

## **Data Collection**

In order to achieve the most meaningful results for my inquiry project, I collected data in eight different ways: pre-assessments, student work samples, writing assessments, morning messages, observational notes, student survey, post-assessments, and pictures. I chose to vary my data collection methods for the purpose of obtaining and analyzing data in a way that could produce results that would be reflected in my claims.

*Pre-assessment-* As I mentioned in the section of my inquiry plan, I administered a pre-assessment to six students on February 12, 2007 (Appendix A). The purpose of this assessment was to see how an academically diverse group of students would perform on a written paper and pencil assessment. The assessment focused on three main objectives: Part A- editing pre-written sentences for capitals and punctuation; Part B- using two given sight words in their own sentences; Part C- writing two sentences through verbal dictation. I did not give the students any prompts or suggestions while they were filling out the assessment. I told them that this was not a “test” and that it would not be graded. I did not want to give the students any hints that would affect or influence the results. (See Appendix D for student samples of pre-assessments.)

*Student Work Samples-* Following seven out of the nine morning messages, students were given a topic to write about during Writing later that morning. The morning message that was written to the class usually ended with a question on those days that corresponded with the writing activity. After reading and editing the morning message, there was a short discussion about the

topic of the message and students would share ideas with the class. (See Appendix E for student work samples).

*Writing Assessment-* On February 23, 2007, students were given a choice of three prompts to write about. During the writing assessment, the students had to work on their own. Teachers were only allowed to sound spell and underwrite once their story was completed. This writing sample was given only after three exposures to the morning messages. Their writing was graded using a rubric given by State College Area School District (See Appendix F). There was a grading component for Content and Conventions, which combined to make a total score.

*Morning Message Charts-* Shown above in the Inquiry Plan Description section, I took a photograph of each letter after the students edited it. By saving a copy of each letter, I was able to lay them out at the end of the inquiry project as part of my data collection.

*Observational Notes-* On February 19, 2007, and March 27, 2007, my PDA observed a morning message lesson (See Appendix G). She took notes on the appearance of the letter and the students' interaction with it. I used the feedback from her comments as I planned the messages each week.

On March 30, 2007, my mentor observed and took notes during the morning message (See Appendix H). She used a form with all of the student's names on it to keep record of participation. Along with noting who participated, she wrote down what they corrected, and if they gave an incorrect response. Then she color-coded the chart with reading levels (below average, average, and high) to display the variety of learners in the class. The goal of this

observation was to obtain data showing the amount of participation from a variety of students in the class.

*Student Survey-* At the ending stage of the inquiry project, I administered a student survey to the whole class in order to receive feedback on their feelings on morning messages (See Appendix C). There were five short Yes or No questions that asked students' opinions, for example, "I enjoy the mornings when we have morning messages or letters." We completed the survey together as a class, and I read each question aloud and allowed time for their response. I reworded some of the questions to better explain what I was asking since I noticed that a few students needed some clarifying with some of the vocabulary. The students did not have to put their names on the surveys, and they were told that their responses were not graded.

*Post-assessment-* On April 4, 2007, I administered the same pre-assessment, this time to the entire class as a post-assessment. I gave the post-assessment to the whole class for the purpose of seeing how student's performed in the first section of the assessment where I asked them to "edit" a few sentences. Since this was the main process we went through during the morning message in a whole group setting, I wanted to see how they performed on an individual paper and pencil worksheet.

I set aside the post-assessments from the original six students to whom I gave the identical pre-assessment for careful analysis. The objective was to see if any of the previous results/scores changed over the seven-week period when the morning messages were in place. (See Appendix I for examples of student's post-assessments).

*Pictures-* See Appendix J.

## Data Analysis

Before beginning my data analysis, I organized the materials I had been collecting over the past several weeks into categories based on the method of data collection. I carefully went through each category several times to look for patterns before beginning the analysis.

*Pre-assessment-* After analyzing the results from the pre-assessment, I observed that there was a need for additional work to be done in the area of beginning language arts skills. Out of the twelve mistakes that were in Part A (where I asked students to help edit the sentences), the average number of mistakes found and corrected was 1.5. I came up with a small chart that outlined what I was looking for from the students in each of the three parts. As I read over each pre-assessment, I used tally marks each time I came across one of those areas I was looking for. The following shows the results from the pre-assessment:

### *Part A*

An average of 12.5% of the mistakes were found and corrected

### *Part B*

100% of the students used their sight words correctly in a sentence

92% were complete sentences

67% of the sentences began with capitals

42% of the sentences ended with punctuation

### *Part C*

0% of the sentences began with capitals

33% of sentence 1 ended with a period

0% of sentence 2 ended with a question mark

There were 15 misplaced capitals found throughout their work. (See Appendix K for full analysis of results.)

### *Student Work Samples-*

As I was going through student's work samples, I looked through the number of times a capital was used at the beginning of a sentence, and the number of times there was a correct punctuation mark at the end. I found that the easiest method for recording this was to take a green (Go) and red (Stop) colored pencil and trace over or mark where the beginning and end of each sentence was. I made tally marks noting the *actual* use of capitals and punctuation, versus what *was* used in their writing. I also marked a tally in a separate column every time I observed a capital or punctuation mark being used incorrectly. Even though I went through this process for all of the student work samples I collected, the following is the results from the first sample of student's work taken on February 13, 2007, and the second to last sample collected on March 27, 2007.

#### *February 13:*

- 60% of the beginning sentences had capitals.
- 50% of the sentences had correct punctuation.
- There were 9 misused capitals throughout the paper.
- There were 4 misused punctuation marks throughout the paper.

*March 27:*

- 72% of the beginning sentences had capitals.
- 78% of the sentences had correct punctuation.
- There were 5 misused capitals throughout the paper. (50% decrease)
- There were 2 misused punctuation marks throughout the paper. (45% decrease)

The above data results do not factor in that the student's work collected in March contained two to five more sentences compared to the data collected from their work in February. I believe that the data would reflect a more accurate analysis of correct punctuation and capitals if the same amount of sentences were used.

*Writing Assessment-* Even though the overall scores for the writing assessment given in February were mainly proficient, the results of this assessment indicate that the students are in need of additional support and practice when it comes to conventions. The graded results from the six students I selected to collect data from during this inquiry project were as follows:

*Overall score:* 5 Proficient; 1 Basic

*Content:* 4 Proficient; 2 Basic

*Conventions:* 6 Basic

*Morning Message Charts-* By writing the messages on a chart instead of the white board or overhead, I was able to keep a dated and accurate record of each message and the skills practiced. At the end of the seven-week period where I implemented morning messages, I laid out each piece of chart paper for analysis. Even before looking for trends within the chart, I noticed how their

visual appearance changed by the week. The first few letters that I wrote contained no blank spaces for students to fill in. Each letter was visible and no sound spelling was needed in order to make the correction. Even if the student could not read the word, they would have been able to correct the capital letter by noticing it fell at the beginning of the sentence. After the fourth week, I began leaving blanks so that the students would have to first figure out the initial sound, and then decide if it needed to be capitalized.

Even though I changed the variety of skills being built and the topic of each letter, there were many things that I kept consistent as I wrote each message. Each time I would use a different colored marker to separate each sentence. According to Adams, et al. (2003), using different colored markers is an important strategy for ensuring success with all learners. Even though some adults and students may think that would make the editing of punctuation very easy, the addition of the missing punctuation was always one of the last skills edited. (The top of Appendix H shows one day's order of mistakes corrected by the students.) The easiest and quickest corrections that the students made were filling in the missing blanks throughout the letter.

As the weeks went on, I began focusing on more skills in each letter. For example, the skills focused on during the first morning message were: editing, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. The skills worked on during the final morning message were: editing, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, -ing ending, beginning and ending sounds, expression, and recalling events. As students became more familiar with the format of the letter and gained knowledge with specific skills, I was able to build on more skills in each letter. I choose to vary the skills built in each message, although they always contained missing punctuation and capitals.

*Observational Notes-* In order to carefully analyze the notes taken from the observational notes my PDA recorded (Appendix G), I read over them several times. The first thing I did was to look for trends within the observation notes, and I noted what was mentioned several times. Some of the trends were:

- Students were totally engaged.
- They loved being the “teacher”.
- Writing and color-coding sentences made it an appropriate level for most students to follow.

The chart that my mentor filled out during one of the morning messages was also filled with useful information. After careful analysis of the chart, I came to the following conclusions:

- The first things that students noticed about the message were the missing letters.
- The last things to be corrected were punctuation marks.
- 74% of the class participated (was called on at least once).
- Out of the students that did not participate, 3 score at a low reading level, and 2 score at an average reading level.
- Out of the students who participated, 3 are at a low reading level, 5 are at an average reading level, and 8 are at a high reading level.
- The 3 incorrect answers came from a high, a low, and an average reader.

*Student Survey-* In order to analyze the student surveys, I tallied the results using a blank student survey (See Appendix L). Out of the twenty-two students who took the survey, the responses were as follows:

- 82% - *I enjoy the mornings when we have morning messages or letters.*

- 91% - *I like to help edit the letter.*
- 95% - *I can learn from other friends in the class during the morning letter.*
- 95% - *I learned skills such as capitalization and punctuation.*
- 95% - *I feel confident participating in front of my peers.*

Once I tallied the results, my next step was to look for patterns. There were two students who said that they did not like the mornings when we had morning messages, but answered, “Yes” to all of the other statements. The one student, who said that she did not feel comfortable participating, also said that she did not like to help edit or enjoy the mornings when we have messages. However, she did learn skills and also learned from her peers. The overall results show that the majority of students enjoy messages, and learn skills.

*Post-assessment-* After collecting the post-assessments from the entire class, I set aside a copy of the assessment from the original six students who took the pre-assessment. The first step I completed in this analysis was to fill out the same chart I made for the pre-assessment results, and compare the results. The average number of mistakes found was 5 out of 12.

*Part A*

An average of 42% of the mistakes were found and corrected

*Part B*

100% of the students used their sight words correctly in a sentence

92% were complete sentences

92% of the sentences began with capitals

58% of the sentences ended with punctuation

*Part C*

67% of the sentences began with capitals

83% of sentence 1 ended with a period

17% of sentence 2 ended with a question mark

There were 9 misplaced capitals found throughout their assessment.

During the time between the pre and post assessment, the amount of misplaced capitals reduced by 40 %. There was a clear increase in knowledge learned in all parts of the assessment.

(See Appendix M for full analysis of results.)

Once I compared and analyzed the results from the six student's post-assessments, I began looking at the results from the whole class. I first looked through them all to get an idea of the overall performance:

- 66% of the time punctuation was used.
- 37% of the mistakes in Part A were corrected.

Then I separated the papers into groups based on reading levels to see if there was any relation between reading levels and performance. The following are the average mistakes found by the three reading levels: High- 5.6; Average- 4.6; Low- 2.8. When I observed the amount of punctuation used, I noticed no correlation between the reading level and punctuation used. For example, 6 out of the 8 high readers used punctuation, 4 out of the 8 average readers used punctuation, and 5 out of the 6 low readers used punctuation.

## Claims and Evidence

*Claim 1: Writing mechanics can be taught through a morning message.*

Each morning that I practiced a message with the students provided me with the opportunity to informally assess what the students were learning, and what they struggled with. According to Adams et al., morning messages are an effective way to quickly assess skills and the ways children approach tasks (2003). Once students got into the routine of editing a message, we were able to quickly and effectively edit and read the letter. The student samples that I had been collecting also provided me with tangible evidence that backed up the success I was informally observing during the morning message routine.

The results of the pre and posttests that I analyzed illustrated the results of teaching writing mechanics through a morning message. Overall, there was a clear increase in knowledge learned in all parts of the assessment.

- The average number of mistakes found and corrected in Part A of the assessment jumped from 1.5 to 5.
- There was a 25% increase in the use of capitals at the beginning of their self-constructed sentences.
- There was an 11% increase in the use of punctuation at the end of their self-constructed sentences.
- The results during the dictation part of the assessment increased from 33% to 83% in placing periods at the end of the sentence.
- The amount of misplaced capitals was reduced by 40%.

*Claim 2: Teaching writing mechanics can be an interactive process with high student involvement when using a morning message.*

One of the trends that I noticed in the notes my PDA wrote during the observation of a morning message was that all of the students were engaged and enjoyed participating. “Having children come to the chart to make the corrections really helps keep them attentive and involved. They all love the chance to be ‘the teacher’” (Lynne Sanders, 2007). The students volunteered and took the lead during the activity. There were always hands in the air, eager to make a correction on the chart.

The chart that my mentor filled out (see Appendix H) detailed the students who participated, and what they corrected. 74% of the class participated in editing the message, and all of the students remained on task. When I polled the students at the end of the inquiry project on their feelings on morning messages, the responses were overwhelmingly positive. 97% of the students felt comfortable participating and 95% enjoyed editing the letter. Even if students did not come up to the easel to make any corrections, we read the letter together as a class, before discussing the question posed in the message.

*Claim 3: Writing mechanics can be taught to a group of children at various achievement levels when a morning message is used.*

One of the most rewarding statistics that I obtained during this inquiry project is that 95% of the students feel confident participating in front of their peers. Even the students who are not as strong when it comes to reading achievement levels felt comfortable participating in the activity. I believe this was the result of careful planning and research from published literature. Some of

the suggested strategies that I used when planning the morning messages that allowed for whole group success were:

- *Underlining tricky words.*
- *Using pictures in the message for beginning readers.*
- *Writing each sentence in a different color.*
- *Following a consistent format, limiting the message to any combination of the following: date, greeting, letter of the day, task, news for the class, closing (Adams, et al., 2003, p.8).*

Appendix H illustrates the variety of students that participated in the message on March 30, 2007. Grouped according to their reading level, there were nine high, five average, and three low level students that participated. The three responses that were incorrectly given from students came from one high, one average, and one low level student. The variety of results show that many different students can be involved in a whole group activity. The results indicate that students, who may not be at the highest reading level for first grade, can still learn basic language arts skills, including conventions.

Evidence that morning messages can be used to teach a variety of learners comes from the notes that I read from my PDA, and from the discussions with my mentor about the careful planning that had to go into the writing of the message each time. What might seem like invaluable details are key contributors to the fact that many students were successful in editing the morning message. Some of the important ideas that I talked about with my PDA had to be considered in order to promote student success were:

- using different colored sentences to help them notice

- calling on students to practice when they are confident
- having no “red marks” on the paper
- simple sentences
- meaningful content- connected to the unit or the day
- predictable language and sentences

By considering these and many more tactics when it comes to writing a message, students of various achievement levels found success. This feeling was also reflected in the high marks from the student survey results.

*Claim 4: Skills learned through a morning message transfer to student writing.*

Over the seven-week period, I collected a variety of work samples from the students. The time between February 13 and March 27, when I collected my last sample of student work, shows the evidence that the skills learned did transfer into their writing.

*February 13:*

- 60% of the beginning sentences had capitals.
- 50% of the sentences had correct punctuation.
- There were 9 misused capitals throughout the paper.
- There were 4 misused punctuation marks throughout the paper.

*March 27:*

- 72% of the beginning sentences had capitals. (12% increase)
- 78% of the sentences had correct punctuation. (28% increase)
- There were 5 misused capitals throughout the paper. (50% decrease)

- There were 2 misused punctuation marks throughout the paper. (45% decrease)

These results show that there is a benefit to having a morning message with students. The evidence that I found for this claim also coincides with some literature that I have researched. The authors, Payne and Schulman (1998), explain “Writing a morning message, daily news, or class message with students is a powerful way for teachers to demonstrate how writing works and to extend the students’ participation during the school year” (p. 55).

*Claim 5: Students are more highly motivated when they can be actively involved in the learning process than when doing more passive paper and pencil worksheet activities.*

During the editing of all of the morning messages, 100% of the mistakes were found and corrected by the students as a whole group. When they individually took the paper and pencil assessment at the end of the inquiry project, their test results did not reflect their performance during a morning message activity:

66% of the time punctuation was used.

37% of the mistakes in Part A were corrected.

None of students seemed to be excited to take the assessment, and I needed to remind them to be quiet as they worked on multiple occasions. The evidence that I have collected shows that using a morning message is more effective than worksheets because students are always engaged.

There was a noticeable difference in the student’s motivational levels during the message when 74% of the class volunteered to participate, versus the performance on the written assessment.

## **Conclusion**

### *Implications for Future Teaching*

From this inquiry project, I have learned several things that I will take with me as I continue in my professional development as a future teacher. After using morning messages in my classroom, and seeing the results, I have a deeper appreciation and interest in them. Each group of students that I will encounter throughout my teaching experience will bring with them a variety of experiences and interests. I am anxious to see how others will respond to the use of a morning message. I will use morning messages on a daily basis in my future classroom. Beginning on the first day of school, the message will be consistently displayed for use during the opening routine. I will also use the message as a way to teach key concepts from thematic units to a whole group.

I was amazed at the results I saw after just a few exposures to a message. I feel like the skills I selected to build in my morning messages over the past few weeks are just a few of the many. I also plan to use a morning message as a way to informally assess students. They can provide valuable information about students academic and social interests. In addition to finding out which students know what about writing mechanics, I also feel that messages will be an effective way to pre-assess what students know about upcoming topics in the units.

By further speaking with experts and experienced teachers, I hope to continue to deepen my understanding of the functions of a message. I plan to continue to read literature on morning messages and the many skills that can be built during the morning routine. Although my formal data collection phase is over for this inquiry project, I will continue to use morning messages in

the classroom this year. I also plan to continue professional development in the field of education as I begin my career as an inquiring teacher.

### **New Wonderings**

As a result from this inquiry project, I am filled with an abundance of new wonderings. Even though I have answered some of my initial wonderings, I have developed more during the data collection and analysis process. Some of the new wonderings I have are:

- When is it an appropriate time to have the students write the message *with* me?
- What keeps students from using capital letters and punctuation consistently in their writing?
- What age groups benefit most from a morning message? Can I use them in intermediate grades? How would sixth grade students feel about morning messages?
- Can primary students be editors of each other's work, like they edit my message?
- Why do students show a greater improvement when assessed during group discussion versus paper and pencil work?
- Would the use of more paper and pencil activities in the classroom have affected the results?
- How much of the morning can be set aside for a message with such a busy daily schedule?

## References

- Adams, A., Farnham, D. McQuillen, C. & Peabody, D. (2003). *Morning message*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books.
- Novelli, Joan. (2004). *Morning meeting*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books.
- Payne, C. D. & Schulman, M. B. (1998). *Getting the most out of your morning message*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books.
- Pinnel, G. & Fountas, I. (1998). *Word Matters: Teaching phonics and spelling in the reading/writing classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heineman.
- Schiffner-Danoff, Valerie. (2001). *Beyond morning message*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books.

## Appendix A

Kelli Daniels  
February 6, 2007

### Inquiry Brief

#### Purpose

As an intern in a first grade classroom, I interact daily with students of various learning achievements. My mentor and I have been noticing a pattern in student's writing of not using punctuation, and misusing capitals. While some students are using multiple pages as they write complex stories, others are struggling to meet the bare minimum in writing. A majority of students, however, are missing some basics of writing skills. So I began my wondering thinking of what could be done to increase the knowledge of writing skills in my class. Morning messages are a powerful way for teachers to demonstrate how written language works, along with literacy skills practice, interaction with text, and communication between students. I am interested in seeing what effect a morning message will have on the student's writing skills. I plan on using a morning message twice a week. On one of those days the morning message will be carried into their own writing, with a specific topic or question to answer. The morning messages will consistently focus on the use of punctuation and capitalization by having the students edit the letter that I have pre-written.

#### Question

What effect would the introduction of morning messages have on student writing?

#### Sub-questions

Will morning messages be successful if used only twice a week?

Will students become better editors of their own work?

Are they careless mistakes in writing, or do the students just not know?

Will students recognize sight words in the morning message and be able to use them correctly in a sentence during their own writing?

How does the students' writing change, if at all?

When will the use of punctuation become automatic? Or will it?

Will students use capitals correctly at the beginning of sentences?

Can a morning message be carried into writing time to give students ideas about what to write?

#### Data Collection

Observation/ fieldnotes- will take notes after the morning messages on participation and comprehension. Are the students engaged with the message? Do they raise their hand to answer questions and edit the letter? Are they able to explain why something needs to be changed? (ie. Capitalization)

Students' artifacts/documents- will collect samples of student writing once a week

Pre and post assessment- will assess students use of capitals and punctuation before and after implementation of morning messages by giving them the same test with sample sentences to fix and write. I will be comparing students' weekly writing throughout the inquiry.

Pictures of the morning message

Mentor/PDA sheets will be completed with feedback on the morning message

### **Literature and Experts**

Lynne Sanders

Word Matters: teaching phonics and spelling in the reading/writing classroom

Gay Pinnel and Irene Fountas

### **Calendar**

*February*

- ~ collecting baseline data- initial writing sample
- ~ pre-assessment- writing
- ~ begin morning message every Tuesday and Friday, including Tuesday during writing

*March*

- ~ background/context for inquiry paper
- ~ annotated bibliography
- ~ inquiry vs. project paragraph
- ~ wonderings
- ~ continuing the collection of data/documents
- ~ analyze data and look for patterns in student work

*April*

- ~ post-assessment students- writing (same as pretest)
- ~ final analysis
- ~ written component/paper
- ~ inquiry conference

### **Resources**

Beyond Morning Message

By Valerie S. Danoff

Getting the Most out of your Morning Message

By Carleen Dacruz Payne, Mary B. Schulman

Morning Meeting Messages K-6

By Rosalea Fisher, Eric Henry, Deborah Porter

Morning Message

By A. Adams, D. Farnham, C. McQuillen, D. Peabody

Morning Meeting

By Joan Novelli

The New Kindergarten: Teaching reading, writing and more  
By Constance Leurenberger

**Appendix B**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I need your HELP! Please correct the following:**

after school i am going To play with my dog fred it will be fun? we will play  
with a Ball do you want to play with me!

**Use the word WAS in a sentence.**

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**Use the word FOR in a sentence.**

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**Appendix C**Post-assessment  
STUDENT SURVEY

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. I enjoy the mornings when we have morning messages or letters.         | YES | NO |
| 2. I like to help edit the letter.  | YES | NO |
| 3. I can learn from other friends in the class during the morning letter. | YES | NO |
| 4. I learned skills such as capitalization and punctuation.               | YES | NO |
| 5. I feel confident participating in front of my friends.                 | YES | NO |

Appendix D

I need your HELP! Please correct the following:

A after school I am going To play with my dog fred it will be fun? we will play  
with a Ball do you want to play with me!

Use the word WAS in a sentence.

I was playing with my friend

Use the word FOR in a sentence.

This is for you.

When I come over  
we will have fun

**I need your HELP! Please correct the following:**

after school I am going To play with my dog fred it will be fun? we will play  
with a Ball do you want to play with me!

**Use the word WAS in a sentence.**

\_\_\_\_\_ My car was given \_\_\_\_\_

**Use the word FOR in a sentence.**

\_\_\_\_\_ I will give you a DVD for a case \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Went Cen com DVD \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ We will have fun \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Appendix E

Date: 2-19-07

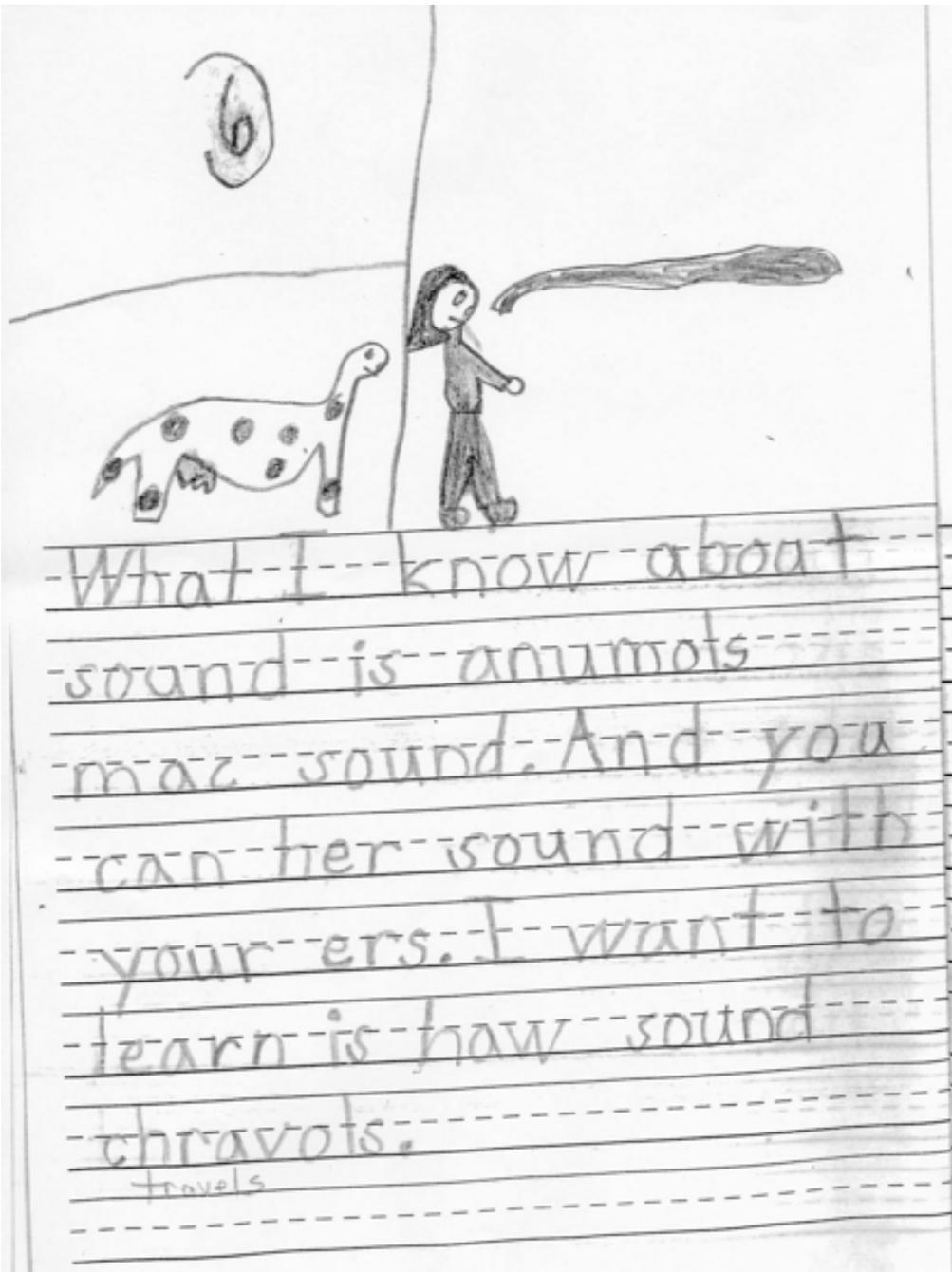
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:  
We have been learning some of the things you do for our country.  
Here is what I hope you will do:

I hope you will  
Stop Wars. How  
are you doing

I hope you  
are doing Good

Sincerely, " " "



1. with 201 I. with  
2. they 111w 5 2. they 111  
3. at 211 3. at  
We are at gimnaw  
They play with dolls In sid.

## Appendix F

## FIRST GRADE WRITING RUBRIC

CONTENT (worth 80% of total score)	CONVENTIONS (worth 20% of total score)
<p><b>4/ADVANCED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Narrative</i> - Has a beginning, middle, and end with characters, setting, major events</li> <li>✓ <i>Expository</i> - Has central idea and a series of related sentences</li> <li>✓ Maintains focus by grouping related ideas</li> <li>✓ Uses sentences of differing lengths and types in an order that makes sense</li> <li>✓ Uses descriptive language (adjectives and verbs) and details</li> <li>✓ Includes creative thinking and/or creative language</li> <li>✓ Includes characteristics of insight, vitality, richness of expression</li> </ul> <p><b>3/PROFICIENT = EOY BENCHMARK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Narrative</i> - Has a beginning, middle, and end with people, places, and things</li> <li>✓ <i>Expository</i> - Has a series of related informational sentences</li> <li>✓ Maintains focus</li> <li>✓ Uses simple sentences in an order that makes sense</li> <li>✓ Uses simple descriptive words and verbs</li> </ul>	<p><b>4/ADVANCED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Spells all current benchmark words correctly</li> <li>✓ Uses capital letters at the beginning of sentences and for proper nouns most of the time</li> <li>✓ Uses ending marks correctly most of the time</li> </ul> <p><b>3/PROFICIENT = EOY BENCHMARK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Spells all current benchmark words correctly</li> <li>✓ Uses capital letters at the beginning of sentences, names of people, and the pronoun "I" most of the time</li> <li>✓ Uses ending marks correctly most of the time</li> </ul>
<p><b>2/BASIC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Writes a complete thought or sentence</li> <li>✓ Includes a single event or several events loosely linked</li> </ul> <p><b>1/BELOW BASIC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Uses pictures and/or print to convey meaning about the topic</li> <li>✓ May add labels related to topic</li> </ul>	<p><b>2/BASIC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Uses beginning and ending consonants well enough to be read</li> <li>✓ Leaves spaces between words</li> <li>✓ Writes left to right and top to bottom</li> </ul> <p><b>1/BELOW BASIC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Copies names and words</li> <li>✓ Represents whole words with one, two, or three letters</li> </ul>

## Appendix G

Observation Notes

By Lynne Sanders

February 19, 2007

“ Morning Message:

- The message was well written (Subject: President’s Day).
- You used different colors for each sentence- excellent.
- The writing was neat, well-spaced, easy to read, and a good size.
- The content was written at an appropriate reading level for most students to be able to recognize all words- this is very important to do so students don’t become frustrated. Well done!
- Having children be the “teacher” and make corrections on the chart paper kept them totally engaged.
- Using a chart rather than a board was an excellent idea.
- Having the students read the letter together at the end was a good strategy.
- You asked very good questions and were animated, relaxed, and obviously “enjoyed” this activity as much as the students. Very good pacing- you kept them moving.

Observation Notes

By Lynne Sanders

March 27, 2007

“ Morning Message:

- Nicely written (good printing, appropriate size, use of different color for each sentence which worked well- excellent use of organizer!)
- I was so impressed with how well the students found all your ‘errors’ and could identify everywhere there was a need for punctuation or a capital letter. They were able to use periods, commas, and exclamation marks correctly- wonderful!
- The students loved this activity and were so proud of their good work.
- You asked very good questions, gave everyone a chance to participate, and provided excellent feedback to them.
- Having children come to the chart to make the corrections really helps keep them attentive and involved. They all love the chance to be ‘the teacher’.
- The children are learning without even realizing it! They are so competent now with capitals and punctuation. “



Appendix I

I need your HELP! Please correct the following:

After school i am going to play with my dog fred it will be fun we will play  
with a ball do you want to play with me?  
A b ?

Use the word WAS in a sentence.

I was vrey hot.

Use the word FOR in a sentence.

This is for me and you.

Wim can I come ovr.

We will have fun.

I need your HELP! Please correct the following:

After school I am going to play with my dog fred it will be fun? we will play  
with a ball do you want to play with me?  
b I t ?

Use the word WAS in a sentence.

I was litte but I am big  
naw

Use the word FOR in a sentence.

thise presit is For  
you ges wot It is.  
wen can I cum othre.  
we will hath fun.

Appendix J



**Appendix K**

## Pre-assessment Analysis

## Editing the sentences:

Number of mistakes per page total: 12

Average number of mistakes found and corrected: 1.5

Percentage corrected: 12.5

## Using site words in sentences (out of 12):

Words used correctly: 12                      Percent: 100

Complete sentences: 11                      Percent: 92

Beginning sentence capitals: 8              Percent: 67

Ending sentence punctuation: 5              Percent: 42

Misplaced capitals: 10

## Writing 2 sentences through verbal telling:

Beginning sentence capitals (out of 12): 0    Percent: 0

Ending sentence punctuation

    Periods (out of 6): 2                      Percent: 33

    Question marks (out of 6): 0              Percent: 0

Misplaced capitals: 5

**Appendix L**

## STUDENT SURVEY

- |   |               |             |
|---|---------------|-------------|
| 1. I enjoy the mornings when we have morning messages or letters.         | <b>18 YES</b> | <b>4 NO</b> |
| 2. I like to help edit the letter.  | <b>20 YES</b> | <b>2 NO</b> |
| 3. I can learn from other friends in the class during the morning letter. | <b>21 YES</b> | <b>1 NO</b> |
| 4. I learned skills such as capitalization and punctuation.               | <b>21 YES</b> | <b>1 NO</b> |
| 5. I feel confident participating in front of my friends.                 | <b>21 YES</b> | <b>1 NO</b> |

**Appendix M**

## Post-assessment Analysis

## Editing the sentences:

Number of mistakes per page total: 12

Average number of mistakes found and corrected: 5

Percentage corrected: 42

## Using site words in sentences (out of 12):

Words used correctly: 12                      Percent: 100

Complete sentences: 11                      Percent: 92

Beginning sentence capitals: 11                      Percent: 92

Ending sentence punctuation: 7                      Percent: 58

Misplaced capitals: 7

## Writing 2 sentences through verbal telling:

Beginning sentence capitals (out of 12): 8                      Percent: 67

Ending sentence punctuation  
Periods (out of 6): 5                      Percent: 83

Question marks (out of 6): 1

Percent: 17

Misplaced capitals: 2