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Sharing, Writing, and Motivation: What's the Connection?

Megan M. Coursen

PDS Intern, Grade One, Panorama Village Elementary

mmc261@psu.edu

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Teaching Context

This year I have had the pleasure of interning at Panorama Village Elementary in the yearlong PDS program. The school is located on the outskirts of State College, in Boalsburg, PA. Panorama has two kindergarten, three first grade, two second grade, and two third grade classrooms, while Boalsburg Elementary, its partner school, houses the fourth and fifth grade. Within the school, there is a large number of students whose parents have emigrated from Russia; as a result, my first grade classroom has two students whose first language is Russian and who speak English as a second language.

To better understand my questions about sharing writing, it is important to understand the classroom context. Looking at my first grade classroom, the first observation I made is the even distribution of girls and boys. There are nine girls and nine boys. What I notice next are the variety of educational services and supports my students receive. Three of my students receive Title 1 services and two of these three students also qualify for English as a Second Language (ESL) support service. In addition to the two students who speak Russian as their first language, another student speaks Japanese as his first language.

In our classroom, we group students for language arts according to reading ability. There are four groups: three of the groups each have five students, but the lowest group has three students. My mentor teacher grouped these students based upon their running record scores from the beginning of the year. From the lowest to the highest group, there is a parallel relationship in how much the students are willing to write, with the highest students usually writing more than what is required, while the struggling students only writing the minimum number of sentences to fulfill the assignment.

In math, the students are placed into three flexible groups: high, medium, and low. The students were grouped based on recommendations from the previous kindergarten teachers. The high group is able to count by twos, fives, and tens; they understand money, make patterns independently, make combinations of numbers, and do addition and subtraction problems with few mistakes. By contrast, students in the lower groups tend to need more help and guidance with counting, money, addition and subtraction problems, and combinations.

As I mentioned earlier, there are a variety of academic ability levels in my first grade classroom; as such, there seem to be quite a range of ability levels when it comes to writing as well.

Rationale

In my first grade classroom, students regularly share their writing with the whole class. However, I have noticed several of my students would rather not share their writing aloud to their classmates. In addition, I have noticed a range of reading fluency levels among those students who do choose to share their writing. Some students can read through their writing with no mistakes while other students seem to struggle with every word (despite the fact that they were the ones who wrote it). There is also a wide range and varying abilities in the actual quality of their writing. Some students use narrative structure and understand vowel usage while others have difficulty with capital letters and sound spelling. Given the range of ability levels in our class, I think it is important to find ways to help develop and encourage each student as a writer. My hunch has been that making sharing a more meaningful part of our classroom routine may motivate students to put more effort into their writing. As a result of these initial

observations, I am interested in seeing how experimenting with different ways of sharing might affect the students' writing skills.

From this inquiry and the conclusions I draw, I may be able to help students in my classroom become more proficient writers. If I know what makes students most comfortable and motivated to share, I can use that to make sharing a positive experience for each of my students. In addition, if I know what kinds of sharing strategies may help to improve my students' writing, then I can structure sharing opportunities accordingly. In the future, this inquiry can inform the way I approach writing and sharing. Although I know every classroom is different, I can use the sharing techniques and possible conclusions I drew from the inquiry to inform how I incorporate sharing.

After looking at my classroom, I came up with some questions that I can use to guide my inquiry and reflections.

Wonderings and Questions

Main Wondering

-What, if any, are the effects of introducing various forms of sharing opportunities on my first grade students' writing abilities and how might this affect their motivation for writing?

Subquestions

- What do teachers and other experts believe is the purpose of sharing?
- Does sharing have the same purpose for all students?
- Why are some students more motivated to share than others?
- Why does sharing come more easily for to some students while others find it difficult to share?
- What might the effects be if students had a chance to rehearse what they planned to share ahead of time?

-How does or doesn't this relate to writing ability?

-What kinds of sharing effectively promote improved student writing?

After I came up with wonderings, I had to think about what made my ideas and concerns in the classroom more of an inquiry instead of an improvement plan.

Inquiry versus Project

“Teacher inquiry invites intentional, planned reflection, heightening your focus on problem posing” (Dana, N. and Silva, D.2003, p. 7). When I began to think about the problems in my classroom, I noticed how the students varied in their academic ability, particularly their writing abilities. When I probed deeper, I noticed during sharing time, some students, typically the stronger writers, were more willing to share while other students did not want to share. I wanted to know if sharing in different ways, other than the typical whole class style, would have an impact on my students' writing skills. In addition, I wanted to see what kinds of sharing might best motivate my students to share and what, if any, effect that would have on their writing. In order to determine the sharing strategies, I interviewed students and used their responses in an “intentional,” “planned” way, hoping to see connections and/or patterns that would help me provide more effective writing instruction. This “intentional, planned reflection,” is the essence of teacher inquiry, and should help “heighten,” according to Dana & Silva (2003), “[my] focus on problem posing” (p. 7). My inquiry started with my observations of my students during sharing time; it was a concern that I had about a common classroom activity. I designed a way to collect data on this activity by looking at student writing samples, charting student behavior during sharing, and conducting student interviews. As I continuously analyzed my data, I used the information I gained from teachers, other experts, and the students themselves to better understand what the purposes were for

sharing, how the students themselves thought about this activity, and how I might introduce new strategies to potentially create more motivating activities. In addition, I was interested in seeing how this might connect to students' writing abilities overall. I wanted to know what implications this might have for future classroom strategies, claims I might be able to make about this group of students, and additional questions on which I can reflect throughout the rest of my student teaching experience and career in education.

In the next section, I included my timeline, describing the steps I took in my inquiry process.

Inquiry Plan Description

Appendix A shows my data collection timeline. During the week of January 29, in order to collect baseline data, I had students share a piece of writing with the whole class. My mentor used a blank chart with their names on it to take notes on the students' sharing behavior (how well they read their stories, if they shared, why they didn't share) (see Appendix B). I also used the writing checklist (see Appendix C) with each student's name and quality writing criteria across the top, to see where each student began in his/her writing. Then based on the sharing with the whole class, I found three students who did not want to share their writing. I interviewed these three students along with one student from each writing ability group (one higher ability, one average ability, and one struggling ability). I determined writing ability by looking at content and mechanics in the students' stories. I interviewed these six students during the week of February 19, asking them how they initially felt about sharing, what ways of sharing would help them, and if they thought sharing made them a better writer.

During the weeks of February 26-April 6, I continued to have my mentor take notes on the students' behavior during sharing. After the sharing, I interviewed the six

students to get their thoughts on each sharing time and new sharing strategies. Based on their thoughts I tried different sharing strategies, ranging from pre-selected partners to familiar small groups to student-selected partners. Then during different points, when students shared new pieces of writing, I made photocopies of these and used the writing checklist to record any student progress.

At the end of the inquiry, from April 6-10, I looked at each student's recent writing and used the writing checklist to determine how the students had progressed with the quality of their writing. I also interviewed the six students, asking them the same questions I did at the beginning of my inquiry. Then during the final days, from April 10-13, I analyzed the data I collected and wrote my inquiry paper. The data collection section, which follows, includes more specific details about the pieces of data I collected throughout my inquiry.

Data Collection

For my baseline data, I looked at the students' recent creative writing samples. Then I developed a checklist for quality writing, with criteria including capitalization, sound spelling, details in the story, and a narrative structure. I rated the students on their writing by using a '0' to represent no evidence of in the writing, an 'X' to represent what occurred inconsistently, and a '√' to represent the student met the criteria consistently (see Appendix C). To begin, my mentor took notes on the students who shared and how well they shared, as well as the students who did not and why they chose not to share with the whole class (see Appendix B). Then I took specific writing samples from six students in the class; two stronger writers, two average writers, and two struggling writers. These students were eager to share, although a few had difficulty reading their stories. In addition, I interviewed the three students who initially chose not to share their

work and tracked them throughout the entire inquiry. I asked them ways that would help them feel comfortable sharing in the classroom.

As I continued my inquiry, I collected data from the three students who chose not to share initially and also targeted a writer with high ability, a writer with average writing ability, and a writer who struggles with writing. I judged writing ability to include both content and mechanics. I interviewed all six of these students to find out how they felt about sharing. To help them better describe their feelings, I used a Garfield-based likert rating that allowed them to point to one of four pictures, showing a continuum of emotions from very happy to very sad (see Appendix D).¹ Based on the information I gathered from students during these interviews, I designed new class sharing strategies. I continued this approach through five iterations. I also continued interviewing and monitoring the three initial students who did not want to share. I collected student writing samples, used a chart to record observations and made notes about who shared and who did not. I kept track of the students' writing progress using the checklist described above (Appendix B).

At the end of the inquiry, I selected a recent sample of writing from each student, and used the writing checklist to determine if, and/or how, the whole class had improved/changed from the beginning of the inquiry. I also interviewed the six, targeted students again to see if their ideas about sharing had changed. In the following data analysis section, I look specifically at the information I gained from each piece of data.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze my data, I decided to look at the pieces in a specific order. First, I looked at the student interviews in order to see what kinds of responses the

¹ The actual name of the Garfield likert scale is the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna and Kear, 1990). Jim Davis is the Garfield comic creator/illustrator.

students gave me after a particular sharing experience. Then I looked at the student observations to see how the students reacted during different sharing experiences.

Finally, I referred to the writing checklists I created to analyze student writing.

Student interviews

Before I began my inquiry, I interviewed six students asking them how they felt about sharing; what kind of sharing they thought would help them best; if reading over their writing first would help them to read it better; and if they thought sharing made them a better writer. I found four students thought sharing was good and rated it as either first or second Garfield (meaning liked a lot or just liked). While the other two students rated sharing as the fourth Garfield (disliked a lot). But the six students had different ways of sharing they thought would work best. Two students preferred whole class; two students preferred small groups; one student preferred picking partners; and one student preferred sitting in an “author’s chair.” Four of the six students felt as though reading over their writing first would help them to share better. Only two of the six students thought sharing made them a better writer.

After students shared in teacher-selected pairs, I interviewed them, asking, how they felt about the sharing and if they thought it might work better for them to choose their own partner. Four of the six students rated the sharing as first or second Garfield, meaning they liked that method of sharing, while five of the six students rated picking their own partners as first or second Garfield.

I interviewed the students after they shared with partners they had selected. Five of the six students rated this method as the first or second Garfield. When I asked them which sharing strategy they preferred, teacher-selected partners or choosing their own, all five mentioned they liked to choose their own partners, as one student put it, “I can share

with one person and I can pick who I want to be with” (A.T.; P.K; P.E.; L.M.; W.K, personal communications, March 8, 2007).

The students also shared in their language art groups and I interviewed them to see what they thought. Five of the six students rated this method of sharing as the second Garfield, meaning they liked it but not as much as when they chose their own partners. Three of the six students said they preferred to pick their own partners while two of the six preferred whole class sharing.

The next strategy involved sharing with partners first then the whole class, and again, I interviewed students after they completed the activity. Three of the six students rated this sharing strategy as the second Garfield. Two of the students picked either a third or fourth Garfield, meaning they did not like this method. However, when asked if they thought sharing their story with a partner first made their reading to the whole class better, four of the six students responded yes.

At the end of my inquiry, I once again asked these six students the preliminary questions I had used for baseline data. Four of the six students told me they felt better about sharing now, rating sharing as either a first or second Garfield. In addition, four of the six also preferred to choose their own partners while the other two preferred whole class sharing. Finally, four of the six students said that sharing their writing made them a better writer. (See Appendix E for full student transcripts)

Student Observations

Before I began my inquiry, I observed students when they shared a piece of writing with the whole class. I noticed the majority of the students (13 out of 18) shared easily, meaning they raised their hand to share, were excited, and smiled when reading.

However, three students in particular did not want to share even though they had brought a story with them to the carpet.

On February 27, 2007, I selected partners for the students. As I watched the pairs share, I noticed almost all of the students (16 out of 18) were eager to share with their partner, as evidenced by smiling, laughing, oral engagement, and heightened positive affect. In particular, the six students I was watching were all eager to share, even though one student stumbled over his words and struggled reading what he had written, and one student did not get a chance to share because he was not finished with his sentences.

When students chose their own partners, I noticed five of the six students were excited and eager to share, showing the same patterns as noted above. In particular, one student who disliked sharing a lot (he rated sharing a fourth Garfield) was smiling and reading in an excited voice. One of the six students was absent and was unable to share that day. Looking across the class, I noticed the other students were smiling, laughing with their partner, and reading in enthusiastic voices.

On March 8, 2007, students shared in small groups that I chose. I selected groups in which students had varying writing abilities and tried to make sure they were not in the same language arts or math group. Two of the six students did not want to share with the small group; instead they only wanted to share with one another. Three of the students were eager and excited to share with the group, while one student was absent.

When students shared in their language art groups, I noticed how most of them appeared more comfortable. Four of the six students were eager to share, even volunteering to share first in their groups, and smiling while they shared their stories. While two of the students did not want to share and volunteered to read their story last; one student actually put his head down when the other students were sharing.

For the final sharing strategy, I had students share in pairs first, then with the whole class. Six of the eighteen students in the class shared with their partners, but they did not want to share their stories with the whole class. All six of the targeted, students shared with their partner eagerly and only one student did not want to share with the whole class. One of the six students (W.K.) actually raised his hand first to share with the class. L.M. and W.K. did not struggle over their words in their stories and seemed to read more fluently.

Writing Checklist

At the beginning, I took samples of writing from every student in my class. Out of the six students I observed on a regular basis, two used all of the criteria for quality writing consistently except use of details. The other four students had various struggles in their writing including capitalization, vowel usage, no excuse words spelled correctly, sound spelling, and not including enough details in their writing.

After sharing in teacher-selected partners, I noticed P.E. and L.M. included more details in their writing. But L.M. was still struggling with capitalization and sound spelling. W.K. used better sound spelling and had a better understanding of vowel usage in his stories. After the students shared in their language art groups, P.E. and L.M. continued to include more details in their writing. W.K. continued to struggle with sound spelling, vowel usage, and details in his story, although he used capitals more consistently in his stories, as compared to the beginning.

After the sharing strategies, I noticed how some students seemed to have improved in their writing. A.T. was using all writing conventions consistently (capitalization, punctuation, sound spelling, etc.) in his writing, although he was not including many details. P.E., L.M., L. Ma., and P.K. consistently included all of the

quality writing criteria in their writing. W.K. was still struggling with capitalization and vowel usage, although he was including more details and using better sound spelling. Based on the data analysis, the next section present claims and evidence that supports those claims.

Claims and Evidence

Claim 1

Teachers and other experts reported the purpose of sharing is to provide all students with a sense of accomplishment, motivate students to write better and longer stories, share ideas and comment on each others' writing, and build students' self-esteem.

My evidence for this included a Purpose of Sharing Email I sent out to Panorama Village Elementary teachers concerning the purpose of sharing and how sharing is incorporated in their classrooms. A first grade teacher said, "When you ask children to share their work, it gives them a sense of pride and gives value to their ideas. By allowing them to share, we are telling them that we think what they have to say is important. It can help them develop a sense of confidence with their work," (S. Upcraft, personal communication, February 2007). A kindergarten teacher included, "Sharing provides all children with a sense of pride in their accomplishments," (K. Burkhard, personal communication, February 2007). From an intern in second grade, "I think that the most important purpose of sharing writing is so that students know that their work is meaningful, and something that can be appreciated by all," (J. Mendenko, personal communication, February 2007).

My evidence for this claim also included literature about the purpose of sharing. One expert believed sharing increases a writer's self esteem, makes writing better, and "increases technical accuracy" (Frank, 1995). "The writer feels the fulfillment of

bringing everything together in finished form. Others add positive responses. The sum total is a grand boost in self-respect,” (Frank, 1995, p. 150). Frank also said, “As kids write and publish they become spontaneously concerned with grammar and spelling and structure. And they begin to want to improve” (Frank, 1995, p. 150). Another expert believed if “The child shares an early draft, or a paragraph, and the other children receive the piece by responding to the information they hear. The very process of responding to the details of the piece also reminds children of topics they can write about,” (Graves, 2003, p. 28). Another experts explains sharing, “In most of these classrooms, the writing time ends with a sharing session during which the entire class gathers together to respond to two or three students’ work-in-progress. Then the author reads and asks the listeners for their questions and responses,” (Calkins, 1986, p. 27).

Claim 2

From my interviews with teachers and review of the literature, I found a tendency for teachers to view sharing as serving the same purpose for every student. However, what I found was that different students viewed sharing differently.

My evidence for this claim included Purpose of Sharing Email I mentioned above. The teachers I interviewed use the same sharing practices for all students. They said they believed sharing activities have the same general purposes for all, including: a sense of accomplishment, building self-esteem, and giving value to students’ ideas (S. Upcraft; K. Burkhard; J. Mendenko, personal communication, February 2007). In the literature, experts believed sharing provides students with a way to communicate ideas to other students, builds self-esteem, and makes writing better (Frank, 1995; Graves, 2003).

When I interviewed students in my classroom, I found different students viewed sharing differently. Four of the six students preferred to share with partners they chose. The other two students preferred whole class sharing.

Claim 3

When students were allowed to choose ways they preferred to share, they became more motivated about the sharing. In my student observations, I noticed when a student was sharing using his or her preferred mode, positive affect increased.

As mentioned above, four of the six students preferred sharing when they chose their partners. The other two students preferred to share with the whole class. When using their preferred mode, these students exhibited behavior such as smiling, laughing, and raising their hands to share first. When I interviewed students about why they had specific preferences for sharing, the four students said they liked picking partners because “I can share with someone I know; I am not sharing with everyone, and I can pick who I want to share with.” The other two students preferred whole class sharing because “everyone can hear my stories and I want to share my stories with everybody.” (See Appendix E for full student transcripts)

Claim 4

Some students find it easy to share, some find it very difficult, and the reasons vary by student.

During unfamiliar small group sharing, I noticed the students who found it difficult to share had different reasons for not sharing. Unfamiliar small group sharing meant I selected what group each student would be in based on his or her writing ability. Within the three groups, I put students together who are not in the same group for language arts or math. When I observed the students sharing, two students in particular

did not want to share with the small group. I did not pressure them to share but when I offered them the opportunity to share with each other, they smiled and read to one another. Later when I asked them why they did not want to share with the whole group, they both told me, “I didn’t want to.” One student said, “I only like to share with boys.” While the other student said, “I am happy to share with one person.” However the other four students in the group were eager to share, meaning they shared easily when asked and were excited to share with the other group members. (See Appendix F for student observation chart 3/8/07)

During teacher-selected partner sharing, I noticed some students who found it easy to share, but they had different reasons for preferring this mode of sharing. I selected partners for the students to share with and I made sure students of varying writing ability would share together. When I observed students, I noticed one student seemed excited to share with her partner because she was smiling. When I interviewed this student she picked the first Garfield (very happy) in response to how much she liked this mode of sharing. She said, “It didn’t take as long and I liked my partner.” I found another student who shared easily but she had a different reason for sharing in partners, “[I like it] because it was not in front of the whole class.” (See Appendix E for full student transcripts)

Claim 5

Some students who read over their stories with a partner appeared to have fewer problems re-reading their stories to the whole class.

During my initial interview with students, I asked them if they thought reading their writing before they shared with the whole class would help them share better. Four of the six students said yes because, “I can fix words or mistakes in my writing; it would

help fix mistakes before I read; I could understand my story and could read it well” (P.K.; L.M.; P.E; W.K., personal communication, February 19, 2007).

On March 27, 2007 I had my students share with a partner they chose, then they shared their writing with the whole class. I observed students during this sharing strategy and I noticed five of the six students who shared with the class did not struggle over their words and read their stories fluently. In previous sharing strategies (on 3/5/07 and 3/22/07), two of these six students struggled over words in their stories. However, when they read with a partner first, I noticed they did not have the same kinds of trouble as in previous weeks. I interviewed the students, asking them how they felt about sharing with a partner and then the whole class. Four of the six students believed reading over their story with a partner first helped them because, “It helped me check my mistakes; I read my story a little better; I got to know my story and fix any mistakes; I could practice [reading] with my partner” (L.M.; W.K.; L. Ma.; P. K., personal communication, April, 4, 2007). The other two students said no because “I did not want to share; I did not want to share with the whole class” (A.T. & P.E., personal communication, April 4, 2007).

Claim 6

Some students appeared to have improved their writing since the implementation of sharing strategies, although this is correlational only, since I found no direct cause and effect link.

Before I began various sharing strategies with my students, I looked at recent writing samples and used a quality checklist I created to code student writing. Two (P.K. and P.E.) of the six students consistently used capitalization and punctuation, employed good sound spelling, vowel usage, and spelled no excuse words correctly. But they did not include many details in their stories. At the end of the sharing strategies, these two

students were consistently adding details in their stories. Another two students (L.M. and L. Ma.) had trouble initially with capitalization, punctuation, and details at the beginning. At the end, I noticed these two students consistently included these three criteria in their writing. In particular, one student (W.K.) struggled with writing, especially capitalization, sound spelling, and vowel usage. At the end, I noticed this student consistently demonstrated sound spelling and vowel usage, although he still struggled with capitalization. (See Appendix C for writing checklists)

Claim 7

Some students appeared to have improved writing after sharing with teacher-selected partners and in familiar small groups, although again this data is also correlational only.

After these two sharing strategies, I took samples of six students' writing and used the quality checklist to code their writing. Before sharing strategy implementation, P.E. and W.S. consistently demonstrated all of the writing criteria except they did not include many details in their stories. After teacher-selected partners, these two students consistently included details. In addition, P.E. consistently included details in her story after familiar small group sharing.

Before I implemented sharing strategies, W.K. inconsistently used capitalization, sound spelling, vowel usage, and did not include many details in his writing. After teacher-selected partners, W.K. used capitalization, sound spelling, and vowel usage in his writing. Before sharing strategies, L.M. inconsistently used capitalization, did not include many details, and did not spell *no excuse* words correctly. After teacher-selected partners, L.M. consistently used details and spelled *no excuse* words correctly. In addition after familiar small groups, L.M. continued to consistently use capitalization,

included details, and spelled *no excuse* words correctly. (See Appendix C for writing checklists)

There is, however, no way to know if the sharing strategies improved student writing or if those changes were a result of other classroom strategies and continued instruction. Often when students shared their stories, they read old stories; as a result, I did not use the checklist to look at those stories because they were not current and might provide me inconsistent results. It is also possible that students improved their writing because of focused writing lessons that my mentor and I taught to the class. During the time of I was collecting data, my mentor and I taught writing lessons such as how to make a beginning, middle, and end in a story; adding details to sentences and stories; how to edit stories using a checklist; and how to add a more detailed ending. These lessons could have led to the improvements I observed in student writing.

The next section will include implications for my future teaching as a result of the claims I made.

Conclusions

I have learned several things that I can use to inform my future practice. First, I need to allow students to choose their preferred method of sharing. The students I interviewed and observed were most enthusiastic when allowed to select their own sharing partners. For the remainder of the year and in my future class, I can make sure I give students choices about sharing partners and about how they can share their writing. I now know that interviewing students can help me determine which method of sharing they prefer and guide my choices for structuring this activity. By interviewing and observing these students, I learned about their purposes for sharing, what they liked about sharing, and which methods of sharing they preferred. Sharing may serve different

purposes for different students, and I need to understand students' attitudes and preferences in order to make this activity as effective as possible, since researchers (Graves, 2003; Frank, 1995; Calkins, 1986) and other experts I interviewed (S. Upcraft & K. Burkhard, personal communications, February 2007) suggest sharing has the potential to help students build reading fluency, increase motivation for writing, and improve oral communication skills and confidence. Based on my data, I plan to allow students to read over their stories first, either by themselves or with a partner, before sharing with the whole class because most of the students I observed and interviewed, read better when they read with a partner first. When I tried this strategy, my students tended to have an easier time reading and read more fluently. I realize no matter what grade I am teaching, it will be important to know and understand my students, and it may be helpful to allow them to choose their sharing strategy, and read over their story first before sharing with others.

New Wonderings

My inquiry has led to several new wonderings, in addition to the wonderings I had in the beginning but did not fully explore. I feel as though I have answered some of my questions, although not conclusively. I know the results I found are only for my class of students, in this grade level, at this particular elementary school, in this school district. Next year my situation will be different and I might have different wonderings and results. Currently, I have new questions that have resulted from my inquiry:

- How is or isn't sharing related to reading fluency?

As I mentioned before some of my students struggle to read their words aloud. I did not get a chance to explore how reading fluency or running record level might be related to sharing ability.

-What factors influence the decision of choosing whether or not to share one's work (pride, creativity, etc.)?

In my classroom, I did not ask specifically why students did they want to share. Some students told me they like sharing with a partner or whole group better. I did not probe into why they prefer these methods; therefore, I am interested these other factors associated with sharing.

-What effects would props or puppets have on students' willingness to share?

Although I did not have a chance to explore in my classroom, I am interested in how willing or not willing students would be to share with props. The seminar we had on puppets inspired my curiosity about this subject.

-If sharing were mandatory (and not a choice), how would this affect the experience for all students?

In my classroom, if a student did not want to share, I did not pressure him or her to share. However, if I made sharing mandatory would more students resent sharing or share just because they had to and not because they wanted to?

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Appendix A

Inquiry Plan Timeline

January 29-February 2

- Collect baseline data (student sharing with whole class in circle)
- Use chart to record student sharing behavior
- Use writing checklist to look at each student's writing

February 19-23

- Interview 6 targeted students
- Determine sharing strategy to use during following week

February 26-March 2

- Try sharing approach based on student interviews
 - Possibilities:
 - Sharing in small groups
 - Museum (putting stories on desks and having students walk around to look at them and read)
 - Have students share a teaser sentence (favorite sentence in story with class)
 - Having students share with whole class, but student sharing can sit in an author's chair (my mentor's chair)
- Use chart to record student sharing behavior
- Use writing checklist to look at six targeted student samples
- Interview six targeted students to see what they respectively liked/didn't like
- Observe students at writing station

March 5-March 9

- Try another sharing approach based on student interviews (give them a choice from list above) and data collected to this point
- Use chart and writing checklist to see impact on six targeted students

March 19-March 23

- Try another way to share based on student interviews and data collected to this point
- Use chart and writing checklist to see impact on six targeted students

March 26-April 6

- Finish up sharing approaches based on data collected to this point
- Post data on all students using checklist
- Analyze data for all students

April 9-13

- Finish up last analysis of data (if necessary)
- Writing inquiry paper

Appendix B

Student Observation Chart

A.T.	B.M.	B.S.	B.J.
E.A.	G.D.	H.L.	L.Mad.
L.M.	L. Ma.	L.L.	P.K.
P.E.	T.A.	W.K.	W.S.
W.M.	Z.C.		

Appendix C

*Writing Checklists***Beginning Data 2/11/07**

	Capitalization	Punctuation	Sound spelling (1-1)	1-1 Vowel Usage	No excuse words spelled correctly	Details in story	Narrative Structure (climax, resolution)
A.T.	√	√	√	X	√	X	X
B.M.	X	0	X	X	√	X	X
B.S.	X	X	X	X	√	X	0
B.J.	√	√	√	√	√	X	X
E.A.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
G.D.	√	√	√	√	√	√	X
H.L.	√	√	√	√	√	X	X
L.Mad.	X	√	√	√	√	√	X
L.M.	X	√	√	√	X	X	X
L.Ma.	X	X	√	√	√	√	X (not finished)
L.L.	√	√	X	X	√	X	X
P.K.	√	√	√	√	√	X	√
P.E.	√	√	√	√	√	X	X
T.A.	X	√	X	X	√	X	X
W.K.	X	√	X	X	√	X	√ (time to finish)
W.S.	√	√	√	√	√	X	X
W.M.	X	√	X	X	√	X	√
Z.C.	√	√	√	√	√	X	X

Key:

0= not evidenced in the writing

X=seen a few times in the writing (inconsistently)

√= demonstrated consistently

Teacher-selected partners 2/27/07

Students	Capitalization	Punctuation	Sound spelling (1-1)	1-1 Vowel Usage	No excuse words spelled correctly	Details in story	Narrative Structure (climax, resolution)
B.M.	X	0	√	√	√	X	NA
B.S.	√	0	√	√	√	X	NA
L.M.	X	√	X	√	√	√	NA
P.E.	√	√	√	√	√	√	NA
W.K.	√	X	√	√	√	X	NA
W.S.	√	√	√	√	√	√	NA

Key:

0= not evidenced in the writing

X=seen a few times in the writing (inconsistently)

√= demonstrated consistently

NA=not applicable

Familiar Groups 3/22/07

Students	Capitalization	Punctuation	Sound spelling (1-1)	1-1 Vowel Usage	No excuse words spelled correctly	Details in story	Narrative Structure (climax, resolution)
B.M.	X	X	X	√	√	X	NA
B.S.	ABSENT						
L.M.	√	√	X	√	√	√	NA
P.E.	√	√	√	√	√	√	NA (not finished)
W.K.	√	√	X	X	√	X	NA (not finished)
W.S.	√	√	√	√	√	X	X

Key:

0= not evidenced in the writing

X=seen a few times in the writing (inconsistently)

√= demonstrated consistently

NA=not applicable

Ending Sharing Data 4/5/07

Students	Capitalization	Punctuation	Sound spelling (1-1)	1-1 Vowel Usage	No excuse words spelled correctly	Details in story	Narrative Structure (climax, resolution)
A.T.	√	√	√	√	√	X	X
B.M.	√	X	√	√	√	√	X
B.S.	X	√	X	X	√	√	√ (if time to finish)
B.J.	√	X	√	√	√	X	X
E.A.	X	√	√	√	√	X	X
G.D.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
H.L.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√ (if time to finish)
L.Mad.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
L.M.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
L.Ma.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
L.L.	X	√	X	X	√	X	X
P.K.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
P.E.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√ (if time to finish)
T.A.	X	√	X	X	√	√	X
W.K.	X	√	√	X	√	√	X (not finished)
W.S.	X	√	X	√	√	√	√
W.M.	X	√	X	X	√	√	√
Z.C.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

Key:

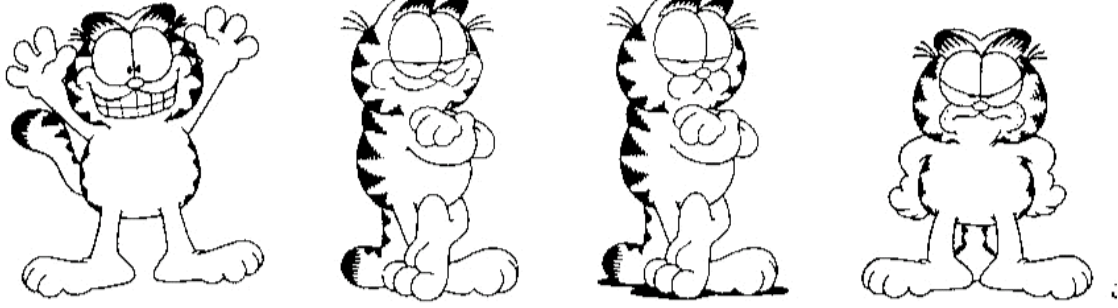
0= not evidenced in the writing

X=seen a few times in the writing (inconsistently)

√= demonstrated consistently

Appendix D

Garfield Likert Scale



Appendix E

*Student Interviews***Initial Interview with Students 2/19/07**

Students	How do you feel about sharing?	What kind of sharing do you think would best help you? Why?	Do you think if you looked over your writing before you share it that would help you share better?	Do you think sharing your writing makes you a better writer?
A.T.	4 th Garfield-don't like sharing because whole class. "I don't do sharing." Don't like others to hear writing.	Share in partners because not whole class	No, need that extra time to finish story.	No "I don't like sharing."
P.K.	2 nd Garfield-whole class not a good way to share.	Small groups or partners (like partners best) because not whole class	Yes because "I could understand story and could read it well."	No "sharing doesn't help my writing because I don't want other people to hear my stories."
L.Ma.	4 th Garfield-don't like writing and makes nervous to share with the whole class.	Sitting in teacher's chair while others at desks. "They would be farther away from me."	No because "I would still be stuck on words."	No because "I get embarrassed when I get stuck on words."
P.E.	2 nd Garfield-like writing better than sharing.	Small groups because "you don't have to wait." Would like to share picture.	Yes because would help fix mistakes before read.	No because "I like drawing and writing better."
L.M.	1 st Garfield-"Because I do a good job and others don't laugh."	Whole class because everyone can hear each other's stories.	Yes because "I can fix words or mistakes in my writing."	Yes because "It makes me feel good when others like my writing."
W.K.	2 nd Garfield-"Everyone can hear my story and I can hear others."	Whole class because "Everyone can hear me."	Yes but "Ms. Coursen should read first, then me. It would help me with hard words."	Yes because "It makes me happy and I like to hear other stories."

Interviewed Students After Teacher Selected Partners 2/28/07

Students	Did you like pre-selected partner sharing? Why?	Would sharing be better if you got a chance to pick your own partners? Why?
A.T.	3 rd Garfield-because partners were picked. "I didn't like sharing with a girl."	1 st Garfield-"I like picking myself because I am used to being with boys."
P.E.	1 st Garfield-"It doesn't take as long and I liked my partner."	1 st Garfield-could pick good friend and would be more comfortable to share.
P.K.	1 st Garfield-because not in front of whole class.	1 st Garfield-"I liked sharing with one other person."
L.Ma.	1 st Garfield-because not whole class, shared with only 1 person.	3 rd Garfield-wants teachers to pick. "It is a surprise and you don't know who you will get." Thought might get someone not comfortable with.
L.M.	2 nd Garfield-liked sharing in partners but "not that much." "If it is not finished then I don't want to share."	1 st Garfield-because "we don't usually get to pick [our partners]. So I can pick different partners who don't know my story."
W.K.	4 th Garfield-"I like the whole class to hear me so they can pass on my story."	2 nd Garfield-"I am partners with the same people because of stations. If I get to pick it would be with new people that I haven't been partners with in a while."

Interviewed Students after student-selected partners 3/8/07

Students	How did you like sharing with partners you picked?	What way of sharing did you like best so far? (whole class, teacher selected partners, and student selected partners)
A.T.	2 nd Garfield-because would rather be with a boy and pick partners.	Like picking partners best.
P.K.	1 st Garfield-because "it was someone I know and wanted to share with."	"Partners are better because it is not the whole class and I am just sharing with one person."
Ma. L.	ABSENT	ABSENT
P.E.	1 st Garfield-because "I like to pick my partner to share with."	Picking partners is better because "I don't know who Mrs. Tranell or you will pick. I like picking people who I play with a lot."
L.M.	2 nd Garfield-likes to share in partners "but not a whole lot."	"Partners we pick is better because I would be with someone who I want to share with."
W.K.	1 st Garfield-"it was fun because I got to pick someone I know."	"They are all ok." Doesn't have a favorite way of sharing.

Interviewed students after familiar small groups 3/23/07

Students	How did you like sharing in language art groups?	What way of sharing have you liked best so far?	Do you think we could try another way of sharing?
A.T.	Between 2 nd and 3 rd Garfield-because not finished with story	Picking partners because "like picking who I will be with."	No other way
L.M.	2 nd Garfield-"I was not really happy because I was not done with it [story]."	Whole class because everyone gets to hear	Rock buddy sharing
W.K.	2 nd Garfield-"I kinda liked it. I didn't get to share in front of the whole class."	Whole class is favorite	Share with the teachers (pick groups and "we share to you.") Good because "teachers can hear and so can others."
L.Ma.	4 th Garfield-"my stories are crazy and I am usually embarrassed when I share."	None very helpful	Sharing with just the teacher
P.K.	2 nd Garfield-because "it was only my group and I knew the other people."	Picking partners because "can pick people I know."	No other way
P.E.	2 nd Garfield-"my story wasn't done but I still liked it because we shared in small groups."	Picking partners because "get to pick who you want [to be with]."	3-4 people in a group and we [the students] get to pick

Interviewed students after partners then whole group 4/4/07

Students who did not share in whole group

Students	Why did you choose not to share with the whole class?
B.M.	“I didn’t want to read the rest of my story because it was too long. I would share [with the class] if it was shorter.”
B.S.	“I don’t like to share with the whole class. I like partners better.”
B.J.	ABSENT
G.D.	“Sharing with the whole class is not fun. I like sharing with one other person.”
H.L.	“I don’t like whole class sharing. Partner sharing is better.”
Z.C.	“My story was too long. I could have shared a little of the beginning, a little of the middle, and a little of the end.”

Six students who I typically interview

Questions	How was sharing with a partner then the whole class?	Do you think because you read with a partner first it helped your reading (in whole group)? Why?	Is there another way we could try to share writing in the class?
A.T.	3 rd Garfield-“I like to share in partners but not the whole class. I like to pick my own partners.”	No because “I didn’t want to share with the whole class.”	No other way
L.M.	2 nd Garfield-because shared with one person then everyone. “I like everyone to hear my story.”	Yes because “I could practice [reading] with my partner.”	Sharing in math groups
W.K.	2 nd Garfield-still got to share with whole class.	Yes because “I got to know my story and find any mistakes.”	No other way
L.Ma.	Partners (2 nd Garfield) because “everyone was not looking.” Whole	Yes because “I read story a little better.”	Share with teachers or picking own partners

	group (4 th Garfield)- embarrassing to share with whole class.		
P.K.	1 st Garfield-"I like sharing with a partner first."	Yes because "It helped me to check my mistakes."	No other way
P.E.	2 nd Garfield-because "I don't really like sharing."	No because "I did not want to share."	No other way

Final Interview with Students 4/10/07

Students	How do you feel about sharing now? Why?	What kind of sharing did you think helped you the best? Why?	Do you think sharing your writing makes you a better writer? Why?
A.T.	In between 2 nd and 3 rd Garfield-“not used to share what I write. I don’t really like sharing my writing.”	Picking partners because “I like being with boys to share.”	Yes because feedback from others “helps me write better.” “But I am normally a good writer.”
P.K.	1 st Garfield-“people can hear my stories and I can share with everyone.”	Picking partners because “I can pick my partner that I want to work with.”	Yes because “I can fix any mistakes.”
L.Ma.	Between 3 rd and 4 th Garfield-because “I am embarrassed and I don’t like sharing.”	Partners then whole class because “it was not with a lot of people and I got to pick who I wanted to read with.”	Kind of because “I am usually sharing to my mom and dad all the time. When I read to the whole class I write better stories but I don’t like sharing to everyone.”
P.E.	2 nd Garfield-“sharing is not my favorite and I don’t really like doing it.”	Picking partners because “it is a shorter amount of time. I don’t want to share with everybody.”	No because “I like keeping my stories to myself.”
L.M.	2 nd Garfield-got to be with partners and whole class. “I like to share with everybody in the class because I want to them to know my story.”	Whole class because “I want to share all my stories with everybody.”	Yes because “people will hear my stories and like them. It helps me to write better stories.”
W.K.	1 st Garfield-because “they were fun and helpful for me.”	Whole class because “everyone is on the carpet and they can hear me. In partners everyone can’t hear my story.”	Yes because “people can hear my story. They can tell me they like my story.”

Appendix F

Student Observation Chart 3/8/07

A.T. -no story to share -“didn’t want to share” -happy to share with one person -Said “like sharing with boys”	B.M. -read clearly—did not stumble over words	B.S. -didn’t want to share at first -read very quietly -then didn’t want to share whole story with group (only small part)	B.J. -ABSENT
E.A. -eager to share	G.D. -eager to share -extended ending of story to include other things	H.L. -eager to share	L.Mad. -eager to share
L.M. -“didn’t want to share” -Said: happy to share with one person (smiled when shared)	L. Ma. -ABSENT	L.L. -eager to share	P.K. -eager to share
P.E. -couldn’t pick a story to read -shared easily (ending of story), but didn’t want to share whole story	T.A. -eager to share	W.K. -eager to share -trouble reading some of words	W.S. -eager to share -extended ending of story to include other things
W.M. -eager to share	Z.C. -eager to share		

*Actual document available upon request