Art and Literacy: A Study of Young Children’s Art in the Development of Their Literacy

Bonnie R. Perkins

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ART AND LITERACY:
A STUDY OF YOUNG CHILDREN'S ART
IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR LITERACY

THESIS

Submitted to the Graduate Committee of the
Department of Education and Human Development
State University of New York
College at Brockport
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Education

by
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May, 1989
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"No information derived from this thesis may be published without permission of the original author, with whom copyright lies."
This is dedicated to the ones I love.

Bill
Jennifer
Jason
Joshua
Abstract

This study was designed to examine young children's art in the development of their literacy.

Twenty children, involved in a literature-based art program, were observed and interviewed after the completion of various literacy episodes involving their art work. The children's art work was classified and described according to the characteristics of the literacy episodes and the samples that were produced. The responses to the interview questions were descriptively analyzed.

The results of this study indicate a strong interaction of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and children's art work in their literacy development. Children like to draw at home as well as school. They prefer to make their own decisions about their art work but family and friends significantly influence their decisions. Their creative expression leads to the kind of self-esteem and confidence necessary for success in any learning situation. Art expression was viewed as a learning process that enhanced their comprehension development, cognitive development, and language development. Children felt that their art work was important but few children internalized the significance.
Children's art work in the classroom can support their reading, writing, and language development. Art expression opportunities should be provided in all activities and should be considered an alternate form of communication.

This study's findings yield insight into the importance of young children's art in the development of their literacy. Longitudinal research is necessary to comprehend the developmental nature of this mode of learning in relation to reading, writing and language development over a longer period of time.
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Chapter I

Statement of the Problem

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the importance of young children's art in the development of their literacy.

Need For The Study

Literacy has always been of prime educational importance. "Traditional error of thinking about reading and writing was to see them as discrete subjects isolated from the world of language and spoken culture and then to teach them as if they had no relationship to listening and speaking" (Holdaway, 1979, p.12). Methodologies changed in an attempt to find a successful program of literacy development. A recent focus, guided by more realistic research of a developmental kind, creates a more sensitive awareness of language. Current researchers (Holdaway, 1979; Goodman, 1986; Graves, 1983) suggest that developmental learning is regulated by the learner, is highly motivated, is purposeful and meaningfully related to other aspects of development.

Several researchers have reported that art is an important part of children's literacy development.
(Brittain, 1979; Cohen & Gainer, 1984; Dyson, 1986; Garner, 1973; Kellogg, 1979; Lowenfeld, 1959; McGuire, 1984). "Symbolic representations of the environment through pictures and sculpture are as natural to human beings as the development of speech" (Cohen & Gainer, 1984, p. 3).

Drawings are a form of communication that is especially valuable because of children’s limited language. Gardner (1980) states that the creative works are the means of expressing feelings that are often inarticulate and inexpressible in other media. The young child, still inarticulate but already harboring many important if ineffable feelings, resorts spontaneously and with deep felt need to the media at his disposal.

The connection between literacy development, as we teach today, and children’s art has not been thoroughly investigated. Art is usually taught as something special, separate from education and from life. Art is an integral part of education, enriching and binding together many aspects of human experience (Cohen & Gainer, 1984). The detailed observation of children and their art during literacy episodes will lead to a clearer understanding of this integrated process of learning.
Questions

1. What is the importance of children’s art in reading development?

2. What is the importance of children’s art in writing development?

3. What is the importance of children’s art in language development?

Definitions

Literacy  Literacy is a developmental process of reading and writing to communicate meaning and to function effectively in society.

Literacy Episode  A developmental task, such as reading and writing, occurring in a meaningful situation. Some examples of literacy episodes are journal writing, writing in response to literature, independent reading, sustained silent reading, prewriting and prereading activities and various classroom activities involving reading, writing and language.

Language  Language is used to communicate thoughts, emotions, and needs to family and peers. Language is used and learned in the context of expressing and comprehending meaning.

Natural Learning  Children learn to read and write in the same way that they learn to speak and listen. Language learning is motivated by the need to communicate, to understand and be understood.
Art  Art is a universal visual language. Art refers to the conscious efforts of human beings to arrange colors, shapes, lines, sounds, movement, and other sensory phenomena to express their ideas and feelings about themselves and their world.

Literature Based Art Program  An art program that is motivated primarily by children's literature.

Reading  Reading is a complex process by which a reader reconstructs to some degree, a message encoded by a writer in graphic language.

Writing  The units of written language (letters) representing the sound units of speech rather than meaning as in pictographic and other systems.

Limitations

The subjects for this study include twenty children attending a third grade language arts program and a literature based art class at the same elementary school. Any conclusions drawn from this group are limited to a similar situation.
Summary

In the past several years, the problem of illiteracy within our society has created increased concern about children's education in the elementary schools. Literacy is no longer looked upon as separate disciplines but knowledge unified and whole. Research indicates that art is a valuable tool for learning and functions as a potent force for transmitting information to them and for yielding information about them.

This study attempted to provide a better understanding of how children's art relates to their literacy development.

Sample of children's art work

Once there was a pigeon named Walter. And he was brown. And he lived with a farmer and a lady.
Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the importance of young children's art in the development of their literacy.

A review of the literature relevant to this study has been divided into the following categories:

Literacy
Literacy/Learning
Literacy/Reading
Literacy/Literature
Literacy/Reading-Writing Relationship
Literacy/Writing
Art
Art/Learning
Art/Cognition
Art/Language
Art/Reading
Art/Writing
Art/Evaluation

Review Of The Literature

Literacy

Literacy is more than knowing how to read and write a particular language. Holdaway (1979) describes literacy as one of the most complex phenomena in experience. Reading, writing, spelling, listening, speaking, and written expression are not isolated from the world of language and spoken culture. Anything that can be said of human language and language learning has some vital
bearing upon the processes of literacy. Language engages the organism simultaneously at every level of experience. Holdaway (1979) explains that literacy is developmental and learning occurs with a minimum of instruction as a 'natural' part of ordinary development. He reports:

Developmental learning is highly individual and non-competitive; it is short on teaching and long on learning; it is self-regulated rather than adult-regulated; it goes hand in hand with the fulfillment of real life purposes; it emulates the behavior of people who model the skill in natural use (p.14).

Teale (1986) made several conclusions about literacy:

1.) Children in a literate society actually begin learning to read and write very early in life (p.2).
2.) The young child's reading and writing abilities mutually reinforce each other (p.5).
3.) Literacy develops out of real life settings in which reading and writing are used to 'get things done' (p.7).
4.) Young children are actively involved in the process of their literacy development (p.11).
5.) Being read to plays a special role in the literacy development of the young child (p.18).
6.) Learning to read and write is a developmental process for young children (p.20).
"The development of language may play an important part in the child's intellectual or cognitive development" (Tough, 1976, p.9). Tough (1976) cites Vygotsky who describes a number of studies that support her conclusions, "...that as the child learns to use words, he is helped to develop concepts. That is ideas about objects and events as they exist, and the relationships which can be seen to exist between them" (p.9).

The very act of using language to draw attention to what the adult finds significant and meaningful, is to help the child to look at the world around him with a particular perspective, as well as encouraging alertness and stimulating curiosity and interest (Tough, 1976, p.14).

"There is no more successful example of language learning than that provided by mastery of native language during infancy" (Holdaway, 1979, p.19). Holdway (1979) states that since time before history, families have succeeded in transmitting their native language to their infants. Infants have succeeded in learning the language within a natural environment of language use.

Smith (1985) relates that:

...the tremendous intellectual achievements of children during the first few years of their lives, and especially during the first few months, not only without formal instruction but at a time when adults rarely suspect that any significant learning is taking place (p.7).
Children do not have to be trained to learn. They are highly skilled and experienced learners. It begins with a function and then involves experimenting with the language forms necessary to fulfill that function (Goodman, 1986).

Parker (1983) noted that children acquire the necessary prerequisites for written language through their own processes of inventing graphic signs and symbols, rather than learning them through direct teaching. Language is communication, reflection of our own experiences, symbolic expression and the ability to share what we learn. It is learned from whole to part. "The whole is always more than the sum of the parts and the value of any part can only be learned within the whole utterances in a real speech event" (Goodman, 1985, p. 19). Just as speech develops in an environment which is immensely richer than the immediate needs of the infant, so the orientation to book language develops in an environment of rich exposure beyond immediate needs (Holdaway, 1979). The results of a study performed by Taylor, Blum and Logsdon (1986) indicate that children learn best in a language-and print-rich environment, characterized by many opportunities to observe, try out, and practice literacy skills in genuine communicative situations. "Language learning is a process of social and personal invention... each person invents language
all over again in trying to communicate with the world" (Goodman, 1986, p.18).

Attitudes and values are implicit in the way in which language is used within the family (Tough, 1976). There are apparent differences in the way children use language which may be attributed to the way of life and to the purpose for which language is used in the home. The research of Taylor, Blum and Logsdon (1986) partially supports the whole-language view that young children can learn to read and write when the right environment is provided. "When literacy-related experiences are lacking in the home environment, the provision of these experiences in a meaningful and relevant fashion in the school curriculum becomes a critical factor in the acquisition of literacy by children from such environments" (Taylor, Blum & Logsdon, p.147).

The orientation to literacy consists of a strong awareness of the rules of various kinds of narrative discourse states Fox (1985). Literacy acquisition is concerned with the perception of the differences and similarities between speech and writing. Hearing stories read aloud as well as storytelling has given children the opportunity to reconstruct their own meanings and worlds, and the forms and shapes to do it with. "Reading aloud to children stimulates their interests, their emotional development, and their
imagination" (Trelease, 1985, p.11). Children continue to imitate behavior with words until their language development peaks around the age of thirteen. The language is spoken as it is heard. Altwerger, Faxon and Anderson (1985) found that read-aloud interactions are finely tuned to the experiential, linguistic, and literacy background of the child. Early reading was learned through the teaching set up by the parents constructing good social interactions and contexts reports Thomas (1985). Parents of early readers read to their children more times within a day.

Children engaged in the story making process, bring personal and shared meaning to their pretend play (Roskos, 1988). The story serves as a way to organize the play and players. It provides the narrative framework for structuring, coordinating, and sustaining the play talk. The child learns about reading and writing simply being a member of a literate society.

Archer, Coffee and Genishi (1985) found that teachers' questions and responses focus children on one aspect of the conversation or they keep the conversation going by sustaining the current topic. When language activities are interesting to the children and when the teacher listens and responds well, the curriculum can work. Conversational skills, relate Torrance and Hildyard (1985), do vary greatly in children and make up an important part of oral competence. Good
conversationalists use language more for the expression of thought, use more cohesive devices and switch from one episode to the next (Torrance & Hildyard, 1985). Children more skilled in semantic and syntactic structures of language are better able to cope with early reading. Skill in turn taking and good conversation does not relate to success in learning to read. Cazden (1985) was also concerned with the teacher's responses to a child's talk and how these responses affect the talk. As the teacher responds, they must be concerned about the child's purpose in sharing the experience, his/her cultural background, and the teacher's own instructional goals for sharing time.

Sample of children's art work
"The major aim of reading instruction programs is to develop readers who not only can read but who do read and who will continue to read throughout life" (Cullinan, 1987, p.126). Teachers must make reading easy for every child states Smith (1985). Children can read only through materials and activities that make sense to them.

Researchers are discovering that in order to understand reading they must consider not just the eyes but also the mechanisms of memory and attention, anxiety, risk-taking, the nature and uses of language, the comprehension of speech, interpersonal relations, sociocultural differences, learning in general, and the learning of young children in particular (Smith, p.3).

Learning to read involves no learning ability that children have not already exercised in order to understand the language spoken at home states Smith (1985).

Goodman (1986) states that reading is a selective process that involves minimal language cues selected from perceptual input on the basis of the reader’s expectation. On processing, tentative decisions are made to be confirmed, rejected, or refined as reading progresses. Smith and Goodman take the developmental point of view that the most efficient way to learning to read and to write is by actually reading and writing. Human learners gain control of their own behavior, bringing all their sense of probability tobare in recreating meanings and discovering how to make sense of
conventions state Holdaway (1979). Children are predicting, testing, and correcting as they go.

An essential factor in becoming literate is to understand the registers of the written language. Pappas and Brown (1987) examined the reading-like behavior of a prereading kindergartner. The child's strategies were documented as she attempted to resolve her misunderstanding of the social conflict, plans, and actions of the characters of the story. They concluded that children learn to read by reading as they observed the child extending the functional potential of storybook language. But, grade school children are not adept at interpreting complex syntax on their own. Richgels (1986) concluded that grade school children may rely on world knowledge in the comprehension of spoken and written complex sentences. Once children find world knowledge unreliable, they switch to syntactic information. Children did better when such sentences were spoken rather than written.

Wells' (1985) study noted that it is not the reading of stories on their own that leads children toward the reflective, disembedded thinking that is so necessary for success in school, but the total interaction in which the story is embedded. Success in school is intimately related to the early acquisition of literacy through activities such as listening to stories read aloud and looking at picture books. The manner in which
the adult fulfills this is almost as important as the story itself. Parents with children who showed an early voluntary interest in books were reading models for their children since they read often in their leisure time (Morrow, 1985). More books were found in their home, television was regulated, children were taken to the library more often and read to daily.

McMahon's (1983) study found that skill in combining reading and listening is established early. Flexibility increases through the primary grades but then becomes more selective with reading experience. Reading while listening is viewed as a single task, not a pair of competing activities. Feitelson, Kita and Goldstein (1986) contributed to spoken language and listening comprehension with their study of reading aloud. They found that "children who had been read to outscored children in the control classes on measures of decoding, reading comprehension, and active use of language. These children persuaded their families to buy them books and began to read on their own" (Feitelson, Kita & Goldstein, p. 353).

Aaron (1987) states that "children's reading ability is maintained and enhanced by reading. Certainly, just reading without systematic instruction will not accomplish the task; children must be taught to read" (p.126). Frager and Thompson (1986) concluded that "we must recognize that the effectiveness of an activity in
which reading is involved is not only a function of what
the teacher does; the students’ goals, interests,
feelings, and perceptions also influence the outcomes of
reading instruction” (p. 13). Bloome (1985) supports
these findings in his own study where he describes
social contexts of reading by how people interact with
each other, by the social status they give to each
other, and by who gets to do what, with whom, when, and
where.

Barron (1985) produced evidence that indicated
subjects can exert some strategic control over the use
of phonological information in simple word recognition
tasks.

Other evidence indicated that good readers were
better able to use both visual and phonological
information in reading and in spelling than poor
readers with some poor readers being especially
reliant upon visual information for reading and
upon phonological information for spelling
(Barron, 1985, p. 384).

He concludes that successful acquisition of the skills
of literacy involves visual and phonological
characteristics of written language. Phonological
information is related to reading skill. It may
function as a back up code in the processes of accessing
semantic and syntactic information and it may have a
role in retaining information during comprehension.

Specifically, phonics-based approaches to learning
to read may encourage children to attend to all of
the letters in a word, rather than to superficial
and unreliable cues such as the first and last
letter and word shape. As a result, children may
be more likely to acquire visual representations
that include information about individual letter identities in a word. These visual representatives may turn out to be advantageous for spelling as well as reading (Barron, 1985, p.384).

Lomax and McGee (1987), also found that attending to sound-segments in words, knowing letter-sound correspondences, and concepts about print and attention to graphic details of written language are linked to word-reading acquisition. However, Backman’s (1983) study offers the tentative findings that describes a more complex skill involving the manipulation of sounds in temporal order that may be a facilitator and/or consequence of learning to read.

A visual representational system for speech is acquired when children learn to read and spell. Ehri (1985) found that the visual forms of words acquired from reading experiences shape the learner’s conceptualization of the sound structure in words. Written language supplies a visual-spatial model for speech and when children learn to read and spell, this model and its symbols are internalized as a representational system in memory (Ehri, 1985). Spellings may facilitate thinking about similarly pronounced words when the spellings are similar. This researcher pointed out that printed language may exert an impact on groups of speakers by fixing their pronunciation of words and thus inhibiting change over time.
Gentry (1987) concludes the following about spelling:

1.) Learning to spell is an organized, developmental process.
2.) Learning to spell is a conceptual process. It involves thinking, not rote memorization.
3.) Spelling should be taught socially in interaction with reading, writing, and the other language arts - and with people.
4.) Formal spelling programs should not focus on tedious drills with irksome materials and hideous tests, but should take place in a context that honors the recent understandings of children's developing orthographic knowledge, principles that can be applied in a child-centered curriculum (p.47).

Literacy/Literature

"Language is one of the primary instruments we use to interpret and organize our experience; it helps us understand our world and our place in it" (Cullinan, 1987, p.2). Children use language to make sense of their world. These perceptions are often expressed in vivid images to explain how things appear to them. They learn from the language they hear; the richer the language environment, the richer the language learning (Cullinan, 1987).

Literature's words offer a wealth of language.

"Because good literature is precise, intelligent, colorful, sensitive, and rich in meaning, it offers the child his best hope of expressing what he feels" (Trelease, 1985, p. 12).

The graphic symbols consist of language and illustrations presented in such a way that the reader is made aware of an order, a unity, a balance, or a new frame of reference... He will experience other places and other times; he
may identify with others; he may observe nature more closely or from a different perspective; he will encounter the thrills of taking risks, meeting mystery; he will endure suffering; he will enjoy a sense of achievement, and feel he belongs to one segment or all of humanity. He will be challenged to dream dreams, to ponder, and to ask questions of himself (Huck, 1968, p.7).

The combination of adult, children, and good books is basic to literacy development states Roser (1987). The teachers must have a responsive attitude and thoughtful questions. Roser’s teachers in her study were models of comprehender, reader, wonderer, and thinker. "They demonstrated what it means to be literate by asking and answering questions, reminding children that many answers are in the book, casually stating opinions, wondering about a character, simply enjoying the story" (Roser, p. 95). Literacy is not developed in isolation. Roser argues that children’s texts designed for literacy acquisition are more concerned with vocabulary and sound/symbol patterns than with sharing good stories. Storytime contributes most to language and literacy by providing opportunities for experiencing and appreciating the best. "Children grow toward literacy when their questions about words, about pictures, and about stories are answered" (Roser, p. 96). Morrow (1985) contributes to these findings by stating that a directed reading activity that emphasizes structural elements in a story also appears to give better results in traditional comprehension.
"The research shows that the learning of reading competencies depends on the kinds of texts to which children are exposed" (Sawyer, 1987, p.37). Children's literature is the first literary experience, where the reader's expectations of what literature is are laid down. "A literature-based reading program is rooted in the whole language approach, which has children learn from whole language units. Reading is done in context, as opposed to a basic skills approach" (Lamme, 1987, p.42). Johnson and Louis (1986) agree and contribute "that children grow in their capacity to use language by becoming engaged with language that is somewhat more mature than that which they currently use" (p.11). Basal reading schemes are not likely to encourage an interest in reading, only practice in a basic mechanical processes (Sawyer, 1987). This could be done with good genuine stories and also teach written language structures. "The children's literature-based reading programs generated much better retelling scores than the phonics and skills program"(DeFord, 1981, p. 656). Bruce (1984) suggests that less constrained trade books may come closer to meeting what should be the primary goal for the basals. He warns that when choices about the design or selection of a passage for a series are made, the educational purpose such as positive attitudes about reading and learning the essential skills for reading should be considered. Brett and Huck (1982) agree with
the continuing search for standards and the importance of making books of excellence accessible to the many as well as the few. They argue that it is necessary to preserve the qualities which are literary and those which are childlike.

Book selections, book size and book predictability structure were examined in a kindergarten classroom. By considering these factors, teachers should be able to promote children's sustained efforts at interacting with books. Voluntary reading habits must be established (Martinez & Teale, 1987).

Sample of children's art work
Literacy/Reading-Writing Relationship

Language interaction is necessary to becoming literate. There is a supportive, interactive relationship between the reading and writing process. The children must be free to explore and make their own discoveries. Teachers can only aid the process, not interfere (DeFord, 1981). Bissex (1980) relates her findings about one child's learning to read and to write from the beginnings of literacy at age five up to age eleven. Children learn more about print and learn it earlier than when they are taught. "Writing (drawing included) and reading are universal; and learning to write and read share in those basic processes by which we grow as human beings" (Bissex, 1980, p.200).

"Reading and writing are both acts of composing. Readers, using their background of knowledge and experience, compose meaning from the text; writers, using their background of knowledge and experience, compose meaning into text" (Butler and Turbill, 1987, p.11). Children are given the responsibility to choose topics and books for reading and writing experiences. "The motivation to read and write is sustained by the sense of ownership the children have in their work" (Butler and Turbill, 1987, p.20). Clay (1975) relates some of the skills and concepts necessary to read and to write. The child learns how to attend to printed language, organize one's investigation of printed form,
tell left from right, visually analyze letters and words, study words, and direct one's behavior in carrying out a sequence of movements.

Jagger, Carrara and Weiss (1986) studied how children's exposure to literature, their writing experiences, and classroom instruction interact to influence children's knowledge and use of written language. The researchers found evidence that:

1.) in writing children borrow ideas from their reading, incorporating these into their own personal experiences to form the content of their stories, 2.) children try to produce different kinds of narrative discourse, experimenting with the features of different genre and, as a result, developing strategies for creating the texts they want to produce, 3.) classrooms with a process approach to writing, have conditions more similar to those in which real writers write, 4.) teachers take time to highlight the characteristics of narrative writing in order to heighten the student's awareness of the properties of various genre and the strategies authors use in creating their texts (Jagger et al., 1986, p. 299).

Langer (1986) concluded that while all groups interpreted reading and writing as meaning-based activities, their views were shaped by their own special vantage point in the child's life:

1.) the teachers focused on school objectives and used the language of instruction to state their views,
2.) the children focused on controlling the reading and writing activities in their attempt to make sense, and when they had difficulty, they resorted to the language,
3.) the parents focused on the home environment they could arrange or the interests they could see and try to foster in their individual children (Langer, 1986, p. 134).
Children's context for literacy is predictably complex. Langer (1986) found that these complexities appear to be a natural outgrowth of the social uses reading and writing play in people's lives.

**Literacy/Writing**

Graves (1983) provides insights into critical literacy by linking the nature of learning to social relations and opportunities to take risks. In the transition from speech to print, children are only concerned with getting the marks on paper. The setting and context of writing is instinctively done by drawing before and speaking before they write. It is a rehearsal for what they will write.

Putting symbols in order is a difficult task for many children. The ordering of symbols is quite dependent on the speed with which a child recognizes sound-symbol relationships from their own speech and the speed with which the letter is written (Graves, 1983, p. 20).

Young children expect written language to make sense. Their early writing attempts are intentional efforts by the children to create and share meaning. Children make decisions about what they want to write. This demonstrates children's awareness of a large number of the conventions used for writing (Newman, 1984). "A vital part of becoming a successful language user is being comfortable with the 'messing around' that must go on" (Newman, 1984, p. 31). Language learning is a risky business. "Expecting children to produce exact, correct
language, whether oral or written, places unnecessary pressure on them as language users" (Newman, 1984, p.31). Children will not continue to take risks if the cost is too high. They need to be able to experiment with what they want to say, or what they want to write. "Experiences with written language enhance our ability to interact with and create oral language; oral language provides resources for generating written language" (Newman, 1984, p. 71). We must provide opportunities for reading and writing. Children need to read many different kinds of writing, have access to books and opportunities to write. They must be owners of their own work. The best way to learn to write is by writing (Graves, 1983, Newman, 1984).

Hildyard and Hidi (1985) found few differences between the oral and written narratives of 8- to 11-year-olds. They write as well as they narrate. By age twelve, structural superiority of written procedures appears. It would seem that because "writing permits closer attention to detail and makes repeated scanning possible, children who write are better able to recall their production than are children who narrate" (Hildyard & Hidi, 1985, p.303). Children learn to notice the wording, and examine, vary and edit their wording to make a more precise reflection of the intended meaning.

"Writing is not just a matter of learning to print, to spell words or to use punctuation. It requires the
intricate and sophisticated orchestration of many
different kinds of knowledge all at the same time"
(Newman, 1984, p. 31). Hiebert (1981) found that
preschool children simultaneously acquire both general
and specific information about print in the world around
them. He reported that:

...letter naming is only one of several kinds of
concepts and skills about reading which young
children are acquiring. Children's early print
awareness incorporates a broad range of concepts
and skills, and it is therefore not surprising
that instruction which considers only one aspect of
this process is not entirely successful" (Hiebert,

Hudson (1986) argues that children are capable of
categorizing their written products by ownership,
setting, audience, purpose, and genre. They named more
categories for their self-sponsored writing than for
that which was assigned and at some point, children made
some assignments become their own.

Researchers study children's writing and formulate
findings. Newkirk (1987) found the term 'expressive
writing' inadequate in describing children's initial
writing. He suggests that early non-narrative writing
is strongly tied to their drawings. Early naming of the
picture becomes evident in attribute books that children
write. Dyson (1984) analyzed kindergarten children's
literacy behaviors across writing tasks. The child did
not just attend to the teacher and her directions but
looked for patterns in the ways written language events
were conducted.
Literacy is not simply a set of skills; it is a social activity. No matter what the instructional objectives of specific tasks, children do not focus on objectives, but on tasks as activities - as whole experiences - that include materials to be used, a series of actions to be followed, and a way of talking during and about the activity (Dyson, 1984, p.262).

Hilgers (1986) observed four students, second through fourth grades, and their writing progress. The study suggests that:

1.) affective responses tend to dominate children’s judgments of a composition’s quality, 2.) children tend over time to increase the number of criteria which they employ in arriving at judgments of quality, 3.) effective use of an evaluative criterion is related to ability to articulate the criteria, 4.) evaluation criteria are used in both planning and revising of compositions (Hilgers, 1986, p. 36).

Dickinson (1986) looked at collaboration in children’s writing in the classroom. Although children rarely talked with each other while writing, when they worked at the computer they had to articulate their plans with their partner. Their peers could provide instruction or feedback instantly. Collaboration provided shared responsibilities. Children used their complementary strengths effectively.
Art

Art is an integral part of life providing infinite pleasure and deepening understanding of ourselves and our world (Gaitskill, Hurwitz & Day, 1982, p. 236). Cambourne and Turbill (1987) state that "children almost exclusively use drawing because they perceive it as allowing them to use the tools of writing in ways which they have already learned to some degree and with which they feel confident" (p. 9).

Art is developmental, according to Kellogg (1979). "Children begin to draw at about the same time and their drawings show similar arrangements of form and sequential patterns of development (p. 28).

Art/Learning

Linderman (1979) states that there are many paths to learning that do not require words. Multisensory learning allows the student to sort out various sensory experiences to gain information and knowledge that has meaning and store it in the brain. This information builds meaning, understanding, and concepts about the world. Brittain (1979) maintains that this activity of bringing together and elaborating upon the essence of the external world, coupled with the physical activity of exploring through the use of color, form and space, provides an opportunity to develop a reality which in a broad sense could be considered knowledge. The drawing
experience becomes a natural means of extending the child's frame of reference (Lowenfeld and Brittain, 1970). "Only experience can give substance to learning and make understanding possible. In art, there is complete involvement of the senses, of thought, feelings and imagination" (Bookbinder, 1975, p.796). The child clarifies his understandings of the physical and social world and is able to appreciate himself and the ways in which he is unique and significant as an individual (Pitcher, 1979). Art is recognized as the most intelligent, creative, and sensitive of human activities, concludes Greenberg (1972).

Cohen and Gainer (1984) state that in quality art experiences, analysis shows that children are learning:

- to observe carefully and to record their observations
- to organize ideas and to express feelings
- to work with purpose
- to solve problems individually through trial and error method
- to respect themselves through their own achievements
- to communicate
- to discover their own points of view
- to appreciate different viewpoints and cultures
- to create change in their environment using a wide range of media
- to make aesthetic discoveries and judgments (p. 23)

Bookbinder (1975) agrees that art reinforces other learnings as other learnings reinforce art. "Each form of expressing, speaking, writing and painting reinforces learnings, in that they all help make more vivid and
enduring the event and perceptions experienced at first hand in the real world" (Bookbinder, 1975, p. 784).

The arts can amplify much of what schools want children to learn. Wolf (1983) found that the arts have a ripple effect on children's level of investment, participation, and curiosity outside the art class. Studies reviewed demonstrate a positive correlation between instruction in art and academic achievement in language and reading (Fortson, 1983; McGuire, 1984). Richardson documents this in his study of the effects of clay work and mask making on a rural classroom. His survey found that basic skills were highest where the curriculum was widest (Wolf, 1983).

**Art/Cognition**

Art work helps to develop the child's mental abilities in learning to think in terms of change, being able to see fine differences, and being able to hear and listen well. A creative mental attitude can be applied to all school subjects (Brittain, 1979).

Cohen and Gainer (1984) report that children understand the relationship between their art and the world around them. They understand that pictures can be symbols of other things. These nonverbal operations are essential to intellectual development that will ultimately enable children to read. "There are striking correlations between Piaget's theory of cognitive
development and Lowenfeld’s descriptions of drawing development. The obvious parallels attest to the validity of using children’s drawings as indicators of their thinking" (Cohen & Gainer, 1984, p. 31).

Brittain (1979) comments that "children’s drawing and painting could be an excellent means of facilitating cognitive development, the means through which a child organizes his concepts so that they become understandable to him and become assimilated into his intellectual functioning” (p. 184).

Drawing activities allow children to think out loud. "Lines flow in gay abandon from the crayons and brushes of children from two to adolescence. These lines disclose much about their creator’s thought processes" (Cohen & Gainer, 1984, p. 68). Children see their ideas take form. Cohen and Gainer (1984), describe this process of selection and arrangement as a crucial aspect of organizing experience. "Learning to think is really learning to organize one’s experiences logically" (p. 69).

Art/Language

Art is a language. According to Klepsch (1982), "drawing communication is elemental, basic, and universal. It can cross any existing language barrier" (p.7). Dyson (1986) observed children drawing a picture and dictating a written text about it. She concluded
that "children then need not only to write and read but also to talk, act, draw, dance, and sing as well (p. 87). Art can encourage verbal or nonverbal forms of communication for optimal learning. According to Linderman (1979), art offers the student opportunities for expression other than with words, many times expressing ideas that the student is unable to verbalize. "The complex array of features that differentiate one event from another cannot be dealt with verbally at an age when verbal ability is limited" (Brittain, 1979, p. 185). The drawing becomes a record of the event and the process of assimilation of the information.

Greenberg (1972) cites Rudolf Arnheim who "contends that perceptual response to the world is the basic means by which man structures events and from which he derives ideas, and therefore language" (p.70).

Bookbinder (1975) reports that the increase in self-esteem and confidence through art makes for a more positive relationship in other subject matter fields and to the school as a whole. It can help children learn about themselves, learn to think, learn to see, and learn about feelings, agrees Cohen and Gainer (1984). "Studies of children's development indicate that art activities provide direction, clarification, and reinforcement of new concepts" (Cohen & Gainer, 1984, p. 9).
Graves (1977) longitudinal study cited by Fillmer and de Kane (1980), revealed that oral language, reading and writing are related forms of communication. It involves motoric and visual skills as well as conceptual processes basic to learning communication skills. Fillmer and de Kane (1980) cite Piaget (1969) whose research states that "drawing is the act of graphically representing internal images. Language is the verbal representation of internal images. Both symbolic modes communicate internal thought processes externally" (p.641). A supportive study investigated graphic representation as a method of eliciting oral language. De Kane (1978) suggests that drawing activities generate more oral language than other types of pictorial stimuli.

Children find it easier to create a picture of an emotionally laden subject than to describe it in words. In this way, state Cohen and Gainer (1984), children are freed from explaining details to make another person understand.

**Art/Reading**

rather than through the words. As writers, they illustrate while they compose the oral story" (Cambourne & Turbill, 1987, p.9). Children tell their stories as they draw. De Kane’s study (1978) suggests that drawing activities generate more oral language than other more structured types of pictorial stimuli.

Cohen and Gainer (1984) discuss children’s art as they organize their thoughts and actions in patterns necessary for skill in reading. "Art provides opportunities to reinforce and clarify the concepts necessary for learning 'the basics.' Practice in different contexts is considered essential for skill mastery. Applying skills to new situations demands thought and tests basic understanding" (p. 65). Accomplishing these basic skills, shows the understanding of symbols required by reading.

Greenberg (1972) relates that

Art can vitalize the reading program. Reading is a process of thinking stimulated by visual symbols. It requires the concentration of each child and must be built on the foundation of the child’s previous experiences, accomplishments, and knowledge. Non-verbal experiences can become verbal ones. Art can sharpen perception and stimulate thinking (p. 86).

"The success and sense of achievement gained from completing a work of art can give the child confidence which can then be transferred and applied to other areas of learning" (O’Brien, 1978; Hall, 1979). The nationally validated exemplary, Developer/Demonstrator,
multi-district Title I Children's Program: Learning to Read Through the Arts, is an experimental, successful program. It is an intensive, individualized, reading program that focuses on the improvement of reading skills through the integration of art. The students improved an average of 1 to 2 months in reading for each month they have participated in the program, as measured by standardized tests. According to a study by Platt (1977) cited by Fillmer and de Kane (1980), there was a significant increase in vocabulary growth in reading scores when children drew and then wrote about their drawings.

Learning to read is a complex process, and too often we forget the importance of motivation (Brittain, 1979). "He must be eager to find out what the symbols mean and try to translate the written word into a meaningful piece of information" (p.204). Griffith (1970) agrees that drawings serve as a valuable part of the imaginative material. Imagination is an equally fundamental skill. Art stirs up the curiosity and ignites an interest in invention. "Art-making involves children in experiments and taking risks, leading them out of their 'ho-hum' approaches to things and experiences" (Wolf, 1983, p. 16). It will help them to notice details that would otherwise escape them.
Art/Writing

Cohen and Gainer (1984) state that "among children who have not attained literacy, art functions as a potent force for transmitting information to them and for yielding information about them" (p. 36). The art symbols are more powerful than verbal ones and have references to visible realities. They are not as arbitrary as an alphabet. Children are able to describe real experiences and imaginary adventures with greater facility, complexity, and intensity in drawings than in writing or even in speaking (Cohen & Gainer, 1984). Understanding the symbol system of drawing may be a critical transition to the initial understanding of the symbol system of writing (Dyson, 1986). Art offers unique opportunities to figure out how symbols work. Gardner (1973) concludes that the relationship between the child's drawing and his handwriting is very complex.

According to Gaitskill and Hurwitz (1982), children's writing may be closely related to the way in which they draw or paint. Jones' (1964) study also found that there are similar elements between creative writing and creative drawing.

Art/Evaluation

Any evaluation of children's abilities should include some consideration of their artwork. There is a wealth of information to be found in children's art that
relates directly to their intelligence, creativity, and developmental level (Cohen & Gainer, 1984). "Children's eyes and hands must be active for intelligence to develop. Children's art can be categorized for similarities of gestalt formations which means that they are reflections of mental and physical processes common to the species" (Brittain, 1979, p. 13).
Chapter III

Design

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the importance of young children’s art in the development of their literacy.

Questions

1. What is the importance of children’s art in reading development?
2. What is the importance of children’s art in writing development?
3. What is the importance of children’s art in language development?

Methodology

Subjects

The subjects for this study included twenty third grade children from a rural, middle class school in western New York State. The children, eleven boys and nine girls, participated in literacy episodes during their language arts program and their literature based art class.
Instruments

1. Interview questions designed by the researcher.
2. Tape recordings during the interviews.
3. Samples of children's art work created in a literature-based art program.
4. Forms (See Appendix)
   - Art Survey Form
   - Art Analysis Form
   - Anecdotal Record Form
   - Student Data Form

Procedure

The students were independently interviewed by the researcher after the completion of various literacy episodes involving their art work. Literacy episodes include responses to literature, children's books, and reading and writing activities. The researcher and student sat side by side with the student's art work in front of them. The interviews were tape recorded, with answers and observations noted on the Student Data Form. Oral communication was encouraged throughout the interview. Art samples were copied and retained for further study on the art analysis form.

Anecdotal records were maintained while the children were involved with literacy episodes and their art work. The literacy episode was observed and recorded on a check list with areas for unexpected observations.
An art survey was administered to each student to gain more information about the student and their feelings toward their art work at home and at school.

**Analysis**

The importance of young children's art work to their literacy development was described. The children's art work was classified and described according to the characteristics of the episodes and the samples produced. The responses to the interview questions and the art survey were descriptively analyzed.

**Summary**

Twenty third grade students were interviewed and observed after the completion of various literacy episodes involving their art. The children's art work was classified and described according to the characteristics of the literacy episodes and the samples that were produced. The responses to the interview questions, and art survey were descriptively analyzed.
Chapter IV

Analysis of Data

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the importance of young children's art in the development of their literacy.

This chapter will present the findings of the study in four parts. The first part will examine how children perceive their art work in school using an Art Survey. The second part will investigate how children's art work relates to their reading, writing, and language development with an analysis of a response to literature. The third part will also look at how children's art work relates to their reading, writing, and language development using an analysis of the children's own books. The fourth part will examine how children perceive their art work in relationship to their home, their school, and themselves using an Art Interview.

This study was carried out with third grade children involved in a literature based art program.
Part 1

Analysis of the Art Survey

This part of the study was an attempt to learn how children perceive their art work in school. The children’s responses were limited by the questions on the Art Survey Form, their cognitive development, their written communication and their motivation to answer the questions.

The questions on the Art Survey Form were categorized into three major categories:

A - The Art Process
B - Perceptions of the Art Work
C - Art Work as It Relates to Other Subjects

Sample of children's art work
The purpose of this category was to examine how the children perceive the art process.

**Table 1**  
Category A - The Art Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1: Making pictures at school are____________.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2: Drawing is hard when____________________.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You don't know how</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You don't feel like it</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(I don't feel well, I am bothered,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when your mind is on something else)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are on a car or a bus</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have to do it neat</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use crayon</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It never is</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question: I would rather make a picture than ________.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers related to doing something else</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(go to school, go to bed, do nothing,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>take out garbage, do dishes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers related to school work</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(reading, homework, writing, counting)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers related to art</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(paint a picture, make a project, color)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| No response                      | 3 |

Question 4: My favorite art project is ____________.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers related to project</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Clay work, scratch board drawing,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drawing, 3-D projects)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers related to subject of picture</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(making suns, birds, rockets, army things)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| No response                      | 5 |
The questions in Table 1 are categorized according to the children's perceptions about making a piece of artwork such as a drawing, painting, or making projects with a variety of materials.

In Question 1, the majority of children view making pictures as a fun activity, three thought it was creative, and two gave no response. No response may indicate that they did not understand the question or did not wish to answer. At this point, the children view art as a pleasurable experience at school.

Responses to Question 2 indicate that children looked upon drawing as hard when they didn't feel like doing it or didn't know how. It appears that the children do not relate these negative responses to the art process itself. They understand that the reason it is hard comes from within themselves or that it is related to other areas such as not feeling well or when something else was on their mind.

Some responses related to physical concerns such as riding in a car/bus or using a crayon. Children are aware of the importance of materials and location to complete a task. According to one child, it was hard to draw if "I have to do it neat". This response indicates that the environment or the child may have set very structured expectations for this task. One child decided that drawing is never hard. Five children gave no responses. This may be interpreted that the children
did not understand the question or did not wish to answer.

Responses to Question 3 were related to school work, art class, and doing something else. According to seven responses students would rather make a picture than "go to school, go to bed, do nothing, take out the garbage or do dishes." Making a picture is viewed as a more enjoyable or an easier task than doing many other things. As they viewed making pictures as "fun" in Question 1, it can be assumed that this response supports their feeling that an art activity is an enjoyable experience.

Five responses indicated that they would rather make a picture than read, write, count, or do homework. Children understand that making a picture is an easier task than participating in academic type subjects. Five responses related to the physical nature of art. These responses indicate a preference of a specific type of art work such as painting a picture, making a project, or coloring. Their choice of drawing a picture may be interpreted as either a more desirable choice or an easier choice to accomplish. Three children did not respond to this question, indicating that they did not understand the question, did not have a preference, or did not wish to answer.

According to the responses in Question 4, the children’s favorite art project related to the type of
project or type of picture they enjoyed the most. Ten responses indicated that their favorite art project was clay work, scratch board drawings, drawing, or 3-D pictures. Five responses related to the subject of the picture such as making suns, birds, rockets, or army things. It is interesting to note that all these responses were projects the children completed in the literature based art program this year. Five children did not respond which may indicate that they did not have a favorite art project, did not understand the question, or did not wish to answer.

An analysis of the responses in Table 1 suggest that most children perceive making their art work at school as fun and more enjoyable than many other tasks. Gaitskill, Hurwitz and Day (1982) state that children must gain satisfaction from these activities or they would not engage in them spontaneously. Pleasure obtained in producing a piece of art work provides the motivation and the interest for additional learning. When drawing was viewed as hard, student indicated that other things made it hard, not the art process itself.
The purpose of this category was to examine how the children perceive their art work.

Table 2

Category B - Perceptions of their Art Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 5: I like my pictures best when</th>
<th>Answers relate to children's performance</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(I get creative, I draw them good,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I don't mess up, I draw them neat,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I try hard, I take my time)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Answers relate to the picture</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(people say they are good)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Answers relate to what was made</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(I made a rainbow, I used markers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 6: My friends think my pictures are</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Terrible</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 7: The people who like my pictures best are ___.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 8: The best picture I ever made was _______.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answers relate to specific examples</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(bird, whale, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers relate to specific places</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(in art, in language arts, in school)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The questions in Table 2 are categorized according to the children's perception about their art work. Their perception is influenced by their own self concept, and the interaction with others.

According to Question 5, ten responses related to the child's performance in drawing a picture. These responses indicate that the children liked their pictures best when they had some ownership in the process. For example, the responses "I get creative, I
take my time, I do my best", all show "I" as an important factor in the art process. They liked their picture best when "they" did it and determined it was best.

Three responses concerning the picture itself, may indicate that positive feedback influenced their feeling toward their picture. Some children assess the value of their work by the feedback received by others. In this case, the children felt it was their best picture because others said it was good. Two responses related to what type of picture was made or what materials were used to complete the picture. These children felt that the topic and material made their picture the best. This may indicate that when children enjoy or are comfortable with the topic or materials, they will have a more positive feeling about their art work.

Five children had no responses which may be interpreted that they do not have a "best picture", they did not understand the question, or they did not wish to answer.

Question 6 relates to how others view the child’s art work. Fourteen responses indicate that the child believed that others felt their pictures were good. Two responded that their friends thought their pictures were terrible. Interestingly, these two students have a very poor concept of themselves and their pictures as well. Three children gave no response which may
indicate that they do not know how their friends feel about their art, they did not understand the question, or they did not wish to answer.

The responses to Question 7 related to the people who liked their pictures the best. Ten responses indicated "friends" and eight responses indicated "parents." These responses may be interpreted that friends and parents may have a significant influence on the child's art work. Only one child responded with "teacher" and one with "myself." Positive responses have an important role in the self esteem of the child. Every child had a response to this question.

Question 8 was concerned with the child's concept of his best picture. Sixteen responses indicated that the best picture had a specific topic such as a bird or a whale. Three responses reflected a specific place in school where the picture was made. It is assumed here, that almost every child felt good about a specific piece of art work. Only one child did not respond which may indicate that s/he did not have a best picture, did not understand the question, or did not wish to answer.

An analysis of responses in Table 2 suggests that most children like their pictures best when they are personally involved in the process of making the picture. It is also concluded that it is very important to have the approval of friends or family. This is one way to achieve self satisfaction from their art work.
According to Cohen and Gainer (1984), pictures can be viewed as an extension of themselves, a way of knowing themselves better. In a child's art work, there is no right or wrong way to make a drawing or a painting. There is no limit to the many different ways a child can draw a tree, or a person. The children can make these decisions as they compose their pictures.

Positive feedback is an essential element in the growth of the individual. It must promote the self-concept of the child. Most of the children in this study appear to have a good self-concept in relation to their art work. This concept is supported at school. "Children's art is often seen as instrumental in fostering and preserving each individual's identity, uniqueness, self-esteem, and accomplishment" (Gaitskill, Hurwitz & Day, 1982, p. 169). This development is a very important basis for personal adjustment and coping with the learning environment and the learning process.

Sample of children's art work
The purpose of this category was to examine how the children perceive their art work and how it relates to other subjects.

Table 3
Category C - Art Work as it Relates to Other Subjects

Question 9: When my teacher reads a story I,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draw a picture about the story</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers relate to positive feeling</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw other pictures</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 10: I like to draw in other subjects such as_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language arts (reading)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science or math</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free time</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All subjects</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate responses</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 11: Art class is ____________________________.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumb</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 12: My favorite subject in school is _________.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gym</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The questions in Table 3 are categorized according to the child's perception of their art work and how it relates to other subjects.

Question 9 relates to stories read aloud by the teacher in language arts. Six responses indicated that they drew a picture about the story while the teacher read. (The teacher gave the children free choice during story telling.) According to three responses, these
children exhibited positive feelings about drawing and reading. They responded "I like it" and "I think about the story." While four children just listened to the story and did not draw, two children drew pictures not related to the story. Five children did not give a response indicating that they did nothing during story time, they did not understand the question, or they did not wish to answer.

The responses to Question 10 suggests that drawing is done in other subjects at school. According to eight responses, the children liked to draw in language arts. Three liked to draw in science or math, two children drew in free time, and two liked to draw in all subjects. Four responses had inappropriate answers which may indicate that there was some confusion in answering the question.

According to Question 11, eighteen responses suggest that art class is good. One child thought art class was dumb. There was one child who did not respond indicating the student did not understand the question, or did not wish to answer. The majority of the children view art class as a positive, enjoyable experience.

Question 12 supports the previous responses in Question 11. According to twelve responses, the child's favorite subject was art class followed by math, gym, spelling, music, and lunch. It must be noted that many
children wish to please and may have given the answer they thought would please the teacher.

An analysis of responses in Table 3 suggest that according to the majority of the responses, children like to draw in other subjects, feel that art is good, and is valued as their favorite subject. Gaitskill, Hurwitz and Day (1982) state that "art, a sensory experience, can provide a tactile basis for learning in general" (p. 412). But, they warn, only a student who is emotionally and intellectually moved by an experience in another area of learning is in a position to relate artistic expression to other school subjects. Then, this fusion may be said to be strong, and learning both artistic and academic, is gratifying.

Children enjoy drawing in language art whether it relates to the story or not. This is a natural and positive way to integrate language, art, and the imagination. Stories may encourage students to make illustrations, compose their own story or continue to write about what they have drawn. Art interprets experiences. Past experiences help to build knowledge of a subject. Linderman (1979) states that this is how one uses knowledge and imagery and how one develops and expands one's imagination.
Analysis of a Literacy Episode: Response to Literature

This part of the study was an attempt to learn how children's art work relates to their reading, writing, and language development. The children's responses to the literacy episode were limited by their ability to express themselves artistically and their interaction with the story. Each response was analyzed according to the children's comprehension development, cognitive development, and language development during the literacy episode.

The teacher read the book *Alistair's Time Machine* by Marilyn Sadler. The story was about Alistair's entry in a science competition which takes him to many places and time periods. Unfortunately he can not prove it to the judges. The materials provided for this art activity were paper, crayons, markers, and pencils. The story was interrupted once for the children to predict and draw Alistair's work room and a second time to draw Alistair's time machine. The illustrations were shown to the class after each page. After the story was finished, the children drew a place they would go if they had their own time machine. Time was given to finish all drawings. The book was available for all to see during the class period.
The purpose of this literacy episode study was to examine the evidence of comprehension development, cognitive development, and language development in the children's art work. The researcher developed a set of criteria for assessing the responses. These are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4**

Comprehension, Cognitive, and Language Development:
Response to Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Little evidence</th>
<th>No evidence or incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A - Comprehension Development</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B - Cognitive Development</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C - Language Development</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All children who completed the literacy episode showed evidence of comprehension. Seventeen children included specific details in their pictures. For example, in Figure 1, one child showed Alistair working with bottles in a room similar to the illustration and suggested by the text. The child understood that his workroom was similar to a scientist laboratory.
Another child used print as well as pictures to illustrate Alistair's workroom in Figure 2. The print provided clarifying information. The child wanted to be sure that the illustration was understood.

Figure 2
A third example in Figure 3, illustrates the contents of Alistair’s workroom. A few items are labeled to identify the objects. The child uses the details of the story as well to determine what Alistair is working on in his room. This child understands that her message may not be clear using only a picture and supplies the print.

Figure 3
The child's art work can strengthen a reading program by providing varied contexts in which to exercise developing cognitive skills. Cohen and Gainer (1984) state that practice in different contexts is considered essential for skill mastery. Applying these skills to new situations demands thought and understanding. The art work is a tangible record of thinking. "These records and the process of making them are of great importance even before reading skills are taught. They are evidence of the mental imagery that must precede reading comprehension" (Cohen and Gainer, 1984, p. 65).

Although all pictures of the time machine illustrate the understandings of the children, two pictures provide fine examples of their perception as seen in Figure 4. They understand that the time machine could fly, had many parts, was made by Alistair, and could take you to unusual places. Three children had no response or did not complete the activity. This may indicate that the children did not understand the directions, were not motivated, or did not wish to participate in the activity.
Thirteen responses to the story indicated cognitive development. The following examples are taken from the drawings that show where they would go if they had a time machine. The story illustrated and described Alistair's adventures into the past. The majority of children made pictures about a place in the past, only two drew places in the present time period.

One child drew pictures of beasts in Figure 5, and printed "I want to go to the age of beast." Print and illustration suggest his "thinking out loud" process on paper. He appears to be organizing experiences such as interactions with this story, other books, movies, or TV programs to decide where he would like to go. The child creates on paper using pictures and print to retell his experiences and think about them.

Figure 5

I want to go to the age of beasts
Another child creates what he knows about a pirate ship by carefully arranging the detail and selecting the content (Figure 6). He applies what he knows to the present situation, once more clarifying his thoughts.

---

Figure 6
Four responses showed little indication of cognitive
development. It appeared that their picture was hurried
and lacked relationship to the activity. Three children
did not respond or did not complete the activity. This
may indicate that the children were not motivated, did
not understand the directions, or did not wish to
participate.

Children constantly create symbols of their
experiences in order to think about them.
"Symbolization is necessary for thought to take place"
(Cohen and Gainer, 1984, p. 67). Art activities provide
opportunity for selection and arrangement, necessary for
organizing experiences. "Learning to think is really
learning to organize one's experiences logically" (Cohen
and Gainer, 1984, p. 69). The children's responses to
this literacy episode clearly illustrate the
organization of these experiences. Gaitskill, Hurwitz
and Day (1982) conclude that "Though their art, children
can create worlds and can control action and outcomes as
they investigate in a safe way concepts, relationships,
understandings, and models of behavior" (Gaitskill,

Fourteen responses to the literature indicate
evidence of language development. Language development
that is written, oral, or picture language. Picture
language is the ability to communicate information to
others in picture form. All fourteen pictures
communicated information or their interpretation of the story. For two of the children, the picture information illustrated details clearer than a verbal description. In Figure 7, the picture communicates what the child knows about the story. The picture relates specific information in the story.

Figure 7
Other responses to the literature show speech balloons indicating a language user in the picture (Figure 8). Language use is an important communicator in these pictures. It helps to define the action, to reveal feelings, or to portray thoughts.

Figure 8
Four responses showed little evidence of language development in their pictures. Three children gave no response or did not complete the activity. This may indicate that the children were not motivated, did not understand the directions, or did not wish to participate.

Art is a language. It functions as a potent force for transmitting information to children and for yielding information about them. "Art symbols are more powerful than verbal ones because they have obvious references to visible realities" (Cohen and Gainer, 1984, p. 36). In this study a very close relationship between listening, speaking, writing, reading, and drawing was observed. Each is made more complex by the others. Children can listen to experiences and discuss them with a peer. They can illustrate them more intricately and use print where their art expression stops. Rereading and revising completes the interaction.
Part 3

Analysis of a Literacy Episode:

Children’s Books

This part of the study was an attempt to learn how children’s art work relates to their reading, writing, and language development. However, in Part 3 the children’s responses to the literacy episode were limited by their ability to express themselves artistically and their interaction with their story. Each response was analyzed according to the children’s comprehension development, cognitive development, and language development during the literacy episode.

The children read several book selections in their classroom. The teacher discussed the parts of a book, provided resources for information, and directions for writing their own book. The children wrote and illustrated their own books either inventing or retelling a story.

Sample of children’s art work
The purpose of this literacy episode study was to examine the evidence of comprehension development, cognitive development, and language development in the children's art work. The researcher developed a set of criteria for assessing the responses. These are presented in Table 5.

Table 5
Comprehension, Cognitive, and Language Development: Children's Books

A - Comprehension Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little evidence or incomplete</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B - Cognitive Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little evidence or incomplete</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C - Language Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little evidence or incomplete</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fourteen children who completed the literacy episode showed evidence of comprehension in their art work.
Four children showed little evidence of involvement in
the book or did not complete the activity. This may
indicate that the children did not understand the
directions, were not motivated, or did not wish to
participate. Two children did not respond as they were
absent.

The majority of the responses suggests that the
children understood the story they were inventing or
retelling. The illustration and the print related the
same message indicating a strong relationship between
the two forms of communication. The children who retold
a story, understood the message of the book and used it
for their own. It was internalized, organized and
placed on paper in the form of a picture supplemented by
the print.

The children organized this activity differently.
Some illustrated the book first then wrote, others wrote
first then illustrated, and finally some did a little of
both at the same time. The message was clear that the
print and illustration enhanced and supported each
other. Sometimes the print or the picture provided its
own information about the story. For example, the
following picture in Figure 9, is a page from a
retelling of the story Cinderella. The print gives the
background information about Cinderella, while the
illustration suggests Cinderella's feelings and station
in life.
Once there was a girl
name Cinderella who lived with her
evil stepsister. One day, Cinderella was
wandering if she would ever see the Prince.
So one day, while she was thinking her evil
Cinderella's clothes were sang her
Step sister made fun of her. Because
of her clothes.
Figure 10, from an invented story, shows a simple statement and an action packed illustration. The child understands that the picture and print work together to give information. In this illustration, the picture is more descriptive than the words.
Fourteen children who completed the literacy episode, showed evidence of cognitive development in their artwork. Four responses suggest that there was little evidence of cognitive development or they did not complete the book. This may indicate that the children did not understand the directions, were not motivated, or did not wish to participate. Two children were absent and did not respond.

The majority of the responses indicate evidence that there is an active involvement in the learning process. This suggests a complete involvement of the senses, of thought, feelings, and imagination. The children organize their experiences in their pictures as well as their print. They control action and outcome. Children explore experiences in depth and learn about size shape relationships such as in Figure 11. Their pictures show more emotion than their writing.
In the following example, Figure 12, the child learned the story language, created an original version, and added it to the illustration.

Figure 12

It was George's big day because it was the farm family day every one was invited. My George was getting up his Mom was getting dressed.
In Figure 13, the child internalized the situation, and attempted to find a solution on paper. The picture controls the action and the outcome.

Figure 13

The master runs this day!
The last example in Figure 14, shows the child exploring other parts of the story and uses her imagination and experiences to develop the remaining page of her story.

---

Figure 14

Walter had a very nice live ther. But one day Walter saw a hunter in the woods. And Walter almost got shot put he diden't.

The End
"Each form of expressing, speaking, writing, and painting reinforces learnings, in that they all help make more vivid and enduring the event and perceptions experienced at first hand in the real world" (Bookbinder, 1975, p.784). These experiences give substance to learning. Bookbinder (1975) concludes that working through the tangible substances of art media, children constantly touch, shape, alter, join and build.

Fourteen children completing this literacy episode showed evidence of language development. Four children did not complete the book or showed little evidence. This may indicate that the children did not understand the directions, were not motivated, or did not wish to participate in the activity. Two children were absent and gave no response.

The interaction between the print and the picture suggests a powerful form of communication. Words and pictures are both a form of communication used generously by the children. Some children enhance their pictures with speech balloons contributing more information. The following picture in Figure 15, illustrates this well.
Figure 15

[Cartoon drawing of two characters. One character is saying "YEA!" while the other is saying "WHY DO YOU SAY boo?"

- 80 -
Anecdotal records were used by the researcher during this activity. They were primarily used to determine the content of the oral language during this literacy episode. The conversation was a necessary element in the completion of the children's book. The children talked before, during, and after the activity. It was a sharing, organizing, thinking process necessary for the development of the project. They asked each other about topic, drawing, spelling, cover design, beginning, and ending sentences. The researcher noticed children sharing their drawings. If one child could not draw a part well, a friend was asked to draw it. Oral language supported the picture language development on paper.

"Since the cave dwellers, two- and three-dimensional art continued to communicate ideas for the tribe, the church, the state, the individual" (Bookbinder, 1975, p. 783). Art, speech, writing, and reading have always been a natural and closely related means of communication. It is a way for inarticulate children to communicate through their drawings.

This study was an example of the interaction between reading, writing, speaking, listening, and drawing. This literacy episode offered opportunities for social interaction where ideas and concepts were clarified through the joint experiences. The children learned changes between initial and final stages of events, organization of thought, and meaningful expression using
pictures and print. They learn to understand through their own inventions. "Piaget's suggestions for learning situations that include the active involvement of students because knowledge must be internally constructed, that involve social communication, and that allow the development of representation are clearly met by classroom art activities" (Cohen and Gainer, 1984, p. 68). Holdaway (1979) supports this concept when he states that book experience generates the use of written language and stimulates new interests to explore the real world.

Sample of children's art work

Once there was a flying unicorn named Cristal.
Analysis of the Art Interview

This part of the study was an attempt to learn how children perceive their art work in relationship to their home, their school, and themselves. The children's responses were limited by the questions asked, their cognitive development, their oral communication, and their motivation to answer the questions.

The interview questions were grouped into three major categories:

A - Art Work and Home
B - Art Work and School
C - Art Work and Its Importance

Sample of children's art work
The purpose of Category A was to examine how the child's art work relates to the home environment. The researcher developed a set of criteria for assessing the responses. These are presented in Table 6.

### Table 6

**Category A - Art Work and Home**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1: Do you make pictures at home?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2: What do you do with your pictures?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hang them up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throw them away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 3: Does anyone in your family make pictures?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brothers or sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one else</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mom or Dad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 84 -
The questions in Table 6 are categorized according to the evidence of art work in the home. The answers to Question 1 indicates that all the children make pictures at home. This suggests that picture making at home is an existing element in their environment. As children perceive making pictures as fun in Part 1, it can be assumed that this is also an enjoyable activity at home, perhaps part of their literacy development.

Responses within Question 2 find fourteen children who hang up their pictures at home. Many hang them up on the refrigerator, bulletin board, or wall indicating that these pictures are celebrated by someone in the family. One child responded that his mother threw them away. Five children gave no response indicating that they did not understand the question, did not know the answer or did not wish to answer.

Question 3 relates to the family and their involvement in art work. According to nine responses, their brother, sister, or both drew pictures. Five children responded that their mother, father, or both drew pictures. One child's father was an artist by profession. Seven children gave the response "no one else" indicating they were the only one in the family who drew pictures.

An analysis of responses in Table 6 signifies that all the children make pictures at home and some have
parents or siblings that draw. The majority of children exhibit their pictures at home.

"Many adults regard art as a dispensable frill in the curriculum or a subject requiring exceptional talent to teach or learn" (Cohen and Gainer, 1984, p. 3). The predominant judgment about the subject of art may be stated as pleasant, but not really important. Society tends to put a lower value on aesthetic experiences. As many homes reflect these societal attitudes, it is of great importance to determine how the family views the child's art work. If the family is supportive or at least passive, perhaps the school can foster and encourage children's aesthetic development, that is, assuming that the child's art has an important place in all subjects and not just the art room.

Sample of children's art work

![Sample of children's art work](image-url)
The purpose of Category B was to examine how the child's art work relates to the school environment.

Table 7
Category B - Art Work and School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1: Do you make pictures at school?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2: Do you make pictures after you read?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 3: Do you make pictures when you write?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 4: Do you like to talk about your picture when you draw?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The questions in Table 7 are categorized according to the evidence of art work in the school. Responses to Question 1 indicate that all children make pictures in school. The picture making process is a natural form of expression and is used throughout the subjects.

According to Question 2, fourteen responses indicate that children made pictures after they read. Some children said the pictures were part of a language arts activity. Many children added that they made pictures while their teacher read to them. Four responses indicated that they did not make a picture after they read. Whitehead (1971) reports that art provides children with opportunities to reflect and think creatively about their literature experiences, and then to express themselves as individuals. Every child needs an outlet for free, honest, original expression.

Question 3 relates to the child's art work and writing. Fifteen children responded that they sometimes
drew when they wrote at school. Two children said "yes" and three said "no." Gaitskill, Hurwitz and Day (1982) state that if a child’s interest remains high after written expression, a further expressive act in another medium might lead to further clarification of their reaction. "Children can speak and write about things they may not draw, and vice versa. Combining the two can enhance the development of both linguistic and graphic forms" (Gaitskill, Hurwitz and Day 1982, p.413).

Responses within Question 4 relate to children talking about their art work. Thirteen children responded that they did like to talk and draw. Four children responded "no" and two responded "sometimes." Speaking and art expression are both forms of communication. One enhances the other. Children must use all forms of communication available to them.

An analysis of responses in Table 7 concludes that the majority of children made pictures at school when they read and write. Most talk about their art work before, during, and after completion. "Art is a value we share all of our lives; it is a universal subject area where we can learn together, discuss together, and express our ideas and opinion" (Linderman, 1979, p.8). The child’s talents and abilities should be expressed throughout the school and be obvious in a variety of ways. Children need to take responsibility for pursuing
a subject. Self direction and determination result in the most meaningful experiences at school.

Sample of children’s art work

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The purpose of Category C was to examine how the child perceives the importance of his art work.

Table 8
Category C - Art Work and Its Importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Do you like to make pictures?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (rather build things)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Question 2 | Tell about your pictures. (Children describe several pictures in their art folder.) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 3</th>
<th>Do you think your pictures are important?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I made the pictures</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I exhibited them</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could be an artist some day</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps me to remember the story</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tells something</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps me to think about things</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeps me going</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone told me they were</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could make it for someone in the hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The questions in Table 8 are categorized according to the child's perception of his art work. Responses within Question 1 indicate that all the children like to make pictures or build things. The "no" response was included as the child qualified the response which reflected a positive attitude toward his art work.

Question 2 asked the children to discuss the pictures or projects in their art folder. The accumulation consisted of three illustrations from stories read aloud, one book composed and illustrated by the child, one scratchboard picture (free choice topic), and two three dimensional projects motivated by a nonfiction text. They described their pictures and explained how they were made. It was during this process that this researcher asked the last question "Do you think your art work is important?"

According to Question 3, all children thought their pictures were important. Their reasons covered a wide range of areas and did not seem to have a central tendency. Four responses focused on self esteem with the reply of "I made the picture". This may signify that they were proud of their work therefore making it important to them. It should be noted that these children hesitated and thought before they answered the question.

Three children felt that their pictures would be important if they were exhibited. Children are aware
that things of value are put up for other to see. In past experiences, art exhibits at school or in galleries are a place of honor. They are celebrated and hold an important value. Perhaps these children have won awards for their work in the past. Two other children support this feeling by stating their pictures could be important if they became an artist. One child stated that his art work would be important if someone told him it was important. Positive feedback supports positive self esteem.

According to two children, their pictures helped them to remember things in a story. Most children were able to retell the story related to the literature response pictures in their folders. Two children said that their pictures tell them something. Another two responded that it helped them think about things. Perhaps they perceived the role of art expression as a thinking process.

Another child responded that it "keeps me going." This particular child has many learning problems in other academic settings but loves to build things with his hands and does well in art class. For the present time, it is one of the only successful things he can recall at school. The children who did not know the answer, may not have understood the question or did not wish to answer.
An analysis of the responses in Table 8 conclude that all children like to make pictures. Most children believe their pictures are important. These reasons can be somewhat grouped into self esteem, increased comprehension, cognitive learning, and motivation.

One of the most important elements in any classroom is the degree to which children are truly involved. The excitement and enthusiasm is dependent upon their motivation. Sometimes there is a natural drive for expression. At other times, the teacher must stimulate the interests of the child and provide a motivational framework. Lowenfeld and Brittain (1970) state that a variety of approaches best insures that each youngster is free to use his own mode of expression. The purpose is to translate the motivation into meaningful, purposeful creative activity.

"Comprehension and retention of what is read, as well as personal satisfaction in reading, depend on strengthening many cognitive skills beyond word recognition" (Cohen and Gainer, 1984, p.64). Children organize their thoughts and actions while they create their art work. It reinforces and clarifies the concepts necessary for learning the basics.
Chapter V
Conclusions and Implications

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the importance of young children's art in the development of their literacy.

Conclusions

The results of this study indicate a strong interaction of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and children's art work in their literacy development. Although previous research supports this complex interaction in literacy, new insights and questions are presented.

The analysis of the data suggests that children like to make pictures at home as well as in school. Children draw in many subjects at school depending on the teacher and their interests. They like to be involved in making decisions about their pictures but approval of family and friends plays a significant role in the perception of their art work.

Motivation in the classroom through art expression can develop an enthusiasm that can become contagious. Lowenfield and Brittain (1970) state that "the purpose is to translate the motivation into meaningful, purposeful creative activity, not to force a particular topic upon him" (p. 98). This creative expression leads
to the kind of self-esteem and confidence which in turn makes for a more positive relationship to other subject matter and to the school as a whole. School becomes more acceptable and even exciting.

Comprehension development in the two literacy episodes supports the strong relationship between the child's art work and the learning process. Children write or listen to stories and convert them into pictures. "Each form of expressing, speaking, writing, and painting reinforces learnings, in that they all help make more vivid and enduring the event and perceptions experienced at first hand in the real world" (Bookbinder, 1975, p. 784). The children's art work showed evidence of their understandings of the literature by inventing or retelling the story in picture form.

This study indicates that children's art work reinforces cognitive development. The children's pictures involve their feelings and imagination. Art expression of their experiences gives substance to their learning and make it possible. Thinking children constantly create symbols of their experiences in order to think about them. The symbol system enables individuals to deal with situations that are remote in time or place (Cohen and Gainer, 1984, p. 68). The inventing and retelling found in the children's books
and the responses to literature illustrate their cognitive development.

Art functions as another language, another form of communication. Children communicate by transmitting a message. In this study, children communicate by art expression alone, art expression and print, art expression and oral language. Each expression is unique to the individual. The child should choose the expression that meets his/her constantly changing needs.

Children feel that their art work is important. In this study, the researcher found that although children felt this way, they did not know specifically why. Their answers vaguely touched upon self-esteem, comprehension, motivation, and thinking. The children’s art work supported the strong interaction in the learning process; however, few children had internalized the significance.

The results of this study suggests that young children’s art work is a very important element in the development of their literacy. Although it is a "part" of the whole process of learning, it is without a doubt, an important but often underestimated mode of learning.
Implication for Research

In the past, research has provided insight into the importance of the children's art in their literacy development. This study has substantiated those findings. However, further more specific research is necessary.

A longitudinal study following kindergarten through third grade showing the relationship of the children's art work to reading would specifically produce data to support this relationship. A similar study could be conducted with writing.

This study could be duplicated with a larger sample of children using a traditional classroom and art program. A similar study could be conducted in a whole language classroom. Comparative research may give significant data about the children's art work in two different settings.

Research could survey the attitudes of classroom teachers toward children's art work and their literacy development.

Further research is needed concerning children's art work and literacy learning in special classes. These special classes could include learning disabled, bilingual, and gifted children.

Investigations into children's art work as an assessment tool in the classroom could provide additional information for the classroom teacher.
Implications for the Classroom

Children's art work in the classroom can support their reading, writing, and language development. Art expression opportunities should be provided in all classroom activities. Children should take responsibility for pursuing a subject. The teacher should offer choices of expression. Self direction and determination are the most meaningful experiences not only in art but also in general education.

Children should be allowed to find other channels to work through their feelings and concerns. Art expression should be available for releasing emotion and expressing doubt.

As art is a form of communication, handicapped and non-English speaking students would benefit from an alternate form of communication.

Teachers should provide an art center along with their reading, writing, and listening centers for independent expression. A variety of media should be offered.

Children should be encouraged to discuss and share their art work. The teacher should make a connection between the children's art work and the other modes of learning.

Teachers should "model" how art work supports the classroom activities. Children need to see how an adult values the learning activity as well as the art work.
Art in the classroom is considered an expression of the uniqueness of each individual and a means of understanding the social and physical environment (Cohen and Gainer, 1984, p. 2).

Summary

This study's findings yield insight into the importance of young children's art in the development of their literacy. Longitudinal research is necessary to comprehend the developmental nature of this mode of learning. Administrators, teachers, and parents need to be educated in this area so as to provide the necessary support and opportunity for the children's literacy development.

Sample of children's art work

Walter had a very nice life there. But one day Walter saw a hunter in the woods. And Walter almost got shot but he didn't. The End

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References


APPENDIX

Information Forms
ART SURVEY FORM

NAME: ___________________________________________ DATE: __________________________

DIRECTIONS: Complete each sentence in whatever way describes you best.

1. Making pictures at school are ______________________________________________________

2. Drawing is hard when _____________________________________________________________

3. I would rather make a picture than __________________________________________________

4. My favorite art project is __________________________________________________________

5. I like my pictures best when _______________________________________________________ 

6. My friends think my pictures are __________________________________________________

7. The people who like my pictures best are ____________________________________________

8. The best picture I ever made was __________________________________________________

9. When my teacher reads a story before we draw, I ______________________________________

10. I like to draw in other subjects such as _____________________________________________

11. Art class is ________________________________________________________________

12. My favorite subject in school is __________________________________________________
ART ANALYSIS FORM

LITERACY EPISODE:                      DATE:                      
STUDENT:                             GRADE:                      
RESEARCHER: Bonnie Perkins

(Describe the art sample. Explain the relationship between the art sample from the literacy episode and the children’s reading, writing, and language development.)

DESCRIPTION OF ART SAMPLE:

COMPREHENSION:

COMMUNICATION:

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT:

LANGUAGE:

INTERVIEW WITH STUDENT TO CLARIFY RELATIONSHIP: (If necessary)
ANECDOtal RECORD FORM

NAME: ____________________________

DATE: ____________________________ GRADE: ____________________________

LITERACY EPISODE: ____________________________

MATERIALS: ____________________________

THE STUDENT IS INVOLVED IN: READING WRITING LISTENING SPEAKING ART ACTIVITIES

THE ART WORK WAS COMPLETED ( BEFORE, AFTER ) THE EPISODE.

THE ART WORK WAS: VOLUNTARY IN VOLUNTARY

DOES THE ART WORK RELATE TO THE EPISODE? YES NO

UNEXPECTED OBSERVATIONS:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

COMMENTS:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

ART AND HOME

1. Do you make pictures at home? Why?
   Do you share them with your family?
   Does your mother make pictures? Why?
   Does your father make pictures? Why?
   Does your brother/sister make pictures? Why?

ART AND SCHOOL

2. Do you make pictures at school? (outside of art class)
   Do you share them with your friends?
   Do you make pictures when you read or listen to a story? Why?
   Do you make pictures when you write? Why?
   Do you make pictures at other times in school? Why? When?
   Do you talk about your picture while you draw?

IMPORTANCE OF ART

3. Do you like to make pictures? (draw, paint)
   Why do you make them?
   Do you think your pictures are important? Why?
   Tell me about your pictures (art folder).
   Did they help you?