

Afternoon Activities and Reflective Journals: Do They Have a Value in the Classroom?

Will using afternoon community building activities and reflective friendship journals help my students to treat each other more respectfully during the school day?

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Abstract:

This inquiry focuses on using community building activities and reflective “friendship” journals to determine if students can change the way that they communicate with each other. The activities for this inquiry are typically read-alouds and discussions or partner activities that focus on communication. I strategically paired students for the reflective journals by partnering students who either do not communicate or do not communicate well.

Description of Teaching Context:

I am an intern in a 4th grade classroom at Boalsburg Elementary School. My class is comprised of twenty-one students. Eleven students are males and ten students are females.

Academically, the class is diverse. Six students receive enrichment math instruction. Six students receive Title One services for reading. Three students have Individualized Education Plans for reading, one student has an Individualized Education Plan for writing, and another student has an Individualized Education Plan for math. All of these children are taken out of the classroom to receive instruction in those respective areas with the resource teacher.

Behaviorally, the class started off extremely well. In the beginning of the year, there were very few behavior problems. The students typically monitored their own behavior and were aware of when their behavior was inappropriate. A nonverbal signal from the teacher usually stopped the undesired behavior, and the student returned to appropriate, on task behavior. Sometimes, a verbal intervention was needed, but not often. More recently, however, the classroom behavior has changed. I have noticed a lot of the students treating each other very disrespectfully. The behavior does not seem to follow any sort of pattern. One group of male students was calling another student “Gas station boy,” because he does not cut well with scissors and the group of boys said that the only job this student could obtain was at a gas station. Not only is that comment disrespectful to the student, it is also disrespectful to people who work at gas stations. There have also been reports of boys pushing each other in the bathroom. I have had a

group of three girls who cannot seem to get along with each other and they give each other dirty looks and refuse to communicate their problems. Students have also been treating my mentor and me disrespectfully. Students have been rolling their eyes and giving us dirty looks when they do not want to do what we have planned.

Rationale:

I was led to my inquiry, using afternoon activities and reflective friendship journals, because of the sudden change in the behavior of my students. I did not have any plans to conduct an inquiry that focused on the topic of community building until I realized how badly my students were treating each other and how that affected their attitudes about our classroom. I decided to take action to try to understand the shift in their behavior this year and to learn how we can work together to create a positive classroom community. It was important for me to conduct this inquiry project so that I can answer my many wonderings and understand which types of activities increase the sense of community in the classroom. My findings will affect my teaching this year because I am now much more cognizant of group work and pairing for partners than I was earlier in the school year. I tried to pair students who will work well together for academic tasks, but for tasks in afternoon activities I tried to pair students who either do not typically work together or students who I know have had problems. I wanted to pair these students together so they can practice being respectful to each other and experience success while working together.

This inquiry project will also affect my future teaching because I will always need to find ways to build community in my classroom. Conducting this inquiry project will give me a number of necessary tools to use when building community in my classroom

next year and for future years. I will be able to reflect on the activities that I did this year to see which activities were most valuable to my classroom and incorporate them into my community building lessons.

Literature and Experts:

“The need for community is universal. A sense of belonging, of continuity, of being connected to others and to ideas and values that make our lives meaningful and significant- these needs are shared by all of us. Their loss, for whatever reason, requires us to search for substitutes, which are not always functional” (Sergiovanni, 1994, xiv).

Creating a positive sense of community and continuity in the classroom is essential. I wanted to create a positive sense of community with the students in our classroom so they would not find dysfunctional ways to interact with each other, which was beginning to happen. According to DuVall, respect is an essential ingredient in creating a strong classroom community. “Respect is highlighted and demonstrated in a caring classroom community. Students are concerned about everyone’s welfare. They encourage one another” (DuVall, 1997, p. 4). Providing students with guidelines to recognizing respectful ways to communicate with each other was a primary goal of this inquiry. Equipping students with the tools to respectfully communicate with each other builds the overall community of the classroom. According to the Northeast Foundation for Children, there are seven beliefs about creating a caring community in the classroom. One of the steps is that,

“There is a set of social skills that children need in order to be successful academically and socially. These skills form the simple acronym CARES-

cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self control- and should be taught in an integrated fashion throughout the day” (Kriete, 1999, p.14).

In choosing the activities and reflection questions for the students, I tried to touch on each of these skills. Having students practice the above skills in a controlled setting would improve their use in an uncontrolled setting.

Chip Wood states,

“Nothing is fair to the nine year old, who is also struggling with the cognitive task of understanding ethical behavior at a new level. Many nines feel that they are singled out for unfair treatment by a teacher, parent or Little League coach. This is also a way children relate to a growing sense of peer importance and group solidarity” (Wood, 1997, p.97).

In my classroom, this is certainly the sentiment of several students. Through the afternoon activities and friendship journals, I wanted my students to experience the same events and use their shared experience to build a feeling of group cohesion.

I decided to have students write to each other in journals because I wanted the students to be able to communicate their feelings about the activities in a casual way.

Bromley states,

“When your students are able to express themselves and write freely in their journals without fear of grades or evaluation, journals become a place where they can experiment with language and thinking, where knowledge can unfold and grow, and where they can learn to communicate effectively with themselves and with others” (Bromley, 1993, p. 10).

I wanted the journals to be a place where students would be able to write about their feelings without having to worry that I was going to grade their responses. The journals provided me with a way of knowing that the students were reacting and responding to the activities, but I was not required to evaluate their thoughts.

Another reason why I chose to have my students record their thoughts and responses in journals was to give them the opportunity to answer the required questions, but the journals would also offer students a place to personally connect to each other. “In personal journals, students can work through dilemmas, give voice to inner thoughts and feelings, discuss adventures and dreams, and become fluent, comfortable writers” (Bromley, 1993, p. 19). By reading each other’s thoughts and feelings, and being able to work through dilemmas, students would be able to get to know each other better. My hope was that if students were more personally connected, they would communicate and treat each other more respectfully.

Wonderings and Questions:

The main question driving my inquiry was, “Will using afternoon community building activities and reflective friendship journals help my students to treat each other more respectfully during the school day?”

I had many sub-questions as well. First, I wanted to know if there will be a point of satiety. Will the students get bored with the afternoon activities and friendship journals? Another question that I had is should I ever pair two students up more than once? If students are having a hard time reflecting and writing to each other, should I keep them as partners until I see a change in their writing? Another question that I had centers on parents. I know that some parents had voiced concern over a student in the

class and do not want their child sitting next to this student or interacting with that student. Am I allowed to pair these two students together or do I have to be cautious because of the parents' concerns?

Another subset of questions focused on the logistics of the afternoon activities. With so many students leaving the classroom in the afternoon for band, strings, chorus, Title One, enrichment, and reading support, will I be able to find a time that all students are present for the afternoon activity? I also wanted to know if it would be useful to teach something to a group of students that do not have to leave in the afternoon and then have them teach the students who were not present. This would provide the students with the opportunity to work cooperatively and I would be present to see that the students are teaching each other in a respectful way.

Inquiry vs. Project

This project was inquiry because I did not know the answer to my wonderings. I was not sure that afternoon activities and reflective friendship journals would have any impact on my students. If this were a project, then I would be putting something in place that I know would work and could track the changes. This is also inquiry because I analyzed the data that I collected to discover patterns and then tried to figure out where to go from there. This is inquiry because it was an ongoing process that was subject to change depending on the reactions of my students. Finally, this was inquiry because it was not a means to an end. Conducting this inquiry ultimately resulted in new wonderings that I want to explore . . . not in having fixed a problem!

Inquiry Plan Description

In order to carry out this inquiry, I told the students that we would be doing some new things in our classroom. I told the students that we would all be participating in afternoon activities and then writing in friendship journals to partners in the class about the activities. Then, I told the students my expectations of what would go into the friendship journals. I set up the expectation that nobody but them, their partner, and me would read their journals. I let the students know that whatever is written in the journal is between them and their partner. I informed the students that they would be responsible for answering questions about the activity, and if they completed the required questions, they could write to each other about anything, as long as it is appropriate for school.

After setting up the expectations for the friendship journals, I presented the first friendship journal topics to the students. Their first question was to write whether they thought it was cooler to be a friend or a bully and why. After I gave the students this question, I told them that our classroom was a very safe environment to write their responses. I told them that I would not be upset if they thought it was cooler to be a bully. I told them that there is not a right or wrong answer as long as they were able to provide examples of why they thought what they thought. Finally, I gave the students their partners. I deliberately paired them up with people they were friends with so that the first friendship journal experience would occur with a person they were comfortable with. I gave the students two weeks to work on this friendship journal. During the two weeks that they were working on this friendship journal, I administered the first survey. I told the students to put up privacy folders so that nobody would see their answers, and I asked them not to put their names on the survey. I read each question out loud to the

students and asked that they fill out the survey honestly. I told them that I was the only person that was going to see their answers, and if I disclosed any information, it would be a general pattern among the class, not one particular student's thoughts.

Next, I selected an afternoon activity in which the students could participate and reflect on in their friendship journals. First, I had the students brainstorm a list of words they associate with conflict. I wrote the words that students said on the board. Then, together we sorted the words into a positive or negative category. We discussed how conflict can have both positive and negative aspects. Finally, I read the book *Chicken Sunday*, by Patricia Polacco, to the students. Then, I posted questions up on the board for the students to write about in their friendship journals. The questions were:

What are some positive aspects of conflict?
What are some negative aspects of conflict?
Do you think it was wrong of Mr. Kandisky to blame the kids for egging his store?
Have you ever been blamed for something that you did not do?
How did that make you feel?
Write about a time that you were in a conflict.
How did you solve it?

This time when partnering students for the friendship journals, I decided to pair students that were acquaintances, but not great friends. I wanted students to become comfortable sharing their thoughts with people that they were not good friends with. I gave the students two weeks to write about this experience.

After this round of friendship journals, I decided to do an afternoon activity without having the students reflect in their journals. I noticed from looking at the first set of student surveys that the students did not feel like a team. I asked to myself what would make the class seem more like a team? I decided to have the students brainstorm a list of potential mascots. We generated a list together, and then voted on our favorite.

After that, I decided to have half of the class compose a class cheer, and then they would have to teach the cheer to the other half of the class that was not present during the creation of the cheer. I explained what compromise is, and that even if the entire cheer is not your idea, there will be some components of the cheer that you like. After coming up with a cheer and a mascot, we would do the cheer at morning meetings or at the end of the day. When the classroom mascot and cheer activity were over, I gave the students another survey to fill out. I informed the students that the surveys would not be read by anybody but me, and that they should not put their names on the surveys.

My next step in carrying out this inquiry project was to select another afternoon activity for my students. I decided to have my students participate in an activity that focused heavily on communication. I split the class up into partners. I tried to pair students that either had social problems with each other or students that did not normally interact with each other. I gave the students their partners and asked that they line up facing each other. Each pair of students had a clipboard in between them. The students were lined up so that one line had their backs to the board and the other line was facing the board. I had put a picture up on the board and asked that the students facing the board describe the picture to the students who could not see it. Then, I asked the students facing the board to tell the students not facing the board how to draw the image. They were not allowed to say what the image was, but they were allowed to describe the shapes and lines of the image. They were not allowed to touch the paper of the students drawing the image. Next, I had students switch places. I put a new image up on the board and the students switched roles. The questions that I had asked for this activity were:

How did communication help you with this activity?
What did you do to cooperate with each other?
When you felt frustrated, what did you do to remain calm?

During this round of friendship journals, I did another activity that did not require students to reflect in their journals. I read the students *The Blue Day Book for Kids: A Lesson in Cheering Yourself Up*, by Bradley Trevor Greive. I then asked that the students write a sentence and illustrate how they cheer themselves up when they are having a blue day. I had the pages bound and it is now a part of our classroom library.

The next afternoon activity and friendship journal again focused on effective communication skills. I paired students together based on previous interactions. I tried to pair students that either had problems communicating respectfully to each other or students that did not interact much. This afternoon activity required the class to be split into halves. I took one half of the students into the hallway and told them that when they walk back into the classroom, they are going to be paired with somebody. The person that they are paired with is going to try to tell them a story. Their job was to make sure they showed their partner that they were not listening. The only rule was that they were not allowed to walk away from their partner. They were allowed to look away, put their fingers in their ears, talk, close their eyes, etc. While I was telling these students their job, my mentor teacher was telling the other half of the students that they were going to get a partner when the other kids come back. Their job is to tell that person a story. They all thought of a story to tell, and they had to be successful in telling their story. When I brought the students back into the room, I paired them together with their new friendship journal partner and told them to begin the activity. After 10 minutes, I brought the students together on the rug and asked them what happened. We had a short discussion,

and then I posted the questions for their friendship journals. The friendship journal questions were:

For the Storyteller-

How did you feel when you could not get through to your partner?

What can you do in the real world when people are not listening to you?

For the Listener-

How did you feel knowing that your partner was trying to tell you something and you were not allowed to listen?

What was your partner doing to try to keep your attention?

For Both to Answer-

Why is communication important?

Is there a respectful way that we can show somebody that we do not want to listen to them?

The final afternoon activity that I had the students participate in was when I read a book aloud to the students. I read the short story *The Zax*, by Dr. Seuss. After I read the book, we had a discussion about the importance of compromise.

Finally, I had the students fill out a third survey. I reminded them that their answers would be kept private and that they should be very honest in their answers. I had the students put up privacy folders so that they would feel comfortable answering the questions.

Data Collection

There were two primary forms of data that I collected throughout the period of my inquiry: student surveys and student friendship journals. The first student survey focused on student attitudes about their comfort level in our classroom and whether or not students felt like they had friends in the classroom. This survey also asked questions about whether students preferred to play alone at recess, with a small group, or with a large group. Refer to appendix A to view the survey. The second survey that I administered to students asked the same questions as the first survey, but also had a

section devoted to student attitudes about the friendship journals. Refer to appendix B to view the second survey. The third and final survey that I gave to the students was also similar to the first two surveys. In this survey, I deleted the questions referring to whether the students preferred to play alone, with a small group, or with a large group at recess. This survey had questions about the friendship journals as well. Refer to appendix C to view the third survey.

Another form of data collection came from the friendship journals. Students had four rounds of friendship journals to complete. After the first activity, I collected their friendship journals. I then discovered more activities for the students to take part in, and I gave them new friendship journal partners. After the second afternoon activity, I gave the students new questions and had them write to new partners about the activity. I then collected the second round of friendship journals. The third round of journals were given to student pairs, and when they finished answering the questions about the activity, I collected those journals. Finally, the fourth round of friendship journals were given to students. When students finished reflecting on the activity, I collected the final round of friendship journals.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze data from the surveys, I tallied the responses to each question. Each question asked students to circle yes or no. I counted the number of responses of yes and no. Some students created their own category on the survey labeled “sometimes.” After tallying how many students answered yes, no, or sometimes, I changed that to a percent because the same amount of students were not always present to fill out the survey. Then, I recorded trends from the “why or why not” part of the survey

questions. Refer to appendices A.1, B.1, and C.1 to see the tallied student responses from the surveys. Refer to appendix D to see the recorded percentages for each survey.

In order to analyze data from the friendship journals, I read through each of the journals. Next, I decided to document prevalent themes in student responses. I also recorded outlying opinions or thoughts from students. Refer to appendix E to see the recorded themes of student friendship journals.

In order to tailor the surveys to the inquiry process, my surveys changed over the course of the inquiry. In determining what questions best suited my original wondering, some questions were omitted from survey #2 and #3. I also added questions to survey #2 that specifically asked students about the friendship journals. Then, in survey #3, I added questions that asked if they felt that they were more respectful in their communication with others and if the friendship journals helped them to be more respectful.

Some student responses to the survey remained fairly constant throughout the entire inquiry process. Other responses varied greatly. Some responses increased while other responses yielded a sharp decrease. For example, the question that asks students if they feel like the friendship journals are a valuable part of our classroom, the percentage of students that thought the friendship journals were a valuable part of our classroom greatly decreased. This table shows student responses from survey #1 and survey #2.

Do you think that the friendship journals are a valuable part of our classroom?

Survey #2			Survey #3		
Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes
68%	32%		47%	47%	6%

Another survey question that showed dramatic change over the course of the inquiry was: Do you think that you are a good friend? As you can see in the graphs below, on survey #1, 80% of the students believed that they are a good friend. This percentage increased to 84% on survey #2 and to 100% on survey #3.

Do you think that you are a good friend?

Survey #1			Survey #2			Survey #3		
Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes
80%	15%	5%	84%	16%		100%		

Claims

Claim 1

Students are aware of the purpose of communicating and how to respectfully decline communication; however there is a disconnect between this knowledge and the way that they choose to communicate with each other in our classroom.

Evidence 1

When reading the friendship journals from round 4, students were able to clearly state respectful ways to let somebody know they did not want to communicate. They were also able to determine the purpose of communication. For example, in friendship journal round 4, one student responds to the prompted question, “Is there a respectful way that we can show somebody that we do not want to listen to them?” by writing to his partner that you can walk away. Another student from friendship journal #4 tells his partner that if you do not want to talk to somebody, you can send him or her an I-message. Both of these students can identify a strategy for when they do not want to communicate with somebody else, but when situations arise in the real world when they

do not want to communicate with others, these strategies are not employed. In the classroom, I have seen these two students, and many others, decline communication in a very disrespectful manner such as ignoring the speaker, interrupting the speaker, or rudely telling the speaker that they do not care.

When reading through friendship journal #4, it is apparent that students understand why communication is important. Student responses ranged when addressing why communication is important. Several students wrote that communication is important when trying to talk to somebody else. Another student wrote that communication is important because it helps you to make friends. The responses in the friendship journals blatantly contradict the attitudes that some of my students have about making friends in the classroom. During the period of my inquiry, there was a group of three boys who were no longer allowed to sit together at lunch because of their behavior. The student that made the above statement in his friendship journal that communication is important because it helps you to make friends is the same student that told me he does not know how to make friends. There is no connection between what students write in their friendship journals and their actions.

Claim 2

My second claim is that student attitudes about the classroom and themselves improved.

Evidence 2

When reviewing the results of the student surveys, I paid particular attention to two trends that I noticed while analyzing student responses. On the first survey, 60% of students reported feeling comfortable in our classroom (appendix A.1). On the second

survey, this number rose to 72% (appendix B.1). Finally, on the third survey, the number fell slightly, but was still above the original 60%. The number of students reported to feel comfortable was at 70% (appendix C.1).

Another survey question that supports this claim is the question that asks if students feel like a team in our classroom. Originally, only 10% of the students felt like our classroom was a team. On the second survey, this percentage rose to 33%, and finally on the third survey, 47% of students reported feeling like a team. Consequently, the number of students that did not feel like a team dropped over the three surveys. Refer to appendices A.1, B.1, and C.1 to view the survey results.

When looking at the surveys, many students mentioned feeling like a team because of the team cheer and team mascot that we created in an afternoon activity. This activity directly impacted the students and they recognized that they worked together to build something for our classroom.

When looking at another aspect of the student surveys, the number of students classifying themselves as a good friend increased. In the first survey, 80% of students thought of themselves as a good friend. This percentage increased to 84% in the second survey, and finally to 100% in the third survey. Once again, please refer to appendices A.1, B.1, and C.1 to view survey results.

Claim 3

My third claim is that the friendship journals facilitated communication among some students to influence their relationships with peers in a positive way.

Evidence 3

While reading through the friendship journals, I noticed that the friendship journals opened an avenue of communication between one student and two of her partners. This particular student has had trouble maintaining friendships this year and is not effective in communicating her feelings to her peers. In one instance in friendship journal #3, her partner wrote, “I’ll try to get along with you if you try to get along with me.” This particular student responded, “I will try to get along with you and it is great having you as a friendship journal partner.”

In friendship journal #2, a peer that she has been friends with but also repeatedly has had problems with as well confronted this same student. In this journal, the two students are able to communicate about a problem that they recently had and voice their feelings about the situation. For example, the partner writes, “I don’t want you to be mad at me forever, and I know what I did made you mad. But sometimes my opinions are different than yours. I don’t like when you walk away when I give you and I-feel’ message. I also don’t like when you give me the silent treatment...” The student responded by writing that she was not mad. Even though the thoughts expressed may not have been directly addressed by each student, the journal opened up the avenue for effective communication. These two students typically do not know how to handle conflict face-to-face. The friendship journal gave them the opportunity to write about their feelings and process their thoughts before verbalizing them.

Claim 4

Several students did not see the value in the friendship journals and did not appreciate them in our classroom.

Evidence 4

During our persuasive writing unit, I asked students to brainstorm a list of topics that they would be able to write about persuasively. I encouraged students to select a topic that they felt strongly about and would be able to back up with three different reasons. When reading over their brainstorms, four students had why we should not have friendship journals as potential topics. Although I was slightly disheartened, I told these students that if they could find three different reasons as to why we should not have friendship journals, then they would be able to write about that. None of the students were able to generate three reasons, so they all decided to choose other persuasive topics.

While conversing with the students about why they do not like the friendship journals, all of them said that it was because they did not have their friends as partners. They only wanted to connect and reflect with their friends, not with other students in the classroom.

When looking at student surveys, I noticed that students who responded that the friendship journals were not a valuable part of the classroom, did so because they created more work for the students. Other students mentioned that they could just as easily talk to people instead of write.

Conclusions

After conducting an inquiry focused on communication and journaling, I intend to continue using these strategies in future classrooms. Journaling offers students an informal, casual way to communicate with peers. If the expectations are clearly set up before beginning a journaling activity, students will feel comfortable opening up and honestly writing to classmates. In future classrooms, I will continue to use journaling between students and among the students and me. Journaling offers an open avenue of

communication, and I would like my students to feel that I am interested in their thoughts and journaling is a great way to show them that I care.

Classroom community is an extremely important aspect of any classroom. In creating a place for all students to feel safe, comfortable, and like an important citizen of the classroom, community building activities are essential. Through this inquiry project, I am able to take away great activities for future classes to take part in to build a community for themselves. I know which activities I will use from now on with every class that I teach, and I know which activities did not yield the type of results I was hoping for. Through this inquiry, I was able to clearly see which activities have value in creating a sense of positive classroom community.

I am aware that not all of my future classes will require such a heavy reliance on positive communication and community building activities. I am well aware now of which types of activities are useful for any classroom, and I feel like I am equipped to help students build a positive classroom community.

New Wonderings

There are many thoughts that I have about my inquiry and why things happened the way they did. I was wondering about the students that did not like the friendship journals. I wonder if the aversion to the friendship journals was because students were not able to pick their partners or if it was because students do not like to write. I began to wonder if there was a way for students to reflect with partners about activities verbally that would be manageable for the teacher to document. I believe that reflection is an extremely important aspect in life, and documenting reflection helps us make changes. Is writing the only way? I also wonder if students would have benefited more from the

inquiry if they were able to choose their own partners. In the future, I may have students choose their partners for some activities. I wonder if that would motivate them to keep on writing or to write more deeply about their thoughts and experiences.

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Appendix A

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THIS SHEET!

1. Do you feel like you have friends in the classroom? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

2. What is your favorite thing to do at recess? _____

3. Do you talk to people from school when you are not in school? YES NO

4. Do you feel comfortable when you are at school? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

5. Are you excited to come to school and see your classmates?

Why or why not? _____

6. If there was one thing that you could change about our classroom, what would it be?

Why would you change it? _____

7. Does our class feel like a team to you? YES NO

Why or why not?

8. Do you think that you are a good friend? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

9. Do you ever call people names (either to their face or behind their back) YES NO

10. At recess, do you prefer to play alone, with a small group of friends, or with a large group of friends? ALONE SMALL GROUP LARGE GROUP

Appendix A.1

Survey #1 Responses

1. 18/20 said they feel like they have friends. (90%)
2. Not relevant
3. 17 yes 2 no 1 no response (85%) (10%) (5%)
4. 12 are comfortable (60%) 5 sometimes (25%) 3 no (15%)
 No- I feel like I have to do everything right or I'll get in trouble
 No- I think that there's not a reason to go to school

 Yes- 9 said yes because they have friends

 Sometimes- 3 said bullying or fighting (conflict)
5. 13 said yes because people are nice, want to talk to their friends, want to see their friends (65%)

 4 said sometimes because of bullying/ fighting/ conflict (20%)
7. 2 Yes (10%) 1 Sometimes (5%) 2 I don't know (10%) 15 No (75%)

 people are mean to me, tease me, bully me, argue
8. 16 yes (80%) 1 sometimes (5%) 3 No (15%)

 Yes- I respect them, we play together, I am nice to them
 No- I call people names, I tell exaggerated truth
9. Yes 10 (50%) No response 1 (5%) No 9 (45%)
10. Small group 10 (50%) Both Small and Large 2 (10%) Both alone
 and Small 1 (5%)

 Large 7 (35%)

Appendix B

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THIS SHEET!

1. Do you feel like you have friends in the classroom? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

2. What is your favorite thing to do at recess? _____

3. Do you talk to people from school when you are not in school? YES NO

4. Do you feel comfortable when you are at school? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

5. Are you excited to come to school and see your classmates?

Why or why not? _____

7. Does our class feel like a team to you? YES NO

Why or why not?

8. Do you think that you are a good friend? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

9. Do you ever call people names (either to their face or behind their back) YES NO

10. At recess, do you prefer to play alone, with a small group of friends, or with a large group of friends? ALONE SMALL GROUP LARGE GROUP

11. Do you feel like you can be honest in your friendship journals? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

12. Do you feel like the friendship journals help you talk to somebody that you would not normally talk to? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

13. Do you think the friendship journals are a valuable part of our classroom? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

Appendix B.1

Inquiry Survey #2 Given on March 7, 2007

1. 16 YES (88%) 2 NO (12%)

YES- friendly to me, nice to me, want to be around me, I get picked to be partners.

NO- people are mean to me, some days I have friends, other times I don't.

4. 13 YES (72%), 5 NO (28%)

YES- I have friends there, people make me feel safe

NO- people could make fun of me, I might get embarrassed, argue with people, I feel like I have to be perfect.

5. 11 YES (61%), 6 NO (33%), 1 sometimes (6%)

YES- because my friends are at school

NO- I could be made fun of, we argue, I am embarrassed

7. 6 YES (33%), 12 NO (67%)

YES- we work together, we have a team name

NO- we are like several separate teams that don't like each other, we fight a lot, there are groups, people don't listen to each other

8. YES-16(84%) NO-3 (16%)

YES- I am nice, I am respectful, I treat people the way they want to be treated

NO- I am not nice, I make fun of people, I tease people.

9. 11 YES (58%), 7 NO (37%), 1 SOMETIMES (5%)

11. 16 YES (84%), 3 NO (16%)

YES- It is between me and the classmate and the teacher, we are writing to people we know, we should be honest.

NO- teachers will read them, your partner will tell on you, I don't want to hurt feelings.

12. 10 YES (53%), 8 NO (42%), 1 SOMETIMES (5%)

YES- you get to communicate with the people, you don't get to pick your partner so you have to talk to other people, you find out things that you have in common.

13. 13 YES (68%), 6 NO (32%)

YES- Get to know each other better, only our class does it, can work out problems

NO- They're not fun, can communicate quicker by talking, don't get to talk to your friends.

Appendix C

1. Do you feel like you have friends in the classroom? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

2. Do you talk to people from school when you are not in school? YES NO

3. Do you feel comfortable when you are at school? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

4. Are you excited to come to school and see your classmates?

Why or why not? _____

5. Does our class feel like a team to you? YES NO

Why or why not?

6. Do you think that you are a good friend? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

7. Do you ever call people names (either to their face or behind their back) YES NO

8. Do you feel that you are respectful when you interact with your classmates?

YES NO

Why or why not? _____

9. Do you think that the activities that we did with our friendship journals showed you different ways to communicate respectfully with your classmates? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

10. Do you feel like you can be honest in your friendship journals? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

11. Do you feel like the friendship journals help you talk to somebody that you would not normally talk to? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

12. Do you think the friendship journals are a valuable part of our classroom? YES NO

Why or why not? _____

Appendix C.1

Survey #3 Results

1. 15 yes, (88%) 2 no (12%), 4 absent
YES- play together, get picked for partners, nice to me
NO- I don't get friendly greetings, I get picked on
2. 13 yes (76%), 4 no (24%)
3. 12 yes (70%), 4 no (24%), 1 sometimes (6%)
YES- friends at school, teachers to help you
NO- I get yelled at, I have to be perfect, picked on, people make fun of what you eat at lunch
4. 12 yes (70%) 2 no (12%), 3 sometimes (18%)
YES- I like to play with my friends and see my friends
NO- I don't have friends, I don't like school
5. 8 YES (47%), 9 NO (53%)
YES- work together, mascot and cheer,
NO- fight, argue, pick on each other, don't like our mascot
6. 17 yes (100%)
don't argue, treat people how they want to be treated, am respectful, loyal
7. 6 YES (35%), 11 NO (65%)
8. 17 yes (100%)
I call them names at home, I treat them how they want to be treated, we can disagree and not fight, I try to be nice
9. 8 yes ((47%), 7 no (41%), 1 sometimes, (6%)1 no answer
YES- can become friends and talk nicely to each other, because it showed me another way to communicate, it showed me what it was like when nobody was listening to me
NO- We are only talking, I am communicating the same way
10. 11 yes (65%), 4 no (23%), 1 sometimes (6%), 1 no answer
YES- only your partner and the teachers see, I don't like to lie
NO- might tell friends what you wrote in your journal,
11. 7 yes (41%), 5 no (29%), 4 sometimes (23%) , 1 no answer (6%)
YES- you get to know them better, you get to talk to other kids, helps me make new friends

NO- they're not your friend and you don't want to talk to them, I already talk to everyone in our class

SOMETIMES- I get paired with people I don't talk to

12. 8 yes (47%), 8 no (47%), 1 sometimes (6%)

YES- nobody else does them, it helps you get to know others

NO- hard question to answer, we can just talk to them, not fun, gives us more work, we could communicate other ways.

Appendix D
Percentage Results for Common Questions Among Surveys

Do you feel like you have friends in the classroom?

Survey #1			Survey #2			Survey #3		
Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes
90%	10%		88%	12%		88%	12%	

Do you feel comfortable when you are at school?

Survey #1			Survey #2			Survey #3		
Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes
60%	15%	25%	72%	28%		70%	24%	6%

Are you excited to come to school and see your classmates?

Survey #1			Survey #2			Survey #3		
Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes
65%	35%		61%	33%	6%	70%	12%	18%

Does our classroom feel like a team to you?

Survey #1			Survey #2			Survey #3		
Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes
10%	75%	5%	33%	67%		47%	53%	

Do you think that you are a good friend?

Survey #1			Survey #2			Survey #3		
Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes
80%	15%	5%	84%	16%		100%		

Do you ever call people names (either to their face or behind their back)?

Survey #1			Survey #2			Survey #3		
Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes
50%	45%	5%	58%	37%	5%	35%	65%	

Do you feel like you can be honest in your friendship journals?

Survey #2			Survey #3		
Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes
84%	16%		64%	23%	5%

Do you feel like the friendship journals helped you talk to somebody that you would not normally talk to?

Survey #2			Survey #3		
Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes
53%	42%	5%	41%	29%	23%

Do you think that the friendship journals are a valuable part of our classroom?

Survey #2			Survey #3		
Yes	No	Sometimes	Yes	No	Sometimes
68%	32%		47%	47%	6%

The following questions were only asked on survey #3

Do you feel that you are respectful when you interact with your classmates?

Survey #3		
Yes	No	Sometimes
100%		

Do you think that the activities that we did with our friendship journals showed you different ways to communicate respectfully with your classmates?

Survey #3		
Yes	No	Sometimes
47%	47%	6%

Appendix E

Friendship Journal #1

Bully Journal

All students said that it would be cooler to be a friend than a bully. Students had time to write to each other and get to know each other on a deeper level than just answering the questions.

Many students began asking each other personal questions, such as “what is your favorite color, food, TV. Show, movie, etc.”

Friendship Journal #2

Chicken Sunday

Some students felt that it was ok for Mr. Kandisky to blame the kids, others did not. Students were able to identify strategies that they have used before when in a conflict: ignoring the situation, giving in so that the other person is happy...

One set of friendship journal partners are both walkers. They did not really interact much before being partners. Now at the end of the day, they socialize before walking home. They were able to use the friendship journals as an avenue to get to know each other.

Friendship Journal #3

Drawing Activity Journal

Telling partner shapes to draw helped them to be successful. Cooperation is a valuable part to being successful. Clear communication helped us to be successful.

One student said that when he felt frustrated, he thought that his partner had to go through the same experience, so he was able to empathize with her feelings.

Another set of students used this journal as an avenue to make amends. “I will try to get along with you if you try to get along with me” Response- “I will try to get along with you and it is great having you as a friendship journal partner.”

Friendship Journal #4

Conversation Journal

Each student can identify why communication is important. They can all name respectful ways to let somebody know that they do not want to listen. One student said that if you want somebody to listen to you, you can use an “I-message”. They can all say effective communication strategies, but they do not communicate this way with each other in the classroom.

People thought that it was fun to not listen to their partner's story, but they also felt mean not listening. All of the people who were telling the story recorded feeling frustrated.