

ENRICHING PRIMARY, GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS THROUGH CREATIVITY

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Creativity has become a focal point in recent educational writings and professional meetings. Interest of the writer has increased with reading, listening, and trying limited creative activities suggested for classrooms. Boys and girls within the writer's classroom have appeared to enjoy creative experiences and have expressed desire to more similar activities.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this investigation is to increase the writer's understanding of and appreciation for creativity, to determine apparent values to be gained from its use, to understand the roles of the teacher and pupils in creativity, and to be able to apply information learned to the language arts program in a self-contained second grade classroom.

Questions to be investigated. To better meet the needs of the classroom teacher the writer seeks the following information:

1. What constitutes creativity in a language arts program for second grade?
2. What values can be attained by the use of creativity in the language arts?
3. What is the teacher's role in developing creativity with language arts?
4. What specific suggestions and activities can foster creativity in the language arts area?

Limitations and delimitations. Creativity with emphasis on primary grade language arts is the area of concentration for the following library study. For the purpose of this study, handwriting and formal spelling have been omitted. Basal readers and other elementary school textbooks were not considered.

Specific suggestions considered by the writer as being helpful are chosen on the basis of personal observation, experience, children's response and study. Suggestions are not exhaustive, comprehensive listings. Because language arts experiences can be used in all subject areas, suggestions are not limited to language arts subjects.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Brainstorming. "A conference technique in which a group attempts to find a solution for a specific problem by amassing all ideas spontaneously contributed by its members."¹

Creativity. "A process whereby one becomes aware of problems, difficulties, gaps in information, and disharmonies for which he has no learned solution; searches for clues in the situation and existing knowledge, formulates hypotheses, tests them, modifies, and retests them, and communicates the results."²

¹Alex F. Osborn, Applied Imagination (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965), p. 151.

²E. Paul Torrance, "Uniqueness and Creativeness: The School's Role," Educational Leadership, 24 (March, 1967), 494.

Convergent thinking. The drawing of thinking patterns to one acceptable answer.

Divergent thinking. The development of thinking patterns which are unlike, separate, and unique for each individual; opposite of convergent thinking.

Open-ended situations. Provision of learning experiences and responses with range to spread out and extend in the conclusion of final state due to individualization.

Openness. Awareness of an individual to feeling and experiences which allows him to take new information and see things in a new relationship, to abandon definitions and to lower defenses which expose one to threat.

Success orientation. To begin on a level which can be satisfactorily completed; each child working at his own level of ability to accomplish a task successfully.

CHAPTER II

WHAT IS LEARNING TO THINK CREATIVELY?

A child learns creatively by questioning, inquiring, searching, manipulating, experimenting, even by aimless play; in short by always trying to get at the truth. Learning and thinking creatively takes place in the process of sensing difficulties, problems, gaps in information; in making guesses or formulating hypotheses about these deficiencies; in testing these guesses and possible revising and retesting them; and finally communicating the results.¹

Thomas says of creativity, "proper environment can reveal it, unfold it, draw it out, even cultivate it."² Creativity is within the grasp of second grade children and it can occur in many areas. It is not limited to music and art, generally thought of as creative areas, and can be adapted to most school subjects.

Authorities generally agree that the creative process consists of four major steps:

1. Preparation
2. Incubation
3. Illumination
4. Revision.³

¹E. Paul Torrance, Education and the Creative Potential (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963), p. 47.

²Lawrence G. Thomas, "Defining Creativity," The Education Digest, 21 (November, 1965), 18.

³Robert D. Kranyil and Barlett A. Wagner, "Creativity and the Elementary School Teacher," Elementary School Journal, 66 (October, 1965), 2-9.

I. PURPOSE: SOMETHING NEW

"In creativity something new, different, or unique results."¹
School children are novices and much of their creativity may be trite and trivial in a long view. Activities and experiences guide them through situations and yield something new to the child. This something new is not necessarily new to the world or to anyone else in it. It may be found in the process of learning, in the final product, or in both.

II. SUCCESS ORIENTATION

Success orientation is vital to creativity. The theory of recognizing that children need work on their ability levels to develop successfully is not to be treated lightly. An air of expectancy for creativeness should be exhibited by the child and his teacher. A feeling of self acceptance and teacher acceptance helps each child to respond at his appropriate level. Success orientation indicates that the child can find satisfactory responses much of the time. It does not eliminate errors or prevent mistakes; rather it utilizes mistakes to make learning situations which have meaning for the child. This type of learning has lasting meaning of a positive nature. The child is able to accept errors and can recognize a means of avoiding recurrence of similar mistakes.

¹James A. Smith, Creative Teaching of the Language Arts in the Elementary School (Boston: Allyn Bacon, 1967), p. 9.

III. UNPREDICTABLE OUTCOMES

Creativity can be compared to the prism, reflecting and refracting lights--each child's response is part of the array. In initiatory activities the children's response and help is convergent in nature since the teacher organizes the class and serves as its guide and leader. Through all of the motivation and preplanning, the teacher does not and cannot know what products will result as she provides opportunity for the children to face a situation without her direct supervision.

Divergent thinking patterns make possible several acceptable and correct outcomes, known commonly as open-ended situations. Each child is encouraged to generate and develop his own ideas as he works within his own interest and ability level.

IV. NATURAL PATTERN FOR LEARNING

The basic principles of creativity are soundly rooted in relation to growth and development of children.

Forcing them (children), to learn in ways unnatural for them and incompatible with their best abilities and preferred ways of learning robs them of much of their human dignity and chance to achieve their potentialities.¹

Jessie Rehder illustrates a natural learning process as she explains the development of writing.

¹Mildred A. Dawson, "Language Learning Goals," Childhood Education (November, 1965), p. 132.

Of necessity the writer of a story--like the painter, the sculptor, the musician--begins with what is meaningful in his own particular realm of knowing and feeling. There he makes his choice among the different means of expression and begins the particular process which leads to fiction. This process consists of a series of further steps consciously taken by one, presents certain significant aspects of experience in a guise, imitative of reality. In taking these steps, the writer adds thinking to feeling.¹

Like the young writer, children work from the known to the unknown, exploring and adding to knowledge that which is meaningful. Though responses may be extreme, they are based on experiences real to the child.

V. INTEREST IN LEARNING

Creativity used in the classroom effectively tends to increase interest in the work at hand.

Research has revealed repeatedly that people tend to learn and develop along whatever lines they find rewarding . . . thus, if children are to be challenged to learn to think creatively, we must honor this kind of achievement.²

Self initiated learning, a common characteristic of creativity, encourages effective learning which, because of its meaningfulness, is retained by the individual. Torrance states:

One mark of the high creative individual is his self-starting ability. Strong curiosity and exploratory tendencies suggest

¹Jessie Rehder, The Young Writer at Work (New York: The Odyssey Press, Inc., 1962), pp. 4-5.

²E. Paul Torrance, "Rewarding Creative Thinking," Educational Digest, 37 (May, 1962), 46-48.

that all or most all children have this self-starting ability. The problem is to keep it alive.¹

In a creative learning situation, the learner is the central motivating force rather than the leader or teacher, or something outside himself. Thus it follows that interest is strongest because need is present . . . a reason for being, for doing. The climate for learning is at its best. One of the strong principles of educational psychology is present . . . children seem to learn best when they like what they are doing and are free from stress.²

Inductive learning is the product of ideas and objects manipulated and explored in meaningful ways. The opportunity to experiment, to participate with media, and to find answers for oneself are important.

The child should have the freedom to learn and should not be inhibited by overconcern with rules. He should be encouraged to express his ideas and later fit these ideas into patterns expected in society. He should be encouraged to participate in group experiences and to help develop values through setting standards, making decisions, and working with the peer group.³

VII. RELATIONSHIP OF CREATIVITY AND INTELLIGENCE

Through research, Torrance found that creativity is a form of giftedness not measured by intelligence tests. He stressed the importance of recognizing the relationship between creativity and intelligence.

¹E. Paul Torrance, "Uniqueness and Creativeness: The School's Role," op. cit., p. 495.

²Marion E. Wilt, Creativity in the Elementary School (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1959), p. 55.

³Pat Anazole and Dona Stahl, "Creative Teaching for Today's Child," The Instructor, 76 (May, 1967), 24.

He emphasized that the

. . . intelligence tests do not measure the child's flexibility, originality, and depth of thinking intuition. New creativity tests used at the University of Minnesota measure these traits and identify gifted children as well as intelligence tests do. Intelligence alone, however, does not insure creativity. Although intelligence is necessary in order to create, above a certain point it does not determine the degree of creativity.¹

In summarizing a series of studies, Smith discussed qualities found with creative people which are not necessarily found with other intellectual people. He believes creative people see relationships well and are capable of using previously learned facts to an advantage. Because of this they are better able to apply previously learned concepts and generalizations to new situations. It appears that they are able to break down a problem into its constituent parts, to see the relationship of these parts to each other, and to be able to apply them to the solution of a problem with ease. Perhaps most important of all, they are able to identify problems skillfully.²

¹James A. Smith, Setting Conditions for Creative Teaching in the Elementary School (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1966), pp. 50-52.

²Ibid.

CHAPTER III

THE TEACHER'S ROLE AND CREATIVITY

The teacher is a key factor in fostering creativity in the elementary school classroom. "The role of the teacher is to recognize, appreciate, and to release the creativity of every study in whatever form or degree."¹

I. MOTIVATION

Motivation can be an effective means to stimulate creativity in children. Wagner² emphasizes as

Teachers are learning the importance of the arranged environment and how to establish it. The challenging bulletin board, the curiosity-developing questions on the chalkboard, the stage setting for informal dramatizations and interpretative readings, the use of current events, the recognition of the teachable moment, the use of ideas and objects presented during sharing time--all these methods and many others nurture interest and growth.

Teacher enthusiasm, zest, and attitude are recognized motivating forces which appear to compliment student interest.

¹Ruth Strang, "Creativity in the Elementary Classroom," NEA Journal, 50 (March, 1961), 20-21.

²Guy Wagner, Max Hosier, and Mildred Blackman, Language Games (Darien, Connecticut: Teachers Publishing Corporation, 1963), p. 11.

II. GUIDANCE

Hahn's¹ recent study states,

In those classrooms where instruction focused on children's thoughts, ideas, and varied methods for self-expression, it was observed that the teacher served as a catalyst to initiate learning and as a ready resource to keep it going. In such an environment it was apparent that boys and girls had more opportunity to become independent, self-reliant workers. They found a great deal of satisfaction in their own achievement, as well as in the achievements of others.

When this type of study is supported the classroom teacher accepts the challenge to provide continued experience to guide children in their growth and development.

III. FAMILIARITY WITH MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

Teachers need to be familiar with the wide range of materials available as well as the many pieces of equipment they have access to, when they expect to meet the needs of the children.

IV. ACCEPTING AND SETTING FORTH CONDITIONS NECESSARY

The teacher knows and accepts the need for friendly relaxed environment--free from pressures, distractions and frustrations--when creativity is expected. She realizes children learn from each other through observation, imitation, and cooperative consideration of mutually challenging tasks. Understanding will be enriched with a

¹Harry T. Hahn, "Three Approaches to Beginning Reading Instruction--ITA, Language Experience, and Basic Readers Extended to Second Grade," The Reading Teacher (May, 1967), p. 715.

background in child development and growth. The noise level of a creative classroom will be higher than is accepted in traditional teaching situations, and is much higher than many more formal classrooms.

Alice V. Keleher, states:

It is devoutly hoped that school people will realize that silence for the sake of silence belonged to another era. . . . Repressive silence is not the road to learning in the language arts. Listening well is quite something else.¹

V. PERSONAL INFLUENCE

The teacher's attitude toward school and toward the students is one of the most important factors to be considered in how well creativity can be utilized in the classroom. Lindberg believes,

The measure of creativity is in the nature of the relationship which exists between the teacher and child. The most creative teacher is one who relates most fully to each child the warm responsiveness of one human being for another.²

Patience, tact, respect, and thoughtfulness are vital in the effectiveness of the teacher in seeking to develop creativity in children. They contribute strongly to making the most of the teachable moments, to thoughtful listening to what children have to say, to the involvement in discipline, to the relaxed nature of class sessions, and to the spread of enthusiasm and idea building. The qualities are expected in all classroom teachers. The quantity of those qualities must be greatly increased when creativity is sought.

¹Alice V. Keleher, "Editorial," Childhood Education, 42 (November, 1965), 131.

²Lucille Lindberg, "The Creative Teacher," School Comment, Ada Dawson Stevens, Editor, College of Education, University of Toledo (Spring, 1963), p. 12.

CHAPTER IV

CREATIVE TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR PRIMARY LANGUAGE ARTS

Creativity is appropriate to primary children and teachers are challenged with ways of utilizing it effectively. In meeting criteria for creative experiences in language arts primary teachers select activities of oral language, written experiences, listening and reading. No area is independent of any other, however, for the purpose of this study each is considered.

I. DEVELOPING ORAL LANGUAGE

Smith¹ believes that only when children receive opportunity to talk frequently and freely do they develop an extensive vocabulary, and that this is possible only when teachers contrive experiences to keep children using these vocabularies in new and creative ways that they become meaningful. "Children have mastered 2,500 words when they enter first grade and will learn 10,000 to 15,000 more when they graduate from high school. These are averages; some children will learn many more, some fewer."²

¹James A. Smith, Creative Teaching of the Language Arts in the Elementary School, op. cit., p. 57.

²Edgar Dale and Dorothy Sherwood, "Vocabulary Development," Childcraft, Volume 14 (Chicago: Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, 1964), 436.

Playing, watching, asking, associating, imitating, and listening . . . these activities build creative oral language experiences.

Activities which are considered helpful in creative expansion of oral expression follow.

Brainstorming. A simple technique for developing participation in classroom activities is brainstorming. In this activity participants use creative imagination and judgment of past experiences to spontaneously collect ideas. No topic, even in its most exaggerated form, which follows topic ideas is excluded. "Every idea, crackpot or crackerjack, is written down."¹

Topics selected may parallel some of the study areas or may be imagination. Participation encourages interest which sparks growth and self confidence, and helps the child see something in a new perspective.

The following suggested topics and starters or samples of information are appropriate at the second grade level:

Science:

1. Things I could see in the sky--
Squirrel, robin, cloud, moon
2. Methods of moving--
Slither, run, crawl
3. Objects lighter than a pound--
Wooden ruler, feather, cotton ball
4. Animals--
Fish, horse, bird, hippo, dinosaur

¹Alex F. Osborn, op. cit., pp. 166-195.

5. It's soft like--
Marshmallow, pillow, velvet, a kitten

Social Studies:

1. Where could you find a wheel--
Car, clock, brace, pulley
2. Conveniences we enjoy which were unknown to pioneers--
Electricity, ready-to-serve foods, daily news
3. Uses for cotton--
Army uniform, curtains, baseball, band-aid
4. Products made with wood--
Door, pencil, gun, hammer handle

These topics are suited to the area of creative vocabulary development through building experiences new to the child, yet not necessarily new to anyone else.

There are times when brainstorming is an activity in itself. The building of interest, the class participation, and the opportunity to think are purposes achieved. Topics must be within the range of the students. Free associations require having an understanding, though it may be limited, of the topic. The topic may be given ahead of time for consideration, or it may be introduced at the beginning of the session.

Miscellaneous topics and starter suggestions may be--

1. English, it ain't (collection of slang expressions)--
You'ens, ain't, cool,
2. When I grow up I'd like to--
See a fair, be tall, be rich, vacation
3. Brothers! (Sisters)--
Giggle, read, have friends, help, fight
4. From a bug's eye-view I might see--
Giant feet, another bug, a cat

5. Rainy day fun,--
Make puppets, read, play with a friend

Some materials can be classified for further study, some may be helpful in developing bulletin boards, charts, stories, art projects, experience charts, and future class study. Analyzing and/or synthesizing experiences may develop from brainstorming.

Creative dramatics. The experience of creative dramatics helps children release emotions through the role of someone else. Separation of the realistic world and the imaginary world can be developed. Cooperation, resourcefulness, and acceptance of responsibility are traits which grow with experiences in creative dramatics at the primary level.

Imitations of familiar people, television programs, and situations of the home are early indications of creative dramatics. Young children become aware of moods, actions, roles, and settings. Teachers have opportunity to encourage creative play in conversation, stories read to children, and in providing time and place for dramatizations and role playing. The following suggestions encourage creative dramatics:

1. Dramatic play corner. One area of the room is designed for play. Objects which spark ideas such as old hats, masks, dolls, blocks, puppets, chairs, a table, and a junk box for building properties may be kept there. Children's spontaneous productions are creative, encourage oral language in unconstructed situations, and helps provide for individual development.
2. Assigned situations for role playing. Develop empathy, oral language, and have opportunity to meet situations in a creative manner as children react in teacher prepared situations. Conditions used in role playing may be real to the classroom, yet can be discussed with ease using other names and places. Prepare a setting such as the following:

Sue was playing at Mary's house. She liked Mary's doll so much she took it home with her. She knew it was wrong. You are Mary's mother. What might you say to Mary?

Ted is afraid of the dark. Tom wants him to help catch fireflies. You are Tom. What could you tell Ted to encourage him to go outside into the dark?

John was to be home at 4:30. At five o'clock he was still playing with his friend, Dick. You are John's father. You have just gotten home from picking up your son. What will you do and say?

3. Dramatizations. Developing a story with actions presented by characters can be a creative learning activity. Children enjoy playing their interpretations of "Three Billy Goats Gruff," the "Gingerbread Boy," "Bremen Town Musicians," "Three Little Pigs." Costuming, scenery, and props can be planned and developed creatively by the children and can be simple or elaborately developed, depending on the need of the situation.
4. Pantomime. Acting without conversation calls for creative thinking which frequently strengthens awareness of and appreciation for oral language. Telling a friend you have found a lost kitten, go fishing and ask a friend to join you. Johnny has found a "perfumed" skunk under your porch. Guide children to think and develop situations which they may share with the class.
5. Shadow plays. Original stories can be shared as shadows are developed to present the activity to the class. By hanging a piece of muslin over a frame, turn it on and tell the story as shapes help to illustrate the action. Oral presentation may be tape recorded or spontaneous.

Building imagery. Ask a question such as "What might you do if a gooselnoozle came to your house?" While minds are considering, develop further questions such as what would it look like, what would it do, what should we do? Descriptions, stories, or experiences will vary with each child's ability to describe a make believe creature or character. Oral experiences of this nature adapt to class, small group, and individual

situations.

Try other experiences such as: What to do with a thingamajig? How to care for a monkeyoose or breaking a crockasnoz of his rude manners. Words, interest, and fun can be developed beyond the oral experience with pictures and written stories if desired.

Go-togethers. Unusual combinations can form the spark for spontaneous creative stories. Two or three dissimilar objects are used in this type of yarn spinning.

Try combinations of this nature:

1. cat, corn cob, bankrobber
2. potato, key, sidewalk
3. belt, curtain, turtle
4. book, flea, coach
5. a ticket, a rabbit, and a fishpond

Develop nonsensical creative tales for possible illustration and an introduction to tall tales.

Other oral experiences which may contribute to language development and may contain some elements of creativity are illustrated talks, demonstrations, book reports, storytelling, telecasting, and puppet shows.

Vocabulary growth and meaningful experiences are developed from a wide range of activities.

II. DEVELOPING CREATIVE WRITTEN LANGUAGE

Most writing has a creative quality if it reflects the special individuality of the author. "Creative or personal writing for fun, expressive writing, and free writing cannot be entirely separated from

functional everyday, or practical writing. They do and should overlap."¹

. . . the objectives of creative writing might be stated thus:

1. Stimulation of the creative expression of ideas.
2. Development of a sense of potency and personal worth for each child and his contributions.
3. Establishment of rapport among children and teachers to encourage freedom of expression.
4. Development of writing skills and vocabulary to facilitate writing as a form of communications.²

Teachers find springboards of ideas to guide creative writing in building children's story ideas from oral language to written language.

Many children feel more free with vocabulary as they dictate a story which the teacher writes. This is particularly true of children who have not had opportunity for creative writing. Other children may be ready for the experience of independent story writing. The teacher will first encourage them to be concerned with getting their ideas and flow of thought on paper.

What the child writes is important and should be given priority over other considerations.

In fact it could be said that many a student's interest was killed because he had to hurdle the rules of formal grammar before he could put his complete thoughts on paper. This can be as stifling as putting a gag into the mouth of the child who has learned to speak his own words.³

¹Jean M. Ullyette, Guidelines for Creative Writing (Dansville, New York: F. A. Owen Publishing Co., 1963), p. 6.

²Iris M. Tiedt and Sidney W. Tiedt, Contemporary English in the Elementary School (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967), p. 190.

³Robert L. Fiblyn and Stefan Vogel, So You're Going to be a Teacher (Great Neck, New York: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1962), p. 75.

Too much emphasis on spelling and grammar at this point checks the flow of ideas or frustrates the writer so he abandons writing as a communications form. In creative writing, how to write correctly and acceptably comes after ideas are put down in their desired form. Final drafts of materials should be used to develop the best handwriting.

Creative writing. Story starters for creative writing experiences can be found in musical experiences, classroom happenings, sharing common experiences, books, and nonsense. Some springboard ideas appropriate for story writing are:

1. The week the grinch stole soap
2. Meet the funniest person I know
3. What if I were a caterpillar
4. I discovered a treasure!
5. The story of a well-worn shoe
6. A day with Clifford, the big red dog
7. My adventure as a cloud
8. A trip on a magic carpet
9. This morning it rained cats and dogs
10. It was a backwards day
11. My pet skunk
12. Curious George came to My house
13. The terrible temper tantrum

Writings can be an aid in getting to better know and understand children.

Common experiences. Common experiences such as night, rain, mud, winter, summer, being lost, being hurt are known to most every child. Individual reaction to each expresses a wide range experience much influenced by past experiences. The following stories written by second grade children reflect experiences with night.

Night is spooky.
 Night is still.
 Night is beautiful.
 Night is bedtime.
 I like night.
 by Jennifer

Night is the light that God turned off and on. When it is light, God turned the light on, and sometimes the moon turns it on again.

by Linda

Night is the flight of a tight light. Night makes me dream of diamonds dancing in the moonlight. Night lets me rest in my own little nest. I like the moon because it shines at night.
 by Stephen

Night is frightening when car lights flash on the wall and your little brother starts crying.

by Gary

Night is a spooky time. Ghosts fly out of trees. I get scared sometimes. Witches sneak in the house and I get awfully, awfully, scared.

by Kathi

Stories illustrated by the children can use a variety of art media. Batiks are especially suited to the topic night. A wash with white tempera paint gives a snowy effect to a snow picture completed with crayons. The light blue wash adds to summer pictures.

Science and social studies. Science and social studies areas provide much background experience which can be utilized in creative writings. The brief study into the sea life helped to spark the following stories.

Squoo, the Squid

Help! I'm a squid. A whale is my enemy. I'm an enemy to the fish. I have two eyes. A whale is coming, I'd better hide. That whale's name is Bully Whale. I have some black ink. I'll hide behind it.

by Kent

The Octopus and the Squid

One day when a squid was swimming, a whale came over. Unknown to both the squid and the whale there was an octopus. Along came the octopus. The octopus and the squid both squirted ink, then they ate the whale.

by Monty

Miss, the Dolphin

Hi, I am Miss, the dolphin. I live in the Atlantic Ocean. My enemy is the Blue Whale and the Squid. The starfish is my friend. Today we will explore. We will go see Mr. Lobster, and Mrs. Clam. No, no! Here comes the squid. Quick, hide.

It's safe now. Good-bye for now. 'See you next summer.

by Michelle

A wide range of subjects is open to children in this area.

Appropriate topics for suggested creative writings are the story of a seed, adventures of a raindrop, my neighbor Mars, winter in the pond, a day without gravity, machines have vanished.

Class stories and accompanying illustrations set up into book form can be enjoyed by class members. Such a collection offers opportunity to share work, to see growth in writing, and to have a group experience in writing. Booklets, typed from the children's stories can be shared with parents. Each child's story is included. Parents report reading a story written at school usually brings a note of pride.

Music without words. Story starters can be unfolded in records tapes containing musical melodies. Imagination blossoms with melodies such as:

"Little White Donkey" From Histoires No. 2 by Ibert

"Petite Ballerina," From Ballet Suite No. 1, Shostakovich

"Peter and the Wolf," Prokofiev

"Bydlo" from Pictures at an Exhibition by Moussorgsky

"Parade of the Wooden Soldiers," Jessell

"Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" and "Waltz of the Flowers"
Nutcracker Suite, Tchaikovsky

Children listen carefully hoping to build an idea of what story the music tells. The listening experience is continued as the children write their ideas. The background melody provides additional thoughts, clarification, and as a variety of approaches for the writing experience.

The following stories were developed after second grade children heard the "Petite Ballerina," and illustrate the wide range of ideas interpreted.

A cottontail is hopping through the woods and the rabbit found some food in a box. The rabbit went in. The box fell. The next day a boy came and they lived happily ever since.
 by Stephen

I'm Mr. Elf. I can do Magic. I help the king and queen. I can do many things. The queen likes me the best. The king likes me better than the knights. The knights don't like me.
 by Kent

I hear a cat that is tip-toeing and it's having fun. It's going to tip-toe for a long time until the music stops and then it will be laying down.
 by Shelly

Here is a story about a musical ballet dancer. I think that because I've heard ballet music on T.V. It sounds exactly like it. I like ballet. That's my story, the musical story.
 by Penny

I am a dancing girl in the jewelry box. When Laurie and my family open the jewelry box up and wind me, I dance for them.
 by Kathi

Creative experiences which can serve as ideas for story springboards are numerous. Illustrative examples of easy to locate ideas

which can be used with primary children are:

1. Unusual pictures enlarged by the opaque projector.
2. Interesting pictures made into a transparency and shown with the overhead projector. Magazine pictures placed on transparent contact paper, then soaked in water with a weak soap solution ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup per gal) makes an inexpensive transparency.
3. Unusual combinations of objects such as
 - a sea shell and a peanut
 - a key and a rabbit
 - a shoe and an apple
 - a piece of string, a cookie and a tree
 - a horseshoe, a dish, and a kite.
4. Tape record a sequence of two or three sounds which might be heard in the story. Try combinations of rattling springs, rubbings from the surfaces of various objects, scratching, tuning forks, blowing over bottles, and closing doors.
5. Feel objects in a closed bag. Combine the items felt into a story.
6. From a doodle, complete a picture, then tell a brief story about it.
7. From development of imagery (oral lang. p. 17) build individual stories to be illustrated.

Rhyming. Primary children may find it helpful to begin writing by completing a simple words and phrases in rhyme started by the teacher, such as scout, spout; mice, nice; log, frog; birds fly, I try; sad clown, big frown.

A rhyming "fun" activity which second grade children can develop and appear to enjoy is "Did you ever" _____. Second grade children have developed nonsense fun with these rhymes "Did you ever see"

- a glue with the flu
- chemistry in ministry
- a mountain with a fountain
- a hill with a bill

- a bee with a flea
- a flower in the shower
- a duck with bad luck

"The couplet is the simplest form of rhymed verse, and therefore offers possibilities for introducing rhyme to writers."¹ Samples of the couplet may be

I don't know where
I saw that bear.

Can you see
A purple bee?

Expanding the two lines of rhyming to three lines is the beginning developing of the triplet. It frequently tells a brief story or is humorous in nature.

Birds fly high
Into the sky
I wonder why.

There's a whale
With a tail
He can't use for a sail.

The main purpose of promoting creative writing programs is to give children opportunities for free expression of their ideas. There are certain benefits found in the program which support its place in the primary curriculum two or three times each week. Vocabulary expansion, appreciation of writings, purpose.

III. DEVELOPING CREATIVE LISTENING

Listening is an integral part of modern living. Over half (two

¹ Iris M. Tiedt and Sidney W. Tiedt, op. cit., p. 230.

and one-half of the five hour day) is spent in listening.¹ Watching television in the home rates an average of three hours daily with school age children.² With this much exposure to listening in the daily routine, meaningful creative listening becomes a necessity.

David Russell³ states that levels of listening vary with the activities and interests of children. He believes no one level is necessarily better than any other but that the levels range from inexact to detailed, from aimless to purposeful, and from passive to creative. The lowest level of hearing sounds or words calls for no reaction beyond recognition and may be intermittent in nature. Russell's middle levels require listening passively with little or no observable response. The highest level of listening requires forming associations with related items from one's own experiences and listening closely enough to the organization of a talk or report to get the main ideas and listening critically with genuine mental and emotional participation. Russell's critical listening is approximately the same as creative listening.

A variety of teaching techniques can make classroom listening more effective and stimulative.

It is helpful for the teacher and the class to plan for creative

¹Marian E. Wilt, "A Study of Teacher Awareness of Listening as a Factor in Elementary Education," Journal of Educational Research, 43 (April, 1950), 626-636.

²David H. Russell and Elizabeth F. Russell, Listening Aids Through the Grades (New York: Teachers College Press, 1959), p. 4.

³Ibid., pp. 2-14.

listening experiences and to set forth conditions such as a quiet setting, cleared desk tops, no moving about unless an emergency occurs, and no playing with objects at desks.

Creative listening stimulates divergent thinking. The following activities should promote creative listening with second grade pupils. This list is not comprehensive or exhaustive, merely illustrative. Some of these activities have been used successfully by the writer and others, have been selected from the literature because of their seeming applicability and ability to foster creative listening.

Storytime. Storytime is an opportunity for children to enjoy the creative writings of others. A listening exposure to books such as those listed below expands imaginations, stimulates ideas, and provides enjoyment for most children. Drawing comparisons between characters, situations, events, and roles can enlarge children's concepts of stories. The following list of books exemplifying creative writings of others are preferred by the second grade children in the writer's classroom.

Examples of books for storytime are:

Anglund, Joan Walls, A Friend is Someone Who Likes You
(New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1957)

Divoisin, Roger Antoine, Veronica's Smile (New York: Knopf,
1964)

Geisel, Theodor, Horton Hatches The Egg (eau Claire, Wisconsin:
E. M. Hale and Company, 1940)

Joslin, Sesyle, What Do You Say Dear? (New York: Young Scott
Books, 1961)

Kinney, Harrison, The Kangaroo in the Attic (New York:
Whittlesey House, 1960)

- Klein, Leonore, Brave Daniel (New York: Junior Scholastic Book Services, 1958)
- Ippcar, Dahlow, The Calico Jungle (New York: Knopf, 1965)
- Lindgren, Astrid, Peppi Longstocking (New York: Viking, 1959)
- Munari, Bruno, Who's There (New York: World Publishing Company, 1963)
- O'Neill, Mary, Hailstones and Halibut Bones (New York: Doubleday, 1961)
- Peet, Bill, The Pinkish, Purplish, Bluish Egg (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1963)
- Rey, Margaret Elizabeth, Curious George Learns the Alphabet (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1963)
- Sendak, Maurice, Where the Wild Things Are (New York: Harper and Row, 1963)

Wanted: Descriptions. Investigate listening to find words to describe or to help visualize. For example "The Little White Duck" recording as sung by Burl Ives for Columbia records can help children visualize through listening. With the description built from music, each child may draw his interpretations while the record plays softly.

Other records with songs which may be helpful for similar activities are:

- "Puff the Magic Dragon," Golden Records
- "Teddy Bears Picnic," Vocalion
- "The Little Engine That Could," Columbia Records
- "The Animal Fair," Harmony Records
- "Over in the Meadow," Vocalion

Records as story tellers. Words, music, and professional story

tellers convey a message. Children seem to enjoy this listening experience as their imaginations share the interpretation of the story.

The following records recommended by the writer set a framework for creativity which the children may develop.

Peter Pan, adapted by Winston Hibler and Ted Sears, Walt Disney Productions, 1963.

Peter and the Wolf, narrated by Sterling Holloway, Walt Disney Productions, 1964.

Carnival of Animals, narrated by Eddie Bracken, Columbia Records.

Winnie the Pooh and The Honey Tree, Sterling Holloway and Sebastian Cabot, Walt Disney Productions, 1965.

Just So Stories, Caedman Records.

Johnny Appleseed, told by Dennis Day, Disneyland Records, 1964.

Swan Lake and Sleeping Beauty, Tchaikovsky, Golden Records.

Melody. Teachers can provide opportunity to listen creatively and to describe experiences in melody heard from records. This can be the child's opportunity to let the imagination blossom. Suggested records for this activity are:

"Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy," Nutcracker Suite, Tchaikovsky.

"Waltz of the Flowers," Nutcracker Suite, Tchaikovsky.

"Parade of the Wooden Soldiers," Jessell.

"Night on Bald Mountain," Mussorgsky.

"Peter and the Wolf," Prokofiev.

Thought echo. This activity challenges children to listen carefully and to think of another way to word the sentence without changing its meaning. Encourage the group to find as many versions of the

sentence as possible. Creative thinking can guide children to variety and awareness of the powers of words. Working in small teams provides an opportunity for vocabulary development.

Sound secrets. Schedule a "secret sounds" session. Ask children to listen for objects which create sounds which might be brought to school in a bag. Children can present the sound secrets brought to school from behind a screen or large cardboard box. Children in the class try to guess what the object is. Additional activity may be telling what the sound resembles (egg beater, scissors cutting, water poured).

Poems for listening. Children appear to enjoy a variety of poems. They are interested in the story told in words, pictures which come to their minds, and in the interesting arrangements of words. This activity can provide for discovery of new word meanings from context.

For a listening experience of sharing creative poems of others, the writer suggests for enjoyment:

- "The Raggedy Man," James Whitcomb Riley.
- "The Umbrella Brigade," Laura E. Richards.
- "Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee," Mildred Plew Meigo.
- "Mrs. Simpkin and Mrs. Wobblechin," Laura E. Richards.
- "Jonathan Bing," Beatrice Curtis Brown.
- "Sugar Plum Tree," Eugene Field.
- "Owl and the Pussy Cat," Edward Lear.
- "The Elf and the Dormouse," Oliver Herford.
- "I Saw a Ship-a-Sailing," author unknown.
- "The Monkeys and the Crocodile," Laura E. Richards.
- "Whiskey-Friskey," author unknown.
- "Who Has Seen the Wind," Christina Rossetti.
- "Fog," Carl Sandburg.
- "Brooms," Dorothy Aldis.
- "Clouds," Christina Rossetti.
- "Rain," Robert Louis Stevenson.

Retelling stories. As an evaluation skill as well as a listening skill, retelling stories using detail children feel is important has a place in the second grade program. This type of experience gives the teacher an idea of what children can gain from their listening and provides opportunity for children to express what they felt was important in the development of the story. Suggested stories for this type of activity are:

The Gingerbread Boy, a tale
Three Billy Goats Gruff, a tale
The Engine That Could, by Wally Piper
A Boy and His Goats, a tale
The Tale of Peter Rabbit, by Beatri Potter
Three Little Pigs, a tale
Winnie-the-Pooh, by A. A. Milne
The Little Red Men, a tale
Story of Ferdinand, Munro Leaf

A growing tale. Children build a tale as each child adds a line to the story. The nonsensical tale grows becoming a conglomerate activity from the class. Listening to what has happened previously is essential to build a story with continuity. Opportunity for this experience can be expanded to improve previous activity. This type of group activity can be an introduction to work which may follow of an individual nature.

Descriptive sounds. Collect words which describe common sounds as an individual activity or as a class project. Suggestions in this area are: Rain--sprinkles, wet, mist, water, drops, storm, soft, splash, clouds, shower. Voices--loud, whisper, shout, scratchy, hoarse, children's, frightened, happy, singing, distant, near, high, low, moan,

scolding, pleasant. An old car--creaky, pattering, rattling, chugging, clanking, purring, squeaking, honking, clattering. Other descriptions suggested as appropriate are wind, night, school, popcorn, a dog, a zoo, and an old house.

Twenty questions. Children can ask twenty questions answerable only by yes or no to seek the identity of an unknown object known by a child and the teacher. Students quickly learn which types of questions best serve to narrow the field and seek information helpful in seeking identity. The correct response given by a child entitles that person to select a new object for guessing. Objects within the classroom are fun to describe. Suggestions would be a bulletin board, a storybook, a pair of scissors, a desk, a person within the room, a plant, the aquarium, a ruler, or any other object familiar to all of the children early in the activity. Later fun may be expanded beyond the classroom to familiar objects or things. Questions helpful often relate to size, color, shape, usefulness, and room placement.

IV. DEVELOPING CREATIVE READING

Independent reading can provide opportunity for the child to put his own experiences into new ideas and his dreams into the dreams of others. He is able to explore and discover new words and new word combinations. He has a world of meanings to manipulate and rearrange.¹

¹James A. Smith, Creative Teaching of Reading and Literature on the Elementary School (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1967), p. 57.

The library corner. Opportunity to stimulate creative reading can be provided with the selection of books in the library corner. The library corner, a necessity to a balanced reading program, should contain a variety of selections. One type of book recommended is the creative writings. Second grade children suggest the following books as favorites:

- Bannon, Laura, The Scary Thing (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1956).
- Baum, Arlene and Joseph Baum, Know What, No What? (New York: Parent's Magazine Enterprises, Inc., 1964).
- Bishop, Claire and Kurt Weise, Five Chinese Brothers (New York: Crowell-McCann, 1938).
- Bridwell, Norman, Clifford Gets a Job (New York: Scholastic Book Services, 1965).
- Cerf, Bennett, Bennett Cerf's Book of Riddles (New York: Random House, 1960).
- Duvoisin, Roger A., Petunia (New York: Knopf, 1950).
- Holland, Marion, A Big Ball of String (New York: Beginner's Books, a Division of Random House, 1958).
- Leaf, Munro, The Wishing Pool (New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1960).
- Newell, Crosby, Hurry Up, Slowpoke (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1961).
- Shapiro, Irwin, Jonathan and the Dragon (New York: Golden Press, 1962).
- Suess, Dr. (Theodor Geisel), Cat in the Hat (New York: Random House, 1957).
- Hop on Pop (New York: Random House, 1963).
- One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish (New York: Random House, 1960).
- Ten Apples Up on Top (New York: Random House, 1961).

Exchange books on the library table from the central library at approximately two week intervals. Repeat favorite books for the children to enjoy.

Language experience charts. Class experience followed by oral language sharing is extended to written language and finally to chart form. Language experience stimulates the reading process and the reading product--both essential parts of creativity. In developing this type of experience the writer intends to convey meaning to others through his use of words. Second grade children can be exposed to a wide range of language experience activities. Here is an example of a language experience story developed from an autumn walk. Children were encouraged to feel, listen, and watch for signs of fall before they went outdoors.

The Fall Walk

We walked through crispy, crunchy leaves. We saw tree's empty branches looking like arms grabbing the wind. Leaves had been painted by Jack Frost. They were red, yellow, orange and browns. Greens have nearly vanished! Our red noses and cold hands helped us know fall is here.

Building class stories or individual stories requires that a child be spontaneous in his reactions, flexible in his interpretations and original in his thinking. All of these skills are concerned with the development of divergent thinking processes and are essential parts of creativity!

Reading original stories. Children express their delight in reading their stories as well as those of their classmates. Keep a

copy of stories developed in written language experiences available (see pp. 20-23). Work developed by children can be helpful to remedial readers in other grade levels as a part reading experience. The vocabulary is limited and the interest level frequently appropriate to other children.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this investigation has been to increase the writer's understanding and appreciation of creativity, to determine apparent values to be gained from its use, to understand the role of the teacher, and to develop activities appropriate to the language arts in the second grade.

Procedures used. From a review of the literature, an expanded understanding of creativity and its relation to the language arts developed. Appropriate activities for oral development, listening experiences, creative writing, and reading were selected by teacher judgment to be used with classes. Screening to select the most appropriate activities continued during the school year. Only those activities which were most successful in terms of children's interest and response, observation of the process and the product, and teacher judgment have remained and are included in this report. Suggested books, records, and special selections recommended have been used with several self-contained classes with reported success.

Brief summary of the report. Creativity is appropriate to the language arts program at the second grade level, and can serve as a catalyst in stimulating growth in the four major language areas. Varied activities, experiences, and examples appropriate to each area are suggested.

The use of creativity appears to add variety, expanded approaches to teaching, and increased interest on the part of the student which in turn stimulates learning and participation.

Teacher awareness to individual growth tends to increase. Experience with creativity helps the writer realize the contribution it can make toward guiding individual growth, making learning meaningful, and expanding the variety of approaches to the language arts areas. Natural learning patterns appear to thrive as teachers motivate through arranged environment encouraging exploration and curiosity for learning.

Teachers who use creativity must be willing to study, to explore, to learn, and to guide. Creativity is challenging to the teacher and to the class when it is properly used.

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- Duvoisin, Roger Antoine. Veronica's Smile. New York: Knopf, 1964.
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RECORDINGS SUGGESTED

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- Johnny Appleseed, told by Dennis Day, Disneyland Records.
- Just So Stories, Caedman Records.
- Little Engine That Could, Columbia Records.
- Over in the Meadow, Vocalin, a division of Decca.
- Peter and the Wolf, narrated by Sterling Holloway, Walt Disney Productions, 1964.
- Peter Pan, adapted by Winston Hibler and Ted Sears, Walt Disney Productions, 1963.

Puff, the Magic Dragon, Golden Records.

Swan Lake and Sleeping Beauty, Tchaikovsky, Golden Records.

Teddy Bears Picnic, Vocalion, a division of Decca.

Winnie, the Pooh and The Honey Tree, Sterling Holloway and Sabastian Cabot, Walt Disney Productions, 1965.

CLASSICAL MELODIES SUGGESTED

"Bydlo," from Pictures at an Exhibition, Moussorgsky.

"Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" and "Waltz of the Flowers," from Nutcracker Suite, Tchaikovsky.

"Little White Donkey," from Histoires, No. 2, Ibert.

"Parade of the Wooden Soldiers," Jessell.

"Peter and the Wolf," Prokofiev.

"Petite Ballerina," Ballet Suite, No. 1, Shostakovich.

POEMS SUGGESTED

"Brooms," Dorothy Aldis.

"Clouds," Christina Rossetti.

"Elf and the Dormouse," Oliver Herford.

"Fog," Carl Sandburg.

"I Saw a Ship-a-Sailing," author unknown.

"Jonathan Bing," Beatrice Curtis Brown.

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"Rain," Robert Louis Stevenson.

"Sugar Plum Tree," Eugene Field.

"The Umbrella Brigade," Laura E. Richards.

"Whiskey-Friskey," author unknown.

"Who Has Seen the Wind," Christina Rossetti.

ENRICHING PRIMARY GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS THROUGH CREATIVITY

by

PEARL ELIZABETH WATSON

B. S., Kansas State University, 1964

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

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