cities and 1984 contain differences in style, themes, characters, plot, and tone. Two uniquely different genres, these novels are difficult to compare and the objective exam scores illustrated these distinctions.

The students hated these objective exams for two main reasons. Firstly, they were used to, and preferred, the essay exams I normally gave. These tests are, in all fairness to the students, more transfer-appropriate. Secondly, they said the exams were "picky," "shallow," "ridiculous" and they knew much more than the questions indicated. They were correct. Although the group keeping the learning logs scored above the mean on each examination, the actual scores did not adequately measure the knowledge of the students as unique learners.

Mini-Case Studies

In early December, the fifty students in Group A turned in their learning logs on A Tale of Two Cities. All of the students attempted the assignment and no learning logs were

late. For this part of my study, I randomly chose the works of three students -- Mary, Jim, and Mike.

Mary

Mary was an exceptional young lady. Maintaining a 3.5 average, she was also involved in student government, basketball, S.A.D.D., and community service programs. She possessed a great deal of character and was admired by the faculty and her peers. Her family life had been difficult -- an alcoholic parent and a divorce, yet these challenges only served to make her a stronger, more confident individual. Immediately after the assignment had been explained, she contracted the chicken pox and was absent for all class discussion of the author, time period, and text. Her learning log is particularly interesting as it illustrates how she found her own sense of the novel without interaction with me or her classmates. She wrote:

Dickens immediately leaves me with no room for simplicity. His opening line is a perfect example of contrasts which he carries throughout the chapter -- maybe the book? ...

... I didn't relate to where he started out with a real gloomy outlook, and I can't see where he can tie in the spiritualness of the people. I see that as a contradiction because first he's giving you a feeling of despair and hopelessness, but he turns around in the next paragraph and says the people are very spiritual. But if they are spiritual, how can they be filled with despair? ...

... Dickens spends a lot of time and detail discussing the horses and their problems tracking

through the mud. Maybe Dickens is trying to relate them to the people? The horses' lack of energy except when whipped could parallel the people being oppressed by the government. If so, the mud could be the misery of their daily lives ...

... By reading this chapter (Chapter 2, Book 2) I came to the conclusion that Jerry Cruncher is a "fishy" character. It seems he is always planning something illegal yet he keeps referring to himself as an "honest tradesman." He is so fake it is ridiculous ...

... I could see that death was near for the Marquis because of Dickens' use of the red sunset. Like red with the wine cask, it symbolized death ...

... When Carton declares his love for Lucie he proves to be a man of great sentimental worth. He must be a real hero and it frightens me that he says he would give his life for her or someone she loves ...

... It was tragic that the peasants who were once fighting for the unmerciful murders of their loved ones had been taken over by revenge ...

These excerpts from Mary's log show her discovery of the style Dickens employs, the traits of the characters, the situations existing in England and France, and several themes, particularly an emphasis on religious ones. When she returned to school, she did not feel behind the classwork and was able to actively participate in lively discussions.

On the 50-question objective exam for A Tale of Two Cities Mary scored an 88, above the mean although below her usual work; on the 1984 exam, having not done a learning log, she scored a 72, below the mean. During the work on 1984 she had neither been sick nor had any unusual pressures. She was very honest, in a conference with me, when she said that the learning log forced her to read more carefully and think as

she read. An in-class writing assignment showed her comprehension and interpretive strengths as she integrated a variety of ideas in a cohesive, thoughtful paper. In forty minutes she wrote:

While Dickens does not begin his novel A Tale of Two Cities with the theme of resurrection, it soon becomes the driving force of the novel. This theme of resurrection brings A Tale of Two Cities full circle, creating a means for the intimate relationships shared by all of the characters. Each character plays an important role in this intricate story by taking on the resurrection of another character.

Dickens sets up his story with a strong basis in Christianity. Along with his juxtaposition of opposites between the two cities, he also compares Good and Evil, Light and Darkness and Heaven and Hell. He describes the "Christian pastors" guiding the people and creating the tools of the Revolution using the great suffering of the people. Just as Jesus died for His people and His cause, scores of Frenchmen were eager to do the same.

Dickens ties in the Christian Resurrection with the resurrections of his characters by relating the spilled wine to the spilled blood of the Revolution. The spilled wine shows not only a loss of human dignity but a relationship to Jesus. Jesus spilled blood for His people and for His cause; He suffered a loss of human dignity, and He is represented resurrected in the Eucharistic wine.

Jarvis Lorry informs the world that Dr. Manette has been "recalled to life." He had been imprisoned for eighteen years, thought to be dead. The Defarges have been caring for Dr. Manette, slowly trying to bring him back to life. His daughter, Lucie, must actually do the resurrecting of her father's soul which seems to have passed on. Mr. Lorry wonders if Dr. Manette really wants to be "recalled to life" imagining Dr. Manette replying that he cannot be sure. One must wonder if a peace has been created within Dr. Manette more peaceful than reality.

Jerry Cruncher resurrects the dead in his own way. His grave-digging practices set the scene for his miserable lifestyle while at the same time reveal truths about the other characters that Dickens artfully uses later in the story. Cruncher's failure to resurrect Roger Cly shapes Cly's later role in resurrecting Charles Darnay.

Darnay is resurrected three times, mostly through the pain and destruction of others. Darnay represents Life for Lucie while at the same time represents Death for Sydney Carton. Lucie brings Light and Life to Carton who is only to be crushed by her Life -- Darnay. These three characters create a vicious circle of resurrections ending in the death of Carton only to resurrect him through their child.

Lucie gives Carton the will to live yet he is willing to die for her happiness. When he dies for her, he resurrects her hopes, her faith, her husband, and her love for him. She, in turn, resurrects him after his death through her child who becomes what he could have been. Carton, like Christ, has died for the sins of others so that they could go on living.

Though it seems that dying for a cause is highly regarded by Dickens as shown in his hero's altruism, the lust for life he instills in his characters and their unwillingness to let each other die may indicate that he considers the heroes those who have endured. His character's resurrections show their unwillingness to die and his unwillingness to let them.

Jim

Probably the most interesting of the learning logs was written by Jim, a young man with a 3.0 grade point average, actively involved in student government and the swim team. The oldest of four boys, Jim came from a turbulent home, almost military in nature. Jim hated writing at the beginning of the year and believed that everything he wrote was unacceptable. He was also angry that he was assigned to Group A as he didn't think he would like Dickens but would

probably be able to "get into" Orwell. I asked him to please give it a try since he had to read the novel anyway. His learning log turned out to be the most reflective, philosophical, and detailed (over 100 pages) of any of those I have encountered. Some excerpts included:

What an entrance! Dickens, who gives new meaning to your words, "Be Specific," gets into some heavy material. He describes the conditions of Paris and London by description and philosophical personification. My favorite is the discussion of Fate as a woodman and Death as a farmer ...

... Dicken's descriptions of the weather conditions are poetic and soothing. I can almost feel the dampness and mud on my boots while I hear every difficult step of the horses ...

... I get disgusted when Dickens describes the courtyard and stairs to Dr. Manette's room at the wine shop. I envision shabby houses, paint falling off the walls, human waste strewn everywhere, a foul stench. It should make anyone examine the conditions of peasant life -- UGH! ...

... Carton and Darnay are reflected in the mirror.. Doesn't a mirror reflect objects backwards to reality? Could this be significant? ...

... Again, Dickens is getting a little obvious with his resurrection theme when Mr. Lorry says, "almost a night to bring the dead out of their graves," and the repetition of the number three ...

... Sydney has many repressed feelings. His life is a hard one of determining his own self worth. To his disposition I attribute alcohol. I have seen what it can do to a man. It chooses no particular victim; rich and poor alike may share this disease. But, it devastates the person, casting them deeper into despair and degrading every aspect of their lives. Sydney chooses to remain in his destructive state. Why? Is it easier to remain the person he views himself as than to change and make something of his life? He can change his ways if he truly desires. It is a hard route,

granted, but it can be done. Lucie is one route. He sees her, loves her, and imagines what his life could have been. Instead of trying to change, he showers himself with self-pity (an alcoholic characteristic) and gains Lucie's compassion, all he desires. I believe him to be true in his feelings but false to himself, by not correcting his incorrigible habits. Lucie is an awakening for him, reality, a goal which he has already chosen not to reach. Depressing. I have pity and compassion for him but no respect ...

... In Chapter 17, the stage is set. Lucie and her dad are going to "share a moment" together. Quick, let me get my camera. Sappy, but acceptable. Little is said, but much is communicated -- deep love for father. My profound thoughts come with the passages about how life is sad, the coming and going of human life, like moonlight and sunlight fading away through the earth's rotation. Nothing is really permanent. Lucie cannot be happy unless her father is. Dr. Manette cannot be happy unless Lucie is happy. Very, very sappy. Miss B., I bet you love this scene! ...

... Oops, I now award Carton. Darnay is seeming a little like a fake when compared to Carton. Carton's mind is more advanced although his appearance and self-esteem are depressed. When Lucie says, "I fear he is not to be reclaimed," Dickens again hits us with "recalled to life" then foreshadows (I've read ahead -- sorry) with, "I am sure he is capable of good things, gentle things, magnanimous things" ...

... Dickens describes the continuing storming (back to the lightning in Soho?) of the Bastille as a raging flood -- killer! ...

... Could Carton's whisper to Lucie, "a life you love" be similar to Jesus' death on the cross for us?

At the end of his log, Jim wrote the following note:

Miss B,

I really enjoyed this book! Granted it had its difficult and boring parts, but I think Dickens is a great writer. I read the book twice -- once to get the gist of it, once for my learning log. Each time I read it, or when I look back at something I wrote, I get more from it. I believe this book to be a classic. Thanks

for encouraging me to stick with this book -- the log made me think as I read and I know I wouldn't have gotten involved with the story without this journal.

Jim
3:10 A.M.

On the 50-question objective exam, Jim scored 98, well above the mean and well above his usual work. He truly believed the learning log made all the difference. On the exam for 1984, the book in which he had expressed such interest, he still scored above the mean with an 86, much more typical of his usual work.

For a student who professed to hate writing, he wrote the following essay during a forty-minute class:

Charles Dickens' themes center around resurrection in A Tale of Two Cities. From the beginning of the book in the chapter "Night Shadows" when Lorry ponders the idea of "recalled to life" to the last chapter "Footsteps Die Out Forever" when Sydney Carton finally finds meaning in life, resurrection is woven throughout the characters' lives. In the lives of Dr. Manette, Charles Darnay, Sydney Carton, Jerry Cruncher, and little Sydney this theme is expressed.

Dr. Manette's recalling is the most prominent. He has spent eighteen years in the Bastille accused for crimes he never committed. The imprisonment has made him a robot, oblivious to his environment, literally powerless. His mind only comprehends the making of shoes. Lucie Manette encourages her father to weep, to bring out his human emotions. He begins the long road to recovery. Although Jarvis Lorry's cryptic response, "I can't say" leads one to believe the recovery will never end, Dr. Manette seems to have completed his cure by the end of the novel.

One man lucky to be alive is Charles Darnay. He has been on trial three times, once in England when he was acquitted due to his resemblance to Sydney Carton, a second time in France during the Revolution when he was

freed after Dr. Manette's plea, and the third time after being renounced by three citizens. Darnay is saved by Sydney Carton.

Jerry Cruncher, a comic relief in the story, plays a part in the resurrection theme. He is a graverobber who disinters new corpses for medical experimentation in exchange for money. An "honest tradesman," he is called a "resurrection man."

A man without meaning to his life, Sydney Carton finds his resurrection in service to someone he loves, appreciates, and respects. Difficult for a man who keeps to himself, Carton allows Lucie to conquer him, opening his heart. Still in his self-pitying philosophy, he believes himself not worthy of her. His promise foreshadows an imminent death. Carton, much like Christ, sacrifices his life so Lucie can be happy. He is then recalled from his meaninglessness.

At the guillotine, Sydney envisions a little Sydney born to the Darnays. This child is all Sydney could have been.

Dickens, in A Tale of Two Cities, centers an intriguing story around the message of the importance of finding a meaningful place in life.

Mike

The third learning log I chose to include in this study was written by Mike, a student interested in politics, history, and wars -- not, as he emphatically told me, English. His grade point average was a 2.0 and his extracurricular involvements included the Model United Nations Club and basketball. Probably the most significant factor in his home life was the recent death of his mother. The oldest of three boys, he was forced to assume a lot of responsibility for a teenager. His learning log was an

enjoyable, colloquial discussion of a book which he really did not enjoy.

... I don't understand why it took Dickens six, long, wordy chapters to set the plot in motion. His eye for detail is good, but too large. For example, the peasants made dams to keep the wine from flowing. I could have assumed that ...

... Why were the British so bloodthirsty? Is it any wonder that the colonies wanted to break away from England? ...

... This chapter shows the indifference of the aristocracy towards human life and the footsteps keep getting louder with each such event ...

... Again, Dickens shows how cruel the upper class can be when a woman whose husband had recently died stopped the Marquis' carriage to ask for a small grave marker. By this time, it is clear that a revolution is brewing. Dickens is also saying that the same thing might happen in England ...

... The most important part of this chapter is found in the last sentence when Carton says, "... think now and then that there is a man who would give his life to keep a life you love beside you." Wow, I think Sydney Carton slipped off his rocker. Of course, he would die for Lucie, but for someone she loved? ...

... The whole book seems to be based on dualities - best/worst, rich/poor, light/dark, liberty/revenge ...

... Here is a potentially important part in the book. We learn that, through a mole in the police force, a spy will be placed among the peasants. M. Defarge describes his physical qualities and states that his name is John Barsad. I remember that Barsad was a witness at the trial of Charles Darnay ...

... Darnay is such an idiot! I had goosebumps for five minutes after I finished reading. It is so profound, that I may have given my life for Carton. What a tremendous man! His face gave confidence to the twenty-year-old seamstress who went to the guillotine before him. The ending helped me, Miss Bowman, as the

first anniversary of my mother's death will soon be here. I hope my mom found the same kind of peace and contentment Sydney did. My mom would have died for those she loved, too.

Mike is one of those students who enjoys reading and reads often for pleasure but avoids required class readings. It is usually difficult to elicit responses from him in class; therefore, I was excited about his comments in his journal on the book.

On the 50-question objective exam he scored a 90, well above the mean and his usual performance. He always performed better, however, on objective exams than written papers and essays. On the exam for 1984 he scored an 82, again, well above the mean. He did comment that he enjoyed helping his girlfriend with her learning log on 1984!

Mike's in-class writing illustrated a fairly good grasp of the material and for him this was exceptional work:

Resurrection in A Tale of Two Cities was probably the most dominant theme. Charles Dickens achieved this through the use of foreshadowing and symbolism in this historically-based novel.

The first time this theme becomes apparent is in the beginning of the novel. Doctor Manette is recalled to life by his daughter Lucie. Doctor Manette has been buried alive or presumed dead for eighteen years. To recall Doctor Manette to life means to bring him back from the dead into his regular state of mind. The thing that Lucie does to recall her father to life is to simply meet him. Her hair matches the hair of his wife's and he returns from his state of amnesia.

Charles Darnay was recalled to life three times in the novel. The first time that Darnay was recalled to life was at the first trial in April of the year 1780.

Darnay was on trial for treason. The punishment for treason was drawing and quartering. Drawing and quartering is when they tie your four limbs to four different horses and have the horses all run off in different directions. I'm sure it wasn't a pleasant sight. Darnay is resurrected by Sydney Carton who saves Darnay by appearing to look identical to him. The second time Darnay is resurrected is at the second trial in December of 1793. Darnay is accused of being the last of a long line of evil aristocrats by the name Evremonde. He is resurrected by Doctor Manette who uses his personal influence to get Darnay acquitted. The third time that Darnay is resurrected is of course at the third trial in December of 1793 which was only a few days after his last acquittal.

Doctor Manette's papers are found in his prison cell and even his influence will not stop the jury from finding Darnay guilty. The night before his execution Darnay is visited by Sydney Carton who drugs Darnay and takes his place. This resurrection from certain death was the most dramatic of the three.

Sydney Carton is a man known as the jackal. He was considered a scavenger and his intellectual genius was unknown except to Stryver who took credit for all of Carton's work. His life was going nowhere and his biggest fear was to die unmourned. He is incredibly in love with Lucie. He sees a way to give his life meaning and to leave a remembrance of himself that will be respected. He takes Darnay's place at the guillotine.

Jerry Cruncher is a messenger for Tellson's Bank. He is also a gravedigger, men who were known in those days as resurrection men. They got that name because when someone was buried they were supposed to be resurrected from the dead. The parody here is that Cruncher did resurrect their bodies. He was a body snatcher who sold bodies to surgeons for experiments.

The people of France also were resurrected from poverty. After the revolution, the people of France had a new vitality. They had been oppressed for so long that they lost the will to fight for what they believed in. Then there was the Revolution and the people became alive and active. Too bad they used this new vitality to kill and destroy.

The learning logs on 1984 were submitted in April by the fifty students in Group B. These offered very different discussions from the Tale of Two Cities logs, yet they illustrated an interaction with the novel which proved beneficial to the students' understanding of the text. Once again, I randomly selected three learning logs and looked carefully at the responses of three students -- Karen, Janet, and Kevin.

Karen

Karen was the class valedictorian, an intelligent young woman who had to work very hard for the top grades. She was unable, however, to score well on any standardized exam. Although she possessed a 4.13 grade point average, her SAT scores wavered around a 900. From a secure, professional family, Karen was highly motivated to achieve her goals. Her learning log was interesting in its personal interjections:

... I'd rather be a prole in Oceania because they are basically free. They do not have telescreens in their homes and are rarely interfered with by the civil police. The sexual rules did not apply to them since they were of a despised class. It would not bother me to be compared to the animals, at least I would be free ...

... After Winston left the pub, he entered a store that reminded me of a tiny antique shop along the streets of Williamsburg, Virginia. In contrast to the pub, I felt that Winston was safe in Mr. Charrington's shop. He seemed like a friendly and open man. From the description of the interior of the shop, I am beginning to think that dust is symbolic -- not for uncleanliness

or dirt, rather to preserve the relics of the past. It may even show a disintegration of the past ...

... I don't believe it, Mr. Charrington was a member of the Thought Police the whole time. I would never have guessed this. His new physical characteristics resemble those of O'Brien. I bet O'Brien is a member of the Thought Police, too. O'Brien tricked Winston into thinking that there was a Brotherhood to convict him of thoughtcrime. No wonder "The Book" did not tell Winston anything new. It was only a ploy to create realism in the existence of the Brotherhood. I can't believe the abrupt turn of events! Orwell is a mastermind ...

Karen's log was over 60 pages of reflection, and it was obvious that she had reached an understanding of the novel as well as a clearer view of what she found important in our society. I was concerned about her scores on the 50-question objective exams, but she received a 90 on both tests, well above the means, particularly the mean for the 1984 exam.

Her personal response to the novel was again evident in a 20-minute free writing about the novel. She wrote:

Orwell's description of the characters who ruled in Oceania seemed to parallel with Russian leaders in history. Emmanuel Goldstein is a great deal like Trotsky with his Jewish name and gray goatee beard. Trotsky did not believe in totalitarianism and was exiled by Stalin for his resistance to Stalin's rule. Goldstein was the hated man resisting Big Brother's rule. Big Brother, like Stalin, encouraged totalitarianism and was a self-righteous ruler. Big Brother reminds me physically of Hitler who expressed similar beliefs as Stalin.

Orwell uses references to Russian Communists and German Nazis throughout 1984 and I can only be grateful that this does not exist in reality. If this is anti-utopian literature, portraying life in an imperfect world, then America must be the Utopia of freedom and feelings.

Janet

Janet was a French-Canadian student with a 3.0 grade point average interested in psychology and English. Having attended boarding schools in Europe and Canada, she was very independent -- as an individual and a student. Her learning log reflected her interest in human motivations as she wrote:

... The victory gin is wearing off. I think Winston uses it as a crutch to help drown his anger, fears, and helplessness. He realizes there is nothing in life that is really and privately his own. This kind of life reminds me of Russia or communist Germany. Oceania is similar because of the totalitarian government it thrives on. Like in dictatorships, the people have to be careful what they say about the government. The government issues rations of food, of which there is never enough. In the Soviet Union there is never enough of the necessities such as toilet paper or meat. In the U.S.S.R., the Soviets have been known to indulge in their vodka, with the hard and burning sensation like Winston's victory gin ...

... I think Winston is sexually frustrated and the scene with the prostitute reminds me of the movie "Moscow on the Hudson" where there was a similar scene where the main character has met with his lover clandestinely and feels a surge of hatred for the Kremlin because he has to sneak around. Winston thinks his greatest enemy is his nervous system! ...

... Winston does enjoy his job. Although it seems monotonous and boring, there are times when he can lose himself in creating and re-creating people. It was his only outlet for expression because bright ideas and conflicting ideologies were punishable by death. Thinking was discouraged in almost every facet of life ...

Janet's learning log explored a variety of ideas which later came up in class discussions. On the objective exam

for 1984 she received a 94, far above the mean and one of the best scores in the class. On the Tale of Two Cities exam she scored an 84, even though she said she liked that novel more!

Her brief writing assimilated many of the ideas in her journal with a very psychology-based focus:

The outer party carried out the policies of the inner party. They were responsible for putting up slogans and banners, openly conditioning the proles and outer party members to believe and practice party doctrine without probing into or trying to comprehend the laws and rules. B.F. Skinner originated programmed instruction where the pupil is conditioned to accept the information supplied. He promoted mass-conditioning as a means of controlling society. Big Brother's ideology in Orwell's 1984 reflects Skinner's studies of behavior modification.

Kevin

Thirdly, I looked at the learning log of Kevin, a transfer student with a 2.1 grade point average. From a single-parent family, Kevin went through bouts of leukemia as a child and spent several months in drug-abuse counseling. His learning log was one of my favorites as it truly reflected his personality and reactions to the book:

... The author sets a gray, dark, gloomy mood of disgust in the beginning with dust covering everything and the smell of cabbage everywhere -- I know I hate the smell of cabbage in my house! ...

... Newspeak seems to exist to cut words down to a minimum and the dork Winston works with likes doing it. This guy doesn't care that the government is thinking for him, that Shakespeare and Chaucer are being rewritten. This guy is a weak individual who has no

identity or self-worth and seems to enjoy destroying what took centuries to build ...

... Winston reminds me of the lead character in the movie "They Live" by John Carpenter. His life seems meaningless as he only thought by dying he could change the way things were going. "They Live" seems to be an updated version of 1984. As I develop hand cramp, I wonder about Orwell mentioning Shakespeare. George needs to take lessons from Will -- I liked Will but George bores me ...

... Up to now, Miss Bowman, I think Winston ought to get that ulcer checked out and stay away from gin, bag Julia, and keep fighting the government brainwashing ...

... Winston is in love! Julia slipped him a note saying, "I love you" and that's all it took. I knew she wasn't a spy and now he's gone from wanting to bash her brains in to wanting to go to bed with her. This is what women always do to men ...

Kevin made a lot of interesting connections in his log which showed his participation in the novel. On the objective exam for 1984 he scored a 78, not much above the mean and only a little above average for him. On the Tale of Two Cities test he received a 66. The inconsistency in these scores reflects his dislike of objective exams in the teaching/learning of literature.

His 20-minute writing was as colloquial as his learning log. He wrote:

1984 was a good book but not a great book. Basically Winston was tortured more each chapter and was deteriorated into an "unperson." Orwell let me down at the end of the book, but maybe he was trying to show that every cloud doesn't have a silver lining and that not every book will have a happy ending. I tried to

watch the movie but I found it so boring I turned it off after Winston was captured. It is a frightening look at what the U.S. could become if we do not protect our democratic society.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

When I began this thesis, in fact, in my original proposal to study the effects of learning logs on high school literature achievement, the major focus was to center on the second part of this study involving precise test scores on objective examinations to substantiate the learning log effect. What I learned from this study was that no multiple-choice, true-false, matching questions could possibly define the effect of this valuable learning tool.

The test scores for the students who kept learning logs were higher than those for the students who did not. Indeed, retest scores indicated even greater results, suggesting the learning log is effective in utilizing prior knowledge and storing information in long-term memory.

Some may find these scores evidence enough to consider more such cognitive instruction in the classroom. The real data, however, can be found in the learning logs themselves. For here, we can observe the processes our students employ in reading and finding meaning. Here we see that more understanding, integrating, and assimilating occurs the more students write. The benefits were many in this study as all 100 students were able to write better in-class papers,

organize their ideas more cohesively, and participate confidently in class discussions after keeping a learning log. I will always remember the excitement of one student in danger of not graduating as he found his own ideas through reading. Several times he would interject into class discussions, whether relative or not, insights from his log. One day I began class by asking him to "talk about the book so far." As he summarized, explained, and editorialized, the students in the class looked at each other with shock and surprise and finally said, "Hey, give us a chance to talk!" This young man was so proud of himself, and his grades in all his classes increased dramatically.

Another student who admitted that he hated to read and was one of the students I referred to earlier as more willing to purchase Cliff Notes than pick up the book gave 1984 an honest try. His learning log was amusing as he coached Winston through every encounter. His comments, "Come on, Winston; that's my boy!" and "You moron, how could you?" showed a genuine interaction with the text. During class, a squirrel often ran by the door and sometimes into the classroom. He quickly named the squirrel Winston and its appearance always brought a wealth of references to subtle themes, incidents, and phrases from 1984 long after the novel had been concluded.

I noticed the biggest difference from the learning logs in my average-achieving students. For the most part, their essays, participation, and even the test scores were far above their usual work. These students began to exemplify the characteristics of the higher-achieving students.

I found that the learning logs also helped the lower-achieving students, but to a lesser degree. I believe this was due, in part, to a lack of time and effort put into the logs by these students. For those students, however, who did commit themselves to their learning log, improvement was noticeable and their test scores were aligned closer to the mean.

The higher-achieving students produced wonderful learning logs which kept me immersed for hours, yet their test scores showed very little change from their usual performance. However, these students were the most adamant in their assertion that the learning log made a big difference in their level of understanding of the text.

When I first explained the assignment, the students thought it was a simple one. Group B learned, though, from the agonizing of Group A near the due date of their logs that the learning logs required more time and thought than appeared from the instructions. It was heart-warming to hear daily, "The more I write, the more I have to say." Comments such as "This could take forever," "I could write about this

book all year," and "I didn't know I knew so much" best evaluated the critical thinking generated by linking reading and writing.

With this study came new ideas and new hypotheses. For example, such experimental questions for me in the future will include:

- Is the average-achieving student most benefitted from the learning log?
- Will essay exams show the same differences between control group and experimental group?
- Will narrowing or broadening the framework of the learning log make a difference in student responses?
- Can an instructional method be devised to lead students from one level of cognitive processing to another?

The recent shift in instruction towards Writing in the Content Areas lends itself particularly well to the dynamic study of literature, and journals have long been used in the English classroom to promote creative writing and the free expression of ideas vital in a subject so inherently personal and emotional. We should be searching for the strengths in our students, confirming, not denying, their individuality, potential, and knowledge. Increasing the role of writing in the literature class will empower the students as well as the teacher in learning and assessment. In addition, writing-to-

learn techniques will encourage each teacher to be some more observant, knowledgeable, flexible, and active in the classroom, creating an environment of good instruction. This, above all, will always be the best preparation for any exam and the foundation of true education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Character Identification Match the proper description with the character.

- | | | |
|-------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| _____ | 1. Miss Pross | a. recalled to life |
| _____ | 2. Mr. Stryver | b. wine-shop master |
| _____ | 3. Jerry | c. Sheep of the Prisons |
| _____ | 4. Jarvis Lorry | d. always knitting |
| _____ | 5. Sydney Carton | e. tax official |
| _____ | 6. Miss Manette | f. wild and red |
| _____ | 7. Dr. Manette | g. earns a living as a
tutor |
| _____ | 8. Charles Darnay | h. kills the Marquis |
| _____ | 9. Mr. Barsad | i. messenger |
| _____ | 10. Madame Defarge | j. haughty in manner |
| _____ | 11. Monsieur Defarge | k. man of business |
| _____ | 12. the Marguis | l. spies for the court |
| _____ | 13. Gaspard | m. glib and
unscrupulous lawyer |
| _____ | 14. Roger Cly | n. Stryver's jackal |
| _____ | 15. Gabelle | o. golden-haired |

TRUE/FALSE If the statement is True, mark it T; if False, mark it F.

- _____ 16. The story takes place during the War of 1812.
- _____ 17. Mr. Jarvis Lorry is on his way to London at the beginning of the story.
- _____ 18. Miss Manette receives the news about her father without emotion.
- _____ 19. The broken wine cask episode vividly illustrates the desperate state of the people in Saint Antoine.

- _____ 20. Madame Defarge is a clever, calculating, cautious woman.
- _____ 21. Jacques is a code name for the revolution workers.
- _____ 22. Dr. Manette's years in prison change him into a bitter and vengeful man.
- _____ 23. Mrs. Cruncher prays for her husband.
- _____ 24. Charles Darnay is charged with treason.
- _____ 25. The extraordinary likeness between Darnay and Sydney Carton is the cause of Darnay's acquittal.
- _____ 26. Sydney Carton becomes a drunk because he lacks talent and intelligence.
- _____ 27. Dr. Manette gives up his shoemaker's bench for his daughter's sake.
- _____ 28. Charles Darnay hides his true identity from everyone but Lucie.
- _____ 29. The Marquis accepts his nephew's philosophy.
- _____ 30. The mender of roads avenges the death of Gaspard's child.

MULTIPLE CHOICE Choose the word or phrase that best completes the sentence.

- _____ 31. After his carriage runs over a child, the Marquis is most concerned about (a) the child, (b) his horses, (c) the driver, (d) his carriage.
- _____ 32. Sydney Carton begs Miss Manette to (a) help him stop drinking, (b) marry him, (c) be wary of Charles Darnay, (d) think compassionately of him.
- _____ 33. Jerry Cruncher's discovery that Roger Cly was never buried is important because (a) this knowledge helps Carton save Darnay's life, (b) he uncovers a secret ring of grave robbers, (c) Cly pays him to keep quiet, (d) he learns his wife has his welfare at heart.

- _____ 34. Madame Defarge is knitting (a) a shawl for Lucie, (b) shrouds for the poor, (c) a register of those who will die in the revolution, (d) a record of the shop's business.
- _____ 35. The revolutionaries (a) storm the Bastille, (b) hang and behead Foulon, (c) burn the Marquis' chateau, (d) all of these.
- _____ 36. A letter for the Marquis St. Evremonde is sent to (a) Dr. Manette, (b) Tellson and Co., (c) Mr. Stryver, (d) Sydney Carton.
- _____ 37. Darnay returns to Paris (a) to reclaim his inheritance, (b) at Mr. Lorry's request, (c) to help his friend Gabelle, (d) to see Monsieur Defarge.
- _____ 38. Hearing about Darnay's arrest, Dr. Manette (a) is despondent, (b) resumes shoemaking, (c) sends for Sydney Carton, (d) is confident he can get Charles released.
- _____ 39. Madame Defarge visits Lucie because she (a) wants to recognize her later, (b) wishes to express her sorrow, (c) wants to help Lucie escape from Paris, (d) plans to arrest her.
- _____ 40. Dr. Manette is able to see Darnay in prison because (a) he is head of the Tribunal, (b) he is turnkey at La Force, (c) he is inspecting physician of the prison, (d) he is a spy for England.
- _____ 41. Dr. Manette is a hero to the French people because he (a) is a physician, (b) was once a prisoner in the Bastille, (c) endorses the Tribunal, (d) spies against England.
- _____ 42. Darnay's release from prison (a) gives Dr. Manette confidence, (b) lasts only three days, (c) surprises Mr. Lorry, (d) upsets Sydney Carton.
- _____ 43. Charles Darnay is tried a second time for treason and denounced in a letter by (a) Mr. Lorry, (b) Dr. Manette, (c) Sydney Carton, (d) Madame Defarge.
- _____ 44. Sydney Carton's last words to Lucie are (a) "Recalled to life," (b) "Farewell, my love," (c) "May you prosper," (d) "A life you love."

- _____ 45. When Dr. Manette fails to get Darnay released from prison a second time, he (a) asks Carton to help, (b) sends Lucie to London, (c) suffers a relapse, (d) agrees to poison Darnay.

MATCHING Match the proper description with the character.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| _____ 46. Madame Defarge | a. Self-sacrifice out of love redeems a wasted life. |
| _____ 47. Marquis St. Evremonde | b. Love and compassion should guide our actions. |
| _____ 48. Charles Darnay | c. Repression is the only lasting philosophy. |
| _____ 49. Sydney Carton | d. Hatred and vengeance will right old wrongs. |
| _____ 50. Lucie Manette | e. Inherited privilege must be forfeited. |

APPENDIX B

1984

CHARACTER IDENTIFICATION Match each character with the appropriate identifying phrase.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| _____ 1. Ampleforth | a. "the human sound track" |
| _____ 2. Charrington | b. Jew with goatee beard |
| _____ 3. Goldstein | c. works in Fiction Department |
| _____ 4. Julia | d. suffers from a varicose ulcer |
| _____ 5. Katharine | e. Mongolian "servant" |
| _____ 6. Martin | f. talks thoughtcrime in sleep |
| _____ 7. O'Brien | g. philologist, Newspeak expert |
| _____ 8. Parsons | h. Thought Police disguised as
prole |
| _____ 9. Syme | i. remembers the last line of a
children's rhyme |
| _____ 10. Winston | j. poet who rhymes
"God" with "rod" |

TRUE/FALSE If the statement is True, mark it T; if False, mark it F.

- _____ 11. Winston's job is rewriting past news.
- _____ 12. The abbreviation "Ingsoc" stands for "integrative socialism."
- _____ 13. Oceania uses the metric system.
- _____ 14. There is no mention anywhere in the novel of a telephone.
- _____ 15. Julia has never seen a lemon.
- _____ 16. Winston never knows for certain that his mother is dead.

- _____ 17. Even members of the Inner Party cannot turn off the constantly eavesdropping telescreens.
- _____ 18. Julia shows a great deal of interest in "the book."
- _____ 19. There is absolutely no social mobility between the three classes of society in Oceania.
- _____ 20. After their arrest, Winston and Julia never see each other again.

MULTIPLE CHOICE Choose the word or phrase which best completes each statement.

- _____ 21. One of the party slogans states that ignorance is (a) strength, (b) love, (c) liberty, (d) dangerous.
- _____ 22. The emblem of the Junior Anti-Sex League is a (a) red handbag, (b) scarlet sash, (c) white sash, (d) steel belt.
- _____ 23. The Malabar Coast is located in (a) India, (b) China, (c) South Africa, (d) Russia.
- _____ 24. Winston awakes from one of his dreams with (a) Churchill's, (b) Milton's, (c) Shakespeare's, (d) Stalin's name on his lips.
- _____ 25. The meaning of the word "duckspeak" is (a) complimentary, (b) insulting, (c) neutral, (d) variable.
- _____ 26. Disgraced party members frequently wile away their remaining days at the (a) Chestnut Tree Cafe, (b) courthouse, (c) Ministry of Plenty, (d) railway station.
- _____ 27. "Steamer" is the proles' nickname for a (a) drink of gin, (b) rocket bomb, (c) tea kettle, (d) train.
- _____ 28. One thing which really excites the proles is (a) baseball, (b) the elections, (c) the lottery, (d) volunteer work.
- _____ 29. The word "lackey" refers to a (a) capitalist, (b) high lord (c) servile follower, (d) social rebel.

- _____ 30. St. Martin's is converted for use as a (a) war museum, (b) museum of art, (c) community center, (d) bomb factory.
- _____ 31. Which of the following is not located in Victory Square? (a) a statue of Big Brother, (b) a statue of Cromwell, (c) St. Martin's, (d) Charrington's shop.
- _____ 32. When Julia melts into Winston's arms for the first time, Winston's reaction is best described as (a) confidence, (b) scorn, (c) disgust, (d) disbelief.
- _____ 33. Julia's surname is (a) Blair, (b) Ericson, (c) Lyons, (d) not mentioned.
- _____ 34. "Muck House" is a nickname for (a) a cafe, (b) the canteen, (c) Pornosec, (d) Victory Mansions.
- _____ 35. An unwelcome intruder in the room above Charrington's shop is a (a) bat, (b) lizard, (c) rat, (d) snake.
- _____ 36. Julia thinks the rocket bombs that fall on the prole quarters are fired by the (a) Brotherhood, (b) Eastasians, (c) Eurasians, (d) Government of Oceania.
- _____ 37. O'Brien invites Winston to visit his apartment supposedly for the purpose of (a) borrowing a dictionary, (b) discussing Ingsoc, (c) drinking wine, (d) playing cards.
- _____ 38. Just before leaving O'Brien's apartment Winston proposes a toast to (a) humanity, (b) the future, (c) the past, (d) sanity.
- _____ 39. According to "the book," the actual although unstated purpose of warfare is to (a) destroy the enemy, (b) consume industrial products, (c) capture raw materials, (d) capture cheap labor.

- _____ 40. The ideology of Eurasia is called (a) Obliteration of the Self, (b) Neo-Bolshevism, (c) Ingsoc, (d) Death-Worship.
- _____ 41. According to "the book," Big Brother's function in Oceania's system of social control is to (a) be an impartial judge, (b) be the chief administrator, (c) make the laws, (d) provide a focusing point for love, fear, and reverence.
- _____ 42. While Winston awaits the beginning of his interrogation at the Ministry of Love, three of the following acquaintances come into his cell. The exception is (a) Ampleforth, (b) O'Brien, (c) Parsons, (d) Syme.
- _____ 43. O'Brien explains that the reason Winston has been brought to the Ministry of Love is to (a) cure him, (b) kill him, (c) make him confess, (d) punish him.
- _____ 44. The reason the Party seeks total power is (a) to protect Oceania from its enemies, (b) to rule benevolently over the ignorant masses, (c) for the sake of power itself, (d) not explained in the novel.
- _____ 45. According to Party doctrine, God is (a) hate, (b) love, (c) power, (d) truth.
- _____ 46. The form of torture used to bring about Julia's betrayal of Winston is (a) branding irons, (b) starvation, (c) snakes, (d) not mentioned.
- _____ 47. The last scene in the novel is set in (a) Charrington's shop, (b) the Chestnut Tree Cafe, (c) Room 101, (d) a church.
- _____ 48. Three of the following statements are characteristic of Newspeak. The exception is (a) vocabulary is drastically reduced, (b) subtle shades of meaning can be expressed with precision, (c) Newspeak is

designed to diminish the range of thought, (d) Newspeak is founded on Esperanto.

- _____ 49. In the Appendix, Orwell quotes from a well-known document which contains the words: "whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of those ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it..." The document quoted is the (a) American Declaration of Independence, (b) Communist Manifesto, (c) English Bill of Rights, (d) Magna Carta.
- _____ 50. Julia slips Winston a note on which is written (a) Meet me in Victory Square, (b) I love you, (c) Big Brother loves you, (d) Join the Brotherhood.

APPENDIX C

A Tale of Two Cities

Matching

_____	the guillotine	a.	always flopping
_____	Bastille	b.	buried alive eighteen years
_____	Saint Antoine	c.	close to Dr. Manette's home
_____	Soho Square	d.	National Razor
_____	Lucie Manette	e.	revolutionary dance
_____	Sydney Carton	f.	frightfully grand woman
_____	Tellson's Bank	g.	weaves the golden thread
_____	Old Bailey	h.	rusty fingers
_____	the Marquis	i.	French prison
_____	Mrs. Cruncher	j.	poor suburb
_____	Jerry Cruncher	k.	murdered by the Jacquerie
_____	Charles Darnay	l.	English court
_____	Dr. Manette	m.	place of business
_____	Carmagnole	n.	dies at the guillotine
_____	Madame Defarge	o.	nephew of the marquis

True or False

- _____ Madame Defarge is always knitting.
- _____ Mr. Stryver is Sydney Carton's jackal.
- _____ Dr. Manette never returns to his shoemaker's bench.
- _____ Jerry Cruncher thinks his wife is praying against him.
- _____ Dr. Manette does not want to know Darnay's true identity.
- _____ The story takes place in the 1600s.
- _____ The passengers in the mail coach are worried about highwaymen.
- _____ The Marquis favors granting peasants more rights.
- _____ John Barsad is a turnkey.
- _____ Madame Defarge is killed by the mob.

APPENDIX D

1984

Matching

- | | | | |
|-------|-------------|----|-------------------------------|
| _____ | Charrington | a. | enemy of Oceania |
| _____ | O'Brien | b. | Winston's neighbor |
| _____ | Katharine | c. | servant |
| _____ | Syme | d. | leader of the Revolution |
| _____ | Goldstein | e. | member of the Anti-Sex League |
| _____ | Julia | f. | poet |
| _____ | Martin | h. | Winston's wife |
| _____ | Ampleforth | i. | member of Thought Police |
| _____ | Rutherford | j. | interrogator |

True or False

- _____ There are no written laws in Oceania.
- _____ There is no mention of modern warfare in 1984.
- _____ Winston and Katharine had one child.
- _____ Winston is Julia's first lover.
- _____ It is difficult to find out where anyone lives in London.
- _____ There is no word for science in Newspeak.
- _____ Winston dies hating Big Brother.
- _____ O'Brien is arrested as the novel ends.
- _____ Gangsters and murderers are treated better than political prisoners in Oceania.
- _____ Oceania came into being when Great Britain was absorbed by the United States.

- _____ Winston works for the Ministry of Love.
- _____ Winston's greatest fear is tests.
- _____ Two Minute Hate is directed at Goldstein.
- _____ War is strength.
- _____ Winston usually drinks beer.

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