

CREATIVE WRITING IN THE LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM  
OF THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES

---

4871  
EVELYN FRAZIER

B. S., Sterling College, 1955

---

A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1970

Approved by:

Harlan J. Trennepohl  
Major Professor

LD  
2648  
R4  
1970  
F72  
C.2

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTROCUCTION . . . . .	1
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	2
Importance of the Study . . . . .	2
Definition of Terms . . . . .	3
Language arts . . . . .	3
Creative writing . . . . .	3
Audience . . . . .	4
Evaluation . . . . .	4
Climate . . . . .	4
METHOD OF RESEARCH . . . . .	4
Limits of the Study . . . . .	5
REVIEW OF LITERATURE . . . . .	5
The Value of Creative Writing to Intermediate Grade Children .	7
Factors that Affect Creative Writing . . . . .	8
Some Ways to Evaluate Creative Writing . . . . .	11
Techniques that Encourage Children to Write Creatively . . . .	13
A Survey of Language Arts Materials from Nineteen States . . .	18
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION . . . . .	19
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	22
APPENDIX A. A Collection of Creative Writing by Sixth Graders . .	24
APPENDIX B. Cumulative Collections of Writing by Patti Reed and Ricky Webb, 1969-1970 . . . . .	34

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The writer wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the advice and encouragement given by Dr. Harlan J. Trennepohl in the preparation of this report.

## INTRODUCTION

Tell me, where is fancy bred,  
Or in the heart, or in the head?  
How begot, how nourished?

William Shakespeare  
The Merchant of Venice

No less than painting or drawing or acting, writing can be self-portrayal. To the degree that it is honest personal expression, it is an art experience.<sup>1</sup>

The development of the language arts occupies almost the entire school day at the elementary level; in reality, language is taught from the time the first child enters the classroom in the morning until the last child goes home. The teaching of language arts is a coordinating enterprise which includes such skills as speaking, writing, and vocabulary growth taught together rather than in isolation. Personal, individual, or creative writing is a most important part of a well-rounded language program.

Paul S. Anderson states: "Perhaps the most important idea that those who work with children in the area of creative or imaginative writing have found to be true is one of the utmost simplicity. You cannot teach children to write creatively--you can only help them to express the original ideas within them. Behind the story, poem, or letter--behind the clear, concise sentence or the stumbling search for words--is the child and all that he can become. Creative writing is one more way to understand him."<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Alvina Burrows, Teaching Children in the Middle Grades (New York: D. C. Heath Company, 1952), p. 247.

<sup>2</sup>Paul S. Anderson, Language Skills in Elementary Education (New York: Macmillan Company, 1964), p. 346.



### Statement of the Problem

It was the purpose of this report to determine through a study of available literature: (1) the factors that affect creative written expression; (2) the value of creative writing to children; (3) techniques of teaching that encourage children to write; and (4) what is being done to evaluate creative writing.

### Importance of the Study

As early as 1917 research in English recommended that imaginative activities should be recognized to a greater degree in the language arts programs of public schools. More recent studies also indicate the domination of grammar over composition, but produce evidence of the success of informal and varied assignments of practice in writing.<sup>3</sup> A survey by Dora V. Smith in 1941 recommended "greater opportunity for and motivation of creative expression throughout the entire school program".<sup>4</sup> It makes profitable use of experiences, opinions, and lively imaginations of children and is an outlet for emotional tensions as well, and should be given particular emphasis in the upper elementary grades. Children need to be encouraged to think and feel about things that happen to them, to recognize the worth of personal experiences

---

<sup>3</sup>John R. Searles and G. Robert Carlson, "Language, Grammar, and Composition," Encyclopedia of Educational Research (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), p. 460.

<sup>4</sup>Burrows, op. cit., p. 247.

and to be courageous in putting their own thoughts and feelings into words.<sup>5</sup> Writing ideas down makes it easier to examine, criticize and correct them.

### Definition of Terms

Language arts. Language arts is interpreted as meaning a coordinating enterprise having to do with speech, writing, listening, reading, language, and literature.<sup>6</sup> The one facet of language arts--creative writing of intermediate grade children--is singled out for purposes of this study.

Creative writing. In this study creative writing is defined as free writing with emphasis on originality of content and style. It means tapping past experiences to come up with something new, not necessarily new to the world but new to the child who writes. It is playing with ideas, expressing the ridiculous and the poignant. It may be in the form of stories, poems, plays, haiku, limericks, riddles, or commercials. Sometimes it might be purely experience writing that invites the child to put on paper those happenings that are most meaningful to him at the moment, that make him incandescent with hope, grief, joy, or delight.

---

<sup>5</sup>William F. Tidyman and Marguerite Butterfield, Teaching the Language Arts (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1951), p. 190.

<sup>6</sup>Wilmer K. Trauger, Language Arts in Elementary Schools (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1963), p. 4.

Audience. The audience is predetermined by the writer and is the person or group for whom the composition is written. A child in grades four through six can learn to define a wide variety of audiences and to shape his creative written experiences to fit those audiences.

Evaluation. In the term evaluation is implied the basis for appraising the writings of children. It can be interwoven with the writing experience itself as in proof-reading and teacher-pupil conference, or based on a collection of writings of individual students. The use of fixed measures of grading is a contradiction when applied to creative written expression.

Climate. In this study climate means a creative, learning atmosphere that is tension-free, accepting and stimulating. It is the kind of environment that respects and encourages each child and his efforts.

#### METHOD OF RESEARCH

A survey of library materials was conducted at the Kansas State University Library, Manhattan, Kansas. Resources of the Manhattan Public Library were also used. Letters were sent to the Department of Public Instruction in twenty-five states requesting elementary school curriculum guides and language arts bulletins in current use. Nineteen states responded; these materials were also studied.

The author of this report has been an intermediate-grade teacher for the past five years in the Manhattan Public Schools, and has made

practical application of portions of this study. Samples of creative writing by local grade school children will be found in Appendix A and cumulative collections in Appendix B.

### Limits of the Study

This study was limited to creative writing in the language arts program of the intermediate grades.

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Except for the reading field, the language arts program especially needs overhauling right now; it's as patchy as a hobo costume at a masquerade. There's a little bit of everything in it, put together in a haphazard manner unworthy of the careful planning needed by a space age.<sup>7</sup>

Research in language arts, particularly the teaching of composition or creative writing, has not kept pace with that done in other areas of education. "Some terms are being defined usefully, a number of procedures are being refined, but the field as a whole is laced with dreams, prejudices, and makeshift operation."<sup>8</sup> In 1963 a special Committee on the State of Knowledge about Composition was appointed by the National

---

<sup>7</sup>Mauree Applegate, Easy in English (Evanston, Illinois: Row, Peterson and Company, 1960), p. 5.

<sup>8</sup>Richard Braddock, Richard Lloyd-Jones, and Lowell Schoer, Research in Written Composition (Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1963), p. 5.

Council of Teachers of English to review all available research and prepare a report on what is actually known about the teaching of writing. Under the chairmanship of Richard Braddock and at a cost of \$18,000, this committee examined more than a thousand studies and screened out the research in which little confidence could be placed. Only five studies were included in the final report as paradigms for future efforts, and none of these were concerned with composition in the elementary school.

James R. Squire points out three causes for the critical condition in the teaching of writing today; inadequate training of teachers, the heavy teaching loads of elementary and secondary teachers, and the failure to plan developmental programs in writing which move progressively from primary experiences with teacher-dictated sentences to the personal writing of the intermediate grades to the increasingly disciplined practice of high school and college.<sup>9</sup>

Probably children today will have greater need of skill in writing than any previous generation. More and more young people are scattered over the face of the earth--in armies, in the Peace Corps, in industry and trade as well as diplomatic circles. "A generation who will do business with the whole world . . . will need to know more about imaginative writing than they can learn by filling in blanks in a workbook."<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup>James R. Squire, "The Teaching of Writing and Composition in Today's Schools," Elementary English, 31:3, January, 1964.

<sup>10</sup>Mauree Applegate, Helping Children Write (Evanston, Illinois: Row, Peterson and Company, 1954), p. 18.

## The Value of Creative Writing to Intermediate Grade Children

By the time a child reaches the intermediate grades in the elementary school, he has had hundreds of experiences and has gleaned uncountable impressions of the world in which he lives. Often a child will know more about some particular topic than anyone else in the classroom including the teacher. This is a time of life for limitless curiosity, enthusiasm and discovery, a time for the development of previously-acquired skills.<sup>11</sup> The chief value of creative writing lies in the fact that what is written has been shaped in the pupil's mind and set down as a personal achievement. Careful choosing of the subject will help a child to know and to find himself, to develop memory and observation, and to make conscious his growing understanding. Creative writing is a child's statement of awareness, his assessment of a continuing journey.

From her study of children's writing Marnie Miller concluded that (1) written expression serves a valuable purpose in the release of tensions and the resulting therapeutic effect and (2) a child's writing serves as a valuable clue to understanding of the child.<sup>12</sup>

Paul Witty, Professor of Education at Northwestern University states: "Creative writing often enables the teacher to understand children better and to sense their varied needs. Children, encouraged

---

<sup>11</sup>Noel Holmes, The Golden Age for English (New York: Macmillan, St. Martin's Press, 1967), p. vii.

<sup>12</sup>Marnie E. Miller, "What Creative Writing Can Tell a Teacher about Children," Elementary English, 44:273, March, 1967.

to write freely, experience great joy and satisfaction in creative writing. As in the case of reading, writing of this type sometimes provides a desirable form of escape as well as a highly pleasant activity. And the joy in the activity itself is often associated with the acquisition of greater competency in writing."<sup>13</sup>

It has been the experience of this teacher that creative written expression establishes a rapport between teacher and child that is lacking without this aspect of the language arts program. It is personal, subjective, and sometimes emotional. It is enjoying the rhythm of certain words and delighting in the way the words are put together; it is the job of sorting, deciding, and choosing the right word for the right spot. This facet of the language arts program makes room for children to write their own literature and appreciate beauty in the writing of others.

#### Factors that Affect Creative Writing

Several research studies have attempted to define factors that affect creative written expression, but few have been made in the intermediate grades. The studies of both Earl Buxton and Neal R. Edmund in 1958 support the theory that home-background and frequency of experience with writing are important factors in improvement of composition ability.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup>Paul Witty, "Some Values of Creative Writing," Elementary English, 34:143, March, 1957.

<sup>14</sup>John J. Deboer, "Composition, Handwriting, and Spelling," Review of Educational Research, 31:161, April, 1961.

Edmund's study further indicated that too few elementary teachers encourage children to write about their experiences, that children do not write well simply because they haven't been taught. Investigators do not seem to agree on just how much writing is the optimum amount. Writing interests of children need further study as well.<sup>15</sup>

Educators have suggested that a receptive and encouraging attitude on the part of the teacher will produce better creative work of all kinds from students. Two studies reinforce that idea. One made by Syra Nikoloff in 1965 showed that there was a significant difference in the compositions of children when their teacher emphasized ideas and originality. Another conducted by Winnifred F. Taylor and Kenneth C. Hoedt indicated that children's writing will be measurably improved if criticism is withheld in favor of praise.<sup>16</sup>

Several studies looked at ways in which the stimulus for writing influenced student production. Lois N. Nelson (1965) investigated over a period of ten months the effect of a wide variety of topics on vocabulary and verbal output. She discovered a wide range of individual differences, concluding that there is a qualitative difference in writing as a function of the topic assigned.<sup>17</sup> A more recent study conducted by Derek Sharples

---

<sup>15</sup>Neal R. Edmund, "Writing in Intermediate Grades," Children's Writing: Research in Composition (Champaign, Illinois, National Council of Teachers of English, 1960-1961), p. 23.

<sup>16</sup>William W. West, "Written Composition," Review of Educational Research, 37:164, April, 1967.

<sup>17</sup>West, ibid., p. 162.



in England examined the content of children's writing in response to various stimuli. The results showed that compositions differed in quality and content in relation to the stimuli employed.<sup>18</sup> In 1959 Ruth Kearney Carlson conducted a similar study, evaluating fourteen hundred samples of children's writing and using two specially designed scales with equated groups. She found that the use of a variety of stimuli including multisensory experiences, pictures, literature, and toys resulted in greater fluency and originality than did the use of the story titles alone.<sup>19</sup>

Harry A. Green and Walter T. Petty state that classroom environment is an important factor in bringing forth from each child his best expression, and that this is largely dependent upon the teacher.<sup>20</sup> Such a climate respects each child's personality, his problems of adjustment to other members of the group as well as his out-of-school environment.

Another factor, one on which no research was found, is that of an appreciative audience. Securing the approval of one's fellows is a human desire and appreciation of creative expression is no exception. Children like an audience and will write with more vitality if they are aware that the teacher and the class will appreciate their efforts.

A teacher's competence in literary craftsmanship is a factor too. She must be able to give workable advice on how to improve a piece of writing; it must matter enough to justify the effort of helping the child find good ways of expressing himself.

---

<sup>18</sup>Derek Sharples, "The Content of Creative Writing," Elementary School Journal, May, 1969, p. 419.

<sup>19</sup>Deboer, op. cit., p. 162.

<sup>20</sup>Harry A. Green and Walter T. Petty, Developing Language Skills in the Elementary School (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1959), p. 353.

### Some Ways to Evaluate Creative Writing

According to the Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer study, research has given no clear indication of the most effective ways to evaluate written composition particularly as it relates to younger students. John Wormsbecker, working in the Vancouver Elementary Schools with 213 sixth graders investigated the effect on writing improvement of three different grading methods and found no significant difference. No study proved that intensive marking is the best procedure to use with upper elementary grades.<sup>21</sup>

The Diederich study in 1966 proposed that monthly composition grades be totaled throughout the year.<sup>22</sup> The accumulated scores on a large number of written compositions could result in a significant evaluation of a student's progress. Some teachers have found that keeping children's compositions in some sort of permanent form which makes possible both self-evaluation by the child and evaluation by the teacher over a period of time long enough to show growth is one of the best ways of helping children to take pride in their own progress and of motivating them to further writing.<sup>23</sup>

Many investigators evaluate student writing by exclusively mechanical standards as by the use of composition scales, counting errors, number of sentences, or length of sentences, but this neglects such considerations as purpose and main idea, organization or originality of expression. Probably

---

<sup>21</sup>Braddock, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>22</sup>Paul B. Diederich, "How to Measure Growth in Writing Ability," English Journal, 55:435, April, 1966.

<sup>23</sup>Ruth G. Strickland, "Evaluating Children's Composition," Elementary English, 37:321-330.

no single measure can be accepted as accurately portraying the level of development of any writer. Any program of evaluation comes back finally to the individual, and the purpose must always be to find weaknesses to be strengthened and strong points to be expanded, refined, and deepened. For purposes of individual development each child's work must be judged in relation to what he himself has accomplished. "If he is growing in depth of thinking, in imaginative creation, in respect for the worth of his own ideas, and in ability to be himself, then the work is good."<sup>24</sup> Such an evaluation is dependent to a large degree on the perception of the teacher and the rapport that has been established with the child who writes. Individual conferences provide an effective way to evaluate a piece of writing and to make suggestions for its improvement.

Peer evaluation is a useful technique in the intermediate grades. Not only does it make the writer more audience-conscious than when all evaluation is done by the teacher, but it motivates children to improve their writing when they know it will be publicized. Sometimes the student may read his work to the class or he may prefer to have the teacher lead the discussion regarding it. Evaluation may be more fruitful without divulging the author's name, and should deal with the thought behind the composition. However, children should be lead to perceive that a good paper is one that does something important to the reader or hearer. Class discussion and evaluation of the product provide children with goals to work toward in their writing yet allow for individual differences in style as well as maturity.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup>Ruth G. Strickland, The Language Arts in the Elementary School (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1951), p. 285.

<sup>25</sup>Strickland, Elementary English, op. cit. p. 329.

In grading creative writing at the intermediate level, a teacher helps her students polish their craft by her comments that point out and praise some specific achievement. These written on the margin of the paper will do more for the mind and spirit of the child than assigning any letter grade.<sup>26</sup>

#### Techniques that Encourage Children to Write Creatively

Creative expression cannot be taught in the sense that addition is taught. It may be taught, however, in the sense of setting the stage for learning. Perhaps this is the most important responsibility of the teacher--to stimulate and encourage the students to express themselves freely and with originality, to help them become more sensitive to the world about them. This can be done by providing interesting experiences, real and vicarious, during the school day.

In the preparation of this report, techniques for encouraging children to write creatively were studied in many language arts textbooks, curriculum guides and bulletins. Those that appeared to be particularly suitable for use with intermediate grade children were selected and added to the resource unit already compiled by this teacher for use in her own classroom. Samples of children's writing collected by the author will be found in Appendix A with cumulative collections in Appendix B.

#### Techniques for teaching creative writing in intermediate grades

1. A single word.<sup>27</sup> Often a lively trend of thought can be started from words like cave, traffic, flag, circus, windstorm.

---

<sup>26</sup>Strickland, Elementary English, op. cit., p. 329.

<sup>27</sup>Trauger, op. cit., p. 259.

2. Three words. Put a number of unrelated words on the chalkboard--horse, angel, tea; peanut, nightgown, propeller; banana-split, tobacco, grass--and let children weave them into a story. When shared with the class, they can be richly entertaining.
3. A group of words.<sup>28</sup> A word cluster, considered as a unit gathers thoughts of action and situations around itself. Some examples are: fog, night, sunrise, rain, robin; kitten, table, meat, jump, flypaper; snowman, fort, battle, sleigh, pancakes.
4. A beginning sentence. Some sentences can set an idea in motion:
  - a. "Sammy, you're stepping on fresh paint!"
  - b. It was a small advertisement reading: "Wanted, a boy who is not afraid".
  - c. Suddenly I was on a strange journey backward in time.
  - d. There was a violent knocking on the front door.
  - e. "Look out!" yelled Dad.
5. An ending sentence. These sentences work in reverse; children write about the action that might lead up to them.
  - a. The "ghost" was my pet calf with a handkerchief tied to his tail.
  - b. After that I crept into the house and crawled in bed.
  - c. I'll never try that again!
  - d. Next time I'll not be late!
  - e. We never ventured into the cave after that.
6. Brainstorming.<sup>29</sup> This is a good way to generate ideas. Children have fun considering "What if?" and "If only" ideas.
  - a. What if everyone were the same size?
  - b. What if time turned backwards?
  - c. If only my parents would . . .
  - d. If I were a teacher, I would never . . .
  - e. What if the classroom clock (or a penny, or Napoleon's boot, or a raindrop) could talk?

---

<sup>28</sup>James A. Smith, Creative Teaching of the Language Arts in the Elementary School (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1967), p. 195.

<sup>29</sup>Sidney W. Tiedt, "Self-Involvement in Writing," Elementary English, May 1967, p. 477.

7. Personal experiences. Most children are eager to tell about things that have happened to them. They write without pretense concerning their achievements and encounters with disaster. Some starters might be:
  - a. A Personal Catastrophe
  - b. An Epoch in my Life
  - c. I was Punished
  - d. The Story of my Name
  - e. A Joke that Backfired
  - f. I Used to Think . . .
  - g. The First Time I . . .
  - h. The Last Time I . . .
  - i. Seeing Red!
  - j. Riding a Nightmare
  - k. A Kid's Eye-view of Make-up
  - l. What is a Grown-up?
  - m. The Pros and Cons of being my Age
8. A picture. One of the most commonly used methods for stimulating writing is the picture. More than just what is happening in a picture should be considered. What might have happened before? What might happen next?
9. Using specific senses for creative writing.<sup>30</sup>

Children can make a list of smells or sounds they like and arrange them in rhythmical pattern so they read like a poem of free verse. Smith suggests some unusual ideas that can be used to explore the senses:

  - a. How does a Christmas tree feel when it is cut down?
  - b. Why is hurt like hunger?
  - c. What color is happiness?
  - d. How does it feel to be green?
  - e. What is the taste of sorrow?
10. A variation on old themes:
  - a. What happened to Goldilocks the next day?
  - b. What type of queen was Cinderella?
  - c. How did Epimetheus punish Pandora?
11. Character studies. These may begin with self-characterization, a "Who am I?" story that may be read by the teacher while the class identifies the writer. It can be extended to include characterizations of great men and women in history, those that have a special appeal to the individual child.

---

<sup>30</sup>Smith, op. cit., p. 189.

12. Myths or "Just so" stories. Children enjoy making up explanations for natural phenomena. This is another piece of writing that provides entertainment for the class and recognition for the author when it is shared.
13. Tall tales. This topic might be developed around a reading unit of tall tales. Some children like to cast themselves in the role of the main character.
14. Fairy tales. After class discussion of favorite tales and their general characteristics, the more gifted intermediate children will enjoy creating their own tales, often illustrating them.
15. Fables. This topic might prompt children to look at their own experiences from which they have learned a valuable lesson. They can substitute animal characters for people, and tack on the moral at the conclusion of the fable in the manner of Aesop.
16. Stories relating to social studies. Children in intermediate grades study people and places that have the magic appeal of distance. Sixth graders, for example, might write about dog sledding in the Far North, deep-sea fishing off Newfoundland, or a day with Henry Hudson during the study of Canada. For units on Central and South America, they might write about llamas, blue morpho butterflies, bull-fights in Mexico, or a story about an event in the life of Henry Christophe, the only black king to rule in the Western Hemisphere.
17. Special days.<sup>31</sup> One of the most interesting ways to celebrate a special day in our history and culture is through creative expression. The selection of background material needs to be aesthetic, stimulating feelings rather than facts to catch the spirit of the day. Children can add some facet of their particular experience to make the writing a personal expression.

---

<sup>31</sup>Ruth H. Drewes, Winifred P. Fischer, and Lorna Round, Practical Plans for Teaching English in Elementary Schools (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Company, 1965), p. 61.

18. Library books may be used as opportunities for creative writing. The children can express their views and opinions of a book, its author, setting, and characters. They might write about such questions as "Do you think the book will be popular many years from now? Why?"
19. Field trips or short walks provide creative inspiration. The children can write about their impressions, the things they found most exciting.
20. "Round robin" story. In this type of story someone begins with a first line and then each child adds a line. Such stories take many turns in plot and style and are fun to read aloud.
21. How something is done.<sup>32</sup> Children are expert in noticing how something happens or is done. They might use this idea to write on such topics as the way:
  - a. A person carries a precious parcel
  - b. A tree mends a wound in its bark
  - c. A fern unfolds from a coil to a frond
  - d. A rocket blasts off
  - e. The prow of a boat cuts the water
22. A particular time.<sup>33</sup> There are special details of a special time, and children catch the flavor of these occasions when they write about:
  - a. A Clear Winter Night
  - b. Christmas Eve
  - c. A Night of Dense Fog
  - d. The Day after the First Frost
  - e. The First Thunder Storm in Spring
23. Pretending. This theme kernel might be introduced by naming "things" and listing them on the board--a coin, a tree that becomes a toothpick, a snowflake, a statue, etc.--and children are invited to write an appropriate autobiography.
24. Nonsense verse. Children have a natural appreciation for nonsense verse. It has a decided rhythm, silly content, and invented words. Reading selections from Dr. Seuss and Edward Lear will set the stage for children to write their own rhymes.

---

<sup>32</sup>Trauger, op. cit., p. 266.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.



25. Japanese haiku.<sup>34</sup> This form of creative expression is a fairly new addition in American schools. Haiku poems are usually seventeen syllables long, and are written in three lines (usually of five, seven, and five syllables). They use word pictures about some small marvel of nature or suggest a time of day or a season of the year. Children are intrigued with trying out first one word and then another to achieve just the right effect and still maintain the Japanese verse form.

#### A Survey of Language Arts Materials from Nineteen States

Letters were sent to the Department of Public Instruction in twenty-five states requesting current language arts bulletins and curriculum guides used in their elementary schools. Nineteen states responded. Five of the states indicated they either had no specific publication in this area or that their materials were out of stock or out of print. Information from three states showed that programs in language arts were the responsibility of county or local school systems and that no state publication was printed.

Eleven states forwarded curriculum guides used in their schools, usually a K-12 program listing skills to be taught at each grade level. In most of the materials studied, there was no mention of creative writing except as that topic might be covered under the term "written composition."

---

<sup>34</sup>Helen M. Robinson and others, Cavalcades Guidebook (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1965), p. 59.

Of the states responding, only two--Virginia and Texas--publish a separate bulletin on children's writing. The Virginia publication, Children's Written Composition, is little more than a listing of characteristics, skills, and interests of children in the various grade levels.<sup>35</sup> However, the Texas Bulletin, Creative Writing, is a more complete study which defines terms and suggests specific ways that teachers can foster creative writing in a real classroom situation.<sup>36</sup>

This survey would seem to confirm the findings of Neal Edmund that children actually have too little experience with writing, that more attention needs to be given to the development of this skill.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Research in language arts involves both human beings and an art, entities which are difficult to measure with scientific exactness. Present are such variables as personalities of teachers, classroom conditions, the frequency of practice, techniques of teaching and evaluation.

Research in writing, especially for intermediate grade children, has not kept pace with that done in other areas of education. A survey of language arts materials from several states indicates that creative writing is not a part of the curriculum in many cases except

---

<sup>35</sup>Children's Written Composition, A Bulletin of the Virginia State Board of Education (Richmond: Department of Public Instruction, September, 1961, Vol. XLIV).

<sup>36</sup>Creative Writing, A Bulletin of the Texas Education Agency (Austin: Department of Public Instruction, June, 1967).

as that topic might be included in the term "written composition", or as it might be taught by individual teachers.

Children learn many things when they write. They cultivate a sensitivity to the world around them and become familiar with selecting, eliminating and arranging words. Through the writings of children, a teacher is better able to understand her students and meet their varied needs.

Teaching techniques for encouraging creative writing will vary with each classroom. Language arts textbooks, periodicals, curriculum guides, and the experiences of the children themselves provide teachers with resource materials for creative writing. Research indicates that more opportunities for written expression should be provided in our schools.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### A. BOOKS

- Anderson, Paul S., Language Skills in Elementary Education. New York: Macmillan Company, 1964.
- Applegate, Mauree, Easy in English. Evanston, Illinois: Row, Peterson and Company, 1960.
- Applegate, Mauree, Helping Children Write. Evanston, Illinois: Row, Peterson and Company, 1954.
- Braddock, Richard, Richard Lloyd-Jones and Lowell Schoer, Research in Written Composition. Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1963.
- Burrows, Alvina, Teaching Children in the Middle Grades. New York: D. C. Heath Company, 1952.
- Green, Harry A. and Walter T. Petty, Developing Language Skills in the Elementary School. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1959.
- Holmes, Noel, The Golden Age for English. New York: Macmillan, St. Martin's Press, 1967.
- Robinson, Helen M. and others, Cavalcades Guidebook. Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1965.
- Searles, John R. and G. Robert Carlson, "Language, Grammar, and Composition," Encyclopedia of Educational Research. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960.
- Smith, James A., Creative Teaching of the Language Arts in the Elementary School. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1967.
- Strickland, Ruth G., The Language Arts in the Elementary School. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1951.
- Tidyman, William F. and Marguerite Butterfield, Teaching the Language Arts. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1951.
- Trauger, Wilmer K., Language Arts in Elementary Schools. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1963.

## B. PERIODICALS

- Deboer, John J., "Composition, Handwriting, and Spelling," Review of Educational Research, 31:161-165, April, 1961.
- Diederich, Paul B., "How to Measure Growth in Writing Ability," English Journal, 55:435-449, April, 1966.
- Miller, Marnie E., "What Creative Writing Can Tell a Teacher about Children," Elementary English, 44:273-274, March, 1967.
- Sharples, Derek, "The Content of Creative Writing," Elementary School Journal, pp. 419-426, May, 1968.
- Squire, James, "The Teaching of Writing and Composition in Today's Schools," Elementary English, 31: 3-8, January, 1964.
- Strickland, Ruth G., "Evaluating Children's Composition," Elementary English, 37:321-330, May, 1960.
- Tiedt, Sidney W., "Self-Involvement in Writing," Elementary English, pp. 475-479, May 1967.
- West, William W., "Written Composition," Review of Educational Research, 37:159-165, April, 1967.
- Witty, Paul, "Some Values of Creative Writing," Elementary English, 34:139-145, March, 1957.

## C. BULLETINS

- Children's Written Composition, A Bulletin of the Virginia State Board of Education, Vol. XLIV. Richmond: Department of Public Instruction, 1960.
- Creative Writing, A Bulletin of the Texas Education Agency. Austin: Department of Public Instruction, June, 1967.
- Edmund, Neal R., "Writing in Intermediate Grades," Children's Writing: Research in Composition. Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1960-1961.

**APPENDIX A.**

**A Collection of Creative Writing by Sixth Graders**

## JAPANESE HAIKU

Flowers have fragrance  
In psychedelic colors--  
Some are in our yard.

--C. S.

----

The iris stands still,  
Winds blow it toward the south.  
Grass hides it from view.

--K. O.

----

In dark, murky depths  
A little fish awaits sun--  
Then races its rays.

--V. B.

----

The grass grows bright green  
In the beautiful country.  
It's my home always.

--D. H.

----

The old willow tree  
Is so very nice to me.  
It shades from hot sun.

--R. W.

----

Softly hums the bee  
And dips his feet in pollen,  
Flies to the next bloom.

--B. G.

----

See the old, old tree.  
It is standing, gnarled, bent.  
Very wise it is.

--T. S.



## DIAMANTES

A diamante has no rhyme or set rhythm, but it does have an exact formula: one noun, two adjectives, three participles, four related nouns, three participles, two adjectives, and one noun.

Life  
 Wild, beautiful  
 Laughing, living, playing,  
 Baseball, basketball, football, soccer,  
 Weakening, thinning, tiring,  
 Old, dark,  
 Death.

--D. B.

----

Baby  
 Sprouting, small,  
 Wetting, burping, crying,  
 Child, boy, sports, girls,  
 Dating, coming, going  
 Eighteen, big,  
 Man.

--B. G.

----

Car  
 Sleek, loud,  
 Roaring, forbidding, flashing,  
 Headers, scoops, slicks, SOHC,  
 Screeching, skidding, spinning,  
 Flaming, shattered,  
 Wreck.

--T. S.

## I USED TO THINK . . .

When I was little I used to sit and admire the beautiful Red Robin. That was the only thing that I really and truly wished to have. One day when I was bird-watching, my father told me that if I would sprinkle just a little bit of salt on the robin's tail, it could be caught easily. People around my neighborhood saw almost nothing but a little boy running around with a saltshaker for the next two months. After many frustrating weeks, I finally figured out that if I could get close enough to a robin to sprinkle salt on his tail, I could grab him with my bare hands.

--R. T.

----

I used to think that I could get a shovel, go out in the back yard, and dig to get water. First of all, I would ask our dog if she thought there would be a chance for water there. Then I would pretend that she said yes. "Now is the time for me to dig," said I. I carefully marked off a place on the ground and started digging. After a few minutes, when no water came, I put away the shovel and went into the house.

Another thing I thought I could easily do was to start running and, when the speed was just right, I could take off and fly. I would be able to laugh at some silly people who thought flying was for the birds. But, alas, when I tried it, I found out that it was indeed for the birds.

--B. M.

## I USED TO THINK . . .

When I was little I believed in the Tooth Fairy. You wouldn't get any money from the fairy if you didn't give every tooth that came out of your mouth to her. One day I ate an apple over a sink while adoring my new haircut. Just when I bit the apple, my tooth fell into the drain. After working an hour over the sink to get my tooth back, I quit, frustrated. Water poured all over the floor when my dad used the sink that night. He straightened me out on the Tooth Fairy after that incident.

--S. S.

----

I used to think that my dresses shrank inside my mother's washer. Whenever I saw her putting my sister's dresses in, I asked her how many times she'd have to wash them until they'd be my size!

Another used-to-think is about the leaves turning colors. I thought God sent tree fairies to change the colors of the leaves. There was a yellow fairy for a yellow leaf, and a red one for a red leaf and so on. When the leaves fell, I thought that they were going back to heaven.

--F. F.

----

I used to think that when it snowed, Mother Goose was having a pillow fight. When it rained, she was crying. One day my teacher was talking about superstitions and told us about this particular one. I got mad at her and stuck out my tongue because I wanted to believe it.

When I was six or seven I thought dolls were alive. I made beds for them and made sure they were comfortable every night. Each morning, though, they were in a different position! I thought they danced all night until I saw my dog drag them into a pile. He was the guilty one after all!

--L. M.

## THE LAST TIME I . . .

. . . wore my old red tennis shoes I was sad because I knew they would be thrown away that same night. These shoes were given to me and were very comfortable. My mother told me to put them in the trash. I begged her to let me wear them more, but she said I could wear them only that one day. Hastily I put them on and went outside to play. When I went outdoors, though, I couldn't have any fun playing. So I just sat down and talked to my shoes. After awhile I went inside and had a good cry which made me feel better. As the day rolled on, my shoes didn't bother me as much. That night my mother threw them away, holes and all.

--S. M.

----

## MY WISH

I wish I could be like a bird any time I wanted. Up in the air I could soar lazily, and glide with the greatest of ease. Why, I'd zoom to the highest mountain as quick as a wink. In singing I could imitate any bird as well as any mocking bird can. Oh, it would be fun to be able to do loops, barrel rolls, and let the wind blow me along. I could find out if the birds have a language of their own.

But when I was through flying, I'd be a boy again.

--E. K.

## WHICH WAY IS UP?

Up is opposite from down because down is opposite from up. The sky is up from the earth. Hell is down, so Heaven must be up. You can go up town.

Up can mean lots of things. Trees can grow up. People can grow up. Plants can grow up. People can build up things. You can throw up!

--M. D.

----

Up is when an airplane goes up in the wild blue yonder. Up is a red balloon going up. A teeter-totter goes up in order to come down. A merry-go-round goes up and down, up and down. Up is a rainbow in the sky. When you point to the sky, that is up.

Up is endless!

--J. P.

----

## WHICH WAY IS IN?

In is inside, indoors, and not out. In is when you're not out of a group, when you're with it. In is what you want to be; nobody wants to be out. If you're in, something is enclosing you. In is inside you, what you feel in your heart.

If you are out, you know which way is in.

--J. L.

## BLUE IS THE COLOR OF MY NAME

The wonderful way I got my name happened when I was no bigger than two weeks old. My mom and dad had a fight over what to call me. To tell the truth, my dad wanted my name to be Herman, but my mom wanted it to be just plain-as-day Steven. My mom won, of course, and I am ever so glad of that.

The color of my name is blue. It just feels that way to me. If I had to change my name, it would be Tom. It would just absolutely have to be Tom.

--S. C.

----

## YELLOW AND BLUE ARE THE COLORS OF MY NAME

Yellow is part of my name. It stands for a wheat field in the summer and sunlight shining in the field.

Blue is another part of my name, and it stands for the bright sky and clear blue lake that shines in the sunlight.

--T. R.

----

## GREEN IS THE COLOR OF MY NAME

Green is the color of my name. It smells like the green grass that's just been mowed. My name feels like a tall field of grass with no rocks or prickles. The name Sheryl is smooth, like frosting in a bowl.

I love the name Patricia. To me it's the color of blue with a silver streak in it. It feels like a faint cloud in the distance. Patricia smells sweet like roses and is soft like a baby.

--S. P. K.

## AN EPOCH IN MY LIFE

I'll never forget the date August 21, 1956. On that day my brother first came home after being born four days before. My grandparents brought me home and then Mom and Dad came home. Mother handed me a blanket and said to open it. I sat down and opened the top, and there in front of my face was my first brother. Three weeks later Mom came in to find Walter and me playing cars and trucks. Of course, Walter only chewed on them.

--M. A.

----

An epoch in my life happened when I was about four or five. Mother was to go to the hospital to get us a sweet little sister. A few days later we drove up to the hospital, and Mother came out with a baby.

Now when I look back on the situation, I know that half of what Mother had said is true. The baby might be a little sister, but she is no longer sweet.

--B. M.

----

## I'LL NEVER FORGET . . .

When I was in first grade we ate hot lunches at school. After I got finished eating, I still had an ice-cream bar left. I did not want to throw it away, so I put it in a paper bag and stuck it inside my desk. After the teacher read the story and we were ready to work, I opened my desk and saw melted ice-cream all over my books and pencils.

I was lucky because the teacher did not get mad at me, but my mother did!

--B. C.

## WHAT IS A GROWN-UP?

A grown-up is someone who is over twenty-one and has full responsibility, makes his own living, and pays his own bills. He can drive a car, and doesn't have to ask anyone if he can go somewhere. He can live by himself. A grown-up is one who has full authority and can rule little kids.

--G. M.

----

A grown-up is a person who has had the experience of growing up. They have many responsibilities. A grown-up can give us advice and help us learn. They make their children behave, teach them manners, and sometimes let them go to movies.

Grown-ups can do about anything!

--J. S.

----

It used to be that a grown-up was the person who had to play Santa Claus on Christmas Eve, or the Tooth Fairy when one of your teeth came out. Now a grown-up is the person who has the most privileges and who sleeps in the best room of the house. A grown-up has to work to earn a living and buy food. Grown-ups are people who are respected by other people. When you become a grown-up, you are at the peak of your life. You cannot be reborn or become young again.

--C. C.

----

A grown-up is a person who always makes you go to school, go to bed early, and clean your room. They are people who have money and will not let you have any. They can go wherever they want to, but you can't go where you want to. Sometimes they answer hard questions for you. Grown-ups send you to get them what they want, and you have to do it.

--E. D.



## A PROPHESYING DREAM

My dreams aren't what most people think of when you say the word dream. Usually you think of something like a fairy tale or a frightening murder mystery. Well, I guess I'm just different.

One night last summer I went to bed thinking about the baseball game my team was to play the next night. After I had fallen asleep, I started dreaming about the game. The dream whizzed right along until I got to the last inning. We were up with the score tied, one out, and the boy at bat had two strikes and three balls. Guess who was next to bat--ME! Luckily the boy who was up walked, and that put one man on first. I nervously walked to the plate, lifted the bat, and waited for the pitch. That must have been my lucky night because I connected with the ball. It bounced past the pitcher and between the second base and short-stop. Feeling happy, I stopped at second base; the other man had scored and we were ahead.

It's a funny thing. That's exactly what happened the next night. My team won the game, five to four!

--M. H.

## A PERSON I ADMIRE

My mother is the most admired and loved person I know. We squabble and quarrel at something that seems important at the time, but when I sit alone in my room I think how lucky I am to have such a nice mother who devotes her time to my wants and needs. She is generous and understands all my little problems. Sometimes I wish I were big enough to tackle hers. Mom and I have loads of fun together, laughing at little humorous things that happen. I wish I could be as good a mother when I grow up as she is to me. In the mornings we hustle and bustle to get me (lazybones, Mom says) to school with a good warm breakfast that will stick to my ribs.

Yes, I really admire my mother.

--J. A.

----

## RIDING A NIGHTMARE

Once when I went to bed, I was wishing that I could fly like a bird. I said I'd give anything if I'd get to do it. Then the dream began. I went to the airport, bought a ticket, and got on a jet. When we were over the white clouds, I jumped out. I had no parachute, but suddenly two colorful wings appeared in my back and I could fly like a bird. I flew back into the clouds and kept flying until I was very tired.

I had to go down where I could rest, but I was going so fast that I couldn't stop and my wings had disappeared. I kept going down and down until I was about to hit the ground. I screamed, and at that same moment, I fell off the bed. Everybody in the house woke up.

I enjoyed flying very much, though.

--N. A.

APPENDIX B.

Cumulative Collections of Writing

by Patti Reed and Ricky Webb, 1969-1970

The creative writing below was written by Patti Reed, a sixth grader at Bluemont School, during the 1969-1970 school year.

#### THE STORY OF MY NAME

Patricia Louise Reed is my name. Patricia is Latin and means "noble-man". Louise is French and means "famous in battle". Reed, originating in Hertfordshire, means "red-haired or ruddy". These names fit because I often feel noble, love to fight, and have red-gold hair.

Mom gave me my first name. Aunt Pat encouraged the situation too. The second name is from my uncle's middle name, Louis.

Blood red seems to fit my name. Though a gruesome color, it has its own effect on people.

----

#### SEEING RED

What makes me see red is the bratty little boy next door. He is so mean it just makes me yell, scream, cry, or want to murder him. I can take it for awhile, but before long, I just boil over and slap his sassy little face. Sometimes I almost have to tie my hands behind my back because if I get them on his neck, I'll break it. The little rat calls me names and gives away my ambush in war. His mind is working against me all the time. One of these days I'm going to let go and beat him no matter how young he is. Some day I might get over it, but right now he is the most aggravating person I know.

Below are samples of a new poetry form called "diamante" because of its diamond shape. A diamante is easy to write for there is no rhyme or rhythm, but it is important to know parts of speech. The formula: one noun, two adjectives, three participles, four related nouns, three participles, two adjectives, and one noun.

Youth  
 Giddy, glorious,  
 Laughing, loving, longing.  
 Care, cry, love, hatred,  
 Graying, distinguishing, sobering.  
 Tired, old  
 Age.

----

City  
 Smoky, smelly,  
 Hurrying, rushing, running,  
 Muggers, mashers, sirens, screams..  
 Comforting, relaxing, inviting,  
 Cool, quiet,  
 Country.

----

Life  
 Wonderful, beautiful.  
 Crying, laughing, loving.  
 Glories, sorrows, defeats, victories.  
 Growing, slowing, tiring,  
 Dark, sorrowful  
 Death.

## ABOUT MYSELF

It was 4:30 P.M., August 28, 1958 when I was born in Bloomington, Illinois at St. Joe's Hospital. I am now eleven years old, have strawberry-blond hair, blue eyes, and am four feet, eleven inches tall.

Our family has a dog named Plato. He is black, brown, and white and is strictly a one-family dog. When I pet him his expressive eyes shine. They are full of love and joy. If I am sad, he licks my face and in his own doggie way he tells me he loves me and is sad something is wrong. When I'm happy he is like a puppy frisking about though he is quite old.

At empty times in the afternoon my four hobbies occupy me. There is my animal statue collection, my animal postcard collection, animal information booklets, and my animal article collection.

My consuming ambition is to be a veterinarian. All summer I worked at the Vet Hospital giving baths, clipping animals, and helping in different ways. Now I realize just what my goal is. —

----

## WHY COUGAR'S EYES GLOW IN THE DARK

In the Beginning all the animals had left men because of a glowing substance called fire. Now that beasts had retreated to the forest, they remembered how warm fire was.

The forest council met with a wise wolf at the head. It was decided that they would steal some fire from man. Little did they know that the wicked old cougar had heard the plan and decided to come along to get his own fire.

That night the wolf stole to where the men were sleeping with all the forest folk behind him. Quietly he picked up a branch, filled it with fire, and tossed it to the hare who tripped and burned one man's back. This caused an uproar in camp. Frightened, the hare ran faster, almost hitting the cougar. "Give it to me, I'll save it," whispered the greedy cat. Not realizing who it was, the rabbit handed over the flaming branch.

When the fleeing cat was caught by the animals, he was forced to swallow the firey branch. Gravely the wolf said, "Since you chose to be selfish with fire, we have decided that when in your dark caves you hide from enemies, your eyes shall flame, thus giving you away.

----

#### THE SQUIDGEE AND THE WINGBAT

On a dark, stormy night the Squidgee of Glober and the Wingbat of Shlopper-doom met. The Squidgee was a four-eyed, snaked-haired Docree. He had eight gleaming fangs. Wingbat had tiny wings on her shoulders. She had a batty ancestry to her credit.

The two of them circled each other cautiously. Screaming, they met in battle. Furious insults could be heard.

Squidgee was on top, biting and clawing. Suddenly, the tables turned and Wingbat was on top. Making use of her time, she took a lump of limburger cheese from her pocket. After stuffing herself, Wingbat turned and blew in Squidgee's face. A long, slow death of suffocation was Squidgee's fate.

Many years passed, and Wingbat told her grandchildren the story of how she defeated the Squidgee.

The creative writing below was written by Ricky Webb, a sixth grader at Bluemont School, during the 1969-1970 school year.

#### ABOUT MYSELF

I was born August 23, 1957 about twelve noon in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Africa. There are eight in our family, and all of us are in school including my parents. My big brother, my big sister, and I have been around the world one and a half times.

When we were in Africa, we had a pet turtle as big as my desk. Its neck was as long as a broomstick.

#### THE STORY OF MY NAME

Ricky is one of the most popular names. It comes from the Teutonic, meaning "powerful, valiant rider" or "treasure of the kingdom". Don means "master" and is one of the most popular names today. My last name, Webb, refers to one who wove cloth, either male or female.

I was named Ricky by my parents. Teddy, my big brother, said my middle name was to be Don after a friend in Ethiopia. Festus is my nickname.

#### THE SQUIDGEE AND THE WINGBAT

Once upon a time there was a Wingbat. She was skipping through the forest to take a basket of snoodle to Grandmother Glim who lives in Pollygoop. All of a sudden a Squidgee jumped out in front of her.



He asked, "What do you have in the basket?"

"Some snoodle to take to Grandmother Glim," she replied.

The Squidgee ran along the shortcut so he could get to Pollygoop before the Wingbat and eat the snoodle.

Getting there first, he gobbled up Grandmother Glim. In doing so, the Squidgee caused her to scream. A glumpcutter came, cut off his blooper, and pulled Grandmother out. They lived happily ever after--that is, except for the Squidgee.

#### A PERSONAL CATASTROPHE

One night my mother and father went out to eat. My big brother and sister were gone too. Rodney, Danny, Jeane, and I were at home. Jeane was wearing diapers. They needed to be changed, and I told Rodney and Danny I would give them a quarter if they would change her diapers. But they wouldn't, so I did it. As I was rinsing them, they slipped out of my hand into the toilet, so I flushed them down.

When my parents got home, I told them about it and got bawled out.

#### A KID'S EYE-VIEW OF MAKE-UP

"Boy, you must have gotten into a real fight!" Goober said to his sister as she walked through the door.

"I didn't get into a fight!" yelled Martha. "It's make-up."

(Next day.)

"Martha, you sure got a lot of make-up on today," said Goober.

"That's not make-up. I got into a fight," squawked Martha.

(Opinion.)

They can make as much make-up as they want, just so I don't have to wear it.

#### THINGS I TREASURE

When we were in Ethiopia, my father got African baskets, necklaces, bracelets, knives, rings, and other things. He gave my big brother Teddy a machete. It is about one and a half feet long. Teddy gave it to me. It is hanging on our bedroom wall now.

I got my bike five years ago last Christmas. It has a banana seat, butterfly handle bars, and the body is red. I like it so much that I would not buy a ten-speed if I got the chance.

#### DIAMANTES

Foundation  
Ditch, cement,  
Digging, scraping, filling.  
Rocks, sand, water, steel.  
Hammering, sawing, shingling  
Warm, Cozy  
Home.

----

Morning  
Fragrant, sunny,  
Waking, yawning, stretching.  
Breakfast, work, play, rest.  
Running, jumping, dodging  
Cool, sleepy  
Evening.

CREATIVE WRITING IN THE LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM  
OF THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES

---

EVELYN FRAZIER

B. S., Sterling College, 1955

---

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1970

The development of the language arts occupies almost the entire school day at the elementary level. It is a coordinating enterprise which includes such skills as listening, speaking, writing, and vocabulary growth taught together rather than in isolation. Creative written expression is a most important part of the well-rounded language program for it encourages the child to express the original ideas within him and invites him to put on paper those happenings that are most meaningful at the moment, that make him incandescent with hope, grief, joy, or delight.

Research in the language arts, particularly in the teaching of composition or creative writing, has not kept pace with that done in other areas of education. Yet children today have greater need of skill in writing than in any previous generation for they will do business with the whole world. Our schools have failed to plan developmental programs in writing which move progressively from primary experiences with teacher-dictated sentences to the more personal writing of the intermediate grades to the increasingly disciplined practice of high school and college. Inadequate training of teachers and heavy class assignments contribute to the critical condition in the teaching of writing today.

Many factors affect creative written expression: frequency of experience with writing, an encouraging attitude on the part of the teacher, kinds of stimuli, classroom climate, audience, and the teacher's competence in literary craftsmanship. For purposes of individual development, each child's work must be judged in relation to what he himself has accomplished. Conferences provide an effective way to evaluate a piece of writing and to make

suggestions for its improvement. Comments written on the margin of a pupil's paper will do more for the mind and spirit of the child than assigning any letter grade and will encourage him to write again. The accumulated scores on a large number of written compositions may provide a more significant evaluation of a student's progress and make it possible for him to assess his own growth. The value of any of these methods is dependent on the perception of the teacher and the rapport that has been established with the child who writes.

Creative expression cannot be taught in the sense that addition is taught. Perhaps the most important responsibility of the teacher is to encourage students to express themselves freely and with originality, to help them become more sensitive to the world about them, and to know and find themselves. There is a great variety of teaching techniques which are particularly suitable for use with intermediate grade children. They can be found in language arts textbooks, curriculum guides, and bulletins as well as in the classroom practices of many teachers. Springboards for creative writing might be single words or groups of words, story titles, personal experiences, poetry of many kinds, fables, tall tales, myths-- and the list grows with use.