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A COMPARISON OF THE CONTRACT PLAN AND THE DAILY-RECI TATION PLAN OF LEARNING FOR EFFECTS IN THE COGNITIVE AND AFFECTIVE DOMAINS IN A HIGH SCHOOL POETRY CLASS

MASTER'S THESIS

Submitted to the Graduate Committee of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction Faculty of Education State University College at Brockport in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Education

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by

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Abstract

Schools are criticized for their inability to produce self-reliant, flexible students. Critics blame the schools for not encouraging students to make more decisions, for lack of individualized instruction methods, for destructive use of competition, and for faulty methods of evaluation. Educators are experimenting in an effort to improve learning methods and evaluation procedures.

The contract plan of learning is one alternative to the daily-recitation plan. Contract learning has been viewed by many researchers as equal to, and in some cases superior to, the daily-recitation method. Those who endorse reforms in today's schools, such as contract learning, hold assumptions about human nature and learning which are similar to the assumptions held by the advocates of Progressive education. The contract plan allows individual differences in learning and has the potential to develop initiative and responsibility for learning on the part of students. Also, objectives must be clear and grading becomes less subjective with contract learning. Some researchers warn that social interaction decreases with the contract plan, quantity of work may become a substitute for quality, and when used improperly, the contract plan can degenerate into a monotonous series of jobs handed down to the student by the teacher.
This study was undertaken to compare the effects of daily-recitation methods of learning with the contract plan of learning for effects in the cognitive and affective domains in a high school poetry class. A nonrandomized control group pretest-posttest design was employed. The investigator developed an attitude scale to measure changes in the affective domain. The Objective Test, which consisted of identification and analysis of certain elements of poetry, and the Subjective Test, which consisted of descriptive writing, constituted the instruments to assess growth in the cognitive domain. The experiment lasted seven weeks.

Analysis of variance was used to analyze all data. The results of the attitude scale showed that after seven weeks there was no significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in attitudes toward poetry and creative writing. On the Objective Test, both groups made significant increases in learning, and there were no significant differences between the two groups. There was a trend which favored the contract group in gains made on the Objective Test. This trend was not statistically significant. On the Subjective Test, there was a significant difference between the two groups. The control group made more gains in the use of imagery than did the contract group. There was a strong probability that this difference could be attributed to the difference in treatments. But
this difference was not statistically significant at the .05 level.

In this study, the contract plan was equal to the daily-recitation plan in affecting growth in attitudes and knowledge in a high school poetry class.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer is especially grateful to Dr. Robert Blake for his steadfast encouragement, prudent advice, and thoughtful insistence on proper format and style throughout the study. The writer also wishes to thank Dr. Barry Shultz for his help in the statistical analysis of the data, Dr. Don Johnson for his advice in developing the attitude scale, and Mr. Russell Rees, principal of Holley High School, for allowing the experiment to be conducted at that school.

In their own way, the writer's husband, Dale, and her sons, Nathan and Benton, contributed to the study by enduring the frustrations and sharing in the exhilarations of a wife and mother completing a Master's thesis.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Whatever rhetoric they may subscribe to, most schools in practice define education as something teachers do to or for students, not something students do to and for themselves, with a teacher’s assistance.

The result is to destroy students’ curiosity along with their ability—more serious, their desire, to think or act for themselves. In this quote from his formidable book Crisis in the Classroom, Charles Silberman sums up one of the strongest criticisms leveled against American schools today. Instead of developing mature, self-reliant, self-motivated individuals, most schools appear to foster docile, dependent people, incapable of thinking for themselves.1

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3Silberman, pp. 134-5, 336.
Some critics claim that the schools do not give students the necessary skills to live in a world that is constantly changing with ever-increasing speed. The schools, they say, fail to teach the process involved to become a thinking person capable of dealing with today's problems with concern, flexibility, or wisdom. Schools are expected to produce young people who function as creative and productive individuals. A sense of personal worth is a necessary prerequisite for a person to care about his future and feel he can solve problems which face him and his fellow man. Rather, critics maintain, the student emerges from our schools as a narrow, static inflexible individual. Some critics point to the high drop-out rate, increasing need for psychiatric help (school problems stated as the number one problem).
reason for adolescents), increasing alienation as witnessed by the increased use of illicit drugs, rising rate of suicide among children, and the poorly prepared "successful" students as evidence that schools are not functioning as they should.14,15,16 Certainly there are many reasons for these failures, including out-of-school family and social conditions. But that does not relieve the school from a responsibility to provide optimum learning conditions within the classroom.

To support their claim that schools are remiss in encouraging self-reliance, self-motivation, and maturity, critics point to four school practices and policies which do little to prevent the student from feeling worthless and unimportant.

The first such policy comes from the assumption that students are not to be trusted to make decisions about most of their time at school. The resulting practice is that adults make most decisions for students, social as well as academic. Rules cover the most minute aspects of students'

14Lembo, pp. 2-6.
15Pepper, pp. 123-4.
16Glasser, p. 43.
social behavior during the school day.17,18,19 This same assumption pervades the academic sphere. Rarely is a student allowed to pursue goals which are meaningful to him. Most educators assume that the adult knows what is best and what is important to learn. Frequently students' concerns and values are ignored. Rare is the school where students can talk honestly about their observations of life and interpret the meaning of life for themselves.20,21,22,23 A set curricular program which allows students no participation in the planning, no choices and little opportunity to modify it does little to enhance self-concept and learning.24 Instead of encouraging students to think critically, students spend most of their time sitting and listening to the teacher.25

17 Silberman, pp. 122-141.
18 Jackson, pp. 11-19.
19 Pepper, pp. 118-25.
20 Silberman, p. 336.
21 Jackson, pp. 32-33.
22 Lembo, p. 11.
23 Glasser, pp. 36-38.
The successful student soon learns that he will be rewarded for remembering, not questioning. The issue of learning and true inquiry is corrupted; the teacher has decided what is important to learn. Recall is considered by many teachers the highest form of intellectual achievement in the classroom.²⁶ Problems such as poverty, alienation, despair, drug abuse, suicide, and war are not placed within the context of most classrooms.²⁷ A situation where adults regulate a student's social behavior and do not allow him freedom to pursue academic goals which are meaningful to him runs counter to the goals of self-reliance, self-direction, and a feeling of personal worth.²⁸

Another assumption which operates in many schools is that there is a single process which is appropriate for all learners. Instead of taking individual differences into account, school personnel set up situations where learners of a particular age are guided through the same content at the same time in the same way.²⁹ In many cases, independent study, self-selected groups, and student-as-teacher may be more appropriate and effective means of

²⁶ Postman, p. 20.
²⁷ Lembo, pp. 22-23.
²⁸ Rogers, p. 163.
²⁹ Lembo, pp. 11-12.
teaching if one really values individualized learning conditions and recognizes that the same process of learning may not be appropriate for everyone at the same time.\textsuperscript{30,31}

Another school practice that runs counter to a healthy learning environment is one closely related to American economic and political philosophy, namely, competition. Schools are under pressure to improve their "product" each year. Many educators argue that such competition is desirable to prepare students for later life. School personnel fear that if they don't hold competition for grades over students' heads, students will lose their motivation to learn.\textsuperscript{32,33} Many feel that students will work harder and learn better to obtain higher grades when competition for grades is stiff.\textsuperscript{34}

Educators often fail to make the distinction between "motivating a student to complete tasks and achieve goals appropriate for him; and motivating a student to succeed in relation to other students."\textsuperscript{35} Many educators ignore

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{30}Silberman, pp. 322-366.
\item \textsuperscript{31}Lembo, pp. 11-12.
\item \textsuperscript{32}Rogers, p. 206.
\item \textsuperscript{33}Glasser, pp. 65, 95.
\item \textsuperscript{34}Eugene Alexander, "The Marking System and Poor Achievement," \textit{The Teacher's College Journal}, 1964, 36: 110-113.
\item \textsuperscript{35}Lembo, p. 32.
\end{itemize}
research which indicates that people generally avoid situations they believe will result in failure or dissatisfaction. If a person feels he has a fair chance, competition can be motivating. If he does not believe his chances are fair, competition threatens him.36,37

Some recent studies support the idea that failure and bad grades do more harm than good, contrary to the beliefs of many educators. In 1954 Sonia Osler experimented with three groups of students in an arithmetic class. The students were matched for ability; age, and arithmetic scores. At random one group of students was told its scores were among the lowest ten per cent on an arithmetic test. Another group was told its scores were the highest on the test, and the last group was not given any information on its standing. Then another arithmetic test was administered. The failure group performed significantly worse than the other two groups. Osler concluded that it was not actual failure that led to poor achievement but the feeling of failure on the part of the individual. Since the individual perceived himself as a failure, he functioned accordingly.38

36Lembo, pp. 11-12.


In 1949 I. L. Child and Whiting concluded that perceived failure does not operate as a stimulus to higher achievement but rather, leads to withdrawal from a goal which in turn leads to more failure. Frequently in classrooms the student who needs encouragement the most is the one experiencing failure through grades, as a result of competition. These researchers are not opposed to occasional failure, but they suggest that a destructive cycle operates in too many schools.39

In 1962 Beaman Phillips conducted an experiment which supported the contentions of Child and Whiting. Phillips imposed an anxiety producing situation on both middle ability and high ability students. Both groups responded to the stress, but they handled their anxieties in different ways. Anxiety lowered the grades of the middle ability students; on the other hand, the grades of the high ability students actually increased. Those students who were more capable were able to react in a more constructive fashion to stress while those who were less capable lacked the ability to handle anxiety constructively. Those who perhaps need success the most are least able to achieve it in a highly competitive system. Phillips' research seems to

support the notion that our present system of competition does little to help those students who need help the most.\textsuperscript{40}

In 1953 M. Aborn found that when individuals find themselves in a situation that they perceive as threatening to them, they will remember less information than they will if the threatening condition is removed. This experiment seems to support the notion that grades, if perceived as threatening to a student, would hamper retention.\textsuperscript{41}

Research by Eugene Alexander indicates that failure and low marks are not always a goad to the student to do better but rather that failure is in itself harmful to a child because it prevents him from perceiving his true strengths and abilities.\textsuperscript{42} Combs and Rogers concur that failure can damage a person's self-concept and impair learning.\textsuperscript{43},\textsuperscript{44}

Competition is very closely aligned to evaluation, another practice which attracts controversy and criticism. The basic criticisms of the evaluation process in education

\textsuperscript{40}Beeman Phillips, "Sex, Social Class and Anxiety as Sources of Variation in School Anxiety," \textit{Journal of Educational Psychology}, 1962, 53:316-322.


\textsuperscript{42}Alexander, p. 110.

\textsuperscript{43}Combs, p. 150.

\textsuperscript{44}Rogers, p. 161.
can be summarized as follows:

(1) The evaluation in most schools does not include self-evaluation.

(2) The atmosphere created by the present evaluative process is threatening and not supportive to students.

(3) The present manner of grading can and does destroy self-image for many students; it concentrates too much on failure.

(4) Evaluation is not used for feedback but is a terminal, dead-end step.

(5) Grades cannot really carry out the many functions they are supposed to perform. One numerical or letter grade cannot give needed information about a student's achievements and difficulties, as well as his level of accomplishment in relation to his abilities or in relation to others.

(6) Grades have become a substitute for learning.

(7) Students misinterpret grades; grades have become equivalents for self-worth.

(8) The evaluation process encourages cheating.

(9) Using the midpoint as the acceptable standard prevents those with below average ability and motivation from experiencing success.

(10) Grades encourage academic conformity and discourage critical thinking. 45,46,47,48,49,50,51,52,53

45 Silberman, pp. 347-48, 357.
Critics claim that school practices have the potential to discourage initiative, restrict responsiveness to issues, and destroy self-confidence. The student can readily conclude, consciously or unconsciously, that his concerns are not important. Someone else will decide for him what he will learn, when he will learn it, and how adequate his learning is. Under such a system, he is not encouraged to confront or define himself, the central task of adolescence, according to Edgar Friedenberg.

Adolescence is the period during which a young person learns who he is, and what he really feels. It is the time during which he differentiates himself from his culture, though on the culture's terms.54


47 Kirschenbaum, pp. 214, 251-289.

48 Jackson, pp. 19-27

49 Glasser, p. 59.


51 Combs, p. 116.


Friedenberg believes that a person develops a sense of self through conflict and confrontation with his culture. This tension permits a sense of individuality. Friedenberg suggests that the institutions of our society, including schools, place too much emphasis on cooperation and group adjustment. He feels that the school's record in contributing to a clarification of the meaning of life for the adolescent is poor.55

Those who would reform today's schools hold assumptions about learning and human nature which are different from the assumptions implicit in the practices discussed above. These assumptions of today's reformers might be summarized as follows:

(1) Human beings have a natural potentiality for learning.

(2) A person can and will learn without fear or punishment as the chief motivators.

(3) With reasonable support, a learner is able to evaluate his progress and thereby develop independence, creativity, and self-reliance.

(4) A person will pursue goals if they are his own.

(5) Participative learning is far more effective than passive learning.

55Friedenberg, p. 105.
(6) Skills may be developed in a variety of ways, and educators must be willing to accept more vehicles for gaining competencies, including those vehicles chosen by the learner.

(7) The most socially useful learning in the modern world is learning how to learn.

(8) Different rates of learning must be considered acceptable.56,57,58,59,60,61,62

As discussed earlier, the daily-recitation method of learning whereby students are evaluated on the basis of achievement tests is one of the areas criticized by those who advocate changes in today's schools. Consequently, educators are experimenting with grading methods. Kirschenbaum, Napier, and Simon, strong critics of present grading methods, have listed alternatives to

56 Rogers, pp. 157-64, 200-201, 208.
57 Pepper, pp. 122, 143, 151.
58 Combs, pp. 93-96, 259.
60 Glasser, pp. 22, 49.
61 Lembo, pp. 42-53.
traditional grading methods. These alternatives are:

1. **Written evaluations.** The teachers use all the letters of the alphabet to evaluate the students' work. These evaluations are periodically sent to parents, kept on file in the school and eventually sent to colleges and employers.

2. **Self-evaluation.** The student evaluates his own progress, either in writing or in a conference with the teacher.

3. **Give grades but don't tell the students.** Students receive grades as usual, but they are not told what their grades are.

4. **The contract system.** The contract system means that if the student does a certain type, quantity, and ideally quality of work, he will automatically receive a given grade.

5. **Pass/Fail grading (P/F).** At the beginning of the course, the teacher states his criteria for a passing grade or else the teacher and students together decide on the criteria for a passing grade. Any student who meets these criteria passes; any student who does not meet these criteria fails. Students have the opportunity to redo failing work to bring it up to passing quality.

6. **Credit/No Credit (CR/NC).** This system works precisely the same way as pass/fail grading, except the two categories are "credit" and "no credit."

7. **Blanket grading.** The teacher announces at the beginning of the year that anyone in the class who does the required amount of work will receive a blanket grade. Usually the grade is a B.

These alternatives to traditional grading methods

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need to be tested and refined further before any conclusive statements can be made concerning their effectiveness.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study was to compare the effects of the contract plan of evaluation and a traditional type of evaluation, for changes in the cognitive and affective domains during a seven week period of a high school English program. Students in both classes studied certain elements of poetry and creative writing.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Controversy surrounds present day experiments in education. People have deep disagreements about the conditions under which learning should take place. Many feel students will not learn in an atmosphere which allows the students to choose their activities. Schools, they say, should not encourage such an atmosphere of permissiveness. Many educators have fears of informal education. These fears can be traced, perhaps, to the failures of Progressive education in the 1920's and 30's in this country. More scientific studies need to be conducted to determine the effects of alternative methods of learning and evaluative methods.
Research concerning the contract plan of evaluation is inadequate. There is a significant lack of research in which experimental research designs have been used to compare the results of the contract plan of evaluation and a traditional grading method for effects on students' attitudes and knowledge.

It was anticipated that this study would (1) produce scientific findings, based on an experimental research design, (2) provide a basis for further research in this area, and (3) yield findings which would give direction to others who wish to experiment with the contract plan of evaluation.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

A contract is an agreement between the student and the instructor, defining a set of objectives that the student will complete for grading purposes.

The contract plan of evaluation is a means of evaluating students. If the student satisfactorily completes the objectives of his contract, then he will receive the grade for which he contracted. This investigator will determine grade criteria and acceptability of completed work.
The traditional type of evaluation is a method of evaluating students on the achievement shown on test scores. This investigator will develop all tests used to determine grades. This investigator will be the sole evaluator of those tests.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Thirty-nine students attending Holley High School, Holley, New York, served as subjects for this experiment. Holley could be described as a small middle-class rural community. The population of the village of Holley is approximately 2,000. The high school population (grades nine through twelve) consists of approximately 450 students.

2. Most of the students participating in this experiment were sophomores.

3. In both classes, students were heterogenously grouped. Both Regents and non-Regents students were enrolled in both classes; in approximately equal proportions. Period One contained fifteen Regents students and six non-Regents students. Period Two contained twelve Regents students and six non-Regents students.

4. Both classes met in the same room each morning. Period One met from 7:50 A.M. until 8:35 A.M. Period Two met from 8:40 A.M. until 9:25 A.M.
5. The experiment lasted approximately seven weeks; beginning April 21, 1975, and ending June 6, 1975.

6. All students in this experiment were instructed by this investigator.

7. Each class was exposed to the same texts, lectures, discussion topics, and audio-visual presentations.

8. The students using the contract method of evaluation had to make more choices about their learning. They had to decide which grade they desired to earn. They had options under each grade; some activities were completely open and unstructured. In other words, the student had to find his own material for such an activity. Other activities were completely structured.

9. Students in the contract group were more free to move around the room and consult classmates, the teacher, and other reference materials. Students in the contract group were not told they had to work on their contract during class time. However, they were instructed that if they wished not to work on their contract activities, they could not disturb other students who wished to pursue their own contract activities.

10. Reference materials were limited. Therefore the contract students were given a brief written introduction to each unit of study. The traditional group was given the same introduction, but orally instead of in writing.
11. The students using the contract method of evaluation were given approximately sixty per cent more free time to work on projects and tasks of their choice.

12. The students using the contract method of evaluation were given the option to re-take tests if they did not achieve their goal; the students using the traditional method of evaluation were not allowed to re-take tests.

13. The attitude survey used to measure attitude toward poetry and creative writing was developed by this investigator.

14. Most test items to measure cognitive growth were developed by this instructor; some were borrowed with permission from Ginn and Company.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

In this study there were two basic assumptions:

1. The attitude scale developed by this investigator is a valid indicator of attitude toward poetry and creative writing.

2. Tests for cognitive development, developed by this investigator with the help of some materials borrowed from Ginn and Company, are valid indicators of knowledge of certain elements of poetry and creative writing.
HYPOTHESES

(1) The two methods of evaluating students studying poetry and creative writing will yield no significant difference in the amount of knowledge acquired.

(2) The two methods of evaluating students studying poetry and creative writing will yield no significant difference in student attitudes toward poetry and creative writing.

SUMMARY

Schools are criticized for their inability to produce self-reliant, flexible students with the necessary self-confidence and skills for today's problems. Critics attack the schools for not allowing students to make decisions, for lack of individualized instruction methods, for destructive use of competition, and for faulty methods of evaluation. Educators are experimenting with alternatives to daily-recitation methods whereby students are evaluated on the basis of achievement test scores. The contract method of evaluation whereby the student contracts for the grade he desires to earn is one alternative to the daily-recitation method. This study was undertaken to compare the effects of daily-recitation methods of learning with the contract plan of learning for effects in the cognitive and affective domains in a high school poetry class.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Since many of the assumptions about learning under a contract plan are similar to the assumptions underlying Progressive education, it was decided to review briefly the history of that movement, as well as some reasons for its demise. The review of related literature was divided into two categories: (1) a brief review of the history of Progressive education and (2) a review of literature and studies completed which relate to the contract plan of evaluation.

**Progressive Education**

Around the turn of the last century in the United States, a desire to redirect the education process was starting. In the 1890's the schools were in a depressing state. Skyrocketing enrollments brought overcrowded conditions; it was not uncommon to find a class size of more than sixty students per teacher. Lone efficiency reigned supreme. As school budgets mounted, politicians recognized a lucrative source of extra income and corruption increased. Meanwhile the influence of such European reformers as Pestalozzi, Herbart, Froebel, and Rousseau was beginning to spread. As more and more children were
entering public school, educators in this country were beginning to recognize the problems of educating the gifted and those with special disabilities. This prompted questions about educating the mediocre student as well. Therefore it seems understandable that the stage was set for a reform movement such as Progressive education.¹,²

An educator named Colonel Francis Parker is often considered the father of Progressive education. Parker developed the so-called "Quincy System" in Quincy, Massachusetts, in an attempt to give America better elementary schools. Parker believed that education should center around the child and that the teacher should correlate the subjects of the curriculum in such a way as to make them meaningful for the learner.³,⁴,⁵ Colonel Parker believed that subjects were "not ends in themselves, that they merely existed to promote the development of each child."⁶ Parker recognized the importance


⁴French, p. 137.

⁵Good, pp. 220-21.

⁶Atkinson, p. 80.
of internal motivation. Children should enter into activities because they wanted to, not because of external rewards such as grades and awards, according to Parker.7

These ideas were revolutionary. Many people began to raise their voices in criticism, claiming that this system was ineffective for teaching the three R's. So many criticisms were raised that the Massachusetts State Board of Education conducted an examination in old-type subject matter. Parker was vindicated. Quincy children surpassed those in other cities educated in the traditional manner.8

In 1901 Parker became the first head of a school of education at the University of Chicago. In 1896 at that same institution Dr. and Mrs. John Dewey had previously established a "Laboratory School." When Parker died in 1902, Dewey succeeded him as head of the school of education. The "Laboratory School" endured a total of seven and a half years, closing in 1904 after an argument between the president of the university and Dewey.9,10

7Atkinson, p. 80.
8Ibid.
9French, p. 137.
10Atkinson, pp. 80-81.
At Dewey's Laboratory School primary emphasis was on pupil activity rather than passivity.\textsuperscript{11} Dewey was very influential in advancing the ideas of Progressive education, which were considered a shock to most schoolmen of the day.\textsuperscript{12} Basically the principles of the Progressive education movement were:

(1) Individual differences among children must be recognized.

(2) We learn best by doing and by having a vital interest in what we are doing.

(3) Education is a continuous reconstruction of living experience that goes beyond the classroom.

(4) The classroom should be a laboratory for democracy.

(5) Social goals, as well as intellectual goals, are important.

(6) A child must be taught to think critically rather than to accept blindly.\textsuperscript{13,14}

It was around 1910 that Dewey's ideas began to spread. Continuous controversy raged as people debated whether students could learn under such freedom. Progressives were

\textsuperscript{11}French, p. 137.
\textsuperscript{12}Atkinson, p. 81.
\textsuperscript{13}French, p. 137.
\textsuperscript{14}Good, pp. 364-65, 394.
optimistic in their view of human nature. They believed the child could and would learn without an atmosphere of punishment and threat of failure. Parents were concerned that Progressive education might hurt their children's chances to attend the college of their choice.\textsuperscript{15}

To answer the growing questions, the Progressive Education Association undertook the Eight-Year Study (1933-41). A large number of colleges agreed to waive the ordinary requirements for college entrance for students participating in the experimental Progressive schools. The study would try to determine whether or not a student from a Progressive school could succeed in college as well as those students from an ordinary high school. In the evaluation the Progressive students were paired with students from traditional schools. The results favored the experimental schools, whose students earned a slightly higher total average of grades, although not significantly different. The students of the Progressive schools showed a higher degree of intellectual curiosity, were more precise and objective in their thinking, and were more resourceful in meeting new situations.\textsuperscript{16} There were

\textsuperscript{15}Good, p. 394.
\textsuperscript{16}Atkinson, p. 82.
criticisms of the study. Questions were raised about how the matching was done. Participating schools were not equally Progressive. No check was made of the methods in the traditional schools. Nevertheless both groups did well in college.

If such a system of education was finding success with its reforms and making school a more humane place for students, what happened to these reforms? Why did Progressive education die out? The reasons are many and complex. As Progressive education spread, it took many new and various forms. In some cases, freedom of choice was carried to extremes, raising protests from Dewey himself. In other cases the approach was vulgarized beyond recognition. Conservatives charged the Progressives with coddling students and allowing them too much freedom. They pointed to the lack of discipline and bad manners among children trained in Progressive schools. Intellectual flabbiness at some Progressive schools encouraged critics to press for a return to discipline, systematic work, and the mastery of the fundamentals. Some conservatives even tried to link Progressive education

17 Good, p. 395.
18 Good, p. 394.
20 Atkinson, p. 84.
and juvenile delinquency. Another fear on the part of the conservatives was that Progressive children would come to reject the hard-won principles of government and ethics.\textsuperscript{21} The conservatives saw the schools' major role as that of transmitting the American heritage.\textsuperscript{22,23}

Another reason why Progressive education failed in the early part of this century was, according to Silberman, the fact that this reform movement was initiated in great part by university scholars who had limited contact with teachers and students. On the other hand, in England, the reform movement to informal education was initiated over a longer period of time and by teachers themselves who saw a need to make education more learner centered.\textsuperscript{24}

Although the Progressive education movement initiated by Parker and Dewey is no longer extant, its influence is felt today. Many good ideas resulted from this movement. Educators were forced to consider basic principles of learning. Many of the same issues face us today. We must decide whether or not we believe that students can and will learn in an atmosphere that removes to a great extent the threat of failure and allows freedom of

\textsuperscript{21}Good, p. 395.

\textsuperscript{22}Atkinson, p. 85.


\textsuperscript{24}Silberman, pp. 179-182.
choice. 25

Today's reformers can learn much by looking at the rise and fall of Progressive education. Attempts to reform education must be well planned and initiated with careful attention to the results. Based on the history of Progressive reforms, one can conclude that intellectual flabbiness and neglect of the fundamentals will not be tolerated by most American people. A system which allows students to become ill-mannered and rude will likewise be unacceptable. Also, based on a comparison of educational reforms in this country in the 1920's and 30's with the educational reforms in England during the same period, one may conclude that reforms that are initiated slowly by those in close contact with students will be more effective than reforms initiated quickly by those who do not have close contact with classrooms.

Contract Plan of Evaluation

In the literature relating specifically to the contract plan of evaluation, this investigator found that some of the basic ideas of the contract plan can be found under a different name. The Dalton Plan makes extensive use of contracting.

25Good, p. 396.
In 1920, Helen Parkhurst introduced the Dalton Plan in an attempt to make the school function more as a community. Helen Parkhurst felt that spiritual and mental growth would be fostered when the school recognized the vital importance of the social experience at school. The Dalton Plan placed more emphasis on the child's living while he worked and the way he acted as a social being, rather than upon the subjects of his curriculum.26

The Dalton Plan abolished the class system in schools. Classes became laboratories for various subjects. Students could work independently in the laboratories where they would find all necessary materials. The goal of the Dalton Plan was to teach students to work independently, to develop initiative, and to instill proper social habits through the community life of school.27 Freedom with responsibility was the keynote.28

Two basic beliefs about the nature of learning under the Dalton Plan were that a child must be permitted to absorb knowledge at his own rate of speed and the student must learn cooperation with others, including the teacher.29

28 Good, p. 429.
29 Parkhurst, pp. 19-21.
Under the Dalton Plan the student was told what standards had to be attained. After that he or she was allowed to achieve those standards in a manner considered appropriate by the student at his or her own speed. Parkhurst felt that this responsibility would develop judgment and character as well as intellectual powers.30

Miss Parkhurst recognized that the student had to have a clear view of the goals he or she was striving to attain. The student had to be able to plan the steps to take each month or week in attempting to reach those goals.31 Each student's work was organized into monthly contracts for each subject. In those contracts, the assignments were outlined for the student. The students would sign the contracts at the beginning of each month and would be held responsible for completing the month's work.32

Atkinson reported that the Dalton Plan was based on the three principles of freedom, cooperation, and budgeting of time. Each unit of work was written as a job. The job plans were designed by the teacher or pupil, or both. The student budgeted school time as he or she

30 Parkhurst, p. 22.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid., pp. 34–40.
desired, but the student had to finish the work specified in the contract before choosing other desired activities.³³

The Dalton Plan was viewed favorably by H. W. James, who adapted the Dalton Plan for use with a class in education at Alabama College in 1926. James found several advantages in the Dalton Plan. (1) It eliminated discipline problems. (2) It allowed for individual differences. (3) Individual student-teacher conferences seemed to motivate students to study more. (4) The instructor got to know students on an individual basis. However, James also was aware of several negative features of the plan. (1) Demands on the instructor's time were great. (2) Individual student-teacher conferences caused a duplication in covered material. (3) The esprit de corps of a traditional classroom was lacking because of the lack of oral expression.³⁴

In 1928 and 1929 William Thompson conducted an experiment during two summer sessions at the Ohio State University Demonstration School to see whether or not students make faster progress under the Dalton Laboratory Plan. Results were compared with the results of students

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³³Atkinson, p. 242.

in public schools. Miss Helen Parkhurst herself, author of the Dalton Plan, was in charge of administering the experimental plan. The experimental group was younger than the control group but distinctly superior in intelligence. Standardized test results from grades five, six, seven, and eight in reading, composition, arithmetic, spelling, and handwriting were compared. Both paired and group comparisons were used. The Demonstration School operated under many handicaps as a result of difficulties in attempting to set up a new scheme for learning. But in view of the fact that the Dalton group was superior in intelligence, Thompson concluded that it was expected that the Dalton School would make more progress as a group than the control group. This expectation was not fulfilled. A comparison of the two groups showed that there was no consistent difference favoring either school. Both group and paired comparisons reflected this outcome. Thompson concluded that the Dalton Plan showed no advantage over the ordinary school system in formal school activities, even though the students in the experimental group were superior in ability. 35

In 1931, Alison Comish condemned the Dalton Plan for several reasons. (1) Quantity replaced quality.

(2) Students failed to distribute time properly. (3) Teachers were reduced to the role of clerks. (4) Teachers were no longer generating interest in the subjects. (5) Colleges placed an emphasis on quality, not quantity, causing a disadvantage for the student who had formerly learned under the contract plan. 36

John and Valerie Bockman suggest that the Dalton Plan put too much emphasis on the idea of labor. The contract was utilized almost as an employer-employee instrument. These authors suggest that the over-stress on physical labor had something to do with the demise of the contract plan. John and Valerie Bockman also report that the Dalton Plan was misused by ill-informed, inexperienced teachers and administrators. In many cases contracts were rigid and unrealistic. 37

H. G. Good says the Dalton Plan failed because too many pupils accepted its freedom but did not meet their responsibilities. Experience showed that the Dalton Plan had been "praised far beyond its merits," and for that reason it was discontinued. Good places it in the


category of an educational fad, "a scheme for which magical powers are claimed." Such a fad collapses when people realize the delusions. But Good does not completely discount the Dalton Plan, saying that such a fad may be a precursor to a plan of more permanent value. He does not mention, however, the successor to which he makes indirect reference.

William French states that the Dalton Plan founded for two reasons. Students did not fulfill their responsibilities, and many teachers became too rigid in expecting all pupils to work at the same pace.

Even though the Dalton Plan met with disfavor a few years after its introduction, the idea of contracting as a means of learning did not completely fade away. Researchers continued to experiment with different types of contracting. New studies involving contracts as a means of evaluation revived during the 1960's, and such experimenting continues today.

The key principles of the contract plan can be summarized in the following statements.

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38 Good, p. 430.
39 Ibid.
40 French, p. 372.
(1) A contract plan of evaluation allows individual student differences. 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50


50 Dorothy Zeligs, "A Year's Experiment with the Unit-Contract Plan," Ohio Schools, Volume 10, June, 1932, pp. 190+.
(2) A contract plan of evaluation encourages greater freedom of choice and responsibility on the part of the student. The contract plan increases the active participation of students in the learning process. This participation encourages the student to be realistic in assessing his or her own capacities and limitations.\footnote{51}{Carl Rogers, \textit{Freedom to Learn} (Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill Publishing Company, 1969), p. 133.} \footnote{52}{Frymier, p. 263.} \footnote{53}{Harvey, p. 44.} \footnote{54}{Herman, p. 554.} \footnote{55}{Dash, p. 231.} \footnote{56}{Amsden, p. 282.} \footnote{57}{Davis, p. 52.} \footnote{58}{Bookman and Bookman, p. 18.} \footnote{59}{Charles L. Thompson and Marianna Davis, "Grade Contracts: A Method of Redirecting Motivation," \textit{Focus on Guidance}, Volume 3, September 1970, pp. 7-10.} \footnote{60}{Poppen and Thompson, p. 420.} \footnote{61}{Zeligs, p. 190.}
(3) Objectives must be clearly stated with the contract plan of evaluation. The teacher comes to grips with educational objectives. 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67

(4) The student-teacher relationship is less antagonistic and a feeling of trust can be created; free decision on the part of the student is enhanced. Anxiety over grades is lessened. 68, 69, 70

(5) Grades become more objective, less subjective and arbitrary. The student can see the connection between the grade received and work completed. 71, 72, 73, 74

62 Frymier, p. 261.
63 Harvey, p. 43.
64 Dash, p. 231.
66 Thompson and Davis, p. 7.
67 Poppen and Thompson, p. 420.
68 Rogers, p. 133.
69 Thompson and Davis, p. 8.
70 Poppen and Thompson, p. 420.
71 Harvey, p. 44.
72 Delworth, p. 277.
73 Amsden, pp. 1280-1282.
74 Poppen and Thompson, p. 421.
(6) Emphasis is on learning and success rather than testing and failure, with the contract plan of evaluation. Tests are used primarily for teaching. Errors are not held against a student but are used as a springboard to learning.75,76,77

Studies involving the contract method of teaching and evaluation are not abundant. From the literature reviewed by this investigator, one may conclude that, in most cases, the contract method was equivalent to if not slightly superior to the daily-recitation method.

In 1929 Esson and Cole experimented with secondary school classes studying American history. Two hundred and seventy-five eleventh and twelfth grade students in ten high schools participated in the experiment. The researchers wished to retain the socializing aspects of the daily-recitation method of education and still develop a teaching plan that would allow for individual differences in rate of learning and interests. The contract method was employed in the experimental group; the control group was taught by daily-recitation. The schools were paired according to scores students received

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75Frymier, p. 263.
76Dash, p. 234.
77Amsden, p. 1282.
on intelligence tests, history tests, and a reading scale. In the experimental classrooms, contracts were developed for each unit of study. Each student was required to meet minimum requirements, or a "C". After meeting the minimum requirements, the student was qualified to attempt the "B" contract and the "A" contract. Both groups were given the same initial and final tests. The results of the experiment showed that the contract plan was superior to the daily-recitation method in four out of five of the paired groups. Even though the tendency to favor the contract method was not highly significant, the authors felt certain considerations were not reflected in the statistics. Teachers using the contract plan were not familiar with its methods and principles. Library facilities were inadequate, a distinct handicap to the experimental group. Therefore, the authors felt that, in consideration of the disadvantages to the contract group, the net results of the experiment clearly favored the contract plan.78

In 1929 Shepard experimented with the contract plan in a sixth grade history class. The control group was

taught by the daily-recitation method while the experimental group used the contract method. Shepard compared the scores of the two groups for historical knowledge and the average recall of information. Shepard concluded that both methods were equally effective.79

In 1932 Dorothy Zeligs reported her observations after a year's experimenting with the contract plan with two seventh grades in history, geography, and reading. No research design was employed. One of the groups showed a wide range in mental abilities; the other class did not show such a wide variation of mental abilities. Zeligs found that her initial contract for the "C" was too difficult and had to be modified. Another difficulty was helping the children learn to organize their work and budget their time. The sensitive child tended to be overburdened with the feeling of responsibility. But Zeligs felt that the advantages outweighed the disadvantages. Discipline problems disappeared. Zeligs also felt that individual pupils developed responsibility, attained a sense of importance and dignity, and found the contract system enjoyable.80


80Zeligs, pp. 190-192.
In 1932 Wagner conducted an experiment to compare the daily-recitation method with the contract method in two high school bookkeeping classes. Wagner paired students in one class with students in another class on the basis of chronological age, mental age, previous school marks, and an initial achievement test. Wagner repeated the same experiment the following school year to make the data more reliable. The results favored the contract method slightly in both groups on a test developed by the instructor. The results of an opinion survey showed that students also favored the contract method of evaluation.\(^{81}\)

J. O. Bradshaw conducted an experiment in 1933 to compare the contract plan and daily-recitation methods in two sections of high school biology. Eighteen pairs of students were identified by matching their IQ scores and biology test scores. For the test group (the group learning by contract) two-week contracts were developed. The experiment lasted five months. Results indicated that the control group was superior in immediate retention but the test group was superior in delayed retention. In terms of the sum total of information, Bradshaw felt

that the contract group was very slightly superior, but not significantly so. 82

In the same year, 1933, A. Mason Mann used the contract plan in an experiment in American history classes. Pupils were paired on the basis of achievement tests in American history, intelligence tests, age, and sex. Each group numbered seventeen. Units of work lasted approximately three weeks and became the basis for individual contract duration. At the end of the semester, two standardized tests were administered to both classes. The results favored the experimental group which scored higher on both standardized tests. The experimental group also scored higher on five of the six teacher-made tests which were administered to both groups throughout the semester. The difference between the two groups, while showing a high probability, was not statistically significant. 83

In 1934 Irma Martin organized the study of sixth grade geography on the contract plan. Although no experimental research design was employed, Mrs. Martin


felt that through the use of the contract, the study of geography became more interesting and enhanced responsibility and self-expression on the part of the students. 84

In 1935 A. C. Heiges used the contract plan in an experiment which compared that plan with the daily-recitation method in the teaching of literature. Forty-six ninth grade students were paired on the basis of IQ scores. The experiment lasted fifteen weeks. For the experimental group, content material was arranged into assignments for A, B, and C grades. Time limits were set. Heiges looked at five different abilities in the final results. Overall, the experimental group made slightly higher scores than did the control group. The most significant difference between the two groups was in the area of comprehension. Heiges stated that the contract method exposed students to a wider range of reading which gave them greater experience and understanding. The experimental group was only slightly superior to the control group in appreciation of literature, character identification, vocabulary, and passage

84Irma Martin, "Contract Plan Sixth Grade Geography," School and Community, Volume 20, April, 1934, pp. 118-19.
There is a distinct lack of published scientific studies on the contract method of evaluation between the mid 1930's and the mid 1960's.

In 1968 Morris Shirts used a contract method of grading on the college level in a course entitled "Historical and Philosophical Foundations of Education." Shirts was prompted to try the contract because he felt dissatisfied with existing methods of evaluation which he found distasteful and unfair. Although no experimental research design was used, Shirts concluded that the contract approach had certain merits, as well as disadvantages. Most students showed indications of good learning. Students worked hard and most contracted for an "A," although their abilities were not always commensurate with such aspirations, according to Shirts. However, the author reported that the contract plan was more demanding on the teacher, and assignments became burdensome and perhaps meaningless to students. The author felt he would try the contract again but would recommend the following changes:

(1) due-dates for each assignment.

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(2) interviews to help students set more realistic goals.

(3) alternative grades for those who fail to "honor" the contract.

(4) fewer assigned papers.

(5) more use of discussion groups.\textsuperscript{86}

In 1970 Thompson and Davis used grade contracts in an attempt to redirect motivation in eighth grade mathematics. Twenty-one eighth graders were selected for the experimental group. Twenty students from another eighth grade mathematics class constituted the control group. The grade contract was prompted by group counseling sessions to discover what could be done to improve achievement in mathematics. Most of the students in those sessions did not know what to do to succeed in the math class. Class assignments and ways to pass the course needed to be clarified. Individual grade contracts were initiated on a trial six-week basis for the second grading period. When Thompson and Davis compared marks for the first and second grading periods, they found that seventeen of the twenty contract students raised their math grade. Grades in the control group remained about the same.

A comparison of grade averages for the two groups revealed that the contract group made higher gains than the control group. The failure rate for the control group decreased from eight to five, a fourteen per cent improvement.\textsuperscript{87}

Thompson and Davis suggest that the grade contract brought about a role shift by the teacher. This role change may have perpetuated a behavior change cycle leading to further positive change. In any case, the teacher was so pleased with the results that she decided to initiate the contract approach with her other class—the former control group.\textsuperscript{88}

In 1970 Edward Dash experimented with the contract plan in educational psychology classes at Colorado State University. The author developed A, B, and C contracts. The C contract had to be completed before students could proceed to the B or A contract. Dash reported that sixty-three per cent of those who contracted for an A achieved that grade. Eighty-six per cent of those who aspired to earn a B reached their aspirations. When Dash compared results of the contract group with a random past group, he concluded that more students appeared to


\textsuperscript{88}Ibid.
achieve higher final grades in the course under the contract approach. 89

In 1971, at the University of Tennessee, Poppen and Thompson randomly divided four classes of Educational Psychology into two groups, experimental and control. The experimental group was evaluated by the grade contract while the control group's performance was evaluated by daily-recitation methods. Four comparisons were made--examination scores, child care study reports, reaction papers, and independent projects. In this study the grade contract was no better than the daily-recitation method of evaluation. The experimenters did see worth in the contract approach since it allowed movement toward individualized instruction and had no real disadvantages as a means of evaluation. 90

In 1971 Hugh Taylor assessed the opinions of students who had experienced the contract plan in an educational measurement and evaluation course. A total of 240 students was enrolled in the course. The sample consisted of twenty-three male and sixty-three female


students chosen at random. A fourteen item Likert-type attitude scale was administered to measure attitude toward the contract technique. Results showed a generally favorable opinion toward the grade contract system. Taylor found high student consensus that students are not motivated to work at an optimum level under the contract system. A further comparison with a control group showed that grade contract students ranked the fairness of course grading significantly higher than did the control group. The writer felt that the results indicated a willingness on the part of students to approve the grade contract.

Throughout the literature concerning the grade contract there seems to be a general consensus that the contract plan of evaluation is equal to, if not better than, daily-recitation methods of teaching and evaluation. As noted in the studies, many researchers found distinct advantages, academic as well as social, in using the contract plan of evaluation. However, there are also disadvantages in using the contract plan. Some have been mentioned in the reported studies. These negative considerations could be summarized in the

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following statements.

(1) Some students will contract for the minimum, just enough to pass the course. Such a student is unlikely to expose himself to any possible learning experiences beyond contract terms. With the daily-recitation method, he might learn more.92,93,94,95

(2) The time required to work out contracts with students is a very real stumbling block. Demands on teacher time are great.96,97,98

(3) Assignments can become monotonous and burdensome. The quantity of work is easily overemphasized and becomes the sole basis for the grade.99,100,101,102,103,104

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92Harvey, p. 44.
93Zeligs, p. 200.
94Taylor, p. 313.
95Amsden, p. 1281.
96Harvey, p. 44.
97Shirts, p. 457.
99Shirts, p. 457.
101Zeligs, p. 201.
102Comish, pp. 95-96.
(4) The socializing aspects of daily-recitation methods are decreased with the contract plan, which tends to lessen class spirit. 105

(5) Unless the student becomes involved in the process of developing the contract itself, the contract instrument has the potential to dehumanize and depersonalize the educational process. The process of developing the contract is more important than the resulting contract. 106, 107

SUMMARY

Many of the assumptions about human nature and learning that are held by today's reformers of American education were also shared by the advocates of Progressive education. The Progressives stressed individual differences, active learning, social needs, and critical thinking. The Progressives felt that students would learn without the threat of punishment or failure. The


104 Harvey, p. 42.

105 Shirts, p. 458.

106 Bockman and Bockman, p. 22.

107 Roobach, p. 237.
Eight-Year Study showed that students from Progressive schools performed slightly better in college than students educated in the more traditional manner which used daily-recitation methods. The reasons for the demise of Progressive education are varied and complex. As the reforms of Progressive education spread, they were sometimes carried to extremes. In some cases, students were allowed too much freedom, and lack of discipline brought charges that Progressive students were ill-mannered and rude. Many people feared that Progressive schools were not upholding the hard-won principles of government. Another reason for the decline of Progressive education was that this reform movement was initiated in great part by university scholars who had limited contact with classrooms. Today's reformers can benefit by understanding the reasons for the decline of Progressive education, which brought much good to American education, in spite of its problems.

The contract plan of learning is one alternative to the daily-recitation method. Contract learning has been viewed by many educators as equal to, and in some cases superior to, the daily-recitation method. The contract system allows individual differences and has the potential to develop initiative and responsibility for learning on the part of students within an accepted framework. With
the contract plan, objectives must be clear. Also student anxiety over grades is lessened and grading becomes less arbitrary. However, there are some possible disadvantages to the contract plan. Some students will choose the minimum requirements to pass the course. Quantity of work may become a substitute for quality in assigning grades. Care must be taken so that the contract is not entirely monotonous and depersonalizing.

More studies employing an experimental research design need to be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the contract plan of evaluation in comparison to other methods of evaluation. This investigator feels that this study will contribute to the research concerning the contract plan of evaluation.
CHAPTER III
DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In this study, the nonrandomized control group pretest-posttest design was utilized to determine both cognitive and affective changes.

Table I
Nonrandomized Control Group
Pretest-Posttest Design\(^1\)

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<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group</td>
<td>(T_1)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(T_2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>(T_1)</td>
<td>(\cdot)</td>
<td>(T_2)</td>
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The pretest and posttest measured three areas—attitude toward poetry and creative writing, knowledge of certain poetic elements, and ability to generate imagery in descriptive writing. The experimental variable to be measured was the contract plan of learning. The control group, which did not experience the contract plan, was taught by the traditional method, that is, by daily-recitation-assignment.
Both groups were given a pretest on Monday, April 21, 1975, and a posttest on Friday, June 6, 1975. All instruction for both groups was conducted between April 21 and June 6. Neither group was randomly selected from a larger population. Both were intact groups before the experiment began. However, a comparison of three different scores for the two groups revealed that there were no significant differences between the two groups on those three measures. (See Table II, page 55) The three sets of scores compared were scores on the California IQ Test, Grade Point Average for the first half of the school year's work, and a composite language score on the 1970 edition of the California Achievement Test. A t-test was used to analyze the data for the two classes on all three measures. Acceptance was at the .05 level.

For all three measures the difference of the means of the two groups was not large enough to reject the null hypothesis. There was no significant difference between the two groups on these three sets of scores. The investigator therefore proceeded with the experiment under the assumption that the two groups were sufficiently comparable for such an experiment.

The experiment was conducted in English 10 classes at Holley High School, Holley, New York. The subjects used in this study were predominantly sophomores.
Table II
A Comparison of Mean Scores of the Control Group and Experimental Group for Differences in IQ, Grade Point Average, and Achievement Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Mean Scores</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group (n=21)</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group (n=18)</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t score*</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*t score must equal 2.04 to be significant at .05 level.

enrolled in English 10. All English 10 classes at Holley High School are taught by this instructor. The two classes for this experiment met Monday through Friday during Period One and Period Two of the school day, from 7:50-8:35 A.M. and from 8:40-9:20 respectively. Both classes were heterogeneously mixed, that is to say, there was no separation of Regents from non-Regents students. *Period One class* (the control group) consisted of six non-Regents and fifteen Regents students while *Period Two class* (the experimental group) consisted of six non-Regents and twelve Regents students. The
control group had thirteen females and eight males while the experimental group had eight females and ten males.

The scale to measure changes in attitude and the test to measure changes in cognitive behavior were both developed by this investigator. Statistical analysis of the test results of the two groups was completed by using analysis of variance to test for significance of difference between the scores of the two groups. The .05 level of significance was used to accept or reject the hypotheses.

Measuring Instruments

Attitude scale. This investigator felt that it was important to assess changes in attitude during this experiment, even though significant changes were not expected. It is commonly assumed that attitudes and values are formed and developed over a period of time, perhaps even years.\(^2\)\(^3\) It is unlikely that a significant change in attitude toward poetry and creative writing


\(^3\)David Darling, "Why a Taxonomy of Affective Learning," ibid, p. 224.
would have resulted in a seven-week time period. However, this attitude scale could be used in research covering a longer time period. Studies of a longer duration could produce important results as to how a teacher could correlate cognitive teaching to positive affective development. Under some conditions the development of cognitive behaviors may actually destroy certain desired affective behaviors.

...instead of a positive relation between growth in cognitive and affective behavior, it is conceivable that there may be an inverse relation between growth in the two domains.4

It is possible that certain students' strong adverse feelings toward poetry have resulted from insistence on high cognitive growth, without attention to the effects on the students' attitudes toward poetry. Even though this investigator did not expect significant changes in attitude toward poetry and creative writing, she felt it was important to determine whether or not different methods of learning would have a significant effect on students' attitudes.

A Likert-type scale, developed by this investigator, was used to measure attitude toward poetry and creative

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4Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, p. 188.
writing. In constructing the attitude scale, the investigator followed guidelines suggested by Turney and Bobb in *Research in Education, an Introduction*. ⁵

First the investigator gathered forty-four statements that expressed both favorable and unfavorable attitudes toward poetry and creative writing. (See Appendix A, Pilot Attitude Survey.) Twenty-two of the statements expressed positive feelings toward poetry and creative writing; twenty-two were negative statements. For each of the forty-four statements, students were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement. Five choices were given—strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree. Positive statements were scored as follows: 5 points = strongly agree, 4 points = agree, 3 points = undecided, 2 points = disagree, 1 point = strongly disagree. Negative statements were awarded reverse points, that is: 1 point = strongly agree, 2 points = agree, 3 points = undecided, 4 points = disagree, 5 points = strongly disagree.

This original set of forty-four statements was

administered to forty-five students in English 10. These same students were not to be involved in the experiment but were representative of the students who would later be given the final attitude scale. This initial testing was necessary to develop a set of statements which would discriminate well between students who had negative feelings toward poetry and creative writing and students who felt positively toward the same subject.

After the trial testing, each person's total score was calculated by adding his item scores. Points were awarded as described above--positive statements scored from 5 to 1 points, negative statements from 1 to 5 points.

The top fourth of the scores were considered the high scoring subjects. In this case, the eleven scores ranging from 164-206 represented the top twenty-five per cent. The bottom fourth of the scores were considered the low scoring subjects. In this case, eleven individuals scoring between 87-118 represented the bottom fourth. The twenty statements which best discriminated between these two groups would be retained for the final scale. Next each of the forty-four statements on the survey was analyzed to determine the total points it received from both the high-scoring and low-scoring individuals. (See Appendix B, Item Analysis of Pilot Attitude Survey
for Level of Discrimination.) Those ten negative and ten positive statements which had the greatest difference of points between the two groups would be considered the best discriminators between the two groups and would be retained for the final attitude scale. The remaining twenty-four items which did not discriminate as well between the two groups were discarded. Therefore, the final scale consists of twenty statements, ten positive and ten negative. (See Appendix C, Attitude Scale.) A student could possibly score between 20 and 100 on this scale, depending on his or her feelings about the statements about poetry and creative writing.

Turney and Bobb claim that this procedure provides internal consistency for the scale, because each item correlates well with the general attitude of the person tested. The Likert-type scale is easy to construct, more reliable than the Thurstone-type scale, and provides precise information about the subject's opinion on an issue.⁶

There are limitations for such an instrument. One limitation is that one cannot assume that the distances between the scale positions are equal. Another is that the scale does not tell how much more favorable one subject's attitude is toward an issue than another

⁶Turney and Bobb, p. 141.
individual's. One can only say that there appears to be a difference. Also one can determine that there has been a change in attitude, but not the extent of that change. There is also the possibility, through various combinations of item scores, that two individuals who have different attitudes might end up with the same score.

Since this investigator was unable to find any scale to measure attitude toward poetry and creative writing which had been tested for reliability and validity, she decided to use the method described by Turney and Robb. It is assumed that this attitude scale is valid and does measure attitude toward poetry and creative writing.

Test for Cognitive Behavior. The instrument used to measure changes in cognitive behavior was developed by this investigator. Some question items were borrowed from test materials published by Ginn and Company, with the company's permission. The test measured knowledge in the four areas studied—imagery, figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification), tone, and symbolism. The test consisted of two parts. The first part was termed the Objective Test and the second part, which consisted of creative writing, was termed the Subjective Test.

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7Turney and Robb, p. 141.
The first section of the Objective Test was concerned only with identifying figurative language. On this portion of the test, students were asked to identify the types of figurative language, if any, in ten short passages. Also students had to choose the best definition of cliché and personification from five possible answers.

The second section of the Objective Test required students to read longer passages and analyze all elements studied—imagery, figurative language, tone, and symbolism. Fourteen multiple choice questions made up that section of the test. Most of the test items for this section of the test were from materials published by Ginn and Company.

Finally, students were asked to describe a picture in one of their poetry texts. This section of the test was termed the Subjective Test. The investigator decided to measure the use of imagery in the descriptions as one measure of descriptive ability. This investigator realizes that the production of imagery alone is not in itself a measure of excellence in descriptive writing. The student must be aware of how imagery contributes to the overall description. A mixture of sensory data and
personal reaction is an effective way of communicating feeling and, at the same time, allows the reader to experience enough sensory data to share in the experience also. Writing that concentrates only on personal feeling or only on sensory data cannot communicate in such a way. From past experience, this investigator observed that students were generally unaware of the importance of imagery in writing and concentrated on telling their personal reactions when asked to describe something. With these ideas in mind, the investigator decided to measure the amount of imagery used by both groups on the pretest and the posttest. This investigator realizes that such a measure is limited in its value and subjective in its application.

The posttest was identical to the pretest with the exception of three multiple choice items at the end of the Objective Test. These three items were designed to measure the same ability with slightly different passages. (See Appendix F, Objective Test--Posttest)

Reliability scores for the Objective Test were computed by using the Kuder-Richardson formula 21, which would provide relative conservative estimates of the

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coefficient of equivalence. The formula followed is as follows:

\[ r_{KR21} = \frac{k}{k-1} \left( 1 - \frac{M(k-M)}{ks^2} \right) \]

Where: items are scored 1 point if right and 0 points if wrong, M is the mean, k is the number of items, and s is the standard deviation.

The reliability coefficient for the pretest for the control group was .69 and for the experimental group .73. The reliability coefficients for the posttest were higher--.82 for the control group and .76 for the experimental group. Paul Diederich reports that:

Most of the good, usable tests and other instruments worked out by the writer's students have reliabilities between .6 and .8 in the relatively small groups in which they are tried out. With an unconventional instrument or procedure it is unusual to get even as high as .6

Therefore, although the reliability coefficients are not as high as one would like, they were deemed satisfactory for this situation.

The scoring for the first part of the Objective

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9 Isaac and Michael, p. 87.
Test was completed by awarding one point for underlining an instance of figurative language and a second point for correctly identifying the type of figurative language. This section of the test comprised twenty total points. For the remainder of the test items on the Objective Test, one point was awarded for each correct answer. These items were in the form of multiple choice questions.

For the Subjective Test, the exercise that asked students to describe a picture in their poetry text, one point was awarded for each instance of imagery. Imagery was defined as the "representation through language of sense experience."11 Most often the word "image" suggests a mental picture, but here the definition includes all the senses. Language that allows the reader to see, to hear, to touch, to taste, to smell, was considered an example of imagery. The determination of points on this portion of the test was completed by this investigator, as were all the other sections of the test.

It should be noted that the pretest and posttest for both the control and experimental groups had no bearing on the grade which students received for that

marking period of English 10. The pretest and post-test were used exclusively to measure student attitudes toward poetry and creative writing as well as knowledge of certain elements of poetry.

General Design of the Poetry Unit

The seven week unit dealing with elements of poetry and creative writing was divided into three smaller units, each lasting approximately two weeks in length. The first unit dealt with imagery, starting Tuesday, April 22 and ending Tuesday, May 6, 1975. The second unit, a study of figurative language, began on Wednesday, May 6 and ended Tuesday, May 20. The third unit, a study of tone and symbolism, began on Wednesday, May 21 and ended Thursday, June 5. The texts for both classes were *Man in the Poetic Mode*\(^\text{12}\) and *Some Haystacks Don't Even Have Any Needle*.\(^\text{13}\)

For the first unit, Imagery, students in both groups were required to complete activities to meet the following objectives:

1. define imagery.


2. recognize imagery in literature.
3. recognize the difference between language that appeals to the senses and language that does not.
4. understand the effect of imagery.
5. generate images in writing.
6. analyze the use of imagery in certain poems in the poetry texts.
7. write descriptions of places or things.
8. recognize the difference between concrete and abstract nouns.
9. recognize the difference between general and specific nouns.
10. recognize the difference in specificity of verbs.

These objectives were to be met by all students. At the start of the unit, students in the contract group were asked to look over the requirements for each grade and to state their intentions in writing. They also had to state which activities they would complete when a choice was necessary. If a student in the contract group completed all the activities to master these minimum requirements and achieved a score between 70-79 per cent on the unit test, he would earn a C for the unit on Imagery. A student wishing to earn a B had to complete more activities (some of a more difficult nature) and had to achieve a score of 80-89 per cent on the unit
test. A student wishing to earn an A likewise had to complete more activities and had to achieve a score of 90-100 per cent on the unit test. The investigator tried to avoid making the activities for the grades of A and B simply repetitious of the activities for the grade of C. The activities for the grade of A and B were designed in some cases to challenge a student's higher level of thinking, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the concepts studied in the unit. At all levels, some activities were unstructured. The student himself had to create the materials or ideas to fulfill that objective.

If a student in the contract group did not achieve the score he desired on a test, he could re-take the test within three days, with the additional requirement that his score must be five points higher. For example, if a student contracted for an A but received 85 per cent on the unit test, he had three days to study and re-take the same test. But this time his score had to be 95 per cent to qualify for the A. Students in the control group did not have the option to re-take tests.

If a student in the contract group met the requirements for his or her grade, but received a higher score on the unit test, he or she was allowed three extra days to fulfill the additional activities necessary for the
higher grade. If a student in the contract group achieved the desired grade for his or her contract but did not complete the necessary activities, one point per activity was subtracted from the test score. If the activities were handed in late, a half-point per activity was deducted from the test mark. If any activity was deemed unacceptable by the investigator, it was returned to the student who was allowed to re-do the activity until satisfactory.

Students in the experimental group were given approximately sixty per cent more free time during the class period to work on their activities for the contract. These students in the contract group were not told how to regulate their free class time and homework to achieve the objectives. That decision was left to them. They were informed that work handed in late (that is, after the unit test) would be penalized.

In the control group students were given daily assignments to meet these same objectives for the unit on imagery. The instructor used daily recitation to check the progress of the control group toward those objectives. Students in the control group were not given a choice of grades to earn and were not allowed to retake tests. Students' grades in the control group were assigned on the basis of the scores on the
achievement test at the end of the unit. Students in this group had fewer choices to make in regards to regulating their class time to achieve the objectives. Those decisions were made for the students by the investigator.

These same guidelines for Unit I applied to the two successive units.

The second unit, Figurative Language, began on Wednesday, May 6 and ended Tuesday, May 20. The same procedures for Unit I were followed for Unit II. The only differences were in the objectives, which were as follows:

1. define figurative language.
2. recognize simile, metaphor, personification in everyday language and in literature.
3. recognize the purposes of figurative language in poetry and prose.
4. generate original comparisons in writing.
5. analyze the figurative language in given poems in the poetry texts.
6. identify tone as it is revealed through figurative language.
7. recognize cliché.
8. tell why cliché is ineffective in poetry.
9. write descriptions of persons, places, or things,
using some figures of speech.

The third unit, Tone and Symbolism, began on Wednesday, May 21 and ended Thursday, June 5. The guidelines for this unit were the same as those described for Unit I. The objectives for this unit were as follows:

1. define tone, as it applies to literature.
2. tell how a person can identify tone in spoken and written communication.
3. define the denotation and connotation of a word.
4. give examples of words that have the same denotation but different connotations and explain the differences.
5. identify tone in given poems.
6. analyze tone as revealed by figurative language, rhythm, connotation of words, and imagery.
7. define symbolism.
8. name symbols used in everyday life and explain how they operate as symbols.
9. analyze symbolism in given poems.

Both the experimental group and the control group had the following constants:

1. This investigator was the instructor for both groups.
2. Both groups met in the same room in Holley High
School, Room 19.

3. Both groups met in the morning; the control group met from 7:50 A.M. until 8:35 A.M. Monday through Friday, and the experimental group met on the same days from 8:40 A.M. until 9:20 A.M.

4. Both groups were assigned the same texts.

5. Both groups had the same lectures, discussion topics and audio-visual materials.

6. Both classes were approximately the same size, about twenty students per class.

7. Both classes were heterogeneously mixed. No separation was made between Regents and Non-Regents students.

SUMMARY

In this study, the nonrandomized control group pretest-posttest design was used to determine cognitive and affective changes. Before the experiment began, the investigator compared the mean scores for IQ, Grade Point Average, and Language Achievement Test of both the experimental and control groups. There were no significant differences between the two groups.

This investigator developed an attitude scale to assess changes in affective behavior. Two tests were developed to measure cognitive changes. The Objective
Test consisted of identification of certain elements of poetry and multiple choice questions based on poetic passages. The Subjective Test required students to describe a picture of an old man. The pretest and the posttest were the same with the exception of three test items on the Objective Test.

Objectives for each poetry unit were the same for both classes. The control group was instructed by the daily-recitation method. Students in the control group were evaluated on the basis of their scores for the three unit tests. In the experimental group, the contract plan of evaluation was used. If a student completed the required objectives for a certain grade, he or she automatically received the grade for which he or she had contracted. Students in the contract group were allowed to re-do work and re-take tests until the desired goals were reached.

The pretest and posttest were used exclusively to measure student attitudes toward poetry and creative writing as well as knowledge of certain elements of poetry and creative writing. These tests had no effect on the grade which students received for that marking period in English.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to compare the contract plan of learning with the daily-recitation plan of learning to determine which method would be more effective in producing cognitive and affective growth in a high school poetry class. Thirty-nine students enrolled in English 10 at Holley High School served as subjects for the study. Both the experimental group and the control group studied poetry and creative writing for seven weeks. An attitude scale to measure changes in the affective domain was developed by this investigator. The instrument to measure cognitive growth consisted of two parts—the Objective Test, which tested students' ability to identify and analyze certain elements of poetry, and the Subjective Test, which consisted of creative writing.

The results of the statistical analysis of the data from the experimental and control groups will be presented in this chapter. The statistical analysis will be divided into three sections. The first section will present the results of the statistical analysis of the attitude scale. The second section will present the results of the...
statistical analysis of the Objective Test, the first part of the instrument to measure cognitive growth. The third section will present the results of the statistical analysis of the Subjective Test, the second part of the instrument to measure cognitive growth.

Changes in Affective Behavior

A two factor analysis of variance with repetition on one factor was used to analyze the data from the attitude scale. The comparison of the two classes combined showed no significant difference in affective behavior between the administration of the pretest and the posttest. \( F = 0.10, P > .05 \) Also a comparison of the combined pretest and posttest scores of the two classes showed no significant difference between the experimental group and the control group. \( F = 1.97, P > .05 \) (See Table III, page 76.)

In terms of the mean scores, the control group increased its mean score on the attitude scale from 63.8 per cent to 65.7 per cent, reflecting a gain of 1.9 percentage points. The experimental group also increased its mean score slightly, .9 percentage points. (See Table IV, page 76.) However, the statistical analysis of the results of the attitude scale revealed that the differences between the two groups
**Table III**

Analysis of Variance--Attitude Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Among Subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>526.25</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>266.84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.97</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.77</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>252.56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>19782.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*F must equal 4.11 to be considered significant at the .05 level.

**Table IV**

Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Estimated Standard Error of Means for the Attitude Scale, Pretest and Posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>63.81</td>
<td>16.86</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>69.83</td>
<td>15.71</td>
<td>3.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>65.71</td>
<td>17.28</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>70.11</td>
<td>11.87</td>
<td>2.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
cannot be considered significant. Also the slight increase in mean scores made by both groups between the pretest and the posttest cannot be considered significant.

The standard deviations for the attitude scale are relatively high, ranging from 11.8 to 17.2, indicating that the dispersement of scores from the mean score was rather wide for both classes, on the pretest and the posttest.

Changes in Cognitive Behavior

**Objective Test.** Again a two factor analysis of variance with repetition on one factor was used to analyze the data from the Objective Test. A comparison of the two classes combined showed a significant increase in cognitive learning between the administration of the pretest and posttest. \( (F = 20.11, P < .01) \) On the other hand, a comparison of the combined pretest and posttest scores of the two classes showed no significant difference between the experimental group and the control group. \( (F = 1.02, P > .05) \) (See Table V, page 78.)

In terms of mean scores on the Objective Test, the control group increased its mean score by 4.6 total points on the Objective Test. (Highest total points on the Objective Test equal 36 points.) The experimental
Table V

Analysis of Variance--Objective Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Among Subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>37.17</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>744.63</td>
<td>20.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>52.06</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>3547.29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*F must equal 4.11 to be considered significant at the .05 level.

The group made an even greater gain in terms of mean scores on the Objective Test between the pretest and the post-test--7.9 points gained, almost twice the gain of the control group. (See Table VI, page 79.) However, the statistical analysis of the results revealed that, while both groups made significant increases in cognitive learning, the difference between the two groups could not be considered significant.

Standard deviations remained constant at approximately 6 points, which appeared fairly high for a total score of 36 points. (See Table VI, page 79.)
Table VI  
Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Estimated Standard Error of Means for the Objective Test, Pretest and Posttest  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Error</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>13.52</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>18.19</td>
<td>6.56</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>10.50</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>18.44</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subjective Test. Again a two factor analysis of variance with repetition on one factor was used to analyze the data from the Subjective Test, the portion of the test which involved creative writing. A comparison of the combined scores of the two classes showed no significant differences between the administration of the pretest and the posttest. (F = 2.32, P > .05) On the other hand, a comparison of the combined scores of the two classes showed a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group.
(F = 4.19, P < .05)

Table VII
Analysis of Variance—Subjective Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Among Subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>243.96</td>
<td>4.19*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>58.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>123.12</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>157.36</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>52.85</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>4633.54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* F must equal 4.11 to be considered significant at the .05 level.

Table VII shows that there was a significant difference between the two classes on the Subjective Test. (F = 4.19, P < .05) However, the score which indicates level of interaction (AB) is not high enough to be considered significant. (F = 2.97, P > .05) Therefore one cannot conclude that the difference between the two classes was due to the treatment. One can only conclude that there was a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group on the combined scores of the two classes.
In terms of mean scores the difference in gains between the two classes is not notable. The control group averaged seven images on the pretest and twelve images on the posttest. The experimental group averaged six images on the pretest and remained constant at six images on the posttest. (See Table VIII.) Although the control group made a much larger gain than the experimental group on the Subjective Test, the analysis of variance shows that the difference between the two classes cannot be attributed to the difference in treatment.

Standard deviations appear relatively high, almost equal to the mean score in every case. (See Table VIII.)

### Table VIII

**Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Estimated Standard Error of Means for the Subjective Test, Pretest and Posttest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>7.14</td>
<td>6.61</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>12.29</td>
<td>10.04</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to compare the contract plan of learning with the daily-recitation plan of learning to determine which method would be more effective in producing cognitive and affective growth in a high school poetry class. An attitude scale to measure changes in the affective domain was developed by this investigator. Cognitive growth was measured by a two-part test. The Objective Test measured students' ability to identify and analyze certain elements of poetry. The Subjective Test measured students' use of imagery in descriptive writing. A two factor analysis of variance with repetition on one factor was used to analyze the data from the attitude scale and the test for cognitive growth.

A comparison of the scores of the two classes on the attitude scale showed no significant difference in affective behavior between the administration of the pretest and the posttest. Also a comparison of the combined pretest and posttest scores of the two classes showed no significant difference between the experimental group and the control group.

On the Objective Test, a comparison of the two classes combined showed a significant increase in
cognitive learning between the administration of the pretest and the posttest. On the other hand, a comparison of the combined pretest and posttest scores of the two classes showed no significant difference between the experimental group and the control group.

On the Subjective Test, a comparison of the combined scores of the two classes showed no significant differences between the administration of the pretest and the posttest. Even though a comparison of the combined scores of the two classes showed a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group, the level of interaction score indicated that this difference could not be attributed to the treatment.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION OF RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter the investigator will discuss the results of the experiment which were presented in Chapter IV. The discussion of the results will be followed by conclusions and recommendations.

Results in the Affective Domain

For this experiment, the second hypothesis was that the two methods of evaluating students during a study of poetry and creative writing would yield no significant difference in student attitudes toward poetry and creative writing. The results of the statistical analysis for the attitude scale confirm this hypothesis. Neither group significantly changed its attitudes toward poetry and creative writing after a seven week study of poetry and creative writing. In this study, the contract plan of learning was no different from the daily-recitation plan of learning in affecting the students' attitudes toward poetry and creative writing. This outcome was expected by this investigator, who felt that a significant change in attitude toward poetry and creative writing was unlikely after a seven-week time period.
Research of a longer duration might produce different results. It should be noted also that the attitude scale measured attitudes toward poetry and creative writing. It is possible that students in this experiment may have changed their attitudes about methods of learning. Students in the experimental group may have changed their attitudes significantly toward a learning method that encourages them to take some responsibility for their own learning. However, this attitude was not measured on the attitude scale for this experiment. The investigator wanted to determine whether or not different methods of learning would affect attitude toward subject matter, not attitude toward learning method.

This investigator feels that it is important for teachers to be aware of how teaching methods affect attitudes. One must develop teaching methods where cognitive learning correlates highly with positive affective development. Some interesting observations were made by this investigator in tabulating the results of the Pilot Attitude Survey. On that survey, statements numbered 2, 6, 8, 13, 19, 21, 23, 36, 39, and 42 are statements concerned with how the student feels about creative writing. For each one of these statements, the average rating of both the low-scoring and high-scoring individuals was above 3 points and in most
cases closer to 4 points. (See Appendix B, Item Analysis of Pilot Attitude Survey for Level of Discrimination.) To this investigator, it was surprising that those students who felt negatively toward poetry and creative writing still felt that creative writing was fun and important (numbers 13 and 23). These same students felt that creative writing helped them improve their writing (number 6). (It should be remembered that negative statements, such as number 6, were awarded reverse points, so a high score reveals a high positive attitude.) On the other hand, statement number 45, "I like writing poems" is one of the highest discriminators between high-scoring and low-scoring individuals. These results would lead one to conclude that students in this study who feel negatively toward poetry strongly dislike writing poems, but these same students enjoy creative writing. This investigator speculates that students in this study who dislike poetry may have been required, in the past, to write poems with strict attention to rhythm and rhyme. Perhaps students in this experiment are not aware that free verse is a type of poetry. From past teaching experience at Holley High School, this investigator assumes that most students have not been exposed to free verse as much as other forms of poetry. Another possibility is that the word
"poem" in itself intimidates students when told they must write a poem. Based on the results of the Pilot Attitude Survey, it would appear that most of the students in this experiment enjoy creative writing activities, as long as the teacher does not tell them they must write a poem. This investigator feels that the implications for this observation are important. Confronted with students who share the attitudes of the students in this study, a teacher who wants students to feel positively toward poetry and creative writing can foster positive attitudes by using creative writing techniques that do not initially require the finished product to be in the form of a poem.

Two additional statements on the Pilot Attitude Survey that were of interest to this investigator were number 24, which read, "I dislike reading poetry out loud for others to hear." and number 33, "I like to read poetry out loud for others to hear." Both the students with strong positive feelings toward poetry and the students with strong negative feelings toward poetry in this study tended to dislike reading poetry out loud for others to hear. Even the students with strong positive feelings were, on the average, only willing to rate those two statements as high as 3 points or "undecided." Apparently, based on the Pilot Attitude
Survey, past experiences in which students in this study read poetry out loud were not enjoyable to those students. It would be helpful to determine whether or not these students feel this way when reading their own writing, the writings of other students, or the writings of professional poets, or all three. Perhaps students would enjoy hearing their own voices recorded by tape recorder reading their own writing, the writings of fellow classmates, or the writings of professional poets. Perhaps they have never been exposed to some of the excellent recorded readings done by poets. Dramatic techniques whereby students experiment with different voices and gestures for the characters in the same and different poems could be interesting and pleasurable. In any case, this investigator feels that it is important for students to experience the beauty of spoken poetry, including free verse, and to develop positive attitudes toward such an activity. She also feels that there are teaching methods which can foster positive attitudes toward reading out loud for others to hear. This assumption could be the basis for further research.

Results in the Cognitive Domain

The first hypothesis of this experiment was that the two methods of evaluating students studying poetry
and creative writing would yield no significant difference in the amount of knowledge acquired. The discussion of the results of the instrument to measure cognitive growth will be divided into two sections. The first section will be concerned with the Objective Test. The second section will be concerned with the Subjective Test.

The Objective Test. The results of the statistical analysis of the Objective Test, presented in Chapter IV, confirm the hypothesis for cognitive behavior. The growth of the control group was not significantly different from that of the experimental group, as measured by the Objective Test. Both groups experienced a significant increase on the Objective Test. Even though there was no significant difference between the two groups in terms of statistical results, there was an interesting trend in relation to the mean scores of the two groups. At the beginning of the experiment, the mean score of the control group was three points or eight per cent higher than the experimental group mean score. At the end of the experiment, the mean score of the experimental group equalled that of the control group. (See Table VI, page 79.) In terms of mean scores, the experimental group made greater gains than the control group. This trend, however, was not strong enough to be considered
significant. The score to indicate level of interaction between the two groups (AB) was too low to attribute the difference to the different treatments \((F = 1.40)\). (See Table V, page 78.) Even though the difference between the experimental group and the control group on the Objective Test was not statistically significant, this investigator feels it would be important to determine whether such a trend would continue and take on significance after a longer period of time. It takes time for students to adjust to a new method of learning. In a situation such as a contract plan of learning, perhaps it is necessary for the student to see his or her earned mark on the printed report card in order for him or her to believe that there will be a direct correlation between work achieved and marks received on the report card.

Another consideration in relation to the results of the Objective Test is the reliability of the Objective Test. The reliability scores for this test range from .69 to .82. These scores are not as high as the reliability scores of most standardized tests. Perhaps the differences between the two groups in this study would be even greater if measured by an instrument with a higher reliability.

In any case, for this experiment both groups made
significant gains on the Objective Test. In terms of mean scores, the experimental group made more gains than the control group. However, the differences between the two groups were not significant.

**Subjective Test.** The results of the statistical analysis of the Subjective Test confirm the hypothesis. Although there was a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in the amount of imagery used in descriptive writing, the level of interaction (AB) is not high enough to be considered significant at the .05 level. The difference between the two groups, therefore, cannot be attributed to the treatments. However, the level of interaction is significant at the .10 level. (F must equal 2.85 to be considered significant at the .10 level. On the Subjective Test, F = 2.97 for level of interaction. See Table VII, page 80.) There is a strong probability, therefore, that the daily-recitation plan of learning was responsible for producing greater gains in the amount of images used in descriptive writing in this experiment. At the .05 level, which was the accepted level for significance in this study, the difference between the two classes is not significant.

The mean scores of both groups on the Subjective Test reveal that the control group went from an average
of seven images per description to an average of twelve images per description, while the experimental group actually made a slight decline in the average use of imagery, going from 6.4 to 5.9 images per descriptive passage. This investigator made an observation in tabulating the results of the creative writing which she feels is important. The low use of imagery on the part of the experimental group on the posttest may reflect a lack of enthusiasm and a weariness for writing of any kind. Students in the contract group not only used less imagery in their writing on the posttest, but they tended to write less than they did on the pretest. Descriptions on the posttest by the contract group seemed terse and lifeless. One boy, who is viewed as highly creative by this investigator, responded to the creative writing by writing he was sorry but he could not generate any feeling toward the picture. On the pretest his response was profuse and vivid, with many instances of specific imagery. The same observation was true for others, but not to the same extent as with this one particular student. This investigator speculates that the result of lower use of imagery in writing for the contract group came about because the contract students were required to fulfill almost all the requirements of their contract in writing. Since their progress was not checked by
daily-recitation, it was monitored through writing and reinforced by individual student-teacher conferences as time allowed. Students must have felt weary at times with the amount of writing. The investigator can readily attest that the checking of written assignments made her feel that her role had degenerated to that of a clerk. Although this weariness did not manifest itself in the students' attitudes toward poetry and creative writing, perhaps it is manifested in the portion of the test that measured the use of imagery. In this case, students in the contract group used less imagery and wrote less perhaps because of the inordinate amount of writing required by the contract method used in this study.

Another reason for weariness, and a much more important consideration in a contract plan of learning, is the way the contract was used in this study. Students were involved in deciding what grade to earn, and in the cases where activities were unstructured, they were required to create the activity; but this investigator feels that students were not involved enough in deciding how to fulfill the requirements of the contract. This element was left too much to chance. Not enough encouragement or guidance was given to students in this direction. Also students were limited in determining learning objectives. Students in the contract group were only allowed
to determine how many objectives beyond the minimum they wished to pursue. Students contracting for the minimum had even fewer decisions to make concerning learning objectives. As a result, students tended to accept the requirements as a "job" to be done and perhaps did not have the time or ability to give thought to the more creative activities in the plan. Weariness and boredom would be natural results of such conditions. Bockman and Bockman said the same when they stressed the importance of the contract as a process, not as a product. A brief summary of the ideas of the Bockmans would include these ideas. Used as process, the contract plan of learning involves the student directly in deciding his or her own learning objectives. Together, teacher and student carefully set goals and determine specific limitations, such as activities, conditions of evaluation, and deadlines. The process of contracting contributes to the potential for intellectual growth and to learner satisfaction. When used as product, the contract becomes a series of jobs and requirements handed down to the student by the teacher. The student is deprived of the essential role of determining learning objectives. Used as product, the contract plan contributes little to intellectual growth and is potentially a source of considerable dissatisfaction. The Bockmans added that
when the contract is used as product, the contract has the potential to dehumanize and depersonalize the learning process.\(^1\) The investigator feels that, to some extent, the contract was used as product and contributed to a feeling of weariness on the part of students in the experimental group in this study. The investigator also feels that the mean scores of the contract group on the Subject Test reflect, not so much an ability to use imagery but, a feeling of weariness toward any kind of writing.

Further evidence of weariness on the part of the experimental group might be reflected in the pattern of completed contracts. Enthusiasm for completing the contracts was at its highest level during the initial unit, if one looks at completed contracts. For Unit I, student contracts and actual grades earned are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contract</th>
<th>Actual grade earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A = 8</td>
<td>A = 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B = 6</td>
<td>B = 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C = 4</td>
<td>C = 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 18</td>
<td>D = 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Unit I, four students received a mark lower than desired on the contract. One student actually received a mark higher than his contracted grade, and one student took the unit test a second time to raise her final mark.

For Unit II, the number of unfulfilled contracts rose. The contracts and grades earned for Unit II are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contract</th>
<th>Actual grade earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A = 10</td>
<td>A = 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B = 2</td>
<td>B = 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C = 5</td>
<td>C = 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 18</td>
<td>D = 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F = 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Unit II, ten students earned marks lower than they desired on the contract. Only two students took advantage of taking the unit test a second time to raise their final marks for the unit.

For Unit III, the same trend toward unfulfilled contracts continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contract</th>
<th>Actual grade earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A = 8</td>
<td>A = 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B = 3</td>
<td>B = 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C = 6</td>
<td>C = 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>none = 1</td>
<td>D = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 18</td>
<td>F = 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For Unit III, eight students earned a mark lower than they had initially agreed to earn. One student earned a higher mark than initially desired, and one student decided to take the unit test a second time for a higher mark.

This investigator feels that the contract plan does have value as a learning method. It does take into account individual differences in learning. It does make objectives clear to students and teacher alike. It does place more of the responsibility for learning on the student. Grading becomes more objective; the student knows what is required for each grade. The contract plan has the potential to give students more freedom of choice in what to learn and how to learn. However, in this experiment, the investigator feels that the contract process should have been altered after the first unit. After students were exposed to one unit, they were familiar with the operation of this new learning method. At this time, students could have profited from being involved in determining some learning objectives, with the help of the teacher. Students could have been guided and encouraged to consider their own particular strengths and weaknesses, and subsequent ways to complete their contracts. It should be noted that such an approach might require more time and expertise. This investigator questions whether most
classroom teachers have enough skill in this area to guide this kind of learning.

The alternative way, however, of using the contract as a product instead of a process has the potential to dehumanize the learning process. In this case, this investigator feels the contract was used too much as a product and not enough as a process. Even though some activities were unstructured, these activities were not always required and therefore not chosen by enough students. The decline in the use of imagery in descriptive writing on the part of the contract students and the increasing number of unfulfilled contracts as the experiment continued are seen by this investigator as evidence that the contract was used too much as product and not enough as process. The investigator also speculates that students became somewhat weary with the contract plan as it was used in this study and that this weariness is reflected in the results of the Subjective Test and also in the pattern of uncompleted contracts.

CONCLUSIONS

After a seven-week study of poetry and creative writing, students in the control group and students in the experimental group showed no significant differences when compared. This result was true for both the affective
and cognitive domains. Some interesting trends occurred, although these trends were not statistically significant. In terms of mean scores the contract group showed a greater gain in knowledge of elements of poetry than the control group. Differences between the control group and the experimental group in the use of imagery on the Subjective Test were perhaps due to the inordinate amount of writing required by the contract plan of learning in this study.

This investigator concludes that the contract plan does have value as a learning instrument. The contract plan does take into account individual differences in learning. It does make objectives clear to students and teacher alike. The contract plan places more of the responsibility for learning on the student. Grading becomes more objective. The contract plan has the potential to give students more freedom of choice in what to learn and how to learn.

The contract plan has the disadvantage of reducing the amount of social interaction between students. Also a contract plan in which students have no rôle in determining learning objectives has the potential to dehumanize and depersonalize the learning process. Used in this manner, the contract can become nothing more than a series of jobs handed down to the student by the teacher.
Enthusiasm for learning can be diminished when the contract plan does not encourage students to be involved in determining learning objectives, with the help of the teacher.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that a similar study be conducted in which students using the contract plan are directly involved in determining some learning objectives, with the help of the teacher.

2. It is recommended that different methods be compared to the contract plan, using a type of contract plan in which students are directly involved in determining some learning objectives, with the help of the teacher.

3. It is recommended that a similar study be conducted in which a contract plan is alternated with the daily-recitation plan.

4. It is recommended that a similar study be conducted to examine the long range effects of the contract and daily-recitation methods on cognitive and affective behaviors.

5. It is recommended that a similar study be conducted comparing students who have previously taken a contract course to those who are taking a contract course for the first time.
6. It is recommended that a similar study be conducted to examine other effects on writing.

7. It is recommended that a similar study be conducted to determine how a contract plan in which students determine some learning objectives, with the help of the teacher, affects self-image and self-reliance.

SUMMARY

The hypothesis for affective behavior in this study was confirmed. After a seven-week study of poetry and creative writing, neither the control group nor the experimental group significantly changed their attitudes toward poetry and creative writing on the attitude scale developed by this investigator for this study. This result was expected by this investigator who feels that attitudes are formed over longer periods of time. In tabulating the results of the Pilot Attitude Survey, the investigator found that students who had an overall negative reaction to poetry on the attitude survey still indicated that they enjoyed creative writing and considered it important. Also, students who said they disliked writing poems indicated that they enjoyed creative writing activities. Another observation from the Pilot Attitude Survey was that most students said they disliked reading poetry out loud for others to hear.
The results of the Objective Test confirm the hypothesis for cognitive behavior. Both groups made significant gains in cognitive learning. There were no significant differences between the two groups on the Objective Test. In terms of mean scores, there was a trend which favored the experimental group, which made greater gains than the control group. This trend, however, was not statistically significant.

The results of the Subjective Test reveal that although there was a significant difference between the two groups, this difference could not be attributed to the difference in treatments. There is a strong probability that the greater gains in use of imagery made by the control group resulted because of the treatment (daily-recitation plan). However, this probability is significant only at the .10 level of significance. This investigator speculates that the decline in the use of imagery and the increasing number of unfulfilled contracts by the experimental group are reflections of weariness on the part of the contract group. The investigator speculates further that this weariness resulted because the contract itself was used more as a product and less as a process.

The contract plan has value as a learning method. Under the contract method, individual differences are taken into account, the student must take more responsibility
for learning; objectives are clear, and grading becomes less arbitrary. The contract plan has the potential to give students freedom of choice in what to learn and how to learn, within an accepted framework. The contract plan has the disadvantage of decreasing social interaction. Also the plan which uses the contract as nothing more than a series of jobs to be completed contributes little to intellectual growth and can diminish learner satisfaction.

Further research could produce more conclusive results concerning the effectiveness of the contract plan as a learning method.
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Appendix A: Pilot Attitude Survey

This is not a test. Your answers will remain anonymous. No names please. Be honest with your answers. Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. For example, the statement might be, "School is boring." If you strongly agree, your answer will look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School is boring.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, if you disagree with that statement, your answer will look like this:

| School is boring.              | 5              | 4     | 3         | 2        | 1                 |

If you have any questions about this survey, please ask the teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I like poetry.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Writing down thoughts and feelings is stupid.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Poetry is fun to read.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Listening to other people read poems is boring.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Poetry is important.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Creative writing does not help me improve my writing.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Reading poetry is relaxing to me.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I dislike putting my feelings into written words.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I admire persons who write poems to earn a living.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Tenth grade English would be a better program without poetry.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I enjoy hearing poetry read out loud by others.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I dislike learning about poetry.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Creative writing is fun.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Poetry is boring to read.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I enjoy writing comparisons of things which are not alike.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I dislike reading poems.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I feel it is useful to study and learn more about poetry.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. The only reason students read poetry is because they have to.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Creative writers are important.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I hate poetry.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I like to write descriptions of people and places.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. People who write poems add nothing of value to the world.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Creative writing is important.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I dislike reading poetry out loud for others to hear.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I enjoy studying poetry.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. People who write down their feelings are dumb.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Poetry is useful.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Poetry is the worst part of studying English.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I enjoy writing down my feelings.</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Poets are weird.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. I like to read poetry out loud for others to hear.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Poetry is the best part of studying English.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. I dislike comparing things which are not alike.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Poetry is interesting.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Poetry is not important.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Creative writing is boring.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. People who like poetry are weird.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. I like writing poems.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix B: Item Analysis of Pilot Attitude

### Survey for Level of Discrimination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements from Pilot Attitude Survey</th>
<th>total pts awarded by the eleven low-scoring students</th>
<th>total pts awarded by the eleven high-scoring students</th>
<th>difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I like poetry.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>25*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Writing down thoughts and feelings is stupid.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Poetry is fun to read.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>26*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Listening to other people read poems is boring.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Poetry is important.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Creative writing does not help me improve my writing.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Reading poetry is relaxing to me.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>22*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I dislike putting my feelings into written words.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I admire persons who write poems to earn a living.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Tenth grade English would be a better program without poetry.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I enjoy hearing poetry read out loud by others.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I dislike learning about poetry.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>28*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Creative writing is fun.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Poetry is boring to read.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>31*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*indicates statement was retained for the final attitude scale because of high discrimination between low-scoring and high-scoring individuals.
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<th>total pts. awarded by the eleven high-scoring students</th>
<th>difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. I enjoy writing comparisons of things which are not alike.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*16. I dislike reading poems.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>22*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*17. I feel it is useful to study and learn more about poetry.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. The only reason students read poetry is because they have to.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Creative writers are important.</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*20. I hate poetry</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>31*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I like to write descriptions of people and places.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. People who write poems add nothing of value to world.</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Creative writing is important.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I dislike reading poetry out loud for others to hear.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*25. I enjoy studying poetry.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>26*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*26. People who write down their feelings are dumb.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>22*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>28</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>51</td>
<td>33*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>27*</td>
</tr>
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<td>31. Poets give me insight about life.</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Poets are weird.</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. I like to read poetry out loud for others to hear.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Poetry is the best part of studying English.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*35. Poetry is a waste of time.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>26*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Creative writing helps me become a better writer.</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. I dislike comparing things which are not alike.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*38. I enjoy reading poems for pleasure.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Writing descriptions of people and places seems like a useless activity to me.</td>
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</tr>
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<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*indicates statement was retained for the final attitude scale because of high discrimination between low-scoring and high-scoring individuals.
Appendix C: Attitude Scale

Listed below are twenty statements about poetry. For each statement indicate how you feel about that statement by circling one of the five numbers.

For example, the statement might be, "School is boring," if you strongly agree, your answer will look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, if you disagree, but not strongly, your answer would look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have any questions about this survey, please ask the teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I like poetry.

2. I feel it is of no value to study poetry.

3. Poetry is fun to read.

4. Poetry is a waste of time.

5. I enjoy reading poems for pleasure.

6. Tenth grade English would be a better program without poetry.

7. Poetry is interesting.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. Listening to other people read poems is boring.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I feel it is useful to study and learn more about poetry.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I hate poetry.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
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Appendix D: Objective Test

Written below are ten short passages. First circle the number of each passage that contains figurative language. Second underline the figurative language in those passages you selected. Third above each figure of speech that you have underlined, write down what kind of figurative language is being used.

Example: \(5\) She is a doll.

1. Down in the drowsy town, the streetlamps yawn and nod.
2. In the grass and the grain, beside the road, and in some places scattered over the road, there were many papers.
3. It seems to me that I am the lost piece of that jigsaw puzzle accidentally fallen into the wrong box.
4. The big white computer devoured the roll of white paper that Mr. Jones put into its dark mouth.
5. Adam didn't really hear the last sentence. His shoulders slumped, his eyes grew misty, and his gaze went to the ground. The smile left his lips as he trudged across the street to his tenement.
6. I am a snowflake, falling silently to earth. One in a million or a billion more.
7. You knew it was time to be careful when Nancy's voice became velvet.
8. When I stepped out into the bright sunlight from the darkness of the movie house, I had only two things on my mind: Paul Newman and a ride home.
9. The yellow fog rubs its back upon the window panes.

10. Her nose looks like a little white onion.

Circle the letter of the best answer.

11. Cliché could best be defined as:

   a) language which shows the speaker's attitude toward himself or his subject matter.
   b) giving human qualities to an object, an animal, or an idea.
   c) the dictionary definition of a word.
   d) a stale, over-used comparison.
   e) a statement that contradicts itself.

12. Personification is:

   a) giving a person the qualities of an object or an idea.
   b) the speaker's attitude toward his subject matter.
   c) the emotional feelings behind a particular word.
   d) a figurative way of speaking.
   e) a short form of poetry.

Test items 13 -- 17 are based on the poem "Wash"

WASH

For seven days it rained that June;
A storm half out to sea kept turning around like a dog trying to settle himself on a rug;
We were the fleas that complained in his hair.

On the eighth day, before I had risen,
My neighbors' clothes had rushed into all the back yards
And lifted up their arms in praise.

From an upstairs window it seemed prehistorical:
Through the sheds and fences and vegetable gardens,
Workshirts and nightgowns, long-soaked in the cellar,

Underpants; striped towels, diapers, child's overalls,
Bibs and black bras throng the sunshine
With hosannas of cotton and halleluiahs of wool.

by John Updike
13. The people in the first stanza
   a) are unhappy.
   b) complain to the dog.
   c) have fleas.
   d) are turned around.
   e) are sitting on the rug.

14. There is a change in the weather in
   a) the first stanza.
   b) the second stanza.
   c) between the second and third stanza.
   d) between the third and fourth stanza.

15. In the second, third, and fourth stanzas the speaker is describing
   a) his idea of heaven.
   b) clothes hung out to dry.
   c) people rushing out to sunbathe
   d) his neighbors' singing and dancing.

16. In the last line the speaker describes what he sees as though it were a
   a) church service.
   b) madhouse.
   c) wash house.
   d) friendly neighborhood.

17. How does the speaker feel about what he sees?
   a) Sad and discouraged.
   b) Pleased and amazed.
   c) Angry and frustrated.
   d) Unconcerned and bored.

Test items 18 and 19 are based on "Dust of Snow."

**Dust of Snow**

The way a crow Shook down on me The dust of snow From a hemlock tree Has given my heart A change of mood And saved some part Of a day I had rued.

by Robert Frost
18. The speaker in this poem seems to feel

   a) annoyed.
   b) angry
   c) sorrowful.
   d) relieved.

19. Which one of the following statements best supports your answer to question #18?

   a) Words like "crow" (line 1), "dust" (line 3) and "tree" (Line 4) show the speaker's feelings.
   b) The picture of the crow is so ridiculous that it must have amused the speaker.
   c) The fact that the speaker mentions his heart (line 5) gives the poem its sentimental tone.
   d) In the second stanza the speaker tells us how he feels.

Each of the following three short passages is followed by two questions. Circle the letter of the best answer.

She has new leaves
After her dead flowers,
Like the little almond tree
Which the frost hurt.

from "New Love" by Richard Aldington

20. In this short passage, "dead flowers" refers to

   a) the heartbreak that a new love can cause.
   b) an unfortunate or unhappy experience that is now past.
   c) the time in the woman's life before she finds love.
   d) a flowering fruit tree in spring.
   e) the joy of dying.

21. The person who wrote these lines probably believes that love is

   a) powerful
   b) amusing
   c) deadly
   d) exasperating
   e) always happy
This is the time when the blackbird opens up her drumfire, streams of soft-nosed dum-dums on the stunned fields.

from "The Black Book" by L. Durrell

22. In this passage, "drumfire" refers to
   a) a gun shot.
   b) the roar of a cannon.
   c) the roll of a snare drum.
   d) the boom of a bass drum.
   e) the sound of the blackbird.

23. Which one of the following best describes the sound suggested in the lines above?
   a) It is repeated several times.
   b) It is simply one of many sounds.
   c) It is uncomfortably loud.
   d) It isn't heard by anyone.
   e) It frightens the birds.

24. In this passage, the moon is a
   a) harvest moon.
   b) pale moon.
   c) thin crescent moon.
   d) full moon.
   e) half moon.

25. The person who wrote this passage seems to feel
   a) jealous.
   b) bewildered
   c) angry
   d) joyous
   e) thoughtful.

Question #26 is based on the poem "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost.
The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

by Robert Frost

26. In the poem "The Road Not Taken," choosing a road becomes a symbol for:

a) the choice between good and evil.
b) unimportant decisions that everyone has to make.
c) making choices about things which look similar but which will result in different experiences.
d) choosing between things which look very different and bring similar experiences.
e) choosing a path in the forest.

Test items 13-25 were borrowed with permission from the following test materials published by Ginn and company, from the series: Responding: Ginn Interrelated Sequence in Literature. Charles Cooper, Diagnostic Tests of Specific Skills, 11, ed. Alan Purves.

Growth Test 9, ed. Alan Purves.
Pretest 7, ed. Alan Purves.
Appendix E: Subjective Test

Describe what you see on page 27 of the book entitled Man in the Poetic Mode to a person who cannot see the picture. Try to capture the feeling of the picture in your description.

Write your description on this page. Use the back side if necessary.
Appendix F: Objective Test--Posttest

The items on the Objective Test--Posttest were identical to the Objective Test used in the Pretest with the exception of the last three items for which the following items were substituted. (See Appendix D: Objective Test for the first twenty-three items on the test.)

Questions 24 and 25 are based on the following passage:

To think to know the country and not know
The hillside on the day the sun lets go
Ten million silver lizards out of snow.

by Robert Frost

24. The "Ten million silver lizards" are

a) snow flakes.
b) melting water.
c) light reflected off snow.
d) snowbanks sparkling in the sunlight.
e) tree roots.

25. How does the speaker seem to feel about the scene he is describing?

a) He is saddened by what he sees.
b) He dislikes what he sees.
c) He fears what he sees.
d) He is indifferent to what he sees.
e) He likes what he sees.

Question 26 is based on the following poem.

The Brain Within Its Groove

The brain within its groove
Runs evenly and true;
But let a splinter swerve,
'Twere easier for you

To put a current back
When floods have slit the hills,
And scooped a turnpike for themselves,
And trodden out the mills!

by Emily Dickinson
26. In the above poem what symbolic meaning might be associated with "mills"?

a) Forces that regulate our lives.
b) Destruction in our lives.
c) Evil forces in life.
d) Independence and freedom.
e) Choices in life.
Appendix G: Raw Data of Test Results

Scores for Control Group*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude Scale</th>
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<th>Subjective Test</th>
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*Scores should be read vertically. There is no correlation when scores are read horizontally.
Scores for Experimental Group*

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</table>

*Scores should be read vertically. There is no correlation when scores are read horizontally.
Appendix H: Sample Contract Unit

Unit I

Imagery

This first unit will begin Tuesday, April 22, and end Tuesday, May 6. The unit test will be given Tuesday, May 6. You may take the unit test earlier if you feel you are ready. For this unit, Exercises #10 and #11 have deadlines--Monday, April 28 for #10 and Monday, May 5, for #11. You may do them any time before those dates but they MUST be completed by those deadlines. All work for the unit must be completed by Tuesday, May. You will be penalized for work handed in after that date.

Read the minimum requirements for a grade of C. Look over some of the exercises to get an idea what they are like. If you wish to earn an A or a B, read the guidelines. Then write your name and your intentions on a sheet of paper to be given to me on Tuesday, April 22.

C (70--79)

1. Read introduction, listen to lectures.
2. Answer review questions, exercise #1.
3. List images, distinguish between showing and telling, exercise #2.
4. Write two of your own images, exercise #3.
5. Read five of the poems listed. For each poem answer the questions given, exercise #4.
6. Write words to describe touch, a "touch inventory," exercise #5.

7. A sight inventory, exercise #6.

8. Worksheet on the difference between concrete and abstract nouns, exercise #7.

9. Worksheet on specific and general nouns, exercise #8.

10. Complete two sensory recordings, exercises #10 and #11. (See deadlines.)

11. Verbs in your writing, exercise #9.

12. Take part in class discussions.

13. The last minimum requirement is a grade of at least 70% on the unit test. If you do not earn 70% on the test, you may study and take the test over, but this second time you must earn at least 80% for a C.

The above are minimum requirements. If you wish to earn a higher grade, read the following.

B (80--89)
Complete all the minimum requirements (same as those for a C) and add the following:

2 additional poems (same list as exercise #4) 
at least one extra activity (list is at the end of the unit) 
80% on unit test (or 90% if taken over)

A (90--100)
Complete all the minimum requirements (same as those for a C) and add the following:

4 additional poems (same list as exercise #4) 
2 extra writing activities from list at end of the unit. 
at least one piece of creative writing of your own design. 
90% on unit test (95% if taken over)

Now decide what grade you want to work for and write out your intentions for me to see and approve.
Unit I

Imagery

Imagine for dessert you had a three-layered nut-and-cream-covered hot fudge sundae. Perhaps someone asks what it was like. Or you are swimming in fresh, clear, cool water and someone from the shore calls out, "How does it feel?" Or a friend asks you what Drama Club is like, or playing baseball, or marching in the band. How do you communicate these experiences?

First, forget all the adjectives you had lined up: fantastic, incredible, terrific and so on. They don't describe anything. There is only one way really for you to communicate to the other person what your experience feels like: by using a number of sharp, clear experiences that resemble the experience you are trying to describe, and saying that this experience is a combination of those.

In other words, you must search for words that will paint a picture in your friend's mind, or leave a taste in your friend's mouth. You will want to use imagery. Imagery is language that allows the reader (or listener) to see, to hear, to touch, to smell, to taste the object or experience you are trying to show. (We often think of imagery as applying to the sense of sight, but actually imagery involves all the senses.) When you use imagery, you SHOW something, instead of TELLING ABOUT it.
Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>TELLING</strong></th>
<th><strong>SHOWING</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My lunch was good.</td>
<td>My lunch consisted of a pizza thick with tomato sauce, melted cheese, pepperoni and mushrooms on a thin crunchy crust.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My girlfriend is cute.</td>
<td>My girlfriend has shoulder length blonde hair, shiny and straight. Her eyes are clear blue. Her nose is small and delicate; dimples accent her mouth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter is cold.</td>
<td>Winter brings icicles clinging to the outside of my bedroom window, frosting the glass like down on a duck.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You may ask, "What's the difference?" If you really want to communicate to your friend what an object or experience or person is really like so that your friend can see, hear, touch, taste, or smell, then imagery is the only way to do it. Telling about will not communicate the experience to your friend in the same way as showing. Imagery allows your friend to **feel**. And feeling is what poetry is all about. (Another thing imagery does is that it allows your friend to make up his mind for himself. You may say your girlfriend or boyfriend is cute; without a description your friend can imagine anything he likes. When you use words that allow your friend to see for himself, then he can decide for himself if your girlfriend or boyfriend is really cute, according to what "cute" means to him or her.) The key to imagery is **FEELING**. When I say my lunch is good, you can imagine anything you want, and it is likely you do not start
to salivate. If I describe my lunch so that you can see, smell, and taste it, then it is possible for you to feel. If you are hungry and like that food, you may feel saliva in your mouth. If you are stuffed and hate pizza, you may feel nauseated! In any case, imagery allows the reader to feel. Imagery communicates in a different way than telling about something.

For additional information about imagery you may want to check in some books. Listed below are the titles of some books that contain information and examples about imagery.

- Sound and Sense, pp. 45-52.
- Beowulf to Beatles, pp. 57-77.
- Writing Incredibly Short Plays, Poems, Stories, pp. 141-156.

**Exercise #1:** Review questions

1. What is imagery?

2. What is the difference between language that "shows" and language that "tells about" something?

3. Write your own example of "showing" and "telling about" the same thing.

4. When is it important for people to use imagery?

5. What purpose does imagery serve for a poet?

**Exercise #2**

Part I: Distinguish the following passages as primarily SHOWING or TELLING.

1. The classroom was in complete disarray.
2. The soldier staggered into the room and bowed politely.

3. On both sides of the trail, broken husks of wagons and the bleached bones of the oxen which had pulled them lay abandoned.

4. The sky was bright red.

5. My mother was furious with me!

6. The wings of the butterfly were dotted with blue and yellow eyes and lined with black.

7. The bug was ugly.

8. He really does know how to dress!

9. What a different world I knew from that of my ancestors!

Part II: Underline the images in the following passages.

A grimy little door at the very top of the stairs stood ajar. A very poor-looking room about ten paces long was lighted by a candle-end; the whole of it was visible from the entrance. It was all in disorder, littered up with rags of all sorts, especially children's garments. Across the furthest corner was stretched a ragged sheet. Behind it probably was the bed. There was nothing in the room except two chairs and a sofa covered with American leather, full of holes, before which stood an old deal kitchen table unpainted and uncovered. At the edge of the table stood a smouldering tallow-candle in an iron candlestick.

(From Crime and Punishment)

Dogs often wander into the classrooms at schools, and always cause an uproar. Kids cannot contain themselves when dogs appear in the midst of Egypt lesson, for what reason no one seems to know. Why couldn't they, the kids, just let the dog be in the class, wandering around, sniffing here and licking a few hands there, quietly, moseying about in the style of dogs while the class continued with the most important part of the lesson about Egypt? But no, they can't. They got to rush the dog, they got to pick him up and drop him, they got to offer the dog candy and pieces of sandwich, they got to yell and scream and act like they never saw
any dog before in their whole lives.

(from How to Survive in Your Native Land)

Lincoln Park in the center of town may once have been as inviting and pleasant as the square around a rural county courthouse, but all of that is changed today. Whether it's because there are too many people for the little space, because people are too careless, or because taxes no longer will support the care that such a park requires, Lincoln Park has changed. It's no longer inviting. It's no longer safe. It's no longer comfortable. It's crowded, dirty, littered, and dangerous.

(from American Chronicle)

The red sun sinks low
Beyond a dead tree clutching
An old eagle's nest.

Boncho

A cautious crow clings
To a bare bough, silently
Watching the sun set.

Basho

Exercise #3 Writing your own images

Try as many as you like; minimum is two. Compare your images with those of other people in the class.

On a separate sheet of paper, try making two images of your own. Use one of the topics below or one of your own. Write your images so your reader can "see" them. Don't tell about, SHOW! Put your images in three lines like the poems in exercise #2, if you want to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a worm on a sidewalk</th>
<th>buds on a tree</th>
<th>confetti in the air</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a spring rain</td>
<td>a sunrise</td>
<td>fireworks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moving dark clouds</td>
<td>a broken window</td>
<td>your own choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spring flowers</td>
<td>lightning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise #4

Read five of the poems from the two lists below. For each poem answer the following questions.

1) Make a list of the images in the poem.

2) Does the imagery appeal to more than one sense? Which senses does the imagery appeal to?

3) Why did the poet use those images; what is he trying to communicate to you?

Poems from the book Man in the Poetic Mode

"Harlem" p. 5
"River Apples" p. 25
"Evans" p. 26
"The Market Man" p. 29
"The Old Pilot" p. 35
"Hand in Clasped Hand" p. 45
"Memory" p. 74
"Lines Written in Time of Peace" p. 89
"Boot Cellar" p. 101

Poems from the book Some Haystacks Don't Even Have Any Needle

"From a 19th Century Kansas Painter's Notebook" p. 36
"Corner" p. 39
"Fast Run in the Junkyard" p. 43
"Two Friends" p. 59
"Traveling Through the Dark" p. 72
"The Man in the Dead Machine" p. 96
"Sunday" p. 101
"Lies" p. 106
"On Hardscrabble Mountain" p. 107
"The Coming of the Plague" p. 109

Exercise #5 Touch Inventory¹

Your classroom is a laboratory. It contains literally

dozens of different kinds of substances. You can feel the differences among them.

Working in teams of two or three people, make an inventory of your sense impressions. Each team must complete at least eight of the following ten activities and should end with at least forty different words. You may use dictionaries, thesauruses, dictionaries of antonyms and synonyms. Make an effort to use words which really describe WHAT IT FEELS LIKE.

Example: 1. Put your hand in water running from a faucet. Describe the feel of the water on your hand. (5 words)
   a) wet
   b) comforting
   c) smooth
   d) silky
   e) refreshing

Ready? Go!

1. Place your hand on the floor at least 30 seconds. How does the floor feel to your hand? (5 words)

2. How does the floor feel to your bare feet? (Take off your shoes and socks and try it!) (5 words)

3. Imagine that the floor is a living substance. How would your foot feel to it? (5 words)

4. Go to a window. Feel the window pane with the back of your hand. Describe the feel of the glass. (5 words)

5. Go to the classroom door and grasp the door knob. Describe what it makes you think of or how it makes you feel. (5 words)

6. Go to the blackboard. Rub it with your hand. Feel the chalk. Feel the board eraser. Describe the different textures of these three objects. (5 words total)

7. Find 5 different kinds of hair. For each person's hair that you examine, try to find a word to describe the feel of it alone. (This exercise is not intended to insult anyone—if you think you might, forget it. Pick another exercise instead.)

8. Look for 5 kinds of garments in the room. Examine the material of each closely. Write 5 different words to describe their textures.
9. Go to the fireplace. Feel the bricks. (5 words)

10. Go to a desk. Rub your hand across the surface. (5 words.)

Now compare your list with other classmates (or lists from the teacher).

Exercise #6 Sight Inventory

Seeing is a highly selective process. Each of us sees from his own point of view and each of us tends to assume that others see things as we do (or at least we believe that they ought to). Keep in mind when you are trying to show an object, a place, or an experience--your reader will see what you allow him to see.

If I asked you to go look out the classroom window for about 30 seconds you would see various things. Many things you would not notice. You probably would not notice the garbage cans. But what if you were a custodian? When you looked out the window, what would you most likely see if you were:

- the school principal
- a student wanting to skip out
- a custodian
- depressed
- a nurse
- a car salesman

The rest of this lesson will be completed with slides in class on Tuesday, April 29. Make a special effort to be present. If you are absent that day, I will give you an alternate lesson to complete this part of the sight inventory.

Exercise #7 Concrete and Abstract Nouns

A concrete noun names an object that can be perceived by the senses. When we hear or read a concrete noun like "dog" we can visualize what it refers to quite easily. But

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abstract nouns have less definite referents, things the word refers to. An abstract noun names a quality that an object can have but that cannot be detached so that it has a separate existence from that object. For instance, the abstract noun "happiness" does not have a referent that we can visualize; it does not name something that we can see or hear or feel or touch. It does not have an independent existence. Someone or something has to be happy if "happiness" is to exist. Once we make the connection between an abstract noun and a concrete one, then we can easily visualize the result: "Happiness is a warm puppy." Concrete nouns are more forceful than abstract nouns.

Abstract words are essential to our language. We need words like "happiness," "beauty," "honor," "truth," "goodness," "glory," "fear," "hope," "love." But we have to exercise restraint in using them in our writing. Because abstract nouns are not specific "picture-making" words, they are not precise. The overuse of them makes for vagueness and fuzziness in our writing. Consider, for example, the following sentence:

Objective consideration of the achievement witnessed here today compels the conclusion that posterity will remember with pride and honor the glory that has accrued to our nation.

Does it make sense to you after the first reading? Does it paint a vivid picture in your mind's eye? Would this statement live on as a memorable quotation? What makes it so obscure? This statement could have been made by Neil Armstrong when he landed on the moon. Fortunately it wasn't. What did he say. Why was his statement so much better than the one quoted above?

Some writers try to cover their lack of ideas by using vague, abstract nouns. There are, however, times when we must use abstract nouns. Consider, for example, the following excerpt from John F. Kennedy's inaugural address (1961):

In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility; I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it, and the glow
from that fire can truly light the world.
And so, my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.

1. List the abstract nouns that John Kennedy has used in this passage. (You may underline.)

2. Why are they more suitable in this situation than corresponding concrete nouns?

3. For what specific kinds of writing (and speaking) would the use of abstract terms be more appropriate?

Exercise #7  Concrete and Abstract Nouns

In each of the following exercises an abstract sentence is left unfinished. In your answers, finish each sentence using concrete words or phrases. Each unfinished sentence should call to your mind many different ideas or images.

Use words and phrases that say exactly what you mean. Detailed and concrete words and phrases make the most interesting and successful images.

Freedom is ............ (5 images)
Loneliness is ..........
Happiness is ..........
Spring is .............
Peace is .............
Fear is ...............
Anger is .............
Jealousy is ...........

Example:

Happiness is walking barefoot in a field of fresh green clover, smelling the clean summer air and feeling the hot summer sun.
Exercise #8  General and Specific Nouns

Most people have experienced the frustrating problem of wanting to say or write down an idea, but not being able to find exactly the word they are looking for to express that idea: "I know what I want to say, but ..." Many people, as a result of this dilemma, tend to overuse words like "thing" to express a variety of ideas. People who do not know the names of specific items tend to use meaningless nouns. Consider, for instance, the driver who uses nouns like "thing-umajig," "whataycallit," "doodad," "what'm it's-name" when trying to describe to a mechanic the trouble with the family car. As nouns, these words are useless because they do not name or refer to anything specific.

The noun "Mona Lisa," for instance, refers to one particular object—a painting by Leonardo daVinci. We say the "Mona Lisa" is a specific noun because it has only one referent. But the noun "painting" is much more general than "Mona Lisa." It has many referents and can be used to refer to a vast number of works. Consequently, we call "painting" a general noun. Proper nouns, like "Mona Lisa," are the most specific nouns in our language.

Although we use the terms general and specific to refer to nouns, we cannot absolutely separate all the nouns in our language into either of these categories. It is a matter of degree. We say that some nouns are more specific or more general than others.

For example:  Most general  animal  
               quadruped  
               dog  
               collie  

                  Most specific  Lassie

Arrange the following words in order from the most general to the most specific:

male, American citizen, F. D. Roosevelt, Democrat,  
human, U.S. President, politician

Try making your own language ladders for each of the following words. The words may occur anywhere on the ladder. Make your ladders as long as you wish, but be sure that each is at least five words long.

3Ronald Shephard and Alan Coman, p. 50.
Concentrate on using specific nouns in your own writing. Obviously there is no "rule" that says the specific noun is always better than the general. It depends on the nature of the piece of writing. Writing can be too specific: an excess of details and proper nouns can create a boring and cluttered impression. But most inexperienced writers tend to use words that are flabby and imprecise. One remedy for this problem is to concentrate on being as specific as possible in your writing.

Rewrite the following sentences using specific nouns to replace the general nouns.

1. I washed the clothes.
2. I see the car.
3. He ate the sandwich.
4. The boy climbed the tree.

Exercise #2  Verbs in Your Writing

We have seen the importance of using concrete and specific nouns in our everyday writing. But forceful and vigorous nouns alone are not enough: they must be combined with the right verb, or their effect will be lost.

A verb is a valuable tool in helping you construct any piece of writing. Develop the habit of questioning the verbs you use in your own writing. Consider the following example. You are describing for your school newspaper the recent appearance of a popular singing star. You write, "She went on stage as the band played her theme song." Is the verb "went" really effective? Does it convey any information other than the fact that she went through some physical movements which resulted in her presence on stage? Does it create a picture for your reader in his "mind's eye"? Why are the following alternatives preferable?

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4Ronald Shephard and Alan Coman, p. 57.
Complete the following activities.

I. Imagine that you are a junior reporter for a newspaper. Your editor decides that your writing is rather dull. He suggests that you learn how to use vivid verbs as a possible way of injecting some fresh blood into your tired prose. He gives you the following list of synonyms of common verbs and asks you to write one sentence for each. (If you are not sure of the meaning of any word, check it in a good dictionary.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dull</th>
<th>Vivid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She went on stage</td>
<td>She glided on stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>floated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stumbled</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weaved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pranced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bounced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slithered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RUN: sprint, bound, gallop, spurt, rush, dart, bolt, scamper, hasten, scurry

SHOUT: call, yell, bellow, roar, scream, shriek, screech, exclaim

WALK: stroll, saunter, shuffle, stride, trudge, lumber, strut, mince, flounce, amble

II. In the following activity you are presented with various writing situations. In each case you are given the necessary details and supplied with a point of view. An example sentence containing a dull, colorless verb is presented. Write three improved sentences for each example using more vigorous, colorful verbs.

Example: You are attending a party with your classmates. A girl whom you dislike enters as if she expects deafening applause.

Dull: Stella came into the room.
Improved: Stella slithered into the room.
Stella pranced into the room.
Stella glided into the room.

1. You are attending an exciting hockey game and are amazed at the speed of one of the players.

Dull: Dave Keon skated the length of the ice.
Improved: (three)
2. You are listening to your ex-girlfriend's reactions after you have just told her that you have a new girlfriend. You are not sympathetic.

   Dull: She was crying very loudly.
   Improved: (Three)

3. You wake up one morning feeling very happy. The sun is shining brightly through your window and the smell of spring is in the air. You hear the robins outside.

   Dull: The robins were singing.
   Improved: (Three)

4. You have been summoned to the principal's office to explain your frequent absences from school.

   Dull: The principal spoke to me.
   Improved: (three)

III. Whether or not you are a sports fan, you have surely heard a radio or TV sports announcer giving the scores of the games played that night. To avoid simply reading a long dull list of scores, announcers often try to use more vivid verbs than beat or defeated. For example, instead of saying, "The Red Wings beat the Bruins 8-2," they might say, "The Red Wings trounced the Bruins 8-2." If the Blues beat the Flyers by a close score of 3-2, they might say that the Blues edged out the Flyers 3-2. Imagine that you are an imaginative sports announcer who has the following list of hockey scores to read. Use a variety of verbs to report these scores. Make use of your thesaurus if necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maple Leafs</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kings</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruins</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Stars</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seals</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadiens</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flyers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Hawks</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabres</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Wings</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blues</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canucks</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penguins</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. Read the following poems. Make a list of the verbs used in these poems.

"The Double Play" p. 36, Man
"Hazardous Occupations" p. 44, Man
"The Passer" p. 77, Haystacks
Exercise #10  Sensory Recording

This exercise must be finished no later than Monday, April 28, at the beginning of class.

Choose any place away from school that you would like. Go to that place with paper and pencil. For fifteen minutes write down what you hear, see, and smell there. Think of what you write as notes for yourself later. These notes will not be graded but you will need them for another assignment. Bring them to class. Don't worry about spelling or correct sentences in these notes; write in whatever way allows you to capture on paper what you observe at that place. You may also include your thoughts and feelings about what you observe. You may also want to say what things look, sound, or smell like. Remember—15 minutes only.

Exercise #11  Sensory Recording

This exercise must be finished no later than Monday, May 5, at the beginning of class.

Do as you did in your first "sensory recording," but this time change either the time or the place. If you went to an indoor place before, go somewhere outdoors now. If you went to an active place, go now to a still place. If there were no people where you went before, go where there will be people. Or you may return to the same place you went before, but go at a very different time of day, or when the weather is very different. Remember that you are to take notes of what you observe, see, hear, and smell and of what thoughts and feelings you may have about what you observe. If you have found a better way of taking notes since last time, use the new way. Again time yourself—15 minutes only.

Unit I  Imagery  Extra Activities

1. Describe some ordinary object—a coin or a piece of

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6Ibid., p. 188.
fruit, or anything you want. Note the shape, color, smell, and other characteristics. Avoid general, abstract nouns. Use specific, concrete words to "show" the object.

2. Take the same object in activity #1. Let's say you chose your bike. Now describe that object through the eyes of someone else—perhaps a young boy who would like to own a bike like yours, or an old man who remembers bike riding in his youth—or a tough hood who wants to steal your bike. How would one of those persons describe your bike? (or any other object you chose) Try to show the different feelings of the person. Again use specific, concrete imagery.

3. Play some music, without lyrics, that means a great deal to you. Jot down images that come into your mind while listening to the music.

4. While music is playing, answer the question, "What am I?" (It is not necessary to use music with this exercise, but music may help enrich your imagination.)

5. Record a dream (or any number of dreams) as precisely as you can remember. If you can remember a dream from the past, write it out. List the images contained in the dream.

6. Describe a frightening experience. Use imagery so that your reader can see, hear, smell. Remember imagery will allow your reader to feel the fright.

7. Take an experience that you remember very well from your past. Try to describe that experience.

8. Describe the most horrible meal you can think of. Use words to picture the food, the smell, the texture.

9. Imagine a monster is preparing to attack you. What does he look like? smell like? sound like? Describe his movements.

10. Describe your favorite sport. Use images.

11. You are shopping. You see an outfit that you must have! Why? What does it look like? feel like? What would you look like in that outfit?

12. Describe the ocean.

13. Describe the car you would like to own someday.

14. Practice writing images of your own.