HOW STUDENTS MAKE MEANING OF THEIR LEARNING EXPERIENCES THROUGH SELF-REFLECTION

A PLAN B PAPER SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION AND CURRICULUM STUDIES, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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How Students Make Meaning of Their Learning Experiences

Through Self-Reflection

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May 2006
Dedications

This paper is dedicated to my two daughters, Gabrielle and Maile Kawasaki

And to my husband and best friend Jason
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

I first became interested in self-reflection when I took Dr. Kathryn Au's course, Literacy Assessment II. In that class, I designed a portfolio assessment system, and implemented a part of it in a second grade classroom at an elementary school on the Wai'anae Coast in Spring 2005. That first day, I spent several hours visiting the classroom I was to do my project in; observing the children, talking with the classroom teacher, and doing a read aloud before leaving.

During the discussion with the classroom teacher, I learned important information about the students' home lives, environments they lived in, and the community they lived in. Out of her 27 students, the teacher had only met three of the parents. Many students didn't receive a lot of support at home, and often didn't complete their homework.

The teacher said that by middle school, many children would "fall through the cracks of the system", and would not be helped. This teacher had grown up in the area, and still lived on the coast.

I left feeling overwhelmed. I don't want to say that all of the students were in the same situation, but many were, according to the classroom teacher.

I returned to the classroom the following day. As I walked in, I heard some of the students say, "She came back!" Needless to say, I grew very fond of
the entire class, not just the small group of four students I was to work with. I worked with the students from March until June. These students had a tremendous impact on me.

Although my task was to implement a portion of my portfolio assessment system, another goal became to work with the students on developing a sense of ownership in literacy. I viewed this as a means the students could use to help themselves get ahead in life, no matter what their circumstances were.

After meeting the students, and observing them in their classroom environment, I came up with interview questions such as what their favorite books were that their teacher had read to them and why. I asked them to tell me about things they were interested in. I wanted their interests to be the springboard for literacy topics we could then work on. At that moment, I saw students developing a sense of ownership in their work as being a key factor in them not falling through the cracks of the system.

During this time, I was enrolled in Dr. Andrea Barlett's Children's Literature in Elementary Curriculum course, EDCS 603, and my task was to plan and implement a critical literacy unit. I used the information the students had shared in their interviews about the books that interested them, and planned a critical literacy unit with the students' interests in mind. As I worked on both the critical literacy unit with the students, and on implementing portfolios, I incorporated student self-assessment and peer-assessment. Gradually, I began to see how students could explain their thinking about why they chose a particular piece for their portfolios. One second grader wrote, "I chose this piece for my portfolio,
because I want my mom and dad to see how pretty I draw.” This made her thinking more visible to me, showing me that she valued what her parents thought about her work. I saw too how peer-assessment could help the student with self-assessment (self-evaluation), helping them to be better able to look at their own work reflectively, after having assessed someone else's work using a rubric.

Although I initially viewed self-reflection as a component of portfolio assessment, I began to see that it actually played a much bigger role, a leading role. Self-reflection can be used to make the learning and thinking processes a child goes through more visible to himself/herself and to the teacher. Students who are able to self-reflect can then learn to take an active role in thinking about their learning and setting goals for themselves. What I learned from these students set the foundation for my research focus, self-reflection.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Teacher Self-Reflection

If you ask a teacher what it is to be self-reflective, you may get a lot of different answers and perceptions, depending on his/her frame of reference (Freese, 1999, p. 896; Loughran, 2002, p. 33). Dewey defined reflection as "turning a subject over in the mind and giving it serious and consecutive consideration, then acting in a deliberate and intentional manner" (as cited in Freese, 1999, p. 896).

Rogers (2002) offers a framework of reflection that she refers to as a reflective cycle. This is how it works. "Teachers deliberately slow down their thinking so that they can think about what is, rather than what they wish were so, and then shift the weight of that thinking from their own teaching to their students' learning" (p. 231). This thinking grows out of Dewey's original work on reflection, which outlined a process of "extended inquiry that slows down teachers' thinking processes and asks them to observe carefully and describe in detail, selected situations within the classroom," followed by deciding on the best course of action (as cited by Freese, 1999, p. 896).

Rogers (2002) suggests that when this framework is put into practice, there is a shift in teachers' thinking, resulting in the realization that "This isn't about me!" (p. 231). She says that it is about the teacher and her teaching, but only as it stands in relation to the students and their learning. I relate this concept to realizing as a teacher that if the students are misbehaving, it is up to
the teacher to reflect on what he/she is doing that may be causing or allowing the misbehavior to occur.

Loughran (2002) cites an example of a student teacher whose class is disinterested in learning. If the student teacher is to perceive it as the students' problem, there would be little incentive for him/her to address the problem, but if she/he sees that it could be a result of the manner of teaching, and therefore inside of her/his control, a reflection on teaching practices and subsequent adjustment or change in the teaching would be warranted.

Schon (1983) expanded on Dewey's ideas on reflection. Schon suggests there is a distinction between 'reflection on action' and 'reflection in action.' 'Reflection in action' refers to you, the teacher, consciously thinking about your teaching in the moment you are teaching. 'Reflection on action' refers to planning out your lesson before you teach it, as well as reflecting on your lesson after you teach it (p. 54).

As cited by Freese (1999), Loughran developed a 3-part reflective framework, designed to help preservice teachers think about their teaching. Freese modeled this reflective framework at a seminar for preservice and mentor teachers. Realizing it was difficult to observe the act of reflection, she decided to verbalize her thinking as she was teaching, explaining what she planned to teach, why she was doing it, and any changes she was making in her teaching in her response to the learning content (p. 898). Freese (1999) suggested that this thinking aloud about her teaching served as a commentary regarding her decision-making, and that by allowing the preservice and mentor teachers to
hear this, they might be able to understand what she anticipated would happen in her lesson (anticipatory reflection), what was going through her mind as she was making on the spot decisions while teaching (contemporaneous reflection), and what her thoughts were after she taught the lesson (retrospective reflection).

Loughran (2002) examines the value of reflection as a meaningful way to approach learning about teaching. He says reflection places an emphasis on learning through questioning and investigation to lead to a development of understanding. What does this mean? Loughran (2002) says “Experience alone doesn’t lead to learning; reflection on experience is essential” (p. 34). If for example the focus on a student teacher is genuinely as a learner, then it is the learner’s ability to analyze and make meaning from experience that matters most – as opposed to a mentor teacher telling him/her what they should know (Loughran, 2002)

Teachers at the well-known Reggio Schools in Italy use documentation to make children’s learning visible. The act of documenting “slows teachers’ (thinking) down, encouraging them to reflect on and understand the deeper meaning and value of a learning experience. It forces them to compare what they thought they would observe to what really went on, and informs their decisions about where to go next” (Barchi, Barzozzi, Cagliari, Flippini, Gambetti, Giudichi, et al. 2001, p. 289).

“Instead of describing the experiences, the view of documentation involves a deeper analysis of the purposes behind it, and behind the related learning processes and products. Since it is often through discussion with others that we
become clearer about our beliefs and values, collaboration with colleagues becomes a particularly significant part of the project” (Barchi, et al., 2001, p. 289).

**Student Self-Reflection**

When students practice self-reflection, it provides the teacher with the “opportunity to make visible to them…. their thinking” (Showler, 2000, p. 4.) Self-reflection can be an important tool in “helping students become self-directed learners” (Valencia, 1998, p. 174). Teachers have to create the opportunities for students to practice thinking more deeply about their learning. According to Valencia (1998), it isn’t merely the act of having students reflect on pieces that will go into the students’ portfolios that will result in students having greater insights and knowledge. These responses can be “superficial and flat.” Practicing reflection in this way did not produce students who took responsibility for their learning (p. 177).

She writes, “students could not be expected to engage in a kind of thinking they had not learned, practiced, or valued” (p. 177). She realized she needed to more actively teach and provide meaningful contexts for students to practice self-reflection.

She further states, “Self-reflection and self-evaluation are essential elements of education” (Valencia, 1998, p. 174). “Students gain a sense of voice, power, responsibility, and see learning as within their control” (p. 175). They develop a sense of ownership in their work, and are more likely to set, and
accomplish learning goals when they are encouraged to think metacognitively (Valencia, 1998).
Chapter 3

Fall 2005 Pilot Study

My plan B study consists of two studies; my pilot study which was done in Fall 2005, and my Plan B project which I implemented in Spring 2006. I will elaborate on my pilot study first.

In the Fall of 2005, I implemented a pilot study at the suggestion of Dr. Freese in whose EDCS 667 class I was enrolled. This study was conducted with a small group of fifth grade students with parental consent at an elementary school in the Leeward District. Although I was very much interested in students' abilities to self-reflect and how this relates to their learning, I had not yet arrived at my research question. Instead of having one question, I had many.

Dr. Freese suggested having the students initially reflect on their lives and personal thoughts regarding themselves, so that they become aware of their own thinking. One day, after reading a story to my small group of fifth grade students and having them reflect and make personal connections, something happened that brought me to my research question. A student did a great job making connections to the book I had read, and a movie he had seen. I then asked him if the story had reminded him of something more personal. He proceeded to tell me about the time he had been told to put his grandpa's medicine in the refrigerator, but had instead left the medicine out overnight. The next day, it was discovered that the medicine had spoiled. He had tears in his eyes as he told me this, and I asked him what he would do next time. He said, next time he would
listen. It was obvious that he was reliving this very emotional moment by sharing it with me.

This made me go home and write in my journal, “So Troy can self-reflect, now what? How can I help him so that he can use self-reflection in ways that will be useful to him?” I now had my research question, ‘How do students make meaning of their learning experiences through self-reflection?’ This came about as a result of this profound moment with my student, conversations with my advisor and using the ‘wonderings’ strategy of asking questions.

Data Sources

The study included the following data sources:

- Anecdotal records and journal reflections – I took observational notes as I worked with the students, then went home and typed up my notes and wrote a reflection evaluation after each lesson, a form of an ethnographic observational technique called notetaking/notemaking. (Frank, 1999)

- Interviews – I did two interviews with the students. The first interview focus was to see what kinds of things the students were interested in learning about. This helped to get to know them, and provide opportunities for them to read about things they were interested in. This interview was done on September 6, 2005.

The second interview, done on November 23, 2005, provided information on their learning experiences in school and what motivated the students. I
was interested to see if the students felt an ownership in learning and what role their parents played in providing support (Valencia, 1998, p. 175).

- **Student journals** -- I sometimes worked with students as they did reflections on their usual classroom activities. I collected these student writings only if I had worked with the student on it and was familiar with the context, and it was pertinent to my study.

- **Student art work and reflective writing pieces** -- I had the students do art work, then had them write a piece to go along with their art work. We then discussed their writing to gain a deeper insight into their thinking.

- **Classroom Teacher Observations and Input** -- I spoke with the teacher often on her observations and knowledge of the students' attitudes, work habits and of their home environments. I shared my insights of the students and their work with her as well.

**Student Experience One: Self-Portrait and Reflection on Self**

I decided to have the students do a self portrait as an initial assessment, to see how they viewed themselves. Keeping in mind Dr. Freese's suggestion of having the students reflect on their lives and personal thoughts, I had the students do a poem to go with their portraits. I showed the students examples
of the poem, "Where I'm From" (Christensen, 2000, p. 18) and gave them a choice of doing a poem about, "Where I'm From," or "Where I'm Going." I saw the "Where I'm From" poem as being a self-reflective piece, and the "Where I'm Going" poem as being a form of goal-setting in that the students were thinking about future implications in their lives.

One of the boys, Alex, who often came to school tired and who didn't have very much parental support (according to his classroom teacher), wrote about something he loved, football. I found that his intrinsic feelings about the sport, were clear. He wrote, "My position is wide receiver, because I can catch really good.....that's why I love football. It will help me... by running fast, tackling and I can catch the ball with one hand." He showed a love of the sport and pride in his physical abilities.

I began to see that although the reflections made the students' thinking more visible to me, a more thoughtful look into the students' writing could make their thinking more visible to the students. I would do this by taking time to first reflect on what the students wrote and taking the writing pieces back to the students soon after, to discuss certain points and obtain clarification. I encouraged them to think more deeply about why they said what they did, why they think the way they do, and what they think influences them. I wanted to thereby help the students gain greater insight into their own thinking. Following is an example of one student's writing.

One of the boys, Troy, wrote on "Where I'm Going." He began by writing that he would be a professional basketball player and make lots of money. He
would buy a mansion. But as he continued, two themes emerged. One was the reason why he wanted to make a lot of money. It was so he could buy his family anything they needed to make them happy, such as “toys for the children.” The second theme in his writing showed a strong sense of his views on family, and what you do when you have a family.

Teacher Reflection and Conferencing

I reflected on what Troy had written, then later conferenced with him. In our conference, he was able to make his thinking even more clear to me when I asked him, “Why do you want to be rich?” His reply was personal and directly had to do with his parents’ previous financial situation (bills were not able to be paid.) However, in the present the family is doing better financially, and he sees that bills are paid and he is able to have things he wants.

He also mentioned that he wanted to “raise a good family”. When I asked him to clarify his thoughts, he said he wanted to raise a good family, so they “won’t be on drugs, and won’t have trouble.” He had eloquently shared his feelings about why he felt the way he did about money and family. His comments showed an awareness of family issues that he had observed.

Student Experience Two: Drawing and Reflection on Drawing

I had the students ‘spotlight’ a part of their previous writing piece they would like to draw about. They were to focus specifically on a particular passage or idea. After drawing, I had the students write about the drawing.
The students were given an art lesson on the use of a craypas technique in which two light colors are used side by side to cover the drawing paper. The light colors are then completely washed over with a darker color. The students were instructed to use a somewhat sharp point, such as the tip of a paper clip, to draw their pictures on this shading.

*Think Aloud and Discussion*

As time was of the essence, I decided to try something different. Instead of conferencing with the students after their writing, I talked with them as they wrote their piece. The students used the think out loud strategy when deciding what to write. For example as Alex was writing about wanting to play high school football, I asked if he needed to get good grades in order to play. He tied the two ideas in together and wanted clarification. Troy, who also wrote about football, tried to decide out loud what team he wanted to play for. He decided he would play for the "junkest" football team, because "I like helping out losing teams". He said he has done this before, choosing to play with the lowest scoring soccer team, and he agreed to be on that team, so that he could help them get better.

I got to see the students' thinking processes they went through when they wrote their particular piece. As Dr. Kathryn Au once said in a lecture, the comprehension processes a student goes through, (what the student understands in order to get to the product), are equally as valuable as the product itself. I got a glimpse of some of the strategies the students used in the writing process of this particular writing piece.
Key Findings From Fall 2005 Pilot Study

The discussion aspects of reflection between teacher and student are very important to the process of making students thinking more visible.

Greeley (2000) wrote “We really don’t know what is going on in those young heads……I discover the real depth of their learning when I loosen the reins and create space for them to ponder, play and create their own response”. I found something similar going on with my students.

Discussion while the students are writing, (among the students, and between the teacher and individual student), or teacher-student conferencing after the student has written his/her piece are crucial to gaining a clearer understanding of the student’s thinking.

Create opportunities for students to practice thinking more deeply about their learning.

It’s important to actively teach and provide meaningful contexts for students to practice self-reflection. (Valencia, 1998, p. 178.) In implementing this pilot study, I have observed that there are some students who quite easily self-reflect, and there are those who have a difficult time thinking about their thinking and learning. Many opportunities should be provided for these students to make connections to what they learn in school and their personal experience.
Plan B

Statement of the Problem

As I learned in my pilot study, students may be able to self-reflect, but this may be of little use to them. How then can I help students to use self-reflection in ways that are useful to them?

It is important for students to be aware of their thinking, and make meaning of their learning. However, students may need guidance and support to use what they know in order to set goals and work towards those goals. For example, the student may be able to set a goal, but may need support to understand how to achieve his/her goal.

Purpose

How do students make meaning of their learning experiences through self-reflection?

When teachers have students practice self-reflection, they are asking the students about what they think and what they value. It is important for the teacher to create the opportunities to practice higher level thinking dispositions. Learning can begin to have meaning to students when they can see connections between what they learn and how it relates to themselves. For example, is it meaningful to them? Can they relate what they learn to bigger concepts? I believe through practicing self-reflection, students can learn to make meaning of
their learning, so that they begin to develop a feeling of responsibility towards their learning experiences and hopefully, as a result learning can take on intrinsic value.

Greeley (2000) makes connections between students' lives and the work students do in the classroom. She begins by building community in her classroom and believes that real learning starts when students feel a part of the community (p. ix). When students feel they are in a safe and secure environment, this sets the tone for genuine self-reflection to happen.

Methodology

Sampling and Subjects

This study uses a case study approach and includes six students in a fifth grade classroom at an elementary school in the Leeward District in Spring 2006. Three of the six students had participated in my pilot study the previous Fall. After the winter break, I found that one of the students, Alex, who had participated in the pilot study, had moved to another school.

The students were selected by their classroom teacher because she felt they needed more attention in a small group setting. Several of the students had motivational issues, and/or needed to improve in reading and writing. One student, an ESL student from the Philippines, is highly motivated, but somewhat behind her peers in reading, writing, and verbal skills.

The project timeline was from February 7, 2006 through March 30, 2006. The process of writing the newsletter took about 6 weeks with my working with
the students twice a week for about an hour each session. Following this, the videotaping, including preparing to videotape, took 5 days, with my meeting with the students each day.

As I will discuss further in the limitations section, the students had HSA testing during the period of March 14-21, 2006. The classroom teacher was busy preparing the students for testing prior to this, and was very supportive in allowing me to work with the students twice a week. After the students' testing period, I went in each day (discounting the weekend and holiday) from March 23 though March 30, 2006, to work with the students on the second part of the activities which included videotaping the students reporting on a news story they wrote for the class newsletter.

Arrangements for Conducting the Study

I applied to, and received approval from the Committee on Human Studies (CHS), to conduct my research. I then sent home consent forms to the students' parents, along with a cover letter explaining my study, the kinds of data I would be gathering, and how this information would be used to help their child. I included that participation was voluntary, and that no names would be used in any reports. (See Appendix A for a copy of the letter and form.) The students were also asked their permission to participate in this study. I asked each student to sign an assent form after I received the signed consent form from his/her parents. (See Appendix B for a copy of the form.)
**Data Sources**

The Plan B study included the following data sources:

- **Anecdotal records and journal reflections.** I took observational notes from February 7 – March 30, 2006, as I worked with the students, then typed up my notes and wrote a reflection /evaluation after each lesson.

- **Students’ reflective journals.** Each student kept a journal of self-reflections from February 7 – March 30, 2006, as he/she worked on the project.

- **Informal Interviews.** I conducted several informal interviews with the students. The first interview focus was to see how the students felt about interviewing their subject, and if they would do anything differently next time. This interview was conducted on February 14, 2006.

On February 21, 2006 and February 23, 2006 I met with each student to discuss how he/she would start to write and develop a draft.

Following these meetings, in another informal interview, done on February 28, 2006, I asked the students for their insights regarding peer editing (if they felt it was helpful to them), their thoughts on what good writing was, and their thoughts on how being a good writer would benefit them.

The final interview, done on March 23, 2006, asked specific questions about how the student would achieve his/her goal, and general questions about the student’s family, and how the student felt his/her parents felt about education.
• Student work. This included interviews the students conducted, as well as drafts and final writing pieces, and self-evaluations. Data was collected from February 7 - March 30, 2006.

• Dialog Journal. Two students kept a dialog journal from March 1 - 29, 2006.

• Student Videotape. Videotape of students reporting on a news story, and their reflections. The videotaping was done on March 29, 2006.

• Group Meeting. This meeting was held on March 30, 2006. It was an informal meeting where the students were asked to discuss their thoughts on how they worked on their goals, and what they learned from working on this project together. The transcript of this meeting is provided in Appendix E.

I will provide additional informational about the data sources in the following sections.

As I had found in my pilot study, discussion with students, (while the students are writing), and teacher-student conferencing after the student has written his/her piece are crucial in gaining a clearer understanding of the student’s thinking.

In my Plan B project, I incorporated what I had learned in my pilot study and continued to use the discussion platform to gain insights into students' learning. I learned that asking probing questions during
informal interviews was very useful in making the students' thinking more visible to me. I could then triangulate my data using several different data sources including students' reflective journals to gain stronger insights into the students' thinking and learning.

Interview responses could then be used as a springboard to take the students' responses back to them with more probing questions for clarification. Probing questions can be used like steps going up a ladder. Both the teacher and the student are walking up that ladder. With each step, the student is discovering how he/she can better achieve his/her goals. The teacher walks alongside the student providing scaffolding by asking questions to guide and help the student gain these insights. The activity of informally interviewing with a specific goal in mind, such as intending the student to further think about how he/she would achieve his/her goal to write better, encourages the student to keep reflecting and asking himself/herself questions on how this could be accomplished. While this is going on, the student is also collaborating with peers and learning from them (such as brainstorming), as well as self-reflecting in a journal. Therefore the student utilizes several different resources to better assist him/her in thinking metacognitively to achieve the desired goal.

The students worked on the class newsletter within a writer's workshop framework. I incorporated students' self-reflection into the process. I found that the writer's workshop framework of planning, drafting, peer editing, dialoging with the teacher (in this case informal
interviewing), final drafting and publishing of a writing piece to be an effective vehicle in which to provide many opportunities for the students to think reflectively and to make meaning of their learning.

I elaborate further on how the students used the writing of a newsletter to set goals and reflect on their learning, as well as show how the activities promoted student self-reflection and meaning making in the following Procedures section.

**Procedures**

In my procedures, I will provide an overview of the process of writing the newsletter. I included a number of activities to promote students making meaning of their learning. As I go over the procedures, I will include explanations of the role the activities played in encouraging students to explain their thinking, reflect and make meaning of their learning as they worked on writing their stories for the newsletter. Further, I will provide examples of the students' learning in the Activities section. There are two separate parts to the activities. The second part of the activities included videotaping the students as they reported on the news story they wrote for the newsletter. The videotaping was done to capture the students' thinking as well as to give them an opportunity to see themselves discussing their excellent work.
The Writing Process

I invited the entire class to submit stories and drawings for possible publication in their class newsletter. The six focus students then sorted through the stories and drawings, each choosing one they found interesting that they would like to work on. My purpose in having the students choose their own stories or drawings rather than my choosing for them, was the idea that they could choose something that held meaning for them. This refers back to my purpose, the notion that learning begins to have meaning when students see connections to what they learn and how it relates to themselves. For example, is it meaningful to them? If learning holds meaning, my belief is students will feel more of a responsibility towards their learning, and as a result, learning can take on intrinsic value.

The students were news reporters, interviewing the source. They brainstormed interview questions in small groups of three. In having the students brainstorm in small groups, I wanted to encourage peer collaboration with the idea that students learn from each other. Each student then (together with a partner for moral support) conducted his/her interview.

Once the students finished conducting their interviews, I met with the student and his/her partner to discuss their thoughts on how the interview had gone. I encouraged the students to reflect on the interview. I asked questions such as, “How did it feel to interview someone?” “Did you feel prepared?” “How did you prepare?” I wanted the students to start to think about and assess their
learning, and to plant the idea of goal setting. "Would you do anything differently next time?"

The next step was to meet with each student to conference on how the student might develop and organize the information he/she had gathered from the interviews. I provided scaffolding support during our meeting at the level the student needed. My focus was to have the students feel more confident about writing. I will present examples in the Activities section.

To help the students, I gave them a rubric which included writing convention criteria as well as criteria for organization and design. (See Appendix C for the rubric.) When the students completed their drafts, they were asked to peer edit each other's writing piece. (See Appendix D for peer editing sheet.) My purpose of having the students edit each other's stories was to see if they could learn something they might be able to use themselves by reading someone else's work. I then met with each student to get insights into their thoughts about peer editing. My purpose was to find out if they felt peer editing was useful to them and what their views on good writing were. I asked them to explain their thinking. Troy shared his thoughts on what he felt good writing was, "To me good writing is if I could see it in my mind especially when I watch movies. I want to get that book....You can picture the scene in your mind - that exact same place. It's like in real life." I will elaborate further on the students' thoughts on peer editing in the Activities section. I also used this time to look over the students' drafts and discussed revisions they would work on.
In my pilot study, questions of great concern were, "So Troy can self-reflect, now what? How can I help him so that he can use self-reflection in ways that will be useful to him?"

Through practicing self-reflection, students can learn to make meaning of their learning, so that they begin to develop a sense of ownership in their work. When students feel responsible for their learning, learning begins to have intrinsic value for them. Students can then begin to set learning goals, and work towards those goals. (Valencia, 1998).

Therefore, in my Plan B project, The students were asked to set a goal that they would like to work on for this project and include how they would work to achieve their goals. The purpose of setting a goal and working on achieving it was to take self-reflection a step further by taking action to achieve the desired goal.

When the students completed their final drafts, each student did a self-evaluation using the writing rubric they had been given. My purpose in providing the rubric was for the students to have it as a guide as they worked on their stories. They were aware that they would be giving themselves a grade against this rubric. I discuss the rubric more in the Activities section.

Valencia (1998) describes self-assessment as a broad term used to refer to both self-reflection and self-evaluation (p. 177). When students self-reflect they step back from their learning to respond to it. This includes students' personal connections to their work (Valencia, 1998, p. 175).
In contrast, when students practice self-evaluation, they are being asked to evaluate against “shared standards of quality” (Valencia, 1998, p. 176). An example might be a student evaluating a finished writing piece against a rubric.

*The Class Newsletter*

As mentioned above, there were two parts to the activities. In the first part of the activities, the six participants worked on stories to be published in a class newsletter.

The second part of the activities included the participants being videotaped reporting on a news story they had written for the class newsletter. The students then viewed this videotape and did a written reflection on it. My rationale for choosing to videotape is that videotaping is a different forum in which students can reflect on their learning. The students’ could use this forum to make meaning as well.

*Why a Class Newsletter?*

Whereas in my pilot study, students were asked to reflect on themselves and to practice becoming more aware of their thinking, in my plan B, I went a step further and asked students to reflect on their learning as they went through the writing processes of brainstorming, drafting, peer-editing, final draft, and self-evaluation. In addition, the students were asked to set goals and reflect on their thoughts about their learning in general.
I decided on doing a class newsletter for several reasons. First, I wanted to use the writing process as a vehicle whereby the students could reflect on and make meaning of their learning as they developed their writing pieces. Again, I am reminded of Dr. Au’s statement that the comprehension processes a student goes through, what the student understands in order to get to the product, are equally as valuable as the product itself.

Secondly, when I had asked the students on different occasions what they were interested in, Jennie had indicated she loved watching the news on t.v. She was interested in real stories about real people. And finally, several of the students needed to work on writing, and this process was similar to a writer’s workshop.

My purpose was to find out how students make meaning of their learning, and how their thinking affected aspects of their learning. I also wanted to adjust my teaching to facilitate students’ taking responsibility for their learning by creating opportunities for learning to have personal meaning to them. For example, I encouraged the students to set their own goals, and facilitated their journey so that they could take action to help themselves reach their goals.

I learned a lot from Dr. Freese in EDCS 667 (Fall 2005) about setting and building a foundation of trust and confidence in a classroom community. We had read, Why Fly that Way by Greeley (2000) about a teacher’s journey in building a class community where her students felt comfortable to share their thoughts and feelings in a safe and nurturing environment.
As I became more aware of how to support the students, they grew to understand how to take action to help themselves achieve their goals. As I became a stronger facilitator, the students went from becoming aware of their thinking to making meaning of their learning. Their growth was conveyed in the sharing of their thoughts in self-reflections, in their responses in informal interviews and discussions, and in working towards their goals to achieve success. As the teacher, I facilitated this by building a community of trust and mutual respect with the students. I encouraged them make their own decisions with support and guidance. I focused on guiding the students to a higher level of thinking from where we first began.

The Activities

Brainstorming

Each of the students had chosen either a non-fiction story, or a drawing (that had been submitted by their classmates.) The students met in small groups of three to brainstorm interview questions to gain insight into the author or illustrator's thinking. The purpose of the brainstorming activity was to encourage peer collaboration.

This activity in itself did not promote reflection, however, it helped to lay the foundation of a sense of community among the students. Troy said it best when he wrote, "I think we all came up with good questions because we all helped each other".
Goal Setting

At the end of my pilot study an implication was that the next step would be for the students to begin to set goals. Therefore, the students were asked to set a goal for this project, and to tell how they would work to achieve this goal. An important element was to have the students set a goal of their own choosing to promote ownership. Likewise, I wanted to guide the students so that through our discussions and activities they would come up with their own ideas on how they would achieve their goals.

Jennie wrote in her self-reflection, "I was a little nervous (when I interviewed Matt.)" She then set as a goal, "My goal is not to be nervous about asking questions (in an interview.)" "How will you achieve this goal?" I asked. "I will take a deep breath and let it out, then ask the question," she replied.

Jon wrote as his goal, "My goal is to wright (sic) better. I'm going to wright (sic) better by practicing." Since the students had student-led parent/teacher conferences recently, Jon was aware that he needed to work harder on his writing.

At this point, I noted that although the students' goals held meaning for them, the means by which they felt they would achieve their goals seemed somewhat superficial.
Informal Interviewing of Students

When I did my pilot study, I began to see that although the reflections made the students' thinking more visible to me, a more thoughtful look into the students' writing could make their thinking more visible to the students.

For my Plan B study, I decided to continue to use informal interviewing as one of my data tools in combination with the students' self-reflections. My purpose was to encourage the students to think about their learning more deeply and purposefully. Hopefully, this would result in helping the students be more purposeful in helping themselves to achieve their desired outcomes. I did this by using their responses from interviews combined with their self-reflections from their journals as a catalyst for discussion, so that I could go back to the student at a later time, and ask the students to elaborate further to gain clarification and a deeper understanding of the students' thinking about his/her learning. This helped me to better understand each student. I found that for some students, interviewing worked really well, because their verbal abilities were stronger than their writing abilities. For other students, their writing skills were stronger (and they could convey their thinking more thoughtfully) than their verbal skills. It was therefore helpful to use informal interviewing, written reflections and in some cases dialog journals in order to analyze my data. Triangulating data this way was very useful in getting a better sense of the students' thinking. I could then make adjustments to my teaching to better guide and support the students in their learning.
Meeting With the Student to Organize the Writing Piece

Although I felt a primary focus of the writing piece would be for most of the students to develop a writing voice, Jennie had other issues that needed to be addressed first. For example, as I discussed with Jennie how she might begin her draft, it became evident that she did not seem to fully understand the story submitted by Matt. As Matt didn't explain exactly how he had fallen, Jennie had asked him in the interview, "Do you remember what happened?" He replied, "I was dancing to Barney and I fell on the stool." The "ool" was actually underlined, but the word looked like there had been an erasure where the "ool" now stood. (I speculated that Matt may have corrected Jennie, but that at this point she had not comprehended what he meant.) Jennie's next question was, "How did 'they' do that?" Jennie wrote that Matt's reply was, "I was in the stew, and it tipover." When Jennie began to write her draft, I noted she had written that Matt had tripped on 'a stew.' I showed her what Matt had meant by turning over a chair and pointing to how Matt had stepped into the stool. She looked somewhat skeptical. I didn't realize she didn't understand what I meant until I wrote the word, "stool." Then she said, "Ohhhhh!" I realized she didn't quite understand the story, and as a result had difficulty organizing it.

In my pilot study, I had the students 'spotlight' a part of a writing piece they had written by focusing on a particular passage or idea that they would like to draw about. After drawing, I had the students write about the drawing. I wanted to simplify this activity and adjust it to Jennie's needs. I decided to have her draw each event in sequence to encourage her to organize and understand the story
better. I dialogued with Jennie to give her support as she drew the sequence of events. It was a similar strategy I had used in my pilot of talking with the students as they wrote in what I had referred to as a "think aloud and discussion." As my pilot study had set my foundation, I had taken what I had learned there and modified it in a useful way to suit Jennie's more immediate need to comprehend and organize her story.

Drawing the sequence of events while she and I dialoged assisted Jennie in both understanding the story and organizing her writing. Although she still needed assistance with sentence structure, from this point she was able to write the story in sequence. The 'aha' moment for Jennie came when she realized Matt had tripped on a stool. Then she was able to use her background knowledge to begin to make meaning of the story. When she drew pictures to show the sequence of events, this further assisted her in organizing the story into a draft. It was really important for Jennie to receive specific, one to one support and guidance in order for her to connect the specific and general ideas of the story to her own knowledge.

As I had done in my pilot, I met with each student as he/she developed a writing piece. Our focus was to discuss organization of the students' thoughts to start their draft, and on developing a writer's voice. I asked each student to say his/her thoughts out loud before writing them down. I encouraged the student to say his/her thoughts as though he/she were talking to a friend. I felt that this would help the student develop a writing voice in the style we intended for a class newsletter – capturing the reader's attention in a lively and interesting way.
The following are Nani’s insights as she made meaning of her learning during our discussion. What is key here is for the teacher to get a sense of the student; her interests, what motivates her, what she needs assistance with. Nani was a capable writer, but she needed encouragement to boost her confidence as a writer. It was important to encourage Nani by helping her make connections to things that she enjoyed, which in this case was soccer!

Nani felt she wasn’t very good at writing, and I told her that no one starts out being great at writing. We have to work at it and keep practicing. I said I would help her get started. It was important to make connections to what Nani valued to assist her in getting motivated. I found out Nani played soccer during a conversation we had while she was writing a draft for her classroom teacher on her favorite thing to do. Therefore as we worked on her draft, I related the process of writing to soccer. I asked her how it felt to make a goal. She said, “proud.” It takes a lot of effort to practice and get better, but in the end it pays off. I asked her to think about how proud she would feel when the newsletter was done, just like when she scored a goal in soccer. She smiled and seemed more willing to begin working on her draft. I asked Nani if she would like to draw or make a list of important points to organize her writing. Nani chose to first make a list of important details in the story she was writing, and go from there. Nani had chosen to interview Leila on a story Leila had submitted to our class newsletter. Leila had written about a singing competition she had entered and won. Leila had competed against her best friend whom she said was, “hard to beat.” Nani related this to sometimes having to compete against her friends in soccer games.
It wasn't something she enjoyed doing, but it was great to win. Nani had chosen this story because it held meaning for her. She also really liked Leila a lot, and had heard Leila sing before. She felt Leila was very talented. In Nani’s conclusion, she wrote, “I knew she was going to win because I believed in her.” I supported Nani by praising her on being organized and writing with expression. When she had developed a few paragraphs, I said, “Look at what you did. You’re doing a good job. How do you feel about it?” She replied with a smile, “good.”

Peer-Editing

The notion of students learning from each other is an important one. Peer editing is used in the students' classroom whenever they have a writing piece. I was interested to see if it would not only benefit the person whose work was being edited, but if it would also benefit the person who is editing someone else's writing piece. Could they learn something that would help them in their own writing?

Christensen wrote, “I encourage students to listen for what “works” in their peers’ pieces, to take notes on what they like, and then to use those techniques in their own writing” (2000, p. 14). Likewise, a student named Heather wrote in Christensens' Reading, Writing and Rising Up: Teaching About Social Justice and the Power of the Written Word, “When I listen to other people's writing, I hear things I love or wish I'd written myself. Most of the time, that's where I get my inspiration” (p. 14).
The students were given a peer-editing sheet (see Appendix D) similar to the one they use in their classroom writing, but modified for our project. They could pick several things to help their partner with, but didn’t have to choose all of the elements.

After Jon edited Nani’s piece, Jon wrote in his reflection, “I learned that when I wright (sic) my final draft, I want to wright (sic) a story”. When I interviewed Jon, asking him “Did you learn anything from peer editing Nani’s piece?” he excitedly nodded and said, “I’m going to write mine like a story, too, just like (she wrote) hers!”

Whereas Jon had originally written a short paragraph for his draft that mainly gave information, he now wrote a complete, full page story as his final draft, which was typed, and single spaced. It was an exciting story that conveyed his writing voice. The following is the short paragraph Jon wrote after interviewing Sam.

“I interviewed Sam on his cool drawing. I found out that bowser is a big fire-breathing turtle. The title of his drawing is Mario Bros. The reason he wrote Mario Bros. is because he loves video games. The Mario Bros. weapons are steel hammers and metal boots. Sam taught himself to draw. He draws cartoons because he likes it.”

Jon was perfectly satisfied with his writing piece. This was actually his second draft and he felt he was done. The writing piece was rather flat and lacked Jon’s voice. However, after he peer edited Nani’s writing piece, he got
excited about writing! He went back to Sam and asked him more questions about his drawing. The following is an excerpt from Jon’s final draft.

“Sam was inspired to draw this Mario Bros. picture because of his love of drawing. The title to Sam’s drawing is Mario Bros. The story starts out when Bowser takes away the beautiful Princess Peach. Mario and Luigi get ready to take their hammers and boots and set off on their quest. To get there, they had to battle tough and intense monsters, such as the gruesome and terrifying Goumbas!” He went on to write a full page, typed, single-spaced.

Jon had confirmed my idea that peer editing could help the student who is editing someone else’s writing piece by giving him/her better insights into their own writing. Jon’s final draft was filled with expression and conveyed a strong “voice”. It was great to see Jon so excited about writing, as he put it, “I want to write mine like a story.”

When Jon first set a goal, he wrote, “My goal is to wright (sic) better. I’m going to wright (sic) better by practicing.”

However, when Jon revisited his goal following the peer editing activity, he wrote, “My goal is to write better and bring people into my writing. I think I can reach my goal by working hard and read books and see how they bring people into their stories. That is how I will reach my goal.”

The activity of peer editing assisted Jon in having a stronger sense of how to go about achieving his goal. His insights as reflected in his journal reflections and his verbal reflections conveyed a deeper understanding of how he would systematically work to achieve his goal to write better. His reflections made his
thinking about his learning more visible to me, but more importantly, Jon's written and verbal insights made his thinking about his learning more visible to him. With his new knowledge, he began to take action to help himself achieve his goals. He was empowered and it strengthened his confidence.

Self-Evaluation after the Final Draft

The students were asked to evaluate their writing pieces following the completion of the final drafts based on the rubric they had been given. (See Appendix C for the writing rubric.)

I found that the students seemed to choose just one or two criteria from the rubric to evaluate themselves on. The evaluation seemed superficial. The following were some of the responses from the students' self-evaluations.

Several of the students focused on writing conventions, such as correct spelling. For example, Troy said, "I think I should get an ME (meets with excellence), because I checked my spelling". However, Nani focused more on the design of her paper. She wrote, "I deserve an ME, because I have a good introduction". And still another student focused on voice and meaning. Thomas wrote, "I deserve an MP (meets with proficiency) because I had a "strong" (writing) "style".

Based on the students' responses, I felt it was important to look more closely at the writing rubric. I compared it to a writing rubric the students used in their classroom. This rubric was very straightforward and to the point. It listed each point in bullets. I began to see that my rubric was too wordy and "busy".
No wonder the students had difficulty evaluating their work. For example, I had used the phrase, "The writing piece commands and keeps readers' attention and interest by use of language and the writer's style to create meaning." In hindsight, I would have worked on the wording and the criteria of the rubric with the students, so that they would have more ownership in it. If I had taken the time to work with the students on the rubric, it would have held more meaning to them, and I would have gained further insights into the students' thinking. For example, when I asked the students how the rubric could have been better, Troy responded, "Maybe you could have put an example for each one (criteria)." It was a good suggestion. I learned that although this activity had not been entirely successful, I nonetheless learned valuable lessons I could put to use in the future.

*Dialog Journal*

In working with both Jennie and Thomas, I began to see that they needed more assistance with writing and writing conventions, as well as reading and verbal comprehension. I decided to start a dialog journal with each of them where we could talk about the books they were reading to build on reading comprehension, as well as for me to model writing conventions for them. This was a more personal way to have a conversation with Jennie and Thomas, while at the same time working on things they needed help with, such as sentence structure. This will be an ongoing process that I will follow through with until the end of their school year.
Overview of Videotaping: Students Reporting on a News Story

The second part of the activities included students being videotaped reporting on the news story they had written for the class newsletter. This activity followed the completion of the newsletter. This part of the activities also included a group meeting in which the students discussed their thoughts about the process of writing a story for the class newsletter, the goals they set, how they worked on their goals and their thoughts on collaborating and working with the members of the group.

My purpose for having the students videotaped while reporting on a news story was for them to reflect on what they said and did, what they did well, and what they might want to improve on. Videotaping is a different forum in which students can reflect on their learning by actually seeing themselves in action. I was interested to see if videotaping would bring out new and insightful information from the students!

The Process: Preparing to Videotape

The students were aware that following the completion of their class newsletter, they would be videotaped reporting on their news story. Many of them looked forward to this!

Each student was asked to set a goal for this portion of the project. The students worked with a partner to practice interviewing. As consent forms were not acquired from the parents of the students who had submitted the actual pictures and stories, the participants had to pretend they were the author or
illustrator. For example, Thomas pretended to be ‘Sam’ who had illustrated the Mario Brothers drawing, so that Jon could interview him.

The students were provided with their own microphones. I talked with each pair before they practiced, giving them criteria, such as the need for an introduction, having questions pertaining to the story, and having a conclusion. However, I had thought about, but decided against doing a formal rubric, as I wanted the students to feel free to conduct their interview in their own way without too many constraints.

Videotaping

After having time to practice with a partner, each student was videotaped interviewing his/her partner on a news story. The interviews were conducted outside of the classroom in a quiet setting with greenery as the backdrop. Each interview took several minutes.

The following day, each student along with his/her partner viewed their video and reflected on it. They were encouraged to reflect verbally, however, the students had little commentary, and shared just a few giggles as they viewed themselves on tape, watching intently. What came through instead was a great sense of pride regarding their videotaped interviews. This was conveyed not only in words but in the students’ actions. For example, the students requested to share their videotapes with each other which they later did as part of the culminating activity. The students were asked to do a written reflection on their
videotaped interviews at the end of the project. (See Appendix F). I elaborate on the students’ final reflections in the section following the culminating activity.

The Culminating Activity

As the students and I neared the end of our project, I decided to have an informal group meeting where the students could share their thoughts and insights about the process of writing a story for the class newsletter, the goals they set, how they worked on their goals and their thoughts on collaborating and working with members of the group. (See Appendix E for the written transcript.)

In an outdoor setting, the students arranged their seats in a theater style arrangement so they could share their videotape. It was evident how proud the students were to share their videotape with the group. Next, The students and I sat in a circle, as they ate snacks and talked about the project we just had completed which included the class newsletter and the videotape. This was a nice culminating activity. The following are thoughts the students shared in the group meeting regarding respect for each other and from the teacher. I include an excerpt of the discussion that leads into the question of respect.

Mrs. Abarca: How did it feel to be a part of this project?

Jennie: So excited.

Troy: Happy.

Jon: I feel more confident.

Jennie: Yeah.

Jon: Yeah, because you had to ask people questions. I felt like a detective.
Laurie: I felt happy because I got confidence from you. Before I didn’t want to do it because I knew I couldn’t, but then you gave me confidence and courage.

Mrs. Abarca: Did you guys have respect from everybody in the group?

They answer, “Yeah.”

Mrs. Abarca: Did you feel respect from me?

The students answered, “Yes.”

Mrs. Abarca: Did you feel encouraged by me?

They nod yes

Okay, tell me how Mrs. Abarca respected you.

Jennie: Because you always help us.

Jon: You asked us questions.

Nani: Because you care for us.

Laurie: Working with Mrs. A is fun because, it’s not like you’re giving us information, but you act like you’re our friend, you know how our friends talk to us, that’s how you talk to us, not just like a teacher.

Laurie: It’s not something that you’re telling us. You ask us if we want to do something, not tell us.

Students’ Final Reflections

The students were then asked to write their thoughts on what they had done well in the video, what they wanted to improve on, what they were most proud of, and if they had reached their goal. (See Appendix F.) My purpose in asking these specific questions was to probe students’ thinking about what they
felt they learned. In addition I was interested to see if the students would communicate a higher level of self confidence as had been conveyed in the students' actions following videotaping. I asked specific questions about how they felt they did with their interviews and what they felt most proud of. In addition, I asked the students to reflect on the goals they set for videotaping. Had they achieved them? I included questions about the class newsletter as well, including how they felt about the newsletter they helped write and the reactions they received from their classmates.

The following are excerpts of the students' responses. When I asked the question regarding videotaping, "What are you most proud of?" Laurie replied, "I am proud that even though I didn't want to videotape, I still did it." Nani wrote, "I am most proud of not being shy anymore." Jennie said, "I am most proud of doing the interviewing and sharing." Jon wrote, "My confidence, because I'm not scared to talk in front of people." The students' responses reflected their growing confidence in themselves.

Regarding the class newsletter, the following are some of the students' responses to the question, "How do you feel about the newsletter you helped write?" Nani said, "I feel happy because I helped write something and I did something for the class." Jennie replied, "I feel happy because Mrs. Abarca you help us and we learn."

The pre-activity of preparing to videotape with a partner and the videotaping activity itself helped the students to grow in confidence. Further the activity seemed to strengthen the students' self-concepts. They were so proud of
themselves. They felt comfortable in sharing their thoughts and viewed themselves as capable people.

As the students felt very proud, several of them requested that we show the entire class the video. I checked with the classroom teacher, and the next day, we hooked up the camcorder to the classroom t.v. and the whole class viewed several of the students' conducting their interviews. (Some of the students were too shy and decided not to show their portion of the tape.) The whole class applauded. When Jennie had shared, "I am most proud of doing the interviewing and sharing," this is what she had meant. She had taken a huge risk in sharing her interview and the class had cheered.

Although the videotaping activity may not have encouraged the role of reflection as much as I had thought it might, it supported the students' gaining confidence in themselves. The focus was on what the students did well.
Chapter 5

Findings

In my findings I integrate my data to present a case study for each student to convey his/her journey. I include an important teacher reflection that conveyed my concerns part way through the project. Finally, I present my overall findings.

Case Studies

In the following section, I will provide background information on the participating students. In addition, I will present a case study or profile for each student. I drew upon our interview data, dialog journals, the students' self-reflections, my own self-reflections and teacher conferences for each case study. I analyzed this data by reading and rereading all the data I had collected searching for themes and evidence of growth in each student. I found from my analysis of the data, that each student went through a unique journey.

Jennie

Jennie is an ESL student who arrived in Hawaii from the Philippines when she was five years old. She did not have any preschool experience. However, she attended Kindergarten in Hawaii. She lives with her mom, grandma and two sisters, ages thirteen and fifteen. If she needs assistance with homework, her grandma often helps her, since her mom works in the evenings. She said she mainly gets help with math. Jennie said both her grandmother and mom were teachers in the Philippines. She likes to watch the news on t.v. and said she
teachers in the Philippines. She likes to watch the news on t.v. and said she enjoys reading the dictionary to learn words. She likes Junie B. Jones' books. Jennie has academic challenges of which the following seem most pronounced: difficulty with reading comprehension, sentence structure when writing, and understanding conversation. I first began working with Jennie last Fall, in September 2005. Since I first met Jennie, I was impressed at how motivated she was to learn. She works diligently at everything she does and has a good attitude.

**Jennie's Quest to Develop Confidence**

February 14th

Jennie's comments after conducting her initial interview:

"It felt nervous to interview someone (for the newsletter). When I asked questions, he laughed."

Mrs. Abarca: How did you prepare for the interview?

"By taking a deep breath and letting it out, then asking the question."

Setting a goal following conducting an interview for the class newsletter: "My goal is to not be nervous about asking questions about the story."

February 21st

Revisiting her goal:

Mrs. Abarca: How will you achieve this goal?
"I will take a deep breath and let it out, and practice for the video."

March 6th

Jennie revisited her goal at this time and it remained, "I will prepare for the videotape by taking a deep breath, and let it out, and say the words."

However, she had an epiphany between that time and March 23rd, as she now writes:

March 23rd

Mrs. Abarca: Your goal is not to be nervous when you interview someone. You said you'll take a deep breath and let it out and say the words. What else will you do to prepare for your next interview?

"....by practicing everyday and saying it in front of my family."

March 28th

Self-Reflection following videotaping the news story:

"I remembered all the questions without the paper. I did it without being nervous."

March 29th

Group Sharing and Reflection: (see transcript in Appendix E.)

Mrs. Abarca: What goals did you set?
Mrs. Abarca: What did you do to reach this goal?

Jennie: I practiced. I practiced in from of my family, like 10 times.

Mrs. Abarca: How did it feel to be a part of this project?

Jennie: So excited. Confident.

An Excerpt from Jennie’s Dialog Journal

“I am so happy that I did the videotaping. I am proud of myself. I practiced and didn’t get nervous anymore, because I got used to it already!”

Teacher Reflection

Jennie is a self-directed learner. She tries very hard. She is an ESL student. Her struggle to assimilate in a diverse world of many different cultures and into a western culture is at times evident, such as when she misunderstood Matt’s story about dancing in an upside down stool, and instead thought he had stepped into a pot of stew, exhibiting a perplexity in understanding ideas contextually.

The pride Jennie felt in conducting her interview without having to look at her paper was evident. She had discovered that when she practiced in front of her family, this helped her to know her material very well, and in turn gave her the confidence she needed, which resulted in not being nervous. She had prepared well, she knew it, and she was proud. She had set herself up to be successful.
Troy

Troy lives with both his parents. He is the youngest child. He has an older married sister who lives in Seattle, and a 12 year old sister who he says spends a lot of time in her room. They have a family dog. Troy is a very capable student, but has motivational issues. According to his classroom teacher he has difficulty focusing. I began working with Troy last Fall in September 2005. He has diverse interests. Among his interests are his love of skateboarding, as well as cooking and drawing. He is currently reading the Lord of the Rings.

Both his parents are supportive of his education, however, Troy feels that in the past they were not as interested. He was mainly encouraged to read in order to settle down. At the first quarter parent/teacher conference held last October, Troy’s mom was informed about his lack of progress and Troy said his mom talked with him about trying harder in school and thinking about the future, especially college. This discussion seemed to help him. Currently, his mom helps him with his homework as needed. His dad works during the week, but Troy spends a lot of time with him on the weekends when his mom goes to work. His dad enjoys building things as a hobby and helped Troy to build a skim board for boogie boarding. One of the activities Troy enjoys with his dad on the weekends is going to the beach.

Troy: Reading Ownership

November 2005

Reflection Following Parent/Teacher Conference:
“The parent/teacher conference was fun, because I got to talk, and I got to see my grades. I hope next quarter’s will be better. I will do this by turning in my homework on time.”

November 23rd

Mrs. Abarca: What do you like best about school?
Troy: I like lunch and recess.

Mrs. Abarca: Why?
Troy: Because I can talk and relax at lunch. At recess, I like to play sports.

Mrs. Abarca: What is the most important thing you learn in school?
Troy: Math. Because I’ll have to pay taxes when I grow up.

Mrs. Abarca: Do you feel a responsibility for your learning?
Troy: From the parent/teacher conference – my mom talked to me about what I will do with my life – whatever happens now, will happen later. If I don’t like school, what will happen in life? So now I’m trying to work harder.

When I asked Troy the question, “Did you ever not do your school work? When was that? What were you feeling?”

Troy: From Kindergarten, first grade I wanted to do my work a lot more. In 2nd grade, my teacher pushed me, so I got tired and bored in school.

Mrs. Abarca: Do you think it’s because she pushed you too hard?
Troy: Yes. In fourth grade, I felt pushed too much. My teacher pushed me hard in reading. She made us read. I felt I didn’t want to go to school. I wished I was a grown up. In third grade I learned about whales, so I did a lot better.
Mrs. Abarca: You enjoyed learning about whales?

Troy: Yes. In 5th grade, we learned about Indians and the project was good. It appeared that Troy became more motivated about learning when he learned about things that interested him.

February 14th

“My goal is to get good grades, and not get sleepy or tired, and I would also like to be a better reader.”

February 27th

Revisiting his goal:

“I'm doing better now, because I'm not lazy or tired now.”

February 28th

Mrs. Abarca: Has it helped for me to come in and work with you?

Troy: Yes. I'm getting better grades because you bring me books, and I like those books. I don't really go to the library much. Before I didn't like reading, but I do now.

(Following Peer Editing)

Mrs. Abarca: What is good writing?
Troy: To me good writing is if I could see it in my mind, especially when I watch movies. I want to get that book and read it. You can picture the scene in your mind – that exact same place. It’s like real life.

March 23rd

Mrs. Abarca: How do you think enjoyment of reading will help you to be a good reader?

Troy: It helps me with spelling. Ever since I started reading, it makes me faster at writing and reading. I learn about vocabulary. If I don’t understand, I go back and read it over.

Mrs. Abarca: Tell me why it’s important when you read to be able to picture the story in your mind?

Troy: When I can picture it in my mind, it makes me want to read even more, and makes me even better at reading. When I read the book, Narnia, I had already seen the movie. I didn’t just think I was going to get it (understand the book), I knew I was going to get it.

Mrs. Abarca: How does your family feel about education?

Troy: Before they didn’t have much interest in it. I was mainly told to read to calm down. Now I’m getting better grades, and they’re happy about it.

**Teacher Reflection**

Troy shared in November that he felt pushed too hard by his teacher in fourth grade. He didn’t feel like going to school. However when he learned
about things that interested him, he seemed to become more motivated. In the past, Troy said he only read to calm down. However, when he started to read books that interested him, he became interested in reading and has since developed reading ownership.

**Thomas**

I began working with Thomas last Fall in September 2005. He is a bright boy. Although his first language is English, he doesn’t have many opportunities to practice speaking it at home due to his parents’ limited English proficiencies. They speak Tagalog at home. Thomas is a quiet child. He has a younger brother who is three years old. Thomas receives help from his dad on his math homework. He said his dad is good at math and feels that math is important, because it’s something you use in everyday life. Thomas indicated that he enjoys math and feels that he is good at it. He struggles with sentence structure in his writing and reading comprehension. His mom sometimes helps him with reading. Thomas’ parents are very supportive of his education and would like him to be prepared to go to middle school. He attends Kumon twice a week and studies reading and math there. He loves to read about dinosaurs.

Thomas expressed concern about his writing having been told since second grade that he needed to add more details in his writing, and in third grade that he needed to write ‘grammatically correct.’ It is difficult for Thomas to practice as his parents have limited English proficiencies at home, and tend to help him more with math, which he excels in. After working with both Thomas
and Jennie, I decided to start a dialog journal with each of them. I did not see as much growth in Thomas as I had hoped.

During the interview, I asked Thomas what the most difficult part about writing this piece was. He replied, "writing all the details. I had to write the sentences clear, and I wanted it to make sense." I asked him how he felt about his writing in general. He said that ever since he was little, he has known that he had trouble writing 'grammatically correct.'

When Thomas was in second grade, his teacher said he needed to write more and add more details. When he was in third grade, his teacher said he needed to work on writing 'grammatically correct.' For a student whose parents are from the Philippines, he felt discouraged at not being able to get sufficient help with sentence structure, but just kept trying. I had noticed that when Thomas wrote, his words seemed to get mixed up, and had noticed this when he spoke as well. I had been thinking about how to help him. Peer editing seemed to help some, but that was only a temporary fix. I could see that he needed more assistance on this. I will elaborate further in the 'Dialog Journal' section.

**Thomas: Working on Writing**

December 2005

I sat with Thomas as he was working on a paper for class. Prior to this, he hardly had said a word to me when I would try to help him with his school work. He seemed quite shy, and I often felt I was bothering him whenever I came to sit with him at his desk.
I wanted to help him think of things to write for his paper, so I asked him,

"Do you have any pets?"

Thomas: "I have two Koi and a goldfish. They live in the same tank. The
goldfish must be ashamed because I got it first, but the Koi grew faster and 'is' a
lot bigger than the goldfish now." He continued, "When the fish sleep, they have
their own place in the aquarium. I put food on each side. Sometimes I put the
food in the middle."

I asked him, "Why?"

Thomas: So they don't fight and don't waste food.

I was so happy. This is the most he had said to me since I first started
working with him in September.

February 14th

After Thomas interviewed Kim

Mrs. Abarca: How did it feel to interview someone?

Thomas: Fun. Felt like you're a newsperson. It was fun to ask questions.

February 27th

Mrs. Abarca: How do you feel about your writing?

Thomas: Since I was young, I was worried about writing sentences correctly.

Mrs. Abarca: What would you like to work on?

Thomas: Grammar.
March 1st

*Dialog Journal Entry*

Dear Thomas,

Are you enjoying the dinosaur book, *How to Keep Dinosaurs*? Tell me what you find interesting about this book.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Abarca

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March 7th

*Dialog Journal Entry*

Dear Mrs. Abarca,

Thank you for helping me do my writing. The book, "How to keep Dinosaurs" is a great book. It talks about how to keep dinosaurs and tells me what it likes. For example, a Thecodontosaurs is an amazing dinosaur that 'it' enjoys walking and 'runs.'

Sincerely,

Thomas
March 8th

*Dialog Journal Entry*

Dear Thomas,

Wow, you have learned a lot about dinosaurs. I didn’t realize a
Thecodontosaurs enjoys walking and running. It sounds like they get quite a bit
of exercise.

I hope I spelled the species of dinosaur correctly. Please check it for me
in the book.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Abarca

March 23rd

*Dialog Journal Entry*

Dear Mrs. Abarca,

Yes, you did spell the correct species of the dinosaurs. But still I do not
(k)now how fast does it ‘run’, it does not say so.

Sincerely,

Thomas

March 28th

*Self-Reflection Following Videotaping of the News Story*

“It was really good. Yes, I did good. The only thing I forgot was my
questions. I memerise (sp) some of my questions, that was good.”
Teacher Reflection

I found that although Thomas said he wanted to work on his writing, when I did a dialog journal with him, he would sometimes forget to reply. When I would ask him about it, he would tell me that he forgot and would then hurriedly write to me and turn in his journal. As much as I wanted to help Thomas reach his goal of writing better, I felt he wasn’t putting in the effort it would take for him to show a significant improvement. Unfortunately, Thomas didn’t show very much growth by the end of the project.

Jon

Jon is a bright and capable student. He lives with both parents and has 3 siblings. He has an older brother, aged 15, whom he looks up to. He has two sisters, ages 13 and 2. According to his classroom teacher, he needs to work on sentence structure in his writing as well as reading comprehension. He also has motivational issues. Jon said both his parents help him at home with his writing. Jon likes to read books about heroes who go on adventures and save people. He can explain his thinking well when asked.

Jon’s mom is supportive and helps him with his homework. She wants him to be a doctor. His dad is very supportive about Jon’s social skills and behavior, giving him advice if he gets teased in school. Jon sometimes gets teased and reacts defensively by saying mean words which can get him into
trouble. For example, Jon has gotten into trouble by teasing and being teased by girls. His dad wants to teach Jon how to be more proactive and behave in a kind manner. Jon said his dad provides well and tells his children to enjoy what they have, as he didn’t have those things when he was growing up.

**Jon: What Makes A Good Writer?**

February 14th

“My goal is to wright (sic) better. I’m going to wright (sic) better by practicing.”

Jon’s first draft was a paragraph long.

February 27th

*Jon’s insights following peer editing Nani’s writing piece:*

“I learned that when I wright (sic) my final draft, I want to wright (sic) a story. I think I’m getting better at writing, because I’m taking my time instead of rushing.”

February 28th

Mrs. Abarca: What do you think good writing is?

Jon: I think good writing is neat, and has good grammar. The story pulls you in. When you read it, you can see what the author was trying to tell you. I want to start to write like that.
March 6th
Jon turned in his final draft. It was a story a full page in length, typed, single-spaced.

March 23rd
Mrs. Abarca: Tell me what specific things you’ll do to achieve your goal of becoming a better writer.
Jon: I’ll read stories and build up my imagination when I write.

March 24th
Jon revisited his goal. Upon revisiting it, he adjusted it. “My goal is to write better and bring people into my writing. I think I can reach my goal by working hard, and reading books, and see how they bring people into their stories. That is how I will reach my goal.”

Teacher Reflection
At the beginning of the project, when the participants were asked to choose either a drawing or story for the newsletter, Jon chose a drawing. The drawing interested him because it was a Mario Bros. cartoon. He was interested in what inspired the illustrator Sam to draw it. Jon looked at the details in the different scenes and was interested in particular in the type of weapons that were used. When I asked Jon why he wanted to know, he replied that it made a difference what type of weapons were used because some could do more
damage than others. Whereas in my pilot study the students were asked to ‘spotlight’ a passage or idea in their writing piece and then draw a picture on it, Jon seemed to be spotlighting certain details in the drawing to focus on. He came up with interview questions to ask his subject and from there, he wrote an awesome writing piece that was published in the class newsletter. He had used the drawing as an opportunity to expand on a single idea.

When I began working with Jon in early February, he said he wanted to work on his writing, but the means by which he said he would go about it was not immediately clear. Jon’s journey of discovering that writing can be profoundly effective became evident as time went on and he used a number of resources to assist him in understanding how to take action to achieve his goal. He realized that his writing can have an impact on people, just like the stories he reads. I remember our first meeting as a group. He seemed not to want to be there and was having a negative attitude which was conveyed in his body language. I remember telling him that I would be happy to have him work with us, but it was not something he had to do. It was his choice. However, if he chose to work on the newsletter with us, he would have to give 100% and have a good attitude. And he said, “Okay.”

As part of my work with him, I asked him what kinds of books he was interested in and he said he liked stories where someone rescued people and was heroic. I scanned the juvenile shelves at the Kapolei Library and found several books that I thought he might like based on what he said. When I brought him the books, his reaction was lukewarm. When he started reading one
of the books, and liked it, he seemed to warm up a bit. As time went on, he asked for more books, specific titles, and would tell me about the books he read with happiness in his voice. I began to see a change in his attitude. Jon triangulated his data to help him reach his goal of writing better. He used what he learned from Nani in peer editing, what he learned about by focusing in on the drawing and asking questions, and his interest in reading to help him work out how he would reach his goal.

**Nani**

Nani lives with her parents. She has 4 siblings. She has an older sister who's 23, a brother who is 17, and sister who is 13. She also has a younger sister who is 9 years old. Nani plays soccer and dances hula. She needs extra assistance with reading comprehension and writing. She is not as motivated as she could be. She has a strong personality, and her manner can be 'tough' or abrupt at times towards her peers. She enjoys reading about sharks and cats.

Nani seems to have a very supportive and close family. Although soccer season is over, she participates in indoor soccer, and her mom accompanies her to all of her games.

At times, Nani seemed to convey that writing was a chore, and she felt that she wasn't very good at it. She needed to build her confidence. She has good thoughts when she writes, and has the ability to write well.

Nani's attitude towards her peers, boys especially, was puzzling to me. She seemed so 'tough', and I didn't know why, until one day she told me that her
dad was in Iraq. Sometimes a tough exterior is a facade of protection for that person. Nani is courageous, just like her dad.

The turning point came the day she shared with me that her dad was in Iraq and how much she missed him. It was an emotional moment. From that day on, each time I saw her, I would ask her how she was doing, and it seemed a small comfort to her to know that I cared.

Nani: A Tough Exterior

February 7th

Self-Reflection

"I feel so weird talking to people like a news reporter, and I'm afraid I'm going to get bored."

February 14th

"I feel so happy, because I got to interview someone and I felt like a news reporter. I felt mad at Jon, my partner, because he is so bossy, like in a boy's way."

February 23rd

It seems like writing is a chore for Nani. I related writing to soccer, which she plays. She has been playing soccer for six seasons. She has worked hard and enjoys soccer a lot. She of course feels proud when she scores a goal. I said to think of writing like soccer. Think of how proud you will be when you have
written something you can be proud of and it’s published in a newsletter. She thought about it, smiled, and said, “Yeah.”

I told her that we all don’t start out being great at writing. It’s something that we practice. I said I would help her, and she also has to motivate herself to follow through, just like soccer.

February 27th

*Self-Reflection Following Peer Editing*

**Mrs. Abarca:** Did you learn something useful?

**Nani:** No, I did not learn something useful.

February 28th

*Following Peer Editing*

**Mrs. Abarca:** How did you feel when Jon said he learned something from reading your writing piece that will help him?

**Nani:** Happy, proud, kinda surprised.

March 6th

*Self-Evaluation Form to Fill Out Following Completion of Final Draft:*

Rate yourself on your effort in this writing project, and tell why you deserve this rating. (Okay, Good, Excellent)

**Nani:** Excellent. I deserve this rating, because I tried my best, and she (Mrs. Abarca) said, "Good."
March 23rd

Nani is distracted this morning.

Mrs. Abarca: What specific things will you do to prepare for news reporting?

Nani: Practice at home in front of the mirror like it's a camera.

Mrs. Abarca: Tell me how your parents feel about education?

Nani: At my parent/teacher conference, my mom said I did good. It feels good to have her praise me. Mom feels good about my education, and my dad does too, even though he's not always here. My dad is in Iraq. I miss him.

Mrs. Abarca: You must be proud of him.

Nani: Yes, I'm proud of him.

_Nani feels sad. I can feel her mood. It's very emotional. She holds back tears._

Mrs. Abarca: Is that why you are so tough, because you have to be strong?

She nods, "Yes."

Mrs. Abarca: When will your dad be home?

Nani: In June.

March 28th

Setting a Goal for News Reporting and Being Videotaped

"My goal is to do the best I can, because I practiced over the weekend....I get very nervous in front of the camera and quiet down a little. I was videotaped before in second grade, and I was very, very quiet, and my mom had to turn up the volume. So I would like to work on becoming louder when I'm videotaped."
March 29th

_self-Reflection Following Being Videotaped_

“When I was being videotaped, I felt excited and I wasn’t nervous, and I was very loud. When I'm on camera, I sound very different. I sound like I'm a grown woman.”

March 29th

_group Sharing and Reflection_

Mrs. Abarca (to the group): What goal did you set?

Nani: My goal was to become louder when I'm on camera.

Mrs. Abarca: Did you reach that goal?

Nani: Yes.

Mrs. Abarca: How did you reach it?

Nani: I practiced in front of the mirror like it was my audience.

Mrs. Abarca: Good job.

Mrs. Abarca (to the group): Did you feel encouraged by me, did you feel respected?

Nani: Yes, because you care for us.

March 30th

_Final Reflection and Feedback_

Mrs. Abarca: What are you most proud of in your news reporting? Why?
Nani: I am most proud of not being shy anymore because I used to always be shy around people I don't like.

Mrs. Abarca: How do you feel about the newsletter you helped write?
Nani: I feel happy, because I helped write something and I finally did something for the class.

**Teacher Reflection**

Nani seemed to start out with a poor attitude about writing which may have been due in part to not feeling confident about writing. Several different things occurred that seemed to change Nani's attitude. First, the talk we had about how everyone has to work on their writing, that no one starts out being great at it seemed to have a positive impact on her. Secondly Jon's insights into Nani's writing piece gave her confidence a boost. And when she shared the news about her dad, it seemed to release a weight on her shoulders that she had been carrying. It helped Nani to know that I was not only there to teach her, but that I cared about her and supported her as well.

**Laurie**

Laurie lives with her dad. She has an older brother who is 20, a sister who is 17, and a younger sister who is 6 years old. Her dad cares for the family, as mom has left the home. They are at this time not able to contact her mom and Laurie is worried. It is very emotional for her. She is a reflective child and can explain her thinking. She seems to have a good self-concept. She said her
mom taught her a lot about the importance of sharing her feelings and not being afraid. She said her mom gave her confidence. Laurie needs extra assistance with reading comprehension and writing. She likes to read about animals, and likes to watch animal rescue stories on the animal planet network.

Laurie: A Strong Self-Concept

February 7th

Self-Reflection On Writing a Story for the Class Newsletter

“I am going to try and make it my best article that every one has ever read, but I’m also going to try and make it so that it isn’t boring, but exciting so that people are going to read it and I might put some pictures just to make it look nice.”

February 16th

Laurie informed me that Katie, the student she was to interview, was mad at her, so she didn’t know if Katie would agree to be interviewed. I asked Laurie if she wanted me to speak to Katie, and Laurie said, “Yes.” I spoke with Katie and she was willing to be interviewed, so Laurie conducted the interview.

Following Laurie’s Interview with Katie

Mrs. Abarca: How did it feel to interview someone?

Laurie: Kinda fun.
Laurie told me that Katie was mad, because Katie had been passing notes to someone and Laurie told the teacher, so Katie got into trouble. Laurie felt kind of uncomfortable working with Katie, but was willing to go through with the interview. I got a glimpse of Laurie's inner strength that day, when she made a commitment to do something and followed through with it.

February 28th

Mrs. Abarca: What do you think good writing is?

Laurie: I think good writing is when it gets the reader's attention, and when you give good details.

March 6th

"Mrs. Abarca gave me confidence."

March 23rd

Mrs. Abarca: How did I give you confidence?

Laurie: You gave me confidence. I was afraid and shame when I was going to interview.

Mrs. Abarca: When Katie was mad at you, and you still did the interview, that said a lot about you. You already had confidence.

Laurie nods, "Yes."

Mrs. Abarca: Do you think it's important to reflect on your learning?
Laurie: Yes. If I don’t explain, people won’t understand what I mean. It’s important for the other person to understand what I understand.

Mrs. Abarca: Tell me about your family.

Laurie: My dad takes care of us. My mom is a flight attendant. We can’t get in touch with her. My mom told me that it’s important to share my feelings. Mom gave me confidence.

March 29th

Group Sharing and Reflection:

Laurie: When I was going to do my interview, I didn’t want to because the girl I was supposed to interview was mad at me, but Mrs. Abarca talked to me and gave me confidence. At first, I didn’t want to, because I didn’t think I could. After she talked to me, I did the interview.

Mrs. Abarca: How did it turn out?

Laurie: It turned out well.

Mrs. Abarca: To me it showed that you have a good self-concept, because you were willing to interview her even though it was uncomfortable.

Mrs. Abarca (to the group): What goal did you set?

Laurie: A goal I set was that I wanted to try and make it a good newsletter, because if it wasn’t good, then nobody would want to read it.
Teacher Reflection

When I asked Laurie the question, “Do you think it’s important to reflect on your learning?” She replied, “Yes. If I don’t explain, people won’t understand what I mean. It’s important for the other person to understand what I understand.” After having several discussions with Laurie, I believe this idea came from her mother who told her that it was important for Laurie to share her feelings and not keep them inside. Laurie holds the understanding that it is a good thing to share your thoughts and to explain what you mean so that others can understand it as well. As my focus was on how students made meaning of their learning, I found this to be an awesome trait in Laurie.

Laurie seems to have a really good outlook on life, and is a positive person. She’s reflective and explains her thinking well. She will explain why she feels the way she does, before being asked, “Why?” She feels it’s important to share her feelings.

She’s had a lot to deal with after her mom left, and she worries about not being able to contact her. Through all of this, she carries on and lives her life in a positive way.

Laurie said that I had given her confidence, but I explained to her that her confidence was already there. It was important for Laurie to receive assistance and scaffolding so that she could bring it out.
Teacher Reflective Journal

During the project, I kept a journal to reflect on and evaluate the day’s lesson. Although I had a timeline planned out, reflecting after the day’s lesson helped me to adjust my next step according to the students’ needs. In my reflections I would ask important questions that ultimately helped guide my teaching. Sometimes I would continue to reflect on an issue that I didn’t have the answer to but upon persistent reflection I would begin to see things more clearly and therefore be able to evaluate my perspective and refine my thinking. Self-reflection is very useful to the teacher to gain insights that will help to clarify the teacher’s goals and how to achieve them. The following is a reflection that conveyed my thoughts as I worked on the project with the students.

Teacher Reflection

About halfway through my project, I began to panic. Was I gathering the kind of evidence I needed to support my research question? Although the students were self-reflecting and I was conferencing with them to better understand their thinking, I didn’t see profound growth or progress looking at the students’ responses and reflections, and instead often felt several of the students were thinking about their learning on too superficial a level for self-reflection to be of much use to them. They had conveyed the ability to self-reflect, but this in itself did not equate to evidence that students were making meaning of their learning or taking responsibility for their learning.
I began to worry if I would have to change my research question. I began to worry that although I seemed to have given my advisor, Dr. Freese, and second reader, Dr. Bartlett, the idea that I was gathering good data for my study, I was instead going to disappoint them. Had I chosen the wrong vehicle (a class newsletter) for which the students could eloquently convey their thinking about their learning as they went through the writing process?

I turned in a section of my draft to Dr. Freese with some trepidation. It was 17 pages long, including my literature review. I continued to work with my students and gather data. I kept asking myself the question, “Even though the students have shown the ability to self-reflect, and their thinking about their learning is beginning to become more visible to me, does it have any meaning to them?” This was an important question. If reflecting on their learning didn’t hold meaning for the students, how could they feel a responsibility towards their learning? It would be of no use to them. How then would I bridge that gap between my being able to see their thinking through their reflections and the sharing of their thoughts, and them becoming more aware of their own thinking - because it was only then that they could truly take responsibility for their learning, and have that learning have value to them.

Although it was not immediately evident to me, I came to see that the students were indeed making meaning of their learning. I needed to take a closer look at my data. Initially, as I evaluated the data I was compiling, looking at a single activity or a day’s lesson, I realized that I was only gleaning the surface. My teacher reflection and evaluation of the day’s lesson did not in itself
show the students' growth. I was not capturing the essence of the students' learning and thinking. When I began to delve deeper by reading and rereading all the data I had collected searching for themes and evidence of growth in each student, it became evident that there was much more information there than I had initially seen. My data needed to be triangulated. The following are my overall findings.

**Overall Findings**

*Triangulation of Data is Essential*

Gradually as I looked at all the data sources I began to see the distinct journey each student was on. I had gathered data from the students' self-reflections, goal setting, and their thoughts about how they would achieve their goals. I had conducted interviews with each student to get insight into their thinking about their learning in general. I conferenced with them on their writing, and kept a dialogue journal with two of the students. I asked the students what they were interested in, what kinds of books they might like to read, and provided them with books each week that we would sometimes talk about. When I changed my perspective to look at all of the data sources I had gathered, I discovered that each student was on a unique journey. This journey conveyed the development of the student's making meaning of their learning which was supported by evidence in the students' reflective thoughts and responses about learning. The students began to purposefully work on realizing their goals.
A Classroom Community Built on Trust, Mutual Respect and Collaboration is Essential to Set a Foundation For Students to Recognize That What They Think is Valued

The students and I had built our own community within a classroom, as we worked together, supported each other and treated one another with respect. This is essential to set the foundation for students to feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas. I have gone into the classroom and worked with the students since September on a regular basis, first working on my pilot study, then implementing my master's project. The students knew they could count on not only seeing me, but having me work with them, encouraging and praising them. When I asked them what they were interested in learning and reading about, I followed through consistently with bringing the students books that I thought they would enjoy. The following were insights the students shared that supported the notion of the importance of building a classroom community of trust and mutual respect. (I address the notion of student collaboration in the “Students Learn from Each Other,” section.) When I asked the students to tell me how they were respected and encouraged by me this is what they said. Jennie replied, “because you always helped us.” Jon said, “you asked us questions.” Nani said, “because you care for us.” Laurie shared, “you ask us if we want to do something, not tell us.” It was important for the students to recognize that what they think is valued. When students begin to share what they think, they make their thinking visible to the teacher. However, at this point the student's thinking may not be entirely visible to the student. This is an important element needed in
order for the student to be able to make meaning of his/her learning. In order for the teacher to bridge this gap, many opportunities must be created for students to practice and thereby develop higher level thinking skills.

Create Opportunities for Higher Level Thinking to Occur

The teacher creates the opportunities for higher level thinking to occur through the asking of probing questions, teacher scaffolding and providing activities meant to promote and encourage students to reflect and make meaning of their learning. As students become more aware of their thinking, they can begin to purposefully work on their desired goals. Jon initially said he intended to get better at writing by practicing. Jon knew he had to practice to get better, but at that point he didn't recognize the steps he would need to take in order to accomplish this. As he gained insights through reading Nani's writing piece, reading books he enjoyed and being asked probing questions that encouraged him to reflect on his learning, he saw exactly how he wanted to achieve his goal and began to purposefully work on it.

Students Learn From Each Other

The notion of students learning from each other ties in directly with students working collaboratively in a strong classroom community. Troy wrote in his journal on February 9, 2006 following a small group brainstorming session to come up with interview questions, “I don’t really know what to do…..but I think we all came up with good questions because we all helped each other."
Likewise, when the students prepared to be videotaped, Jon and Thomas were partners. I observed Jon taking the lead as he practiced his interview first thereby providing scaffolding for Thomas. Thus Thomas was better prepared to conduct his interview and felt more confident as a result. Although students’ learning from each other in itself doesn’t encourage reflection, collaboration promotes confidence because students gain knowledge from each other.

Inquisitive Questions Encourage Students to Reflect on Their Learning

I saw that the goals the students had set for themselves actually did hold meaning for them, and it was a journey for them to find the answers in order to achieve their individual goals. I learned that the students may not themselves have known how they would achieve their goals in the beginning. It was important not to tell the students how they were going to reach their goals, but rather to provide scaffolding support to guide the students to think more deeply about it. Often I would ask the students probing questions about what they thought, giving them prompts to reflect on. I saw that the quality of information was stronger when I asked thoughtful questions, rather than just having them reflect on for example, their writing. When I asked Troy (whose goal was to become a better reader), “how do you think enjoyment of reading helps you to be a good reader?” He replied that because he enjoys reading, he learns more. He gave an example of learning about vocabulary through reading. He then related it to getting better in math because he also has to learn vocabulary. He made connections to other areas of learning utilizing higher level thinking skills. Troy
had previously shared with me that when he reads, he pictures the scenes in his mind. I asked him to tell me why that was important. He said that when he can picture it in his mind, it makes him want to read even more and makes him even better at reading!

"Effective learning is often associated with learners’ ability to access knowledge, and to regulate, monitor, and take responsibility for their own learning. Students learning is empowered by their reflective, creative, and critical thinking skills." (Wilson & Jan, 1993, p. 7.)

I learned that student self-reflection is a starting point for them to make meaning of their learning. **Self-reflection facilitates their understanding of how they will take action to achieve their goals.**

"Students who are able to use their thinking skills to monitor and improve their own thinking and learning are being metacognitive" (Wilson & Jan, 1993, p. 7). Students who practice this are able to make decisions, choose appropriate strategies or processes for a situation, set their own goals and act on their goals.
Chapter 6

Limitations

This study was limited to six focus students in a fifth grade classroom. As the students were on a multi-track schedule, they had a few lengthy breaks during the school year. The students also had their testing period for a week in March. Instead of teacher conferencing which may have taken more time, I asked probing questions in informal interviews. It should be noted that although there were time constraints, it did not impact the findings of the study.

Implications For The Classroom

The opportunity to work with a small group of students on my master's project was an ideal situation. I was able to provide one to one attention to each student. I learned valuable information about how each of them learned and adjusted my teaching to better meet their needs. In reality, although it would be a challenge to implement this in a whole class setting, it is still within the realm of possibility. I believe strongly in the building of a classroom community where trust, mutual respect and collaboration are valued. This sets the foundation for students to feel comfortable sharing thoughts and to recognize that what they think holds value. Creating opportunities for students to develop higher level thinking skills can be incorporated into classroom activities in all aspect of learning and will encourage students to reflect on their thinking and take action to help themselves reach their goals. As the teacher, It's important to revisit and reflect on the driving questions such as, “are these activities promoting higher
level thinking skills?” “How can I facilitate this?” The questions the teacher asks herself/himself can be used as a guide in deciding what action to take to facilitate students’ learning. The time spent informally interviewing students would need to be well planned as this activity is very time consuming but well worth the effort. I would continue the practice of students working collaboratively in small groups to brainstorm and learn from each other, such as in writer’s workshop, literature circle activities and in other learning groups.

**Conclusion**

As I reflect back on my time in that 2nd grade classroom when my interest in self-reflection was first sparked and I was motivated to learn more about the connection between self-reflection and student learning, I realize that as I walked alongside my students, I too have grown as a teacher. My beliefs about student learning are further grounded by my classroom research.

The classroom teacher’s role in self-reflection is crucial as she/he becomes more aware of how students learn and how they make meaning of what they learn. This knowledge can then be used to adjust one’s teaching. “Follow the students” is a phrase and a belief I carry in my pocket from student teaching. It is a notion I am more deeply aware of as I continue to work with students and learn from them.
References


Christensen, L. (2000.) *Reading, writing and rising up: Teaching about social justice and the power of the written word*. Wisconsin: Rethinking Schools, Ltd.


Showler, J. (2000.) Case study of classroom practice: A “quiet form of
research." The Qualitative Report, volume 5, No. 3 & 4.


Appendices
Appendix A

Dear Parents,

I would like to include your child in a research project that I am carrying out as part of my master's degree program at the University of Hawaii. The study will look at how students make meaning of their learning experiences through self-reflection (thinking about their learning). The information gathered will be used to better understand how your child learns and will be used to guide students, helping them to set literacy goals for themselves and work towards those goals.

I will be working with students within your child's classroom to prepare a class newsletter. As the students work on the newsletter, they will reflect on their learning and thinking. I will conference with students on their reflections to better understand how they learn. This will help me to adjust my teaching to better meet their needs. As part of this project, the students will be videotaped as they report on a news story they have written for the newsletter. The students will view the video of themselves and reflect on what they said and did, what they might want to improve on and what they did well. This activity will give the students further insight into their own learning.

It is my hope that through the students' practicing of self-reflection, they will learn to make meaning of their learning, so that they may develop a sense of ownership in their work, and responsibility for their learning.

Your child's name will not appear on any research reports. Research data will be kept confidential. The University of Hawaii Committee on Human Studies (CHS) has reviewed and approved this research project to be conducted in your child's classroom. (This committee protects the rights of the researcher and the researched by thoroughly reviewing research proposals before allowing the study to be implemented.) The committee has the authority to review any research data collected. Participation in this project is voluntary and involves no unusual risks to your child.

The videotape that will be used in this study will be destroyed immediately following the completion of the project, along with any field notes.

If you have any questions regarding this research project, please contact me at 295-0650. Should you have any questions regarding your child's rights as a research participant, please contact the UH Committee on Human Studies at (808)539-3955.

Sincerely,

Julie Abarca
UH Master of Education Student
Consent Form for Research Participation

Please indicate below your decision regarding your child's participation in this research project. Your child's participation in this research is greatly appreciated.

- Yes, I give my permission for my child, _______________ to participate in the study of How Students Make Meaning of Their Learning Experiences.

I understand that all information regarding my child will be kept confidential, and all records will be destroyed following the completion of the study. My child's name will not appear on any research reports. I may withdraw my consent at any time.

- Yes, I agree to have my child videotaped reporting on a news story as part of this study. The videotape used for this research will be destroyed following the completion of the project.

- No, I do not agree to have my child videotaped.

Please Print Name of Parent/Guardian

________________________________________

Parent/Guardian Signature                   Date

Please return this page to the school in the envelope provided.
Appendix B

Form for Student Research Participation

With your permission, you will be involved in a study about how students make meaning of their learning experiences. You will be working on a class newsletter. As part of this study, you will keep a journal where you will write your thoughts and feelings as you prepare and write the newsletter.

In addition to writing a class newsletter, you will be videotaped as you report on a story (that you wrote in the newsletter). You will have the opportunity to view this videotape and reflect on what you said and did, what you might want to improve on, and what you did well.

It is my hope that this research project will help you to make meaning of your learning, and to use this knowledge to help you in ways that are useful to you, such as setting goals and working towards those goals, and developing an ownership in your learning.

- Yes, I will participate in this research project, involving making a class newsletter, keeping a reflective journal and conferencing.

- No, thank you, I don't wish to participate at this time.

- Yes, I agree to be videotaped as I report on a news story.

- No, I do not agree to be videotaped.

I understand that I may change my mind and withdraw from this research project at any time.

Please Print Your Name

Signature of student

Date
Appendix C

Rubric for Writing Class Newsletter

Meets with Excellence (ME) The writing piece commands and keeps readers’ attention and interest by use of language and the writer’s style to create meaning. A strong sense of the writer’s voice is conveyed in the writing product. The student writes and self-edits using correct grammar, spells with grade-appropriate accuracy and uses correct punctuation with few errors. The writing is well organized, with transitions and a noteworthy conclusion. The student uses feedback suggestions from peer editing and teacher conferencing to fine tune his/her piece.

Meets with Proficiency (MP) The writing piece has strong areas that grab the reader’s attention by use of language and the writer’s style to create meaning. There is a development of the writer’s voice and style evident in the writing product. The student writes and self-edits for grade-appropriate grammar, spelling and punctuation with no significant errors. The writing is organized, with transitions and a conclusion. The student incorporates feedback suggestions from peer editing and teacher conferencing to revise writing to clarify meaning, enliven language, develop voice, and edits for grade-appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Approaching (N) The writing piece grabs readers’ attention at the beginning. There is little attempt to use language to develop the writer’s voice and style to create meaning. The writing is not organized, and lacks transitions and/or a conclusion. The student writes and edits for grade-appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation with a few significant and/or many minor errors. Little attempt is made to incorporate feedback suggestions from peer editing and teacher conferencing.

Below (U) The writing piece does not grab readers’ attention. The writing is disorganized and lacks transitions and/or a conclusion. The student writes and edits for grade-appropriate grammar, spelling and punctuation with many significant errors. No attempt is made to use feedback suggestions from peer editing and teacher conferencing.
Standard 5: WRITING RANGE – Write using various forms to communicate for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Benchmark: Write using forms appropriate to purpose and topic.

Performance Indicators: 1. Communicates information or persuades in an appropriate form (e.g. news story, editorial, explanation, report, summary, brochure, poster, interview). 2. Presents ideas creatively through poems, plays, and stories.

Standard 6: WRITING: COMPOSING PROCESSES – Use writing processes and strategies appropriately and as needed to construct meaning and communicate effectively.

Benchmark: Use feedback from others to revise and edit writing.

Performance Indicators: Considers feedback from others. Revises writing to clarify meaning, enliven the language. Proofreads and edits text for common errors in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation.

Benchmark: Publish – in a variety of ways- selected finished products.

Performance Indicators: Produces a final draft suitable for classroom or other publication.

Standard 8: WRITING RHETORIC - Use rhetorical devices to craft writing appropriate to audience and purpose.

Benchmark: Reveal the writer's developing voice and style

Performance Indicators: Reveals an individual who is committed to the topic and gaining confidence as a writer.

Assessment Task: Students will conduct interviews and write news stories, while developing their writer's voice and style. Students will do peer editing and teacher conferencing to get feedback on writing to clarify meaning, enliven language, and to edit for common grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors. The stories will be published in a class newsletter.
Appendix D

Peer Editing

To assist a peer in the revision and editing process, ask these questions as you are reading his/her story to help in giving feedback and suggestions.

Meaning

1. Does it make sense?
2. Are there significant details and information that give the story interest and meaning? Add your peer comments.

Voice and Audience

1. Is the writer’s voice evident? How?
2. Is it written in an interesting way for the intended audience? (Peers, our parents, our teacher).

Clarity (word choice and sentence structure)

1. Is the writing creative? How?
2. Are these great word choices? (Could you think of another word?) Write it in as you peer edit.
3. Are the sentences well structured for the type of writing we intend? (entertaining). (Could you make a suggestion?) Write it in where you think the sentence could be written differently.

Design

1. Does the beginning pull the reader in?
2. Is the story written in an interesting and creative way?
3. Is the reader’s interest held throughout the story?
4. Does the writing have a good ending?

Conventions

1. Is spelling correct?
2. Is punctuation used in each sentence?
3. Are capital letters used appropriately?
Appendix E

Transcript of Group Sharing

Laurie: When I was going to do my interview, I didn’t want to because the girl I was supposed to interview was mad at me, but Mrs. Abarca talked to me and gave me confidence. At first I didn’t want to do it, because I didn’t think I could do it. After she talked to me, I did the interview.

Mrs. A: And how did it turn out?

Laurie: It turned out well.

Mrs. A: To me it showed that you had a good self concept, because you were willing to interview Katie, even though it was uncomfortable.

Mrs. A: Jon, please share when you peer edited. You had an epiphany.

Jon: When I read Nani’s piece, I wanted to write mine like hers, like a story.

Mrs. A: How much did you end up writing?

Jon: A lot.

Mrs. A: Who else would like to share, how about you, Thomas? Do you want to say something about your interview with Kim?

Thomas: It was fun to interview Kim.

Mrs. A: Okay, What goals did you set?

Laurie: A goal that I set was that I wanted to try and make it a good newsletter, cuz if it wasn’t good, then nobody would want to read it. So I tried my best in making it.

Mrs. A: Good job. Who else wants to talk about their goals?
Jennie: My goal was not to be nervous when I interview on videotape, because I was nervous when I did my first interview.

Mrs. A: Did you reach your goal?

Jennie: Yes.

Mrs. A: What did you do to reach that goal? You guys listen, because this is an important strategy.

Jennie: I practiced. I practiced in front of my family, like 10 times.

Mrs. A: You guys that's a really good strategy to use – to practice first if you feel nervous about doing something. Awesome. She did a great job, right? Okay, who's next?

Nani: My goal is to become louder.

Mrs. A: Did you reach that goal?

Nani: Yeah.

Mrs. A: How did you reach it?

Nani: I practiced. I practiced in front of the mirror.

Mrs. A: Good job. That's a really good tool. Okay, does anybody else want to share their goal?

Jon: My goal was to get better at writing.

Thomas: Me too.

Mrs. A: Do you feel that it's an ongoing process? Or did you reach that goal of getting better in writing?

Jon: Kinda.

Thomas: Almost.
Mrs. A: Do you feel better about your writing now?

Jon: Yes.

Mrs. A: Tell why you feel better about it.

Jon: Cuz now my writing is……more organized.

Mrs. A: Last question. How did it feel now, in the end, to be a part of this whole project?

Jennie: So excited.

Troy: Happy.

Jennie: Nervous.

Jon: I feel more confident.

Jennie: Yeah.

Mrs. A: Confident.

Jon: Yeah, because you had to ask people questions. I felt like a detective.

Laurie: I felt happy, because I got confidence from you. Before I didn’t want to do it because, because I knew that I couldn’t, but then you gave me confidence and courage.

Mrs. A: Did you guys have respect from everybody in the group?

They answer, “Yeah.”

Did you guys feel respect from Mrs. Abarca?

They answer “Yes.”

Mrs. A: Did you feel encouraged by me?

They nod yes

Mrs. A: Okay, tell me how Mrs. Abarca respected you.
Jennie: Because you always help us.

Jon: You asked us questions.

Nani: Because you care for us.

Laurie: Working with Mrs. A is fun because, it's not like you're giving us information, but you act like you're our friend, you know how our friends talk to us, that's how you talk to us, not just like a teacher.

Laurie: It's not something that you're telling us. You ask us if we want to do something, not tell us.

Jennie: It's fun working with you because....

Jon: If I write only a few sentences, you help me write more.

Thomas: I felt 'courage by Mrs. A helping me with my writing.
Appendix F

First Name________________________________ Date____________________

Videotaping of News Report

1. What did you do well?

2. What could you improve on?

3. What are you most proud of? Why?

4. Reflect on your goal for news reporting - did you achieve it? How?

Newsletter

1. How do you feel about the newsletter you helped write?

2. What reaction did you get from your classmates about the newsletter?

3. Reflect on your goal for the newsletter - did you achieve it? How?
Jon’s Interview with Illustrator, Sam
In February I interviewed Sam. I found out that the villain of his cartoon was Bowser. Their weapons are boots and hammers. Sam told me he got his idea from playing Mario and Luigi games. Sam told me Mario and Luigi had to try and save the magnificent beautiful Princess Peach in the story. Sam was inspired to draw this Mario picture because of his love of drawing. The title of Sam’s magnificent drawing is Mario Bros. The story starts out when Bowser takes away Princess Peach. Mario and Luigi are ready to take their hammers and boots and set off on their quest. To get there, they had to battle tough and intense monsters such as the gruesome and terrifying Goumbas, as well as the flying missiles and swift swimming piranhas! Mario and Luigi arrive at the terrifying, jaw breaking, dark, evil Bowser Castle, when all of a sudden ‘Aaaaaahhhhh!! Someone help! Help!’ yells Princess Peach and then a voice said, “Mario! Luigi! You will perish! Goumbas attack! Piranhas bite! Missiles fire! Rrrrraaaaaa!!” as the epic battle began. “Pow! Bam! Kapow! Rraa!” Mario and Luigi beat everyone except for Bowser. Mario and Luigi tried one last time but couldn’t get him. Then, a muscular Goumba attacked and hurt Luigi. Luigi fought back but was beaten. Mario stepped in and attacked the Goumba in fury, but Bowser blew fire and crawled back in his shell. Mario dodged a tail whip and hit back. They were equally matched, but “Wham!” Mario won and saved Princess Peach. After Mario and Luigi beat Bowser, they went to the Mushroom Kingdom and Mario and Luigi became plumbers known everywhere around the lands.

Reality, A True Story
By Leila
On a Sunday night, I went to a competition at Don Ho’s Island Grill. My family came to watch me sing in front of a lot of people. The song I sang was, The Greatest Love of All. I sang my heart out, because I really wanted to win. My best friend, Suzi, and I had to go against each other in the competition. Even though she is my friend, I had to try and beat her. When I sang my song, I felt so excited. My dad told me to give it my all, so I did. I sang it better than ever. When my friend Suzi sang, I was really surprised and I thought I didn’t have a chance. When they announced the winner, The Greatest Love of All, Leila E., I was really surprised! I was so nervous. I can’t believe I won. I will never forget that day. I also can’t believe I beat my best friend who is a really good singer. I am so happy.

Here’s Nani’s Interview with Leila!
It happened on a Sunday night, when Leila went to a competition at Don Ho’s Island Grill. She was competing in a singing competition. Flashback
It took Leila couple of months to prepare for the competition. She was competing against her best friend and her friend was very hard to beat.
The night of the competition
Finally, the Sunday night came and Leila was really nervous. Her dad came in and told her, “Give it your all!”
Then, her name was announced and she got up on the stage and did what her dad told her to do, she gave it her all. Leila felt very excited when she was singing. I’ve personally heard her sing before and she was really good!
Leila was waiting nervously as they announced the winner, and guess what they said, “The winner is Leila E. who sang, The Greatest Love Of All!” I knew she was going to win, because I believed in her.
A Horrendous Mishap On A Dark
And Stormy Night
By Matt

One dark and stormy night, I was dancing to
my favorite show, Barney. When the show was
over, BOOM, it happened! There was blood all
over the floor and I immediately was rushed to
the hospital. The next thing I knew, they were
sewing my head back together and it hurt like
FIRE! The medication must have put me out,
because when I woke up, I had bandages over
my head. Then, when I looked up, they were
putting blood into my body. When everything
was normal, they let me go home, but they said I
was going to have to rest for a while. Anyways,
when the healing was done and they took out my
stitches, I was back dancing to my favorite show,
Barney. I learned my lesson and it was a good
one, too.

Here’s Jennie’s Interview with Matt!

I sat down with Matt and interviewed him. I
asked him questions about his story, and this is
what I found out!

Matt was four years old when this happened
and he was dancing to Barney. He was so
excited, that he turned over a stool and went
inside of it! Just picture Matt dancing inside the
stool! While he was having fun, the stool
accidentally tipped over and he fell on his head!

When his parents saw what had happened to
him, they carried him to the car and drove to the
emergency room! Matt had fifteen stitches! He
said that it really hurt and it took two weeks to
heal.

Although Matt continued to dance to Barney,
he had learned a big lesson that day, and never
played in the stool again!

Jennie says, “Matt, that was
quite a story!”

Jokes of the Month

Doctor: You need new glasses.
Patient: How can you tell? I haven’t told you
what’s wrong with me yet.
Doctor: I could tell as soon as you walked in
through the window!

What has no beginning, no end and no
middle?
Answer: A doughnut!

What falls without getting hurt?
Answer: Rain.
My Accident, a True Incident
By Kim

One day on Thanksgiving 2003, I was getting ready to go to the theater with my family to see Harry Potter, Chamber of Secrets. My mom opened the fridge door, as I was being chased by my older brother. Well, I banged the corner of the fridge door and hit my eyebrow! I was bleeding so much, we had to go to the hospital! At the hospital, my head was numbed, then the doctor sewed up my cut with a needle. When it was all over, I felt a little dizzy as I got off the hospital bed. The doctor said to come back in a few weeks to remove the bandage.

I felt relieved, and my mom did too, grateful that I was safe and okay. After that, my family and I went to the theater in one piece, hoping no more accidents happened!

Here’s Thomas’ Interview with Kim!

When Kim was seven years old, she kicked her brother and found out that was a mistake! Her brother got mad and started chasing her! The two were running into the kitchen when all of a sudden, her mom opened the fridge door and Kim hit her right eyebrow on the door and there was blood everywhere! Her mom called 911 and the ambulance arrived and drove her to the hospital. Her mom was worried that she would only have one eye. When she got to the emergency room, her head was numbed. It took about two hours to sew her eyebrow, but it was not sore at all. When the doctor was done sewing her eyebrow, they went to the movie. Later, after it healed, she had a tiny scar.

Kim had learned her lesson not to kick her brother or run in the house anymore! She did not want any more accidents! She wanted to be safe from then on, and that was the end of the story!

Laurie’s Interview with Illustrator, Katie!

I sat down with Katie and I interviewed her on her interesting drawing. The first question I asked her was, “How did you come up with the name Chi- Bi- Ma- Ru?” She said, “I went shopping and I looked in the store window and I saw the name.” Another question I asked her was, “How did you come up with the idea of drawing a dog?” Katie said, “I was reading this book and there was a dog on the cover and I wanted to see if I could draw it and I finally did!” The last question I asked Katie was, “When you grow up, do you want to be an artist?” I wondered this, because I thought the drawing was amazing. I thought she would have said ‘yes’, but she said, “No, I don’t want to be an artist. When I grow up, I want to be a pediatrician.”

I found out that when Katie goes out and she sees something she likes, she keeps it in her head. Then, when she has a chance to draw, she puts it into her drawing. That is terrific!

Announcements From Your Teacher

Spring Recess: 
April 3-6

Intersession:
April 7-21

Camp Erdman:
May 8-10

Track Meet:
May 12

At's Attack of the Aliens!

Bradley’s Alien Invasion!
Our Staff Writers and Interviewers!

Jennie
Laurie
Nani
Troy
Thomas
Jon

Stories and Drawings were submitted by

Bradley        Nani
Sam            Laurie
Leila          Jennie
Matt           Jon
Kim            AJ
Katie          Robert
June

Robert's depiction of a News report of an alien attack!

Laurie wants to be a Dolphin Trainer when she grows up.

"Hey Sam, Who's Bowser?"
Drawing by Jon