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Writing-to-learn and teacher transformation in an inquiry-based teacher education program

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WRITING-TO-LEARN AND TEACHER TRANSFORMATION IN AN INQUIRY-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION IN CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION AUGUST 1994

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how eight novice teachers in an inquiry-based teacher education program used writing in the lessons they created and in making sense of their own learning. The study used the following qualitative research techniques: (1) participant observation, (2) formal, informal, and focus group interviews, and (3) document analysis of journals, lesson plans, autobiographical essays, as well as student texts.

Negotiating their lessons in the real world of public schools, these novices discovered writing-teacher survival strategies (such as the importance of meticulous planning). One teacher summed up this conclusion as follows: "The more unstructured the activity, the more the teacher has to prepare for it." There were more writing-to-learn success stories than stories of failure. Of the eight volunteers who began the study, three experienced difficulty teaching and/or personal events that eventually caused them to drop out of the program. The other five surprised me with their success in teaching with writing, in using writing for personal growth, and in coming to see themselves as writers—even two women who entered the program with severe writing apprehension.

But in two years of working closely with them as participant researcher, I saw these teachers—in both elementary and high school classes—putting writing to
different uses. These uses stemmed from their own conceptions of the value and purpose of writing, which, in turn, grew out of their very different personal histories and images of themselves as writers. These differences, for the most part, produced positive results. Watching them experiment with classroom writing, I learned that, within the parameters of the writing process classroom, there is no one right way to teach writing or to teach content with writing.

I also learned that writing is not a panacea. It's what we write about that leads to inquiry, creativity, problem finding and solving. Writing can be a powerful tool for constructing one's own learning. But it's the way the "writing process" is implemented--the resulting class climate, the teachers' modeling the belief that students are already writers--that empowers students to take ownership of their own learning.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Part 1: Introduction

The University of Hawaii's Masters of Education in Teaching (MET) Program is based on a problem-finding, inquiry approach to learning and committed to what John Goodlad (1990A) calls "reforming the schools from within." The program was developed as part of the Holmes Group, a coalition of school/university partnerships promoting post graduate teacher preparation, with preservice teachers trained to function as agents of change and learning in the context of schools.

Early in this program's first semester of operation, I began observing the first cohort of students, 25 pioneers who hoped to earn teaching certification and Masters Degrees while working directly in Hawaii's public school classrooms. At the time I was searching for alternatives to traditional teacher training models. I was also searching for a possible dissertation topic. This new program filled me with school renewal optimism, which its students seemed to share.

As a group the MET students and professors exuded a missionary zeal to move beyond what they called the "traditional paradigm" of instruction. Their course work, in seminars and small inquiry groups, was an ongoing campaign for student-centered, process-centered, constructivist approaches to learning, emphasizing whole language,
integrated curricula, and concept-based mathematics, science, and social studies. Their professors promoted a vision of instruction (based on inquiry, problem finding and solving, and collaboration) that is different from the way learning in public schools has frequently been described in the literature (Glasser, 1990; Goodlad, 1984; Langer & Applebee, 1987; Sizer, 1991)—and, closer to home, was different from much of the teaching and learning they were observing in the public schools to which they were assigned.

Sitting in on these early seminars, it occurred to me that writing could serve as a crucial tool in the MET problem-based enterprise. According to Bissex (1987):

It is no accident that the notion of teacher-researchers grew out of writing projects that actively engaged teachers in doing what they taught. And whatever our subject matter, isn’t it learning that we teach? Just as classrooms become writing workshops, they also become learning workshops, where both teachers and students see themselves as learners...where teachers ask questions of themselves as well as of students, where teachers are models of learners (p.4).

I saw a connection between the MET’s inquiry-based, instruction and expanded uses of classroom writing in all disciplines, not just the one we call Language Arts. This is not a new idea. Just as John Dewey has been called "the presiding ghost" at early writing-across-the-curriculum workshops (Herrington & Moran, 1992, p. 235), Dewey also seemed to function as presiding ghost at the MET seminars I was visiting. And writing-to-learn seemed to be directly related to the constructivist, inquiry-based learning the
According to William Zinsser (1988), a New York Times writer and recent proponent of writing-across-the-curriculum:

> Probably no subject is too hard if people take the time to think and write and read clearly. Maybe, in fact, it's time to redefine the 'three R's'—they should be reading, 'riting, and reasoning. Together they add up to learning. It's by writing about a subject we're trying to learn that we reason our way to what it means (p.22).

Although the MET Program did not specifically address the curricular approaches known as writing-to-learn, it seemed to me that writing would function as classroom staple in these novices' "new paradigm" classrooms, from kindergarten to high school algebra, and that it could also serve as a valuable tool for reflection on their own emerging pedagogical world views.

**Part 2: The Writing-to-Learn Support Group**

In January, 1992, I offered a writing-to-learn study/support group for interested MET students. Eight students volunteered, five future elementary teachers and three future high school teachers. All eight volunteered to join the group (and this dissertation study) because they cared about writing; some because they enjoyed it and thought they were good at it; some because they thought they were not—and were concerned about passing on their own writing apprehension to their students. All eight committed themselves to exploring the uses of classroom writing activities as they moved from observing classes and
presenting occasional lessons (their second semester), to student teaching (their third semester), and finally to full-time, paid intern positions (their fourth semester) in Hawaii's public schools. This study recorded and interpreted their experiences from November of 1991 to May of 1993.

Working with them as a participant researcher, I wanted to study how they would use writing in the lessons they created and in making sense of their own experiences in the journals and other autobiographical writings required by the program.

Self-reflection was an important component of the MET model, and journals, which became a valuable data source for me, were required for the portfolio assessment on which these students' final grades would be based. One goal for the journals was to help these novices begin to function as problem finders and agents of change. This image of the reflective practitioner is not a new one (Dewey, 1904; Schon, 1983). Dewey (1904) called for the "habit of reflection" on the part of teachers, a practice of constantly questioning existing educational norms and exploring alternatives. MET program planners were hoping that these students would question the schooling status quo in the ways Dewey described. For the purposes of this study, I was interested in how they would put this questioning on paper, just as Kate, one of the volunteers, has done in the quote below. Her journal entry, written during her first
semester, illustrates how keenly this preservice teacher was aware of Dewey's questioning stance. She also knew in advance that this questioning carries with it an invitation (if not an obligation) to make things better—and that there can be painful consequence to such actions.

In recent years I had abandoned my questioning stance about many issues. I felt strange taking it up again. In many ways, to question is to upset your world, sometimes a world that is carefully constructed to keep the chaos without from coming in. To question something implies subsequent action. However, this can also bring down the wrath of an unsympathetic public. That's why it's so scary to think.

But for those of us who worked together during those three semesters, there was also an upbeat side to this stance, which Kate describes in another entry.

I have often kept myself awake at nights thinking over ways I could have done a lesson better or about something that was said or done in the name of teaching. I have felt a kind of renewal, a coming alive of possibilities, a richness in the fabric of life.

In addition to their problem-finding function, the journals were also intended to enhance the self-knowledge of these fledgling practitioners, an approach that has substantial support in the teacher training literature. According to Bullough, Knowles, Gary, and Crow, (1989), we need to shift our emphasis in preparing teachers and begin to foster more "consistent, grounded, and accurate understandings of themselves as teachers" as well as "how teaching and the teacher role is understood" by novices (p.231).
In terms of this study, I wanted to see how the members of our group would use their journals to shape both teacher and writer identities for themselves. One of my assumptions was that teachers' attitudes about writing influence their teaching and that these attitudes are often rooted in past experiences with writing and with schooling, in images they have already constructed of themselves as writers. I wondered how these images and attitudes would shape the kinds of writing teachers they would become.

According to Zancanella (1988) who conducted a similar study of relationships between teachers’ personal approaches to literature and their teaching of literature:

The attitudes, values, and enthusiasms teachers bring to their classrooms are born less of their formal understanding of the structures of the subject matter than of their informal, intuitive sense of what the reading of literature involves and of the role it plays in their lives (p. 6).

Zancanella (1988) argues us that unlike algebra teachers, "literature teachers have a relationship with literature which precedes their teaching lives and stretches beyond the classroom walls" (p. 2).

Clearly, the same is true for writing teachers, who start their careers by being writers (or non-writers) themselves. According to Donald Graves (1975),

The writing process is as variable and unique as the individual’s personality (p. 227).

Graves based this observation on his own research with seven-year olds learning to write. His landmark study has
prompted research with a variety of age groups on how the writing process is influenced by personality variables (Jensen et al, 1989; Perl, 1979).

For my study of writers (and non-writers) becoming teachers of writing, I wanted to explore a complex interplay of connections—between personal history, personality, theory, and practice. The following questions guided my initial efforts to define these connections.

1. What images of themselves as writers did these students begin the program with?

2. What were their understandings of the nature of writing and the value of teaching writing?

3. What were their perceptions of how writing should best be used and taught and how did these change over time?

4. How were these perceptions influenced by personal history-based beliefs and by their images of themselves as writers?

5. How were theory and practice related? In other words, how were these perceptions about writing manifested in the classroom?

6. How did they themselves use writing to reflect on their own practice and growth?

7. What was the impact of our study group and continued association in helping them to be more successful in teaching with writing?

8. What was the impact of the MET experience (including the classroom experience) on their perceptions of the uses of classroom writing.

In terms of that crucial transition from theory to practice, I wanted to look at how the school culture might affect (or perhaps limit) the ways that these novices translated their own perceptions of the uses of classroom
writing into actual writing lessons. At the outset I was also very interested in the impact of their writing-to-learn approaches on seasoned teachers in the schools they were assigned to. Caught up in the MET missionary zeal, I hoped to see these eight novices changing their schools from within and using writing as a tool.

But I soon realized that this story would constitute a whole other dissertation. And while the subjects' influence on their cooperating teachers was often significant—even inspiring—I had to keep my focus on the novices themselves.

A "writing autobiography" interview, administered at the start of the study, included questions about these novice teachers' backgrounds, past experiences with writing, images of themselves as writers, and knowledge and beliefs about the purpose and practices of teaching with writing. The subjects had already taken the Miller Daly Writing Apprehension Test and written a brief account of their own experiences with writing and plans for teaching with writing. They then wrote their own metaphors for writing, which helped fill out the picture of their self-concepts as writers and their understandings of the nature and purposes of the writing task.

Early review of this data revealed that while all eight novices agreed on the importance of classroom writing and planned to use writing activities frequently, they differed
in their perceptions of what it means to be a good writer and a good teacher of writing.

During our first semester together (the second semester of their program), the eight volunteers and I met regularly to talk about writing, teaching, and learning. We also met individually, conducting at least one "planning-observation-reflection" cycle with each student (Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987). I talked with them about their plans for a writing lesson and then observed the lesson and wrote a detailed transcript, which was shared and discussed. But my role as mentor went beyond sharing feedback and research findings on writing activities that work. Just as important, both for my study and for their own development as teachers, our focus on writing provided a mechanism for sustained reflection. Our support group provided a time and place for this reflection, and I acted as a kind of catalyst—to keep the dialogue going, to help them tell one another how they felt about themselves as writers, as teachers, as learners, as agents of change. The students set their own research agenda, determining, for the most part, which issues and approaches they wanted to explore. At the end of this semester, one student summed up our experience in the following journal entry:

The group made me think about my writing...I never realized that my main "thing" with writing is for self-expression. I received a lot of moral support from the members in the group. Kate shared her notes from a Waianae Elementary School visitation with me...it was a writing exercise.
Sue and Lee saved my life by giving me the idea for the Diamante poetry lesson. Our group seems to disregard the usual boundaries of Elementary/Secondary.

During their third and fourth semesters we continued to meet, though less frequently, and I visited each of their classrooms at least once. But early in their third (student teaching) semester, I narrowed my focus, concentrating on three of the novices working in the elementary grades, Kate, Ann, and Lee. These became the three single case studies in the dissertation. During this semester and most of the next, I visited these three teachers' classes frequently, met with them, and talked with them on the phone regularly.

Their stories, presented in the dissertation's three contrasting case studies, describe the passage from graduate student to novice teacher through their eyes: how they originally viewed themselves as writers, their understandings about writing and teaching with writing, the classroom writing they attempted at different stages of their transition, how both their attitudes and teaching practices were affected by the schools in which they worked and by our writing-to-learn support group, how they used their own journals to reflect on their experiences, and, finally, how they came to see themselves as teachers, as writers, and as agents of change. This dissertation also contains a case study of our writing-to-learn group and how it functioned as an adjunct to the MET seminars.
To inquire into the experiences of these novice teachers, the study used the following qualitative research techniques: (1) participant observation, (2) formal, informal, and focus group interviews, and (3) document analysis of journals, lesson plans, and autobiographical essays and of student texts, including student journals. These research techniques are described specifically in chapter three.

Part 3: Definition of Terms

Inquiry-based Teacher Education

Inquiry-based programs such as the MET emphasize interdisciplinary instruction in the context of the public schools, with preservice teachers identifying issues and problems in the schools they are assigned to and conducting action research in small inquiry groups. They are guided by College of Education instructors, who work in partnership with the school personnel and with the student teachers. Key components of this four-semester internship include: 1. integration of theory and practice, 2: collaboration, 3: inquiry-based learning, and 4: self-reflection.

Social Constructivist Learning Theory

Social Constructivism--a theory that underlies the MET approach to curriculum and instruction--is based on the belief that people learn best when they are able to build relationships and make their own connections among concepts. Dialog is seen as central to this process, with learning
shaped by social interactions and by the values and beliefs of the communities we live in.

**Writing-to-learn**

Consistent with the MET focus on constructivist learning, theories of writing and learning suggest that students do a better job of understanding and remembering what they say or write in their own words, that frequent classroom writing allows them to connect new information with what they already know, to move beyond facts to larger issues, to wrestle with ideas in a kind of inner dialogue, and to convey these ideas to others with different perspectives, further shaping our learning (Bayer, 1990; Britton, 1972; Flower, 1979; Emig, 1971; Perl, 1979, 1980; Zinsser, 1988). Such approaches have been called in the literature by a variety of terms, among them "process writing," "inquiry writing," "writing-to-learn," "discovery writing," and "writing across the curriculum." They all refer to an umbrella movement that is being operationalized in different ways and under different rubrics. "Writing-across-the-curriculum," for example, has been institutionalized in writing programs, especially at college level, which emphasize frequent writing (often in the form of learning logs) in a wide range of courses, including mathematics and science, with the instructor acting as mentor and model in the new discourse.
According to Routman (1991), writing to learn can be defined as "short, spontaneous, unedited, exploratory, personal writing that's not used to affect an audience but to channel, crystallize, record, direct, or guide a person's thinking" (p. 67). In this dissertation I use the terms "writing-to-learn" and "discovery writing" to focus on writing as a tool in the broader enterprise of learning (not as a way to drill a set of writing skills or produce grammatically-perfect texts). I occasionally use the term "process writing" to suggest the different stages a particular text goes through, often including peer feedback and redrafting (instead of the traditional focus on a final product that was graded by the teacher examiner).

Part 4: Rationale for the Study

There are good reasons for exploring ways of helping novice teachers to be more successful in teaching writing and teaching with writing. But studies of schools indicate that these activities are difficult for overburdened teachers to manage. For one thing, students tend to resist the complexity and risk of such inquiry-based assignments (Anderson et al., 1990; Cuban, 1990; Doyle, 1983; McCarthy, 1987; Nelson, 1990; Nespor, 1987). Furthermore, many teachers find it difficult to allow students ownership of their own ideas, for this "letting go" requires them to move beyond their traditional roles as transmitters of knowledge, dedicated to covering the course material (Applebee, 1987;

For these and other reasons, observers have seen little discovery writing being employed in schools (Applebee, 1987; Britton, 1972, Goodlad, 1984, Sizer, 1991). Indeed, Applebee’s (1987) study showed students writing texts of at least a paragraph in length only 3% of the time. Even then the writing usually took the form of a summary of someone else’s ideas, used by teachers for evaluation purposes and not by students as a tool for learning. Some critics have suggested that this failure to teach "real" writing—the kind that Zinsser (1988) describes as reasoning our way on to new understandings—is connected to the way schools are structured and the tremendous cognitive, physical, and emotional workload imposed on teachers (Goodlad, 1984; Palonsky, 1986; Sizer, 1991; Raywid, 1989).

Doyle (1983) calls writing "among the most complex of mental activities" (p.172), and Zinsser (1988) states that "there’s almost no pedagogical task harder and more tiring than teaching somebody to write" (p.13). Yet many preservice teachers receive little instruction in this component of the Zinsser’s "three R’s."

A recent study by the National Center for Research on Teacher Education (1991) states:

Virtually every prospective teacher who plans to teach writing has been taught writing through a different method than the method that teacher educators now advocate; that is, teachers learned
the conventions of writing, but have not learned to use writing to formulate and develop their own ideas to communicate them to particular audiences (p. 35).

This same study found that based on such past conditioning, the preservice teachers in their sample tended to believe that students must learn the conventions and mechanics of writing (such as parts of speech) before they can be allowed to generate texts of their own (1991), a belief that runs counter to the body of recent writing research.

Studies of teacher socialization indicate that even teachers trained in inquiry learning often revert to the earlier models provided by their own teachers (Goodlad, 1990A, Lanier & Little, 1986). Such models are familiar and comfortable to novices fighting to keep their heads above water during that first sink-or-swim year of teaching. While teachers may begin their careers with high idealism (as did all eight volunteers for this study), they often shift to a concern, even an obsession, with classroom management-- an obsession which can preclude the more interactive writing activities that the MET program and our study group were promoting (Hollingsworth, 1989; Zancanella, 1988).

The National Center for Research on Teaching (1991) suggests that "even though research has made great strides in defining better ways to teach writing, very little is still known about how to teach the teaching of writing" (p.
As a profession, we are not even sure what good pedagogical content knowledge for writing would look like—or if there is such a thing.

A fundamental belief of the Bay Area Writing Project (BAWP), a grassroots teacher inservice program that has since become the National Writing Project, is that teachers of writing must they themselves write (Silberman, 1989). Yet in my own thirty years in schools, I have known few teachers, even English teachers, who engaged in their own writing or saw themselves as writers. Most teachers seem nervous when forced to write a memo or proposal that colleagues will see, and there are almost always jokes about getting the red pencils ready. As a BAWP convert, I always wondered if one reason I was so comfortable teaching with writing was that I did think of myself as a writer.

I was therefore very interested in these novices’ images of themselves as writers, especially those who had negative images, who faced writing with fear and trepidation. The study traces how (and if) they came to see themselves as writers in the course of the three semesters. It also explores the kinds of content and procedural knowledge that teachers of writing need to master as well as the ways writing-to-learn is negotiated in the real world of public schools.

In the words of Kate, one of the case study teachers, the portraits of exemplary writing instruction in the
literature, often set in ethnically-homogeneous Maine or New Hampshire, appeared to be too "seamless" (Atwell, 1986; Graves, 1975).) In Hawaii’s ethnically-diverse classes, I wanted to see how the three novice high school teachers would manage to teach writing to six classes, 180-200 students a day, the typical work load. I also wanted to know how the elementary teachers would maintain a process writing/integrated curriculum approach with constantly shifting class populations (i.e., due to pull out programs such as ESL, gifted, and Chapter One classes).

The case studies provide examples of survival strategies these teachers discovered along the way, and in Chapter Seven, the group members themselves helped generate some recommendations for helping teachers to be more successful in making writing a classroom staple.

We need to learn more about writing survival strategies such as these, because teaching writing (and teaching with writing) so often appears in the literature as a doomed enterprise (notwithstanding the New Hampshire successes). Langer and Applebee (1987), after a massive study of discovery writing in the schools, came to the following unhappy conclusion: "To summarize bluntly, given traditional notions of instruction, it may be impossible to implement successfully the approaches we have championed" (p.139). Palonsky (1986) specifically describes the oppressive effects of school culture as follows:
Everywhere, researchers find dull, lifeless classes; the absence of an academic focus; bored, unchallenged students; teachers mired in routine and paperwork....Experienced teachers seem less interested in academic content, less willing to take risks and teach about controversial issues than they were as undergraduates. There is something about the culture of the school that serves to discourage teachers (Palonsky, 1986, p.187).

Better information is needed about what discourages teachers from attempting and maintaining complex learning tasks such as writing-to-learn. Given the tremendous demands on classroom teachers, the cognitive difficulty of the writing task itself, and the fact that many teachers have little experience with and confidence in their own writing, we need to explore ways to overcome these barriers to improving instruction.

But until recently educational research (including research on classroom writing) has focused on particular interventions, failing to account for teachers' personal histories and underlying attitudes and how they might affect classroom decisions, also failing to provide rich descriptions of good teaching and why it works.

Within the context of their classroom experiences, this study considers these novices' attitudes toward writing and the teaching of writing, the deepest (and most elusive) layer of what Goodlad (1990, A) calls "the "richly-layered context within which teaching decisions are made" (p.19). Other studies have examined attitudes, practices, and teacher training, but separately, not in concert. Some have
looked at teachers' attitudes and understandings, but have not looked at them in relation to actual teaching decisions (Zancanella, 1988).

This study, about the intersection of individual perceptions, training, and the real or implied limits of what teachers can do, hopes to provide such thick descriptions.

The National Council for the Teaching of English (Stotsky, S., 1992) has called for "ethnographic studies of the teaching and learning activities taught in courses taken by preservice teachers" and studies of "what those would-be or practicing teachers that we teach do in the classrooms" (p.247). This study also provides insight into that crucial transition from student teaching to full time teaching, and specifically, into difficulties faced by those committed to teaching with writing.

A recent article by Reynolds (1992) asks the question: "How well must beginning teachers execute the tasks of teaching, that is, what do exemplars of competent beginning teachers look like?" (p. 26).

To provide such exemplars in the field of writing instruction, Moffet suggests the use of case studies in his forward to Perl and Wilson's (1986) portraits of six writing teachers in a book called Through Teachers' Eyes. He suggests that this approach is similar to the way cases are used in business, medicine, and law "to develop professional
understanding about how to handle real situations" (p. xi).

Assuming the value of the process approach to teaching writing, the researchers set down the ins and outs, the twists and turns of this approach so as to understand better what it entails, what can go wrong, and what makes it work....It raises questions about what a process approach to writing actually is, whether it always succeeds, and whether teachers are attracted to it for personal reasons they will have to come to grips with (1986, p. xi).

Like Perl and Wilson's (1986) portraits of experienced teachers learning to teach with writing, my portraits of novice writing teachers are intended not to provide specific solutions to teaching with writing but to help us better understand the process and the people engaged in it. It is hoped that these portraits will provide insight into Goodlad's (1990,A) "richly-layered context" of a writing teacher's initiation.

As teacher educators, we have not explored the kinds of training that will move preservice teachers beyond their own socialization in schools that offered them few opportunities for writing themselves. We have not explored ways of helping them be successful as teachers of writing, in spite of the formidable obstacles described in the literature. The writing-to-learn support group for preservice teachers described in this study may provide a model for this kind of training, an approach that begins with teachers' own identities as writers and as learners.

Ultimately, this research may be useful to teacher educators and others wanting to implement writing-to-learn
practices-- and perhaps needing to better understand why that is so difficult to do.

**Part 5: Overview of Remaining Chapters**

**Chapter Two**

After a brief overview that attempts to integrate the four strands of research that served as a background for this study (Part 1), this chapter summarizes research and commentary from the following areas: Part 2: The deficit school- and why schools have been so resistant to inquiry-based approaches such as writing-to-learn; Part 3: Writing and learning-- research on effective teaching with writing, Part 4: Teacher training and socialization, and attitudes and identities (including attitudes toward writing), and the call for change, and Part 5: The study’s cultural and language context, including challenges presented by the local language (Hawaiian Creole English) and Part 6: Portraits of successful writing teachers in action.

**Chapter Three**

This chapter sketches an overview of the qualitative research paradigm in educational research as well as a detailed description of the study’s methodology (including a data collection calendar).

**Chapter Four**

This case study of our writing-to-learn support group begins with an overview of the MET program and describes how our support group functioned within the context of the
program and the public schools in which these novices taught and learned. Portraits of the participants (including myself) are provided, as well as specific examples of our interaction and sharing of information and support.

Chapter Five

After a brief overview, this chapter includes three contrasting case studies of novice elementary teachers who were all determined to make writing (along with a full range of Whole Language approaches) a classroom staple.

Chapter Six

This discussion of the three case studies offers cross-cutting issues and patterns and analysis which includes quotes from the teachers themselves as well as supporting evidence from observations, interviews, and documents (i.e., their journals and their students’ writing). The role of creating a new identity (as teacher of writing) is also addressed.

Chapter Seven

This chapter presents reflections on the group members’ experience teaching and learning with writing in the context of their innovative teacher training program and of their own lives and personal histories. The impact of the MET program is discussed with specific reference to writing as a curricular innovation. A model for a writing-to-learn component to function as part of a problem-based teacher education program is sketched as a way of helping novice
teachers to be more successful in teaching with writing. I conclude with observations on the problems, limitations, and promise of teaching and learning with writing.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Part 1: Overview of Chapter Two

Research and theories of writing and learning suggest that writing can be a powerful tool for learning (Britton, 1975; Emig, 1971; Doyle, 1983; Flower et al., 1990; Perl, 1980). Zinsser (1986) writes of discovery writing as a way of thinking oneself on to the new material. Empirical studies comparing essay writing and note taking conclude that essay writing produces a more integrated reordering and restructuring of information than does simple note taking (Doyle, 1983; Durst, 1987). Some cognitive psychologists associate this process with the creation of new schema, a deeper level of information processing (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1987; Doyle, 1983; Schumacher et al, 1990).

But as described in Chapter One, studies of schools overwhelmingly indicate that these same higher level writing activities are difficult for overburdened teachers to manage, that students at all levels see academic work as "an exchange of performance for grades," which works against the risk-taking involved in discovery writing (Doyle, 1983; Moffat, 1989). Furthermore, many teachers find it difficult to move beyond their traditional roles as transmitters of knowledge and allow students to raise questions, suggest alternatives, and take charge of their own learning (Applebee, 1984; Cuban, 1990; Glasser, 1990; Goodlad, 1984; Langer and Applebee, 1987; Sizer, 1991). For all these
reasons, and in spite of convincing research which is summarized later in this chapter, observers have seen little of what I am calling writing-to-learn in American schools.

A recent report from the National Center for Research on Teacher Education (1991) identifies three barriers that interfere with preservice teachers' ability to teach "the generative side of writing" as follows:

(a) the traditional school norms in which teachers worked, (b) the policy context in which they worked, and (c) the inherent difficulty of this approach to teaching writing (p. 43, 1991).

Crucial to school renewal/teacher education programs such as the University of Hawaii's Masters in Education in Teaching (MET) is the following question: How do we move beyond these powerful obstacles to inquiry learning and "real" writing? This literature review is designed to address these issues in terms of five sometimes intertwined strands of research.

First, the school culture literature, reviewed in Part Two of this chapter, presents a picture of deficit schools, where conditions for teachers (i.e. exhausting teaching schedules, overcrowded classes) result in minimal time spent on writing and minimal energy to respond to student texts. Furthermore, these studies suggest that the values, traditions, and patterns of school life may actually work against constructivist, inquiry-based approaches to learning such as writing-to-learn. (Applebee, 1984; Goodlad, 1984; Langer & Applebee; 1987, Sizer, 1984).
Part Three of this chapter summarizes the research on effective teaching with writing and describes how writing relates to constructivist theories of learning, such as those promoted by the Masters in Education in Teaching (MET) Program at the University of Hawaii.

Part Four reviews research on the ways teachers are recruited and educated (Goodlad, 1990A, 1992; Palonsky, 1986), a body of literature, which has, for the most part, sketched a picture of a deficit teacher, especially a deficit writing teacher. As writers, as inquirers, as self-reflective practitioners— all the things that were being promoted in both the MET program and in our writing-to-learn study group— America’s teachers have been depicted as not measuring up. Emig (1971) suggests that teachers who have little experience with their own writing tend to truncate the writing process. This sentiment was echoed by the pioneers of the Bay Area Writing Project, which has become the National Writing Project. The foundation for this highly-successful grassroots teacher inservice movement is that teachers of writing must themselves become writers (Silberman, 1989).

Part Four of this literature review also explores this connection between teachers’ personal histories and images of themselves as writers and their use of classroom writing. The few large-scale studies connecting teachers’ own uses and conceptions of writing with their classroom practices.
echo Emig's (1971) conclusion: that teachers who do not see themselves as writers use classroom writing less frequently than those who do and generally view students' texts as needing to be corrected for spelling and grammar (Daly, 1988).

Teachers' uses of classroom writing also seem to be connected to larger issues of self-identity, another idea which will be developed in both the study and in this literature review. According to Langer and Applebee (1987), "the most important determinants of the uses of writing (i.e. in their study of teachers implementing writing-to-learn approaches) were the teachers' underlying notions of teaching and learning" (p. 40). Those teachers who best succeeded with the writing-to-learn approaches the researchers were proposing were the ones who fundamentally changed their view of learning in the course of the study. These teachers experienced a major shift in personal identity. They came to see themselves as guides, helping kids continually interpret and reinterpret their own learning. They had shifted, in other words, to a more constructivist perspective on learning.

Further exploring the conditions that help teachers to be successful in teaching with writing, Part Six of this review presents four writing-to-learn success stories that have been highlighted in the whole language and composition and rhetoric literature. These portraits show students
seriously engaged in writing for different purposes, as Zinsser (1986) puts it, "reasoning their way" on to new material. These students are writing for a larger audience than the traditional teacher examiner, and teachers have moved beyond traditional roles as correctors of grammar and transmitters of knowledge (Atwell, 1986; Brady & Jacobs, 1993; Perl & Wilson, 1986; Whiginton, 1985).

Two decades of action research by the National Writing Project shows teachers at all levels becoming writers at the same time as they are learning to incorporate writing into their own curricula (Silberman, 1989). Two of the portraits in Part Six depict this transition, highlighting the experience of two graduates of Writing Project summer institutes.

Finally, no study is culture-free. The teachers in this study were working with writing in Hawaii’s culturally diverse public schools and state university. Section Five of this review describes the study’s cultural and linguistic contexts in terms of Hawaii’s ethnic and historical realities. One reality which impacted on the study, for example, was the subtle conflict surrounding Hawaiian Creole English, a "local" language spoken by many of Hawaii’s public school children (and all but one of the novice teachers in this study).

The review is organized according to five separate strands of research--The Deficit School, Writing and
Learning, The Deficit Teacher, Cultural and Language Context in Hawaii, and New Visions of Writing Teachers at Work. In the daily reality of more than two years of research, however, these strands frequently overlapped.

Overview of Subsequent Sections

PART 2: THE DEFICIT SCHOOL-- the values, traditions, and patterns of school life that discourage teachers' efforts to infuse writing into the curriculum--and why we need to move beyond them toward a more constructivist view of learning.

PART 3: WRITING AND LEARNING-- The Whole Language Movement, how writing shapes learning, research on effective teaching with writing, how writing relates to social constructivist theories of learning.

PART 4: THE DEFICIT TEACHER--Teacher training and socialization, the power of past conditioning, how teachers' conceptions of writing and learning affect their practice, the case for inquiry-based teacher education, self knowledge, and self-reflection through autobiographical writing.

PART 5: CULTURAL CONTEXT AND LANGUAGE POLICY IN HAWAII--additional challenges, especially the conflicted feelings historically attached to the "local language" (Hawaiian Creole English or HCE)
PART 6: NEW VISIONS OF WRITING TEACHERS AT WORK--
Portraits of writing teachers overcoming obstacles and using writing as a tool for learning in "new paradigm" classrooms.

Part 2: The Deficit School

Carl Bereiter and Marlene Scardamalia (1987), a psychologist and a rhetorician who have teamed up to study both writing and thinking, distinguish between "knowledge telling" and "knowledge transforming." They suggest that our public schools have emphasized the former in textbooks, worksheets, and multiple-choice tests, and that "by continually telling students what to do," we have trained them to be good, obedient knowledge tellers. In detailing what they call the "failure of education to promote intentional cognition," they cite a long list of school practices that provide students (and future teachers among them) with a twelve-year indoctrination of classroom activities requiring little mental effort, an indoctrination which can override later efforts to get them to think more deeply and critically--on paper or anywhere else (p.361).

It has become a commonplace that "why Johnny can’t write" is closely related to "why Johnny can’t think." Depicting both educational failures is a new genre of educational reform best seller. John Goodlad (1984) in A Place Called School and Ted Sizer (1984) in Horace’s Compromise, and later (1992) in Horace’s School have documented the pervasiveness of knowledge telling in
American classrooms. Although neither used Bereiter and Scardamalia's term for the inert learning they almost always observed, both found few opportunities for students to move beyond "knowledge telling" and few students engaged in "knowledge transforming."

In 129 elementary classrooms, 362 junior high classrooms, and 525 senior high classrooms, Goodlad (1984) and his team of researchers saw students filling in worksheets with capital cities and principle exports. The time spent reading and writing (beyond filling in blanks and one-sentence answers) was shockingly low. Students were observed reasoning or sharing opinions less than one percent of the time. Most teachers seemed unwilling to give up control of the ebb and flow of thinking, unwilling to allow students a chance to "romp" with open-ended questions, to turn the tables and ask some of the questions themselves. There was a terrible sameness about it all, regardless of the part of the country or socioeconomic level of the community. The emotional climate was neither positive nor negative; Goodlad described it as flat. Goodlad theorized that teachers may be reluctant to extend themselves emotionally, especially at the high school level, because they must interact with 150-200 students, a typical high school teacher's class load (Goodlad, 1984).

Sizer (1984) described the same wasteland of vocabulary drills and grammar worksheets, the same conformity in
American high schools. His hypothetical teacher, a man named Horace, wanted more "hungry students," which Sizer described as follows: "The student who isn't afraid to move a discussion of a worldly matter to a spiritual concern, nor embarrassed to probe issues that reach beyond the immediate" (p. 54). But he found few classroom opportunities for such transcendence and described American high school students (as students, not as people) as "all too often docile, compliant and without initiative. Some who have initiative use it to undertake as little engagement as possible with school" (p.54-55).

Glasser (1990) contends that students instinctively know what is valued in schools: the fragmented facts on their standardized tests. He blames such misplaced curricular priorities and our top-down bureaucracy for a massive resistance to learning among our students, effectively limiting "the number of students who will do any significant work to 50% in good neighborhoods and 10% in neighborhoods where there is little support for learning in students' homes" (p. 430). An industrial model system (inspired by industry's Taylorism) that Glasser calls "boss management" creates an adversarial relationship between students and teachers, effectively precluding real learning of any kind (Glasser, 1990).

Applebee (1984), after a comprehensive study of American high schools, concluded that they are doing a
"reasonable job of teaching lower level skills but failing miserably on higher level ones" (p. 591). He reports that only 3% of students' time was spent on writing anything as long as a paragraph. Even then, most of the writing was used to evaluate previous learning, to show the teacher they had read the material rather than to explore new ideas, raise their own questions or construct their own arguments.

A transmission model of instruction emerges in all these reports. In terms of writing instruction and in spite of a decade of writing-process research, a recent study by the National Center for Research on Teacher Education (1990) suggests that preservice teachers tend to see their primary role as teaching the rules of written language directly to children. The authors add, "We did not find in these responses a sense of acquisition in which children gradually learned these rules by actively manipulating the writing system and sharing with adults their purposes in the process" (Florio-Ruane & Lensmire, p.4).

Doyle (1983) conducted an extensive review of classroom tasks and concluded that academic work was seen by students as "an exchange of performance for grades" (p.181) with students seeking to minimize risk and ambiguity by increasing the explicitness of a teacher's instruction. This finding, ironically, held true even if the teacher was trying to move students from routine to higher-level tasks such as essay writing. In one study of an alternative school
students rebelled against the open-ended activities and "insisted they had a right to be told what to do" (p. 185). Doyle and others suggest that the pressure on teachers to teach low-level procedural tasks is "formidable" (Doyle, 1983).

Larry Cuban (1990), who left his professorship to teach a high school social studies class, discovered that students are schooled in the "right answer syndrome" (p. 481). He found that changing this game--getting them to distinguish between fact and opinion, to discover that history is an interpretation of facts and to write about these interpretations-- was hard work. In fact, it was impossible most of the time.

Scholars from a range of disciplines have sketched equally depressing pictures of our schools. Moffat (1989), an anthropologist who lived a year among college freshmen, found his dorm mates had been trained in their high schools to work for grades instead of for the learning they represented. Says Moffat, "The pragmatics of 'making the grade' came first for almost all of the students" and "substantive intellectual understanding of the material...a distant, optional second" (p. 294). Psychologist Abraham Maslow (1971) goes a step further. He says, "Since classroom learning focuses on behavior rather than thought, the child learns to keep his thoughts his own. Thought, in fact, is often inimical to extrinsic (i.e. school-based) learning"
Maslow called the traditional school culture "the culture of silence," Applebee (1984) a "culture of recitation."

**Beyond Inert Knowledge, Ready or Not**

For those fortunate students who make it to college, this learned unwillingness to engage with ideas, to transform knowledge, to generate their own questions, becomes a major problem. Suddenly, the show-them-you’ve-read-the-material strategies students have learned so well in high school are not enough. Even the five paragraph theme, a sophisticated written product in many high schools, is not always a sure A or B. Sometimes a five-paragraph theme is not even acceptable in college-level courses.

What makes this transition riskier is that these new expectations are often tacit. Professors appear to take it for granted that students will react to issues, question sources, and move from the problem to an analysis of the problem (Bartholomae, 1985). Yet most high school graduates haven’t practiced these skills. Instead, they’ve learned to memorize content (even if it didn’t make sense), to find the main idea and write or type it neatly in a report or summary.

Mike Rose (1989) describes the problems faced even by students who came from good schools in good neighborhoods when they encountered college courses requiring inquiry and analysis, which are "placed like land mines on the uneven
terrain of the freshman year" (p. 191). Suddenly these freshmen have to "question past solutions...seek counter explanations and...continually turn something nice and clean and clear into a problem." Says Rose, "High schools haven't given them any practice in this kind of inquiry." Students have "limited experience in applying knowledge" after "year after year in the exchange of one body of facts for another...and thus it is no surprise that they have developed a restricted sense of how intellectual work is conducted" (p.191).

Eventually, though, and perhaps surprisingly many survive their initiation to the academy. In English Composition and a new category of "writing intensive" courses in content areas, they learn out how to write papers that satisfy their professors and earn the grades they need. If it's a good college and if students get the help they need, many learn to reason, to shape their ideas into readable prose. Some learn to "romp" with open-ended questions and even enjoy it. A few go on become Sizer's "hungry" intellectuals.

It's the others we need to worry about. America's real thinking/ writing problem is much larger than underprepared college students and their frustrated, overworked professors.
Why Johnny Didn't Have to Think--until now

Economists have increasingly linked our failing economy to a failing educational system, particularly our students' inability to think and write clearly, which is bemoaned in the oval office, in board rooms, in Time magazine editorials, in Andy Rooney's deskside chats on *Sixty Minutes*. A new genre of educational reform best sellers has documented that our industrial model schools have outlived their usefulness--that our public school system is deficit.

Some critics would add here that the system never worked, at least not for teaching the masses how to reason and write. Futurist Alvin Toffler (1980) writes of the "factory school." The classes he describes look much like those described by Goodlad, (1984), Sizer, (1984), and Glasser, (1990). Beneath its egalitarian rhetoric, the system operates according to a covert curriculum that teaches punctuality, obedience, and tolerance for rote repetitive work. Its real goal has been to produce a pliable, regimented workforce to serve our giant corporations. Linda Darling-Hammond (1992) explains that teachers in these industrial schools were really not expected to develop "a variety of ways to ensure student success," that for students leaving school "without much education," there were numerous farm and factory jobs (p. 14-15). For this clientele, reading and writing needed to be taught at the most basic comprehension level.
Only the small managerial elite needed to think and question and write, and they could learn how to do this once they got to college. Indeed, some educational historians see the development of English composition courses early this century as prompted by the need to train this new managerial elite to organize and present information clearly and appealingly (Faigley, 1989).

Giroux (1983) has questioned this depiction of the factory school as overly deterministic, with "schools as factories or prisons" and students and teachers serving as "pawns and role bearers constrained by the logic and social practices of the capitalistic system" (p. 21, quoted in Fox, 1990). Giroux cites studies of working class students actively resisting this domination "even if only to choose, ultimately, a working class future" (Fox, p. 21).

But however successful its hidden curriculum was in maintaining compliance, America’s factory school appears to have outlived its usefulness. It is no longer possible to make a decent living in America by standing beside a machine. Teams of highly-trained technicians now collaborate to produce a single automobile. Family farms have given way to giant agribusinesses run by computers. Customers pump their own gas, and janitors need an eighth grade reading level just to mix floor cleaners. Millions of manufacturing jobs have been automated out of existence, and there are not enough mindless jobs left to go around. A
recent Carnegie report states that the dull, repetitive work is moving to other countries, that if America is to remain competitive, its graduates will have to engage in highly technical activity. For this reason, schools that once taught drill and routine in order to produce assembly line workers must now learn how to teach abstract skills and flexible thinking (Feinberg, 1987).

Some question these economic projections, but futurists like Toffler and business "gurus" like Peters and Waterman (1982) are absolutely convinced that our compliant (and mindless) workforce has become obsolete. Twenty-first century workers will have to learn new jobs, over and over again, as they move in and out of retraining programs to keep pace with a constantly shifting world economy. They will be rewarded for sharing creative solutions with company presidents, for working collaboratively to problem solve, sometimes with workers from other countries. There will be an infinite number of non-routine problems, problems that neither teachers nor texts can provide formula for. Many will have to write about their solutions clearly and appealingly.

After a hundred years of passionate reform literature, economics may have finally moved our public schools beyond the factory model. The time has never been riper for realizing the Nation at Risk's rhetorical calls for "lifelong learners" and "skilled intelligence" across the
population. The problem is: How do we do it? As educators in an obsolete system, how do we begin producing this new breed of learner?

This is why programs like the Masters in Education in Teaching (MET) take their joint missions of school renewal and teacher education renewal so seriously. And this is where writing-to-learn comes in. Goodlad (1990, A) complains, as did Whitehead (1929), of existing schools in which knowledge is "translated into inert bits and pieces--in a sense, the garbage left behind in the human dialogue." Instead, says Goodlad, we must begin teaching "the ordered ways created by humankind of structuring experience" (p. 21).

One of the those "ordered ways" of "structuring experience"--one that has been largely overlooked in our schools--is by writing about it. And more and more teachers are beginning to use this time-honored structuring tool. According to Sheryl Fontaine (1991), assigning class time for freewriting "gives students the opportunity to use language just as it should be used: to make meaning by organizing and classifying observations and drawing conclusions about the world" (p. 13).

Writing is a fundamental tool for both reasoning and reflecting. Our students desperately need practice with both, as William Zinsser (1988) explains below:

It's by writing about a subject that we're trying to learn that we reason our way onto what it
means. Reasoning is a lost skill of the children of the TV generation, with their famously short attention span. Writing can help them get it back (p. 22).

Classroom writing activities can also allow teachers to bring controversial issues, which Scriven (1993) calls "the life blood of critical thinking," into the classroom. But the effects of writing-to-learn may go beyond improved thinking. Students who grapple with ideas on paper often enter a political context. Thomas Fox (1990) calls it a cultural event when students begin to explore their own histories through looking at their own writing, thus reversing "their well-rehearsed habit of suppressing social aspects of their identity and the self-imposed limitations that accompany this habit" (p. 13).

Through personal and classroom writing, teachers can also arrive at fundamentally different conclusions about their classroom identities--and these shifts can be politically subversive. Anderson et al. (1989) suggest that the shift to curricular practices (like writing-to-learn) that are called for in current reform initiatives will require teachers to change their views of their own and student roles as well as their conceptions of the social environment. Langer and Applebee (1987) suggest that these conceptions must change, that if we want to address our national thinking/writing problem, "traditional industrial notions"--and the school contexts that produced them--will have to change.
To investigate these contexts and discover how both alternative inquiry approaches to learning and writing might be made to work, these researchers worked along with seven high school teachers to provide support and information on introducing writing-to-learn strategies in their classrooms.

After two years of working together, six of those seven teachers had successfully integrated "real" writing into their teaching. But three of these success stories go beyond the writing itself. For these three teachers, the new focus on writing brought about a fundamental redefinition of teaching and learning. "All three had begun the study convinced that a major part of their roles as teachers was to provide information. At the end, all three had redefined their roles to place more emphasis on the need for students to interpret and reinterpret what they were learning for themselves, with the teacher serving as mentor and guide. In redefining their roles, they had also developed a new perception of "what could count as learning in their classrooms" (Langer and Applebee, 1987, p. 87).

Constructivist Learning Theory

These teachers had shifted to a constructivist perspective on learning. Constructivism is based on the belief that children learn best when they are able to build relationships and make their own connections among concepts, in effect when they construct their own learning. Cognitive constructivist models have their roots in Piaget's
developmental psychology. Other models, such as those underlying the MET program, have also been influenced by sociocultural theorists.

According to Yager, the earlier behaviorist model of learning, defined the teacher’s task as "providing a set of stimuli and reinforcements that are likely to get students to emit an appropriate response." But these methods do not work well when the goal of education is "understanding, synthesis, eventual application, and the ability to use information in new situations." Yager adds, "Because there is no place in the model for understanding, it is not surprising that behaviorist training rarely produces it" (p.54).

In contrast, constructivist models emphasize the learner. All learning is seen as an active process, influenced by the learner as much as by the teacher. Knowledge is always seen from a certain perspective; there is no longer a God’s eye view of objective reality—not even in the "hard" sciences. Constructivist theorist von Glaserfield (1988) suggests that the former unquestioning belief in a body of objective knowledge that could be transmitted to students has been overturned. Yet the transmission model of learning has been strangely resilient, and Yager (1991) reminds us that "in most schools of education, teacher preparation continues as though nothing
new has happened. Despite research findings, the quest for never-changing, objective truths continues as though it were completely possible to fulfill" (p. 53).

Theorists like Lisa Delpit (1988) critique earlier versions of constructivism because of their refusal to acknowledge and examine power relations between teacher and students, especially working class and minority students. And social constructivist models emphasize sociocultural contexts and the dialectical nature of the learning process (Von Glaserfield, 1988; Yager, 1991).

A human being's experience always includes and is strongly influenced by our social interaction with other humans. We can only know what we have constructed ourselves, but such learning always takes place in a social context (p. 54).

These theorists see learning as shaped by social interactions and by shared beliefs and values. Dialogue--an ongoing conversation--is seen as central to learning. Teachers are facilitators and mediators instead of providers of knowledge (Anderson et al, 1992; Englert & Palincsar, 1991; Vygotsy, 1978).

It is not difficult to see how writing would function as an important tool in constructivist and social constructivist enterprises, because it offers students opportunities to continually interpret and re-interpret their own learning, and it can also move teachers to re-assess their own socialization as suppliers of knowledge, "covering" the material. Langer and Applebee (1987) describe
the larger consequences of this crucial re-assessment as follows:

Rather than augmenting traditional approaches to instruction, in a very real sense such approaches (i.e. writing to learn) undermine them—or are undermined in turn by the goals and procedures of more traditionally oriented approaches to teaching (p. 87).

The next section of this literature review will describe specifically how classroom writing can help undermine those traditionally-oriented approaches, can help move teachers and students beyond Applebee's "culture of recitation" and Glasser's "boss management"-- to become communities of learners.

We can move beyond the deficit school, in spite of all the "formidable" pressures to teach lower-level procedural tasks (Doyle, 1983) that this section has outlined, and writing is a crucial part of that renewal enterprise.

Part 3: Writing and Learning

Stirrings of Writing Reform

There is ample evidence in the literature of American students not writing very well. A recent survey of the writings of 4th and 8th graders by the United States Department of Education revealed that student essays—even those from good schools—were largely disorganized and weak on critical analytical content (Hilts, 1992). Recent findings from the National Association of Educational Progress (NAEP) indicate that American students have difficulty going beyond simple reporting to developing an
original argument, for example, or supporting that argument in their texts (National Center for Research on Teacher Learning, 1991).

According to Toby Fulwiler, a leading proponent of writing across the curriculum, "Student writing will improve when student learning does and student learning will improve when students do more writing. That is what writing across the curriculum is all about" (Silberman, 1987, p. 118). Zinsser (1988) elaborates on this connection:

Writing is a tool that enables people in every discipline to wrestle with facts and ideas. It's a physical activity, unlike reading....It compels us by the repeated effort of language to go after these thoughts and to organize them and present them clearly. It forces us to keep asking, "Am I saying what I want to say?" Very often, the answer is 'No.' It's a useful piece of information (p.49).

Zinsser's quote serves as an introduction to the contemporary vision of writing-to-learn. When forced to question what we mean, what we are thinking, in order to express our thoughts in writing, we find ourselves constructing our own meaning. If we go on to talk about this written text with others, that construction is further mediated by the social interaction in way reminiscent of the social constructivist learning theory described in the previous section (Yager, 1990).

But it is only in the past decade that this vision of writing to learn--to discover one's own meaning and negotiate it with others in the class, including the teacher--has taken hold in schools and colleges. The
earlier approach to writing emphasized the final product, with teacher/evaluator as the sole audience. Writing well and being rewarded with a good grade involved following the rules. The student in these product-oriented classrooms had to get it right the first time, because the teacher painstakingly marked all errors in red pencil or ink, with grades frequently based on the number of errors committed. Not surprisingly, many students who couldn’t master the mysteries of English spelling were made to think that they were bad writers.

Prior to 1970 most writing research focused on these final products as well, usually measuring the effectiveness of particular teaching techniques in scientifically-controlled experiments. Emig (1971) shifted the research focus to the writing process—and to the writer him or herself. Emig brought about a minor revolution in research methodology by pioneering a "think-aloud" protocol with the eight high school seniors she observed writing. She learned that even the best students found school-sponsored writing uninspiring. They spent little time planning and revising. The purpose of the assignments was not Zinsser’s (1988) wrestling with ideas or Goodlad’s (1984) "romping" with open-ended questions. Instead, these students were supposed to be showing their teacher they had read the material, not constructing their own meaning from the material. By contrast, the poetry and stories they sometimes wrote in
English class engaged their interest, and they spent more time planning and revising these texts (Emig, 1971).

Other studies followed, looking directly at how people write. Results suggested that students do a better job of understanding and remembering what they say in their own words and what has some connection to their own lives. Donald Graves’ in a three-year study of the writing processes of young children was the first to look at teachers and their children in the context of actual classrooms (Graves, 1984). This research inspired a number of spin-off studies, with teacher/ethnographers documenting their own classes.

Graves and his followers have suggested that writing is not done in a vacuum. The child is part of a larger social context which affects topic choice, interactions with other children and with the teacher, and problem solving style. He proposed the creation of a risk free environment, a supportive community of writers (Graves, 1984). Researchers such as Marsella, Hillgers, and McLaren (1991) have made the same case for college-level writers being initiated into new discourse communities.

The Whole Language Movement

This social-context, process-oriented research has been enormously influential in the past decade. John Willinsky (1990) has coined the term "new literacy" to describe a "yet to be certified" school of thought that includes writing
across the curriculum, "variations of the Writing Process Movement, including the Bay Area Writing Project which has grown into the National Writing Project" along with what is being called the Whole Language Movement. For Willinsky, the common, constructivist thread that connects all these strategies is that they "attempt to shift the control of literacy from the teacher to the student. Literature is promoted in such programs as a social process with language that can from the beginning extend the students range of meaning and connection" (p. 8).

There is no agreed-upon definition for the term "whole language." In true constructivist fashion, its meaning is changing shape as we reform curriculum in actual schools. According to Judith Newman (1985), whole language is not a codified instructional approach but a "philosophical stance...a shorthand way of referring to a set of beliefs about curriculum, not just language arts curriculum, but about everything that goes on in classrooms." In shaping these practices, Newman invites teachers to "explore the practical ramifications" in their own ways--and to share what they have learned (p.1).

Reggie Routman (1988) goes a step further in delineating the characteristics of whole language classroom:

Whole language respects the idea that all the language processes (listening, speaking, reading, and writing--including spelling and handwriting) are learned naturally and in meaningful context as a whole, not in little parts. Learning activities are open-ended and involve student choice,
Routman herself admits to being uncomfortable "with the pureness that the term 'whole language' implies for me" (p. 26) and admits that her own classroom would not always qualify as "whole language" in the strictest sense. The most radical whole language reformers insist that all text books be replaced by trade books, that students never be given explicit writing assignments or prompts, and that we need to consistently view writing as a process, not a product (Atwell, 1986), Graves, (1984), Murray, 1987).

Newkirk (1989) cautions against such either-or distinctions in the writing classroom, suggesting that writing products do, indeed, get read and evaluated by others and that we still need to pay attention to them. Even Graves himself, who has become a kind of process writing cult figure, warns educators against a "new orthodoxy" in the form of a dictatorial prewriting through publication process sequence (Graves, 1987).

The definition of "whole language" continues to evolve and to be contested. On one end of the control continuum theorists like Atwell (1986) Murray, (1987), and Graves (1984), recommend a somewhat "hands off" approach, with students choosing their own topics and genres, their own reading books. The teacher is allowed to nudge and counsel,
but students are essentially constructing their own language arts curriculum along with their own learning.

A more catholic definition is offered by Ministry of Education in New Zealand, a nation that has recently been hailed as a forerunner in whole language instruction:

What's a whole language classroom? It's a stimulating environment where listening, speaking, writing, and reading to, by, and with children continues naturally without interruption throughout the whole day (Learning Media, 1992, p. 1).

As will be seen in chapters six and seven, the novices in this study held differing and steadily evolving perspectives on what it meant to use "whole language" approaches. They could have agreed more readily that they were using what has been called a "writing workshop" approach (Florio-Ruane & Lensmire, 1990) in which children draft and respond to one another in conferences, frequently share their writing with the class or with another intended audience. According to these authors, "All of these arrangements are notable for the background role the teacher plays in setting the social norms for collaboration and in enabling writers through coaching and other forms of technical assistance" (p.4).

But in spite of the growing popularity of these kinds of approaches, studies such as those reviewed in Part Two of this literature review suggest that the so-called traditional approach--with students filling in blanks or writing one-shot summaries to be returned to them covered
with red corrections—is still the dominant approach in public school classrooms. According to a 1991 report on writing instruction from the National Center for Research on Teacher Learning (1991), "mainstream school practices do not yet reflect the findings" from the "considerable educational research over the past decade" (p. 2):

If teachers are to help students learn to write more complex arguments, and to use writing to formulate their own ideas, they need to understand how the process of writing can enable such outcomes; that is, in addition to the traditionally recognized rules of grammar and other writing conventions that guide the construction of finished texts, teachers need to know how writers write, about the ambiguities inherent in writing, and about the struggles that must be made to form ideas and to convert these ideas into words. Teachers need to expand their conception of writing, moving from the view that writing is finished once a product conforms to writing conventions to a view that writing is never really finished, that texts evolve gradually to further the substantive and communicative intent of the author (p. 36).

The research literature makes a strong case that America’s teachers—socialized, for the most part in schools where "finished products" were evaluated according to their surface features—are still largely overlooking the discovery and meaning making potential of classroom writing, seeing themselves as needing to teach the conventions of language in direct instruction.

How Writing Shapes Learning

Janet Emig (1971) posited that writing promotes learning because of the permanence of the written word. We have our ideas immediately available for review and
reflection, which allows us to spot connections, to learn what and how we think. Other researchers have also speculated about this learning payoff. James Britton (1975) as well as Vygotsky (1978) have theorized that we learn from events by giving them shape in language.

Other theorists have suggested that writing produces a greater depth of processing than speaking and also allows for multiple representations of information. Some cognitive researchers have defined two kinds of learning, according to the amount of modification of existing cognitive structures. In the first, which they call learning as accretion, new knowledge is incorporated with little change in the structures and no modification of previously-acquired information (Schumacher et al., 1991). This type of learning is similar to Piaget's "assimilation" and to Bereiter and Scardamalia's (1987) "knowledge telling." The other kind of learning, reminiscent of Bereiter and Scardamalia's "knowledge transforming," involves modification of existing structures. (Other cognitive scientists have called this process restructuring or schema creation.) Schumacher et al (1991) suggest that we need to distinguish between these two kinds of knowledge change when we study writing-to-learn, because writing probably affects each differently, resulting in two notions of academic writing. Perhaps writing serves a different purpose and takes a different form, such as note taking, for type one learning (learning by accretion) than
it does for type two, which involves modification of existing structures during composition.

Studies of what people actually learn from writing about academic material suggest a connection between the more complex writing tasks and the knowledge transforming kind of learning. Working in laboratory conditions, George Newell (1984) simulated writing tasks naturally occurring in schools and measured the resulting gains in knowledge by a recall task as well as the subject's ability to apply concepts to new situations. He found that essay writing produced a more extensive reordering and restructuring of information as well as more specific and integrated knowledge than note taking or answering study questions (Newell, 1984).

Also in laboratory conditions, Durst (1987) contrasted eleventh grade students' analytic and summary writing, using Emig-style "think aloud" protocols as well as the finished essays. Durst found that in analytic writing students employed more varied and complex thinking operations than in summary writing, asking more complex questions, making more sophisticated plans, and spending more time reading and evaluating the essay as it progressed. (Durst, 1987).

Some cognitive psychologists and many writing theorists, following in Emig's footsteps, have ventured forth into what Nespor (1987) has called "ambiguous natural settings" to study students writing in real classrooms (p. 204). His case
studies show students relying on "previously learned automatized production systems" (p. 216) in spite of the specific demands of the writing assignment. He suggests that students continue to use fallback strategies because they continue "to be awarded reasonably good grades--in the absence of other comments and criticisms"--even when they subvert the cognitive demands of the assignments (Nespor, 1987). Marsella et al. (1992) saw similar fall-back strategies being awarded acceptable grades in case studies of 18 college students writing for different courses.

Walter Doyle (1983) has reviewed recent research in cognitive psychology on the intellectual demands of a range of academic tasks, exploring how the classroom context (especially grading) shapes the curriculum in fundamental ways, and how the tasks that students actually do shape the learning, regardless of what teachers think is being taught. His example was a math lesson which claimed to be based on higher-order reasoning skills that culminated in an assignment asking students to solve 25 computational problems. In such cases, Doyle points out, "Attention is likely to be directed to learning the computational steps necessary to produce answers efficiently," not the higher order thinking taught in the lesson (p. 185). A parallel here would be a writing assignment supposedly aimed at analysis or persuasion, with the written product graded
according to the number of spelling errors, still a very common practice in schools.

Like other observers, Doyle has documented a great deal of class time (60-70 %) spent in seatwork and worksheets. Says Doyle, "Tasks that leave room for student judgement are often hard to evaluate and have a greater probability of evoking attempts by students to circumvent task demands" (p.188). Doyle calls writing "among the most complex of human mental activities," (p.172) although he carefully distinguishes between different types of writing tasks, some more ambiguous and risky than others. His conclusion does not bode well for the future of inquiry learning or of process writing in our schools:

The central point is that the type of tasks which cognitive psychology suggests will have the greatest long-term consequences for improving the quality of academic work are precisely those which are the most difficult to install in classrooms" (p.186).

Many teachers would agree. It is easier to have students list the products of Peru or underline the verb once and the noun twice than it is to teach them to think and write--to discover and construct their own meaning--which is probably why so many teachers have failed to achieve this level of cognitive complexity. Langer and Applebee (1987) spent years investigating high school contexts to discover how alternative inquiry approaches to learning and writing might be made to work. They concluded that "virtually without exception" the texts and teaching
materials available "provided piecemeal and inadequate models of teaching and learning." The high school teachers they worked with had to "create each activity from scratch" (p. 148). Still, the teachers in their study "were continually amazed by what their students were able to do when challenged with new tasks...'what if' assignments...and inference papers." However sometimes teachers expected too much and assignments "collapsed in frustration and occasional anger" (p. 142).

These pioneer writing teachers also faced motivational problems with their writing-to-learn approaches with students who had been schooled to go for the grade, not the learning it represents. On the most practical level, these teachers worried about how to get students to give serious thought to freewriting activities without giving them a grade, how to read their papers for ideas and questions and avoid correcting grammar and faulty interpretations of course concepts. As one teacher put it: "When you say 'it's a check-off assignment,' the kids say 'oh, okay' and you get a laid back attitude and you have to guard against that sort of thing" (Langer and Applebee, 1987, p. 63). These conclusions turned out to be prophetic of the kinds of problems and soul searching the novice teachers in my study would encounter as well.

This section has presented a rather dismal picture of the power of past conditioning and how it works against both
learning and "real" writing. But what motivates kids if not the final grade? And what does the research say about how teachers can best respond to student writing? What specific strategies will further the approaches that Langer and Applebee and other researchers have recommended to replace the worksheets and grammar drills?

**Research on Effective Teaching with Writing**

Studies suggest the need to make teachers aware of a much wider range of written forms. Instead of asking students to write an occasional summary (usually on a test), they need to be assigning expressive writing, which Zinsser (1988) defines as "writing that enables us to discover what we want to say" (p. 56) with the teacher responding to ideas rather than circling errors and the emphasis on work in progress rather than marking the errors. Students need to be writing stories and poems, even in the content area. And this language-rich environment makes sense in all disciplines, not just English class. Studies of writing-across-the-curriculum programs movement at the college level show professors using poetry writing in such no-nonsense courses as Abnormal Psychology, and Calculus students relying on process logs to make sense of the new material.

In terms of expository writing, studies suggest that students need to move beyond the usual summaries to analytic and persuasive pieces, so that students do not suffer culture shock when they have to write them in college (Rose,
1989). Even more importantly, these more sophisticated assignments will help them try on the questioning stance we associate with critical literacy (Flower et al., 1990). These new approaches are intended to create a classroom community of writers, with teachers sharing their own drafts, their own struggles to find the right focus or tone or word.

In most schools student writing still gets returned with red corrections all over it. Yet, ironically, research has indicated that this approach is largely ineffective. Students tend to disregard these corrections and look instead for the grade, even if teachers try to hide it at the end of the composition. If they do read the comments, students frequently misunderstand them (Faigley, 1989; Marsella et al, 1992; Sommers, 1980). Theorists like Peter Elbow (1981), Donald Graves (1987) and Nancie Atwell (1986) suggest that peer evaluation/tutoring/editing can be just as effective for improving work in progress, but it’s important to add that other researchers have raised serious questions about the effectiveness of peer response groups. Marsella et al. (1992), for example, in a study of 18 college students in writing intensive courses, found that these students themselves tended to believe that they were not being helped by their peer response groups.

A less contested finding is that students will work harder on their drafts, will care about improving them, if
the final product is destined to be published for an audience larger than the teacher-grader (Atwell, 1986; Graves, 1987; Perl and Wilson, 1988; Wigginton, 1985).

There have been literally thousands of experimental studies of specific interventions to improve student writing. George Hillocks (1986) produced a meta-analysis of available experimental research on writing done between 1963 and 1982. He found that sentence combining worked better than decontextualized grammar instruction, which he (and authors of previous metastudies) insist doesn't work at all. Here a past century of research is unequivocal. The teaching of formal grammar has no effect on students' actual writing. Indeed, the evidence suggests that it detracts from their progress as writers, because so much time is spent learning what is essentially structural linguistics (recognizing parts of speech, syntactical patterns) instead of writing. This instruction also forces students, especially remedial students, to concentrate on the mechanics in a way that distracts them from thinking about their meaning (Perl, 1980).

Other studies have focused on the revision process. Nancy Sommers (1980) compared 20 experienced adult writers and 20 freshmen at Boston University in terms of revision strategies. While the students made only minor changes in word choice or mechanics, the experts saw the essay as a whole. In selecting examples, transitions, and tone, in
moving between intention and execution, these experts were actually discovering meaning in ways that the students were not. Says Sommers, "It is a sense of writing as discovery—a repeated process of beginning over again, starting out new—that the students failed to have" (Sommers, 1980, p.127).

Like Sommers' student revisers, who were stuck on a linear model for composing, the remedial students Sondra Perl observed seemed stuck on a prematurely determined set of rigid rules for their final products. This watchfulness for mechanical errors caused them to frequently lose their train of thought. They were so busy watching for errors that their thinking appeared to happen in fits and starts, blocking the discovery, meaning-making process almost completely (Perl, 1980, Perl & Egendorf, 1979).

The irony of this concern with correctness is underscored in another study in which Mike Rose compared five fluent writers and five writers with writers' block. He concluded that the "non-blockers" operated with fluid, easily discarded rules. (Rose, 1989). Expert writers not only seem more able to switch tactics and modify their plans, they also spend more time planning than inexperienced writers.

Central to this planning is an imagined audience. Faigley and Miller studied 200 college-trained people writing as part of their jobs. While many knew nothing about rhetorical theory, most were very focused on their imagined
audience, on how they might best project their message to this audience (Faigley, 1989). In contrast, Perl's (1980) unskilled college writers seemed oblivious of their readers' needs, neglecting to make connections between crucial ideas or to relate one phenomenon to another.

This lack of concern for audience may be related to their socialization in schools, where--despite recent advances--most school writing is directed at the teacher-as-examiner, where grammar and worksheet activities continue to dominate much language arts instruction.

The National Center for Research on Teacher Learning (1991) maintains that teachers must shift from an emphasis on surface conventions and focus on the discovery and the meaning making process, which they call "the generative side of writing." Reviewing recent studies of how to best help students generate ideas, Hillocks (1986) concluded that invention strategies can be helpful, especially guided inquiry techniques, which were seen as more effective than providing models of finished products. Faigley describes a number of strategies designed to help students generate ideas for writing, from Tagmemics to Aristotle's topics. He concludes: "We know of no study or any method of teaching invention that does not claim success. But the many theoretical and pedagogical studies of invention appear to have had little impact on writing instruction in the schools" (Faigley, 1989, p. 40).
And herein lies the problem with all the writing research described above. None of these strategies, none of the research findings can revolutionize classrooms unless teachers decide to use them. Most teachers don’t, for practical and not so practical reasons. According to Silberman (1989):

One generation of teachers after another has typically viewed ‘good writing’ as ‘correcting writing,’ nothing more, and worthwhile topics as teacher assignments, nothing more (p. 24).

This picture of writing instruction runs against the social constructivist perspective, which emphasizes "verbal interaction between more and less knowledgeable members of a culture around authentic tasks" (Englert & Palincsar, 1991). And even those teachers temporarily inspired to attempt "authentic tasks" and authentic dialogue by a visiting whole language speaker often drift back to their text questions and worksheets, in spite of their best intentions to move beyond them. Why is it so difficult for teachers to persevere with these curricular changes? And what kind of training can help teachers to move beyond these patterns?

According to Langer and Applebee (1987), "the most important determinants of the uses of writing (i.e. by the teachers in their study) were the teachers’ underlying notions of teaching and learning" (p. 40). In their research with high school teachers cited above, the researchers concluded that those teachers who best succeeded with writing-to-learn were the ones who fundamentally changed
their view of learning in the course of the study, who began to see themselves as guides, helping kids continually interpret and reinterpret their own learning. But according to Silberman (1989) this move from a self image as provider of knowledge to a constructivist philosophy can be difficult to achieve, because it requires a major shift in personal identity, a shift away from the way they themselves have been schooled.

Teachers on every level, from the primary grades through secondary school, are also prepared to drill the parts of speech, the reasons for capital letters, commas, periods, paragraphs, and increasingly complex conventions. Pressure from home, local school districts, state governors, legislatures, and departments of education combine to make certain that fundamentals such as these are not neglected. But no comparable pressure or teacher training exists to emphasize the importance of language and writing. As a result of lopsided training and skewed values, school systems have had to resort to hiring teachers who have learned neither how to teach writing nor how to write themselves (p. 8-9).

These teachers often revert to teaching writing in the same way as they were taught. Anderson et al. (1992) suggest that teacher education has not traditionally succeeded in making teachers aware of the "deep seated beliefs that drove their interactions with students and ways of representing subject matter" (p. 34).

This, then, is the teacher education status quo that programs like the MET are so passionately determined to change. For this reason, we might expect that the MET trainees in this study were starting out with the constructivist view of learning that Langer and Applebee
(1987) describe. In their first-year seminars, professors consistently stressed inquiry learning, with frequent writing, especially journal and autobiographical writing, required of MET students as written proof of their own inquiry process.

Still, even if the eight students-becoming-teachers in this study were thoroughly indoctrinated in the MET constructivist world view (or arrived in the program with it), I wondered if a deeper level of past conditioning might affect their eventual uses of classroom writing. For one thing, their images of teaching, learning, and writing were shaped in the contexts of their own industrial-model schools. Without exception, these novice teachers came from "old paradigm schools," staffed by teachers who saw themselves as dispensers of knowledge, as Kate put it, "up in front lecturing."

At an even deeper level than these formative school memories, I wondered about the powerful influence of these novices' images of themselves as writers, about their own confidence levels, which have been demonstrated to affect the way that teachers approach classroom writing activities (Daly et al, 1988).

The next section will explore these levels more closely, focusing on research and commentary on teacher preparation and socialization, especially during the induction years. This section also explores teacher
attitudes toward inquiry-learning and other constructivist, risk-taking practices, the power of the past conditioning, the call for a "new paradigm" teacher researcher, and the connections between teachers' self images as writers and their understandings and uses of classroom writing.

**Part 4: The Deficit Teacher**

**Teachers and Their Teachers**

The deficit teacher is a common figure in stories about teachers. In many of our stories, in other words, teachers turn out looking bad, that is, as deficient in some basic knowledge or human capability that would enable them to be effective in what they do or able to make the necessary change toward enlightened practice (Carter, K. 1993, p. 9)

Lanier and Little (1986) begin their chapter on teacher training in Whitrock's *Handbook of Research on Teaching, Third Edition* by placing teachers and teacher educators within a social and political context, citing studies which sketch a history of women and lower class males flooding the ranks of teacher educators after 1880, with a disproportionately large number of education faculty members from the working class homes. In contrast to their colleagues in other fields, professors of education are depicted as having learned "conformist values" at their mothers' knees. According to these reviewers, these conformist values are then passed on to students who tend to be the university's "least academically inclined" (p. 540).

Goodlad (1990B) describes the teaching profession as suffering from "chronic prestige deprivation." Add low
salaries and tough working conditions and it is no surprise
that many parents are dismayed when daughters and (worse
yet!) sons announce that they want to become teachers.
College students planning to enter the profession frequently
have to justify their choice of career, reporting that
"professors want to know why we are taking this course, and
most of the other students think we are crazy" (p. 173).

**Teacher Education Courses**

To accommodate these demographics, the teacher training
curriculum is portrayed in this literature as watered down,
with busywork courses requiring only low order cognitive
skills (Lanier & Little (1986). This lack of intellectual
rigor cited in Lanier and Little (1986) is described as
causing other "academic noses to go up" (p. 531).
Furthermore, according to this same review, the students
themselves perceive education courses as generally useless.
Little attention was paid to how students learn; teaching
was seen as a simple transmission of knowledge to empty
vessels.

Lanier and Little (1986) cite a review by the Bureau of
Education Research that calls their meta study of teachers
evaluating their own previous teacher education courses "a
litany of woe" (p. 542). Most preservice students seem to
echo society’s perception that anybody can teach and that
there’s not much to be learned in education courses. Lanier
and Little (1986) contrast this perception with that of
medical students who enter programs expecting to work hard and to learn a great deal.

Goodlad (1990B) would add here that teacher education has always been a "neglected enterprise" in America, ever since the first normal schools opened their doors 150 years ago. And as the education profession has become increasingly fragmented, Lanier and Little (1986) suggest that professors in colleges of education engaged in research have more and more distanced themselves from the teacher training component of their colleges, as if wishing to distance themselves from this deficit stereotype.

But in recent years critical theorists and others have attacked this stereotype as being elitist and deterministic as well as inaccurate. One perceived inaccuracy is the myth that we can produce good teachers if we begin with academically-successful students who graduate with majors in the academic subjects they plan to teach (National Center for Research on Teacher Learning, 1992). This belief is the basis for alternate route teacher training programs which offer these graduates short-term training and first-year support. A study by the National Center for Research on Teacher Learning, NCRTL,(1992), concluded that these programs "did not improve teachers' ability to engage students with important substantive ideas in their classrooms and did not help teachers learn how to examine their own educational practices" (p. 5). Knowing a subject
like mathematics, for example, does not mean that someone will know how to teach it.

According to Grossman (1990) teachers must "draw upon their knowledge to select appropriate topics and their knowledge of students' prior knowledge and conceptions to formulate appropriate and provocative representations of the content to be learned" (p. 8). The studies that she and her colleagues at Stanford have analyzed indicate that teachers' content knowledge is transformed by the very act of teaching. Shulman (1986) has proposed the term "pedagogical content knowledge" to better represent the multidimensional nature of subject matter knowledge, which includes knowledge of curriculum and instructional strategies, of students' understandings and misconceptions, as well as teachers' goals for teaching a particular subject.

Other theorists have questioned the socio-economic stereotype that underlies the deficit stereotype. Ohmann (1982) argues that our definition of social class is "basically heuristic," arrived at by "calibrating one or more factors such as income, education, and occupation" and that this heuristic has little to do with the lives of real people (p.8). Fox (1990) calls for "conceptions of class and language that are contextual and dynamic, respectful of the minds and language of working class people, and subject to human intervention" (p. 73).
Fox (1990) further suggests that education should lead women, minorities, and working class students "to explore background that their educational experience may have led them to see as a disadvantage and a liability" (p. 21). Especially though writing about their own background and language use and by sharing their writing with others, these students can be helped to reinterpret their backgrounds and begin to see them as a source of strength instead of a source of powerlessness. He also suggests that teachers need to see themselves as "critical ethnographers...to reconceive of themselves as both intellectuals and as active transformers of history" (p. 35-36).

The Power of Past Conditioning

This vision of teacher/action researcher is consistent with the teacher training goals of the Masters in Education in Teaching Program (MET) at the University of Hawaii. But even if we manage to launch an effective, innovative teacher training program, even when we encourage teachers to problem find, to reexamine their own backgrounds and their own practice, these efforts can eventually be overridden, once these novice teachers are in their own classrooms, by powerful past conditioning. Lortie (1975) calls this conditioning "an apprenticeship of observation." Preservice teachers have spent 12 years watching their own teachers. Whatever their comparatively brief exposure to education courses may have taught them, they often drift back to these
older, more seductive models of teaching and learning once they enter their own classrooms.

In terms of writing instruction, novices often reach the unexamined conclusion that such models were productive. After all, this was the pedagogy that gave them their knowledge of writing. A recent study by the National Center for Research on Teacher Education (1991) states:

Virtually every prospective teacher who plans to teach writing has been taught writing through a different method than the method that teacher educators now advocate; that is, teachers learned the conventions of writing, but have not learned to use writing to formulate and develop their own ideas to communicate them to particular audiences (p. 35).

Data from this same study suggest that based on such past conditioning, undergraduate preservice teachers tend to believe that students must learn the conventions and mechanics of writing—such as the parts of speech—before they can be allowed to generate texts of their own (1991), a belief that runs counter to the body of writing research described in the previous section.

Holt-Reynolds (1992) calls this conditioning "tenacious and highly resistant to instruction" in subsequent teacher education programs (p.327), and Goodlad (1984) identifies the major problem in teacher education as one of "teasing" teachers away from the way they've been taught.

Even more deeply internalized than memories of previous teachers are novices' images of themselves as learners, as readers, and in the case of this study, as writers.
According to Holt-Reynolds (1992) preservice teachers often fall back upon deeply-rooted personal history-based beliefs, referencing themselves and their own experiences "as prototypes upon which to build a generalized premise" (p. 339). Such beliefs (and the self-images that shaped them) can be also extremely resistant to innovation, which, according to Carter (1993) further contributes to the deficit stereotype:

One of the most common characterizations is a woman teacher who is kind and sweet and noble in her intentions, who tries very hard but simply does not, for example, convert to something like constructivist teaching, cooperative learning, or a particular view of mathematics instruction (p. 9).

As I read through this literature, I wondered how many of the eager novices in my study might be undermined by these powerful (and often unconsciously-held) images, especially the three who disliked writing and saw themselves as incompetent writers. Would these values and attitudes-- and their own sense of incompetence-- be passed along to their students in a continuing cycle of writing apprehension?

No doubt this cycle has much to do with observers' overwhelming impression of Applebee's (1984) "culture of recitation," in the schools, with the majority of writing activities filling in blanks or writing brief summaries, to a degree that largely excludes discovery and transformative kinds of writing assignments (Applebee, 1984; Goodlad, 1984;
Studies have shown that highly-apprehensive teachers are less likely to value self-expression in student writing and more likely to be concerned with issues of form and usage. And according to Daly et al (1988) there is evidence to support the possibility that these attitudes can be handed down from teacher to student.

Teachers establish a context for writing that is partly dependent upon their own likes or dislikes for writing. To the degree that teachers are apprehensive of writing, they are likely to encourage fewer writing-related activities and to focus more on rigid criteria which may, in turn (and we must be cautious about the inferential leaps being made here) deleteriously affect students' attitudes about writing as well as their writing performance (p. 167).

Indeed, Rosie, the novice math teacher in my study who "hated writing," confessed in our first focus group interview that she had joined the study group because she did not want to pass on her own writing apprehension to her students. In the course of our discussions, Rosie routinely engaged in bouts of soul searching in which she addressed her own writing aversion. Some theorists (Solas, 1992) suggest that incorporating such autobiographical issues into teacher education programs can help teachers understand their own ways of "imposing meaning on their worlds" (p. 211). Rosie needed to come to terms with the "writing is like pulling teeth" attitudes that had shaped her own schooling before she could really internalize the MET vision of inquiry learning. And other novice teachers can be helped by becoming more aware of their tacit images and beliefs--
those invisible lenses through which they view their own theory and practice. But typical approaches to teacher training often omit the autobiographical inquiries that would encourage teachers to look closely at their own learning and beliefs. According to Kutz, E. and Roskelley, H. (1991):

Simply put, people learn by asking questions. But teachers aren't trained to ask questions about their own learning, or about the classroom setting they create.

The Additional Impact of Job Conditions

Beyond this lack of self-reflection, beyond Lanier and Little's (1986) already dismal picture of dull preservice teachers and their conformist professors, is the impact of job conditions once teachers are launched on their careers. The "harsh realities" of teaching reported in the latter review are certainly not new. The authors describe a book called The Diaries and Letters of Jeannie, a Georgia Teacher 1851-1886, which documents the low pay, inattentive and undisciplined students, and outside interference in classroom decisions that defeated this committed, idealistic teacher back in the last century.

Teachers have traditionally endured these harsh realities in isolation. A study by Lortie (1975) shows only 25% of teachers reporting much contact with their colleagues, with almost fifty percent reporting no contact at all. Another study cited by Lanier and Little (1986) suggests the value of improved collaboration. "Schools in
which teachers talked to one another, were regularly observed, and participated in shared planning" were also "schools in which teachers expected to learn from and with one another on a regular basis" (p.561). But these schools were seen as the exceptions rather than the rule.

Other studies have documented the conservative nature of school settings (Glasser, 1990; Grossman, 1992; Palonsky, 1986) and teaching careers as having no marked stages of progression, with no notion of evolving skills and few opportunities for creativity (Goodlad, 1984, 1990B).

According to Darling-Hammond (1992)

Since the adoption of a bureaucratic form of management at the turn of the twentieth century, our school organizations have essentially pursued what you might think of as a trickle-down theory of knowledge. This theory assumes that somehow most of the knowledge about what to do in schools and classrooms resides at the top of a very large hierarchical system. It is embodied in required textbooks, curriculum packages, memoranda and directives, and systems that have been established for the placement, grouping, labeling, promotion, and treatment of students (p. 12).

Ironically, according to Darling-Hammond (1985) it is these same systems, this same "deskilling" of teachers, that is forcing many of the most qualified to leave the profession. A recent study reported that 45% of the teachers polled reported that the single thing that would make them leave teaching was the "increased prescriptiveness of teaching content and methods" (p. 209. Furthermore, for novices entering the profession, the initiation into that first job is described by Lanier and Little (1986) as "sink
or swim," with consistent patterns of "abrupt or "unstaged" entry into the profession (p. 561).

The authors of On becoming a Nation of Readers (Anderson et al, 1985) as well as a recent report from the National Center for Research on Teacher Education (1991) have joined other observers of the teaching scene to emphasize the importance of continued support and guidance during that crucial first year of teaching. If we want to foster innovative, constructivist practices such as those espoused by the MET program, this support seems even more crucial.

A final problem affecting the success of these innovative practices is the fact that a time-honored way that new teachers can demonstrate competence to peers and administrators is by maintaining control in their classrooms. Not surprisingly, then, research suggests that in the course of their first year socialization, novices tend--almost as a survival technique--to become more authoritarian, often making choices that will control student behavior and increase teacher's control of the discourse rather than promote intellectual growth through collaborative and inquiry-based activities. This shift can, in part, be explained by Lortie's (1975) "apprenticeship of observation." But the tendency toward control has also been attributed to the bewildering management dilemmas novice teachers experience, to the inherent top-down power
structure of schools, and to their contact with other teachers (Featherstone, 1992; Glasser, 1990; Goodman, 1985; Palonsky, 1986).

Programs such as the MET hope to balance this need for novices to acquire useful management techniques with the program's underlying goal of school renewal by providing novices with active involvement in real classrooms combined with active self-reflection. The students-becoming-teachers in my study were learning to ask questions about their own learning, their own self images as writers, at the same time as they were learning to ask questions about the classroom settings they were observing and then later creating for themselves. In this struggle to create blueprints for their own teaching practice, these turned out to be extremely useful questions.

According to Featherstone (1992):

I have come to feel that self-knowledge is a major fruit--perhaps the major fruit--of early teaching experience, that the loudest of the voices urging strict discipline may come from inside the novice's head and that the struggle to manage the behavior of young people is intimately bound up with the struggle to understand and change the self (p. 2).

Such self-understanding can be complex and demanding work, involving negotiation with a novice's present as well as her own student past. Britzman (1992) suggests that taking on the new role of teacher is not the same as creating a new identity of teacher (or, in our case, of writing teacher), and that the latter construction, which
she calls "the significant albeit hidden work of learning to teach," must involve frequent "scrutiny into how we come to know ourselves when we are trying to become a teacher" (p. 24).

The Call for Change

But such scrutiny is not seen as typical in teacher education. Lanier and Little (1986) contrast teachers' lack of reflection with that of social workers and psychologists who are "routinely educated to consider their own personalities and to take them into account in their work with people" (p. 549). Similar critiques of teacher education have proliferated in the past decade, and perhaps the ever more widespread dissatisfaction with our schools will finally push us to do something about this most neglected of enterprises, allowing programs like the MET to flourish.

A call for change is in the air. Innovative teacher training programs such as the MET, programs which are labeled as "problem-based" or "inquiry-based," have been proposed as alternatives to the traditional decontextualized teacher education courses. According to Tom (1985), the "parameters for what counts as inquiry teacher education are fuzzy" (p. 36). Within this "multifaceted concept" are images of teachers as problem solvers, as political craftsmen, as self-reflective professionals, depending on the particular inquiry model being promoted. Still, there is
a common thread of the problematic as a central element of these inquiry models, with reflective teachers "rendering problematic or questionable those aspects of teaching generally taken for granted" (37).

Programs in industry based on similar priorities have achieved well-publicized success in replacing the top-down industrial model with a more collegial workplace. In these restructured companies, factory workers function as teams. They’re rewarded for sharing problems and problem solutions with company presidents. In these new, worker-empowered companies, absenteeism is down, production is up (Peters and Waterman, 1982). These programs, empowering steel workers and motorcycle manufacturers alike, are reminiscent of the goals for teachers and students in problem-based, inquiry-based programs. According to Solas (1992).

If teachers and students have been previously approached as information processors in need of direction, they are new being conceptualized as sense-making and history-making deconstructionalists, endowed with the ability to reflect, describe, and discuss their thoughts, feelings, and actions (p. 220).

No wonder it’s being called a revolution, a shifting of paradigms.

Reflection, Problem finding, and Writing

It is teachers who, in the end, will change the world of the school by understanding it.
(inscription for a plaque in memory of Lawrence Stenhouse)

Donald Schon (1983) in The Reflective Practitioner describes a practice called reflection in action with
examples from several professions. In one example, trainers first showed a group of teachers the tacit frames they applied to the construction of problems and roles (frames such as: "this student can't master subtraction"). Once these teachers saw how they actively constructed the reality of their own practice, they moved to an awareness of the variety of other frames available to them. Basically, they had become curious about student behavior "which might be otherwise dismissed with peremptory judgements" (p. 321).

This same habit of reflection can connect the roles of teacher and researcher in the MET teacher training/school renewal enterprize. Schon explains that "the reflective researcher cannot maintain distance from, much less superiority to, the experience of practice" (p. 323). Schon (1983) suggests that this reflective stance will cause teachers to automatically question existing school practices such as the emphasis on drill and recitation or the one to twenty-five teacher/student ratio. His examples are reminiscent of prevailing educational norms (such as checking the math homework) that Grossman (1992) wants novice teachers to be taught to question.

Whether we call this mental process reflection, reframing, or problem finding, all these activities can be accomplished by the simple act of writing. Writing is reflection on paper--sitting quietly, shaping questions, defining issues and relationships and allowing connections
to be seen. And unlike the spoken word, our thoughts are there before us, available for constant review.

Emig (1977) explains that for Vygotsky, writing represents an expansion of inner speech, that mode whereby we talk to ourselves.

The medium of written verbal language requires the establishment of systematic connections and relationships. Clear writing by definition is writing which signals without ambiguity the nature of conceptual relationships (Emig, 1977, p. 89.)

Sondra Perl (1980) calls the composing process that prompts these connections "retrospective structuring," which she describes as follows:

Once we have worked at shaping, through language, what is there inchoately, we can look at what we have written to see if it adequately captures what we intended. Often at this moment discovery occurs. We see something new in our writing that comes upon us as a surprise. We see in our words a further structuring of the sense we began with and we recognize that in those words we have discovered something new about ourselves and our topic (p. 117).

This is precisely why so many people keep diaries, compose poetry, write nasty letters they don’t even need to mail after the feelings become words on a page. And this same reflective therapy will work for teacher researchers who are also functioning in their schools as agents of change. The focus on writing that formed our original group identity was about more than a practical skill to pass on to students. For these novices, writing was also a vehicle for continued self-reflection and self-evaluation, allowing them to examine self images and past histories in what Britzman
(1992) calls "the murky world of identity" (p. 44), to explore previously-implicit theories of writing and learning, and through this exploration to acquire what Bullough et al (1989) call "consistent, grounded and accurate understandings of themselves as teachers" (p. 23).

Part 5: Cultural Context and Language Policy in Hawaii

This study took place within the context of Hawaii's public schools, which are the most culturally diverse schools in the nation, with more racial/ethnic groups represented than anywhere else in the United States and no single ethnic majority. Honolulu is the only metropolitan area in the United States where what the Census Bureau classifies as "other minorities" are a majority in the schools. Hawaii also ranks first as the state with the highest percentage of students in private schools--approximately 17% or twice the national average (Yoshishige, 1991). We can begin this exploration of the public school scene by exploring the connection between these two national firsts.

Although Hawaii can boast of some nationally-recognized public school programs as well as dedicated educators at all schools, Hawaii's public schools tend to have a negative reputation in the community at large. Many parents, particularly on the main island of Oahu, start their days with nerve-shattering traffic jams delivering kids to three of the nation's largest private schools, which are only a
few miles from one another. What keeps these parents (who represent all ethnic groups) fighting traffic and writing tuition checks in a state where taxes, housing, and food costs are also among the highest in the nation?

The Local Language

One thing parents are paying for in their private school choices is a level of English that comes closer the Academic Register of University speech, also closer to Standard Written English. On all standardized test measures, Hawaii's public school students earn verbal scores significantly lower than the national average (Wright, 1992). Several years ago, for example, the local media uncovered the fact that Hawaii's kindergartners ranked at the 11th percentile (compared to national norms) on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, with almost 80% of entering kindergartners scoring below their age level readiness (Wright, 1992). For a few days, educational experts were appearing on local TV explaining these distressing statistics, informing viewers that a higher percentage of children entering Hawaii's public schools simply do not speak Standard English in their homes.

Some of these students are recent immigrants. An even larger percentage are born into local families that communicate with one another in Pidgin, a local language used—and often cherished—by "locals" of all ethnic
groups, including some "local haoles." ("Haole" is the local term for Caucasian.) (Grant & McLaren, 1990).

According to linguists, this local language that most people in Hawaii call Pidgin is not really a pidgin at all. Technically defined, a pidgin is a first-generation language of contact that evolves as a second language when immigrants from many ethnic groups—such as Chinese, Portuguese, Japanese, Filipinos, and others—had to live and work together, usually as plantation workers.

Hawaii's present local language started off as a pidgin language four or five generations ago, but is now technically defined as a creole. A creole is the term used for the language shared by subsequent generations (i.e. the immigrants' children and grandchildren), for whom it is their first language. Hawaiian Creole English (HCE) is still made up of words drawn from the languages represented in the original plantation communities—English, Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, Ilocano, Portuguese, and others. But like other creole languages, it follows a more elaborated syntax for marking tense and modality and uses a more standardized vocabulary than the pidgin of the first generation speakers (Sato, 1985).

Hawaii's present love-hate relationship with HCE goes back to the early years of this century, when a small group (mostly haoles whose families could not afford private schools) were sent to special public schools (called English
Standard Schools) based on their scores on an English proficiency test. Children who couldn’t pass this test remained in the regular public schools, further strengthening the creole language because this majority of children had very little contact with mainstream English speakers.

Between 1924 and 1960, this system effectively separated students according to their ability to speak "good" English, with a resulting de facto segregation along racial lines. Some historians believe this dual school system lives on today in Hawaii’s public-private division. And to this day, many people in Hawaii see HCE speakers as less educated (and in some cases, less intelligent). This stereotype lives on, in spite of the fact that judges, surgeons, university professors, Board of Regents members speak HCE informally and are equally articulate in Standard English when they need to be—also in spite of the fact that many local people who send their children to private schools to be immersed in Standard English, continue to have a fierce loyalty to their own first language, HCE.

Local poet Eric Chock sees the negative images as perpetuated by Hawaii’s centralized state school system:

I mean the whole educational system as it filters down from the University to the elementary schools. After all, the College of Ed trains the people who teach in our schools. They start you off in kindergarten with the attitude that somehow you’re not a fully developed human being because you don’t fit into a standard American cultural pattern. And when you speak pidgin they tell you
it's bad. Or it's somehow less effective because you can't express complex emotions and ideas. That's what we're fighting against (Chock, 1983).

This language issue and the highly-charged feelings associated with it defies easy generalizations. Even labeling an HCE speaker is not simple. Linguists define a creole-speaking continuum. At one end (called basolectal) are what are called "heavy" Pidgin speakers (who literally can not be understood by tourists to the islands). At the other end (called acrolectal) are speakers of a lilting and accented speech that is still relatively close to mainstream English in syntax and vocabulary. Local people move back and forth along this continuum depending on where they are and who they are talking to (Sato, 1985). And based on their intonation, pronunciation, and word choice, many state leaders, including important elected representatives like the present governor, are sometimes seen by linguists as speaking acrolectal HCE rather than Standard English, per se. Such opinions (i.e., whether a particular official's speech is Standard English with a local accent or acrolectal HCE) are, of course, arguable. But the fact remains that many public school teachers also speak this inflected variety of English, with its own lilting accent, its own unique vocabulary and syntactic markers. And in many public school classes, particularly low-track classes, HCE may be the only language ever spoken by some of the children.
Some parents choose to remove their children from such language environments. If placed in the public schools, they fear their children will not learn to "code switch," will not be able to make the shift into Standard English that university educations and high paying jobs will demand. So they mortgage their homes and take second jobs and sometimes even third jobs to send children to private schools, where Standard English is guaranteed in the classroom—and where somewhat more negative attitudes about the local language are likely to prevail. Indeed, one study revealed that only 26% of private school seniors approved of the use of HCE in school, compared with 54% of public school seniors—-with much higher percentages in the rural areas (Sato, 1985).

The irony here is that traditional notions of high-status Standard English or Standard American English are more monolithic than the actual reality of language use in the United States. Even the idea that there is a Standard English has begun to be debunked. Many mainland locales have strong accent or even dialect variations that nevertheless fall under the rubric of Standard American English. And just as in Hawaii, speakers (including the Southern-born President of the United States) tend to move back and forth along a continuum from these informal, dialectic varieties to more mainstream, formal discourse patterns, depending on where they are and who they are speaking with.
Some theorists call attention to this paradox by spelling "Standard" with a lower-case "s" (Watson Gegeo, 1990; Willinsky, 1990). Perhaps a better term for so-called "standard" English would be "Formal English." Martha Demientieff, a Native Alaskan teacher, uses this term to distinguish between her students' local language (which she calls "Village English") and the institutional language of school. She tells her students that they will need to learn how to talk to people, outsiders, who "judge others by the way they talk or write":

They think everybody needs to talk like them. Unlike us, they have a hard time hearing what people say if they don’t talk exactly like them. Their way of talking and writing is called "Formal English." We have to feel a little sorry for them because they have only one way to talk (Delpit, 1988, p. 293).

**Code Switching**

Like Demientieff's students, many of Hawaii's children become skillful at code switching. And ironically, even in the most prestigious private schools, many students shift back into Pidgin, the language of the playground, as soon as the bell rings. This shift is deplored by some families but tacitly encouraged by others.

By speaking the local language, students (especially private school students) can prove that they are not "haolified." And in so doing, they are tacitly resisting the haole consciousness of the ruling classes that exploited their grandparents and great grandparents in former
plantation days. (At the same time, also ironically, they are proving that it is possible for children to speak both languages with equal fluency to adapt to different language contexts, just as many successful adults do.)

The main point, in terms of this writing study, is that the Formal English end of the continuum is closer to the Standard Written English required for most school-based writing. For monolingual HCE speakers, who are unable to code switch, this distance becomes a major obstacle in mastering the written language of school. Not surprisingly, these monolingual children are disproportionately represented in low-track and remedial classes. Willinsky (1990), quoting Bourdieu, speaks of this access to Formal English as "cultural capital," which "pays the highest dividends" in terms of the writing process. He adds, "Those students whose linguistic experience was rooted in other communities of discourse also bring a form of cultural capital to the school only to find their investments depreciated and their resources depleted, an accounting which they find confirmed repeatedly in English classes (p. 32).

According to linguist and educator Karen Watson-Gegeo (1990),

Certainly a social stigma is attached to being a monolingual speaker of HCE. Attitudes research over the past 20 years has typically shown that teachers and students evaluate HCE negatively in relation to standard English, as do community members. However, these studies also show that the
issue is relatively complex and that attitudes are changing (p. 10).

Attitudes are changing. A 1987 incident illustrates the increasing political awareness of HCE speakers. Hawaii’s Board of Education proposed a new ruling, mandating that Pidgin (HCE) would no longer be allowed in Hawaii’s public school classrooms. They were astonished by the immediate public resistance and eventually modified this position ("encouraging" the use of Standard English instead.)

Ironically, during the well-publicized debates, some BOE members arguing for this new rule were expressing themselves in what some University of Hawaii linguists have called acrolectal HCE!

These heated discussions showed witnesses from various segments of the community expressing their sense of HCE as a marker of local identity (and in many cases of a common plantation heritage) rather than a stigma. In the end, they helped the community re-evaluate and revalue its local language. This incident coincided with a growing interest in local literature--stories, poetry, and plays-- written in HCE as well as a literary journal devoted to local literature, much of it written in Pidgin.

Before this time, the DOE leadership had refused to acknowledge students’ poor verbal showings as possibly related to second language problems, and had consistently refused to apply for federal Bilingual funds. But in 1988, not long after the Board hearings, the DOE applied for these
funds and later established a remediation program to address the needs of Pidgin speakers. In 1989 Project Akamai was launched in selected rural areas, servicing a small population of selected students (Watson Gegeo, 1990). But the conflicted feelings remain. "Akamai," for example, means "smart, shrewd" in HCE. Some think this name gives a misleading message— that it is smarter to speak Standard English than to speak Pidgin.

The real problem with this recent attempt at remediation is that a large number of urban children in Hawaii are Pidgin speakers too. Indeed, there are Honolulu classes in which all student talk is carried on in Pidgin, with teachers often slipping into the local language to maintain rapport and to clarify meaning. For students who have no exposure to Standard English at home, there is, then, little opportunity in school to practice speaking this language that most of them understand well enough from watching television and from listening to their teachers. And some of these students go on to enter the College of Education at the University of Hawaii, opting to become teachers.

The case study of Lee (See Chapter Five) describes this MET student’s experience as a former HCE dominant speaker trying to master Formal English academic discourse in order to write papers and lesson plans and to create a new mainstream, teacherly identity for herself. In the past,
students like Lee had to pass an informal test on Standard English to get into the College of Education, but with affirmative action, this requirement was dropped. Lee’s story illustrates the complex and conflicting feelings that surround the local language and the difficulty of acquiring the new academic discourse.

This dissertation also records other subjects’ experiences teaching HCE dominant students in both elementary and high school classes, as they worked to help them bridge the discourse identity barrier by encouraging them to write and speak in accepted school-based Standard English.

Clearly, in Hawaii this dominant discourse—the language of responding to literary texts and of logical problem solving—is not equally available to all. But except for a few thousand students enrolled in Project Akamai classes, Hawaii has not addressed the inherent language problems of its HCE-dominant students. Nor has the College of Education addressed the language problems of HCE-dominant preservice teachers like Lee, for whom frequent warnings not to let herself "slip into Pidgin" were sadly misdirected. For one thing, some pronunciations and colloquialisms that Lee was criticized for using in the classroom (such as "Tell me how the mouse looks like") were the same colloquialisms one hears frequently from local teachers who are seen as speaking "Standard" English.
The final section of this literature review highlights some successful writing teachers in both mainland and Hawaii settings, teachers who are overcoming the many obstacles sketched in these five sections and creating constructivist classrooms using writing as a vehicle for students to grapple with problems and create their own meaning.

**Part 6: New Visions of Writing Teachers at Work**

Rather than augmenting traditional approaches to instruction, it a very real sense such approaches (i.e. writing-to-learn) undermine them--or are undermined in turn by the goals and procedures of more traditionally oriented approaches to teaching" (Langer and Applebee 1987, p.87).

This literature review concludes with four portraits of real-life teachers whose new approaches have done what Langer and Applebee describe above. By integrating writing into their curricula, these teachers have fundamentally altered their visions of teaching and learning. They have moved from a transmission model of instruction--with teachers supplying information, covering the material--to a constructivist model of learning, with students using language to grapple with problems and construct their own meanings.

The classrooms sketched in this section do not resemble the well-publicized images of deficit schools described in Part 2 of this review. Instead, they have become communities of learners, writing workshops in which the traditional distinction between teacher and learner has been blurred. In spite of the "formidable" pressures to teach lower-level
procedural tasks that still prevail in schools (Doyle, 1983), these teachers have moved beyond the industrial model and are inspiring others to do the same. And writing was a tool that helped them accomplish their minor miracles.

The obstacles these teachers faced have also been described in previous sections of this literature review. A recent report of the National Center for Research on Teacher Education (NCRTE) (1991) summarizes the difficulties the authors saw as interfering with teachers' ability to teach what they call "the generative side of writing":

(A) the traditional school norms in which teachers worked,
(b) the policy context in which they worked, and
(c) the inherent difficulty of this approach to teaching writing (p. 43).

Specifically, the norms on which teachers are frequently evaluated tend to emphasize classroom control. These norms and policies, and the tremendous emotional and cognitive overload of the induction years, often cause novices to become obsessed by control. Part 4 of this review cited studies of novices sacrificing the more complex writing-to-learn activities in favor of traditional worksheet activities in which teachers controlled the discourse. This same NCRTE report (1991) and other sources cited in Part 4 of this review have also suggested that even when novice teachers understand the process/discovery writing approach and want to implement it, they still must overcome powerful past conditioning. Otherwise, they often
revert to models from their own socialization in classrooms where writing consisted of drills on surface conventions or brief summaries of other people's ideas.

Interestingly and perhaps significantly, all the writing teachers profiled below were operating in supportive environments for writing-to-learn innovations. They did not have to overcome bureaucratic resistance and did not have to fear receiving a negative evaluation because of a noisier writing workshop classroom. However, all tell stories of their own difficulties in moving beyond their own preconceived notions of the roles of teacher and student in writing instruction and other curriculum areas.

**Nancie Atwell’s Writing Workshops**

Nancie Atwell (1986), a former 8th grade teacher from Boothbay Maine, has become a nationally-renowned model of whole language practice. But Atwell confesses that she "started as a creationist," each year creating and perfecting her own curriculum which she then "tended and taught" instead of learning with and from her students (p. 1). But inspired by the work of Donald Graves and Donald Murray and encouraged a summer inservice program, she eventually abandoned the worksheets, tests, and writing assignments—"one for each week"—of her curricular creation.

Now Atwell's students work with self-selected topics and keep track of their successive drafts along with
individual editing and proofreading lists. These folders are their "text" for the course, which is called "Writing Workshop." (In Maine intermediate schools, there is a separate reading period each day, which allowed Atwell to develop similar reading workshops as well). At the beginning of the school year her students tend "look for significance in the events of their own lives," concentrating on personal narratives (p.81). But later, inspired by one another and sometimes "nudged" by their teacher, students move on to other kinds of writing (p. 81). Whenever they are ready for feedback on a working draft, they can go to the corners of the room for conferences with their peers. Only papers already critiqued by peers and rewritten go into Atwell’s "Ready for final editing" box. Atwell spends approximately half an hour each day after school responding to these texts. In this way, she involves her students more actively in the writing process and makes her own workload manageable.

Each period typically begins with a five minute mini lesson, in which Atwell shares "my own, professional writers,’ and students’ real solutions" to real writing problems (p.81). The majority of the period is then spent writing and conferencing. The period ends with a brief "group share," with students sitting on the carpet, listening and sharing (Atwell, 1986).
Reba Pekala’s First Grade Publication Cycles

Reba Pekala, a first grade teacher in the Shoreham-Wading River (New York) school system, began her career as "a traditionalist by training and inclination" (Perl & Wilson, 1986, p. 63). She used to be convinced that first graders could not write, not before she taught them the conventions in the form of the alphabet, letter sound correspondences, etc. She also suffered from a high level of writing apprehension, typically avoided writing and saw herself as a poor writer. Still, her district was very supportive of a process-writing approach, and she was eventually inspired to attempt a writing process classroom by a summer workshop offered by the National Writing Project (formerly the Bay Area Writing Project) (Perl & Wilson, 1986).

Now her students produce their own books throughout the year. Like Atwell’s eighth graders, many begin with personal narratives, a trip to the dentist, a family vacation, but the teacher also occasionally assigns topics or launches a letter writing project. After students have written four drafts on four different subjects, they are encouraged to choose one to take to publication. Pekala conferences with the student author and then types the final copy on her computer. The students illustrate the pages and then practiced reading in order to share their books with others.
Moving from her traditionalist perspective, Pekala learned that first graders’ knew that their invented spellings were approximations and worked toward greater accuracy as the year progressed. With the typed versions of their stories providing them with standard spellings, they seemed to learn more words than they had with her past practice of teaching the conventions first.

In spite of the success of this practice in terms of students’ emergent literacy, Pekala is still insecure about her own writing. Still, she has overcome her writing apprehension in order to write several journal articles about the success of her students’ publishing efforts and is actively involved with the National Writing Project. Interestingly, her own writing apprehension has served as an inspiration to create a classroom in which students felt safe to express themselves, in which they all come to think of themselves as writers because their teacher "never doubted that they could and would write" (Perl & Wilson, 1986, p. 98).

**Donna Owen’s Math Logs**

When Donna Owen moved from teaching English to teaching math, in Mathews Middle School, Mathews County, Virginia, she thought she was finished with writing instruction. She was driven to try learning logs by desperation when, no matter what creative teaching approaches she employed, her students were unable to solve simple problems involving the
derivation of Pi. The lesson in question involved circles, radii, diameters, and circumferences, and Owen reports:

I had planned, fetched dead tennis balls, allowed the confusion of student experimentation, talked, demonstrated with a bike tire, talked some more, worked problems on the board, then explained the whole business again. So, the next logical step was to go out into the halls and complain to other teachers (Owens, 1987, p. 22).

A trusted colleague suggested learning logs. The next day, Owen asked her students to write a few sentences about how to find the circumference and then to explain its relationship to the radius and diameter. "I was definitely out on a limb and feeling insecure with this writing in math," she admits (p. 22).

Owens was amazed when her students' texts were not only creative (some had written stories) but also "mathematically sound." On reflection, she realized that writing "reams of legal pages" had always served her well when she had to learn something new. She realized that in her own life, "writing is a tangible form of thinking" (p. 24). Then, further reflecting on her own teaching practice, she realized that there had been nothing wrong with her explanations and demonstrations.

When I was talking, they may have been comprehending what I was explaining, but they weren't thinking about it. They never defined it, questioned it, shaped it, and decided how the relationships worked. When I asked the students to write, though, they had to think. They could not make the pencil move without harnessing their thinking. They had to analyze the problem and explain it, and they had to synthesize it to see the relationships—thinking skills very different
from the short-answer, recall type thinking I had been inspiring during my demonstrations and questions (p. 24).

Owens has gone in to incorporate learning logs as a classroom staple, and her conclusions about students learning through writing are very reminiscent of constructivist learning theory:

My assumptions were wrong. I had assumed that the students learned from me, that they were empty vessels into which I could pour my knowledge. Then, when I finished pouring, not once but several times, I assumed that they knew everything I wanted them to know. But they hadn’t learned. I had never given them time to think and to organize what they understood into their own words so that it could be learned (Owens, 1986, p. 24).

As described in the previous section, the language context in the Hawaii’s public school offers additional challenges to teachers wanting to implement a process writing approach, because many students home language patterns are far removed from the typical school-based Standard Written English. In the profile below, a Hawaii third grade teacher has created a writing workshop classroom in which her students’ diversity is also their strength.

**Carrolyn Emoto’s Third Grade—Invitations for Learning**

An in-progress manuscript presenting case studies of six teachers after a summer National Writing Project institute describes the changes in this third grade classroom (Hussey, 1993). The 26 students are a typical representation of Hawaii’s multi-ethnic society, with children of Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Hawaiian, Spanish,
Black, Vietnamese, and Portuguese ancestry. Students come from lower and middle-income families; some from single-parent families. One immigrant student speaks no English; several others have limited English-speaking proficiency. More than half the children qualify for Chapter One assistance. Students are seated in clusters, with at least one competent reader and English speaker at each table. Emoto sees her curriculum as offering students a series of "invitations for learning." Less than a month into the first semester, students have already generated several reading and learning logs as well as rough drafts written about their families. The theme of family is an organizing concept for this year's curriculum (Hussey, 1993).

On a typical day early in the year, she begins by reading aloud a Judy Blume novel and asking students to visualize the story, asking "What kinds of movies or pictures did you have in your head?" (p. 4). After some discussion, students walk eagerly to the boxes containing their reading logs and begin to write about these visualizations. One student writes, "I saw the whole movie!" Emoto tells the children, "When you write, you have the power to put movies in other people's heads" (p. 5). The researcher describes Emoto's writing process as follows:

For nearly fifteen minutes, students are bent over their logs, engrossed in their thinking on paper. A few are talking about their writing, forming ideas orally, moving pencil on paper. Meanwhile, Carrolyn moves quietly about the room, stopping by the desks of students who appear to have some
hesitancy beginning their logs. She asks one immigrant student to dictate his responses while she writes what he says. Carrolyn does not hesitate to help when a student appears frustrated by writing because she believes in the immediacy of communication. In addition, students need to see how writing engenders, not hinders, learning (p. 5).

Later, the teacher models the revision process with one of her own paragraphs on the overhead projector asking students 'How would you revise this?' As students come up to write in their suggestions, she discusses with students "the new meaning generated by each revision" (p. 6). After this mini lesson, students are asked to work on their own revisions, beginning by reading their texts to one another. Meanwhile, the teacher moves around the desks of students who appear to have difficulty, nodding and making suggestions.

Carolyn's function during writing sessions is to help students get focused, to provide support and encouragement, and to nudge students forward in their thinking by posing many questions. Students are receiving individual and specific attention, providing Carolyn with insights into her students' writing processes as well as into their worlds (p. 7).

Again, the above description--succeeding as well in multi-cultural Hawaii--suggests the same constructivist principles of learning that have been described throughout this chapter. The final section describes other beliefs and writing practices that these teachers also have in common.  

**Effective Practices Common to These Teachers**

The report by the National Center for Research on Teacher Education (1991) cited earlier concludes:
If teachers are to help students learn to write more complex arguments and to use writing to formulate their own ideas, they need to understand how the process of writing can enable such outcomes... Teachers need to expand their conception of writing.... If writing is a generative process, then learning to write necessarily entails experiences generating text (p.36).

This summary of important principles about the process of learning to write cited below not only echoes the research outlined in the previous section but also defines the writing workshop practices that these four teachers had learned to incorporate, several through outreach efforts of the National Writing Project.

Whereas traditional instruction presented students with the specific rules of form that guide the construction of final products, the process approach to writing requires students not only to learn these conventions but also to learn to draft and revise, for instance, to clarify their ideas and to test those ideas on various audiences. Research on learning to write has suggested several important principles about the processes of learning to write. One is that students learn more when they have numerous opportunities to generate texts and to revise these texts. Another is that they learn more when the texts on which they work serve their own purposes rather than those of the teacher; that is, students learn more about writing when they select their own writing tasks and write for real audiences. And yet another is that they learn the conventions of writing when these are taught in the context of their own writing purposes rather than being taught in the abstract, separate from any particular purpose" (p. 36-37).

The novice teachers that entered my study group in the first semester of their Masters in Education in Teaching program lacked the language to describe these practices explicitly, but all had goals and visions for creating
classrooms like the ones above. Furthermore, the novices in my group seemed very determined to move beyond their own "apprenticeship of observation" in traditional classrooms. None of them thought that the pedagogy that had taught them to write (or failed to) was worthy of emulating. But unlike the teachers described above, several of my subjects faced obstacles in the form of school norms and policies as well as evaluation standards that sometimes litigated against the noise and confusion, the movement of students, the blurring of distinction between learners and teachers of a true writing process classroom.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

Part 1: Rationale for the Study’s Methodology

This study uses an ethnographic, interpretive approach as well as a narrative mode of presentation in order to capture what Josselson and Lieblich (1993) have called "the layering of experience so necessary to psychological understanding that cannot be apprehended by linear measurement and thought" (p. xv). Widdershoven (1993) suggests that "the intertwining of experience and story lies at the core of individual life and psychological understanding" (p. 19).

Jerome Bruner (1966) delineates two modes of thought, each one of which provides a means of constructing reality. The first is the logical-scientific mode, which he calls "paradigmatic," useful for establishing formal and empirical proof and making generalizations. The other mode he calls narrative, which "deals in human or human-like intention and action and the vicissitudes and consequences that mark their course." He elaborates on the uses of the narrative mode as follows:

It strives to put its timeless miracles into the particulars of experience, and to locate the experience in time and place" (p. 13).

According to Bruner, both modes can be used to convince, but in fundamentally different ways. "Arguments convince one of their truth, stories of their likeliness"
A great deal is known about the paradigmatic mode of conducting research. But although narrative research has a long history in the social science and humanities, it is a rather recent addition to the realm of educational research. Josselson and Lieblich (1993) have recently set forth several criteria for good, scholarly narratives. These include breath of material as well as coherence (i.e., "the way in which different parts of the story add up to a complete and meaningful picture") and, finally, the aesthetic appeal of the presentation, which they claim is necessary "for a narrative and its explication to make sense." The authors add that good narrative analysis makes sense "in intuitive, holistic ways" that "include but transcend the rational" (p. xii).

For the qualitative research paradigm in general, Marshall and Rossman (1989), building on the work of Lincoln and Guba, propose alternative constructs for establishing the value of a study, the first of which is credibility. According to these authors, "An in-depth description will be so embedded with data derived from that setting that it cannot help but be valid" (p. 145).

The narratives in this dissertation include three contrasting case studies, drawn from two years of contact
with three of the elementary teachers, Lee, Kate, and Ann. Their stories capture Bruner's "particulars of experience" for these graduate students coming-of-age as teachers of writing. They include the "vicissitudes and consequences" along the way, and also serve as narratives of transformation, documenting how these novice teachers originally viewed themselves as writers, their beliefs about writing and teaching with writing, the writing lessons they created at different stages of their transition, how they themselves used writing to reflect on their experiences, and finally, how both attitudes and teaching practices were affected by the schools in which they worked and by our writing-to-learn support group.

According to Newkirk (1991), "the case study researcher usually tells transformational narratives, ones in which the individual experiences some sort of conflict and undergoes a qualitative change in the resolution of that conflict" (p.7). In all three cases, this passage from graduate student to public school teacher was seen--by both subjects and researcher--as transformative.

The fourth narrative in this dissertation is a cross-group case study, describing the evolution of our study group and organized according to cross-cutting issues and themes affecting both the high school and elementary teachers' uses of classroom and personal writing during the course of their final three semesters in the MET program.
Part 2: Context of the Study, the MET Program

This study is based on three semesters of dialogue between the researcher and eight students from a new problem-based teacher education program at the University of Hawaii (UH), which began with its first cohort of students in the fall of 1991. This program, called the Masters in Education in Teaching (MET), is part of the National Network for School Renewal (NNSR), a consortium of university-school partnerships whose twin goals are reform of teacher education and the reform of schools.

The new program was designed to produce teachers who will function as agents of change, active participants in the renewal process, and as self-reflective professionals, capable of conducting action research in their schools. The interdisciplinary instruction was problem-based, with students responsible for their own learning and learning in the context of Honolulu's Department of Education (DOE) schools from their first semester (observing and presenting lessons) through their fourth and final semester (as full-time, paid interns).

For the first two semesters students were required to spend 15 hours per week in their assigned Department of Education (DOE) schools. For the first semester, students visited several different teachers, and actual participation was left flexible. In addition, students were assigned to one full-cohort seminar per week and two different inquiry
groups, one composed of students assigned to the same school. With the latter group, the major project was to write a collaborative ethnography of the school, which was called a school portrait.

In the second semester, students were expected to plan and execute a unit in one of the classes they were working with. Continuing with the same inquiry groups, they were also required to follow up on the school portrait with an action research project related to one of the issues raised in their findings.

The third semester was devoted to student teaching. The MET professors assigned to the school worked in partnership with both the student teacher and the cooperating teacher to plan and assess instruction, and there were also weekly school-based meetings for all groups involved in the partnership, Department of Education teachers, university professor, and MET students at a particular school. The weekly full-cohort seminars also continued during the third and fourth semesters.

The fourth semester offered students a full-time paid internship in a public school, with continuing support provided by a master teacher (one of the Department of Education MET teachers on temporary leave) who worked exclusively with selected interns during a particular semester.
During all four semesters, students were required to keep a journal in which they reflected on their own teaching and learning. In addition, there were frequent reaction papers assigned to inquiry groups, as well as group presentations (of collaborative research) to the full cohort seminars. Finally, in order to complete the program’s Master’s Degree requirement, students had to write a scholarly report called a Plan B paper, a kind of alternative thesis. Students had the option of writing this required paper collaboratively as well. Only one student in our group took advantage of this opportunity.

The main data collection period was during the volunteers’ (all of whom were from the program’s first cohort of students) second and third semesters, although I continued to meet with the three case study teachers during their fourth semester and the full group also convened for a final focus group interview. During that final semester, I also served as a reader and respondent for five of the subjects’ Plan B papers, giving them feedback on their drafts.

The first cohort of MET students were selected from among volunteers, all of whom were applying to the College of Education and able to go to school full time (a program requirement). Applicants had to meet all existing requirements of the College of Education, which included a score of 75th percentile or above on the CAT (i.e., the California
Achievement Test). In the past students applying to the College were required to take a test on Standard English, but this requirement was eventually removed because of equity issues. MET applicants also had to submit three letters of recommendation and were interviewed in small groups, with the goal of ascertaining how effective they might be in working collaboratively.

**Part 3: Gaining Entry**

In the program’s first semester, visiting their seminars, I observed that the 40 students seemed to see themselves as a special group, distinct from the much larger population of teacher trainees at the university. They enjoyed an easy banter with their College of Education instructors and shared in decisions concerning the program. Together, both groups seemed to exude an almost missionary zeal to challenge the policies of the "old paradigm" instruction students were already confronting in their assigned schools.

In November of this first semester, I described my research interests to the full group (25 students) and offered a rationale for infusing writing into their teaching as consistent with the inquiry-based learning promoted by their program. I administered the Miller Daly Writing Apprehension test and asked students to write a paragraph about their previous experiences with writing and a second paragraph describing the ways they planned to use writing in
their own teaching. On a follow-up visit, I proposed a writing-to-learn-study group and asked for volunteers who would be willing to explore the uses of writing-to-learn during the remaining three semesters with me and with one another.

**Part 4: The Subjects of the Study**

The eight volunteers included five preservice elementary teachers (Fran, Ann, Lee, Kate, Fran, and Sue) and three future high school teachers (Christine, Martin, and Rosie). Our study/support group began meeting in January of the spring semester, 1992. (Note: The workings of this group are described in considerable detail in Chapter Four and summarized in Part 5 of the chapter.) All the names are pseudonyms. As a mnemonic device, I have given one-syllable pseudonyms to the preservice elementary teachers and two-syllable names to the preservice high school teachers.

Fran, who was returning to school after a career in social work, hoped to teach upper elementary grades and was especially interested in mathematics instruction.

Both Ann and Kate were also returning to school after a decade or more as preschool instructors. Although Ann had written frequent papers as a sociology major, she had painful memories of these undergraduate writing requirements, especially of the need to be objective in writing academic papers. At the end of the first MET semester, Ann was insecure about her own writing and quite worried about
satisfying the program's writing requirements. Kate, on the other hand, was a confident, flexible writer, a former English major and nationally-published poet.

Lee, who was also preparing to teach in the elementary schools, had grown up speaking Hawaiian Creole English. A recent graduate from the University of Hawaii, she had avoided college writing requirements by majoring in studio art. As MET preservice teacher, she was urged by her professors to join our group specifically to remediate problems she was having in her MET seminars with her own writing and with Standard Written English in general.

Sue was a 62-year old grandmother who hoped to become an elementary teacher. She had taught creative writing as part of her volunteer work as a docent in art museums. Nevertheless, she continued to feel apprehensive about her own writing.

The two preservice English teachers in the study, Martin and Christine, worked as a team during all four semesters at Windward High School, even team-teaching the final internship semester. Both were recent graduates from the University of Hawaii. Both were committed to their own creative writing and had what they called "a reverence for the written word." Martin, a charismatic, athletic six footer, spoke of always writing a poem in some corner of his mind. He was very confident with his own writing, sharing his own poems with his low-track English classes at Windward
High School. Christine did not share this confidence in her own writing at the start of the study and initially feared sharing her writing with others.

Our future high school math teacher, Rosie, a recent University of Oregon graduate, spoke of writing as "like pulling teeth" and joined the study because she did not want to pass on her immobilizing writing apprehension to her students.

Inspired by the MET's emphasis on constructivist, whole language instruction, all eight were committed to infusing writing into their curricula. But as has been described above, not all saw themselves as writers. Indeed, five of the eight expressed low confidence in themselves as writers.

Of the eight volunteers who began the study, three (including Lee) had difficulties in their schools and/or personal events that intervened; all three eventually dropped out of the MET program. The other five surprised me with their success in teaching with writing, in using their own writing for personal growth, and in coming to see themselves as writers.

Given the study's self-selection process, this success is perhaps not so surprising. First, these students had all volunteered to devote time to the study group (with no college credit and no other practical incentive) because they wanted to learn more about teaching with writing. Furthermore, as a group, they seemed determined to change
the world of schooling, consistently rejecting the ways they had been taught in schools. In this they were not typical of preservice teachers often portrayed in the literature as clinging to the ways they themselves were taught (Kagan, 1992; Lortie, 1975; Silberman, 1989).

These volunteers seemed to have entered the MET program already questioning authority, already determined to change the world of schooling. Far from being destined to replicate the models presented during their own "apprenticeship of observation" in schools (Lortie, 1975), they seemed driven to replace them with something better. Perhaps these students were attracted to this program, instead of the traditional teacher training track at the University of Hawaii, because of their readiness to question the schooling status quo. Perhaps the MET program tended to recruit agents of change instead of producing them. And in that sense, these students may not have been a typical group of preservice teachers.

Part 5: Role of the Researcher

As participant researcher, I combined two roles: that of researcher, creating her own narrative, and that of experienced guide to teaching with writing. Palonsky (1986), as well as Kantor, Kirby, and Goetz (1981), believe that an exploration of the subjects' values and perspectives can be best accomplished by a participant observer, an
approach that allows the researcher to become part of the group under investigation.

In this study, my dual roles as mentor and researcher were intended to give me access to what Erickson (1986) calls "the immediate and local meanings of action, as defined from the actor's point of view" (p. 119).

Bissex G.L. & Bullock, R.H. (1987) describe the advantages of this approach as follows:

There is knowledge of a different sort to be gained through empathy and involvement, through sympathetic observation that seeks to understand the experience of other persons rather than their behavior as objects (p. 13).

These authors add that participant researchers attempt to see things from the perspective of the subjects and to understand the meanings the subjects themselves attach to classroom events.

Another advantage to this approach is the healthy reciprocity in the relationship between researcher and subjects, the expectation that each expects to learn something from the other. According to Tobin (1990) this "quid pro quo" should be seen as not just a consequence but a "goal of research." He adds,"Teachers and administrators consent to be part of research projects because they perceive they have something to gain" (275-6). According to Marshall and Rossman (1989), "The researcher is indebted and should devise ways to give time, feedback, coffee,
attention, flattery, tutoring, or some other appropriate gift" (p. 141).

Part 6: Cultural Context of the Study

No ethnic group in Hawaii represents a majority. The students in our schools and universities represent a population other states label as "culturally diverse." This study was representative of this ethnic diversity: Martin and Ann were mixed-race, Fran, Christine, and Rosie were Japanese-Americans, Sue was Caucasian (locally known as "haole"). Kate was the daughter of immigrants from Mainland China, and Lee was the daughter of Japanese immigrants.

Like most of the volunteers to our study group, eighty-six percent of the students at the University of Hawaii (UH) come from Asian or Pacific Island families, families which tend to value humility, respect for elders and experts (McLaren, 1993). These traditional family values have been further reinforced in public schools, where 75 percent of the teachers come from Asian backgrounds as well, mostly Japanese American (Yoshishige, 1991). All the Department of Education (DOE) cooperating teachers depicted in this dissertation were of local Japanese ancestry.

But this mutually-reinforcing pattern ends abruptly when Hawaii's students reach the state university. There a new group of teachers takes over. The majority are haole (Caucasian), many from the mainland states (McLaren, 1993). Furthermore the professors connected to the MET program were
perceived as being politically liberal, and, unlike their DOE colleagues, very inclined to challenge traditional norms and authorities.

**Part 7: Procedures of the Study**

**Fall Semester, 1991**

In early November, research plans for this dissertation study were proposed to the MET Steering Committee and approved the following week. The Miller Daly Writing Apprehension Test (Daly, J. & Miller, M., 1975) was administered to all 40 students (without identifying it by this name.) This instrument measures confidence and enjoyment of the writing process itself as well as confidence in one’s writing being read and evaluated by others. In a focused free write, all 40 MET students were also asked to reflect on their own writing experiences in and out of school and on their plans for using writing in their classrooms.

During this same period, I interviewed two MET students, asking them to describe program goals and curriculum as well as their reasons for choosing this program over the more traditional teacher education offered at the same university. In other interviews, two MET instructors were asked to reflect on program goals and challenges. Transcripts were completed from field notes of all four interviews. Four full-group seminars were observed as well as one typical inquiry group (composed of five
students and one professor). Transcripts were compiled from detailed field notes.

Then, on November 22, I attended a full group seminar and described this research project as well as the proposed study group and asked for volunteers. Ten students signed up to explore the uses of writing-to-learn for the three subsequent semesters. Two of these volunteers dropped out before our first meeting in January, one because of an overloaded schedule and the other because of apparently immobilizing writing apprehension.

_Spring Semester, 1992_

At an initial organizational meeting in mid January, the remaining eight volunteers expressed an interest in meeting once a week to share ideas, articles, favorite poems, student writing samples, successes and disappointments in the classroom. This became our routine. We met every Friday at lunchtime, for approximately an hour, and continued meeting until two weeks after the official end of the semester. Field notes were recorded on issues raised at these meetings. (See Chapter Four, the group case study, for a more detailed description of these meetings.)

As spin-offs from our group meetings, there were also several individual consultations, initiated by particular students, in one case to plan a first writing lesson, in another, to help one student (Lee) with her own writing of
required MET papers. Field notes have been kept of all these discussions.

At our first meeting, I asked students to write a metaphor for writing, to be shared with others in the group. Five of the seven students handed in thoughtfully-written metaphors, which I put together in a booklet for the group along with my own metaphors for writing. Two of the high school teachers never did write down their metaphors but described them to the group. Not so coincidentally, one of these students who never committed her metaphor to paper was Rosie, the math teacher who suffered from extreme writing anxiety and described writing as "like pulling teeth."

Between January and March, six of the seven volunteers were interviewed by the staff of the Manoa Writing Program, which conducts ongoing writing research at the University of Hawaii. In what has been called a "writing autobiography interview" (Emig, 1971). They were asked a scripted set of questions about past experiences with writing, perceptions of the value of writing, future plans for using writing in their teaching.

I collected from each subject several writing samples (i.e., journal entries, reaction papers, and, in most cases, the student’s contribution to the collaboratively-written ethnography of the school they were assigned to.

While this data was being collected, I was also working with each of the volunteers to help plan, execute,
and evaluate a writing lesson or a writing activity within a larger unit. Wilson, Shulman, and Richert (1987) have referred to this procedure as "planning-observation-reflection cycles." The planning interview took various forms: an hour-long meeting, a pre-class meeting at the school, or a brief phone conversation in which the MET volunteer described lesson goals and plan.

During the observation of the actual lesson, I took detailed field notes, interacting with students and sometimes talking with the cooperating teacher as well. These protocols were transcribed and range from five to ten single spaced pages. Transcripts were passed to the MET students for their comments, sometimes with prompt questions embedded. My purpose here was to gain access to their evaluations of what had gone on, including any changes in their perceptions about writing and teaching with writing. I also completed an ethnographic summary of each lesson, which was not shared. Handouts, lesson plans, and student writing in response to these lessons were also collected and studied.

On April 10th, we gathered for a taped, focus-group interview, in which students talked about their writing lessons, their experience in the schools, and their own metaphors for writing. The transcript of this interview was later distributed to students for their comments. Most
students included these transcript documents as part of their end-of-semester portfolio for the MET program.

**Fall Semester, 1992**

In October, 1992, of their third and student teaching semester, the decision was made to focus on three of the elementary teachers, Lee, Kate, and Ann, who were all engaged in creating whole language classrooms. These three would become the subjects of contrasting case studies. The research design called for these student teachers to be observed at least twice, on two successive writing lessons, with follow up visits to trace how a particular lesson evolves from prewriting activities, through drafting, rewriting, and sharing (with many variations on this theme). Transcripts were then submitted to the student teachers with prompt questions and spaces left for their comments.

During this semester, I was frequently at Waiala school, helping out with the MET program. This was where both Lee and Kate were student teaching. I therefore had the opportunity to observe their classes and talk with them much more frequently than the design required, which further enriched the research.

Handouts and student texts were collected for the observed lessons. I also made copies of the teachers’ journals, which were required for their end-of-semester portfolios (a MET grading requirement). Although the MET had no specific requirements for these journals, as part of
their commitment to this study, I asked them to reflect on their writing lessons, how these assignments worked, perceived problems inhibiting the use of writing in the classroom, any changes in their own models for writing. These journals were studied for emerging patterns and themes.

I visited the high school teachers at least once, but did not make the detailed observations notes I had made the previous semester. Our full group met three official (prescheduled) times during the fall semester for two focus group interviews and a final presentation of their writing lessons their full cohort seminar, which continued to meet once a week. For this presentation, I gave an overview of their writing-to-learn activities, after which we focused on three specific writing success stories to share with the full group: Kate’s classroom newspaper, Ann’s efforts to launch invented spelling in lower elementary classes, and Rosie’s use of learning logs in high school math classes. We also continued to meet informally, sometimes going out to eat after their Monday full cohort seminars, though not as frequently as we had done the previous semester.

**Spring Semester, 1993**

During this final program semester the MET students made the shift to full-time, paid intern positions in the schools. However, at the end of the previous semester, Lee had taken a leave of absence from the program to take
additional courses and to work on her writing. I continued working with her to help her improve her own writing. Kate and Ann, the other two case study teachers, were observed several times with student writing samples collected and follow-up interviews for feedback and discussion.

As a result of Department of Education hiring procedures, this semester, it was Ann who was teaching at Waiala, the school I was helping out at two days a week. For this reason, I had ample opportunities to touch bases with her, beyond the official observations called for in the research design. I read and copied Ann and Kate’s journals during this semester, and frequent phone conversations provided addition data.

I also visited the classrooms of the high school teachers at least once and worked with five of the students on their final masters papers (the Plan B) during this final semester.

In April and May, the three case study teachers had a chance to respond to working drafts of their case studies and to a working draft of the discussion chapter, Chapter Six. In early May, just before their graduation, we met for one final focus group interview. For this final official conversation, our question was: How can we help teachers be more successful at teaching with writing? Group members talked about training and support and shared some of the things they had learned about teaching with writing. These
suggestions helped to shape the conclusions presented in the final chapter of this dissertation. After this interview, we had a party at my house, celebrating the end of the data collection (at least officially) and their upcoming graduations. Five of the original group attended along with one of the cooperating teachers.

**Part 8: Methodology of the Study**

**Methods Used**

To inquire into the experiences of these novices learning to teach using writing, this study employed the following qualitative research techniques: (1) data-collection instruments, (2) site observation, (3) informal and formal interview, (4) informal group meetings and focus group interviews, (5) member checking, and (6) document review. Collected documents included journals and other written texts in which these teachers reflected on their past experiences with writing, their models for writing and images of themselves as writers, and on their attitudes and experiences teaching with writing. Another layer of document review concerned student texts, collected during the three semesters.

**Member Checking**

One way I hoped to reduce observer effect was to allow participants to read drafts of the findings and to note areas of disagreement or additional comments. Newkirk (1991) suggests that the credibility issue for qualitative, case
study researchers is not one of objectivity but one of polyvocality, i.e., the inclusion of other voices telling other versions of the story, the inclusion of "counter narratives" balancing the researcher's success stories and thus enhancing the complexity and the credibility of the research (p.18).

To incorporate these other voices, narrative protocols of the lesson observations and interview transcripts were given to participants, sometimes with question prompts and/or spaces left for their comments on particular sections. Likewise, drafts of the case study chapters were given to the three case study subjects--Lee, Kate, and Ann--for their reactions to the way their stories had been documented and interpreted. The three women also read the discussion chapter (Chapter Six) and were asked to respond on the margins in different color ink.

I had hoped that all three would comment not only on my text but on one another's' comments. I had hoped that alternative constructions of their realities might emerge, especially in the case of Lee, who had not been successful in teaching with writing.

But these alternative interpretations were minimal. Kate, the dedicated writer and poet, was the most profuse with written comments. Her comments on my case study draft ranged from critiquing my word choice and sentence structure (just as members of my regular writing group do) to self
deprecating humor and modest rejoinders such as "I think you’re over-estimating my accomplishments." She also used the margins for occasional compliments (for example, on how well she thought I had handled the subtle shifts in her delicate relationship with Janna, the cooperating teacher) and for further clarifying my analysis. The following example was in response to my statement that she valued clarity of thought (and writing and rewriting as a means to that end). She responded in the margin:

I think my need to clarify statements stems from my experiences as an interpreter for my parents. Before I translated anything from English to Chinese, or vice versa, I wanted to be sure I understood what the person meant. (I’m just telling you this as an aside—you don’t have to add it in.)

I did include this additional background information in the final draft. Kate’s speculations sometimes provided another layer of analysis, as in the following example. In my text, I had been describing how Amanda, Kate’s professor from the College of Education, sometimes used the margins of Kate’s MET journals for political consciousness raising. In my example, Amanda was writing about Norman, Kate’s problem student, asking things like, "Why do we expect children like Norman to fit our ideas of school? Do we ever listen to his interests and negotiate the curriculum with him?" Kate added in the margins of my text:

I think Amanda intended these remarks to eventually reach the teacher and/or administrator. It’s also food for thought for me, however. I wish
that we could have had more of a DOE/UH dialogue on this issue.

All three subjects said that they found the case studies and the Chapter Six discussion helpful, but typically, Kate, the published writer, wrote the most profuse response:

You’re a very perceptive ethnographer, though you lean a little on the rose colored glasses side. Even if I think you’ve given me more credit than I’m due, it was still refreshing and gratifying to see my MET experience through another pair of eyes. ...Reading this also helped me clear up some of my thinking about my Plan B paper (Kate was writing about learning logs in math class). I realized that I had been using the term "writing to learn" without really understanding what it meant. Now that I’ve done more research and attended a math conference, I have a better idea of this concept. I can’t tell you how glad I am that I signed up for your writing project. Your suggestions and comments, your support and encouragement have been helpful. Our support group was a veritable oasis in an uncharted land. I wish there were a way to continue our support group. I’m going to have withdrawal symptoms.

Ann wrote a much shorter note of gratitude at the end of her case study. She also made several corrections in the margins. For example, I had written that Sharon, her anti-whole language neighbor at Keala School who frequently criticized her whole language innovations. Ann wrote: "She never really criticized. She just said our kids couldn’t handle it." In my final draft, I rewrote that sentence to say that Sharon came in every afternoon and appeared to "look askance" at Ann’s whole language innovations.

Of all three stories, I was hoping that Lee, who had not been successful in teaching with writing and who
eventually dropped out of the MET program, would offer some alternative interpretations, especially of her painful student teaching semester. But although she read her case study with interest, she wrote nothing on the text itself. Instead, she telephoned and said that she thought I had been fair, but that it had been "very painful to read," admitting that it brought back all the trauma of her student teaching semester. It was clearly painful for her to talk about these memories with me on the phone. I wanted to draw her out, encourage her to comment on what I had written about her own identity crisis, her ambivalence about embracing the mainstream culture and mainstream language. I especially wanted to know her reaction to what I had described as a love-hate relationship with the local language (Hawaiian Creole English). But for reasons I can only guess at, she did not pick up on my invitations to discuss these issues. Her reading of the case study, however, did prompt her to make an appointment to see the teacher whose class she had had to leave during the student teaching semester. Lee explained that she wanted to achieve "closure." But as described in the case study itself, this interview was also unsuccessful in allowing Lee's own counter narrative on her problems with the MET program and with her own writing to emerge.
Triangulation

One reason for encouraging multiple layers of interpretation was to solicit richer and more complex interpretations of the data, and another way of addressing this goal was through triangulation. Marshall and Rossman (1989) define the practice, derived from navigation science, as follows: "Triangulation is the act of bringing more than one source of data to bear on a single point....Data from different sources can be used to corroborate, elaborate, or illuminate the research in question" (p. 146). According to Agar (1980), "If you watch people doing things, you learn something you can’t get by just talking with them, although you can’t learn much unless you talk with them before, during, and after the event" (p.108).

In this study, a series of formal interviews with individual participants as well as focus group interviews with the full group supplemented participant observations, suggesting disconfirming or confirming evidence of possible patterns or conclusions. To allow for further triangulation of data, the novices' journals, lesson plans, handouts for writing lessons, metaphors for writing, and examples of student-written texts were collected and studied.

Data Analysis

The process of analysis included the writing of ethnographic summaries as well as multiple readings of transcripts and field notes for patterns and incongruities.
Ethnographic summaries also served as a means of data reduction, with the researcher noting important information, the reoccurrence of particular themes, or the emergence of new information. Data reduction continued throughout the data collection period to bring data into manageable proportions.

Tentative categories—such as the teachers' decisions on how much to control student texts)—were organized into themes, which were refined and tested out by examining their explanatory power with subsequent data. Here the researcher played with metaphors (like Rosie's "pulling teeth" metaphor for writing) and tried out other "emic" classifications, such as their use of "old paradigm" and "new paradigm" to refer to the transmission model of instruction versus the new, constructivist model of learning promoted in their MET seminars. Further examples include: "Managing a student-driven product," and "the roller coaster" (used to describe their delicate negotiations with cooperating teachers and public school hierarchy).

Special attention was given to data that challenged the study's assertions or that called into question popular writing-to-learn propaganda, such as whether Ann's imposition of story starters disqualified her as a whole language teacher. In this case, for example, the data analysis opened whole other avenues of inquiry in the group mentoring process. The issue of Ann's story starters forced
us to actively question definitions of "whole language teacher" and to reconstruct our own individual definitions.

At the start of the study, I studied preliminary data sources to determine themes and patterns in terms of each subject’s images as writers, past experience with classroom and personal writing, perceptions of the uses of writing, criteria for good writing, and plans for teaching with writing. These data sources were: (1) Complete transcripts of formal "writing autobiography" interviews, (2) ethnographic summaries of these transcripts, (3) written metaphors for writing, (4) written statement about past experiences with school-based writing, and (5) Miller Daly Writing Apprehension Test (administered to all MET cohorts prior to the start of the study.)

Certain categories of response emerged in this early examination, such as Christine’s "writing as self expression," Kate’s "writing as clear thinking," and Ann’s "writing as social process." One common pattern was seeing writing as associated with pain, as expressed in the metaphor "writing is like pulling teeth." Often related to these attitudinal patterns, subjects also formulated goals for the ways they would approach classroom writing.

As the study progressed, I was able to follow each teacher’s progress to see how these preliminary perceptions and goals related to their evolving practice. Ann did indeed continue to view writing as a way of cementing
relationships; she gave teams and collaborative writing activities top priority in her classroom and used journals as a means of communicating with others.

Not all the teachers were able to accomplish their original goals for teaching with writing, however. Lee, as described above, was never able to translate her original goals (to have a classroom in which students are writing "all the time, at all levels") into actual lessons. For a detailed description of these themes and patterns, see Chapter Six, the discussion of the case studies, as well as Chapter Four, the group case study.

Part 9: Limitations of the Study's Research Methodology

My dual roles of mentor and researcher introduced several unique challenges into the research equation. Most problematical was that I knew there was no way to avoid influencing these students as teachers and as writers, given my own authority as experienced writer and writing teacher. This challenge was addressed in the research design in several ways.

First, in order to reduce the risk of what Goetz & LeCompte (1984) call "observer effect" and to enable the novices to feel free to have dissenting attitudes and classroom practices, the study group was established as an optional adjunct to their program, not an official course. Although I served as resource and guide, I was not their teacher. I did not evaluate their performance, give them
grades, or, even more importantly, make decisions about their entry into the profession. There was no practical need for them to please me by infusing discovery writing into their teaching and their lives.

The second thing I did to improve the power imbalance inherent in our relationship was to allow students to set their own agenda for our study group. Chapter Four, the group case study, presents a detailed description of how I actually worked with the group, following up on their own expressed interests, rather than teaching a mini-course on my own favorite approaches to classroom writing. Still, the fact that I was not responsible for grading them also encouraged them to pursue these interests. I have never been an advocate of journal writing in my own classes, for example, but Ann felt perfectly free to make journals a classroom staple, "something that happens every day," all three teaching semesters. I am not sure she would have felt so free to experiment if I had been her supervising professor, responsible for grading her.

Another potential problem with the participant role was that given my own zeal for writing-to-learn curricular approaches, I had to be wary of looking only for writing success stories. Both member checking and triangulation were intended to help correct this tendency and to provide polyvocality to the research. But these techniques have certain built-in limitations.
I promised the students at the outset that they would have a chance to read what I wrote about them. If they had alternative interpretations and explanations, I said I would try to represent them in the final report. But as described above, these alternative interpretations were minimal, especially in the case of Lee, whose own story I am still trying to find ways of helping her express.

Furthermore, I never promised to privilege their insider understandings or to give up narrative authority of the final report. And I have come to see that polyvocality, for all its democratic appeal, has certain limitations which Tobin (1990) calls inevitable. As Tobin admits about one of his own international research projects, "Our authorial control over the final text was never in doubt. We chose the countries, the schools, and the foci of the research, thus in crucial ways anticipating and limiting the stories we told" (1990, p. 279).

In my study, I did even more overt shaping of stories, because in my role as mentor, I supplied articles, ideas for lessons, and ongoing encouragement.

And although in the more than two years since the study began, I have became close to members of the group, seeing them as friends and colleagues rather than "subjects," this final act of authorship, in a sense, transforms our relationship, distancing us, at least on the pages of this dissertation. According to Mira Ariel and Rachel Giora
(1992), although the ethnographer may feel like "the other" during the fieldwork phase of the project, the power balance shifts during the writing phase. The writer comes across as possessing "truth and conscious awareness" while "dissimulation and submission to unconscious powers" (so reminiscent of Lee's silence on the pages of this dissertation) are frequently aligned with the informants. What Ariel and Giora say about anthropologists applies equally to the educational researcher:

During the process of writing ethnography the anthropologist becomes the knowing subject, and the people with whom she or he lived as the other are themselves transformed into the other on paper (p. 340).

Furthermore, the stories presented here, representing three semesters in the lives of these teachers, give too narrow a view of the ongoing transformation in which they are still engaged. I have attempted to further address these limitations in the discussion chapter, Chapter Six, in a final section called "A Poststructural Postscript."

Still, notwithstanding these problems inherent in the research design, the subjects remained active participants and I do not believe that they were "studied down." I also believe that the research itself was empowering to the teachers and that, for the most part, it allowed for co-construction of meaning.

But I continue to be concerned about the limitations described above. As next step to our research, five of these
teachers (including Lee) and I have been talking about writing a book in which they actually do tell their own stories, each writing a chapter (in most cases to be drawn from their final Masters papers) with me writing the introduction. I would also hope to include at least one or two chapters written by former cooperating teachers. Generally, educational research has tended to overlook these practitioner’s views, with an emphasis on theory over practice. In this study (and perhaps an ensuing book) it is hoped that some of these silenced voices will have entered into the teacher training discourse.
CHAPTER FOUR
GROUP CASE STUDY

Part 1: Description of MET Program

The University of Hawaii's Masters in Education in Teaching (MET) Program is part of the Holmes Group, a consortium of university-school partnerships advocating post graduate teacher preparation and professional development schools (Cornbleth & Ellsworth, 1994).

MET students are trained to act as agents of change, active participants in the school renewal process. And since schools must be reformed "from the inside out" (Goodlad, 1990B), lasting improvements will depend on their willingness to become partners in reform with their seasoned colleagues. The MET program, like similar Holmes Group partnerships, is dedicated to shaping this new breed of teacher/innovator; key components of the four semester apprenticeship include: 1: integration of theory and practice, 2: collaboration, 3: inquiry, and 4: reflection.

There is a palpable feeling among MET students of being part of a special group, distinct from the other future teachers in the College of Education as they challenge the hierarchical structure of teacher training and learn to work collaboratively with one another and with fellow teachers, parents, and university professors. According to Dr. Ralph Stueber, one of the founding professors at the University of Hawaii, "The thing that energizes this program is that
they're in schools....It's kind of an ecological approach to teaching."

A related goal is to educate these novices to be self-reflective professionals, capable of conducting research in naturalistic (school) settings. Their interdisciplinary instruction is problem-based, with students responsible for their own learning and learning in the context of Honolulu's public schools from their first semester (observing and presenting mini lessons) through their fourth and final semester (as full-time, paid interns).

These novices identify issues and problems in the schools they are assigned to and conduct their own research in inquiry groups of five or six, guided by an instructor from the College of Education. In addition to these seminars, they are also required to take several electives, chosen from the regular education courses offered by the College of Education. A research methods course, especially a qualitative research methods, was highly recommended at the time of this study and has since been included as a regular course offering included in the program.

**Part 2: MET Writing Requirements**

The program's writing requirements are intended to give students experience in self-reflection, inquiry, and conducting and reporting their own research. The first semester, in inquiry groups of four or five, students write a collaborative ethnography of the school they are assigned
to. This particular collaboration proved to be problematic for all the students in our group. They learned first hand there was such a thing as a writer’s voice and that some of their writer’s voices and writing styles didn’t mesh very well. Several objected to what they considered the flawed writing of certain teammates. One (Christine) insisted upon rewriting these sections, creating bad feelings within her inquiry group. Others like Kate took it upon themselves to rewrite the team’s draft, but only after securing permission of the other writers, including Lee and one other HCE dominant student.

MET students also write extensively as individuals. During the first two semesters there are reaction papers based on readings and research interests, which their professors critique but do not grade. During all four semesters, students are required keep an ongoing journal in which they examine their own teaching and learning. There are no specific length or format specifications. Some members of our group set an often unreachable goal of writing every day. Some, like Fran, did write every day, others like Rosie wrote sporadically. These journals are not graded at the end of the semester but become part of the student’s assessment portfolio, on which final grades (still required by the college) are based.

For the purpose of this study, I asked volunteers to write a metaphor for writing. With the three case study
students, I supplied additional writing prompts during their final internship semester, designed to elicit input on their writing lessons and their changing goals and perceptions. But only Kate actually wrote in answer to these questions. The other two discussed their answers in separate interviews but were too busy to write them down.

In order to complete the program's Master's Degree Requirement, students also had to write a scholarly report, a kind of alternative thesis, called the Plan B paper. I served as author-selected reader and critiquer for Kate, Rosie, Lee, and Christine. I also worked with Lee as she revised this and other required papers for her seminars and education courses.

Part 3: My Introduction to the Program

During the new program's first semester, I visited both full-group weekly seminars (with all 40 students present) as well as several smaller inquiry groups in order to get to know the program and the students. Then, in October, 1991, I administered the Miller Daly Writing Apprehension Test to all 40 students (without calling it by name) and asked them to write a paragraph reflecting on their own past and present writing experiences and a second paragraph on how they were planning to use writing in their own teaching.

These documents were studied for attitudes towards writing and expressed confidence levels. They were not returned to the students, so as to avoid passing on self-
fulfilling labels to the eventual volunteers for the study. In November I described my research interests to the full group and offered a rationale for infusing writing into their teaching. I then asked for volunteers who would be willing to explore the uses of writing-to-learn during the remaining three semesters of their program.

Ten students signed up to work with me, but only eight actually came to our first meeting after the Christmas holidays. (One dropped out because of an overburdened schedule and another because of immobilizing writing apprehension.) All the names are pseudonyms.

Part 4: The Participants as Writers

Seven women and one young man came to that first group meeting, held in a campus Burger King restaurant. Four were recent college graduates; four others were making career shifts to teaching. Five hoped to become elementary teachers; three hoped to become high school teachers (two English and one math).

Three said they had problems with writing (and had indeed demonstrated low confidence on the Miller Daly). These same three had very limited writing experience. Fran and Rosie, both math majors in their respective undergraduate colleges, saw themselves as having difficulty generating ideas. In her metaphor for writing, Fran, who planned to teach upper elementary grades, described herself as "going into a strange, dark closet then closing the door
behind me. I am in complete darkness, I don’t know what is surrounding me. I freeze up. I stand motionless, powerless in the darkness which represses me."

Rosie, who planned to teach high school math, saw writing as "like pulling teeth" in the metaphor that she never actually wrote but told our group about. She explained that she had joined the study because didn’t want to be so "one-sided" (i.e. loving math and hating to write) and wrote in her Plan B paper, which was about learning logs in math, "I was only good in one of the three R’s." But as an undergraduate, Rosie had taken an innovative math education course that required written learning logs. Possibly this brief exposure to another way of constructing meaning in mathematics encouraged her to risk exploring writing with our group. Encountering the MET program and philosophy, she reports, "It became my personal desire to enhance my writing skills through math. I wanted to do something that would make me a better writer while also developing my students as writers."

The third student who saw writing as problematic and had a poor self image as a writer was Lee, a former art major who had grown up speaking Hawaii Creole English (locally called Pidgin) at home and in public school, where most of her peer group spoke the local language both in and out of the classroom. At the University of Hawaii, she had avoided writing by majoring in art. When papers were
required in core requirements ("maybe ten pages of writing" in the entire four years), Lee tried her best, but felt she could not master the academic discourse of students whose families spoke a more mainstream version of Standard English or who had attended schools in which Standard English was the required discourse.

Now, faced with the extensive MET writing requirements, Lee was struggling with Standard Written English syntax in her reaction papers and in writing the school ethnography project with her group at Waiala School. This latter project was especially painful for Lee, because she felt a certain humiliation at being part of a group she saw as being much more capable of producing the descriptive, analytical prose the assignment required.

Not surprisingly, the three former English majors who joined our writing-to-learn group expressed confidence in their own writing ability and spoke of positive experiences with language and literacy. Martin, who planned to teach high school English, is a charismatic six-footer, an athlete and coach as well as a poet. He exudes confidence in everything he does, including his writing, but somehow manages not to exude arrogance.

For all four semesters, Martin was teamed at Windward High School with Christine, another novice English teacher. They’re pals, kindred spirits, fellow kid lovers and literature lovers. They were the two in our group who went
the furthest in living up to the MET ideal of collaboration. They team-taught all four semesters, including their final internship semester, bucking some bureaucratic resistance and sharing the single salary while both put in full teaching days. Although both discovered that teaming had its down side and required much more commitment and compromise than they had anticipated, both agreed that it had been worth the effort. (Christine wrote: "Imagine being able to go to the bathroom any time you want!") They eventually came to think of themselves as partners, finishing one another’s sentences (on good days). People joked that they were "joined at the hip" like Siamese twins.

When Christine watched Martin teaching poetry and sharing his own poems with students, she called his lessons "awesome." Both have a reverence for language and speak of "the power of words." But Christine didn’t exude confidence at the start of the study. Although she writes in a strong, appealing, clearly-recognizable personal voice, she initially feared sharing her writing with others. She also had difficulty with the collaborative writing of the school portrait, objecting to the more formal style of some of her classmates. For Christine, the main purpose of writing is self expression. Above all, she values a straightforward, honest writer’s voice. She has high standards for this intellectual honesty and low tolerance for the more pretentious styles of writing frequently found in academia.
Through the three semesters, Christine would see writing as a kind of safety valve for her low-track English classes at Windward High. But in allowing them to express their pain and alienation through writing, she would face difficult censorship issues. Her confidence in herself as writer and teacher would grow dramatically, and she would go out of her way to express appreciation for the support of others in our study group. She would also thank me in the "Acknowledgements" section of her Plan B paper (written about team teaching) for giving her confidence in her own writing.

The third former English major in our study group was Kate, who had just re-entered Academia after a decade of Head Start teaching, hoping to teach upper elementary grades. Although a well-rounded student, Kate called literature her first love. As an undergraduate at the University of Hawaii, she had published poetry in local journals as well as in a collection whose New York editor referred to her as "one of a promising school of younger poets developing in Hawaii."

Early in this first getting-acquainted semester, Kate shared copies of favorite poems and also wrote her own poetry as part of a 5th grade unit on scientific and creative modes of description. Through all three semesters, writing was center stage in her classroom. Although I called myself a "writing specialist," I eventually learned a great
Two other volunteers defied easy connections between the writing they'd done and their confidence levels. Ann, who planned to teach lower elementary grades, had written frequent papers as a sociology major in her undergraduate degree. Ann’s mother had published several books, and Ann had kept a journal on and off for most of her life. Furthermore, she was immediately drawn to the uses of classroom writing. In her second semester, with no teacher support (indeed, the mentor teacher thought it could not be done) she launched a highly successful writing unit in a second grade class in which the children had no prior experience with original writing (only copying words off the board). This unit alone made the cooperating teacher a Whole Language believer. Still, in terms of her own self image as a writer, Ann compared writing to running a marathon in her metaphor and admitted in the Writing Autobiography Interview, "One of my big fears about going back to school was the fact that I’d be writing papers."

Sue was the 62 year-old grandmother who hoped to become an elementary teacher. She carried impressive academic credentials and had written award-winning children’s stories, an unpublished romance novel, and "reams of letters" to friends all over the world. She had also taught creative writing while working with children in museum
educational programs. Nevertheless, she continued to feel apprehensive about her own writing, seeing the act of committing thoughts to paper—for all to see and judge—as "precarious, tempting, sometimes fulfilling, and dangerous." Sue left the MET program after our initial semester because of a move necessitated by her husband's career, but she was definitely a central figure and outspoken role model for the younger teachers during the time we worked together.

Part 5: My Dual Roles as Mentor/Researcher

I was also a participant in the study, functioning in two roles. First, as mentor and writing-to-learn resource, I shared ideas and experiences intended to help these novice teachers be more successful in implementing writing-to-learn strategies in their classrooms. An educator with more than thirty years experience teaching writing, I am also an addicted writer of both fiction and non-fiction. For me, writing is a mental health practice I truly love to pass on, especially to people idealistic enough to want to become public school teachers (and willing to examine themselves as they do this).

I had been warned by my advisors about the messiness of this dual role, and as researcher (my other role), I knew I had to be careful not to impose my own view of writing as survival tool on them (although in our almost two years of contact, I think this came across to them anyway, mostly by my example).
I also had to be careful not to oversell my own favorite approaches to classroom writing, and on this score I think I was more successful. As participant, I did supply ideas and articles, but always as options and suggestions, open for discussion. As researcher, my goal was really to help them with their own reflection, keeping the dialogue going as they discussed and interpreted their experiences to me and to one another.

And in spite of my example, no one became an addicted writer. Still, several experienced some gain in confidence. Toward the end of the study, Lee was beginning to feel better about her Plan B paper. Christine was willing to risk showing her texts, written in her unique voice, to others. And most dramatically, Rosie, our most reluctant writer, experienced the value of writing-to-learn first-hand in writing and learning from her Plan B paper, which was about the use of learning logs in math and science classes. At the completion of this paper, Rosie reflected in her journal on this breakthrough in her own learning:

Prior to writing this paper, I considered myself well-read on the topic and felt competent in its usage. But when I started writing about my experiences, I realized that my thinking regarding the topic was jumbled. I kept going in circles trying to get my thoughts down on paper. Only after writing, then talking, and then writing again, could I organize my thoughts.

Vygotsky would have been thrilled by her awareness of this transformation, especially on the part of someone who had begun the study by admitting that, "I don't like
"committing my thoughts to paper." Indeed, through our three-semester conversation, all the volunteers came to a better understanding of what writing, both personal and classroom, meant to them—a good starting point from which to build a pedagogical world view. I saw myself as observer, listener, and recorder on the road these students were traveling. And our shared journey began on the first Friday of their second semester.

**Part 6: Our First Semester (Spring 1992)**

At our first organizational meeting in January '92, we talked about mutual expectations. Because these students were going to be very busy teaching and observing in their assigned schools, as well as reading, writing, and planning for MET seminars, I tried to keep my demands minimal. I asked them to commit to allowing or providing the following:

1. a formal "writing autobiography" interview, conducted by a staff researcher at the UH Manoa Writing Program.
2. several samples of their own writing.
3. a one or two-page metaphor for writing.
4. to allow me to observe one of their writing lessons, followed by an interview. (I would produce a detailed transcript and give them a copy, which we would talk about at the interview.)
5. a focus-group interview in mid April, reconvening the whole group to reflect on their experiences teaching with writing and their own emerging models for writing instruction.

All eight agreed to these commitments, and I in turn made some commitments to them: (1) to serve as writing-to-learn resource, (2) to help them assess their own progress as writing teachers (without evaluating them), and (3) to provide copies of my transcripts of their lessons and drafts
of any eventual case studies to the subjects for their reaction and comments, which I would try to incorporate in the final dissertation report.

The students surprised me by wanting to go beyond the time commitments listed above. They suggested we continue meeting once a week over lunch at Burger King. I was pleased at this willingness to give so much time to our group and to the instructional uses of writing-to-learn, which they all seemed to consider a priority in their emerging pedagogical world views. I also began meeting with Lee to help her with assigned papers and with an autobiographical essay for a scholarship application.

As the semester progressed, the students seemed grateful for the detailed transcripts of their lessons that I provided after my visits to their classes. In these, I recorded not just what the teacher was doing but what students were doing and saying to one another. In some cases, another MET student and group member assigned to the same school sat with me, observing and also taking notes, which we would discuss with the student teacher along with my transcript.

Attendance at our Friday lunch meetings ranged from all nine of us squeezed around a table in noisy conversation to one or two of us engaged in more intimate discussion. The students would come and go, arriving late or getting up to go buy lunch. I wasn't sure we were accomplishing very much,
except for getting acquainted. But the students seemed to think they were learning something because of our group. This surprised me initially. Our once a week contact seemed so unstructured. When I told them this, Rosie quipped, "But we're so used to unstructured!" They all laughed—an inside joke about becoming MET-style self-directed learners and the lack of direction that they were all learning to live with in the new program.

Upon reflection, I realized that through our Friday conversations I had managed to bring up concepts and writing strategies they were not familiar with—but without actually leading the group in discussions or suggesting topics to explore. It was a different experience from my accustomed roles as teacher and workshop presenter. Inquiries were always initiated by students—Christine needing a one-period poetry writing activity, Kate wanting a way of approaching scientific observation with fifth graders, Ann and Lee interested in invented spelling in the primary grades. I would follow up these student-initiated questions by bringing articles or passing on ideas that had worked for me. For example, when Christine was concerned about a group of boys who showed little interest in writing but a great deal of interest in cars, I copied a chapter from Perl and Wilson's (1986) Through Teachers' Eyes about an English class in which students similar to Christine's wrote a mechanics manual instead of a required term paper.
I eventually shared articles on invented spelling with all five future elementary teachers, and we talked about controversies surrounding such whole language approaches (i.e., how to explain "incorrect" English to parents, how to edit student texts, whether to "publish" invented spelling without rewriting it). I had expected these issues might bore the three high school teachers, but they listened and asked good questions about writing in the elementary school.

I was not the only presenter of ideas, however. Group members also shared writing ideas, their own writing, their own poetry with one another. I realized later that we had managed to address a full range of writing-to-learn issues in this seemingly unstructured mode of working together. In the course of that semester, and always as a result of student-initiated discourse, we discussed the following issues and practices at one time or another:

--- the uses of discovery writing to make sense of new learning and connect it with past experiences.

--- the uses of writing to reflect on learning/problem solving (especially useful in math), a kind of discovery writing that can give teachers insight into how well students actually understand the concepts and how they feel about the learning.

--- writing for specific audiences and for different purposes.

--- publishing student texts for a larger audience (through desktop publishing tips as well as xeroxed addresses of various writing contests open to students).

--- responding to student texts (spelling, grammar, etc. grading issues).

--- teaching Standard Written English to Pidgin dominant (Hawaii Creole English) students.
--discourse-specific stylistic conventions.
--invention and revision strategies.

I realized later, as I looked back on that first semester, that I had been unconsciously replicating the grassroots model of the Bay Area Writing Project (BAWP) workshop I attended in 1979. For me, that summer workshop had been a watershed event. I had gained support and a research-based language to help me rethink and recreate my own teaching. I had also begun to write for myself again, after almost twenty years of avoidance.

Now, thirteen years later, the Bay Area Writing Project has become the National Writing Project, with ongoing teacher inservice operating in every state. It's been called the most cost-effective teacher inservice ever implemented (Silberman, 1989). Our Friday lunch meeting lacked the sustained time together that BAWP institutes offer teachers to actually experience writing-to-learn. Still, we were following the guiding principles of the BAWP model listed below:

--The best teacher of teachers is another teacher.

--Teachers of writing must write themselves.

--Programs designed to improve the teaching of writing should include teachers at all grade levels and from all subject areas.

--No single "right" approach to the teaching of writing is appropriate for every teacher and every student (Silberman, 1989).
Furthermore, our continuing association, with a uniting focus interest, has (along with the general MET emphasis on collaboration) helped participants to break out of what Jim Gray, BAWP founder, calls "the professionally sanctioned isolation" inherent in teaching (Silberman, 1989). According to Gray, "If the Bay Area model does nothing else, I hope it will free teachers to exchange ideas and techniques with each other--without fear of stepping out of line or looking foolish" (Silberman, 1989, p. 67.)

Gray is still working to dismantle what he calls education's "top down" caste system, "within which teachers' expertise is untapped, while university faculty brings its knowledge of various disciplines 'down' to the secondary school level--and ignores elementary school teachers altogether" (Silberman, 1989, p. 69).

This same dismantling of hierarchies was occurring within our student teachers' classrooms as well. Christine wrote in her journal about the "golden" moment of learning that "the way in which I was learning was the way I wanted my classes to be structured....I realized that being an educator shouldn't be about teaching the students but rather of learning together." Heavily influenced by Vygotsky, she and Martin spoke of team teaching their classes as "an ongoing conversation."

Still, I continued to worry that our group was too unstructured, that I wasn't giving them enough in exchange
for all the time they were giving me. In seeking support for our group's functioning, I looked for studies done by participant/researchers who had faced similar issues in launching study groups with preservice teachers.

Hollingsworth (1992), for example, writes, as did Christine, of an "ongoing conversation"--this one for preservice and beginning teachers. The researcher wanted to explore how they learned about teaching reading. In meeting with her group of volunteers, however, she often had difficulty steering the conversation back to reading. "As hard as I tried," she recalled, "I could not get the conversation to focus on my interest in their subject-matter knowledge"(p.380). Hollingsworth eventually suspended her original goal and learned to live with the more "ambiguous structure" of their meetings:

I had to change my interactions so that I was no longer telling teachers what I knew (as the group's "expert" on the topic of teaching instruction") and checking to see if they had learned it. I had to develop a process of working with them as colearner and creator of evolving expertise through nonevaluative conversation....Our change in relationship now required that I look at transformation of my own learning (as a researcher and teacher educator) as equally important in determining the success of teachers' knowledge transformation" (p. 375).

I identify with Hollingsworth's experience here. I had become a colearner just as she had, and my own knowledge about teaching writing was greatly enhanced by these novice writing teachers. Along with the MET students, I learned about general and specific strategies for managing the
interactive, collaborative writing lessons and worked through some of my own problems in managing a writing workshop classroom in the process. For example, Kate’s solution to peer response groups, specifically, having students begin with "self conferencing" and then read their drafts to a partner was something I knew I would use in my own teaching. (See Chapter Five for a description of Kate’s peer response process).

But what we were doing together as a group was about more than writing. On a deeper level, my experience with these seven novices helped me to internalize what Hollingsworth (1992) calls a "continuous interaction between how we understand the world and who we are as people" (p.375). In my own research, I had sought to understand relationships between who these student teachers were as people and the way they used writing. Just as Hollingworth’s (1992) study group eventually cycled back to talking about teaching reading (her original research interest), our group did a lot of talking about writing. But like Hollingsworth’s group, we also talked a lot about relationships--with students, cooperating teachers, and with each other. And as our members told their stories, I came to understand, as did Hollingsworth, that this talk was not extraneous but central to their success in teaching with writing--indeed, to their survival in the profession.
Another participant/researcher who helped validate our interaction was Janet L. Miller (1990), who had described her own shared journey with five classroom teachers, specifically, how they had begun to "see the blurring of the distances between our public and private worlds" (p. 23). Her book, Creating Spaces and Finding Voices, describes the evolution of their collaborative explorations "as we began to find the connections between our examinations of ourselves and the often controlling forces of the social and cultural contexts in which we worked" (p. 23). Like me, Miller had begun by rejecting the "deficit" models of research on teaching "that determine teachers' deficiencies and then tell them how to fix themselves, or how and what to teach" (p. 24). But even driven by this conviction, she still had to struggle to get beyond her own unexamined expectation that she, as the professor, was supposed to have and supply the "right" answers:

I began to see that I could not determine the research agendas or procedures for these people, even if I overtly tried to....These educators were quite capable of determining and exploring the issues that they wished to investigate and, in fact, did not look to me for approval or direction as they grappled with their discrepancies (p. 59).

Because the students in our group were all teachers in training, learning the ropes, I wondered if I shouldn't be shaping their practice more actively or at least guiding them away from writing-to-learn pitfalls. Like Miller (1990), I eventually learned that I was not the voice of
authority, that I was only "one among the group who could offer response and discussion" (p. 59).

The most validating comment on my success at what Perl and Wilson (1986) call "getting out of the way," comes from Christine, who wrote about our Friday lunch meetings in her journal. Like, me, she had found herself toward the end of the semester surprised by the "impact" of our group.

To be perfectly honest, I only began to realize the impact of Clemi's writing group after Sue, Kate, and the other elementary people commented on how much they were getting out of the Friday sessions at Burger King. Now, as I reflect on the past semester, I see what Clemi has done for us. She's exactly the type of facilitator that the MET program needs. She doesn't force her opinions and she lets us speak and ask questions. She is prompt with all types of feedback and she always remembers to bring copies of articles that she mentions. She tells us a lot of stories about her teaching experiences and she is knowledgeable about the current theories in writing. The group made me think about my writing....I never realized that my main "thing" with writing is for self-expression. I received a lot of moral support from the members of the group. Kate shared her notes from a Waianae Elementary School visitation with me....it was a writing exercise. Christine and Lee saved my life by giving me the idea for the Diamante poetry lesson. Our group seems to disregard the usual boundaries of Elementary/Secondary.

Part 7: Specific Examples of Our Collaboration in Action

Some of the most profound questions seemed to emerge when only two or three students were present at our meetings. One day, for example, I was sitting alone with Christine, listening to her describing student resistance to her reflective writing assignments in a 9th grade, low-track English class. She had been asking students to evaluate themselves as learners and team members, a big departure
from the kind of mindless questions at the end of the chapter students were used to. She sat a moment looking down at the journals and then asked quietly, "Is there some way you can do it--teach writing--so that it's not so painful?"

This heartfelt question provided an opportunity to share some research on effective writing instruction and at the same time to validate something Christine was already doing. She had just shown me some of her own responses to student journals (written on her new computer). She herself had noticed that the quality of student writing improved after she began responding to their ideas in this way. I assured her that what she was doing was a powerful motivator, and we talked about the importance of teacher response to student ideas (rather than red-pen corrections of grammar and spelling).

This incident also illustrates the generally productive interaction between high school and elementary volunteers. (It was their idea to meet as one group and not break into separate high school and elementary subgroups) Fran, who had been trying out learning logs in a 6th grade math unit (also with low-track students), arrived in the middle of this conversation. Through our discussion, Fran learned about the possibility of motivating her own students by writing responses to their math learning logs and went on to incorporate this in her math log process.
Another discussion, this one on stylistic conventions, further illustrates how our sharing of writing-connected ideas typically occurred. One Friday at Burger King, Christine asked me to read her group's collaboratively-written portrait of Windward High School. She was objecting to another writer's use of passive voice, which she saw as stilted.

Lee, listening to us from across the table, interrupted to say that her computer style checker was always catching her for her use of passive voice. "But that's just how local people talk," Lee added.

Christine disagreed. "No, that's not the way they talk. It's just the way they think they're supposed to write because teachers have trained them that way."

I suggested that there are different discourse conventions in social science, literary writing, academic writing, etc. I identified my own bias as a writer trained in a more straightforward journalistic style who was having trouble meeting the discourse conventions in academic writing. I did not suggest a universal standard for good writing. Instead, I made the point that we write for different discourse communities and that even within a particular discourse community, these conventions are constantly evolving and being challenged.

The following Friday, I brought Christine and Lee copies of an article about passive voice with specific
examples of how different discourse communities view its use. Two other students saw the article and asked if they could have copies, and later, two more saw the passive-voice handout and asked for copies. Some, like Lee, weren’t even sure what passive voice was. We eventually worked together on some of the article’s exercises to prepare them for the grammar and syntax section of the National Teachers’ Exam, which they were all preparing to take the following week.

By the end of the semester, these eight students seemed to have come to see themselves as belonging to a group, to feel a responsibility for keeping one another informed. Kate wrote up notes from her observation of whole language classrooms in Waianai for Christine. Everyone rejoiced with Martin when he achieved a major success in getting his low-track, alienated students to write poetry. Until this time, it had been almost impossible to motivate these students to write anything. Martin’s goal for this unit was to set up a context in which "students almost felt compelled to write." He began by sharing his own poems, including one very personal one about the death of his grandmother. The first breakthrough involved his cooperating teacher, who wrote her own poetry but had never shared it with students. She brought in one of her own poems, about the death of her father, to share. Gradually, students began sharing as well, moving poetry that revealed much about
their own lives. (We will return to the censorship issues created by such student poetry later in this chapter.)

Fran copied articles on teaching math with writing to Rosie, who was also trying to implement journals in a high school math class. At the time Rosie needed the support of like-minded people who were taking similar risks in their own classrooms. She was particularly worried about appearing as "too weird" because of the changes she had launched in the classroom she was assigned to. Her students seemed genuinely bewildered by her. They would ask why she didn't just tell them the things they needed to know, why she went to such elaborate lengths to set up experiential learning for them to discover mathematical principles themselves.

Fridays at Burger King were a time for sharing. Rosie shared her questions—how far and how fast should she be going in creating the MET ideal of an inquiry-based classroom? I shared my own memories of having students removed from my class (by back-to-basics fundamentalist parents) because I wasn't teaching enough grammar. Even the sharing of raw data in the form of lesson transcripts and metaphors for writing fostered new inquiry and new knowledge within our group. Here my roles of mentor and researcher merged, as the research itself became part of the intervention.

At a focus group interview in April we talked about their most successful writing lessons and about some of the
perceived obstacles to teaching with writing (like Rosie feeling "too weird"). I also gave them copies of all of the
group's metaphors for writing, including my own, called
"Open escape hatch, jump in," which described a retreat into
writing during a troubled childhood. Seeing ourselves in
relation to others and through others' eyes, we learned more
about our own writing processes and images of ourselves as
writers.

Through her metaphor, about selecting just the right
fashion accessories, Christine realized that what she valued
above all else was self-expression. Sue discovered that
although she felt reasonably competent as a writer, there
was still something "dangerous" about committing words to
paper. Lee admitted that she had spent hours writing hers,
in which she compared writing to creating a sculpture out of
koa wood, and that its message was still not as clear as she
wanted it to be.

Most had found these metaphors difficult to write but
enlightening; they had never thought about how they viewed
writing and themselves as writers. Martin still hadn't
written his and was gently scolded by the group. Rosie, who
still "hated writing," had also postponed the chore of
writing hers; she told us her metaphor was: "writing is like
pulling teeth."

After the close of the semester, some of us continued
meeting for lunch. Our meetings provided a forum for
continued dialogue about writing-to-learn (although we continued to talk about other things as well) and a growing sense of identity as members of a group. At an end-of-year luncheon at Sue’s beach-side country club, Martin, our resident poet, described his metaphor for writing (which he never did put on paper) as the work of a shell collector, walking along the beach selecting beautiful objects and arranging them lovingly on a bed of blue velvet.

**Part 8: The Two Final Semesters**

By October of their student teaching semester (fall, '92), I began to realize that the dissertation I had originally planned was not going to be possible. There were just too many fascinating stories unfolding, and I would never be able to do all of them justice. There was the story of Martin and Christine team teaching one section of low-track high school English, students for whom the "f" word—shouted frequently across the classroom—functioned not only as expletive but as adjective, adverb, and verb. There was Martin solo teaching another low-track class, using his own poetry to give them voices (He wrote one allegory about reef animals that insightfully portrayed every student in the class.) There was Rosie, still feeling weird but making math logs a part of her algebra classes. At the elementary level, there was Lee struggling to overcome her own difficulties with Standard English in a fourth grade classroom and with written academic discourse in her Plan B
paper, required for graduation. There was Ann team teaching in a low-ability third grade in which a severely retarded student had been mainstreamed (and using student journals to promote caring relationships). There was Kate, consistently surprising me with the scope and success of her writing-to-learn strategies.

About the same time, I began working regularly in one of the schools (Waiala Elementary), giving a helping hand to MET student teachers and their cooperating DOE teachers. As a result of my contact with these cooperating teachers, I was exposed to still another fascinating story: that of the DOE veterans who had volunteered to allow MET agents of change into their classrooms.

The MET model of collaboration bore little resemblance to these teachers' previous experience supervising student teachers. It blurred distinctions between mentor and student teacher. It also forced these teachers to question their "traditional" practices in a way that most had not been forced to do before. There was a built-in collaboration with university staff, which, at least at Waiala, offered these veterans outside opinions on the schooling status quo—and the thrill of empowerment that comes from raising important questions together.

With all the fascinating changes taking place in the lives of these veteran teachers, I had to fight to keep my focus on the student teachers. Still, even if I managed
this, there was no way to collect sufficient data and tell all of their stories in any meaningful detail.

In early October, with my advisor’s encouragement, I made the decision to focus on three elementary student teachers--Kate, Lee, and Ann--who were facing similar challenges introducing whole language curricular reforms in fifth, fourth, and third grades respectively. From October through the following April, I spent much more time with these three, observing, interviewing, talking on the phone, reading their journals and their students’ texts and journals, talking with their students and their DOE mentors. Sue had already dropped out of the program by this time, and Fran was much less involved with our group and eventually dropped out of the program altogether. I continued to visit the three high school teachers. Our full group met three official (prescheduled) times during the fall semester for two focus group interviews and a taped presentation to their full cohort seminar. For this presentation, I gave an overview of their writing-to-learn activities, after which we focused on three specific writing success stories: Kate’s classroom newspaper, Ann’s efforts to launch invented spelling in lower elementary classes, and Rosie’s use of learning logs in high school math classes. We also continued to meet informally, sometimes going out to eat after their Monday full cohort seminars, though not as frequently as we had done the previous semester.
During the final (internship) semester, I continued to spend most of my time with Kate, Ann, and Lee, the three subjects of the contrasting case studies. But there were several opportunities to touch bases with other group members after the Monday full cohort seminars. I also visited the high school teachers once and worked with Rosie, Lee, Christine, and Kate on their Plan B papers.

Toward the end of the semester, we met for one final focus group interview. For this final official conversation, our question was: How can we help teachers be more successful at teaching with writing? Group members talked about training and support and shared some of the things they'd learned on their own. Some of these suggestions helped to shape the conclusions presented in the final chapter of this dissertation.

Part 9: Cross-cutting Censorship Issues

When we did manage to get together during these two final semesters, the group continued, in Christine's words, to "disregard the usual boundaries of elementary/secondary" as members shared both practical writing ideas as well as philosophical struggles (such as how much control over student texts the teacher should exert).

A specific example of a such a dilemma was censorship: specifically, to what extent teachers should interfere with students' choice of topics. The case study of Kate in Chapter Five describes her deciding whether or not to
include in the class newspaper some movie reviews written about R-rated movies. At one of our focus group interviews, Kate told the others, "If I put that in the newspaper, it's like I'm condoning it."

Christine and Martin shared stories of more blatant censorship issues they were facing at the high school level. In the class they were team-teaching, their low-track students had prepared time-lines of their lives in preparation for writing their autobiographies. These time lines invariably included students' first experience with pakalolo (marijuana), their first bong hit (i.e., deep inhalation of marijuana using a water-filled pipe), their first sexual experience.

Even Martin's extraordinary breakthrough (in terms of students' motivation to write) in his poetry unit had produced poems in which students shared their terrible alienation from Mainstream America and, in many cases, from their families as well. Their poems frequently dealt with illegal activities the students regularly participated in, such as cock fighting and beer blasts, as illustrated by the two examples below. (Another poem, which is included in Chapter Seven, told of young girl's sexual abuse.)

The chickens fighting,
blood is flying all over
It's time to scoop cash.

Anonymous
The weekend comes and it’s time to drink
Bust out the eight-ball and the cases of beer
Time to relax and not having to think...

Your body starts to get weak and your head starts to buzz.
You sit on a nearby comfortable looking couch.
Now you know what alcohol does
As you slop away in an uneasy slouch.

Anonymous

The two novice writing teachers also wanted their students write a guidebook for the new ninth graders that they could publish in computer lab and present at the different feeder schools, a idea Christine had gotten from a kindergarten class. But the students, in brainstorming subtopics, had suggested things like how to make friends with the security guards (so that you can sneak off campus). "I don’t think the principal would like it," she concluded sadly.

Christine, forced by her cooperating teacher to present a lesson on the principal parts of verbs (which she herself didn’t know), decided to incorporate "real writing" by having her students write original sentences using the different verb forms. With an audible sigh, she told our group the results: "When I had them come up with sentences, what they wrote about was drugs, alcohol, and sex. But some of the best ones were like that!"

Unlike Kate, who decided to suppress the movie reviews, Christine decided to risk public wrath. She included some of these questionable sentences on a worksheet
she intended to use the following day to teach the verbs—and left the original on the ditto machine when she went home! She worried all night, certain that the principal must have found it.

She managed to locate the original the next morning before anyone else saw it. Still, she continued to agonize over what the censorship limits were, especially given her strong belief that writing should be primarily for self-expression, and that her alienated students, whom she cared deeply about, needed this outlet more than most.

Christine’s cooperating teacher disapproved of the verb worksheet. According to Christine, "He doesn’t want them to go home and show their parents they’re writing stuff like that...and he won’t touch subjects like child abuse...and anything with profanity in it."

But others have suggested that these subjects are precisely what students need to be thinking and writing about. According to Scriven (1993) "controversial issues are the life blood of critical thinking.

Still, even if we get away with addressing such topics, teachers need to know how to respond to such texts. And in this same focus group, we talked about how writing teachers can respond without appearing to condone illegal and dangerous activities, can express worry rather than approval in their responses. Ann joined the conversation, agreeing with Christine about the importance of freewriting for
alienated, at risk students like hers and Christine’s and Martin’s, and Christine, shaking her head, added:

I know I can’t turn their whole lives around and make them straight A students, and, you know, be like us. But if I can touch a kid in a different way that maybe he won’t go out and murder somebody...because chances are some of my kids in the future will murder somebody...

With the population Christine was engaged in trying to bring to literacy, the idea of future murderers was not an exaggeration. Nor was this an exaggeration at Ann’s school. She shared a story of Marlene, her cooperating teacher, a 31 year veteran, sometimes going to the state prison to visit some of her former students (at their request) and "when she walks down the hallway, prisoners on both sides of the aisle are recognizing her and yelling 'Hey Mitsudo!"

Part 10: The Value of Sharing and Support

The MET teachers in this study were being trained to work collaboratively in a system in which teachers have typically been characterized as operating in relative isolation (Palonsky; Glasser, 1990; Palonsky, 1986; Raywid, 1993; Silberman, 1989). In the larger context of the MET program and in our writing-to-learn support group, students saw the advantages of this ongoing conversation, for their own learning as well as their students’ learning. As Christine explained in an earlier quote, they were discovering that the way they were learning was the way they wanted their students to learn. She later wrote in her Plan B paper:
What became apparent was that Mart and I were modeling behaviors that we wanted the kids to follow. Although I contradicted him, the two of us resolved the problem in a civilized way. We talked with the students and did not come to blows. Our congenial and supportive relationship helped to create a safe environment....They (students) are ready to learn and to work. There are a lot of smiles now.

With all the learners touched by this study--students, student teachers and the cooperating teachers--we began to see the transformative power of continued dialogue. The principal of one MET school, commenting on the new program, said that in her school she was seeing "the loneliness (of teaching) being cut." And Ann, looking ahead to her final internship semester with some trepidation, realized how much she had valued the camaraderie, not just of our writing-to-learn group but of all the MET support systems available at her.

I get kind of scared thinking about how well things have gone for me during my student teaching semester and fear that I will have to 'pay my dues' during my internship. The thing that is going to be really difficult is that I will have no support system. That's one of the things that I love right now.

Luckily for Ann, she went looking for a new support system at her new school (Waiala) and managed to find it, latching on to two innovative, risk-taking whole language teachers who were her second grade neighbors. Together, the three of them launched an integrated unit on whales, culminating in a whale-watch boat ride. Within a week, all the second grade teachers (even those who were not known for collaboration) had signed on. The unit became a second grade
project in which teachers planned together, shared resources, tried out similar lessons, sharing and comparing the results.

The point here is that after her exposure to collaboration, Ann knew what she was looking for, what she needed to sustain her along the difficult road of teacher/change agent. And that may be one very positive side effect of the writing-to-learn support group. Perhaps novice teachers need to experience camaraderie and support in order to know what they're looking for. Another point, which Christine helped us to see, is that before we create the Vygotskian ideal of collaboration for our students, we need to experience it for ourselves--and model it for them.

Part Eleven: The Journals, Conversations on Paper

For students in our group, collaboration also took place on the pages of the journals they were required to keep as a program requirement. At some schools, such as Waiala, for example, journals took the form of dialogues. Both cooperating teacher and the MET professor, Amanda, responded on the margins to what Kate, Lee, and Ann wrote about their teaching and learning, sometimes offering conflicting feedback.

Kate reported that she would have preferred more response from her DOE mentor on the issue of Norman, the class problem child. But regardless of whether DOE teachers wrote in the margins or not, they were still being exposed
to the larger questions being raised by these students and especially by Amanda.

This three-way dialogue also addressed the more mundane issues. In one of Lee's journals, for example, she wrote about a particular lesson: "What I had planned ended in a matter of minutes, so instead I focused on the phonics." Rhoda, her cooperating teacher, asked in the margins: "Do you think it was too short? Why does it have to take a long time." Later, Amanda wrote beneath the above comment: "Good question!"

One pattern we saw at Waiala during Lee and Kate's student teaching semester was that specific suggestions for improvement on lesson planning (comments such as "you should have had your materials ready in advance") tended to come across as more harsh than the cooperating teacher intended, more judgmental than they would have come across in an oral debriefing.

Stephanie, Lee's mentor teacher during the student teaching semester, also was called upon to respond to Ann's intern journals during the following semester. Mentoring Ann, she seemed more aware of this power of written language, going to great lengths to offer comfort and empathy. When Ann wrote about bad days, Stephanie would share her own frustrations with the system in the margins instead of offering specific critiques.
Another kind of collaboration on paper came in the form of student-written learning logs and journals. According to Rosie, "Students are sometimes the best evaluators." In her consumer math class for low-achieving students, for example, she asked students to comment on the following question: "If you were the teacher, what would you have done differently in this activity."

One answered, "You've done a pretty good job already. I'm actually doing all of my work." Another extended the activity by describing how she would have "made a paper for their hours and activities and a list for the days to work."

Rosie described the value of dialogues through student learning logs in her own journal:

Although feedback from the mentor teacher is helpful, it is of greater empowerment for a student teacher to receive constructive comments from their peers, students, and outside observers. Personally, I was interested in knowing how my students felt about my teaching, my strengths and weaknesses.

She later devised prompts for her more motivated algebra students such as "One thing that is helpful in this class is...because...." And, "This class could be improved by....The benefits are...." One student, in a response to warm the hearts of MET activists, wrote:

It helps to have active learning as well as learning by listening. It gives people a better grasp on what the subject is....The benefits are that more people would get involved with the lesson, instead of being passive bystanders."
In a similar vein, one of Kate's fourth graders told her in a learning log response that he really appreciated her efforts to use learning logs and problem solving activities and that he was learning more with these methods.

One of Christine and Martin's students wrote in a journal response, "You're doing fine, this is the only class my friends and I don't cut." Another offered the ultimate compliment in her description of Christine and Martin's teaming, "My teachers from all of my other periods teach us but don't communicate. I think communicating is a big part of teaching."

Rosie, who was fast becoming a writing-to-learn believer through the use of her math logs, reported:

A safe trusting environment is the key to learning log writing. Our students sustained an open channel of communication once they felt that their logs received only support and constructive feedback. They sometimes felt that voicing their opinions aloud in class would only bring them ridicule from their peers. But because the logs represent a medium free from judgement, they wrote their comments. They made suggestions, even when not prompted to do so. And they felt free to ask questions, which they might have felt were too "dumb" to bring up in class.

But for Rosie herself, writing was still "like pulling teeth," and she continued to be a reluctant journal writer (although she had responded to some of her prompts along with her students and had used a journal "for venting" during her summer job). During the student teaching semester, collaboration still seemed to work best for her in person rather than on the paper. She and her cooperating
teacher would sit and talk over the cooperating teacher’s notes on her lessons, this talk taking the place of a dialogic journal. And during the internship semester, Rosie reported that Christine had become a kind of daily sounding board. "I always need to talk to Christine about my day," she said, "then I can hang up and go to sleep." It wasn’t until her own writing of the Plan B paper that Rosie learned to appreciate the power of writing to learn in her own life.

**Part 12: Some Happy Beginnings**

The transformative power of this collaboration cannot be overemphasized. According to Maryanne Raywid (1993), "If you embrace it (collaboration) wholeheartedly...there are tremendous advantages of collegial interaction, not the least of which is an enormous increase in teacher satisfaction" (Raywid, 1993). Numerous studies of educators at all levels seem to support this view. According to Rothman (1993):

> In analyzing why some teachers make effective adaptations to today’s students and some do not, the researchers found a striking pattern. Each of the teachers who thrived was part of a ‘professional community’ that enabled its members to discuss problems and mutually develop strategies for dealing with them (p.25).

I think this supportive sounding board was especially crucial for our MET pioneers, who needed to function within a system they were dedicated to change. Early in their first semester of the program, they had come up with the motto: Survive and subvert. But while surviving and subverting and
taking risks, these preservice teachers needed to know that what they were doing was worthwhile. And during the three semesters our group met and talked about writing and learning, we provided that for one another.

This support was especially valuable because these MET novices had additionally committed themselves to teaching with writing, which almost invariably opens up ethical and political dilemmas such as those described earlier. Christine and others had complained not just about the physical stamina demands of teaching but about having to know--through students' writing--about their pain, their alienation, about the tremendous risks associated with being a kid in late twentieth century America. Describing the freewriting of one of her students who was living in a car, she said, "If you have a kid who has no place to live, I can't just tell him that 'you're coming to school because you have to get a good education.' I want to make sure that the kid is all right."

No wonder they were sometimes nostalgic about the "old paradigm" with its textbooks denuded of human emotion, its safe answers to safe questions. And there was something very therapeutic in sharing these struggles with others who had also decided to become teachers of "real" writing.

But a by-product of the knowledge, acquired through spoken and written dialogue with students was a kind of empathy for the individual learner that was unknown during
the days of the safe answers—and also a kind of joy.

Christine concluded her Plan B paper with the following reflection:

I guess that we are doing something right....I know that I don’t dread getting up and going to work in the mornings. There isn’t a day at school where I don’t laugh. To me that is a miracle. Last year, a seasoned teacher said to us, "Once in a while you have these shining moments when some kid just makes your day; you see a spark in an eye and you know...you just know. Hang onto it because you don’t know when the next one is going to come. It could be months." I seem to be getting shining moments left and right. They just drop down from the sky.

Christine also reported that she felt she now "had the skills to reflect, dissect, work things out, and reassess." At the end of her final semester, she was looking for an educational journal to submit her Plan B paper to.

Rosie had started the school year by asking students to tell her one thing about themselves and one thing about their attitudes toward math. She had modeled both prompts for the students, overcoming her own writing anxiety to share her responses with them. She ended the semester with a publishable copy of her Plan B paper, written in collaboration with another MET teacher, which concluded with the following reflection:

As I reflect upon the past 8 months, I realized that my most significant learning about learning logs didn’t occur through my students’ writings. Instead, it occurred during the creation of this learning log about learning logs. It is ironic to think that I approached this subject with a dislike for writing, and eventually derived my greatest learning through writing. But if I can learn through writing, then it is almost a certainty that my students can accomplish the same.
Rosie's writing partner had added as their conclusion, "I think Rosie should be the poster child for this paper."
CHAPTER FIVE

Introduction to the Case Studies--Kate, Lee, and Ann

During the first three MET semesters, Kate was assigned to Waiala Elementary, which serves a mixed population, free-lunch children as well as children from luxurious penthouse apartments who wear designer fashions to school. The school has a large population of immigrant children who speak little or no English. For her final internship semester, Kate moved to a fourth grade position at nearby Lincoln School, which had a much more stable population and a larger percentage of students scoring above average on the SAT test than at Waiala.

Like Kate, Lee also was assigned to Waiala, spending her first three semesters observing and teaching there. During her fourth semester, Lee was counseled to take a leave of absence from the MET program to give her time to work on improving her writing and Standard English. She also took courses and worked part time as a primary ESL teacher during this semester. Repeating her student teaching semester at another school, she again encountered problems and eventually dropped out of the MET program.

During the first three MET semesters, Ann was assigned to Keala Elementary School, which is populated almost exclusively by children from low-socio-economic families, mostly Samoans, other Pacific islanders, and Filipinos. This
school has a very poor reputation for academics, with the lowest SAT scores on the island. For her final internship semester, Ann took a second grade position at Waiala School, which Kate and Lisa had just left.

During the three data collection semesters these women were interconnected by overlapping ties. Until the final semester, Kate and Lee were at the same school, observing each other’s lessons, meeting daily informally and in inquiry groups. Kate and Ann were old friends who knew each other from former Headstart days. In fact, they had decided to enter the MET program together.

These connections also extended to me, the participant researcher. Kate and I discovered that we were neighbors and became walking partners. Ann and I attend the same Quaker Meeting. I often met Lee in the Student Center to work on her own writing. I also helped out with the MET program at Waiala School, where I had the chance to visit Lee and Kate’s classrooms frequently during the student teaching semester and Ann’s second grade during the final internship semester.

My frequent presence in their classrooms, my interest over the phone in a bad day or a good writing idea strengthened these bonds. We became friends, with our own inside jokes. Ideas flowed easily between the four of us. Sometimes one student teacher would tell me of another’s
successful or failed lesson (thus giving me two perspectives on a particular event).

As described in chapters Three and Four, we continued to meet with the original study group (although with diminishing frequency each of the three semesters). When the high school MET students were present at informal or focus group meetings, they listened with interest to the elementary teachers' stories, sometimes incorporating ideas and sharing suggestions. The four elementary students had similar interest in the high school stories. The writing-to-learn support group continued to have a sense of identity, with students venting to one another, laughing at themselves together, and often seeing themselves through one another's eyes.

Case 1: Kate

**Personal History**

Kate traces her love of literature back to her immigrant childhood in a Honolulu's Chinatown. "I turned to books in desperation," she says. "The only place I was allowed to go was the library. My parents were so restrictive, there was nothing left to do but read."

Kate had come to Hawaii from Mainland China at age four, speaking no English, with parents who also spoke no English. "Those first three years of school were like a blur," she remembers.

I was painfully aware that I was different from the other children. With mismatching checks and
prints, my clothes marked me as being 'fresh off the boat.' I didn’t eat the toast and cereal breakfasts depicted in the readers at school, instead we had rice and noodles. We drank bitter Chinese herbs when we were sick, and celebrated Chinese holidays....Learning occurred for me in a cultural vacuum. I could not identify with the Dick and Jane primers because they were unable to mirror and validate my home life. Out of necessity, I became more resourceful, seeking information and help with school work elsewhere. Knowing that I was behind in the English language, I developed a 'catch up mentality' and started learning words rapidly.

By fifth grade, Kate’s teacher was sending her home with the local newspaper to circle words she didn’t know (to be used as the next week’s vocabulary lesson). At the time, Kate had no familiarity with English language newspapers. Still, she had a hard time finding any words she didn’t know. This was her first memory of being competent in school.

By sixth grade she was scoring the highest verbal scores in her class on the Stanford Achievement Test, and her first story, about her cat, was being published in the school paper. What had happened between the blur of those early years and those top 6th grade verbal scores were weekly trips from her grim tenement to the main branch of the Honolulu library, a gracious old-world building with mullioned windows and great arched doors. Kate remembers walking back to Chinatown with such a tall stack of books in her arms that she couldn’t see over it.

In intermediate school she was a reporter for the school paper. Later, she reports receiving "good feedback
from my high school teachers, so that I wasn't afraid to write." At the University of Hawaii she majored in English, because, as she explains it, "I decided my first love was literature." She took creative writing courses and published poetry in a local journal. After graduation, she worked for more than a decade as a teacher with the Headstart Program, working with outreach programs for Honolulu's large immigrant population as well as with local families.

Then, at age 43, a single mom with two teenage kids, Kate heard about the MET program and was intrigued by its emphasis on student-centered, constructivist approaches to learning. She and her good friend Ann (also a preschool teacher) decided to enter the program together (as they would later volunteer for our study group together). Assessing her potential contributions to Hawaii's public schools, Kate has written, "I can attempt to integrate school with home life by asking bilingual parents to come into the classroom to share a little of their culture. I may even be able to help ease some of the painful adjustments that are inevitable in the enculturation process." Her assignment to Waiala School, which has an unusually large immigrant population, was fortuitous.

The MET Program

Kate described the first MET semester as "a stimulating invigorating time."

I have often kept myself awake at nights thinking over ways I could have done a lesson better or
about something that was said or done in the name of teaching. I have felt a kind of renewal, a coming alive of possibilities, a richness in the fabric of life.

Kate meant the part about keeping herself awake at night quite literally. Through all the time that I have known her, Kate has seemed driven by a kind of fierce determination to be an exemplary teacher, perhaps still responding to what she herself has called the "catch up mentality" of a former immigrant child in mismatched clothes.

In November Kate was drawn by her own love of writing and literature to join the writing-to-learn support group I proposed to the full MET cohort. Her Miller Daly Writing Apprehension Test, administered that same month, revealed a confident writer (i.e."I like to have my friends read what I have written") who found it easy to put thoughts into words. She agreed with the prompt, "It's easy for me to write good compositions" and strongly disagreed with "I have a terrible time organizing my ideas in a composition course."

Kate eagerly embraced the whole language, process-centered, social constructivist view of teaching that was espoused in her MET seminars and in weekly informal discussions of our writing-to-learn support group. She wanted to help her students develop the confidence she herself enjoyed as a writer. And, as whole language convert, she planned to approach classroom writing "in a naturalistic
way, where they’re doing it all the time." She also wanted to employ some of the editing techniques she had only recently learned herself (and wished she had been taught in school).

In her writing autobiography interview, she pointed out that local children traditionally do poorly in writing and blamed this on the way writing is taught, with the instructor "caught up in the mechanics and not concentrating enough on the content of the writing."

"That’s really unfortunate," she went on, "because you really shouldn’t be lecturing about gerunds and participles....Let’s just take it from where it is and go from there, and have the work be accepted for its ideas."

Using writing-to-learn approaches, Kate wanted Hawaii’s students, many of whom lack confidence in their verbal abilities, to "feel that writing is not an onerous task."

To achieve this goal, she would place writing at the core of her curriculum, where "writing would become a natural part of their everyday work." Looking critically at the way writing is traditionally taught in Hawaii’s public schools, she also saw the need for "more collaboration....with students reading each other’s texts and giving each other ideas." As an example of this kind of collaboration, she described a peer editing technique she’d learned from her daughter’s sixth grade teacher, who had children read their texts aloud to a partner. "Sometimes
they can self correct," Kate explained, "when they hear something that doesn’t make sense...that’s a technique I was never taught."

**Writing as Thinking Tool**

In the same interview, Kate identified the principal value of writing as enhancing student thinking. "It clarifies your thinking. The more you write, the clearer your thoughts seem to come out." Reflecting on experiences that helped her grow as a writer, she said, "The comments that were most helpful were those that challenged me to do a little bit more thinking." Even during the interview, Kate sometimes seemed to be urging the interviewer (a young researcher at the university’s writing project office) toward greater clarity. When asked about where she goes for help with her writing, for example, Kate responded, "Are you talking about writer’s block? Do you mean mechanical trouble? Ideas? Inspiration?" (Later Kate explained to me that her need to clarify statements stems from her years of serving as an interpreter for her parents. "Before I translated from English to Chinese, I wanted to be sure I understood what the person meant.")

Other comments suggested that achieving this clarity of thought is hard work (i.e.,"Good writing is rewriting and lots of it"). Perhaps extrapolating from her own past, she also saw writing well and thinking well as intimately connected to reading: "Good writers come from good readers."
I think the more you read, and the more you think about what you’re reading, the better writer you become."

Kate’s extended metaphor for writing compared her own re-introduction to academic writing after so many years away from school to clearing a trail in the underbrush. In both interview and metaphor, she explained that having a computer is a big help in this trail clearing/rewriting process. In other data collection sources, she also mentioned this marvelous rewriting tool, admitting that she had "become enamored" of her MacIntosh. Later, in her own teaching, Kate would work hard to make computers available to her students as a means of encouraging them to revise and rethink.

**Writing as Art Form**

But Kate was attracted to more than the practical uses of writing. Because of her love of literature, she seemed equally devoted to writing as art form, as act of creation. She herself, from her earliest days of lugging books back to her tenement apartment, had been passionate about the power of words, about the images a gifted writer can conjure in a reader’s mind. She planned to include both narratives and poetry in her lessons. She had an uncommon (among elementary teachers) distaste for cliches and rejected the way poetry is frequently taught in the schools:

I’d like to see a lot more creative writing being done. I think teachers are afraid of creative writing, especially poetry. And the kind of poetry I see being done isn’t really poetry. They do
diamante or what they call haiku. But what they consider haiku is merely counting out the syllables. What they're lacking is the imagery. What they're forgetting is the metaphors, the similes, the personifications, the figurative language. That part of it is so rich, like describing the moon in another way or somebody's rumpled clothes in an unusual way. I'd really like to see more of this kind of creativity.

She seemed intuitively to understand my own belief, born of my own experience as a Bay Area Writing Project convert, that teachers of writing must they themselves write. Early in our friendship, we began exchanging favorite poems. She knew I was a fiction writer. I think this common addiction--and a similar childhood of escaping into books--forges a bond between us. As our friendship grew, she made me copies of her own poems, like the following, written in response to an assignment given to her fifth grade students:

**Leaf Poem**

My thoughts drift  
Like leaves in slow  
Meditative arcs  
Catching a last glint of sunlight  
Before settling on the dark loam.

**From Theory to Practice**

In her second semester Kate planned a writing unit for fifth grade students as her first major teaching experience. In it, she addressed both of the uses for writing she considered important: writing-as-clear-thinking and writing-as-artistic creation. First, for the "objective kind of writing," Kate brought fresh shrimp to class and asked her 5th graders to write a piece of objective, scientific
observation. Scales and rulers were provided to each group. Later, after these texts were completed and revised, the students wrote poems about the shrimp.

True to her own beliefs, Kate emphasized to the children that their poetry didn’t have to rhyme or have a required number of syllables. Responding to their poems, she was especially gratified with unusual or evocative similes and metaphors. One student wrote, for example, "It looks like an edible tiger." Another compared the shrimp’s eyes to b-b pellets. She collected and painstakingly edited examples (mostly in individual conferences with the students) of both kinds of texts and put them together in a booklet titled *But It Stinks! A Compilation of Fifth Grade Works on a Shrimp,* which became reading material for the class.

We kept in close touch during the planning and execution of these shrimp lessons. At the start of the semester, Kate had sought me out and asked if I could meet with her individually to look over her plans for her first writing lessons, the only student in our group who used me in this way. I suggested the idea of a publishable final product as very motivating to student writers, especially in terms of getting them to take the revision process seriously. As we worked together, Kate listened to my suggestions about teaching with writing, selecting out ideas that fit with her own goals and values (such as the example above) and tactfully rejecting others.
Both in and out of the classroom, Kate seemed to exude a quiet competence, a strong sense of self. When it came time for her group at Waiala School to write their school portrait, a collaborative ethnography required by the MET program, she played a leadership role. Two fellow students, including Lee in our study group, had very limited experience with writing and with Standard English. Synthesizing interview notes and composing a coherent school portrait was extremely difficult for them. Later, Kate explained, "I was unhappy with a lot of the writing, so I sort of took it upon myself to help edit--with their permission."

The Student Teaching Semester, Negotiating Change

Assigned to a fifth grade at Waiala School the following fall, Kate placed writing at the core of her curriculum, just as she had said she would do. In the course of the semester, she would surpass her own goal, expressed in the writing autobiography interview, of having students write frequently. Crafting lessons to address what she termed "writing for different purposes," she would continue to offer parallel opportunities for writing-as-thinking tool and writing-as-artistic-creation. Her students would hone their thinking in math logs, would write stories and poetry, create their own big books, and publish a class newspaper. Additional daily writing activities would be embedded in Kate's science and social studies units.
Her practical approach to classroom writing would take a definite shape, resembling the shrimp unit the previous spring. The process would begin with first drafts, then revision (using the school's Apple Computer Lab as much as she possibly could), finishing in most cases with publication of a final product in the form of a booklet passed out to all the students. And all these writing-to-learn innovations would require a delicate negotiation process with the cooperating teacher.

Janna, a seven-year teaching veteran, was, on the one hand, eager to move in a more whole language direction in her own teaching. But she was also, in Kate's opinion, "a very structured person," who didn't have what Kate called "the questioning stance." What made this negotiation problematic was that Janna herself had been schooled in the traditional paradigm of hierarchical rather than collaborative relationships between mentors and student teachers.

Typically, Kate relied on her journal to clarify her thoughts during these difficult months. But the journal itself, ironically, provided an additional source of conflict at Waiala School. Amanda, the UH professor working with the student teachers there, had proposed that their journals be the basis for a three way dialogue, with both the MET professor and the cooperating teacher responding on the margins to what the MET students had written.
(Actually, in Kate and Lee's case, it was a four-way dialogue, because I read their journals as well as the responses in the margins. I frequently talked over the issues raised with all parties.)

Kate, who had been "very candid" in her previous journals, now agonized over how honest she should be, with Janna reading her comments and questions. In truth, she found much to disagree with in the classroom, starting with Janna's approach to writing (i.e. "She wants to correct everything") and generalizing to the whole school context (i.e., ability grouping and standardized testing). Still turning to writing to help her think things through, Kate began to record her deepest questions in her own diary, which she kept to herself.

In the margins of the MET journal, Janna commented on the lessons Kate described, often making practical critiques that were intended to be helpful. Some examples of the latter comments are: "You should have had your materials ready in advance." And "The transition from activity to activity was rough. Try to make sure the students' entire body (hands not doing anything and eyes on you) are ready before you read."

Such written (rather than verbal) feedback sometimes came across as harsher than intended. Kate commented later in a focus group interview (in which subjects talked about their use of journals): "That's made me shrink from writing
something, if I know I screwed up the lesson and I know
she’s gonna write a comment on the side."

To further complicate the three-way dialogue, Amanda
tended to ask the larger philosophical questions, often
raising moral issues that Kate, absorbed in mastering the
practical routines of teaching, did not want to consider.

Early on, for example, Kate wrote in her journal about
a boy whose disobedience had her "seething": "I thought if I
(or others) could examine what happened, I could come to a
better understanding of how to deal with this." In our focus
group interview, Kate reflected on this particular journal
entry, in which she struggled with how to handle a child who
is "constantly seeking attention."

Sometimes there’s a lot of excitement happening,
like when Norman was giving me a hard time, I
think I wrote five pages that day. I thought that
if I document the day, like as it happened, blow
by blow, it would help me reflect on it.... So
that way you can say, 'Was it anything the teacher
could have done differently--or the conflict in
this situation, could the teacher have stopped it?
Or did it escalate partly because of our
actions...?'"

In the margin next to the entry, Amanda had written:

Kate, I don’t mean to be harsh. However, why do
we expect children like Norman to fit our idea of
school? Do we ever listen to his interests and
negotiate the curriculum with him? How much of his
behavior is related to irrelevant, uninteresting
school work?

In our interview Kate described her reaction to this
kind of dialogic consciousness-raising:

Parts of the journal are a little bit painful for
me to reread because...you don’t come out very
good in certain parts, and the teacher or the prof
sometimes brings up a point... and sometimes I
don't want to be led in that direction.

An essay that Kate had written more than six months
earlier had foreshadowed this dilemma of being lead toward
the more painful questions, toward a higher consciousness
about teaching and learning:

In recent years I had abandoned my questioning
stance about many issues. I felt strange taking
it up again. In many ways, to question is to upset
your world, sometimes a world that is carefully
constructed to keep the chaos without from coming
in. To question something implies subsequent
action, otherwise what good are questions? To take
action, however, can bring down the wrath of an
unsympathetic public. That’s why it’s so scary to
think.

As Kate continued to describe Norman’s insubordination
and frequent in-school suspensions in her journal, Amanda
continued to serve as a post-structural conscience in the
margins, raising such questions as: "Are we creating the
reality of a ‘Norman’ as we describe him. Let’s talk."

And they did talk, and argue, and rethink. Amanda,
though uncompromising in her efforts to keep Kate from being
co-opted by the system, was soft-spoken and unassuming, able
to laugh at herself and her feminist, post-structural
ideals. She had a way of putting people at ease and was
respected by both sides in the change process, by the DOE
teachers as well as the MET student teachers.

As painful as this enculturation into teacher/change
agent sometimes seemed for Kate, the three-way communication
continued to flow—through frequent meetings and on the
pages of her journal. All the while worrying about how frank she should be with Janna as reader, Kate dared to raise questions about the traditional instructional practices she hoped to replace. Questioning a textbook lesson on imperative, declarative, and interrogative sentences, for example, Kate wondered why students need to learn such things. Here, she echoed the objection she had raised earlier in the writing autobiography interview— that teachers are "too taken up in the mechanics."

In the margin Janna suggested that at Washington Intermediate (where their fifth graders would go the following year), "They (i.e., the teachers) expect the students to know grammar, punctuation, etc."

But in her next entry, Kate continued to probe: "Are we teaching for the students or for the students' future teachers?" The more traditional Janna countered in the margin, "I think more for the students, to ease their transition to Washington."

Meanwhile Amanda kept encouraging such questions, pushing Kate to challenge the way we traditionally structure schooling. Such encouragement was true to the MET goal of reforming schools from within. But Kate sometimes felt torn between the different realities of her two mentors.

Kate's first writing lesson was an example of this kind of conflict. Kate was working from Janna's lesson plans, and the lesson was a formula poem, taken from the basal reader.
With her strong beliefs about how poetry should be taught, Kate had serious reservations about this lesson. She didn’t want students to have to conform to a formula, especially for their first poetry experience with her. Amanda also questioned this approach, urging Kate to continue resisting the basal reader status quo. Receiving conflicting feedback from her two observers on the lesson, Kate felt "torn in two directions."

Also undermining her usual confidence during these early weeks was her perception that Janna wanted a much quieter classroom than she herself did. With her own preschool background, Kate was more comfortable with noise and movement. As she approached the time for creating her own units, Kate expressed misgivings about how far she should go in teaching with writing. Her writing lessons would involve a noisier, messier, more interactive classroom than Janna was accustomed to. And Kate needed Janna’s support and endorsement, in the form of a positive evaluation, in order to move forward.

**Breaking Ground, from Classroom to Newspaper Office**

Then, in late September, all of Waiala School went "whole language" for a trial week, and Kate launched a newspaper unit. Over a three-week period, the class would publish a class newspaper. At first students were "luke warm" about the project, but the enthusiasm soon grew. The students created various "desks" with signs identifying
sports, entertainment, school news, etc., after which student editors (chosen by Janna and Kate) planned the features and later selected stories submitted by the class. "There was a lot of excitement and busy-ness, most of it productive," Kate wrote in her journal.

But management of the "newspaper office" was a daily challenge. Some students finished earlier than others, some malingered. "I felt pulled in different directions," Kate wrote in her journal. "Every group seemed to need a different kind of help and all of them at the same time."

Amanda, who had considerable experience with collaborative learning as a teacher herself, offered encouragement in the margin:

Probably the more often the children do these sorts of projects, the more confident they become and they need the teacher a lot less. You’ve broken ground here— it’s tough but you’ve begun something important.

Janna was equally supportive. At the start of the year, Kate had complained that her cooperating teacher, "wants to correct everything the kids write" (a common complaint among the MET student teachers). But with Amanda’s encouragement Janna proved quite willing to give over the editing and the management to student editors. This move from a rather traditional classroom to a noisy, simulated newspaper office was an act of faith for both teacher and student teacher, and both learned a lot about managing what Kate calls "a student-driven product."
Kate encouraged students to write "inter departmental memos" to one another, calls for particular illustrations or for stories, such as one sent out by the features department, advertising the need for "interesting, well-written stories with no mistakes." Students also wrote two letters to the principal, one proposing school-wide air conditioning and another a longer recess. The principal’s answer to the former was printed in the paper as well.

When I observed class during the second week, Kate, a soft-spoken, confident presence with kids milling around her, was reminding students to fill in their own responsibilities within their departments on sheets labeled with the name of each department. I sat down at the Entertainment Desk. The three girls at the table had also filled out Self Evaluation Forms (a management suggestion from Amanda) on which they had responded to the following prompts with one of three choices: Most of the time, half the time, very little.

1. I was on task.
2. I cooperated with the other team members.
3. I completed my responsibilities.

One girl was having trouble getting started on the comics section. "I can’t think of an idea," she told me. A second student was working on the horoscope and a third on a word-find game based on all the names in the class. The features editor interrupted to ask for one of her stories, which the girl retrieved from her writing folder.
"I'm sorry, Sabina," Kate said, joining us at our table, "I think I left you without giving you some guidance." Kate studied Sabina's efforts at constructing the name search game and then picked up a pencil. "I guess if I had a computer, I could do this more easily," she said, and then, "I'm making a grid for you to enable you to fill the letters in."

I scanned the rest of the room. Janna was up at the bulletin board helping students vote on suggested titles for the paper, which were posted above a small ballot box. Three boys were sitting off by themselves at a table labeled "School News." They hadn't done any work on the newspaper since I'd arrived and were looking together at a magazine. One explained to me that he'd been absent and his editor "hasn't explained my responsibilities to me." Norman, representing the Art Department, had been wandering aimlessly, although he had recently started stapling some letters on the board.

Generally, the girls seemed more on task than the boys. Still, for the most part, there was a purposeful hum of activity. In my observation notes to Kate I wondered on paper: "Maybe it's too much to expect that everybody be purposefully occupied?" I suspected that Amanda was right, that with more exposure to this kind of student-directed learning, students would get better at it. But I also wondered if there would be some, like Norman, who perhaps
would not work very well, no matter how hard we tried to negotiate the curriculum with him.

Two censorship issues emerged in the course of the unit. To encourage "students who don't write very well," Kate proposed a movie review feature. But these same students wrote reviews of PG 13 and even R rated movies that, apparently, they had been allowed to watch. Amanda urged both teachers to be sensitive about imposing their own middle class values. "You have to let the children's voices be heard," she said. But Kate was afraid of the potential criticism "if I let these pieces be in the newspaper," and the movie review section was dropped. Later, when the "staff" conducted a survey on how many people in their families smoked (to go along with an anti-smoking feature), a neighboring fifth grade teacher felt the data was "too sensitive" to publish. This survey was replaced with another on sports preferences in the fifth grade.

Her original time frame for the unit had been two weeks. But the process took longer than Kate had anticipated, and this would continue to be the case for all the inquiry-based, process-centered writing lessons she would plan in the course of the semester. Still, the process worked. During the second week the stories were typed and edited on the Apple computers in the school computer lab. "The computer room was chaotic. I felt pulled in all different directions," Kate wrote. But the students
eventually learned to use what Kate described as the "antiquated" word processing program, gaining access to the revision tool she herself so prized.

The third week, Kate spent "chasing after kids who weren't finished and doing the layout." "I can't tell you how many copies we printed out until it was perfect," she said, and then added with a laugh, "and it's not even perfect."

In her journals Kate seemed to be raising questions with more confidence: "When and how often should I intervene?" and "Maybe more of the decision making could be left to the students?" By October, Janna was writing longer, more self-questioning responses in the margins. Kate was also making a point of complimenting some of the things that Janna did in her journal, as a way of showing her support.

Kate still suffered when receiving Janna's critiques, suggesting, for example, the need for greater structure in one of the newspaper activities. But now she was able to move beyond her initial reaction. "I have to let go and think of where she's coming from," Kate told me. "She's a very structured person...not comfortable with a little bit of chaos." Furthermore, Kate was able to see many of Janna's suggestions as helpful, her critiques legitimate. Next time, Kate concluded, she would be more directive about assigning certain tasks, editing some of the copy herself, and about leaving students' articles which were handed in after the
deadline. (This time she had run herself ragged in order to have every student represented in the newspaper.)

But in terms of controlling this "student driven product," she also thought that next time she would "give the editors more leeway on the layout" and possibly allow students to choose their own editors. She described her decision to chose the better students as editors as "less egalitarian and less student-driven" and said she would have to reflect on Amanda's suggestion that she had, in a sense, perpetuated the classroom hierarchy with these choices.

In early November, the newspaper--Na Waiho'olu o Ke Anuenue (The colors of the rainbow)--was ready to pass out to the "staff" and to other fifth grade classes. The class had a party to celebrate. The children had created their own "desks," had written and edited their stories on computers (having mastered the "antiquated program"). And Janna had cheerfully survived the chaos. At the time, Kate was too close to the process to appreciate her own success in teaching and learning with writing. But as observer, I found both her teaching and her own writing-to-learn in the dialogic journal almost a model MET coming-of-age. Amanda praised her for her ability to keep up the two levels of questioning (i.e., both the nitty-gritty and the philosophical issues) in her journals and told her how proud she was of her.
Still, the ups and downs continued. About this time, Kate was reprimanded by both Janna and the Waiala principal for calling in absent fifteen minutes too late, a school policy they felt she should have known and respected, although on that particular day Kate's teaching responsibilities were minimal. "I felt I was being criticized and harshly judged," Kate told our group.

I wondered if this reprimand had been as harsh as she felt it had been. I wondered if Kate smarted at real or implied criticism because she was already so hard on herself. She planned her lessons so meticulously, considered all angles, all possible problems, as she had written, "keeping myself awake at night." When something went wrong, she was already punishing herself for it. I wondered if these high standards she set for herself were related to her immigrant childhood and her "catch up mentality," to the feeling that she had to be "more resourceful" than others, that anything less than perfection would be unacceptable.

Then, in Kate's mid semester evaluation, Janna had encouraging things to say about her progress. Still worrying that her class sessions were too noisy for Janna's tastes, it surprised Kate to learn that Janna thought she was doing a very good job.

"I wasn't surprised," Amanda said, smiling. And Janna, responding to Kate's ambivalence about questioning her own
classroom routines in the journals, urged Kate to "write what you feel."

"It's been like a roller coaster," Kate told me the week before her first stint of solo teaching. As she planned her units, envisioning the many ways she could incorporate writing for different purposes, she still felt torn about how much innovation she herself could effectively orchestrate, about how much noise and confusion Janna could handle. For a fledgling teacher entering the DOE status quo, how much curricular change was too much? On the one hand, Kate wanted to "be creative, whole language, and not rely on the textbook." But after a second she added sadly, "There's also the desire to survive." Watching her wrestle with this issues, I was reminded of her earlier essay, in which she wrote that questioning meant taking action, but that taking action could "bring down the wrath of an unsympathetic public."

**The Math Logs**

In a focus group interview reflecting on the student teaching experience, Kate described teaching with writing as "my theme for the semester."

I guess I started writing for different purposes with the newspaper, but I'm continuing it in other things that I do, so I can just call it my theme for the semester. In their math logs, I'm doing a writing-to-learn kind of thing...."

The newly-adopted math texts at Waiala incorporated writing-to-learn and provided regular prompts. But while
Kate found some of them "well thought out," most "were couched in confusing language or else could be answered with one phrase. Why call that a learning log entry?" Others called for the kind of rote thinking Kate was determined to replace. One question, calling for a particularly narrow, ethnocentric response asked, "Why do we need customary (i.e., feet, inches, etc.) measurements as well as metric measurements?" "We don't!" Kate laughed. "A better question would be: 'What adjustments would we have to make if we changed over to the rest of the world's system?" "And who should pay for these changes?"

She decided to try creating her own prompts, which would "give students a chance to express difficult concepts in a language that is more personal and thus more meaningful." But she worried that this additional writing task would be greeted by "a chorus of moans" by her students, who had not been accustomed to doing very much classroom writing.

They wrote their entries without complaint, but like the newspaper, these entries consumed more classroom time than she had anticipated. In her journal she questioned whether they were worth it:

I really enjoyed doing today's activity. But how do I assess whether this was helpful in their learning of this concept? Is taking this time worth it?

And Amanda commented in the margin:
Learning takes time. Talk to the children and ask them if they felt it was worth it.

In the pre-Christmas chaos Kate didn’t have time to follow up on this suggestion. But she persisted with the math logs. Children wrote, for example, about the difference between commutative and associative properties of numbers. They solved problems such as: How would you figure out how many pizzas Pizza Hut sold in September and October if you knew there were 786 sales in September and 595 in October? One student wrote:

All of you listen up. This is what you do, you read the problem carefully. If you don’t get it you read it again. If you know it, you add 786 and 595...

He went on to describe three steps in the addition process ("1 step= You add 6 = 5 =11 then put the first one on top of the 8"). Reflecting on the entries, Kate decided she was "not satisfied" with the prompt, which "seemed like a long way to have students do an addition problem." More important, they could write a description of this process without understanding what they were doing. Her soul searching continued. She wrote," I could not see any thinking that actually occurred because of the writing...Did it help them understand the regrouping they were necessarily doing when they added these two numbers together? If I had let them use manipulatives to act out the problem first, would their language and thus their thoughts have been clearer?"
She wanted them to use the writing process "to actually grapple with a problem on paper." Her next prompt presented the following problem: "If a snail crawled 2 feet and 7 inches in the first hour and 1 foot 8 inches in the second hour, how many inches did it crawl in two hours? How much farther did it travel in the first hour than in the second?"

She had students pair off and supplied each pair with a length of adding machine tape and brief instructions to use the tape to solve their problem, doing the measurements on the tape itself. The measurements yielded "fairly accurate answers" but when students tried to do the calculations on paper, the results did not match the children's "hands on" solutions, which opened new questions about school learning and real problem solving. (The students had not realized that feet and inches use a base 12 system; they had added based on a decimal system.)

In the next semester Kate would turn to the literature on writing-to-learn to answer some of the questions these math logs had raised. She would also continue experimenting with prompts that would shape the kind of mathematical thinking she wanted to encourage—the grappling with real problems and finding meaning in the math concepts. Ultimately, she hoped that the logs might transform mathematics from a boring subject requiring memorization of formula to something relevant to the students' own lives.
Writing for Different Purposes

The connective thread for Kate’s student teaching semester was indeed writing for different purposes. In addition to newspaper and math logs were persuasive letters, thank you letters, summaries of a newspaper article and an art article, retellings of a fairy tale, and a collaborative story writing activity. For the latter, Janna worked with one group and Kate with another as the children created two big books for Halloween. This activity gave Kate the opportunity to explore the beauty and power of descriptive language with her students:

Each child has ownership of a page. And the nice thing is that you get to extend the story, so it’s not just a dark night, but what kind of a night? So they get to put more adjectives, and be more descriptive...

For her solo teaching experience, Kate launched a poetry unit. In her lesson plan, she described her objective as follows: "to help the students gain a better appreciation of the different elements of poetry and to enable them to use these elements in their own poetry writing." She told our group: "We spent a day on similes, a day on onomatopoeia, and a third day on alliteration and rhythm. They had to write little poems on each one of these."

In her journal, Kate described these poems as "passable first attempts":

Most of them consisted of one line after another of somewhat forced similes.... Their responses to onomatopoeia were mixed. They used conventional sound markers like cock-a-doodle-do instead of
attempting their own. I needed to have the actual recordings of the animals on hand."

One student compared the beach to a giant circus, and Kate wrote on the margins of this poem: "I like the fact that you make the entire poem one unifying metaphor." But, for the most part, it was difficult to move the fledgling poets beyond the conventional. Kate told them they were not to rhyme and was dissatisfied when a top student submitted a cleverly-worded rhyming poem. "It was kind of not enough for me," Kate said of the unit. "The poems I got back, the quality wasn't all that great."

_The Animal Stories: Multiple Representations of Reality_

For the rest of the semester, Kate found ways to embed writing into virtually all of her teaching. In December, in an integrated ecology unit, for example, students had to make a clay animal based on one of the ecosystems they had studied and then write a story from the animal's point of view. The final copies of these stories were to be published in a booklet, called _Hiss and Growl, A Collection of Animal Stories_, which she hoped to give out to students on the final day of the semester. In her own written introduction to the collection, Kate told readers that "Writing this story presupposed a more intimate knowledge of the animals than the students had. Additional research and subsequent rewriting was necessary to add to the realism of the stories." The following is a typical entry:
Scorpion

One dark night I was sneaking on a spider; than I stung him on the back. Stinging him on the back is good exercise for me. I ran and it sound like this click, click, click. I had to hide and not be spotted. I like hiding in damp, wet places. I like eating big insects. My sting is like a needle. The spider tasted good; it tasted like chocolate. I am hiding from a bird because I'm afraid I might be the bird's next dinner. I ran away, then I go to my house safely. My house is dark and deep.

Kate described an "important benefit" in the fact that the stories were a way of assessing how much of the ecology lessons students had absorbed. She wrote in her introduction, "Several misconceptions about animals and their habitats surfaced. These became the basis of subsequent discussions." One girl, for example, had a panda eating bamboo shoots from a tree. (Still, Kate liked the originality of the spider tasting like chocolate in the example above.) Another student had her point of view character, a bear, being helped out of the water by a friend who was a lion. In this Disneyesque view of a eco-reality, the lion friend also stayed around to help the bear catch some fish.

"I was disappointed with the ones that didn't research," she admitted. She had wanted the point of view based on the reality of the animal's experience. Some stories, like the example above, were too cute, the young writers trying to be clever rather than represent the animal's experience. But Kate reminded the adult readers in
her introduction that we have to avoid projecting our own world views onto young writers:

Aside from their assessment value, these stories provide a delightful glimpse into the personalities of the student writers. Often filled with humor and surprise, they are written with the distinct world view of a fifth-grader.

Her other complaint about the stories, reminiscent of her disappointment with her students' too conventional poetry, was that they were "formulaic," beginning with the animal getting up in the morning, going in search of food, and finally going to bed, like the example below:

Lion

I wake up in the morning. I go out to hunt for a morning breakfast. I go down by the river. I glare at a deer drinking water in the river stream. I didn't want my target to run away, so I camouflage myself by the grasses, my mouth was watering just by looking at the deer. Then I ran fast, faster like a flash. Soon as I grabbed the deer I grabbed it with my sharp paws and I stabbed it with my sharp teeth. Blood was dripping from my prey. I grabbed it and I dragged it to my cave. I ripped the deerskin and ate some meat. Then I decided to save some for dinner. I had nothing to do so I went to the stream. I met some lions. I greeted them and we played together all day.

After that it was late and I was tired so I went to the cave....

Still, Kate felt good about the above story, because it came from a girl who had, through most of the semester, been almost mute in terms of expressing her own ideas about anything. It was well researched and the student had even managed the correct spelling of "camouflage."
Although some of the stories had not lived up to her own high standards, Kate's integrated science unit was impressive in that it offered classic opportunities for what Dewey called "psychologizing" the subject matter. According to Wilson, Shulman and Richert, (1987) Kate was allowing her students (and herself) to explore different ways of representing their knowledge of the food chain:

Successful teachers cannot simply have an intuitive or personal understanding of a particular concept, principle, or theory. Rather, in order to foster understanding, they must themselves understand ways of representing the concept for students. They must have knowledge of the ways of transforming the content for the purposes of teaching. In Dewey's terms, they must "psychologize" the subject matter (Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987).

Kate's ecology unit--complete with learning logs, dioramas, clay animals, and animal stories--provided an excellent example of what Wilson et al call "alternative representations of the subject matter":

The teacher actively creates multiple representations; the learners, in turn, are stimulated to invent their own as they experience the representational activity of the teachers....As students are multiple, so representations must be various... Hence, teachers should possess a "representational repertoire" for the subject matter they teach. And as the representational repertoire grows, it may enrich or extend the teacher's subject matter understanding per se (Wilson et al, 1987).

Kate's food chain unit seemed almost a textbook example of a novice teacher learning to offer a rich and varied "representational repertoire" and, in turn, enriching her own content and pedagogical knowledge in the process. And
for Kate, writing-to-learn was a crucial part of this repertoire.

But too often articles and videos about successful whole language teachers depict writing-to-learn as a seamless, painless endeavor. This was certainly not the case for Kate, or, indeed, for any of the people in our group.

As with all her writing-to-learn efforts, Kate found that the food chain stories took up more time than she planned, more time than she had as a student teacher. In the pre-Christmas chaos, she had failed to catch some of the mechanical errors (such as the verb tense shifts in the lion story above). "Again I found myself in a rush trying to finish something," she said, "and I wound up editing them myself." She would have preferred to have students read their stories to one another and listen for problems with conveying meaning or word choice and mechanics (the technique she had learned from her daughter’s sixth grade teacher.)

The day of her publishing deadline (i.e., the final day before the Christmas holiday) I found Kate herding three students who hadn’t finished revising their animal pieces to the computer lab, still xeroxing copy for the final booklet, still not satisfied with some of the pieces that were "too silly," still conflicted about not conforming to Janna’s tighter standards of discipline.
The three students who had been herded to the computer lab were unhappy to be there; the rest of the 5th graders were at the dance, with strains of rap music pulsing from the cafeteria. Kate appeared her usual calm and collected self as she advised the author of a long and rambling narrative about a mongoose to cut to the basic elements of his story. Another author (a very bright, individualistic ESL student named Armand) seemed to be resisting her editing suggestions as slights to his pride. "He's very defensive about his work," Kate told me later.

Sitting beside him at the computer, she was tenaciously pushing for some textual changes. Armand, who had written his story from the point of view of a fish, had included the following sentence: "Oh, oh! I think I left my purse on the reef."

"Fish don't have purses," Kate pointed out in her calm, determined way.

It occurred to me as I watched her juggling papers while offering tactful suggestions to Armand that Kate had little understanding of her own extraordinary success in making writing-to-learn a classroom staple. She had juggled papers, kept herself awake at nights planning and evaluating lessons, tracked down reluctant rewriters, edited, copied, and collated four student publications. Meanwhile as single mom, she had juggled laundry, dishes, and teenage trauma; she had paid the bills, serviced the car, arranged for piano
lessons. In her writing autobiography interview, she had spoken wistfully about "finding a space...a time to write." Yet she had somehow managed to find that time--often as she waited during her daughter's soccer practice--for almost daily entries in her journal, reflecting eloquently on her own learning.

Even more extraordinary, she had played the role of curriculum reformer to the end--and was leaving Waiala for her new assignment with a good, supportive relationship intact between herself and Janna. Only time would tell if Janna would use and adapt any of the writing-to-learn innovations Kate had introduced into her classroom. But the curricular reform prognosis looked good. Janna, embarked on her own whole language journey, had replaced the spelling book with students' own individual word lists. She had introduced reading/social studies units based on trade books. An example of the latter was when students each read a book about a Native American and composed a story schema poster in lieu of the traditional book report.

Unable to complete the xeroxing in time, Kate went into school during Christmas vacation to finish the *Hiss and Growl* booklet. "The stories could have used a few more details," she told me. "I reread some of them and was wincing about the grammar and the inaccuracies." As she prepared for her internship assignment, a fourth grade at a neighboring school, Kate was still unsure of how quickly and
how drastically she should approach the curricular changes she hoped to make. The former teacher had done an impressive amount of student writing, and the quality, quantity, and correctness looked better than her present fifth graders' writing. But looking more closely at these texts, it seemed to Kate that the children were "not speaking in their own voices. They all sound like her (the teacher)!!" Kate told me. "I'm picturing a bunch of good little boys and girls, sitting in neat rows!"

Lincoln School had a less transient student body than Waiala and a larger proportion of students scoring above average on standardized tests. The departing teacher was retiring after 26 years. Kate's own classroom at last, with writing at the core of the curriculum! Kate's friend Ann (the subject of the third case study) who had just finished a highly-successful semester of negotiating whole language change with her DOE cooperating teacher, advised her to "go slowly. Don't try to change everything all at once."

The Internship Semester

When we talked during the first week in her own classroom at Lincoln School, Kate was following Ann's advice, but only to a point. "I'm trying to keep the routines," she said. "But I'm starting to make some changes. She (the former teacher) has them so well trained. I look up and all of a sudden there's a line at my desk. I ask 'What's
happening? They want to show me their spelling words, they want me to check that they're copied down correctly!"

She later described her new class as follows:

These fourth grade students that I'm working with seem to be very motivated and to possess better than average writing skills. They have been writing a goodly amount for their previous teacher and do not have an aversion to writing that I have seen in other students. My students last semester viewed writing as a chore. They did it in a perfunctory fashion to get it out of the way. It felt like "pulling teeth." As a result, their writing was short and lacking in spirit...."

In contrast, the fourth graders in her new class at Lincoln seemed to view writing as "just a part of daily school life and not a big deal." But although their previous teacher asked for content and creativity, she placed more emphasis on the mechanics of writing, on spelling, punctuation, and handwriting in assigning grades. Looking over students' work, Kate also noticed that she had given a lot of low grades based on mechanical errors.

This judgement was confirmed by a questionnaire Kate sent home asking parents and students to describe themselves as readers and writers. A number of students identified themselves as poor writers because they couldn't spell:

No, I don't consider myself a writer because I write to dark and I am not good at writing and I write crooket.

Others described their teacher's grading priorities as follows:

"My teacher considers a good piece of writing when there are a little mistakes."
Questionnaires also confirmed that students tended to come from families in which the parents tended to be more educated, more supportive of schooling than those at Waiala. Watching these well-trained children, Kate concluded that her predecessor had seen herself as the "wellspring of all knowledge." Now, even when students worked in groups, they kept "looking to the teacher as arbiter." Kate complained, "They're waiting for me to judge them!" One of her goals for the semester was to teach them to critique each other's papers and to value one another's judgements.

Early in February, I supplied specific journal prompts for Kate to respond to, concerning her own plans to teach with writing this semester and her changing perceptions of writing instruction. In her written responses, she reported:

I would like to continue the journal writing that she (the former teacher) started, but on a daily basis. I would also like to have them do more research writing, which they've already experienced. One type of writing that will be new to them is writing to learn in mathematics, which I plan to do on a twice weekly basis. I would also like to do an in-depth unit on poetry. Somewhere along the line, I would like to fit in some persuasive writing and evaluative writing.

Echoing her original writing autobiography interview, which was now more than a year earlier, Kate explained her goal for teaching with writing ("to emphasize clear writing that moves logically") much more specifically. (In the interview, she had stressed the connection between clear, logical thinking and frequent writing in a much more generic way.) She also wanted to teach students to use details "to
help the reader visualize what they are trying to say." For her poetry lessons, she again hoped to "free my students from thinking in terms of rigid forms such as the diamante or rhymes they are already familiar with." This last also echoed her original concerns expressed in the writing autobiography interview. Below are descriptions of specific writing activities that were launched during the first month of school to accomplish these goals:

**The Journals**

Kate kept the former teacher's procedure of giving the students specific prompts to respond to (rather than telling them to write about anything). She decided she would "recycle" some of her predecessor’s prompts and invent some of her own as outgrowths of particular lessons and discussions. Students wrote in the journals every day, just as she had planned. After a discussion of Martin Luther King Day, for example, they wrote about how they would feel if they were the objects of discrimination. On the anniversary of the illegal annexation of the Hawaiian Kingdom, students gave their opinions on a current controversy over whether the Hawaiian flag should fly for that week above the American flag. Preparing for a math activity based on measuring, students responded to: "If I were one inch tall." She also gave occasional "free-writes."
The Math Logs

Kate resumed experimenting with math logs. Approximately twice a week, students wrote explanations of math processes, posed questions, and expressed feelings about math. She also tried freewrites, asking them to "stop everything and write." She wrote about her refusal "to impose writing on my students without something about which to write." Feeling that "students need to construct situations in order to understand the mathematical concepts they embodied," she went in search of calculators and math manipulative, which were little known in this traditional school. Finding few, she went to work to create her own. In the problems she created, students measured liters of water and solved practical problems and then wrote about them.

Kate was paying particular attention to this writing and thinking, because she was writing her Plan B paper (a graduation requirement) on Writing in Mathematics and because she was still very interested in how writing shapes mathematical thinking. She was reading widely on the subject and attending Saturday workshops as she tried to design prompts that would enhance the inquiry process she hoped to instill.

The Writing Folders

This project was launched early in January, after students wrote an initial story describing a magic carpet they would create. She wrote in her journal that she planned
to use these stories "as a basis for teaching a variety of writing skills, from improving the clarity of their writing to the mechanics such as grammar, spelling, and punctuation." She also hoped to introduce peer editing techniques, to help students "be their own judges of how good a piece of writing is." Inside the flap of their writing folders, students generated a list of ideas for future stories. The drafts would accumulate until a student chose to "take the story to publication, at which time it will be edited and revised as needed." Although there was considerable enthusiasm for the story writing, it was difficult to sell these students on the idea of letting unrevised first drafts accumulate. Some wanted Kate to edit everything they'd written. In writing and in our conversations, she returned to her goal of introducing peer revision:

My intent is to have the task of revision fall on the students' shoulders, with the help of peers and the teacher. I need to plan for lessons in which we edit pieces together.

**Classroom Management**

There were no more neat rows. Her students were seated in clusters. Soon there were no more "good little boys and girls." Boys got into fights and had to be sent to the office. Students moved more freely around the room. By the end of February, she found herself "struggling with behavior more than I wanted to." She added, "The control is always there. I always have to think about what I'm doing to keep
the behavior under wraps. One minute it can be going well and then it falls apart." She wondered aloud, "What happened to the quiet kids in neat rows?" and then answered her own question. "I’m giving them more freedom and telling them to choose and decide. But when they’re working collaboratively it’s a lot harder to monitor the progress. It can be going well and then it falls apart."

She also worried about the noise level, which she described as "sometimes too high even for me." "Certain things they’ll work quietly at, such as when they do those horrendous questions at the end of the chapter (referring to some "very prescribed" questions following stories in the basal reader, an activity the previous teacher had used frequently.

I asked her if she found herself tempted to assign these questions, just to maintain control, even though she was philosophically opposed to them. "Sometimes I do," she answered. "But my conscience wouldn’t allow me to do it very often. Still, it’s always a delicate balance, how to keep the noise level manageable and not too distracting for their own learning. It’s also the level of activity and the quality of the interaction that I worry about."

One idea she was toying with was using a self-assessment form after group activities, and I supplied her with some samples I had recently come across. She eventually developed a self-report form that asked children to rate
themselves on a scale of one to five on items such as: "I did not leave my seat or otherwise disturb others." "I completed my assignment." There was also a place where they could write about how they would improve their behavior.

In terms of classroom management, she'd also concluded that careful planning was essential to keep things from "falling apart." She recalled Amanda's comment the previous semester that "the more unstructured the activity, the more the teacher has to plan for it." She said, "I see the truth of that statement." Kate also saw the need to research and refine her lesson ideas, to carefully gather material for the children to use, and to give the activity a trial run. "Any type of 'hands-on' activity should be attempted ahead of the actual class (preferably on a 'guinea pig' child of about the same age. Consideration must also be given to the time difference as certain students will finish their projects faster than others. What alternative activities can a student who finishes early do?"

Meeting together regularly during those months, we talked about peer revision and classroom management strategies. In these conversations, she seemed to be defining for herself just what that "delicate balance" would look like in her classroom. Still, she admitted she had a long way to go in learning to teach with writing: "What I still don't have a handle on is: How do you keep yourself
from being pulled in 20 different directions, especially at the beginning of the project?"

**Final Snapshots**

In spite of this curricular and philosophical soul searching I had come to expect, Kate appeared her calm and competent self whenever I visited. Both the quality of the interaction and noise level seemed purposeful, and the evidence of student writers at work was everywhere apparent. My visits to her classroom through mid March convinced me that Kate had fulfilled her original goal, expressed in the writing autobiography interview of "placing writing at the core of the curriculum, where it would become a natural part of their everyday work."

A related goal, also expressed over a year before, had been to move toward "more collaboration, with students reading each other's texts and giving each other ideas." For this, she was still working to develop a process that worked for her. I reminded her that Rome was not built in a day. I also told her how impressed I was with the variety and quality of classroom writing opportunities. In mid March of her first semester of full time teaching, Kate may not have had all the answers about peer revision or managing a student-driven process, but she clearly looked like a writing teacher at work in her own classroom. And my own experience as a writing teacher and researcher had convinced
me that teaching with writing is almost always a messy looking affair.

"Maybe I have too many projects going," she said to me, as we sat at her table one afternoon surrounded by poetry books, math logs, journals, and writing folders, letting the sudden silence settle around us. It was 2:45 pm; the children had exploded out the door after a final reminder about some poems that still needed to be handed in. During the final hour, the class had been upstairs in the computer lab typing up stories the children had written about a mysterious planet, with Kate "being pulled in 20 different directions," helping them edit and master the computer commands. Again, she was going out of her way to make this revision tool available to students, this time with a better word processing program than she had used at Waiala School. But the typing was taking a lot more time than she had anticipated, and she was concerned that too many of her fourth graders were still hunting and pecking. "They’re supposed to have learned keyboarding in second grade," she told me.

Once these planet stories, which were mounted on the classroom wall in handwritten drafts, were printed, Kate planned to bind them into a book for students to take home. Replicating one of Ann’s assignments, Kate had used "ublick," a cornstarch mixture with strange physical properties, as a story starter. But unlike Ann, Kate had
asked her students to write individual stories and had also supplied three questions to shape their narratives. The assignment asked them to "Imagine you are going to land on a planet made of this stuff and: (1) Describe the characteristics of this substance,(2) What kind of life forms would live on this planet, and (3) What modifications would your space ship would need in order to land. In the example below, the student writer addresses the third question toward the end of his story, entitled "The Planet White":

Clever Mak made some changes on his ship. He made everything weigh only 1 pound so the ship wouldn't sink in to the planet. Then he put more powerful rockets so if they get stuck, they can get unstuck. At the bottom of the ship there will be a strong pole holding a large rubber substance....

The planet stories had been written as part of an integrated unit on space that had just concluded. Working in groups, students had also designed a space station and described it in writing.

Kate had just launched a new unit on the American Prairie and Western immigration. During the interim period between the two units, Kate had introduced poetry writing. The results were mounted on the bulletin boards. First students had been asked to write a poem which described a particular sound. These turned out to be pog poems instead, as students, influenced by the current pog craze, wrote about the sounds made by pogs. In the following example, Kate showed herself more tolerant than she had been the
previous semester about a rhyming poem, which, with its combination of internal and external rhymes, she admitted was cleverly written:

Pogs
Slap, slap, tap, tap,
Here goes a pog!
Slaps like rain,
Bats and balls,
A person clapping,
Someone slapping,
Takes the pressure,
Slam!

"I don’t want them rhyming," she admitted, "but I don’t want to overreact. I don’t want to say ‘don’t rhyme at all.’" She still wanted them to "rethink the way they’ve been taught poetry," which she had complained about in the writing autobiography interview. "It’s just that they’ve been so conditioned to rhyme," she said. "Sometimes you have to go to the other extreme, i.e. discourage or forbid rhyming. But it can be reintroduced after students have a crack at the other elements. One student was trying to rhyme ’log’ and ’hog’ with ’pog.’ I told her ‘If it’s forced, it’s not gonna work.’" In explaining her approach, Kate wrote that

Students also wrote nature poems, using metaphors and similes to describe mountains, clouds, or trees. This writing assignment began with a worksheet of Kate’s own making in which they completed a list of similes, such as "The baby was as soft as...(one student wrote, "a leaf falling" for this one). In these poems, which were published
on a bulletin board along with illustrations, students compared mountains to "a kids’ chipped teeth," and trees to "an upside down broom stuck in the ground, green as nature." She seemed more satisfied with their originality than she had with the poetry written by her Waiala students.

Starting with the nature poems, she was beginning to develop a procedure for peer editing. In preparation for introducing the class to peer response groups, Kate had modeled the process with the whole class, using one student’s first draft of the nature poem. Kate began by pointing out that the author didn’t have to use verbs in poetry. A student suggested that "clouds travel to other countries" might sound better than "clouds travel to other places." At this point," Kate recalled, "Janie (the writer) started objecting. ‘It’s my poem!’" she told her classmates. Kate assured Janie that these were only suggestions, that she didn’t have to use any of them. (Actually, in her final draft, Jennie did make the suggested change to "countries" instead of "places." She felt the exercise had paid off in terms of demonstrating how we go about improving a piece of writing. She reported, "They went back to their seats and I think they did a much better job of editing their own drafts."

Another incident illustrates Kate’s continued willingness to allow the children’s own voices to emerge in the writing. One student, a girl she described as
"argumentative," resisted all efforts to improve her text. The girl had written, "The cloud sounds like a gun."

"Your first line doesn't work for me," Kate told her.

But the final version was even more cryptic: "The cloud has a gun to me." Kate shrugged. "I don't want to force myself on them. It's an ownership issue. Sometimes they want to keep their own ideas."

To launch the new unit on the Prairie and Western Immigration, Kate decided to put students in touch with their own immigrant roots. They began by brainstorming questions to use in interviews with parents and grandparents. After recording the answers, students wrote drafts of their family histories that yielded fascinating results, like the example below:

My two great grandmas were picture brides. Picture brides mean when the men in the plantation would get lonely they would receive a picture of a girl and, if they liked her, they would send her to the plantation, and then they would marry.

Others told more recent stories of parents fleeing from Vietnam because "the Communists took over the country" and of struggles in the new country to find "documentary" (documentation), to learn the language, find a job and housing.

"I hate to assign grades to these," Kate said, pointing to the stack of final drafts. "But I'm assigning grades." So far, of all the writing done that semester, Kate had graded only the magic carpet stories and the space
station descriptions (as part of the grade for the whole project). Clearly, she was still working to develop consistent criteria for assessment, and we talked about developing rubrics for specific writing assignments, with the children helping to define the characteristics of an A or a B paper, for example (a strategy I had used with my students).

On the family histories she had given one student an A minus because the boy had good ideas and because he had incorporated her suggestions for improvement on earlier drafts, which had tended to be redundant. Kate saw him working in this one to be more concise and wanted to reward that. On his final draft, she had corrected several spelling words, written "taken" underneath "The Communists had took over." She had decided to overlook his failure to capitalize Hawaii and English.

Like many writing teachers who feel obligated to assign grades, she still wasn't sure how to approach the mechanics, how much to correct, how much to penalize. In an earlier goal statement, she had written: "I would like to present clear criteria for judging the merit of a piece to my students so that they will know what I expect of them." She was finding that developing these criteria would take time and continued experience with students and texts.

Although she was still working on developing assessment and revision procedures, Kate was learning better ways for
students to share their writing. When they brought in their first drafts of the interviews, for example, she decided not to have them read their papers aloud to the class, which had turned out in the past to be very boring. Instead, she had students sit in a circle without their papers. "We're just going to talk," she announced and then asked them to briefly summarize what they had learned in their interviews. Kate shared her own immigrant story, and after some initial protestations that they couldn't remember what they had written, her students began to talk freely about the data they had collected. "They really listened to each other," she said. "And we began to see patterns, such as the theme of escape—running from the inner city, running from the Communists." She planned to make a graph of these patterns as well as a graph of where the families had come from. (In the margin of Kate's journal description of these activities, Stephanie, the mentor teacher, wrote, "Wow!") Another follow-up writing activity involved a comparison of their own family's immigrant experience with that of Irving Berlin, which was described on a worksheet.

All around the room were the results of other assignments, always thoughtful, never rote. Student writing was all over—mounted on walls, piled on desks and tables, hanging from the ceiling. There were colorful pictures of space stations with accompanying written descriptions, book reports strung on index cards, photos of a recent trip to a
taro patch, with Kate and her students knee-deep in mud. These photos were mounted on paper on which students had been asked to write captions, such as "Now is the best part. We’re getting all muddy and I like it."

Student writing was also being used as a self-assessment technique. Borrowing from the former teacher, Kate had continued the practice of having students write a letter home at the end of the month summarizing what they had learned and setting new goals for themselves. (Students also selected their best work, which was sent home as well.)

By mid March she was ready to launch her peer response groups via a transition in which students, as a class, critiqued several first drafts she had typed and photocopied. Then, after writing stories, students first read through their own drafts (aloud) and then read through their drafts with a partner listening and reading along. When she then read the drafts and found lapses in clarity, she would call up both writer and partner to talk about it. Most of the students' suggestions were of the error-catching variety, but Kate was experimenting with ways of encouraging them to read for meaning and clarity.

She'd also learned some good lessons about teaching writing from rereading her own journals from the student teaching semester. The usefulness of this record of her teaching motivated her to keep writing in her journal at
least once a week (while some of her MET cohorts had been neglecting theirs in the crush of full time teaching.)

After reflecting on her experience at Waiala, she'd decided to have students do most of their writing during class time (with reading more typically assigned for homework.) The previous semester at Waiala, she had frequently assigned writing to be done at home. Now she suspected that this practice may have had something to do with her students’ poor showing and perfunctory approach to writing assignments. Looking back, she said, "There's not going to be much writing produced at home if a child’s home life is disruptive." She'd also begun to see why writing was so intimidating to those Waiala fifth graders, because so much of their school-based writing had been about "getting judged and graded."

She recognized that the family backgrounds of her present students also had something to do with their success with writing and willingness to write. But even given these better motivated students, she also felt that her own approaches to writing— with its emphasis on thinking things through on paper, on creating vivid word pictures rather than correcting mechanics— was paying off. She said, "Even for the G/T (gifted and talented) kids, I can see that their writing has improved." Students were also making positive comments on the interactive class climate Kate had created.
One boy said he liked the kinds of activities she provided because "each child got to talk more."

In late March I put the final touches on the case study of her induction into teaching with writing, which I wanted to give her to read during her week's spring vacation. I hoped my account of her story would demonstrate to her how well she had managed to keep writing at the core of her curriculum, just as she had planned at the start of my study. In fact, her teaching was even more centered on writing as classroom staple now that she was the sole curriculum decision maker. Furthermore, in spite of the demands of single motherhood, full time teaching, and writing her Plan B paper, she had continued to use her journal to make sense of her own learning, to keep a record that she could use for later reflection and continued growth as a teacher.

Case Study 2: Lee

Personal History

Lee begins an autobiographical essay for a scholarship application by telling the reader: "I was raised by a single parent in a very traditional Japanese home." Her mother, who spoke what Lee calls "broken English," supported her two daughters by taking in piece work sewing. Lee remembers waking in the middle of the night and hearing the whir of the sewing machine. From her mom, Lee received a
"determination to succeed" as well as "constant guidance by her value of education."

In spite of this guidance, however, Lee admits she was not serious about school. She says of her own learning style, "I didn’t want to learn, I’d rather do." During her elementary school years, she didn’t fit into what she calls "the traditional paradigm of learning," and her teachers tended to label her as inattentive.

In an early draft of her culminating MET paper (called the Plan B paper), Lee uses herself as an example of a student for whom the "traditional paradigm" did not work.

I recall sitting in the front of the row equally spaced....The teacher stood in front of the class lecturing the information....The information was straight out from the book....The teacher was the sole informant, and the students role was to work on the assignment that was requested. I remember being very reluctant to raise my hand to ask for additional help.... I often felt intimidated to ask the teacher to help me. Often times, I asked my neighbor for the information, emphasizing the trouble of 'chattering to others.' A verbal reprimand in front of the whole class was the result of my actions.

In a later draft of this same paper, she fills in additional details of these early years. Some of these later descriptions are at odds with the portrait suggested above, that of a student who is trying but who just can’t keep up with the lesson:

Every teacher placed me in the front row, directly in the middle, so I had constant attention and had few distractions....I preferred to discuss the lessons with my friends to reduce the boredom of sitting at a desk for a long period of time and focusing on a topic where I was not emotionally
involved with passion.... At times I tried hard to concentrate, but after three minutes of reading something that had no meaning to me, the assignment was an impossible expectation. My mind wandered to find a much more involving issues to contemplate.

In the successive drafts of the Plan B paper's autobiographical introduction, Lee never really clarified the extent to which she was tuning out this instruction because she was not "emotionally involved with passion." Indeed, during the entire MET program, Lee continued to struggle with these causational issues out of her own past. The teachers she describes in her writing, however, appear to have seen her as unmotivated rather than unable. She herself describes them as too frustrated or angry to give the individual help she needed:

Going through my worksheet data, one teacher commented, "All you had to do was to copy out of the book!" On another occasion, a teacher wrote, "The problem was to add and what you did was subtract" in large red ink over the top of the paper.

One thing that comes across crystal clear from her writing about these early school years is how painful they were for her to live them:

I can visually recall the moment as I retrieved corrected papers from the teacher, knowing that my paper would be colored with red ink. I hoped that my peers would not ask me questions about my performance. I quickly shoved my paper in my folder and slithered down my seat and quietly watched the others excitedly sharing their rewards of a scented sticker. Going through the public school system, advancing from one grade level to the next, I continued doing just enough to pass, feeling inferior.
In high school, she took a lot of art courses and identified with the non-academic crowd, students who tended to speak Pidgin (Hawaiian Creole English) rather than Standard English. Lee writes of these years:

Stanford Achievement Test scores also labeled me in the low average group. I went through school having a very low self esteem; however, I had a parent who was determined that her child will succeed...With the support from my mother, I had to prove to every teacher...that labeled me as a inattentive student that (I) can achieve if I put it into practice.

During these formative years, Lee had few models for Standard English, and this lack would become a problem when she entered the MET program, where she would suddenly be expected to model Standard English diction and syntax for her students and to use it in her own academic writing.

After graduating from high school, Lee didn't have a high enough grade point average to get into the university. She attended community college, where she admits that although she regularly attended classes, she did not read any of the books assigned. She knew her grammar was poor, that she "didn't know the parts of speech," that she was afraid of writing. She was assigned to remedial English classes, working one-on-one with tutors who "would ask you what you wanted to say and help you say it."

_Art Studio Classes --"Emotionally Involved with Passion"

Earning a two-year associates degree, she transferred to the University of Hawaii. Even then she was interested in a teaching career, but her grade point average was too low
to qualify her as an education major. Instead, she decided to major in art, knowing that there were "no jobs in art" but that she would regret it if she didn’t somehow discover and nurture her talents. She also admitted she knew that as a studio arts major she wouldn’t have to write papers. (Here her expectation was confirmed; she produced, "maybe ten pages of writing during the whole undergrad major.")

As an undergraduate student, she may not have learned much about writing, but she did learn something valuable about learning. In her writing autobiography interview, she recalled her art studio classes as follows: "That’s where I learned how to discipline myself and study...." Here she caught herself; "study" wasn’t the word she wanted. After a moment, she continued, "It wasn’t really study, but more the process of learning that I really cherished."

Without having the vocabulary to articulate it at the time, Lee also knew intuitively that she had shifted into a new student-centered, process-centered, inquiry based approach to learning. She writes:

Interestingly, I found that I was so conformed to the teacher-centered approach, I needed the approval from the professor each time I worked on a project. I was afraid and not confident in my thought processes. I depended on the professors comments to say that my work was good or bad. As the semesters went on, I found that my ideas were as important....I also discovered that if I disagreed with the professor, it was alright so long as I had analyzed and processed on the given comment. I began to enjoy the learning process and the motivation to learn was unstoppable. Sky was the limit.
She describes this breakthrough in taking control of her own learning in an early draft of her Plan B paper:

There was a point in time where I found that my expectations out of the project was far beyond the professors' goals. The external rewards, such as a letter grade, did not influence me....I did far more than expected.

She treasured those art major years, working as a shop assistant instructing others in the use of the power tools and looking forward to classes. The project she was most proud of was a 12-foot boat she made in a useable sculpture class, modeled on a classic Japanese prototype. She writes:

Other people discouraged me by telling me that the task was too complex to do. I became very angry inside and was even more determined to prove to them that I can do it with what I have....Being labeled as a low achiever, I had the burning desire to prove to everybody that I can succeed.

She completed the boat; she and her boyfriend still use it to go fishing. During those years of feeling that "I could take charge and be on the top," Lee remembers feeling sorry for her business and engineering major friends who "almost hated school, couldn't wait to get out."

Listening to Lee talk about her more practical friends, about kids and learning, it's clear that she places a high premium on one's life work being intrinsically satisfying rather than just financially rewarding. For Lee, being "emotionally involved, with passion" is crucial. It also seems crucial to her that both artistic and written expression be one's own, not someone else's. Her dream is to
build her own house one day, and she has assembled all the materials needed to weave her own wedding dress.

Lee has talked to me and written papers about her desire to pass on to her students "what I have experienced of the excitement of learning." This appears to be a major motivation for her choice of a career in teaching. But her devotion to her own creative integrity would, ironically, cause conflicts when Lee, in the first year of the MET program, committed herself heart and soul to improving her written and oral expression in Standard English.

The MET Program

Lee entered the new program right after graduation from college. She was 23 years old and still lacking confidence in her academic ability.

I was very surprised to find that the committee chose me as one of their students of twenty five. I knew my academic records did not shine as I had hoped for. I felt that my records through my art classes reflected my process of learning.

The recognition that "I lack writing in Standard English" was Lee's reason for joining our writing-to-learn support group. "When I entered this program," she recalls, "I still was afraid to write...to put down my ideas." During the first two MET semesters, she energetically sought help and feedback from a number of sources: from MET professors, from fellow students at Waiala School where she was assigned, and from me.
In February, 1992, she and I began meeting regularly to critique her reaction papers for MET seminars. Reading her drafts, it sometimes seemed as if Lee were practicing a foreign language whose style and conventions she simply didn't know. And for her, Standard English in the academic register was indeed a foreign language. Typical of her efforts to master this new discourse were sentences like the following:

"This type of examination is no longer existing."

"I sit among the students as I correct the stacks of worksheets and the students continually promote a negative attitude against their work."

When I probed for what she meant by statements like the latter, she was sometimes able to explain her meaning quite clearly in simple, Standard English (i.e., "the kids keep fooling around; they don't want to do the work.") It appeared that Lee had felt compelled to express herself in a foreign language of high-sounding prose that she had not yet mastered.

But even in her everyday interactions, clarity--finding the right words to convey her meaning to others--had always been a problem for Lee, and continued to be throughout the data collection period for this study.

In the Writing Apprehension Test I had administered to all the MET students at the start of the study, she identified her major writing problems as ones of clarity and organization. Responding to the prompt "I never seem to be
able to clearly write down my ideas." Lee responded, "strongly agree." And she strongly disagreed with the prompt "People seem to enjoy what I write."

Two months later, in the writing autobiography interview, she identified clarity as a major characteristic of good writing and then added in a rather wistful voice, "When you read a sentence and it doesn’t confuse you." Her written metaphor for writing—a comparison of writing an essay to carving a piece of sculpture from a trunk of a koa tree—described her slow and painful process of revising for clarity. In this metaphor, she wrote:

> The artist peels off the loose bark and brushes away the insect’s nest. I reread my paper and add and scratch out words that make my thought clearer. The artist takes out her chisels and carves away. A little at a time. As hours go by and slowly a form is emerging. My paper has the ideas and is stated somewhat clearly. Much more time is spent on the piece. A final draft is typed up. A pedestal is made for the koa wood. Beauty is seen in the mixture of the blond and rich deep brown color wood. Oil is rubbed to highlight the natural glow. But yet, the artist sits afar from the gallery piece. More work is needed. The statement is not clearly seen by all the audience....It is not good enough.

**Crafting a New Identity**

One of Lee’s former teachers has described her as "a black box sort of person," meaning that frequently other people don’t know or understand what she is thinking. But now, as a developing writer, Lee needed to make her thinking clear to an audience of readers as she wrote papers for MET program requirements as well as lesson plans for her mentoring teachers. In our editing sessions, Lee seemed to
have little notion of what this audience needed to know in order to follow her ideas. For example, in one essay she compared private Japanese language schools (which local children of Japanese ancestry attend after school) with what she called "English schools." I didn’t understand until she explained that by "English schools" she meant the regular public school classes. I had to point out that her readers wouldn’t understand her terminology either. This difficulty of putting herself in the reader’s place consistently restricted her ability to produce what Linda Flower (1990) calls "reader-based prose." Sondra Perl’s (1979) and other studies of unskilled college writers show students who, similarly, seemed oblivious of their readers’ needs, neglecting to make connections between ideas and to relate one phenomenon to another.

Other writing problems were due to Lee’s unfamiliarity with Standard English constructions. She wrote in a reaction paper: "Sandra prevailed to us to buy the book." Such usage made me reflect on how I had learned to say and write things like "prevailed upon." With all the emphasis on parts of speech in traditional classrooms, we don’t teach which prepositions go with which verbs in English classes. These conventions are learned as we ingest Standard English from the people around us, from books we read and plays we see on public television. And Lee had very few opportunities for
such ingestion. She herself attributed her problem with writing to a "lack of reading."

Indeed, most of Lee's content knowledge (knowledge about English usage as well as rhetorical principles) was being acquired during these teacher training semesters. Frustrated by having to master this new language overnight ("So much rules and style!") at the same time as she learned the philosophy, practices, and pedagogical knowledge of a new career, Lee also suffered when her mentors unwittingly interfered with her own passion for self-expression. After the first semester, for example, she stopped going for writing help to her MET seminar professor because he tended to rewrite her sentences "the way he would write them." She preferred receiving feedback from Kate and Sue, her fellow MET students at Waiala School (both of whom were in our writing-to-learn support group, both of whom had "a strong English background") and also from me.

In her writing autobiography interview she explained the success of our style of critiquing as follows:

Clemi would point out where it was fuzzy and where I could change it...she didn’t change it, I went into it and I could reword things. And when I looked at it, I thought ‘Hey, I can do it on my own!’ (She had picked up the expression "Fuzzy thinking" from me reacting to such constructs as "English schools" above.)

According to Lee, the important ingredient in our ability to mentor her was the fact that Kate, Sue, and I suggested the need for changes but left the actual rewriting to her. It worked best "when people help me edit, that’s
when I see that I can improve myself, when I'm correcting my own and it's not their writing."

Not surprisingly, what Lee values most about writing is its ability to express feelings, which is perhaps another reason for wanting to rewrite her own texts.

I can see my feelings on paper. I know it in my head, I can say it out loud, but when it see it (in writing) it's like reference books I can put away later come back and remember things...can see the happiness, can feel what was going on. I have so much power when I have it on paper.

In addition to having clarity, she defined good writing as something that can get you "churned up emotionally," like the original poems that Martin wrote about himself and his students and brought to our weekly study group. I began to see a connection between this passion for expression and her strong desire to construct her own sentences. But according to Lee,"It's rare to find a person who will help you write. They'd rather just tell you it's better if you write it this way. And a lot of them that I met up with (past teachers and tutors) did that."

As she observed and conducted mini lessons at Waiala school during her second MET semester, Lee continued to suffer from often well-intentioned efforts to rewrite her syntax and diction into more conventional Standard English. At one point, for example, she received a note from a cooperating teacher, Stephanie, which documented the following grammatical errors Lee had made in addressing Stephanie’s first grade class:
1. "You wasn’t the person that came up (speaking to a child).
2. "You’re not going to bump nobody." (speaking to another child).

Stephanie’s note concluded with the following message: "I know you’re trying to avoid Pidgin. We all slip into it. But we have to serve as models for ESL kids." That same afternoon, Stephanie had also made corrections on a booklet Lee had written the night before to accompany this lesson on observing baby mice. In the booklet Lee’s prompt had read: "Tell me how your mouse looks like." (Note: This particular wording--how something looks like--is commonly heard among local people in Hawaii). But because of this diction error (according to Standard English), Lee wasn’t allowed to use the booklets, which she had produced on her new MAC computer and seemed very proud of.

Such corrections became a sore point in her usually warm relationship with Stephanie. After all, she was trying--desperately-- not to "slip into" Pidgin, but this was easier said than done. While concentrating on an interactive writing/science lesson with four live mice and twenty lively first graders, Lee couldn’t always police her own discourse.

The Student Teaching Semester

Stephanie became Lee’s cooperating teacher the following fall, in a fourth grade heterogeneously grouped
class. The two women had both requested to work with one another. Stephanie, a local woman of Japanese ancestry like Lee herself, was very concerned about helping local students become competent in Standard English, because she wanted them to have access to the benefits of a larger world that fluency in Standard English could offer. And for Stephanie, this meant carefully correcting errors wherever she found them. This method of instruction had worked well for her. She spoke Standard English impeccably and had become a very well-respected teacher; she also enjoyed a pleasant lifestyle in one of Honolulu’s better neighborhoods.

When I first met her during the previous spring semester, Stephanie was feeling considerable top-down pressure from the district to shift to a whole language mode of instruction, pressure applied by district and state administrators who were far removed from classroom realities. During that year, Stephanie would make a remarkable journey of her own. She would begin to rethink her own beliefs about teaching and learning, would read John Dewey, would go on to become a mentor teacher for the MET program, and would make extraordinary changes in her own practice in terms of teaching with writing.

But in the fall of 1992 Stephanie had no training in process writing strategies. She had no particular knowledge about the importance of allowing writers ownership of their own ideas, and she faced the daunting task of helping Lee
transform herself from a Pidgin speaker with a very poor self concept (in terms of academic learning) into a competent professional.

**The Parent Letter, Probing for Specificity**

In mid September, Stephanie painstakingly rewrote one of Lee’s letters to a parent, in which Lee was suggesting alternatives to her lessons with live mice for a child who claimed she was allergic to animals. What was problematic about this rewriting was the fact that Lee had by then made progress in her use of Standard English and was feeling quite satisfied—even euphoric—about this progress. Furthermore, only one construction in Lee’s draft of the letter was not in conventional Standard English (i.e., "Having Jennifer is allergic to the mice, we will excuse her from the class during the period of the activity"). The rest of Stephanie’s rewrites were not corrections of incorrect grammar or fuzzy thinking, they were different word choices ("engaging in a science and art activity" instead of Lee’s "focusing on a curriculum based on science and language arts") and more often, ways of wording the message that gave more specific information to the parent.

Lee deeply resented the rewritten sentences and felt she was being treated like a child. Looking down at the rewritten letter, with Stephanie’s brackets enclosing the rewritten portions (almost all of the text had been
bracketed in some way) Lee said, "This represents my whole experience this semester. I feel as if I'm being bracketed."

At Waiala School the cooperating teacher was expected to write comments on the margins of the student teacher's daily journals. After this letter incident, Lee found herself bristling at Stephanie's written comments, although the latter were frequently encouraging. "I'm not really expressing my own ideas," Lee complained to me, "and when I do, I'm always being told it's not clear. I feel really junk!" On Lee's written lesson plans, just as in the rewritten letter, Stephanie seemed to be gently nudging her to be more specific. For example, in a projected plan for a unit on space, Lee had written about doing "an art unit on the solar system." "How?" Stephanie probed on the margin.

Without expressing her feelings to Stephanie, Lee chafed inwardly at such comments, at times asking me if she was being "too personal" about the corrections.

I suggested that this might well be the case, but it was a very complicated case indeed. Lee had admitted to resisting authority figures in the past. In a way, she seemed to be continuing this struggle, with Stephanie cast as the demanding mother figure. At the same time, I knew how desperately Lee yearned to master the discourse Stephanie was trying so hard to teach her. The conflict seemed to come, in part, from the fact that Lee was just as committed to constructing her own meaning, with her own words, her own
ideas, her own sentences. And increasingly, this passion for self expression got in her way of accepting Stephanie's guidance.

In the world of art, in the sculpture studio where she still worked, Lee was becoming expert at making meaning with forms, with wood and clay and fiber. She now felt like a colleague to her former professors. But in a world of written texts, the rules and the processes were completely different. In art, you can work spatially and intuitively. You don’t have to verbalize. You don’t have to consciously analyze or theorize in a linear manner.

But these were the skills she needed when she tried to develop and communicate her plans and ideas in Stephanie’s fourth grade classroom. And Lee often seemed unwilling to submit to the discipline of learning how to function successfully in this new world of discourse. In addition, the two women seemed to epitomize two very different ways of being in the world: Stephanie was articulate, linear, analytical, while Lee represented the archetypical "hands on" person.

In her first month of student teaching, all the lessons Lee initiated were "hands on." These included crayon and pastel etching and a science lesson based on crystallization in which the kids made their own lollipops. Even her one self-initiated writing lesson had the students describing
Lee’s demonstration of how to make a habitat for a mouse out of plexiglas.

Teaching with writing, from theory to practice

In the writing autobiography interview, Lee had described her goal for teaching with writing as follows: "to have the kids be expressive verbally. And it goes back to how I see writing." Without being explicit here, Lee seemed to be suggesting that she wanted to help students overcome their own problems with Standard English, which she herself was struggling to master. We can read this meaning between the lines because she went on to say: "There’s so much rules and style. I never know which way is the right way....Everything that I feel what I’m going through, I would like to have the kids have."

In this same interview, she described what she saw as a push to teach more writing in Hawaii’s schools as follows: "They’re realizing now that local kids are lacking writing and they’re kind of changing that." Similar to the gaps in her written lesson plans, Lee didn’t actually say here that she planned to have her students write frequently, although, again, we might read that between the lines. Indeed, in the interview and in her early weeks as a student teacher, Lee wasn’t able to be specific about ways she would use writing or other techniques to accomplish her goals. And this is what the more analytical, more verbal Stephanie kept pushing her to do.
Lee's primary motivation for joining our writing-to-learn study group seemed to be her desire to improve her own writing, as she said in the initial interview "to give me more experience of being able to express clearly." Still, in our weekly meetings (and in the MET seminars), she had participated in a lot of talk about infusing writing into the curriculum, and she also seemed committed to this goal.

In her journals she wrote about wanting to explore "cognitive, affective, and collaborative learning" while presenting "hands on" science lessons using her mice and rabbits. But she never explicitly made the connection between writing-to-learn activities and this "new paradigm" of active learning she wanted to achieve. Instead, she agonized on paper about students being too quiet in class and needing more "hands on" kinds of homework. She worried about some who seemed perpetually tuned out--"but when I bring in a rabbit. Boy, I get 110% attention!" She described the kind of excitement for learning she wanted to create in her own classroom as follows: "I want to see hands fluttering in the air and gasps of air from ones who can't wait to tell their story."

Yet it was difficult for her to move forward to design specific activities, and, in the case of my study, specific writing lessons to help create this classroom climate. In responding to her journal entries, both Stephanie and Amanda, the MET professor assigned to Waiala, kept probing
for specificity. When Lee wrote about Justin having "a very bad attitude," Amanda asked in the margin, "Explain very bad attitude, Lee. Why do you think he has this?" Later in the journal, Lee responding to such probing, wrote: "I have a lot of problems with when I sit at the computer to type out what to write. I don’t know where to start."

Intuitively she moved in one direction of writing instruction that her own personal history—with its strong emphasis on self expression—would have suggested. In correcting classroom writing initiated by Stephanie, Lee refused to interfere with students' ownership of their own work. Instead of rewriting their sentences for them, Lee would read their texts aloud, so that they could hear their own errors and go back and make their own corrections (just as she herself had been helped by her MET colleagues and by me). She noted in her journal that some students could do this self-correction while others couldn’t. In a similar vein, reflecting on a sentence development exercise she had been asked to conduct, she wrote in her journal, "I would never stop their idea flow and force them to say full sentences."

But beyond resisting these more traditional editing practices and presenting her "hands on" mini lessons, Lee didn’t seem to have enough confidence in her theoretical constructs to map out plans and strategies for meeting her
goals. As Stephanie probed and made suggestions, Lee increasingly felt "too personal" about them.

Others in our MET group had also grown up speaking Pidgin but had acquired models of literacy through books, through joining forces with the academic track crowd at school. Lee had no such models. She was a newcomer to the world of books, to the power of language. All the MET students in our support group agreed that they wanted their students to be more comfortable writing in Standard English. They all wanted to "take away the fear," as Ann had expressed it.

But Lee had no lay theories about how such instruction would be accomplished, or even what it would look like in a fourth grade classroom. All her content and pedagogical knowledge had come from two semesters in an innovative teacher training program, from a semester and a half of informal meetings with a writing-to-learn support group, and from me, a participant researcher with a background in composition.

This gap became apparent as she worked with Amanda to plan her lessons. When Amanda mentioned using an "organizing idea" as the basis of a unit, Lee shook her head. "I don't know how," she told her. When Amanda asked her what activities would constitute the introduction, the body, and the closing sections of her unit, she felt bewildered by the choices.
It soon became clear that during her previous two MET semesters students, Lee had gained a philosophical and theoretical perspective on whole language and inquiry-based learning as well as some intriguing snapshots of how such innovations worked (Nancie Atwell's writing workshops, Whigington's Foxfire Project). But in Lee's inquiry groups there had been no systematic training on how to construct and present lessons and units, the kind of pedagogical knowledge preservice teachers are likely to come across in a good methods course, one that is taught by a professor who has considerable classroom as well as theoretical experience.

One of her professors who was pushing her to make up an incomplete grade with a written paper, reflected that Lee seemed to be learning for the first time a lot of things most of us learned in high school. But she was also struggling to learn the kind of pedagogical basics she might have acquired in a more traditional teacher training program.

And on a much deeper level, there was also a question of a new identity being forged. Lee had no images of herself as writer or as teacher. Looking at a teacher's induction years through a poststructural lens, Deborah Britzman makes the following distinction between taking on a new role (i.e. that of public school teacher) and the much more complex process of constructing a new identity:
Whereas role can be assigned, the taking up of an identity is a constant social negotiation. One must consent to an identity. There is a distinction between learning to teach and becoming a teacher. Indeed, the significant albeit hidden work of learning to teach concerns negotiating with conflicting representations and desires" (Britzman, p.24, Fall, 1992, Journal of Curriculum Theorizing).

For Lee this new verbal/analytical, Standard English speaking identity may have come with hidden internal conflicts. In negotiating the change, she was struggling to integrate an ethnic past with a mainstream, professional present. Indeed, for many local students in Hawaii, Pidgin (Hawaiian Creole English or HCE) has become a way of resisting the haole consciousness of the former ruling class that abused their grandparents and great-grandparents on the plantations. For many of these teenagers, taking on this Pidgin discourse is a way of resisting the authority and domination of the white monied class--and all that it represents here in Hawaii. In this context giving up the "local language," can mean giving up a part of oneself. According to Sato (1985), years of legitimized negative stereotyping of HCE speakers by the public school administration eventually produced a kind of backlash.

The escalation of tourism and resort development followed, exacerbating existing resentment among many locals toward tourists, real estate speculators, and outside corporate investors. "Talking laik wan haole" (talking like a mainland Caucasian) associated one with the economic and political exploitation practiced by such outsiders and was therefore behavior to be avoided. Speaking HCE became a salient indicator of ethnic--i.e. "local" as opposed to mainland haole--in groupness... (p. 85).
But Sato goes on to explain how this affirmation of linguistic identity also "locked many HCE speakers into a vicious cycle of educational failure, socioeconomic stagnation, and political powerlessness." But the alternative for students like Lee, abandoning HCE for Standard English, "effectively removed people from their primary social networks and often created tension within these networks". (Sato, 1985, p. 85).

Sato’s analysis of local linguistic conflicts is strangely reminiscent of Britzman’s (1992) depiction of the post structural dilemma faced by some teachers in training.

Our identities, overdetermined by time, place, and society, are lived through the discourses or knowledge we employ to make sense of who we are, who we are not, and who we can become. Identity, then, always signifies relationships to the other and consequently...must be negotiated.

To negotiate this new identity, Britzman (1992) describes a dialogic relationship between what she calls "authoritative discourse," which tends toward the norm (in Lee’s case the Standard English, middle class values of Hawaii’s professional class) and "internally-persuasive" discourse, which Britzman describes as a "push against authority, the refusals, the breaks... the imaginative space" (in Lee’s case, the Pidgin of her "local" childhood.) Quoting Bakhtin, Britzman develops the idea of an "ideological becoming" that seems very reminiscent of Lee’s experience in the MET Program:
His (Bakhtin's) use of becoming suggests the incompleteness of identity. In this ideological process of becoming, two types of discourse clash, two forces push and pull in the process of coming to know.

Perhaps this is why the act of writing—of making up for her "lack of writing in Standard English"—would continue to be both a high priority as well as a painful struggle for Lee.

With all these gaps and ambiguities, it must have seemed to Lee, as she moved into her second month of student teaching, that she was being asked to remake herself all at once. I worried about her being able to accomplish this metamorphosis in time. Lee was an extraordinarily talented woman. Although a recent convert, she was capable of embracing what has been called the new literacy (Willinsky, 1990, Rose, 1989) with the full intensity of her passionate soul. She had begun reading Glasser on alienated learners and was asking all kinds of questions about how we might invite what she called the "lost boys" at Waiala School into the academic conversation. Some of these students (most of whom were male) reminded her of herself as a child, chided for inattentiveness and placed in groups that are "not even up to the standard of our grade level." She wrote in her journal of these alienated learners: "When I see students struggling because of the abstract thinking, I have flashbacks of the same learning style."
Lee would have a remarkable capacity for mentoring local kids, other "hands on" learners, other Pidgin speakers like herself. All of us wanted her to succeed. All of us agonized over how to help her get through the program.

**A change of mentors**

Towards the mid point of the semester, relations between student teacher and cooperating teacher reached an impasse. Whenever I observed Lee in the classroom, she seemed sad. The usual sparkle seemed to have gone out of her. Then she performed particularly well in a lesson on space (having followed a "step-by-step lesson plan" that Amanda, had been teaching her). Lee wrote in her journal, "Using the step-by-step process of a lesson plan creates and exciting lesson....I will never forget this experience with the dear 4th graders."

But Stephanie didn’t make much of this successful lesson. "I have to guess what she’s thinking," Lee complained of Stephanie. "I’d like to feel that I’m comforted." I wasn’t sure what she meant by this last remark but was reluctant to ask her to explain herself at a time when so many others were asking for the same thing.

Meanwhile, Stephanie admitted that she was exhausted by the continuing negotiations. She felt Lee didn’t always think through and internalize the suggestions she offered. Lee responded to this critique in her final journal entry addressed to Stephanie:
It's like telling a child, don't jump on the bed. That's all, no reason. Childs cannot understand the reason, feels as though he is reprimanded. I feel as though Mrs. Fukami (Stephanie) or Nate (another MET professor) do not understand what I am trying to practice or build to become a teacher.

Amanda, the MET professor working with student teachers at Waiala School, saw the problem as a "combination of Stephanie's response to the situation and Lee's insecurity." Clearly, the two women were taking their differences increasingly personally. In one of their ever more frequent meetings mediated by Amanda, Stephanie said she was feeling like Lee's mother. Finally, after a head-on confrontation, the decision was made to switch Lee to another cooperating teacher and another grade level--kindergarten--in which the content area knowledge would be less problematic.

Lee saw the new grade level as a much more encouraging learning environment in which to move beyond the traditional paradigm. She wrote in the current draft of her Plan B paper:

I experienced a traumatic student teaching process where I was told to teach in the paradigm that I resented. I could not take the style of teaching and perform in front of the fourth graders knowing that many of them feel intimidated by the abstract thinking mode. The teaching philosophy (at Waiala School) is in a transition of having the teachers learn new ways of a holistic approach. But they still emphasize the learning through the text book. I was then transfer to the Kindergarten level where there is much more freedom. Majority of the lessons are taught in a very concrete manner.

At the same time, she also knew her differences with Stephanie had been more than just philosophical. Lee
admitted to me that she had been resistant to Stephanie’s suggestions in a way that she had not resisted those coming from Amanda and from me and that she would have to give some thought to what that meant.

The new cooperating teacher, Rhoda, a 30 year veteran, was jovial and easy going, quick to irreverent laughter that shook her whole body. Almost at once, Lee seemed happier in this new placement. Rhoda allowed her free reign in introducing hands-on activities. During her first solo teaching experience, I observed a smiling, confident Lee whose students were constructing a giant rainbow to hang on the wall. As they colored arches of paper spread out on the floor, Lee instructed them to say "red, red, red" over and over, combining a simple verbal cue with motor skills.

On subsequent visits it was good to see her smiling and having fun with the children, leading them in a dance as they sang their good-morning song, asking "Doesn’t it feel good to laugh inside?"

Clearly, this new learning environment appealed to her felt need for more concrete experiences. She wrote in her journal:

Through my experience in kindergarten, I repeatedly ask my cooperating teacher if the style and philosophy that we teach at Kindergarten is possible to teach the upper grades? I see it very possible.

In other entries she called the kindergarten curriculum "a very whole language approach," and added, "Everything is
integrated like CRAZY! Fun! Fun!" She also remarked that "there is very little verbal communication through vocabulary."

Another difference with the new placement was that Lee seemed to accept Rhoda’s critiques with no personal angst, and that these critiques were offered carefully, gingerly, as if Rhoda were testing the waters. Next to one journal entry, for example, Rhoda wrote:

Just a thought. Would you like me to put you back on track when you have strayed off your mark...or would you rather I didn’t say anything and see if you get back on track on your own?

Lee wrote in response: "I do not mind Rhoda jumping in to 'save me' anytime. Amanda too. It guides me and role models for me." To further enhance the relationship, Rhoda, the seasoned kindergarten pro, seemed to have an understanding of Lee’s unique learning style. "You can tell her something until you’re blue in the face," she commented to me, "but she won’t understand it until she does it herself. Lee is just such a hands-on learner."

But even within this more benign learning climate, we continued to see some of the difficulties Lee had experienced in fourth grade. According to Rhoda, there was a problem of giving students’ clear directions. She called this "the mechanics of getting them to do something," and added, "Sometimes Lee gets the kids more muddled than when she started."
An example of what Rhoda called "a problem with focus" was Lee telling a story while holding up the small illustrations in the teacher's manual (instead of the larger pictures in the workbook). The children couldn't see what she was referring to. This difficulty—of putting herself in the place of her audience, of sensing their needs—resembled some of the writing problems that continued to plague her.

Meanwhile, Amanda continued to push for more specificity, more analysis, urging Lee in the margins of her journal to "use your journal to do 'thick description' of your own and Rhoda's lessons and then to reflect carefully on those lessons."

But subsequent journal entries, for the most part, contained few curricular specifics. Instead of 'thick description' of particular lessons, there was often a bare-bones recital of events (i.e. "Morning business. Rhoda did it.")

One entry spoke almost yearningly of innovative writing lessons:

Thought—I really want lots of writing in this class– with 9 weeks left, I would like to see how far I can carry them through a very intensive writing curriculum—need to set up lots of chart paper.

And Amanda, still pushing for specificity, added below:

Let's begin planning concrete activities so that this will happen.
In the margin of this same entry, the ever-practical Rhoda gently reminded Lee of the nine ESL students and an equal number of verbally-impoverished local children in this particular class:

Lee, remember all of the children are not at the same level physically, mentally, so you may want to assess the kids so you won’t be frustrated if some don’t reach your goal. Remember, they’re only 5. Do you remember what you were like? I know from our conversations you’re beginning to have recollections. You may want to settle on a happy medium goal and provide more for those who are more capable.

Both Rhoda and Amanda used their responses in the journal to help Lee move forward toward accomplishing her goals. When Lee wrote, "I want to emphasize the language arts in the lessons. Become a whole language classroom," Amanda asked in the margin, "What does this mean?" and "What are your goals here?" Responding to Lee’s frequent use of the term "scaffolding," Rhoda wrote: "Do you have any plans or strategies to reinforce this concept within your scaffolding strategies?"

After a workshop on collaborative story writing, Lee tried this writing activity with a small group. But the resulting student-dictated and illustrated big book--about one of the classroom mice-- was a disappointment to her. "I didn’t care for it because there was no imagination," she told me. "They (her students) always talk about going to Chucky Cheese (a local pizza place). That’s about it." Lee wondered out loud where Gary Larson, creator of the "Far
Side" cartoons, got his ideas. Then, trying another idea from the same workshop, she used a story the class knew "almost verbatim" to write a story schema analysis, "an overview of what happened" on chart paper, also dictated by the children. These two lessons were the extent of her writing with the kindergarten class, and she did not use her journal to reflect on them.

For a while she had some interest in kindergarten journal writing, and Rhoda and Lee visited the University Lab School to observe their kindergarten journal writing process. But as the semester moved inexorably toward the pre-Christmas rush, the journals were never incorporated.

Ideological Becoming

What seemed to preoccupy Lee during these final weeks was the memory of her own early schooling, as if those years held the secret of her own language difficulties as well as those of her tuned out students. In a November focus group interview with five of our original writing-to-learn support group, Lee found herself again describing these memories. Interestingly, she started off talking about the Plan B paper they were all engaged in writing and then went on to her own difficulties with writing, which seemed increasingly to symbolize Lee's struggle to craft a new identity, to work through Bakhtin's "ideological becoming." She told our group:

So I changed the paper to, you know, why I couldn't get enough information, then later I found out that I was
writing why I had a hard time writing. Because, I mean Clemi was helping me out last year and continuing on. I'm having a hard time writing lesson plans and just writing that paper was having a hard time. And I found...with that paper I'd end up writing the kind of schooling I went to. Why I hated elementary school and English school....

Someone interrupted to ask: "You didn't like English?" (misunderstanding her reference to "English school"). Again, Lee didn't pick up on this confusion on the part of her audience. Instead, she responded, "I never enjoyed school. When I think back, I don't remember HEP (i.e., The Hawaii English Program) or all that. I don't remember nothing. It was like a block. It was like I just went through it 'cause I had to do it."

I decided to jump in here, wanting to call her attention to the fact that her audience still wasn't clear on what she meant by "English school." They were experiencing the same confusion I had experienced while reading her autobiographic essay the previous spring. They didn't understand that she meant the public school (as distinguished from the private Japanese school she had attended every afternoon as a child.) I said, "You called it English school at home? Like what we would call public school, you called it English school?"

Lee answered, "Yea, cause I had a Japanese school."

Group members murmured things like "How interesting!" "What an interesting word choice!" and Lee went on with her story:
I don’t know what else, yea...My mom always said "You finish your English school work. Yea, she was raised in Japan. So first I thought it was the paradigm, the traditional paradigm that got me all caught up and I couldn’t learn. Because we’re learning about this whole language thing, and I think it’s so great. But I thought about it again, but I said, hey, I was doing well in Japanese school! It’s even more rigid and to the paradigm....and I learned! And it was because my mom forced me. She tutored me, you know, by forcing me to do it. I mean I would sit for two hours with nagging, nagging, I don’t want to do it, but I eventually did it. So when I went to school it was a review. Whereas English school (she still hasn’t started to call it ‘public school’) I had no background. I couldn’t concentrate, it was up to me. And if I didn’t do my own...you know, carry on my responsibility by doing it, I won’t learn. So I went school playing. I just did enough to pass.... And then when I went to college I had it easy cause I was in art. I didn’t have to write. Then when I got into this program, I knew I had to write. (Lee was interrupted by empathetic laughter from the group, then continued.) And I thought ‘What am I gonna do?’ So now I’m learning, and ...through all papers, I notice that my writing is changing. I’m being more descriptive, and just practicing. The term practice makes perfect is everything...." (There are murmurs of agreement from the group.) It’s not like someone had...I thought it was my grammar that I had to learn, you know, parts of speech, understand the meaning of nouns and verbs and, you know, all the adjectives. But it’s just writing and reading and writing and reading.

I stepped in here and quoted a saying we’d been using recently: "Writing is the continuous struggle to discover what you have to say and how to say it," and we all laughed.

This sometimes painful discovery process, this "ideological becoming," seemed to consume Lee as she worked on successive drafts of her Plan B paper, which, like the above dialogue, kept cycling back to her own past, redefining and reinterpreting the memories of "English
school" and "Japanese school." As she struggled to give shape to her own educational biography on paper, it wasn't clear if she was blaming herself for her experience in school or blaming the experience for her alienation and pain, for her failure to acquire the Standard English literacy part of her wanted so desperately.

Britzman (1992) illustrates this painful negotiation of a new identity with a case study of a once alienated student struggling to become a teacher. Her subject, whom she called Jamie Owl, reminded me of Lee:

Yet while Jamie believed the teacher's work could be meaningful, her past work as a student was not. Jamie felt she could make a difference in the lives of students by being different from the authoritarian teachers inscribed in her own educational biography. She spoke of her own educational biography as oppressive, and described herself as suffering from "class shock," a condition that caused Jamie to believe her middle-class cohorts were better prepared, smarter, and more attuned to the demands of schooling. For much of her education, Jamie felt "dumb." (Britzman, p. 35)

Given the hidden ambiguities of this writing task, it is not surprising that many of Lee's paragraphs were difficult to understand. Much of her text seemed to illustrate Britzman's depiction of a struggle between "authoritative" and "internally persuasive" discourse. In the following quote, Britzman is describing Jamie Owl:

Jamie's internally persuasive discourse, her own push against authority, told her that things could be different and that she could be different. Yet another ambivalence, rooted in Jamie's supposed dualism of hating school and wanting to teach,
dismissed difference as a problem of reconciliation.

Particularly contradictory were the passages Lee wrote about her mother, who had forced her to do the homework for Japanese school but was unable (because of her own language difficulties) to help with "English school" assignments:

I did not willingly agree to be tutored...I would rebel against the assignment. Eventually, I worked on the assigned task and did well. With my experience of the teaching style that I resented, I had to be forced to learn it. As I had spent many hours fighting my mother.

Adding to the confusion in this and other texts, Lee also wrote of her mother’s perseverance, her "constant guidance by her value of education," with admiration and gratitude. As she struggled to compose these drafts, I struggled to help her edit them. But with paragraphs like the one above, her meaning was so unclear as to render them inaccessible. Clearly, she was still at the level of what Flower (1990) calls "writer-based prose," still struggling to discover her own meaning. In my response to the above passage, I tried to encourage her to continue the struggle:

Lee, it’s not clear to the reader (me!) what you want me to make of your mother tutoring you and forcing you to learn the Japanese characters, etc. Trying to read your mind, I can guess at several possibilities:
1. that the tutoring worked well; you needed it.
   -or-
2. that this pushing wasn’t really good for you because when you weren’t pushed and nagged (ie. in public school) you couldn’t or wouldn’t work, as if you had come to depend on the pushing and nagging. Or even that you were rebelling against it.

It seems to me that you, the writer, are still struggling with these things yourself, you’re still at
the discovering-what-you-want-to-say phase. And it doesn't have to make sense to a reader. In fact, it can't at this point.

As the participant in me worked to help her, the researcher worked to understand her writing process, which produced such inconsistent results. Within the same draft as the passage quoted above were paragraphs of remarkable clarity, beautifully crafted memory pieces like the following:

I can visually recall the moment as I retrieved corrected papers from the teacher, knowing that my paper would be colored with red ink. I hoped that my peers would not ask me questions about my performance. I quickly shoved my paper in my folder and slithered down my seat and quietly watched the others excitedly sharing their rewards of a scented sticker. Going through the public school system, advancing from one grade level to the next, I continued doing just enough to pass, feeling inferior.

When I asked about these inconsistencies, Lee thought for a moment and then explained that it was easier for her to write about events that were inscribed in her visual memory, that it was easier to put something into words "when I know it in my head, when I can go back and see it." She also talked about her own improvement in writing in terms of the visual clues, i.e., "when I can see the mistakes."

Because she had selected the I-Search paper as the model for her Plan B paper, it was entirely appropriate for Lee to begin her study of alternative teaching paradigms with her own experience--and her own failure--in school. But for a while Lee seemed unable to move beyond these early
experiences to reflect on her entry into the profession, on
developing a repertoire of classroom practices she could use
to create her new paradigm.

I wasn’t sure how to support and encourage her. How
should she go about discovering her own meaning for these
early events? How could she best resolve her conflicted
feelings about her mother’s role as the stereotypical
Japanese "education mother"? Would she survive the process
of "ideological becoming" Britzman (1992) had described?

In my own "haole" (a term for the Caucasians in Hawaii)
culture, talking about these issues with family or friends
would have helped me clarify my feelings and make causal
connections to the present. But Lee had been raised in a
very different culture from my own, and it seemed to me that
in this quest for the meaning of her own family dynamics,
she was launched into uncharted territory. Working with her
writing began to feel more like therapy.

**Writing and Becoming**

I had started my study wanting to explore how these
seven novice teachers, trained in an alternative process-
centered, student-centered, constructivist paradigm, would
use writing in the lessons they incorporated and in making
sense of their own experience. Of all of them, Lee seemed to
have emersed herself in the latter-- her own personal use of
writing. Becoming part of my study and our growing
friendship had probably encouraged this focus. I believed in
the therapeutic power of writing to help us think our way through to our own meaning, but would it work for others as it had worked for me?

And however she resolved her identity issues and her own writing problems, there is more to learning to teach than coming to terms with the past and developing fluency in written Standard English. Somehow she had to learn how to design and implement literacy programs in the elementary classrooms. I wondered how she would acquire this knowledge in time for her internship semester.

Then, just a week before the end of the semester, Lee telephoned to say she was thinking of postponing her intern teaching until the following year and was worried about what her dropping out of MET cycle would do to my study. "I want to concentrate on the Plan B (paper)," she explained. Instead of the planned full-time teaching during the spring semester, Lee hoped to take a course in writing-across-the-curriculum as well as a qualitative research course. Both would give her additional opportunities to write. "I need my time for the writing," she said. "This way, I can just work on the writing."

I reassured her that whatever her decision, it would not harm my dissertation. Inwardly, I felt a kind of relief. On a practical level, it was possible that Lee needed another year to get the classroom routines down and her own confidence up before undertaking full time solo teaching.
Her decision also highlighted the importance writing had assumed for her, as if she didn’t feel confident to go forward as a teacher until she could be more successful at making her ideas clear to an audience of readers. I was reminded of her metaphor for writing, which she had struggled to produce almost a year earlier. In it, she had compared the laborious process of making meaning to crafting a sculpture from a koa log. At the end, looking at the finished piece, she had concluded: "The statement is not clearly seen by all the audience....It is not good enough."

Lee had not been successful in teaching with writing, but she had made progress in terms of her own personal writing. Drawing on visual memories, she could compose paragraphs that were crystal clear in their evocative power. On a surface level, her knowledge of the conventions of Standard English had improved. When the clarity of her prose still suffered, it was usually in passages where she herself was struggling to discover her meaning—a legitimate use for the writing process, one I myself was promoting with my writing-to-learn strategies.

She made up her mind to devote the spring semester to her own writing, as she had suggested on the phone. She would re-enter the MET program in the fall, presumably repeating her student teaching semester and then doing her intern teaching in the spring. Perhaps this breakthrough with her own personal writing needed to come first, before
she could think about the specifics of using writing as an instructional tool. Increasingly, she had come to view writing as a kind of symbolic barrier. Indeed, if we look at her MET journey through Britzman’s post-structural lens, taking on a new discourse (while deciding what of the former Pidgin-speaking identity she would keep) was crucial to Lee’s process of "ideological becoming." In the passage below, Britzman, describing Jamie, echoed my own concerns as Lee’s student teaching semester drew to a close:

Her struggle was not only one that required negotiation with the present, but also with her student past. The painful question—Can one become a teacher and hate school?—is also about the struggle between tradition and change—negotiating one’s own territory and enacting one’s own intentions amid pre-established spaces already "overpopulated" by the intentions and practices of others (Britzman, p.36)

I hoped she would be able to use her own writing to come to terms with that past, to resolve some of her conflicts, to define for herself and others just what her "new paradigm" for schooling would be like. And I hoped that the writing-across-the-curriculum course she planned to take would give her the information on curriculum—the practical things like step-by-step lessons plans—to enable her to put her ideals into practice in her own classroom.

**The "Sabbatical" Semester, Time for Writing**

Toward the end of January I met with a tanned, happy Lee to look over the latest draft of a paper that was intended to make up an incomplete in a summer course as well
as serve as a possible beginning for her Plan B paper. She had recently been hired for a part time ESL teaching position in a school near her home. "I love it!" she told me. "My biggest class is four students. We do organic, 'hands-on' things, like origami! I can reflect in my journal, talk to myself. Should I do this or that? Because I have the time!"

Lee was enjoying her half day with elementary ESL students immensely. She had already introduced her mice as language-stimulus. Because these students had little money to buy cages which would allow them to "adopt" a mouse baby, she had also supplied the plexiglass herself and taught them how to construct a habitat. One student had already brought home five mice.

Above all, she was ecstatic to have the luxury of time. "If I keep on teaching half time," she speculated, "I can stop and reflect on how kids are learning...plus I can take courses!" We talked rather wistfully for a while about ways of surviving on half a salary once she was married. She said she would rather cut down on the luxuries and simplify her life in order to have the time to reflect.

And in terms of her own writing, she seemed to be using this time well. She was taking two College of Education courses and loving them. Both involved a lot of freewriting as well as a process approach to generating a final product, with very flexible requirements in terms of that final
product. She had also set up a series of weekly appointments at the university's Writing Workshop to go over her own writing. Her tutor for the entire semester, would be a professor who was known to be very approachable and down-to-earth in her relationships with students. (In the past Lee's visits to this tutoring center, usually staffed with graduate students, had not been helpful to her). This professor was also willing to look at Lee's students' papers and help her find a vocabulary to talk about their language problems. On the margin of the draft we were reading, for example, the professor had drawn for her a chart illustrating subject/verb agreement. Lee was also using the time to go back and rewrite some of her old drafts.

The present draft, which I had seen in several earlier incarnations, seemed much improved, especially her use of transitions between past and present. In earlier versions of this paper, she had shifted back and forth between her own student past and her student teaching present without using transitional phrases telling the reader such things as, "Now that I'm a teacher...."

Dr. Brand, the professor of the writing course she was taking had been talking a lot, as I had for the past year, about the concept of audience, about the need for Lee to put herself in the audience's place. This message seemed to be taking hold. As I pointed out her improved transitions, I told Lee about studies that had compared the process of
remedial writers to that of experienced writers (Perl, 1979, Sommers, 1980). These researchers describe the experienced writers as always saying to themselves, "What does the reader need to know here?" Poor writers, on the other hand, seemed to lack any sense of audience.

In addition to better transitions, Lee's writing was much more specific, especially descriptions of her students the past semester at Waiala. One paragraph told of watching her students filling in bubbles on an SAT test on which they already expected to do poorly on. This followed a paragraph in which she had described her own trauma taking tests as a kid, ready to be labeled as "low section" material. In both instances, her past and their present, the common thread was "that fear of being wrong."

It read well, and I told her so. My suggestions were more in the area of polishing. She could to add some more specific detail to the paragraph about her own test taking trauma, the kind of specific detail that had made the paragraph about the students so effective, essentially showing, not telling readers how awful the testing experience had been for her. In terms of the mechanics, there was only one place in the draft where she had used the pronoun "it" to refer to a plural noun antecedent, a mechanical problem that had surfaced often in her earlier work. In terms of overall organization, the whole essay held together well, she went from her own alienation as a child,
to a description of similar students in her class, to her efforts to offer a more "hands-on" kind of experience, including a specific description of a lesson and how her present ESL students had responded. We talked about the possibility of crafting an additional paragraph in which she would contrast their enthusiasm and attention in this mouse lesson with another, more traditional lesson she had observed them in.

Although she was on leave from the MET program and no longer required to keep one, she continued a journal about her ESL students, usually recording her thoughts and impressions right after her classes. "It helps me a lot," she said, "and it's getting easier. I don't spend as much time writing. Now when I'm walking I can just think it like I'm writing." Interestingly, much of this reflection was still a way of connecting her own schooling--and what went wrong for her--with how to be as a teacher. Confirming this continued self-focus, the professor of Lee's writing course was also encouraging her students, as teachers of writing, to explore their own pasts, explaining, according to Lee, "why you have to write an autobiography to understand others."

An example of this kind of reflection-becoming-journal text was one day when she caught herself telling her students to "shhh." Afterward, she remembered how, when she was a youngster, people always told her to be quiet but
never told her why. Instead, when her students were too noisy she decided to ask them, "Can you save it for after?"
When they asked why she explained that other children were studying and concentrating right then and needed the quiet time.

   Early in their final semester, I had given all three case study students some journal prompts, specific to their uses of writing. Toward the end of the data collection period, Lee had not yet written out the answers in her journal. Instead, during one of our meetings in the Student Center, I presented the prompts orally and took notes on her responses. First, I asked if she could see progress in her own writing, and she answered unequivocally, "Yes, yes, yes!"

   The rest of this interview confirmed that it was indeed getting easier for her to write down her ideas so that others could understand them (a major concern expressed at the start of the study). In a way, this sense of progress was self perpetuating. She was feeling more confident, was losing her "fear of being wrong." One thing she saw as helpful this semester was having to explain the structure of language to ESL students, and this brought her back to dealing with English grammar.

   "I really want to know the parts of the sentence," she said. She had opened one of the grammar books she'd used in remedial English class at community college years earlier.
Pointing to the table of contents of grammatical terms, she said, "I really want to know this stuff." But opening the book to the typical manufactured sentences, she admitted that she still felt turned off by the format, unable to use the book as guide to the conventions of Standard English.

Instead she explained that what was really helping her was bringing her own sentences and those written by her ESL students to the Writing Workshop tutorial, where Lorraine, the professor, was helping her talk about the elements of grammar and usage (mostly the latter) in the context of her students' papers and her own drafts. Lee's experience here would square with the accumulated research (Hillocks, 1986, Rose, 1989) that grammatical and usage elements cannot be learned in isolation, by means of the kinds of books Lee had used in community college, but only in the context of students' own writing. As a result of the present tutoring and of the year of one-on-one with me and other mentors, Lee spoke of the enhanced confidence she felt now in writing. "I know 'is' singular and 'are' is plural. Now I can say 'that sounds right!' and then go on. I can look at my papers and spot the mistakes."

But she had also, in recent months, moved beyond her earlier understanding that good writing is simply a product of knowing the correct grammar. Back in November, she'd told our focus group about this change in perception: "I thought it was my grammar that I had to learn, you know, parts of
speech, nouns and verbs, and, you know, all the adjectives. But it’s just rewriting and reading and writing and reading." This changing view of what it means to be a good writer was a sign of a much more sophisticated understanding of the writing process. Holden Caufield, the troubled teenage hero of Catcher in the Rye (Salinger, 1951), portrayed as a gifted writer who was always being asked to ghost write other students’ compositions, sounds off about this simplistic perception in the following quote:

That’s something else that gives me a royal pain. I mean if you’re good at writing compositions and somebody starts talking about commas. Stradlater was always doing that. He wanted you to think that the only reason he was lousy at writing compositions was because he stuck all the commas in the wrong places (p.28).

She also felt increased confidence in translating her ideas into words and phrases. She recalled the previous semester, being stuck in a series of multiple drafts of this same essay she seemed now on the verge of completing. "When I would sit with you and Paulette (the professor to whom the paper was owed), you wouldn’t understand and I would get frustrated." This would explain why it had seemed so difficult for her to move forward during those months.

But when I asked her for specific ways she planned to use writing in the fall semester, when she would again be student teaching, it was still difficult for her to convey the specifics of what her writing lessons would be like, even with prompting. With her ESL students, she was getting
ready to have them write their own big books and had begun
to teach the elements of a story--beginning, problem,
resolution--that she had used with her kindergartners at
Waiala (after a workshop on collaborative story writing).

I asked her to imagine a hypothetical third grade
somewhere in the future. What kinds of writing activities
would she introduce? She spoke of wanting to bring in
animals, like the mice, to "spark their interest. From
there," she said, "I’ll pull the writing, expressive
writing, descriptive writing, working the process, like in
Sheila Brand’s class."

In terms of this new teacher identity she was
acquiring, I wondered if she had moved closer to coming to
terms with her own linguistic past. During this interview,
she told me that, even now, when she sees local kids talking
on TV, using Pidgin English, "I get real embarrassed,
because that reflects Hawaii." This ambivalence--of feeling
deeply connected with Pidgin (Hawaiian Creole English) and
being at the same time embarrassed by it--is very common
among educated young people, especially teachers in
training. According to Watson-Gegeo (1990), "Future teachers
who are HCE-dominant find themselves stigmatized in many of
their university classes, which probably increases their
ambivalence about HCE vis-a-vis Standard English even as
they are readying themselves to begin teaching in the
state’s public schools" (p. 21).
Final Snapshots

Throughout the semester Lee continued to find her weekly visits to the university Writing Workshop helpful. The professor, Lorraine, gradually introduced her to a self-editing technique called glossing. "It's really helping me to organize, to see what leads to what," said Lee. She explained glossing as a way of "pulling out the main points" of a particular paragraph by writing these points in the margin with arrows denoting the relationship in a kind of linear flow chart. According to Lorraine, texts produced by freewriting could be too scrambled to enable students like Lee to organize their ideas, and beginning with an outline was often too restricting.

Another technique Lorraine was teaching Lee was to incorporate (simplify) sentences that were unclear because they were packed too full of words and ideas. An early draft contained the following sentences: "I am in a program in the College of Education to become an elementary school teacher. I am learning how to become an effective teacher." These sentence, after being "incorporated," became: "I am in a program in the College of Education learning to become an effective elementary school teacher." From Lorraine, Lee was also learning to use strong, action verbs to convey her meaning. The writing was going so well that she would find herself working all day on a draft, unaware that hours had gone by.
When we met toward the end of the data collection period for this study, the draft of the I-Search paper to make up her summer incomplete was even stronger. Lee said of the margin flow-charts that Lorraine had constructed on her previous draft: "It helps me read it from a third person rather than a first person point of view," reflecting increased attention to this all-important imaginary audience for her own writing. In related ways, she also seemed more tuned into what her students needed to know, something she had sometimes seemed unaware of the previous semesters. She told me that now when she made instructional decisions, "I try to figure out 'Do they understand?'"

In our conversations she was beginning to think more like an experienced writer, beginning to ask questions like, "What does the reader need to know here?" It seemed that all the elements were conspiring to help Lee achieve the breakthrough in her writing she had worked so hard for—my insistence on transitions and specific examples, Lorraine’s glossing and incorporating wordy sentences, the writing requirements in her two courses, and her own growing confidence in her knowledge of the conventions of Standard English. She went out of her way at this meeting to express gratitude for the times I’d worked with her on her writing, and for others like Paulette, the professor who had given several extensions on the I Search draft we’d been working on, who had also talked Lee through the connection between
her attachment to the "new paradigm" of teaching and her own painful student past. Then, remembering Amanda, the MET professor at Waiala School who had helped her in constructing her first step-by-step lesson plan, Lee said thoughtfully "I think she is also one of the people who has really guided me."

Another I-Search paper (required for the Writing-across-the-curriculum course) was allowing Lee to come to terms with some of the theoretical information on constructivist approaches to learning, including whole language, that she had been exposed to during her first three semesters of the MET program. Lee described how the professor, Dr. Brand, would take her students "through the process of learning", allowing them to experience various types of writing and peer editing as well as to note their reactions to different types of teaching. Lee said, "By forcing me to write these 'I Search' papers, I am learning on my own. In seminars last year we were supposed to go get research and apply it. Only now I can do it!" She also felt that many of these ideas from the past were suddenly more relevant, "because I'm actually teaching."

Dr. Brand, who had become a kind of role model for Lee, had also made the point that teaching isn't just a job, that people need to regard it as more of a calling in order to be happy and fulfilled. As we talked together, Lee reflected on one of her fellow MET students who seemed to be just going
through the motions of teaching. "To her it's just like a job," Lee lamented. "To do it without the passion! I can't imagine that."

She still didn't know where she would be student teaching in September but hoped that she would be assigned to "the lower kids" (i.e. lower socio-economic backgrounds) because "they have the same fear of being wrong I had." She also felt they tended to be more creative because "they cannot afford Nintendo." And whatever school she was assigned to, her own personal challenge would be "to make the learning fun for them." In her mind's eye she pictured kids singing, laughing, expressing the joy of learning.

Listening to her, I flashed on a memory of Lee with Rhoda's kindergartners this past fall, leading the morning song and asking, "Doesn't it feel good inside to laugh?"

**Epilogue**

She was indeed assigned to student teach in a sixth grade in a low socioeconomic neighborhood, but only weeks into the semester, Lee encountered the same difficulties with planning and sequencing of lessons and making these plans explicit to her mentors. She was eventually encouraged to leave the MET program.

After some initial disappointment, she almost seemed to be relieved, as if laying down a kind of burden. She promptly enrolled in another program in the College of Education for vocational educators. In the words of a former
MET advisor, this program would be "more hands on, more doing than theoretical." She also managed continued working as a part-time teacher's aide at the same school where she had been student teaching.

According to this same advisor, Lee had difficulty conceptualizing "the whole picture--and then sequencing the lessons." Another advisor saw her two major problem as a lack of content knowledge and an inability to step back from a situation and become analytical. This latter was similar to my own observations about her writing, that she had difficulty stepping away from her text and thinking about what her audience needed to know (although I had seen some progress in the past semester).

With these perceived problems, it was difficult to know what the joyful, hands-on, passionate classroom of Lee's dreams would eventually look like--or whether her students would be making sculptures or poems. But I could believe that Lee would make it happen. I had seen her persistence in coming to terms with her own writing problems, her willingness to seek help from a variety of sources and to draft and redraft over and over again. I had seen her overcoming frustration at seeing readers confused by her texts, refusing to give up on her goal of making meaning, so that the work is "clearly seen by all the audience," as she had expressed in her metaphor for writing.
This innate persistence convinced me that she would eventually develop her own plans for teaching with writing, that these lessons and approaches would be consistent with the MET philosophy but would also be uniquely hers. I believed she would find the time or make the time to create her new paradigm, and that it would probably be into programs for the marginalized, the alienated--with kids who were "afraid to be wrong"--that Lee would eventually put her heart, her energy, and her admirable passion.

Case 3: Ann

Personal History

Ann begins an autobiographical essay by telling the reader she was "a product of an interracial marriage" (i.e. a Caucasian mother and a Chinese American father who was born in Hawaii). Both parents were college graduates. Her mother was a writer, the author of several books. Ann remembers seeing her often at her typewriter. Ann grew up on the mainland, where her family moved frequently, and because "mixed marriages were not acceptable in small towns in the midwest," she and her four sisters were often the victims of prejudice. She describes her early schooling as follows:

Those factors created a very shaky foundation on which to stand. My self concept was extremely low and it was difficult for me to imagine myself ever amounting to anything. I was a below average student in high school and had not seen myself as college material. However, at the last possible moment I applied and was accepted to a small college in Michigan.
A life-shaping experience toward the end of high school was a summer work camp which Ann attended with other Quaker teenagers (Ann was raised as a member of American Society of Friends). Their task was to babysit for children of migrant farm workers whose parents spent long days picking peas. In those days, migrant children did not attend school, so Ann and her young colleagues decided to start one, then and there, figuring out among themselves how to introduce reading and writing to illiterate children with no textbooks, no desks, and no classrooms.

College offered additional opportunities for Ann to redeem her self esteem. She calls those years "a new and wonderful experience" and writes, "I felt the world opening up for me." She was drawn to sociology by her love of people and went on to do graduate studies in social work.

Ann calls herself a "people lover." It’s almost immediately apparent what she means by this. In the writing autobiography interview, for example, she very quickly established a companionable give and take with the young researcher at the university’s Manoa Writing Program, which was administering these initial interviews with the students in our study group. But the questions (planned for a much larger study) didn’t really match the experience of older students like Ann, who were returning to college after many years. As she tried to adjust the questions, the researcher seemed to be trying very hard to sound professional. "Do you
write?" Ann asked the young woman in her easy, trusting way, after a somewhat ambiguous question about struggling with one's writing. The young woman admitted that she, too, struggled with her writing, that everybody did, and the tension was eased. At another point in the interview, when the researcher was probing for clarity, Ann exclaimed, "You're very good!" (I wasn't present at the interview, but I can imagine Ann reaching out and patting the researcher's hand.) In tapes of our subsequent focus group interviews during a year and a half of data collection, Ann's laughter rings out—-from the depths of her soul—-at seemingly just the right moments.

When she moved to Hawaii in 1973, Ann found work as a social service aide with the Head Start Program, working with the children of low income families. She says, "It was during this time (and with memories of that summer work camp experience) that I discovered how much I loved working with children."

Fifteen years later, with a husband and three children, and after "a lot of soul searching," she decided to quit that job to enter the MET Program along with her friend and fellow preschool teacher Kate. Looking back, Ann said, "Even though it meant cutting our family’s income in half and making many sacrifices....The thing that keeps things in focus is the fact that when I do graduate, I’ll be able to
teach elementary school children and know that all those sacrifices have been worth it."

The MET Program

One of her biggest fears about returning to school after twenty years was "the fact that I’d be writing papers." In her writing autobiography interview, Ann carefully distinguished between this typical school-based writing and personal writing, which she clearly enjoys and which she calls "an extension of myself." In this latter category she mentioned journals, which Ann has kept "on and off during my life" to reflect on her experiences—(i.e. "to write down things that I wanted to remember and look back on."). She also told the researcher that she enjoys writing letters to her many friends. Not surprisingly, this self-confessed people lover describes this category of writing as a way of reaching out and sharing one’s experience with others.

School-based writing ("writing papers"), on the other hand, she said she only does because she has to. In the same interview, she called such assignments "writing for a larger audience" and added, "it’s a weakness for me, making it sound scholarly." Still, she was able to see a value for informational writing, predictably finding a social purpose for it, (i.e. "to collect data, so that other people can read it and gain the knowledge you’ve gained.")
When I had announced my study and solicited volunteers for our writing-to-learn group, it was the social aspect of the project that attracted her. She later confessed that her first reaction to becoming part of our group was "Oh, NO! I don't want to be involved in that!" But then she rethought it:

I began to see it more as a support group. Sharing ideas with other people, supporting each other in what we're doing. I feel really glad that I decided to join the group. I think I can learn a lot from it and will try to translate those ideas about the value of support into my own teaching.

Her conflicted feelings about her own writing are evident in all her responses during data collection that first MET semester. In a written survey asking for "attitudes, feelings about writing," Ann wrote: "I do enjoy writing for myself but am very self-conscious when others read what I've written." Her Miller Daly Writing Apprehension Test confirms this ambivalence. Ann marked "strongly agree" to the prompt: "I like to write my ideas down." But she also agreed with the prompt: "I don't think I write as well as most other people."

But after these initial fears, Ann was pleasantly surprised by the nature of the MET writing assignments, compared to the dreaded term papers of her sociology major days, papers "which were supposed to be objective." In her reaction papers for MET seminars and especially in the MET required journals, Ann was supposed to react, to take a stand. Through her writing, she found excellent
opportunities for reflection, for "taking the information and working it into my beliefs." In the following quote, she is actually paraphrasing the MET goal of connecting theory and practice, through the use of her journal.

What's happening for me now is that I'm evolving my whole philosophy of teaching. I put down what's happening during the day and what I've seen and learned and then reflect on that and see where I stand. I'm clarifying things for myself, beginning to develop my own idea of the role of a teacher.

With this subjective MET-assigned writing, she commented that writing "gets easier, not as painful, but it's still a lot of work." In her extended metaphor for writing, Ann expands on this idea of the hard work needed to write clearly, comparing the struggle to write to running a marathon, something she once thought she could never do because of childhood asthma. But "well into adulthood" she challenged herself to enter the Honolulu marathon. She managed to finish the race (her personal goal) and then finished four more marathons after that:

Writing is like running a marathon. It takes a lot of time and hard work for me to get the job done. It is not an easy task. The more practice I get, the better and perhaps easier it will become, but like the marathon, it will always be hard work.

This same quiet persistence, coupled with her love of people, served Ann well in the second MET semester when she became a MET teacher trainee, challenging the instructional norms at Keala Elementary, the tough neighborhood school where she was assigned. Here, not only was she required to
synthesize theory with her own practice, but also to sell that whole language, student-centered practice to teachers operating in what MET students were calling "the traditional paradigm."

With her belief in the social value of writing, Ann had immediately embraced the whole language philosophy advocated in her seminars and in our weekly study group discussions. Now she could finally act on these ideas. In the writing autobiography interview, Ann had been very specific about her plans to use writing with her students.

I want the writing to become a part of them, a natural part, where it's not a struggle. I want the kids to write every day, even in kindergarten, all kinds of writing, journals, writing for information. I want to explore all kinds, all content areas, math, science, not just language arts....to take away the fear.

Her conception of teaching with writing had both a practical objective (i.e. making her students comfortable with writing, "taking away the fear") as well as a social mission. She saw writing as not just an academic survival skill but as a way of supporting one another, of sharing our ideas and feelings so that we might understand one another better. She hoped to translate some of the experience of our group-- the idea sharing, the support, the collaboration-- to her own teaching.

From Theory to Practice

For her first full-scale teaching experience (other than "mini lessons), Ann launched a three-week unit called
"Writing for a Purpose." In it, she sought to give her low-ability second graders some real-world reasons for wanting to write. She began by brainstorming with the children about why we write. Her subsequent lessons were structured around the two uses of writing--i.e. personal and informational--that she herself had identified in the writing autobiography interview.

But Ann’s version of informational writing did not include the typical decontextualized, "objective" school assignments she herself had felt so inadequate to produce when she was a student. Instead, Ann’s students, working together collaboratively, experimented and then wrote down a recipe for play dough in a book authored by the children. They also interviewed one another and wrote up what they learned, along with a picture of their subject. In terms of personal uses for writing, Ann’s students also wrote letters, which would be sent off to real people. One set of letters went to a student who had been ill for months, with the students telling him that they missed him and bringing him up to date on what had been happening in the classroom.

By all accounts, the unit was a great success. Ann described it as follows in our first focus group interview:

It was a low ability class and the teacher had, so far, only had them copy things from the board. That was the extent of their writing. At first it was like pulling teeth. They had real difficulty putting their thoughts on paper, because they’d never done it. At first I had to reassure the kids that they didn’t have to worry about spelling. I’d say ‘Just write as much as you can!’ It kind of
freed them up to be able to start that process of transferring it from the mind to the paper and being able to realize that once it was on paper, they could share it with other people. It was real dynamic. I want to be able to do that for students, to take away that fear. They all got really turned on, and the teacher did too. That’s why it was so exciting.

Ron, the second grade teacher, would never have believed that students could use invented spelling and then move to Standard English in editing a variety of publishable final drafts. Soon his excitement matched Ann’s.

What was exciting to me was that the teacher learned something too. He saw something like invented spelling, cooperative learning, working in his classroom, and he had never tried it before. He was really excited. He’d say, 'It’s wonderful! It’s working!' like he never thought it could. So it was like opening a window for him or a door that he could try later.

Ron appeared to be a whole language convert. That same spring semester, Ann and the other MET students assigned to Keala were also able to convince Marlene, a 31-year teaching veteran, that student desks didn’t have to be arranged in straight lines facing the teacher. With their encouragement, Marlene rearranged her students’ desks. "We were so elated to walk into her room and see all her chairs in clusters," Ann recalls.

The following fall, Ron moved to a computer studies position, so we cannot follow up on the durability of Ann’s influence. Ann became Marlene’s student teacher and says of their continuing relationship, "I thank my lucky stars I’ve got her." Still, Ann credits both of them—a happy mix of
two people lovers--with her extraordinary success in fulfilling the MET mission of "changing the schools from within" during that student teaching semester.

Coincidentally, the DOE had been promoting a whole language approach in all schools and the push from "on high" was particularly strong that year. But although some DOE teachers had embraced these new approaches whole-heartedly, some, like Marlene, had not bought into it, and others were very actively resisting.

The following fall, Marlene would keep the cluster grouping of desks, and with Ann's gentle, persistent prodding, would go on to completely revamp her third grade curriculum. Indeed, the next semester with Ann as a student teacher, would introduce her to a radically different view of teaching and learning--of what a third grade classroom is supposed to look like.

The Student Teaching Semester

"In my year of working at Keala," Ann explained later, "I discovered that the children had done very little writing at all. What they had done, prior to the time that we got there, was that the teacher would write on the board, the children would copy what was on the board. That was it. So I had a lot of visions when I went into my student teaching...to incorporate a lot of reading and a lot of writing."
Ann, who seems to radiate a belief that anything is possible, started off by asking Marlene if she could introduce journal writing every morning as well as learning logs every afternoon. (Marlene had introduced journals the previous year, but only "whenever they could," which translated to once a week or every other week.) This semester, Ann insisted, journal writing would be "one thing that happens every single day." Even more revolutionary, she talked Marlene into "putting away the basals" and making a unit on seeds the basis for both reading and language instruction. According to Ann, the classroom soon started to "look very different" to Marlene.

The "Productive Buzz"

At first these labeled low ability third graders (all but one attended Chapter One, a federally-funded reading remediation program) groaned and protested about having to write so much, but within the first few weeks, their attitudes toward the writing improved. Throughout the semester, the morning journals (with no assigned topics) worked better than the afternoon learning logs, although both content and amount of text would improve in both. She attributed the better success with the journals to the amount of uninterrupted time allotted to them, whereas the learning log writing time, scheduled at the end of the day, was often shortened or postponed in the crush of other activities. I also suspect that the nature of the writing
assignment, the fact that in the learning logs students were supposed to write about one or two things they’d learned during the day, were perhaps not as engaging as the journals, in which they were free to write about anything that concerned them.

In the following early journal entry (October 14th), a student describes waiting for a hurricane to pass over the island:

No hurricane came to my house, but I was scared. My dad bought some can food and some batteries and water. I was watching the news. I heard the sirens when I was sleeping. It woke me up. My dad taped the windows and then he covered up the windows with woods....I heard the sirens again and then the news said it was getting closer.

In her own journal Ann wrote about the "productive buzz in the room" as kids wrote in journals and learning logs, conducted seed experiments and recorded scientific observations, and read their own books during USSR (uninterrupted sustained silent reading):

The energy in the air was so invigorating. Both Marlene and I said to each other at the end of the day that we felt so good about how the children were working and contributing to their own learning. It was absolutely terrific.

In that same entry, she tried to analyze why such a miracle had taken place in room 18:

Why are the children so focused and excited about what they are doing? Is it the subject matter? Is it that we’ve given them the freedom to be self directed? Is it because there is a lot of trust placed in them as learners?
The productive climate in room 18 was all the more impressive because of the very poor academic reputation of this school, almost entirely populated by children of low income, housing project families, mostly Pacific Islanders and recent Filipino immigrants. The local neighborhood is often viewed in Hawaii as the spawning ground for future gang members, with evening news coverage of shooting incidents at the nearby high school. Indeed, a number of Marlene’s former students from her 31 years of teaching there, are now in prison. When one of them asks her to come visit, she always goes, and as she walks down the dismal corridor, other prisoners who were once Keala students come forward in their cells, recognizing her and shouting their greetings.

It is also important to note here that not all classrooms at Keala looked like Ann and Marlene’s. In some, there was noise and confusion and a lot of infighting, not a "productive buzz" of happily-engaged children experimenting with seeds and writing in journals and logs. By the second month of school, Ann couldn’t help making the connection between the improved student behavior and her curricular reforms:

One of the things that has really stuck out for me is that some of these children that I remember from last year who were not motivated at all are now displaying great motivation and maturity. Have they actually matured or could it be the way things are set up in the class? Could it be a combination of both? That’s what really grabs me and makes me feel so good inside. To see these
children really wanting to write and to read. YES!!!!!!

The "Roller Coaster"

But the revolution in room 18 was not a smooth transition from the "traditional paradigm" to process-centered, student-centered teaching with "real" writing and "real" books. In another journal entry, Ann describes the ambiguity and risks of this journey into the uncharted territory of whole language:

Marlene has mentioned how exhausted she has been. It is exhausting because there is no written script like there is for the basal. Last week we didn't once open up a text book. She had planned to do so today but we never got to it. We saw that the kids were really engaged in what they were doing so instead of stopping them so that we could go on with something written in the lesson plan, we decided to let the kids continue with what they were doing...Thankyou, thankyou, thankyou Marlene for being so open and so willing. Hearing from other MET students, they have not been so lucky.

With a mixture of gratitude and compassion, Ann saw Marlene as "vacillating between the basals and whole language" but always leaving room for a growing list of innovations: USSR (uninterrupted sustained silent reading), journals, learning logs, a message board for kids to communicate with one another, lots of writing as well as reading aloud to kids every day. It was beginning to look like the whole language classroom of Ann's dreams. "I hope I didn't overwhelm her," she wrote in her journals. "I don't think so, as I kept asking her for her feedback and feelings"
about it. Now we’re really on a roll. My fantasy is becoming
more of a reality."

But the "traditional paradigm" turned out to be more
difficult to uproot, and Ann’s whole language fantasy was in
reality more of a roller coaster ride. Representing the old
guard at Keala was Sharon, the teacher in the next room, who
came every day to look askance at the free-flowing learning
environment in room 18. While shaking her head at the kids’
carefully-labeled seed experiments lining the counter tops,
this neighbor would remind Marlene that "our kids" (the
typically low SAT scoring kids at Keala) "need more
structure, not less. Whole language won’t work with these
kids." In the following journal entry, Ann writes of the
"great influence" Sharon had on Marlene:

I’m not just dealing with one teacher, (I’ve
finally realized) but I am actually dealing with
two. It’s taken me a while to see the pattern and
to understand what was happening. ....Sharon is
very strong and Marlene is easily swayed. No
wonder it’s been a roller coaster ride. Marlene
gets so excited about what we are doing and then
Sharon tends to knock the wind out of her sails,
stressing the basics and her strong conviction
that whole language could never work with these
kids. 'They’re too slow, and so they need the
basics or they will get lost.' And the barrage is
constant. I was really dreading going to school
today (first day I felt this way) due to the big
headlines in the paper about the SAT scores. I
thought for sure I wouldn’t hear the end of it.

The above entry was written on October 2nd, the day
after Honolulu newspapers announced in four-inch headlines
that our statewide Stanford Achievement Test scores had
dropped dramatically.
Keala Elementary had the dubious distinction of being the lowest-scoring school on the island. Sharon, the back-to-basics neighbor, was now fighting mad about whole language inroads initiated by MET cohorts assigned to the school. "We've gotten too far away from the skills!" she proclaimed to Marlene, to the principal, to the assembled faculty, called together in an emergency meeting to formulate plans for improving the grim statistics. "We can't get into all this fun stuff!" Sharon declaimed. "We've got to stick to a narrow path! That's all we have time for!"

"Her whole philosophy is so screwed up!" Ann told our writing-to-learn group. "All the teachers who were experimenting with writing just a tiny bit went right back to the former drill and skill approach. It was so depressing!" In her journal, Ann also vented about the domination of the testing industry "a big money-making business, almost as powerful as the NRA."

Both basals and English grammar books were back in room 18. "I see her as really torn," Ann said of Marlene during these weeks, with compassion evident in her voice. "It must be so difficult for her. I don't know if I could do what she is doing."

Ann's willingness to put herself in her cooperating teacher's place seemed to make a crucial difference at this stage of her quest to achieve the MET goal of curriculum reform and our group's goal of teaching with writing.
Instead of citing research studies about English skill books and basal readers, instead of sulking or going one-on-one in heated debate with Sharon, Ann reassured Marlene that she could live with basals. Meanwhile, Marlene allowed the daily journals and logbooks to continue. Ann’s own journal entries on successive days reflect her understanding of the delicate give-and-take she and Marlene were engaged in:

I need to be aware of her feelings and her needs too. I don’t want to scare her away from new ideas.

I don’t want to come off too pushy and keep reminding myself that change comes slowly. I have been able to do some of the things that I’ve wanted and am happy about that.

I guess it comes down to who’s room is it anyway? I’ve often wondered how I would feel if I had taught as long as Marlene and someone comes in and begins to change things around. It would be very uncomfortable. Though I believe that she has seen some wonderful things come out of the children, it just isn’t comfortable for her and she needs to feel comfortable. I can accept that.

When Ann wrote the above entry, she didn’t foresee much opportunity for continued progress in fully incorporating writing into the curriculum. But two weeks later, with Sharon, the Back-to-basics neighbor out sick, Marlene put aside the basals, and Ann was allowed to launch a time-consuming pen pal exchange. The Keala students would write letters to the children at Ann’s son’s class in a middle-class neighborhood that must have seemed like a foreign country to many of these housing project kids. Later in the semester, they would have a chance to actually meet their
penpals by means of a picture phone the school had access to, but this was a secret Ann was saving for later.

Writing and Cherishing

I visited class on the first day of this penpal activity. When I arrived just after morning business, all the kids were seated on the carpet with Ann and Marlene on chairs at the front of the group. Although I had planned to sit in the corner as unobtrusively as possible, I was welcomed enthusiastically by the children, who had a lei and a special chair for me. They had just handed Ann a folder of birthday cards they’d made for her as a surprise. Ann began reading these birthday messages with great enthusiasm, acknowledging every author, holding up every picture. Almost all the writers said that they were going to miss her in January, that they didn’t want her to go.

As I listened, I looked around the room. The seed experiments, now sprouting mini gardens, still lined the counter tops. A bulletin board read "Seeds we know" with carefully-labeled samples of orange and pepper seeds as well as different types of beans. Marlene leaned over, pointing at the birthday letters. "They’re unedited," she whispered, with some trepidation in her voice. I wondered if she thought I would judge her harshly for any spelling errors.

Ann paused in the reading and looked out at the faces, glowing with pride. "I will treasure these always!" she told the children. As she went through the packet of birthday
letters, each author was applauded and hugged. Ann’s hugs were in no way perfunctory or rushed, and she stood a moment with an arm around each child for a few personal remarks about their writing before going on to the next card.

In addition to hugs for writers, all the children—including some large, hulking boys who even in the third grade were taller than their teachers—lined up after the final learning log entries for a good-bye hug from both Ann and Marlene. A sign on the bulletin board read, CHERISH THE CHILDREN, in both English and Hawaiian. For Ann and Marlene, this seemed to be the guiding instructional principle, a higher priority than even whole language.

But somehow writing and cherishing children seemed to be connected enterprises in room 18. Every time I visited, I would sit pondering the relationship between this outpouring of love and the success of writing across the curriculum, just as Ann herself wondered about the connection between her students’ enhanced motivation and her curricular reforms. Clearly, her goal of using writing as social vehicle—to help students establish positive feelings, to learn to work together—seemed to be producing visible results. In her responses to students’ journal entries, for example, Ann often affirmed the importance of friendships, of maintaining good relationships. For example, a student named Poulele wrote:
Dear Mrs. S. and Mrs. L., I've had a best time in school and I had fun Times with my friends and playing with my friend.

Love,
Poulele

Ann wrote back:

Dear Poulele,
I am so glad you are having a good time in school. I am also glad that you have special friends. That's very important isn't it?

Love,
Mrs. L.

Ann's journal entries throughout the semester are brimming with aloha and enthusiasm. A typical day concludes with the following:

I must say that I am having fun and that I love teaching. I love the students. I love what it's all about. (The Met professor wrote in the margin of that entry: "Excellent. It really shows Ann!")

This enthusiasm and warmth seemed to be echoed in the pages of her students' journals. Willie, a previously alienated student and non-writer, wrote:

I love my USSR and I love reading books and I love my spelling and I love writing in my journal and I love writing in my Learning log and I love my class and I love my teachers and I love Yolanda (a severely retarded girl mainstreamed in the class during part of the day) and I love to help her in the class and in the cafeteria.

Reading these journal responses and observing these classes, I was reminded of a Nel Noddings quote:

The primary aim of every educational institution and of every educational effort must be the maintenance and enhancement of caring...If what we do instructionally achieves the instructional end--A learns X--we have succeeded instructionally,
but if A hates X and his teacher as a result, we have failed educationally (Noddings, 1984, p.174).

Ann used writing to help ease their adjustment to the mainstreaming of Yolanda, who could not speak or participate in any of the academic work. In their learning logs, Ann asked her students to freewrite about their new classmate, offering them an opportunity to put themselves in her place, to express their feelings about her disability, to reflect on ways they might be helpful to her. In their journal entries they tended to say more about liking and helping Yolanda than about making sense of her disability. They wrote of her being "a little different from us, but I love her no matter what," of taking her to the health aid’s office for her medication, of playing with her at recess.

Yesterday, Kimberly and I took Yolanda to the health room for her medication and when she was very jumpi so we had to hold her very tit and we went to take her to the bathroom.

I love to help Yolanda because she is special age (special education?) and a special beautiful girl.

I love to play with her and run around the school.

She’s learning a lot in school. She’s very smart now we could handle her anger.

Today I was jumping with Yolanda and Yolanda was happy and my teacher was happy to....

I began to see a common thread in Ann’s approaches to classroom writing, one that reflected her own Quaker heritage. For Ann, writing was above all a way of communicating with others, a way of sharing the wonderment of being on this earth, a way of saying: We are
interconnected on this small planet; we need to learn to accept one another and work together.

**Little Successes**

Like Kate, Ann had little appreciation of her extraordinary success as educational reformer. "I see little successes," she said. "Still, it's like a roller coaster."

But the "little successes" mounted up. As weeks passed, Ann continued to pursue each curricular modification with great tact. Toward the end of the first quarter, for example, Ann began soul-searching about how she might ask Marlene about changing the seating clusters. Originally, when Marlene had switched to cluster grouping, she allowed students to choose wherever they wanted to sit. This element of student choice was still important to her. But Ann had begun to see problems with allowing them to sit with their friends, because all the boys with poor language ability had grouped themselves at the two tables in the back, "with no role models and no one they can ask for help." Ann thought they should be mixed heterogeneously "so that they can help each other." She had proposed this once before, and Marlene had not been receptive. Ann deliberated on how to present this suggestion once again. Her opportunity came at the start of her solo teaching. She proposed creating new teams, explaining her rationale, and this time, Marlene agreed.

Ann described changing their seats in her journal. Some of the children were upset about the move. True to her goal
of having students write every day, of "having the writing become a part of them," Ann used a writing activity--the composing of "happy grams"--to "ease the pain" of leaving their friends. These happy grams were further examples of the linking of writing with a social mission:

The majority saw it (i.e. the new seating arrangement) as something new and exciting. The "Happy Grams" that they sent to their former teammates seemed to really help ease the pain of saying good-bye to their friends, because truly and literally they were leaving their friends. I was really elated to see each one of them really involved in what they wrote on the Happy Grams. I got to read a few and the things that they shared with one another were indeed very special. It was a reward for me that the content... had really gone beyond the superficial "I love you, you're nice," to "Thank you for being a hard worker and helping me with my spelling."

Indeed, for many students the content of their writing had improved considerably by early November--in daily journal entries as well as in book reports on all their USSR choices. We can possibly attribute this progress to the value placed on writing and the class time allotted to it, to the comments the teachers wrote in students' journals, and to conferences on the book reports that Ann and Marlene had with individual students during USSR. According to Ann, these conferences allowed them to "teach the skills on an individual basis" (i.e. punctuation, run on sentences, and other mechanics issues.). They also used the conferences to help students move beyond superficial responses to the books they'd chosen.
We have spent some time with the children discussing the importance of going beyond writing about just "I love the book, I love the story" to "what happened in the story, how did the characters get from here to there."

In writing his reasons for liking a book about the Berenstein Bears, for example, one boy wrote: "I like when her brother get bean(ed) from the baseball."

**The Final Weeks**

For the remainder of the semester, the basal readers stayed on the shelf untouched, perhaps serving as a kind of security blanket for Marlene. Meanwhile, Ann pursued her goal of "making the writing become a part" of her students. She also continued to use writing as a vehicle for better communication. A typical daily schedule during Ann’s solo teaching illustrates the importance of writing to her curriculum, just as she had envisioned in the writing autobiography interview ten months earlier:

- **Morning Business**
- **Journal Writing**
- **Artist in Schools Presentation (an assembly)**
- **Math**
- **Spelling**
- **Story Writing**
- **Chapter One (pull out program for low ability kids)**
- **USSR**
- **Learning Logs**

When I visited on the November morning this schedule was written on the board, there was no groaning or complaining when the children were asked to go write. Instead, they appeared to love writing in their journals. Ann told later me that children would often ask if they
could stay in during recess to finish this daily writing. They now complained if the journal period were shortened (as it was on the day of my observation, because of a special assembly program).

I watched as they concluded the morning business (seated up on the carpet) and immediately moved to their seats to take out their journals and begin to write. Ann reminded them "We have only ten minutes today (instead of the usual fifteen or twenty)."

"How much minutes?" a girl asked.

"Ten."

A girl at my table looked up at the ceiling, asking (in a stage whisper), "What should I write about?"

At all the tables heads were soon bent over black and white speckled notebooks as children quietly began to write. One boy (Willie) had stayed at the back of the room sweeping up what looked like a spilled pencil sharpener. Another boy joined him and, without a word, helped hold the dust pan. Still without a word, the two went to their seats and began writing in their journals. One girl quietly asked her neighbor "How do you spell "pick?" The neighbor responded in a whisper, "P-I-C-K."

This was the only spelling request I heard. When I had observed earlier in the semester, Ann's students had frequently stopped writing in their journals to ask how to spell a particular word, and one girl had paused almost
every other word to consult a well thumbed paper-back dictionary positioned next to her journal. Studies of remedial writers (like the Chapter One students at Keala) have indicated that students who are constantly stopping to get the correct spelling have difficulty creating a smooth flow of ideas. They frequently seem stuck on a prematurely determined set of rigid rules, especially spelling rules, which in effect block the discovery, meaning-making process (Sommers, 1980, Perl, 1979, 1980, Freeman, 1978). What appears on the page, having been written in fits and starts between trips to the dictionary or the teacher, frequently makes little sense to a reader (Perl, 1980, Rose, 1989).

Instead of getting hung up on mechanics, Ann had wanted to make her students comfortable with their writing. She believed that spelling corrections should be made to a final product intended for a specific audience (such as their letters to penpals), once students were engaged with a piece of writing. When they wrote in their journals, she refused to be a walking dictionary, telling them to spell their words the way they heard them. When they continued to ask, she would tell them, "I’m just interested in your ideas for now. I’m just interested in getting what’s up here (she points to her head) down on the paper."

But refraining from answering their requests for spelling help had been especially difficult for Marlene, who had been trained to correct all spelling mistakes
immediately. The compromise Ann had suggested was for them to refuse to help with the spelling during journal and learning log writing, when there would be no final "published" product. With all their other writing tasks (i.e. book reports, letters, scientific observations), kids still constantly interrupted their writing to ask for spelling help, and both teachers continued to give it.

Ann had finally managed to students not to stop for spelling corrections during journal and learning log writing. On the November day I watched the journal writing, children were not interrupting their flow of ideas to worry about spelling or mechanics. All were concentrating on the text taking shape on the page in front of them. When the ten minutes were up, the girl at my table showed me her paper, "This is the first time that I'm writing all the way down here," she said, pointing to a full page of text. Other children showed me their entries with evident pride.

The following example illustrates the progress in one child's journals during the course of the semester. Ann estimates that only "seven to ten" of the children reached the kind of fluency, the sophistication of ideas, as did Leilani (below), but all of the children were producing more written text (in most cases, a full page per entry) and were taking considerable pride in their own writing.

The first of the sample entries from Leilani's journals, from late September:
Today we talk about when some of our classmates had long hair. I don't know if they like it but I did. I did not get a tune but I'm going.

Underneath the cryptic sentence about a tune (or turn?) is a charming picture of a girl with long hair. We found that, in general, as the journal entries became longer, there were fewer accompanying pictures.

An early October entry is even briefer than the first:

Hi my story is how long was it yesterday. I wrote some things for the school.

By the end of November, however, Leilani's entries were running a page or more in length, and in the excerpt below, she was clearly using her writing to express her wonder (and outrage!), to make sense of the world. I have, in some cases, given the Standard English spelling for some of her invented spelling. Also, this entry was written as a single, page-long sentence. I have provided punctuation to separate this run-on sentence, so that readers can understand Leilani's flow of ideas. Ann made no such corrections of student journals or learning logs, although she helped students learn to break up run-on sentences in their "published" texts, such as book reports and letters.

Today we saw a butterfly in an chrysalis and it hatche and the whole class saw it. And we all like it. I like because I never saw it before. If I never saw it, I have to like it because it's interesting. We saw two that hatche and I like it and I can't wait for my chrysalis to hatche. My and the classroom butterfly is going to be beautiful. And two butterfly are beautiful. And I can't believe it that the butterfly only lasts (last) for a month. That is awful! It should (should) last for as long as it wants. That is how the world should be, not like fly can live for one day. Why is that? And if
people see a fly they will kill them, but why do they do that? Why do they want to kill them? And on the butterfly the wings are like silk and nice and soft.

Unlike the example above, many of the journals remained a litany of "I love my class, I love my teachers, etc." throughout the semester. But although the purpose of this study was not to track the improvement in student writing, even those journals that remained at the litany stage seemed to become more coherent--more accessible to the reader--in the course of the semester. And this was Ann's goal. She saw her students as having very little language experience with books or adults reading to them. The journals were providing that source of language development.

During the remainder of the semester, Ann continued to build on these successes, adding to the journals, learning logs, letters, and book reports a unit on creative writing, which she described in our final focus group of the semester:

I'm focusing in on creative writing ... last week the class as a whole wrote a story together. We talked about the basic parts of a story, and I used an object that nobody knew what it was. (The object was an egg holder). We passed it around and they used words to describe the object, and we listed on the board brainstorming what you could use it as. And then we went into developing a story focusing on this object....I typed it up on my computer and now we're gonna illustrate it.

After this class story, they practiced analyzing published stories using a story schema (i.e. exposition, problem, resolution, etc.). A substance called "ubleck" (with curious quasi-liquid, quasi-solid properties) that Ann
had used in her pre-school days formed the basis for the second story. "It's a real exciting substance to work with," Ann explained. "Each team had to use this strange stuff as the focus of a story. For example, one group went to Mars in a rocket ship and found the stuff.... They had a great time. This was something they’ve never done before." Other teams produced stories called "Ubleck Soup" and "Ubleck of the Forest." It was difficult getting the groups started on their stories, and Ann felt torn in five different directions. During the collaboration, students had to compromise, reach consensus and take turns recording the group’s ideas. Stories were then laminated and bound and presented to the classroom library at a formal reading. With great joy, Ann described Marlene’s excitement as she listened to these readings and noted how students’ "eyes just lit up when they could sit and read their own stories."

In a sense, Sharon had been correct in her complaints about all the "fun stuff" going on in room 18. The writing activities Ann designed were meant to be engaging, to make students want to "write every day," to take away that fear that Ann herself had felt as a student with low self esteem compelled to write "objective" papers. Her activities were classic examples of what Martin (in our study group) had called "making it so that students almost felt compelled to write."
At the same time, it was also obvious that writing was taken very seriously in room 18. Ann, who herself found writing, even in the best of circumstances, to be hard work, would conclude the morning announcements with a remark like "We’ve got a lot of work today." The speed with which her students moved to their desks, the businesslike way they got out their journals and began to write, would have made a whole language convert out of all but the most hardened adversaries. (Alas, Sharon, the next door neighbor, was one of the latter.)

"Taking away the Fear"

Clearly, Ann had fulfilled her goals of "taking away the fear," and in order to accomplish that, of "having them write every day, in all subjects." She had addressed both categories of writing—personal and informational (school-based)—that she had identified in her writing autobiography interview. Furthermore, she had transformed the latter category (school-based writing), once a source of her own low self-esteem as a student, into a way of sharing ideas, scientific observations, and recipes. Her own informational assignments all reflected this redefinition of school-based writing (i.e. "to collect data, so that other people can read it and gain the knowledge you’ve gained.") that she had proposed in the writing autobiography interview.

Furthermore, Ann had managed to adapt both categories of writing to serve an overarching social mission that was
perhaps her highest priority as a teacher. For Ann, more and better writing meant more and better communication. Because by sharing our feelings and ideas, by better understanding one another, we can learn to live peacefully and productively on this small, increasingly crowded planet.

Her uses of classroom writing as a tool for learning had been entirely consistent with the goals she expressed the previous semester. In terms of the writing as a tool for learning, the positive attitudes toward writing exhibited by her students far exceeded my hopes and expectations for what novice teachers could expect to accomplish in teaching with writing. With her Chapter One students, she had moved way beyond the frequency of writing activities typically observed in elementary school classes of average and above average classes. Moreover, her students were clearly having fun and being serious about their own writing at the same time. With almost half of the children, we had seen the content and coherence of the writing improve. Finally, from her happy grams to her message board to her penpal exchange to reading birthday cards and hugging authors, she had found a way to use writing as a social vehicle-- to support one another, to share ideas and feelings, to inform, to comfort, to heal.

In terms of her own personal uses for writing, Ann had continued to rely on her journal to make sense of her experience. In a focus group interview, she had admitted to
our group that when juggling family and school pressures (and her daughter's complaint that "you're not a regular mommy anymore"), her journal was "the first thing to go." Still, she had managed to write regularly throughout this roller coaster semester--to "develop my own idea of the role of a teacher," just as she had envisioned in her writing autobiography interview.

And if the above accomplishments were not impressive enough, she may have also convinced a 32 year teaching veteran that reading, writing, and thinking across the curriculum can work miracles. (This conversion, of course, would depend on whether Marlene would keep all or any of the whole language innovations after Ann moved on to her own classroom in January).

As I wrote field notes on Ann's phenomenal progress, I kept thinking, "No reader is going to believe this. It's too good to be true. I wouldn't believe it if I read this case study!" Ann herself seemed to share my own misgivings as she neared the end of her student teaching semester. She wrote in one of her final journal entries:

I keep wondering when am I going to wake up from this dream. I told Marlene that I get kind of scared thinking about how well things have gone for me during my student teaching semester and fear that I will have to 'pay my dues' during my internship. The thing that is going to be really difficult is that I will have no support system. That's one of the things that I love right now. It's going to be really difficult to leave that camaraderie behind. How difficult will it be to develop a good support system at a new school, in the middle of the school year!
The Internship Semester

Shortly after writing the above journal entry, Ann was hired to replace a retiring second grade teacher at Waiala School, and just as she had feared, the internship started badly. When she visited in the final week of the fall semester, the departing teacher rebuffed her attempts to get acquainted and failed to introduce her to the class as their new teacher. Then, a week into the new semester, Ann came down with pneumonia and missed a week of precious start-up time in the new position.

Things improved on her return, when she had a chance to create her own climate, her own curriculum. "I felt really restricted last semester because I had to respect the person I was working with," she explained later. "I don’t like to use the word barriers. But I didn’t feel free to do what I wanted to do. Still, I’ll always value that experience."

Of her debut as solo teacher, Ann recalled, "I just took off." But the actual transition wasn’t as smooth as her memory of it. On January 15th she wrote the following journal entry:

After being sick for almost a week and coming back to school, I feel like I’m treading water, just barely keeping my head and chin above that crucial point. I feel so overwhelmed with all the work that has to be done. Journal writing, detailed lesson plans for the quarter, unit plans as well as daily plans. What I’d like is support, not more pressure...I’m sorry, I just feel stressed out to the max. And what about my own family? When will I even attempt the Plan B paper?
In addition to this feeling of being overwhelmed by the demands of full-time teaching, the new freedom was "really scary" at first, and she admits, "For a while, I was frozen. I'd read all about this (whole language, writing-to-learn) but I'd never seen anybody do it. Still, I really wanted to try because I believe learning is social, that they can learn much more from their peers. Looking back, it was really about taking me out of the limelight."

The first thing students were aware of was a different classroom climate. On the day back after her illness, they were sitting at their tables smiling timidly at their new teacher. Ann said to them, "Hey, I didn't get any hugs. Come here and give me some hugs!" They were a bit nonplussed but soon got used to the new order. As at Keala, Ann ended each day (after the learning logs) by giving a big hug to all the kids.

Ann quickly found some of the support she needed from two neighboring whole language teachers who had already planned to collaborate on an integrated unit on whales. Soon Ann was participating in the unit and sharing ideas with them, and before long, all the other second grade teachers had joined the project in an unprecedented show of teacher collegiality at Waiala. The project would culminate in a field trips to the Bishop Museum whale exhibit and an excursion on a whale watch boat (with students writing logs about what they had learned and thank you letters after
each). Additionally, there would be a good deal of sharing of writing and other projects between the second grades.

During those early weeks Ann was busy launching her journals, learning logs, individualized reading with book reports, and introducing research writing. Students were reading widely about whales and writing non-fiction books on a whale of their choice, synthesizing all the information they’d learned in their reading.

A typical daily schedule written on the board in late January showed a curriculum reassembling that of her student teaching semester in terms of the class time devoted to writing. During these early weeks, she seemed to be holding on to some familiar elements as she prepared to launch learning centers, a major innovation.

Morning Business
Journal
DEAR (Waiala’s acronym for sustained silent reading)
Recess
Math
Lunch
Charlotte’s Web (which she was reading aloud)
Music
Dragon Making (for Chinese New Year’s)
Learning Logs

In their learning logs I noticed that these second graders seemed to be reflecting much more specifically on what they had learned in school than had Ann’s Keala third graders:

Today my teacher read a book to the class. It was about whales. It was about a whale and a girl and a uncle and grandmother. I hate the uncle but I like the girl and whales and grandmother.
Ann agreed. "The learning logs are more content-based, very specific about what they've done that day." And the Waiala journals had, in Ann's words, "on the whole, more to them" than what we were calling the "litanies of love" produced by her former students (i.e., "I love my class, I love my teacher, I love writing in my journal."). Furthermore, her present second graders seemed more willing (or perhaps more able) to act upon her suggestions for improving their texts than her past third graders had been. According to Ann, their journals were "more descriptive," full of clear, coherent portrayals of events out of their lives:

I was still making a card for my mom and my next door neighbor's baby came to our house and she came inside our house and when she saw my gold fish she went to get something hard so she could crack the glass and grab my gold fish.

She soon increased the amount of student writing with the addition of a message board (like the one she had at Keala). There was also a book students wrote collaboratively about their trip to the Bishop Museum that Ann sent home "to make the connection between home and school." Students were to read their books to parents, and parents wrote comments and signed.

In addition to these writing activities, a science observation log involving meal worms had been added in early February, a second grade science activity that Ann had not been expecting:
Meal worms. I got meal worms. The whole second grade got meal worms. I guess I'm supposed to fit that in because second grade is supposed to cover life cycles. They came to me yesterday--mealworms in one container and sawdust (or whatever it is) in another. I put them together after I talked to Giselle. She suggested I do that, but I looked at them this morning and I think I killed them. Maybe they are sleeping.

But the worms lived and provided an additional reason for writing. Children had their own worms in their petri dish. Each day they recorded life cycle observations similar to the following examples in a special log:

- They have legs did you no that
- They are ugle
- I do not like them

- It’s look borwn.
- It’s long
- I think one is dead
- My worm is moving!

The day's schedule for February 18 indicates the increased importance writing had assumed in Ann's developing curriculum. She had introduced math logs, booklets called "Math and Me" in which children responded to prompts such as: "Think of as many words you can think of that mean subtract." As the semester evolved, this writing turned out to be disappointing, except for providing her with some useful information on her students' learning patterns. What turned out to be more productive in her math lessons was asking students to write their own story problems (called math stories). A typical story went: "One child went to the store and two more children arrived. How many children were in the store?" She would type these stories and share with
the class the following day. The stories that didn’t make any sense were left just the way they were, and when children couldn’t do them, Ann directed them to go back to the authors and explain that they couldn’t understand their stories.

The schedule below also indicates that Ann had launched her learning centers. Children rotated to the following activities; writing, reading, whales, math, and art. Writing activities were embedded in almost all the centers (ie., story starters in whale center as well as written definitions of whale words with accompanying pictures.)

- **Morning Business**
  - Computer (writing on computers)
  - Mealworm observations (with written logs)
  - Centers (with writing activities part of most centers)
- Lunch
- Dear
- Math (math logs and original story problems)
- Charlotte’s Web
- Learning Logs

The activities in the centers were all created by Ann, with no textbooks of any kind. Staying at school until five or six and then continuing to work at home, she typed up story problems, xeroxed books for the reading center, created worksheets with story starters like the example below:

"If I were a whale I would..." One student wrote: "swim to the sea and come up to breach. I have to breach so I don’t die. When I breach, I breathe."

Ann reported on her centers to her fellow MET students at their weekly seminar, explaining her use of a pocket
chart, her anecdotal records for the progress of each child: "They have to sign in at each center, and at the end of the day I go through every box, every paper. That's why it's so time consuming. I have a conference with the student if something needs to be redone. It's a lot of work and a lot of record keeping, just moving kids from one place to another."

One of her colleagues said sadly, as if from experience, "Doing that kind of thing, you're gonna be up til midnight every night. It takes its toll on you, it really does." Everyone at the table agreed. A teacher in this new paradigm seemed to be one like Ann, who said, with a kind of resignation, "I stay at school til six every night and then I go home and work."

Ann's goal for the semester had been to enlarge her classroom writing repertoire still further, to include poetry. Just before spring break, she introduced poetry writing in the writing centers. Students wrote haiku about whales. She told me, "It went really well introducing the concept of syllables and form. They're helping each other counting out the syllables." Unlike her friend Kate, Ann had no problem with this formulaic approach to poetry. "I have to do more research on it," she admitted, "There's more than just haiku. Cinquain sounds neat too." In her quarter plans, she also noted that she wanted to "approach rhyming words" as well, her friend Kate's poetry-teaching nemesis.
In our frequent conversations, Ann did not seem to be becoming coopted by the system. "They always talk about how beginning teachers revert to teaching the way they’ve been taught," she said. "But I definitely want to get away from that!" She also did not seem to be opting for the more routine writing activities that would make it easier for her to manage the noise and confusion level, as some research suggested that novice teachers tend to do. Indeed, the opposite was true, with kids moving freely from center to center and all the management problems such a free flow of activity suggests. She struggled with some kids "fooling around" at centers (like reading) which offered more unstructured activities and with some finishing earlier than others and creating traffic jams at some centers. But she did not cancel or cut short the centers in favor of more direct teaching.

One afternoon I watched her orchestrating a spelling game, played in partners with the week’s spelling words on cards. When the last card was grabbed by the winner of each pair, there was jumping up and down, screaming and squealing reminiscent of the winning touchdown. Watching her, I didn’t think she was becoming obsessed by control, like some reported studies of novice teachers in their first full-time positions. When her students were not listening to her directions, she simply stood still, waiting, until they quieted down.
Stephanie, her MET mentor teacher, wrote in the margin of one of her journal entries: "The children are so happy here and are given a lot of freedom. Remember to take care of yourself."

Still, in her present classroom, there seemed to be less of a social mission than I had seen at Keala; the writing seemed more content based, less a vehicle to create positive relationships than it had been the previous semester. But it wasn’t fair to compare the two situations. This new class was more ethnically mixed than the Filipino/Pacific Islander population at Keala, and there was no Yolanda to give students a compelling reason for reaching out and helping. Ann agreed that she was finding it was more difficult to instill the kind of cooperation she had enjoyed with her former students, even though these second graders had turned out to be better writers, and this was sometimes a source of frustration.

"Sometimes I think I’m in the wrong profession," she said to me after a particularly conflicted day in which one student had written a note calling another "a big fat pig." She admitted that her teams were not working all that well, that one of them was a disaster. "They cooperated better," she said of her students at Keala, "I think that goes along with the Pacific Island culture." At Waiala, she had to confront problems involving stealing and put downs, and she felt she was spending too much time "talking about being a
family and being considerate....and sometimes I don't even know that it helped." She wrote in her journal, "Sometimes I feel like an ogre. Auwe (Hawaiian for "Woe! Alas!")!"

But there was also evidence that her emphasis on helping one another was paying off. Better students were working with partners "without giving the answer," helping with editing and spelling and paired reading activities even in the disaster group. She asked successful teams to model for the others how they worked together and planned to work for the rest of the semester on creating better teams--a personal challenge.

One afternoon in late March we reviewed the semester during Ann's lunch duty stint, as we stood watching second graders cavorting in the grassy area between the classroom buildings. I asked her about other goals for teaching with writing. She realized that some scripted stories in the whale center and the story about the Bishop Museum visit that was sent home had been their only story writing. In the future, Ann said that she wanted to be able to "start off the year with children having writing folders, editing, peer editing and publishing their own stories. That's a goal I have."

Still, it always came back to the time issue--not enough hours in the day. She added that sometimes she found herself asking, "Am I crazy or what? I could do this job so much more easily if I taught the whole class at once, the
old-fashioned way...." There was a moment of silence as we watched some boys trying to retrieve pogs that had fallen into a drainage ditch. "Except that I love it," she finally said. "The kids love it, and I really get to talk to individuals. My contact with them is so much richer, so much more valuable. I get to know who they are and what they think about."

In terms of learning from her own writing, Ann had begun working on her Plan B paper, which was a case study of Yolanda’s mainstreaming the previous semester. And although she had called her journal writing "the first thing to go" in the crush of other demands, she continued to record her reflections at least once a week. When Stephanie, her MET mentor teacher invited her to use the pages to vent her frustrations, Ann wrote about her precious morning teaching time being broken up by special classes such as music and PE as well as individual students being pulled out at different times for ESL. Stephanie, who had fought this same battle with the administration, wrote in the margin: "Be brave! How far are you willing to go to assert your beliefs?" Stephanie also used the pages to offer encouragement and praise as well as practical suggestions.

Ann seemed to appreciate and sometimes even enjoy this dialogic exchange. One Friday, for example, she wrote:

The day is over, the week is over, and I’m tired. Have so much to do but need a little time to just sit and think about the day. Funny. I feel like writing. Could writing possibly be therapeutic?
As my data collection period came to a close, we talked a final time about Ann’s own learning process, which she called "learning by doing." The centers had been "like a big cloud" at first. "But," she added, "it starts to take shape as it goes along." First there was the question of whether to rotate different groups through the centers or allow individuals to choose, which she called "a big organizational question." She began by assigning children to small groups to prevent "aimless wandereding" but later allowed individual choices (based on a brief morning conference and a pocket chart to help keep track of their progress). Another issue she faced was assessment. She eventually developed a process of taking notes on each child's process on her clip board as she circulated. At the end of the day, she would cut out sections on each child and paste them on the child’s individual record. A typical entry for a book report conference with Claudette, for example, described how Ona had probed for clarity and specificity when the child wrote, "Whale is my best (animal) because it is nice." Ona's notes said: "Had her clarify what she meant by 'nice.' Too general."

"I'm still playing with it," Ann said of her centers, "But each day it seems more solid. It gives me an opportunity to really talk to children individually about their writing and reading. I'm constantly learning. All the
time. My advice to others is: You just gotta do it! By doing it, you'll know how you want to change it."

And the improved functioning of the centers seemed to be furthering her goals for group sharing and cooperation. She wrote in late March:

The kids were really working hard and cooperating today. Some were writing stories, some working on whales as a group, some in the art center, and some working on book reports. I'd look up from working with a child and take a quick glance around. It was a great sight to see everyone working. I love it!! I do know why I'm in this profession. I love teaching the children."

Still, she often tended to downplay her own accomplishments, losing sight of the larger picture of her extraordinary successes in the daily struggle with conflicting time demands, as illustrated in the journal entry below:

If I can just get through this semester, finish my Plan B paper, and graduate, then in the fall I can really concentrate on my teaching.

As I prepared a draft of this case study for Ann to read during spring break, I hoped she would be able to see herself in it as the example—the inspiration to other novice teachers—that I found her to be.
CHAPTER SIX
DISCUSSION OF THE CASE STUDIES

Part 1: Writing-to-learn and Teachers' Personal Histories

Wright and Tuska (1968) have suggested that a novice teacher's beliefs and eventual teaching practices are deeply rooted in psychodynamic processes and events from early in life. According to Holt-Reynolds (1992), who conducted a study of preservice teachers' personal history-based beliefs about their own practice, "Over and over, they referenced themselves as prototypes upon which to build a generalized premise" (p. 339).

As I poured over transcripts, watched the three women in my case studies teach, and listened to them talk about teaching and writing, I, too, could see the long shadows cast by their personal histories. For each one, the decision to enter this study in the first place was a consequence of who they were, as human beings with compelling pasts.

Encouraged by her MET professors, Lee joined our writing-to-learn support group to remediate her own writing problems. Ann saw writing as a means of sharing feelings and information with others and our group as a way of creating a supportive network during the MET rite de passage. And Kate was motivated by her own love of literature and her strong belief that teaching with writing could improve her students' critical thinking skills in much the same way as writing had worked for her. These
motivations stemmed from their own very different personal histories and their own images of themselves as writers, which, in turn, translated into different conceptions of the purposes and practices of teaching with writing.

They all agreed that teachers need to do more of it. Based on their own negative experiences with school-based writing and the whole language propaganda of MET seminars, all three planned to place writing at the core of the curriculum. All three wanted to replace the traditional work sheets with student-generated stories and learning logs. All three wanted their students to write "all the time," as Ann expressed it, and "all kinds of writing, in all content areas, not just language arts." Even in kindergarten, Lee wanted to see "how far I could carry them (her students) through a very intensive writing curriculum." All three hoped that this frequent practice would help students feel more comfortable with writing and "take away the fear," as Ann expressed it in the writing autobiography interview.

We have seen that Lee failed to execute these writing-to-learn aspirations during the time period covered by this study or even to articulate how she would actually go about teaching with writing. Ann and Kate, on the other hand, succeeded in making writing a classroom staple during all three semesters. Still, the two women put writing-to-learn to different uses in their respective classrooms, and these uses stemmed from their original conceptions of the value
and purposes of writing, as expressed in the writing autobiography interviews.

What also surfaced in that first interview was the influence of individual personality on the data collection itself. Kate, for example, guided the young researcher toward greater clarity in her questioning, while Ann worked to create a supportive relationship. It was clear, almost at the outset of the study, that each teacher’s past history and unique personality had a profound effect on their instructional goals and practices, reflecting Kagan’s (1992) view that "life stories of teachers explain that the practice of classroom teaching remains forever rooted in personality and experience" (p. 163).

Part 2: From Theory to Practice

I had set out to explore how these novice teachers, trained in an alternative program which promoted constructivist, inquiry-based learning, would use writing in the lessons they created and in making sense of their own experience. Lee’s experience with writing was in the latter category only, and especially as she probed into her own school past in successive drafts of her Plan B paper. As I watched her struggling to rewrite these drafts, my sense was that Lee’s difficulties with her own writing were deeply rooted in her own background and her unresolved identity issues. Indeed, the fact that she herself became so preoccupied with memories of her own schooling suggests that
coming to terms with this past history, through writing about it, was crucial to overcoming this identity crisis and moving forward in her teaching career.

Kagan (1992) suggests, in fact, that helping a novice teacher connect past history with present practice should be a major goal of teacher education. And during the study’s final semester, Lee seemed increasingly to be making these important connections—between her own painful student past and her developing pedagogy—on the pages of her successive drafts.

Both Kate and Ann not only used writing (journals and other texts) to reflect on their own learning but also incorporated a wide range of writing activities into their curricula, sometimes bucking covert or overt resistance to these innovations. But watching them teach, I realized that the successful implementation of writing-to-learn strategies can look very different in two different classrooms, and that these differences were strongly influenced by the unique values, tolerances, and life stories of each teacher.

Research has shown (Kagan, 1992) that novice teachers’ acquisition of classroom knowledge is influenced by their own images of themselves as learners. In much the same way, Kate and Ann’s images of themselves as writers—and their own perceptions of the uses of classroom writing—prompted them to emphasize certain approaches over others.
Kate, the immigrant child in mismatched clothes, "painfully aware" of her own cultural alienation, had walked home from the library with stacks of books too tall to see over. These books—and the Standard English fluency they helped provide—became a path to the mainstream American future she eventually created for herself. They also provided a compelling escape from life inside her tenement. Given this background, it is not surprising that in the writing autobiography interview, Kate identified two major functions for classroom writing: writing as thinking tool and writing as artistic/literary creation. Describing her own uses for writing over the years, she wrote: "Writing was a way of expressing oneself creatively, through the medium of poetry or narrative writing. It was also an avenue for exploring ideas, taking a stance, and reporting on the latest research findings." An English major and published poet, she saw reading and writing as parallel acts, and both as enhancing students' thinking. "It clarifies your thinking," she said of classroom writing at the start of the study. In her students' texts that were destined for publication, she stressed the editing process as a further opportunity to think things through.

Her conception of the uses of classroom writing and her goals for teaching with writing were also related to her own aesthetic appreciation of the power of words, her own experience as a poet. For this reason, she disliked cliches
or formula poems, was critical of the way poetry is traditionally taught, and wanted to see "a lot more creative work being done."

Ann, the Quaker and self-confessed people lover, endowed writing with a social mission--to help students communicate and better understand one another, so that we can get along with one another on this crowded, conflicted planet. In her writing autobiography interview, Ann, like Kate, also described two uses for writing: personal writing (to share feelings and build relationships) and "informational" (expository) writing. But she redefined the latter category in her own emerging pedagogy, rejecting the usual school-based expository writing, such as the "objective" term papers she herself had felt so incompetent to produce (and that are only read by one person: the teacher/evaluator). Instead, she called this category "informational writing" and described it as a means of sharing information, i.e."to collect data so that other people can read it and gain the knowledge you’ve gained."

Both women managed to make writing a classroom staple. Both used writing activities to help create what Wilson et al. (1987) call "multiple representations" of the subject matter. In MET seminars and in our informal group discussions, Kate and Ann were exposed to similar pedagogical knowledge, further extending this
representational repertoire. As friends, they frequently shared books and articles about teaching with writing.

But they put this knowledge to different uses when they translated their emerging pedagogical world views into real-world writing lessons. Like their differing conceptions of teaching with writing, their emerging practices differed as well. And throughout the three semesters I continued to see the powerful influence of their own backgrounds and their own conceptions of the purposes of and practices of teaching with writing on their curricular choices.

Helen Featherstone (1992) found similar connections in her case studies of first year teachers:

What these stories do make clear is that beginning teachers, like the rest of us, learn from experience what their past experience has prepared them to learn....Many reflect endlessly, hectically on this experience, but they bring to bear on this experience only the resources they have brought to the classroom on the first day, along with the attendance book (p. 17).

Ann succeeded in transforming the traditional conception of informational writing in her own teaching. Instead of "objective" assignments (that people write "only because they have to") she offered practical opportunities for exchanging ideas, encouragement, and information—a recipe book, a message board, interviews of fellow students, non-fiction books containing her second graders' "data" about a particular whale, a collaborative story telling parents about a field trip, which was taken home and read to them. Through these assignments her young writers were
indeed sharing data they had collected with one another and
with their families, just as Ann had envisioned in the
writing autobiography interview. Furthermore, these
assignments were all designed to be engaging for students
who, at Keala at least, had done no "real" writing (only
copying words off the board) and did not see themselves as
writers.

Guided by the research from MET seminars and from our
writing-to-learn group, both teachers offered students a
full range of writing products, just as the writing-to-learn
literature suggests. But here again, the impact of each
one's individual personality was seen. Ann, who had kept a
journal "on and off throughout my life...to write down
things I wanted to remember and look back on," made student
journals a top priority in her classroom, "one thing that
happens every single day." Especially during her student
teaching semester at Keala, in a neighborhood noted for gang
wars and alienated students, Ann used writing as part of a
social mission, for creating and maintaining positive
relationships and positive self-esteem. For this reason
there was a higher percentage of personal letters, "happy
grams," penpal exchanges than in Kate's classrooms.

During all three semesters, Kate, the published poet,
made sure that her students wrote poetry in addition to
informational writing (sometimes, as in the shrimp unit,
about the same subject). For Kate, who disapproved of the
way poetry is traditionally taught, it was important to move students beyond the conventional images and techniques. She consistently emphasized that poems didn't have to rhyme, explaining that she was trying to get students to "rethink" what they'd been taught about poetry. Commenting on students' texts, she was delighted by unique images that help a reader see something in an entirely new light and was sometimes disappointed when students insisted on rhyming (even if they had done so artfully).

But because she also saw the value of writing to enhance clear thinking, the proportion of expository, informational kinds of writing to "creative" (i.e. poetry and stories) was roughly equal. And as a writer, she went to extraordinary efforts to publish both kinds of texts in the form of booklets which became classroom reading materials.

The differences between the two women's approaches were particularly striking in terms of their poetry lessons. Kate created a poetry unit each of the three semesters covered by the study. Ann (who had worked with younger students all three semesters) included no poetry until the internship semester, when she had students write haiku about whales. Ann reported, "It went really well introducing the concept of syllables and form. They're helping each other counting out the syllables."

But Kate, who had a more sophisticated understanding of poetry and an aversion to formula approaches, avoided haiku
in all her units. Even if she were to teach this form, Kate insisted that haiku is not about syllables, although that’s the way it’s most often taught in schools. "It’s really the encapsulation of a moment in time," she said.

Ann also noted that she wanted to "approach rhyming words" with her students. Kate, on the other hand, felt that in her poetry lessons she needed to combat the "single-minded view of poetry as something that rhymes....To counteract this impression, sometimes you have to go to the other extreme (de-emphasizing rhyming) by pushing students to have a crack at the other elements." As poetry insider, she went out of her way to acquaint her students with these other elements: metaphor, onomatopoeia, alliteration, and rhythm. (Note: Reading the above interpretation of their different approaches, Kate agreed but added that the fact that she was working with older children (fifth and then fourth graders) compared to Ann’s third and second graders, had also allowed her to approach poetry with greater sophistication.

**Part 3: Control Issues--Getting out of the Way**

There is much discussion and argument in whole language and composition/rhetoric circles about whether students should be assigned topics or choose their own, whether teachers should edit student texts, supply correct spellings, etc. Indeed, some of Ann’s and Kate’s imposed writing prompts (such as the "ublick" stories) would not be
considered "whole language" according to the canonical view espoused by Donald Murray (1982), Donald Graves (1983), Nancie Atwell (1987), and others.

According to Graves (1983), we create a "welfare system" when we assign topics, putting our students on what he calls "writers' welfare" (p. 98). Atwell (1987) suggests that "the student who writes this week on a topic I provide is going to show up the next week and the next requiring more topic hand-outs. He's learned that I'll do his thinking for him" (p. 76). For these theorists, the priority is for students to have ownership in the process and product, which this open-ended practice allows. They believed that if students experience ownership, the writing will flourish, echoing Donald Murray's observation that "Our students will write--if we let them" (1982, p. 146).

Ann and Kate appeared to have different priorities than allowing students complete ownership of their own texts. Kate, for example, sometimes assigned topics to shape students' thinking and challenge their creativity. Ann occasionally assigned prompts to develop confidence (in student writers) and foster healthy relationships. Both were surprised when I told them that these practices would disqualify them as whole language teachers in some circles. Still, I assured them that others within the writing-to-learn community (Kirby, 1988; Perl and Wilson, 1986) would
argue that in refusing to impose topics, we rule out some writing activities that children should be doing.

Still, no matter which side we align ourselves with in the topic debate, all writing teachers eventually find themselves struggling with how much control they should exert over their students' texts. Kate very quickly noticed, in stepping into her internship position, that her students' writing all sounded like their former teacher, something she very much wished to change. But could she guide student writers without interfering with their own voices? And during this internship semester especially, while working with the "better writers" at Lincoln School, she felt an increased responsibility to help shape her students' progress.

Recent studies of student teachers (Florio-Ruane & Lensmire, 1990) show novice writing teachers tending to see their role as explaining the process of writing and the "rules of written language" to their students. The authors suggest that novices must "learn now to mitigate their textual authority so that children could assume more control over their own topics, audiences, purposes in writing" (p. 3).

Bill, one of Perl and Wilson's (1986) case study teachers, called this dilemma learning how to "get out of the way."
Can I convey the overwhelming difficulty of giving up control, of having patience, of "knowing" in my heart of hearts that probably the less I do, the more and better kids will write. Getting out of the way is a hard thing for an activist teacher (p. 256).

But another of their case study teachers suggested that she didn't want to be "out of the way" but "with them (her students) on the way." She went on: "I like the image of partnership better than the image of the teacher collecting dust in the corner while the students merrily do their thing" (p. 256).

In defining this partnership and their own limits for interfering with student texts, Kate and Ann differed in ways that reflected their own conceptions of the uses of writing. Kate's classroom writing tended to be more content-based, with specific topics assigned more frequently, whereas Ann more often allowed her students to determine their own topics, leaving them free to share their own experiences. This was true especially during her first two semesters at Keala. Still, "pattern" would be too strong a word for these tendencies, which were subtle and sometimes inconsistent, with the degree of teacher interference also influenced by the grade level and school setting as much as by individual pedagogical values.

Ann, for example, explained her choice of leaving topics unstructured as particularly crucial during her student teaching semester at Keala, where "children are not read to." She insisted, "These students have no language
experience in standard English; the journals are the only way of giving them voice." Interestingly, during her internship semester at Waiala, there was a subtle shift to more content-based writing and more assigned topics. Again, this shift can be attributed to the fact that students at Waiala entered school with greater language experience than those at Keala.

For math logs Kate set out to design prompts that would produce the desired mathematical thinking. Rejecting the prompts supplied in the new math book, prompts that students could respond to without thinking, she set out to create situations for students to "find their own meaning in the mathematical concepts they were studying." Experimenting with manipulatives, she wanted them to "actually grapple with the problem on paper." Scrutinizing her early efforts, she asked herself questions like, "Did it help them to understand the regrouping they were necessarily doing when they added the two numbers together?"

Ann's students could write in their general learning logs to reflect on anything they'd learned during that day. But (perhaps influenced by Kate) Ann did introduce separate math logs with specific prompts during her internship semester. Interestingly, she found the writing in these math logs disappointing compared to the ongoing general learning logs which she continued to schedule as the day's culminating activity.
As we have seen, a major portion of the actual writing time in Ann's classroom was spent in journal writing, and students could write about anything they wished, usually about their own experiences. When Kate did incorporate daily journal writing during her final internship semester (perhaps influenced by Ann), she preferred to assign specific prompts for students to respond to, usually ideas or concepts from class discussions or previews of upcoming activities (such as reflecting on "If I were one inch tall" before introducing a hands-on measurement activity in which students constructed a tiny house).

Even when Kate replicated Ann's "ublick" stories, she put her own more structured twist on the assignment. She asked students to write individual stories (instead of collaborative ones) and also supplied three questions to help shape their narratives. (Ann had allowed her groups free reign in coming up with their stories, although all of her groups had found it very difficult to generate an idea and get started.)

Similarly, with the magic carpet stories, Kate supplied her students with a heuristic device to guide their content selection and development, instructing them to include three paragraphs on the following topics: (1) how the carpet is controlled, (2) where obtained, and (3) the significance of the design (which students also illustrated). Especially during the internship semester, while working with more
advanced, more motivated writers at Lincoln School, Kate consciously struggled with this topic control issue in her journals. She wondered how she could get boys who wrote consistently gory stories to experiment with other genres. She wrote about the story folders, "My concern is how much to direct them and how much to let them write stories of their own choosing. I want some fantasy, some realistic stories, and some examples of persuasive writing."

We talked about this goal and how difficult it is to achieve in a real-world fourth grade class, where, similar to the classes in Perl and Wilson's (1986) case studies, some children only want to write fantasies, others have great difficulty crafting stories at all and seem much more comfortable with expository writing. Kate, in her typical straightforward matter, also discussed this dilemma with her students. She told them on one occasion, "There are some teachers who never assign topics."

"What, are they lazy?" one student interrupted.

Kate eventually reached a kind of compromise. Half of the writing was on assigned topics. Students could choose their own topics the rest of the time, from lists they had generated on the inside flaps of their writing folders if they were at a loss for other ideas.

Ann, also anticipating the threat of widespread writers' block, established a book of possible writing topics that children had brainstormed early in the semester.
"If they're stuck for a topic," she explained, "they're supposed to get up and go look in the book. But you know, they haven't had to use it in a very long time."

**Part 4: To Edit or not to Edit**

The choice of whether to edit or revise student texts is another getting-out-of-the-way issue that Kate and Ann approached differently. Ann, who had suffered from low self esteem as a student writer, wanted very much to "take away the fear" of writing that many of her students felt. Confidence building and making the writing tasks fun were high priorities for Ann. She therefore tended to place less emphasis on editing and rewriting than did Kate, who had always received positive feedback on her own writing. With published stories and book reports, Ann conferenced with students, calling their attention to run-on sentences and guiding them to be more specific in their choices of words or reasons for liking a particular book. But a higher percentage of her students' writing went uncorrected. Even if their journal entries were sometimes impossible to understand, Ann went out of her way to give her students the feeling that they were still writers. She refused to supply correct spellings during the journal and learning log writing, telling them "I'm just interested in your ideas for now."

Kate believed in the value of rewriting as a critical thinking tool, saying "Good writing is rewriting and lots of
it!" She made it a priority to teach revision and editing techniques, especially those she wished she had been taught in school, such as computer literacy and having students read their texts aloud to a partner. It is important to note here that some student texts (such as journals and math logs) went completely unedited in her classrooms and that in revising other texts, Kate was not interested in hunting out mechanical errors or even correcting them until the final drafts. Her revision strategy was aimed at helping students achieve clarity and artistic impact in expressing their ideas.

Still, even as she helped students revise their texts, especially those destined for publication, she tried hard not to edit out the writers' own voices, concentrating on clarity, word choice, and appropriateness in the changes she suggested. As a writer herself, she valued these student voices, reminding readers in her introduction to the animal stories, for example, that they offer a "delightful glimpse" into the worldviews of the fifth grade authors.

With certain kinds of writing, however, Kate, who had stated that she would be "emphasizing clear writing that moves logically," had more difficulty "getting out of the way." When the assignment had instructed students to take a realistic approach to the content (i.e., the animal stories and space stations), the logical Kate found herself compelled to correct faulty or inaccurate information. With
the animal stories, for example, she talked Armand out of having his fish narrator leave its purse on the reef.

But there were also some similarities in Ann and Kate's approaches to editing. Both women valued overall content and meaning as more important than correcting mechanical errors. Like Ann, Kate cared more about the ideas expressed than the mechanics. Indeed, she identified the traditional focus on mechanical problems as one reason so many students have problems (and negative attitudes) about writing. She was dismayed that her "well-trained" students at Lincoln School described their former teacher's criteria for good writing as follows: "To write nice, neat, correct, and no spelling mistakes." It was immediately clear to Kate that the previous teacher, retiring after a long career in the "traditional paradigm," had seen herself as corrector of errors and "wellspring of knowledge." Kate wanted to ease these students into judging one another's papers and made this a priority for her internship semester, introducing peer editing and response in March, by which time students had become much more comfortable with collaborative activities.

True believers in the MET philosophy, both women emphasized collaboration and experimented with it as part of the editing process. Both had a greater tolerance for classroom talk and movement than their DOE mentors. Kate attributed this tolerance to the pre-school background they
both shared. She and Ann were used to students moving around
the room, talking with one another, gathering for small
group activities. "I don't want to be up in front of the
room lecturing," Kate insisted, and Ann wrote in her
journal: "I really wanted to try (these approaches to
writing and learning) because I believe learning is social,
that they can learn much more from their peers. Looking
back, it was really about taking me out of the limelight."

But although their pre-school backgrounds had made them
comfortable with collaboration, their own experiences with
school-based writing had given them few models for dealing
with the management issues that anyone who has ever switched
over to a workshop approach has to struggle with. Both found
themselves questioning their own vocations as they worked to
create these models for themselves. Beyond the books and
articles they'd read, they had no clear images of what this
new paradigm writing classroom would look like and how it
would function, and they soon ran into practical problems of
kids "fighting and fooling around" as well as escalating
noise levels that Kate called "too high even for me."

Sometimes both women seemed to be operating on faith,
with only a philosophical rationale and some illusive
research, mostly from culturally homogeneous classrooms in
New Hampshire and Maine, that this was a better way to
teach. Their DOE mentors had only the most limited
experience with producing what Kate called "a student-driven
product." For the most part, their pedagogical knowledge about producing a class newspaper or collaborative stories or organizing peer response groups came from MET seminars, our support group, or from each other. They were learning by trial and error. As Ann expressed it, "You just gotta do it. By doing it, you’ll know how you want to change it."

Part 5: Learning how to Manage a "Student-driven" Product

Why are the children so focused and excited about what they are doing? Is it the subject matter? Is it that we’ve given them the freedom to be self directed? Is it because there is a lot of trust placed in them as learners?

The above quote describes Ann’s miracle of whole language cooperation at Keala, when students were working on their seed research. But there were times the following semester at Waiala when she described one of her teams as a disaster, wondered if she had chosen the wrong profession and complained about having to spend "too much time telling them about being a family and being considerate, and sometimes I don’t even know that it helps." About the same time (mid-February), Kate was complaining about "struggling with behavior much more than I wanted to....I always have to think about what I’m doing to keep the behavior under wraps."

Research on novice teachers suggests that in the course of their first year socialization, they tend to become more authoritarian, often making choices that will control student behavior rather than promote their intellectual
growth. This tendency has been attributed to the frustrating and bewildering management dilemmas they experience, to the inherent top-down power structure of schools, and to their contact with other teachers (Featherstone, 1992; Glasser, 1990; Goodman, 1985; Palonsky, 1986). Goodman (1985) who examined field-based experiences of novice teachers, reported that student teachers "turned lights on and off, put names on the board, counted down from ten, and sent pupils to "time out" corners....No issue seemed more important... than management and control" (p. 45).

Florio-Ruane and Lensmire's (1990) research on transforming future teachers ideas about writing instruction concludes with the following observation:

Our students seemed to experience the most difficulty and discomfort when our curriculum or pedagogy challenged their ordinary views of school roles and curriculum in ways that directly threatened their ability to maintain control or seemed uncompelling (p. 11).

Kate summed up the feelings of everyone in our group when she wrote in her journal about the increased management difficulties presented by the workshop classroom. "When they’re working collaboratively," she wrote, "it’s a lot harder to monitor their progress." According to Hollingsworth (1989) novices first need to master organizational and managerial strategies before they can really focus on what students are learning from classroom lessons, even to the point of becoming "obsessed by class control" in order to survive the overwhelming management
challenges they face in their first years. Indeed, Kagan suggests in her meta study of professional growth among preservice and beginning teachers that "promoting the acquisition of standardized routes that integrate management of instruction" is a "genuine, mostly unmet need" in teacher education (p. 162).

But Grossman (1992) objects to Kagan’s focus on the need to acquire classroom management routines before novice teachers have a chance to grapple with the more substantive pedagogical issues, because this focus on management could perpetuate the prevailing norms of instruction and (quoting Lortie) will "contribute to the inherent conservatism of schooling" (p. 176.) Grossman warns that "student teachers may learn to manage pupils and classrooms without learning to teach," and that an over-emphasis on management will divert attention from pedagogical and ethical issues novices need to confront, especially if we want to change the schools we’ve inherited.

Grossman wants novices to question current routines "in which teachers tightly control discourse" instead of perpetuating them. She wants student teachers raising the larger questions, such as whether traditional practices (like checking math homework) will "aid or thwart students’ construction of their own mathematical explanations" (p. 176).
Grossman would have been pleased, I think, by the socialization processes of both Kate and Ann. Both consistently raised larger questions at the same time as they struggled with day-to-day management issues; both consistently opted for activities which would open the discourse rather than control it. I saw examples of this multi-layered process as Kate agonized over the kinds of math log prompts that would promote constructivist thinking, over whether to appoint student editors or to adopt the more egalitarian but messier process of allowing students to choose their own. I saw the temptation to adopt "standardized" management routines when Ann wondered whether she should assign students to centers, when Kate described how her students would work quietly "when they're doing those horrendous questions at the end of the chapter." But she quickly added that her conscience wouldn't allow her to assign such things very often. For the most part, she opted instead for "student driven" texts, learning logs, and peer revision. Similarly, Ann eventually made room for student choice in the management of her learning centers, having launched the centers with a more controlling practice of assigning students to centers.

Both teachers often felt exhausted and sometimes even a bit nostalgic for the "traditional paradigm" with its basal reader, its right answers, its "good little boys and girls in neat rows." Particularly during start-up times, both felt
overwhelmed by the demands placed on teachers of "student driven" learning. Kate likened the job to "being pulled in twenty different directions....It's as if all the students need your help for different things and all at the same time."

They also had to deal with children who regularly delivered put downs or disrupted one another. In a society rooted in individualism, with schools that traditionally foster competition over collaboration, there are few models for how to achieve the kind of helpful, caring behaviors needed to make a writing workshop approach work. The approaches being used in many DOE classrooms (i.e. writing a child's name on the board with pre-specified consequences for rule infractions) didn't seem to fit philosophically with a whole language approach to learning. To create helpful, productive writing workshops, Kate and Ann needed to find ways of creating in their classrooms what Goodman (1992) calls a "collectivist" culture, in which students learn to be constantly aware of the rights of others and to negotiate the tension between the rights of the individual and the rights of the community, working along with their adult mentors.

Part 6: Creating a Collectivist Community

How do we begin to create this culture in our writing-to-learn classrooms? In "breaking ground" with the class newspaper, Kate received encouragement and practical advice
from Amanda, her professor, who suggested self-report forms in which students assessed their own performance as members of their newspaper "desks." The following semester, Kate went on to implement a similar self-assessment form for students to reflect on their participation in small groups.

Ann, too, got practical support during her internship semester from two veteran whole language neighbors, but soon bypassed both in implementing a collaborative, student-centered classroom. Resisting what Goodman (1992) calls "standardized routines," both Ann and Kate continued to function as teacher researchers. While experimenting with a writing workshop approach, they found helpful books and articles and shared them with one another. Although we met less frequently during the final two MET semesters, the members of our writing-to-learn group still supported one another (by telephone and during informal meetings) as they put their classroom writing ideas into practice and struggled with the ensuing management issues. I can't emphasize the importance this support appeared to make as these novice teachers learned to structure the collectivist climate Ann once referred to as "a productive hum."

There was no magic formula for "how much to intervene and when" as Kate often asked herself in her journals. Looking back on her class newspaper, for example, she decided that she would be more controlling for some things "next time." Specifically, she would edit some of the pieces
herself and would insist that all students honor a publication deadline (even if this would mean leaving out some who had wasted workshop time, making the project less "egalitarian" according to Amanda, her professor). But in some areas she would also be less controlling next time. For example, she would give student editors more leeway, even if this meant sacrificing the graphic quality of the final product.

Ann, too, failed to define a magic formula for managing collaborative writing activities, but seemed to be moving in a direction of less rather than more control over student choices (unlike the novice teachers in studies cited above). As we have seen, she began by assigning children to centers in order to prevent "aimless wandering" but later felt comfortable allowing them to choose, based on a conference each morning and a pocket chart to keep track of their progress. She also decided to leave the "disaster" team together, to see if the children could overcome their differences and learn to work together.

By mid-March Ann was seeing some small successes, even with her "disaster group," for example, a better student helping a partner with spelling. In fact, by mid March of the internship semester, both women had begun to see some improvement in the quality of student interaction. Stephanie, the MET mentor teacher assigned to both of them, was very impressed with the cooperation, the "productive
hum" in their classrooms, and felt that she was really learning from them. Ann, writing in her journal toward the end of the data collection period, recalls looking up from conferencing with a particular child to see all her students "working hard and cooperating."

Some were writing stories, some working on whales as a group, some in the art center, and some working on book reports. It was a great sight to see everyone working. I love it! I do know why I'm in this profession. I love teaching the children.

Neither Kate nor Ann became obsessed with management issues; neither became more controlling as the semesters progressed. But both continued to struggle with both mundane and higher-level control issues throughout their four-semester experience of teaching with writing. They found no magic formula, but as Grossman (1992) expresses it, managed "to ask worthwhile questions of their teaching, to continue to learn from their practice, to adopt innovative models of instruction, and to face the ethical dimensions of classroom teaching" (p. 176)

I often asked myself—and am still asking myself—how these two novices managed to be so successful in creating writing workshop classrooms without available models. As we continued to reflect on their decisions and practices, some patterns began to suggest themselves. Both women spoke of their meticulous (and very time consuming) planning process for these open-ended activities, with all possible management problems anticipated in advance. Quoting Amanda,
they were learning that "the more unstructured the activity, the more the teacher has to prepare for it."

Another observation has to do with a classroom ethos (in both Ann and Kate's classes) that stressed student responsibility to the community, that created what Noddings (1984) calls "an ethic of caring" and what Goodman (1992) calls a "collectivist" community. This required teachers to teach students how, specifically, to work together. Much of the literature on classroom management has dealt with relationships between teacher and students and has failed to address relationships among students. We began to see that Ann was not wasting her time "talking about being a family and being considerate."

And in order to create this caring, collectivist community, we began to see the need to preteach the behavior necessary for successful group work, just as we teach the academic skills. Children need to understand why there should be no put downs in their team interaction. Perhaps we need to begin with defining just what put downs are, because for some children, we saw that verbal abuse is as automatic and as unconscious as breathing.

Another possible contributor to their success may have been the amount of attention they paid to their own personal histories in journals and autobiographical writings--to understanding who they were as teachers and learners. According to Featherstone (1992):
I have come to feel that self-knowledge is a major fruit—perhaps the major fruit—of early teaching experience, that the loudest of the voices urging strict discipline may come from inside the novice's head and that the struggle to manage the behavior of young people is intimately bound up with the struggle to understand and change the self (p. 2).

Because this issue—teaching students to work productively in peer response and collaborative writing groups—is so crucial to successfully implementing writing-to-learn approaches, we will return to it in the final chapter of this dissertation and elaborate on these ideas. At that time, I'll include suggestions put forth by all the novice teachers in our writing-to-learn group, all of whom have had to face classroom management issues in implementing their writing programs.

We don't know if Ann and Kate's refusal to be co-opted by the system was more a product of their individual personalities, of their introspection on the pages of their journals, of the group support, or the MET program's ongoing campaign to promote student-centered, constructivist, collaborative approaches to teaching and learning. And only time will tell if they—or other members of our group—will eventually shift to more conforming, authoritarian norms. But somehow I'm optimistic that they will not become "obsessed by control." I picture Ann at Keala, hugging the authors of her birthday cards. I remember Kate showing me the voiceless essays of her predecessor's "good little boys and girls sitting in neat rows." She sighed, was silent a
minute, and then said, patting the stack of papers, "Sometimes I wonder if I'm really cut out for the DOE." Such moments give me faith in their continued commitment—perhaps their obsession—to change.

**Part 7: Negotiating Change from Within**

Contrary to the stories of novice teachers being co-opted by the system, the MET students' missionary zeal to move beyond what they called the "traditional paradigm" was in and of itself a problem in the partnership schools.

"They're just like Moonies!" one cooperating teacher said of the cohort assigned to Waiala School. "They think all the old ways are automatically bad and all the new ways are automatically good!"

Other teachers complained about MET students' emphasis on cooperative learning to the exclusion of all other approaches. One insisted, "You don't have to be cooperative all the time. Sometimes it's better to have kids facing forward and listening to the teacher. There's no one right way to teach."

What made this negotiation for change even more difficult was that the MET students not only demanded different instructional models in the classroom but expected a different mode of interaction with their cooperating teachers. In seminars with their College of Education professors, there was an easy give-and-take, a banter of one-liners more democratic than one sees in the usual
university classes. Indeed, the professors sometimes infuriated students by offering them too much freedom to direct their own learning and set their own standards.

But Department of Education teachers who signed on to the program were accustomed to the former hierarchical model of supervising student teachers. This problem took different forms in the cases of the three novices. Both Ann and Kate compared their ups and downs during student teaching to a roller coaster ride. Lee, felt she was being treated "like a child" in her first relationship with a cooperating teacher, who, in turn, felt exhausted by the demands of the mentoring. When their collaboration failed, Lee attributed this failure to instructional norms she hadn't been able to support, but it also had to do with their failure to communicate, with Lee's hurt feelings of not being understood and encouraged.

I experienced a traumatic student teaching process where I was told to teach in the paradigm that I resented. I could not take the style of teaching and perform in front of the fourth graders knowing that many of them feel intimidated by the abstract thinking mode.

Kate, who had considerable success introducing writing-to-learn reforms, complained at first that Janna, the cooperating teacher "wants to correct everything" and worried that Janna's low tolerance for classroom noise would preclude the workshop approaches to writing she wanted so badly to introduce. In both cases, Janna proved more willing and adaptable than Kate had feared.
Part of the success here can be attributed to Kate's very obvious competence in planning and managing these classroom innovations. Also both women seemed to be actively working to build and maintain a supportive relationship during these months. Kate complimented Janna's lessons and was able to put herself in her mentor's place when they didn't agree on something. For her part, Janna was willing to stretch her tolerance for noise and to consider Kate's feedback, even if it was critical of established classroom routines. Still, Kate felt that there were times that she was being criticized too harshly, that they had slipped back into the former hierarchical model.

Ann had extraordinary success as a whole language, writing-to-learn missionary. Even during the program's second semester, when many MET students were presenting brief, risk-free lessons, Ann launched a writing unit with second graders who had never written before, introducing several forms of student writing and also addressing the reasons we use writing. This unit was impressive not just in terms of the children's written responses but in the impact it had on the cooperating teacher. Ann told our group, "He saw something like invented spelling and cooperative learning working in his classroom, and he had never tried it before."

The following semester, with Marlene, the curricular change was even more impressive—but never easy. Ann
described Marlene as "vacillating between the basals and whole language" during the entire roller-coaster semester, with an outraged Sharon (the anti-whole language teacher in the next room) constantly undermining the changes, insisting that writing would never work for these children because they're "too slow."

Here again, as with Kate and Janna, the importance of relationship building between the two women can not be overemphasized. Ann’s concern for social interaction was modeled in her relationship with her cooperating teacher. Ann, even more consistently than Kate, kept putting herself in Marlene’s place, imagining how she would feel if these changes had been thrust upon her after 31 years of teaching. And for dealing with Sharon, whose values were "so screwed up," Ann used our group and her friend Kate when she needed to vent her frustration.

Often the DOE teachers also seemed to be aware of the importance of maintaining this delicate relationship. In offering critiques, for example, Rhoda (Lee’s second cooperating teacher) went very gingerly with Lee, suggesting in a response to a journal entry, "Would you want me to put you back on track when you have strayed off your mark...or would you rather I didn’t say anything and see if you get back on track on your own." Lee responded that she didn’t mind if Rhoda jumped in to "save me" any time.
But this easy give-and take was not always the case, and we have seen how Lee, with her first cooperating teacher, Stephanie, began to take the critiquing process too personally. But even this story has a happy ending. Stephanie went on to become a mentor teacher with the MET program (whose job it was to support the novice teachers during their internship semester) and felt that she had learned from her experience with Lee about giving encouragement and suggestions to novice teachers without harming their self esteem.

The experiences of all these women suggest that we need to give serious attention to building and maintaining the kind of caring relationships that make it possible to bridge the gap between university and school cultures. Teachers have traditionally not been accustomed to collaboration or collegiality—or to having outsiders critiquing their established practices. We may need to do more than schedule meetings for these stakeholders to address issues. We may need to think about including some form of training in relationship building to prepare DOE teachers, university professors, and student teachers to work together in remaking our schools.

With the novice teachers in this study, the writing itself served as a catalyst for addressing the censorship and ownership issues that the two communities in the partnership viewed differently—and always the student
teacher was caught in the middle. When Kate's students wrote movie reviews of R-rated movies, for example, Amanda, the professor, urged her to include them in the newspaper and suggested that she and Janna were imposing their own middle class values on their students. Kate suppressed the reviews, unwilling to "bring down the wrath of an unsympathetic public," unwilling to risk potential criticism from parents and DOE peers. Similarly, when a neighbor teacher complained that the survey on parents' smoking habits was "too sensitive" to publish, Kate again complied with the more conservative Department of Education norms.

Chapter Four has described even more compelling censorship dilemmas at the high school, where Christine and Martin's students often choose to write about "sex, booze, and drugs." But whatever the grade level, student teachers who allowed students to express themselves through their writing sometimes found themselves negotiating between the two sets of norms. Kate expressed her frustration when she said, "On the one hand, I want to be creative, whole language, and not rely on the textbook." But after a second she smiled sadly and added, "But there's also the desire to survive."

It seems likely that students allowed to express themselves, whether in learning logs, autobiographies, or class newspapers, will sometimes respond by writing about things that shock adults. Novice teachers who incorporate
writing-to-learn approaches will be forced to grapple with censorship issues, will have to decide where and when to place constraints on authenticity of students' own voices, and cooperating teachers will, perhaps for the first time, be drawn into such dilemmas as well. Ironically, incorporating this kind of writing into the curriculum can be viewed as a curricular issue as well. Scriven (1993) has pointed out that controversial issues, issues suggested by Christine's "sex, drugs, and booze," are "the life blood of critical thinking," and that actively grappling with questions such as the legalization of marijuana teaches students to be thoughtful voters.

Part 7. Negotiating New Identities

In addition to the surface negotiations of deciding what and how to teach, the MET rite de passage also required the three women to reshape their own identities to fit their new roles, a process Britzman (1992) calls the "hidden work of learning to teach" (p.24).

For Kate and Ann there were some problems adjusting the increased time demands with the identity of motherhood. In both cases, children felt neglected. The time demands for teachers using writing-to-learn approaches are important enough to return to in the final chapter of this dissertation. But beyond this time adjustment, there appeared to be no barriers to accepting the new teaching identity for Ann or for Kate. For one thing, both women
held clear images of themselves as pre-school teachers for more than a decade. Indeed, Kate believed that this pre-school experience had made both of them much more tolerant of MET-style collaboration and hands-on activities.

Other aspects of their lived experience also served them well in this negotiation. Kate's "catch up mentality," for example, her fierce determination to be "more resourceful" than the rest, produced a student teacher who was impeccable in her preparation and execution of writing-to-learn activities. In her classroom Kate exuded intellectual competence, and her strong image of herself as writer and lover of literature became the basis for the new role of writing teacher.

Ann’s more negative image of herself as a writer helped her to empathize with her students’ lack of confidence, which served her well especially at Keala Elementary, where most students tended to have poor academic self esteem. Here she reminded me of Perl and Wilson’s (1986) portrait of Reba. The researcher writes,

I began to see that Reba’s supposed failure (as a writer) was a powerful teacher. Constantly aware of what it felt like to be the least skilled in the class, Reba made sure that everyone in her own classroom felt comfortable. No one was going to get lost. No one was going to feel diminished because he or she was not as skilled as the next student...I began to see how these concerns shaped her teaching (p. 116).

In much the same way, Ann’s former identity as a student who felt inadequate to produce term papers propelled
her to redefine school-based writing in her own classroom. Furthermore, her deepest sense of self—as a nurturer of people—made it possible to carry out the most dramatic, far reaching curricular reforms in classrooms belonging to two other teachers, all the while maintaining good, supportive relationships with these teachers.

Part 9: Identity and Language

Britzman (1992) points out that identity, in this case the new identity of writing teacher, is negotiated with others through language. But access to the dominant academic discourse is not equally available. Entering the MET program, both Kate and Ann had an advantage over Lee. Their spoken language was already close to the academic discourse of Standard Written English. It was no great jump for them to recast their identities as writers of MET response papers and lesson plans and, as part of this study, as teachers of writing.

This was not the case for Lee. The spoken language she grew up with, an urban dialect of Hawaiian Creole English, was far removed from Standard Written English. Lee’s access to academic discourse was not provided by her own family, by her schooling, or by the crowd of peers she chose to associate with (unlike Kate, also from an immigrant family, who had gravitated toward the library and the academic crowd at school, the students who worked on the school newspaper, for example.)
Willinsky (1990), drawing on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, suggests that "students with childhoods in standard English" bring a certain "cultural capital" to the schools, one that, especially in terms of the writing process "has already been invested in a stock that pays the highest dividends" (p.32). But the cases of Lee and Kate, both children of non-English speaking parents, also suggest that students' own choices during their schooling, especially the choice of a peer group, can also affect access to this "cultural capital."

For whatever reasons, Lee, according to Brady (1993) had not inherited from her past "various styles of discourse that made reading and writing easier, more engaging, accessible to large numbers of people in all sorts of adult occupations" (Cpt. 3, p. 17.) Put simply, Lee had not inherited the language of logical problem solving, and she was not able to bridge this gap during the data collection period covered by this study, although she saw herself as having made progress in her own writing during her leave of absence semester. Perhaps more importantly, she had moved beyond her original belief that writing well means "knowing the parts of speech." She had moved beyond Kate’s Lincoln School students, who thought they were not good writers because they couldn’t punctuate and spell. In connecting her progress with frequent practice and frequent reading, Lee had taken an important step forward.
Still, Lee's struggle with writing seemed to have become a kind of symbolic barrier, as if taking on this new academic, problem-solving discourse (while deciding what to keep of the old) was crucial to crafting the new mainstream identity of elementary school teacher. This is a dilemma faced by other upwardly-mobile students in Hawaii. On the one hand, Hawaiian Creole English (locally known as Pidgin) has become a kind of symbol of a viable "local" culture, independent of the once dominant white aristocracy.

But some Pidgin speakers also admit, as Lee did, to being embarrassed by the local language, as if hating that part of themselves. Joy Marsella (1992) quotes from a student's essay that deals with this negative image. "Many times I have seen adults and children criticized, mocked, and snubbed for speaking Pidgin. These behaviors are practiced in our schools, our courts, and at job interviews" (p. 17).

What I hope for Lee is that she will come to appreciate this part of herself even as she acquires the new discourse, that she will eventually come to understand the two are not mutually exclusive, as the student author of the above quote explains:

I am an advocate of Standard English but I am also a preserver of HCE. I am proud to speak HCE ... By speaking both languages it is possible for me to communicate with English speaking people of all countries and to preserve my culture through its distinct language of Hawaii Pidgin English (p. 18).
Delpit (1988) suggests that in order to preserve this culture and teach students to "code switch" from their own to the mainstream, school-based language, we need to produce teachers who come from that home culture, who have been marginalized themselves. According to Delpit (1989):

I am...suggested that appropriate education for poor children and children of color can only be devised in consultation with adults who share their culture.

But how can preservice teachers like Lee, who never acquired school-based, English be helped to learn what Delpit calls "the codes needed to participate fully in the mainstream of American life" (p. 296)?

Part 10: Teaching Minority Preservice Teachers the "Codes"

Delpit (1988) argues that students like Lee should not be denied access to programs such as the MET because of perceived deficiencies in language. Describing the plight of one of her own Native American students, Delpit states:

To deny her entry under the notion of upholding standards is to blame the victim for the crime. We cannot justifiably enlist exclusionary standards when the reason this student lacked the skills demanded was poor teaching at best and institutionalized racism at worst (p. 291).

But Delpit cautions that accepting such students implies an obligation to help them acquire the dominant language:

However, to bring this student into the program and pass her through without attending to obvious deficits in the codes needed for her to function effectively as a teacher is equally criminal—for though we may assuage our own consciences for not participating in victim blaming, she will surely be accused and
convicted as soon as she leaves the university (p. 291).

But this "attending to deficits" can be a time-consuming process. In Lee's case, and as described in her case study, her two years in the program, even with the one-on-one tutoring from me and from others, did not give her the language and organizational fluency or the confidence she needed.

Lee was asked to repeat her student teaching semester in a new school and another grade level. But even after her "sabatical" semester, she still had problems constructing lesson and unit plans that sequenced activities towards a final goal. She still had difficulty explaining to her mentors just how she intended to "scaffold" the language learning in her classes. Lee eventually dropped out of the MET program because of continued problems with content, especially written English, and because of difficulties planning and analyzing instruction.

At the time of this writing, Lee is enrolled in another teacher education program in the College of Education, studying to become a vocational instructor. But my story ends here, with Lee's potential unfulfilled, with her still working to put her past into perspective, and with her increasing awareness of what good writing is. The original MET interview process was intended to identify students with potential, students who would change the world of schooling.
I still believe that Lee will become one of these public school pioneers, and that, given time, she will become an inspiration for students who, like herself, fear having to write, and, as she expressed it, "feel intimidated by the abstract thinking mode."

And just as Lee is still struggling in her writing to represent and organize the complexities of her own experience, I have struggled to give meaning to this experience—to the experiences of all three women—in my retelling. As I chose words and selected quotes from volumes of data, I was, in a sense, creating still another identity for each of my three "subjects," an identity which was cycled back to them, like mirrors, when they read and responded to drafts of their case studies and of this discussion chapter.

**Part 11: Post-structural Postscript**

I have already highlighted the importance of life history in shaping a novice teacher's professional development, but it's important to note that this development is in no way static. I identify with Britzman's (1992) concerns about her student teacher, Jamie Owl, and I offer the same disclaimer to my readers:

This type of ethnographic work concerns speaking for Jamie even as I read her words through the prism of poststructuralism. A related tension involves my theorizing about another's identity, presenting it as if it were frozen in time.... The drama of Jamie Owl's student teaching, as presented here then, must be read as partial and incomplete(p. 34).
Like Jamie Owl, Lee, Ann, and Kate will remain frozen on the pages of this dissertation.

A research project, a written text, ends when the author decides it is finished. But these women’s stories are still incomplete. Like Perl and Wilson’s (1986) writing teachers, my subjects are also changing even as I write. These authors concluded their book with the following reminder: "As our pages pile up, they are filling new ones. As we end our story, theirs continues" (p. 261).

Becoming a teacher, like reshaping an identity, is an ongoing saga--of juggling time and papers and ethical dilemmas, of trying to have a life outside of school, of always feeling not quite worthy and not quite on top of things--which, as Britzman (1992) suggests, is constantly negotiated with others through the imperfect medium of language.

Using language is always a negotiation because words are slippery and elusive; they bear the capacity to assert another intention, another meaning, another word. When we work with language, we are speaking for others at the same time we attempt to speak for ourselves" (p. 31).

As writer, I was speaking for these three novices as well as for myself. I struggled to represent their experience as close to the ever-changing essence of truth as I could find words to make it. But in choosing some details over others, I was influenced by my own pedagogy, my own past history, and my own emotional involvement, because I’d come to care about all three of these women. And this caring
has provided still another texture, another level of complexity, to the data.
CHAPTER SEVEN
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Part 1: Writing-to-learn and Teachers’ Personal Histories

In October, 1991, I had set out to explore how preservice teachers’ personal backgrounds and images of themselves as writers might influence their perceptions of teaching with writing and subsequent classroom practices. After almost two years of working with the novices in our study group, I was not surprised to conclude that their identities and personal histories were inextricably linked to their educational philosophies and practices. Having been a classroom teacher for more than 20 years, I already knew that we bring to the classroom our own tolerances, loves, and pet peeves, which influence the choices we make as teachers.

Nor am I the first to remark upon this powerful connection. Still, it deserves the attention of teacher educators. For Connelly and Clandinin (1988), the "centrality of teachers’ life experiences" to how they "know and live out their lives in classrooms" is a commonplace—"a commonplace that is mostly ignored" (p. xv). It is also a commonplace that we can use to improve both teacher training and teaching with writing.

McAndrew (1988) followed a group of participants in a training seminar for college writing teachers, concluding that the degree of implementation of process writing strategies depended upon each teacher’s previous history,
beliefs, and teaching identity. McCarthy (1992), in a similar study, followed subjects teaching with writing after a National Writing Project Institute. She found that participating teachers put this training to different uses, according to each one's changing perceptions of teaching with writing. McCarthy concludes:

Not surprisingly, different teachers understand and use ideas, philosophies, and materials in different ways. These differences may be something to highlight and build upon rather than discourage (McCarthy, 1992 p. 24).

In terms of our group, these differences, for the most part, produced positive results. The two practicing poets, Kate and Martin, shared with students their own passion for and considerable experience with poetry, and the notion that anyone could be "writing a poem in some corner of his mind," just as Martin says he does. It was not surprising that these particular writing lessons inspired students to create impressive poems of their own. Although Kate was sometimes dissatisfied with her Waiala students' failure to move beyond the conventional poetic forms, she was generally pleased with the student poetry written during her internship semester at Lincoln. And Martin's student-written poetry was so impressive that the principal was amazed that "Z section" (i.e., the lowest track) students could have produced it. (Incidently, her amazement dismayed Martin, who had never once thought to question their ability to write beautiful, honest poetry.)
Also for personal history-based reasons, teachers like Ann, who see a clear social mission to their work, are likely to be successful with "happy grams," letters, message boards, and journals. And teachers like Christine who believe that the most important purpose of writing is self expression are likely to have a high tolerance for explicit language and frank (and sometimes disturbing) depictions of students’ lived experience. Christine was also able to build on this knowledge to motivate alienated, low track students to take their writing seriously, to see it as a way of giving voice to their alienation in the same way as Christine has always used writing herself.

One thing I saw very clearly in three semesters of data collection was that there is no one way to teach writing or to teach content with writing, given the broad parameters of the process writing approach. I had expected to hit upon more solid writing practice recommendations for this concluding chapter. But on reflection, I have realized that as I myself read articles, attend workshops, and visit classes, I am exposed to more good, exciting writing ideas than I could ever use in three lifetimes of teaching. And like the teachers in this study, I myself naturally choose the ones that interest me the most, that somehow ring true in the "messy meanings of (my own) identity" (Britzman, 1992, p., 23).
What is most interesting about this finding is that personally satisfying (and sometimes spiritually satisfying) activities like Ann's journals and Kate's poetry worked so well. If the Bay Area Writing Project is correct--i.e., that teachers of writing must themselves write--then perhaps a corollary is that we do a better job of teaching the kinds of writing we ourselves value the most. For this reason, we need to celebrate our differences instead of imposing an orthodox view of "The Writing Process" on preservice and experienced teachers. This tolerance, according to Knoblauch and Brannon (1992), fits within the philosophical agenda of teacher research, an agenda shared by the MET program:

Stories don't tell teachers what to do; they simply portray people doing, and also thinking and feeling. Watching others in action, readers see themselves. Discovering personally meaningful themes in the stories, readers find coherence and support for their own professional work (p. 193).

Perhaps even more importantly, an appreciation of our differences would also help us be more tolerant of differences among our student writers, to remember, as Jensen & DiTiberio (1989) conclude in their book on personality differences and writing, "that writing processes differ, that a writer's strengths and weaknesses are related, that not all writers follow the same developmental path" (p. 75).
Part 2: "Getting out of the Way" and Teachers' Understandings of the Uses of Writing

In addition to kinds of writing attempted, the teachers in our group also had to decide how much control to exert over students' choices of topics and evolving texts, an issue that writing specialists continue to argue over in the research literature. Perl and Wilson (1987) have called this issue "getting out of the way." In their similar study of six writing teachers, the researchers began by asking themselves if the writing process approach was "better suited to teachers who had less difficulty 'getting out of the way'" (p. 257). At the end of two years of living and working with their subjects, however, the researchers failed to find a connection between the amount and nature of control and the success of a particular writing teacher's approach. And none of their subjects would have satisfied the "hands-off" versions of whole language instruction represented by Atwell, (1986); Graves (1984);, and Murray (1982). The researchers' conclusion:

We decided it wasn't so simple. All the teachers in the study knew that they, too, at times, took center stage; they, too, performed and controlled students' attention and students' actions...Diane spoke of herself as a "benevolent dictator": controlling, orchestrating, in charge of what was going on even when it looked as though she wasn't (p. 257).

As an interesting aside, this control dilemma paralleled the concern of the founders of the MET program itself, who were reluctant to provide students with ready
made problems associated with some problem-based learning programs. One founding professor insisted, "Students have to go through the work of problem formulation themselves."

Members of our study group wrestled with this same dilemma in language reminiscent of Perl and Wilson's (1987) subjects. Ann spoke about getting herself "off the stage." Kate insisted that she didn't want to be "up front lecturing." Still, watching these novices facing the same interference or non-interference choices faced by Perl and Wilson's experienced teachers, I saw that where they ranked themselves along the control continuum had much to do with who they were as people and with their differing conceptions of the uses of writing. (Incidentally, this was also true of Perl and Wilson's seasoned teachers.) We have seen in Chapter Six, for example, how Kate did more in the way of structuring assignments than did Ann, in part, because of her belief in the power of writing to enhance students' critical thinking. And like Perl and Wilson (1987), I, too, concluded that what worked well for Kate would not necessarily work for Ann. There was no right way of "getting out of the way," just as there was no one right way of teaching with writing. Again, Perl and Wilson's (1987) conclusion:

Performing or "getting out of the way" or not--again, we could not reduce the art of teaching to a formula. And we saw, once again, that whatever aspect of teaching we chose to examine, there was no one way to do it. We could not describe a set of classroom techniques which would work for
everyone or even predict which ones would not work for anyone (p. 257, emphasis theirs).

For Perl and Wilson, the common trait that made all their teachers successful (in different ways) was that they "embodied the belief that students, in their eyes, were already writers," a belief that came across as enabling to student writers (p. 259). Most novices in our study group—especially Kate, Ann, Christine, Martin, and Rosie—seemed to exude a similar belief that their students were writers and had something to say, that their opinions counted.

But if it is true that effective writing instruction can not be reduced to a single formula and that we enable student writers by modeling our belief in them and the process, then how can we best help preservice teachers to incorporate writing into their teaching, to use writing as a tool for their own learning? What can we do to help teachers like Rosie, who enter the profession not even believing in themselves as writers?

Part 3: Writing, Self-reflection, and Self-knowledge

This study suggests that we might begin by helping teachers examine their own self images as writers. This point of departure is consistent with the MET program’s emphasis on self reflection, often on the pages of journals and reaction papers and with frequent feedback from both cooperating teachers and university professors and peers on the margins. Other theorists agree that we begin by acknowledging the powerful influence of personality and life
experiences on preservice teachers’ emerging philosophies and practices (Holt-Reynolds, 1992; Kagan, 1992; McCarthy, 1992). According to Bullough, R.V., Knowles, J. Gary, & Crow, N.A. (1989), there is a need to shift our emphasis away from the more technical aspects of teacher preparation and begin to foster more "consistent, grounded, and accurate understandings of themselves as teachers" as well as "how teaching and the teacher role is understood" (p. 231) by novices.

Holt Reynolds (1992) makes the point that this enhanced understanding would help novices unlearn lessons from their past conditioning, which she calls "potentially misleading and unproductive, tenacious, and highly resistant to instruction in teacher education courses" (p. 327):

We cannot depend on our students to challenge us with their dissenting or disagreeing voices. We must, in effect, understand the implications of preservice teachers’ personal history-based knowledge and then invite them to consider those implications with us (p. 327).

For Kagan (1992), "Teacher educators might be wiser to guide novices through their biographical histories, helping them examine their prior experiences and tendency to assume that other learners share their own problems and propensities" (p.162).

Having watched the novices in my study grow and learn, I agree with Kagan and others about the importance of examining personal histories as part of the training process. Indeed, Rosie’s decision to enter this study, to
come to terms with her own avoidance of both writing and critical literacy, came as a result of such self examination. Kate’s understanding of her "catch up mentality"-- as legacy of the former immigrant child in mismatched clothes-- lead to important insights about her own teaching. Ann’s examined memories of feeling incompetent as a writer lead her to structure a class climate in which everyone was seen as a competent writer. And even with her problems communicating these feelings to others, Lee’s self-reflection about her own alienation at school seemed to be helping her define the kind of teacher she wanted to be.

If we incorporate this autobiographical component into our teacher training, as does the MET model, it seems to me that writing should be recognized as an important tool in this journey of self discovery. For one thing, it allows novices to keep a physical record of their reflections over time. Using the successive drafts of her final Masters paper, for example, Lee struggled to come to terms with her painful school past. Both Rosie and Kate developed a better understanding of learning logs through writing and rewriting this same paper. Christine worked toward a conclusion that team teaching with Martin, for all its problems, had been worth her effort, and Ann was able to articulate a case for mainstreaming severely handicapped children--and to present these reflections at a conference in a paper she authored with one of her professors.
Kagan (1992) argues that we also should be teaching preservice teachers how to learn about their students--their attitudes, aptitudes, interests, and problems. Here again, writing becomes an important tool for acquiring this knowledge. In Chapters Four and Six of this dissertation, for example, we have seen teachers using learning logs with prompts specifically designed to elicit students' evaluation of their teaching and suggestions for improvement (as did Rosie), students’ attitudes about a mainstreamed special education student (as did Ann), students’ processes in mathematical problem solving as well as attitudes about mathematics (as did Kate, Fran, and Rosie).

To help teachers gain access to this knowledge of students and to acquire what Bullough et al (1989) call "consistent, grounded, and accurate understandings of themselves as teachers," (p. 231), innovative programs like the MET need to specifically address writing-to-learn as part of their teacher training/school renewal model. They also need to help students acquire the content and pedagogical knowledge that will enable them to offer a full range of writing activities in their classrooms.

**Part 4: Beyond Self-knowledge: Teacher Training and Pedagogical Knowledge**

Kagan (1992) suggests that in addition to helping teachers examine prior experiences and deeply-embedded attitudes, we also need to make sure they acquire the necessary procedural knowledge as well as "standardized
routines that integrate management of instruction" (p. 162).
Clearly, teacher training programs have to do more than help
teachers put their own pasts into perspective and their
passions to good use, especially training that has as its
goal to prepare future writing teachers.

But little is known about how to teach preservice
teachers to teach writing (National Center for Research on
Teacher Learning, 1991). As a first step, we might
articulate what "procedural knowledge" (Kagan, 1992) or
pedagogical knowledge might look like in the area of writing
instruction.

To begin to answer these questions, we can listen to
the subjects of this study as they reflect on their own
training in the Masters in Education in Teaching (MET)
program. In its initial year, the program offered no
subject-specific pedagogy in writing. The three case study
subjects saw this as a serious omission. They felt they
needed at least one practical course on how to actually
teach in what they were calling "the new paradigm" -- how to
plan and present lessons, according to the constructivist,
collaborative, inquiry-based principles the program was
promoting--and specifically, how to teach writing.

The MET ethos required teachers to go beyond textbooks
or get rid of them altogether, leaving novices to create
integrated units "out of the blue." Both Ann and Kate
managed to meet this challenge, due to an great deal of
background knowledge, an abundance of whole language zeal, and a willingness to devote extraordinary time and effort to their teaching. Both teachers believed they were preconditioned to be whole language, "hands on" teachers because of their backgrounds in preschool education. In addition, both collected their own libraries of professional books and articles, with frequent sharing and book talk between them and with other people in our support group.

But Lee was not able to construct the integrated, "scaffolded" units she dreamed of introducing--or even to describe what they would be like. She herself needed much more scaffolding in the basics of curriculum and instruction--and much more one-on-one practice with Standard Written English, the language of power and of logical, sequential problem solving, the kind of sequential language used in lesson and unit plans.

Lee recalls her first MET year as interesting but too generic to be really useful when it came time to create actual lessons. Speaking of her MET seminars, she said, "They mostly did general topics such as the learner and learning....And then during the student teaching, Amanda (the MET professor assigned to her school) was surprised at how much I didn't know about planning and presenting a lesson."

I kept telling Amanda, "I don't know how!" At first she kept pushing it aside, then it dawned on her and she started going back to the basics.
Beyond reading Ken Goodman's *What's Whole in Whole Language* (which is not a how-to book) and listening to a presentation on whole language, Lee had no idea of how to construct an integrated unit without a textbook to back her up. Eventually, she experienced some success in student teaching by following a step-by-step lesson plan that Amanda provided for her. As described in Chapter Six, Lee also needed more exposure to basic content knowledge, such as the conventions of Standard Written English as well as much more practice with writing, which she had managed to avoid all through college by majoring in studio art.

Both Kate and Ann managed to design exemplary integrated units that incorporated a great deal of student writing. Still, at the outset, they knew little from their own apprenticeships of observation about teaching with writing. In retrospect, they and others in the MET cohort concluded that they specifically needed (often found through our group association) the following kinds of pedagogical knowledge: (1) how to design assignments, topics, and prompts—including whether to give topics at all; (2) how to respond to students' writing (including frank depictions of students' risky or illegal activities); (3) how to set up and facilitate peer response; (4) how to balance different kinds of writing (i.e., descriptive, narrative, expository, poetry); (5) how to edit and revise without editing out the
students' own voices; (6) how to handle the increased time demands of teaching with writing.

Even the academically-inclined, articulate Kate felt she had needed more from the program. Kate complained that much of the discussion during her first MET year had been "too ethereal." She added, "You know, Dewey, nature-nurture controversy," and then explained that her Department of Education (DOE) mentors tended to be "too focused on the practical," too obsessed with classroom routines and specific activities.

One wonders, of course, whether Kate and others might feel differently about their training several years later, having survived their induction years. I have kept in close touch with Kate in the semester following the study's data collection period, and some shifts of perspective have already emerged. First, if Kate were part of the current crop of MET novices at Waiala School, she would, I think, find a better marriage of theory and practicality. As I continue to meet with Kate and Lee's former cooperating teachers, I notice a dramatic shift in their thinking to the more philosophical, theoretical issues that support the MET's "new paradigm" teaching, also a much greater willingness to explore the theory behind their practice. Janna, Kate's cooperating teacher, for example, no longer teaches the classification of sentences (i.e., declarative, interrogative, etc.), a lesson Kate had objected to on
theoretical grounds. Janna has also abandoned the school report card altogether and has switched to writing narratives to accompany each student's portfolio. Another Waiala teacher, Stephanie (Lee's first mentor during student teaching) has been reading Dewey in the original and has completely revamped her classroom practice.

Now in her second semester of full time teaching, Kate laughs at herself when she finds herself adopting Janna's practice (which had seemed so controlling to her before) of insisting that students seated at tables with their backs to her turn their chairs and themselves around to face her whenever she needs to talk to the whole class.

Still, Kate continues to feel that she would have been helped by a seminar or course offering practical advice with a theoretical backing, and that she was helped by the balance of theory provided by our study group, which she describes in the following reflection on my role as mentor:

You have a handle on the latest research findings, but you also consider the practical aspects of teaching writing in a classroom. Thus I have gotten ideas from you that I can use right away that don't compromise my resolution to be an innovative teacher.

A proposed model for a writing-to-learn seminar, designed with this same focus in mind, is described in the next section of this chapter, along with some additional speculations on the necessary content knowledge for future writing teachers.
Part 5: A Model for a Writing-to-learn Component for a Problem-based Teacher Education Program

The success of our study group—both in helping teachers infuse writing into their curricula and use writing as a tool for their own learning—suggests the possibility of incorporating writing-to-learn as an official part of an inquiry-based teacher education program. The model proposed here is similar to that proposed by McCarthy (1992), which acknowledges "the different starting points and differences in experiences of teachers," and offers "extended workshops where teachers are writing themselves as well as learning how to teach children, and which provides on-site demonstrations" (p. 24).

The component of "teachers writing themselves" seems especially crucial. If teachers can best teach writing by projecting their belief that students already are writers, then they need to believe that they themselves are writers, that they have the necessary skills and knowledge. But what is the necessary content knowledge for teachers of writing?

Research has affirmed that the content knowledge for writing is not about surface conventions but about making meaning. I believe it involves learning how to think like a writer, learning to ask the kinds of questions experienced writers ask themselves as they draft and redraft their texts: Is this really what I want to say? Are the transitions clear? Is this word choice too abstract or too chatty for the tone of this piece? Do I need another
example? What can I cut from this paragraph? Have I repeated myself? By the time she left the MET program, Lee, who had moved beyond her original understanding that good writing meant knowing the parts of speech, was just beginning to ask herself these kinds of questions.

Teachers need to acquire fluency with such questions in order to help students ask similar questions about their own evolving texts. And only by engaging in their own writing can they learn how to ask them.

Such knowledge is especially important if we want to move preservice teachers beyond their conditioning in schools where the teaching of writing was little more than the teaching of surface conventions. The National Center for Research on Teacher Education (1991) recently specified learning opportunities for preservice teachers that "seem to be associated with fundamental changes in teachers' beliefs and/or their practices" (p. 68). Based on extensive studies of writing instruction, they have identified the following conditions to help teachers accept and adopt innovative practices:

First, teachers need a chance to consider why the new practices are better than more conventional approaches. Second, they must see examples of such practices. Third, it helps if they can experience such practices firsthand as learners. Fourth, they need on-site support and assistance in learning to put new practices in place" (p. 68).

Incorporating all the above principles, the proposed course or seminar could be modeled after the Bay Area
Writing Project (now the National Writing Project), as was our informal group. (See Chapter Four for a more complete description of this grassroots model.)

If this training were offered as a university-credit course, there would be more class time than our group had to actually experience different kinds of classroom writing and share the results, to practice responding to student drafts and student journals by responding to one another's drafts and journals, and, individually and collectively, to practice asking the kinds of questions described above.

Especially for students like Lee, this more extensive writing experience would help join theory and practice, connecting (1) social and philosophical issues and a solid understanding of the school context (such as censorship, ownership, the social nature of learning), (2) the teacher's own personal values and personal-history based beliefs, and (3) the necessary pedagogical knowledge described above.

In the context of this seminar, future teachers would naturally be arguing and debating the larger issues as they think critically about their own experiences in schools, constantly creating and then recreating their own practice as writing teachers. Several members of our group commented on the productive nature of the contact between high school teachers and elementary teachers, so an additional recommendation is to allow this interaction in the proposed seminar, just as Writing Project groups typically contain
university professors and deans as well as public and
private school teachers from various grade levels and
subject areas.

One problem might emerge if our unofficial group were
revamped into a college-credit seminar: The
teacher/facilitator would have to grade students at the end
of the semester. We would hope that a portfolio assessment
could be devised that would help dispel the pressure to
please the teacher that students feel in traditional college
courses. And watching university professors like Amanda
working collaboratively with MET students and still managing
to assign grades, I have some hope that this challenge could
be met.

However, it is still an open question as to whether
assigning grades would undermine the collaborative ethos our
study group enjoyed, and this component of the model seems
crucial. Although the teacher/facilitator needs to be a
person with considerable experience with classroom and
personal writing, this experience can not be imposed on
preservice teachers from above. The teacher/facilitator has
to see herself as having as much to learn from the students
as she has to teach. Indeed, the teacher has to start acting
like a whole language teacher herself.

For most of us, that will mean some soul searching,
some rethinking our traditional roles in supporting
teachers' learning. As Hollingsworth (1992) has expressed
it, the teacher would have to live with a more "ambiguous structure," working with novice writing teachers as "colearner and creator of evolving expertise through non-evaluative conversation" (p. 375). And this experienced teacher should expect to learn as much as the novices from the interaction, just as I learned just as much from the other members of our group as they did from me.

Hollingsworth has called this kind of collaboration "a feminist approach to research." But I don't feel that we need to step into this dichotomy. Supporting one another, creating a collectivist culture (Goodman, 1992) does not have to be linked to one gender, although it has often been associated with women's ways of being and learning (Noddings, 1984). We have to develop a less simplified theory, because teachers of both genders could, I think, benefit from the kind of collegiality our study group enjoyed. Indeed, the literature on teacher satisfaction seems to support this view, for both male and female teachers (Rothman, 1993).

The value of our group's support system has been highlighted in other portions of this dissertation, especially in Chapter Four, the group case study. Kate, for example, had no models for incorporating writing into her math lessons. "I really needed to be able to talk to someone," she said, "I was the only one using math journals at my school." In our group, Kate was able to share ideas
and resources with Rosie, who was also using learning logs in her high school math classes. These teachers also gave one another faith in what they were doing, especially when they were both, as Rosie had expressed it, feeling "too weird" when measured against the dominant instructional practices in their schools. Kate’s comment, written as part of her reaction to her individual case study, sums up the feelings of our group about the value of collaboration:

Our support group was a veritable oasis in an uncharted land. Wish there was a way to continue; I’m going to have withdrawal symptoms.

We can only hope that these teachers, who have experienced the value of a support system, will go looking for it in their new schools, even if they have to create it themselves.

Part 6: How to Manage a "Student-driven" Product, What we Learned

One rite-de-passage issue often discussed was the problem of classroom management. "Discipline," as it was called in the old paradigm, became a major concern for the novices in our group, sometimes eclipsing all others. In presenting their writing lessons, all struggled to balance MET collaborative ideals with the sometimes infuriating actions of real children in real classrooms. All sometimes wondered what they were doing wrong as they orchestrated collaborative writing activities that were consistent with both MET and writing-to-learn philosophies but that didn’t seem to be working.
Kate reported early in the internship semester, for example, that she was "struggling with discipline much more than I wanted to.... I always have to think about what I'm doing to keep the behavior under wraps." She also expressed the group opinion when she said, "When students are working collaboratively, it's much harder to monitor their progress." Some theorists quoted earlier in this dissertation (Hollingsworth, 1989) have suggested that novice teachers like Kate can become "obsessed by class control" in order to survive the overwhelming management challenges of the first year of teaching. But Kate and the others in this study seemed even more determined to make collaboration and inquiry work in their final MET semester than in their first. Their fierce determination to somehow change the system, to "survive and subvert," persisted. Still they often felt adrift in uncharted seas in their "new paradigm" classrooms.

It was easier in the old days, when teachers tightly controlled the discourse in their classrooms, determining who would speak and when. Classroom management was about teacher-student interactions. Teachers did not need to concern themselves with the messy world of student/student interactions, because there were so few of them. They didn't have to teach students how to converse with one another, how to listen, how to reach consensus in writing workshop

The patterns of interaction and communication that members of a community value are too often alien in classroom contexts....But we can support them by using groups in many ways in the classroom--for writing and responding, discussing, questioning, problem solving, researching, reporting. Such groups encourage learners to take active roles and to assume new responsibilities (p. 258).

Still, as noble an enterprise as these authors have described, they themselves admit that there are "very few models for these new roles and this sort of classroom community" (p. 253). The teachers in our group were sometimes irritated by the impressive snapshots of writing workshop classes in action (Atwell, 1986, Graves, 1984; Wigginton, 1985) as they themselves agonized over how to teach students to work productively in groups, creating the rules as they went along.

The beginnings of writing workshops and other collaborative activities were especially difficult to manage, with teachers typically feeling "pulled in twenty different directions," as Kate once expressed it. Together, we wondered if it took so long for students to get started because they were unused to working together in groups or because they were unused to having the responsibility for learning--for thinking and writing and commenting on another's work--shifted to them.

Typically, Ann urged her colleagues to have faith that the initial chaos and floundering would subside and
that students would eventually be writing and working together. She told them during a final focus group interview, "Just be patient and believe that it's going to work....And it will!" Ann went on to describe a recent story writing activity. As usual, there was noise and confusion. Children were having trouble getting started, complaining that they didn’t know what to write about. Students in her "disaster" group were having trouble getting along:

I had to go around to each group and talk about the problems they were having. Instead of focusing on the paper first, you need to focus on the personalities and identify something that each person can be responsible for, so that everyone has something to do. That seems to help...Once it got going, it worked really well. They were excited and helping each other.

The writing classrooms I visited, for the most part, seemed messier and noisier than models presented in the literature. This may have something to do with how the writing research is typically presented. Master teacher Suzanne Brady (1993) learned that by showing videotapes of her fifth graders' impressively-focused peer response groups, she was actually giving her teacher audiences the message that her students were academically gifted. These videotapes had been made of groups that had already learned how to work together. As a mentor, Brady eventually realized that she needed to tell novice writing teachers something about her own start-up difficulties. In her book *In the Company of Others*, (in press), written with Suzie Jacobs,
another researcher, Brady now includes vignettes attesting to her own management struggles:

Realize that the teacher part of me was standing back, looking, and seeing chaos. In the group meetings I saw laughing, I saw acorn throwing. I saw noise and confusion and complaining, and all the general disorder that as teachers you try not to have, so part of me said, "This better be good, because if it isn’t, I’m wasting a whole lot of time" (Chapter 4, p. 12).

These peer response groups did turn out to be worth the time devoted to them. By taping her students’ meetings she eventually found that they weren’t off task any more than the adults in her own writing group. She continued to refine her writing curriculum. In the end, she and others following her model have been "astonished at what happened to some of the poorest writers" after becoming part of the peer response process. "Their own writing improved dramatically," Brady reports. "As children became better responders, they began to see that readers have questions and to hear all those questions as they wrote" (Cpt. 4, p.13).

Brady learned to admit to teachers that "setting children face to face and knee to knee almost always lead to interaction but not necessarily helpful collaboration" (Chapter 1, p. 1). She also included counter examples in her manuscript, descriptions of children she never managed to turn into productive social beings, children like Robbie. ("Robbie had spent his school life ‘bothering others,’ so now contract time gave opportunity to indulge in that sport.") (Cpt. 10, p. 12). She learned to share with other
teachers the messiness of the first six weeks of school, when she is training her fifth graders to work as team players, when she is building a scaffold for a language of response, raising children's consciousness of who they are, their identity as they sit in groups (p. 12).

In a ten-year dialogue with co-writer and researcher Suzy Jacobs (1993), Brady came to understand the importance of scaffolding these social skills as part of classroom writing activities. Jacobs elaborates:

"Classroom management" is traditionally a separate course. But structures of human interaction and structures of cognition belong in the same textbook. When students of education become classroom teachers, they will find that nurturing the intellect requires the nurturing of child-to-child relationships (Cpt. 3, p. 5).

Members of our group discovered this same truth, although they used different language and different examples to talk about it. Chapters Four and Six contain discussions of what we learned separately and collaboratively. But several of our conclusions bear repeating and re-emphasizing here:

First, to better manage "student-driven" products and activities, Kate and others argued the importance of "meticulous planning," of thinking through all possible outcomes and planning for alternate contingencies. Kate even spoke of trying out collaborative, open-ended activities in advance on some "guinea pig" children. Second, and perhaps our most important discovery as a group, was that we can not
assume that our students know how to work together productively or even peacefully. Quite simply, our system has not been designed to produce team players. Suzy Jacobs, Brady's co-writer, describes her own socialization as a teacher as follows:

I was in sync with an educational system that saw learning in individual terms and saw competition as the only social relationship that had anything to do with learning (Cpt. 3. p. 14).

Part 7: Writing and Caring

With Emerson and Thoreau in our collective consciousness and national icons like Henry Ford and Lee Iococca, it is not surprising that the focus in American education has been on individuals competing with other individuals for a place on the power hierarchy. Programs like the MET aspire to dismantle this traditional hierarchy in school. Some theorists think that this dismantling is all we need to do. According to Noddings (1984).

Many of the skills we associate with teaching are, if they are skills at all, skills whose need is induced by the peculiar structure of modern schooling. If we were to change that structure, many of the skills we now underscore would become unnecessary. Many so-called "management" or "disciplinary" skills would be unnecessary in schools organized for caring (p. 198).

But if we create these democratic classrooms, can we expect that children and adolescents will automatically become caring and democratic in return? This study suggests that they will not. Students need to learn how to operate in "new paradigm" classes. For a hundred years the dominant
instructional mode has been teacher up front lecturing and students in neat rows regurgitating content. How can we expect them to suddenly take turns, give support, listen to one another's suggestions and ideas as they create their own learning? How can we assume that students in writing workshops will know how to get help from one another or to give it productively? Even if we assign rules for interaction, dictums such as "no put-downs" will not be easily understood and absorbed by students previously trained to compete with one another--often rather ruthlessly--for adult attention.

The mutually supportive classroom ethos proposed here is not culture free. Tobin (1994) has suggested that it reflects the middle class and more recent whole language socialization of researchers and teachers like those in our study group, that our whole language and writing workshop classrooms may be "privileging the values and manners of contemporary American bourgeois society" (p. 21). Tobin urges us to "make explicit the unexamined cultural assumptions of whole language, child centered, and natural learning movements" (p. 19). More importantly, he argues that the collectivist "language of response" described above should not be imposed on children under the guise of self-expression. Tobin illustrates with an example of his niece Emma expressing her true feelings over a classmates manuscript (i.e., "That's a junky picture.") and getting the
teacher's "mean look" as reprimand. He suggests that the true goal of his niece's teacher is not to allow children "to talk freely and spontaneously about their feelings." Instead, "her central goal is for children to learn to participate comfortably and appropriately in classroom conversations. These conversations are built on routines that prescribe topic selection, turn-taking, and the form and content of questions and answers. It is only when children have mastered these routines that they can express their individuality in classroom conversation" (p. 15).

Grossman (1992) has argued against a focus on classroom management in teacher training, suggesting that "by concentrating on the interactive side of classroom teaching....student teachers may learn to manage pupils and classrooms without learning to teach" (p. 174). But children who have learned to compete for adult approval, who have lived with a language of put downs all their lives, may see no other way of communicating with their peers unless we teach them--directly and explicitly-- that there is another way, a way which may open doors to a mainstream culture they have often been denied entrance to. And novice teachers will have to learn how to do this teaching.

In the elementary and high school classes I observed, I constantly saw this need to teach the desired collaborative behaviors along with the desired academic skills. Indeed, Ann and Kate discovered, as did Brady, that we need to teach
them before the desired academic skills, putting "process ahead of product," as Ann expressed it, reminding our group that "you need to focus on the personalities instead of the particular writing task."

In much the same way, Brady (1993) learned that she needed to explicitly teach students to give praise and encouragement--and that she needed to give students a language for this praise and encouragement. In seeking for ways to instill a collectivist culture, she found herself rejecting packaged models for cooperative learning, finding them too scripted, often with arbitrary rules and mechanical guide sheets for participants' comments. Instead, she learned to develop routines for student interaction (like specifying that all four students sit across from one another in a cross shape) that still allowed for them to create their own dialogue.

In designing a model for peer response groups in her fourth grade classroom, Kate also learned to be very explicit about her routines. Her emerging model begins with students reading their drafts aloud first to themselves (a "self conference"), then reading aloud to two friends, who are both looking down at the paper at the same time. She found that if she didn't specify and model this process, she would see one student skimming the paper under consideration, while the other two looked around the room or talked about something else. (This same finding has emerged
in studies of university-level peer response groups as well.) (Marsella et al, 1992).

To reinforce these routines, Kate developed self report forms for students to assess their performance in small groups. Both Kate and Ann also learned that in collaborative writing activities, it was often necessary to assign specified roles, as Kate did during the space station stories.

Christine has also learned the importance of carefully structuring small group activities. Now in a new teaching position at another high school, she finds herself cringing as she looks back on her early efforts to introduce collaboration and inquiry-learning during her student teaching and internship semesters at Windward High School. According to Christine, the MET model of inquiry learning had worked well with a small group of highly-motivated, idealistic graduate students like herself. But applying that same model to alienated sixteen year-olds at Windward had produced frequent management problems.

In her new next teaching job, she has not abandoned her belief in student-centered collaborative approaches to learning. But she is learning how to structure collaboration with specified roles and a clearly-defined sequence of tasks leading to final outcomes.

According to both MET philosophy and writing workshop strategies, children are supposed to be learning to teach as
well as to learn. Brady (1993) tells her students on the first day that "their role is to be teachers and that they're placed in groups so that they can teach each other" (Cpt. 4, p. 3). In this, Brady is a kind of pioneer, because most schools are not doing a very good job of teaching students to teach. Watching the teachers in this study, I learned that we need to make this message explicit, even to very young students. I've also begun to worry about our failure as educators to address the management dilemmas of whole language/writing process approaches. If teachers become too discouraged with making these open ended, collaborative activities work, they may give up on "new paradigm" without ever giving it a fair chance.

A third and related conclusion is that we also need to do a better job of providing models of adult cooperation--of Noddings' (1984) "ethic of caring"--so that students can actually see it working. The members of our group became aware of this responsibility, best expressed by Christine in her final Masters paper. Rosie, Martin, Kate, Ann, and Christine also used students' learning logs to model this caring attitude. Rosie, for example, solicited suggestions and reactions to her lessons. And even when one student wrote that the class was boring, Rosie refused to take offense, responding in the margin by asking the student for suggestions on how she might make Consumer Math less boring.
Significantly, Martin and Christine’s curriculum began with the theme of relationships, as students wrote their own autobiographies. Early in the semester during idea-generating exercises, students would write "I have nothing to say" over and over again (while complaining about "having to write again." ).

"They have a lot to say now," Christine reported in our final interview. "They’re much more comfortable. They realize we’re looking for ideas, not if they’ve put the period in the right place....They realize that writing is self expression and communication....They feel that their opinions count."

One student described Martin and Christine’s "ethic of caring" in the following journal entry:

Miss K and Mr. A are really open....My teachers from all of my other periods teach us but don’t communicate. I think communicating is a big part of teaching.

According to Christine, "teaching should be a conversation between teacher and the students." I would add here that this conversation needs to extend to colleagues as well. According to Goodlad (1992),"Teachers burn out from boredom. They burn out from not talking to a colleague" (Goodlad, 1992). For the teachers in our study and their students, much of this healthy communication took place on paper. And in the classes I visited, there seemed to be a strong connection between the use of writing and the collectivist culture the MET program was designed to foster.
Still, there were times when even Ann questioned her faith in the process, asking me, "Am I crazy or what? I could do this job so much more easily if I taught the whole class at once, the old-fashioned way."

Ann's question leads us to a final conclusion that is worth reemphasizing here: that their extended use of classroom writing required considerable planning and response time. Christine described the time demands of this "new paradigm" teaching in her final Masters paper:

I am committed to doing a good job, to going in on the weekends and holidays, to trying to be pleasant to students, to making the time to foster the success of the team. Martin and I meet once on the weekend to plan and get organized because it is difficult to take enough time out of the school day to talk.

For all our teachers, meticulous planning was needed to accommodate students who finished tasks early, students' who couldn't get along with others. Careful orchestrating in advance was needed to clearly define the roles, as Ann explained, "so that everyone has something to do." They all came to agree with Amanda's advice to Kate: "The more unstructured an activity, the more the teacher has to prepare for it." All talked about staying late at school and then working some more when they got home. For the women who had families to care for, this work schedule took its toll. Ann's daughter's comment ("You're not a real mommy anymore.") illustrates the time conflicts these women struggled with.
Part 8: Writing-to-learn and Teacher Exhaustion

But all the novices, whether married or single, came to the conclusion that teaching with "real" writing required much more preparation and response time than traditional worksheet approaches. And a significant conclusion is that not everyone is willing or able to devote this much time and energy to teaching, not year after year. When I asked Kate's cooperating teacher, Janna, whether she would attempt another class newspaper similar to the one published during Kate's student teaching semester, Janna responded unequivocally, "Not without Kate! It's too much work!"

Furthermore, in teaching with "real" writing, there was the additional emotional burden of students' real life experiences. Christine and Martin, in introducing autobiographical narratives and poetry, opened themselves to the stories of their alienated, mostly Hawaiian students. On the one hand, this intimate knowledge helped them to connect, to motivate these low track students to take writing seriously. As we have seen in Chapter Four, Martin experienced an extraordinary breakthrough using his own poetry to make his students (who had been extremely resistant to any form of writing) "feel almost compelled to write."

But these young teachers were also taking career risks in allowing students to write about sexual and drug-related experiences-- and in their own language, much of it
offensive to mainstream readers (and labeled illegal in terms of school rules). My own image of this narrative burden is Christine leaving school on a Friday afternoon with a luggage cart piled to the top with her students’ journals, which she planned to respond to over the weekend.

"We heard a lot of things we didn’t want to hear—and some of it wasn’t even true" Christine reported to our group. Some narratives were untrue or else grossly exaggerated, as if students were "testing the waters" to find out if these young teachers really could stand to know about their lives. Still, some of the most disturbing revelations were true. One of the most eloquent poets was also a drug dealer, who came from a family of drug dealers, and he wrote about what he knew best.

Teachers could only respond to this student’s texts with their own values, sometimes expressing worry or concern, sometimes asserting in a one-on-one conferences that they would not hesitate to take action if they caught students in any of these illegal activities. While they could not appear to condone the behaviors, they did not feel they could put such subjects "off limits" in journal or poetry writing assignments.

Martin’s student poetry also described illegal cock fighting and beer blasts (see examples in Chapter Four) as well as the following description of sexual abuse, which was left "anonymous" in a class anthology.
It Hurt So Much

How could she let you do it
She could have stopped you.
She was just a young girl
Who was very confused.
   There was nobody to turn to
When he tried it again.
Still, it hurt so much that she
Screamed when he did it,
A few rooms near, his children
could hear a painful cry.
   Finally he stopped and
he let her go, but day after day
the same charade went on and on...

Early in our first semester at Burger King, Christine
had asked quietly, "Is there some way you can do it--teach
writing--so that it's not so painful?" Even as we sat
together for our final focus group interview two semesters
later, this was still an open question in our group,
especially when dealing with the emotional burdens sometimes
presented in students' texts.

We faced similar frustrations and again failed to find
a satisfying conclusion when exploring practical ways of
surviving the time and paperwork burdens. Atwell (1986), for
example, gives excellent, guidelines on balancing a
teacher's private life with the need to respond to student
papers. Atwell does not include journals in her writing
workshop curriculum and she relies on peer conferencing for
student texts until they decide that these texts are ready
for her final input. In this way, Atwell avoids those
terrible Sundays with piles of student essays still
untouched on the dining room table where they were dumped
Friday afternoon. Writing specialists like Atwell insist that we need to share the revision responsibility with our students, for their sake and for ours. This advice to teachers goes: "If you’re responding to everything they write, they’re not writing enough" (Elbow, 1981).

In their internship semester Christine and Martin moved in this direction of increased student response to one another’s texts, with generally positive results. "They’re not looking toward us as the all-giving grade givers," Christine reported. Still, she and others also acknowledged that students’ writing tended to became more sparse, with content not as well thought out, and even the classroom behavior got worse when teachers didn’t respond regularly in the margins of journals. And for all three high school teachers at Windward, student journals (with frequent teacher response) continued to be an important motivational tool for their "at risk" students. Quite simply, writing back to these students seemed to be a way of caring enough to read and respond to their ideas and feelings. As Christine expressed it, "They know that their opinion counts."

So we found that even if we shift more of the response responsibility to students, the problem of time and exhaustion remains—and it was on everyone’s mind as the final semester neared an end. Lee was thinking about how she might survive on a half-time teaching salary, to give her
time to think and write and create her beautiful sculptures. Christine and Martin had survived the energy drain by team teaching, both putting in full days and sharing the salary during the internship semester. But after graduation, they both needed to take a full-time jobs to pay off their debts. They would both be teaching six classes a day--180 to 200 students with stories to respond to.

I wonder if they can continue to respond to their students with the same kind of caring they displayed during their student teaching and internship semesters. I wonder where they will find time to plan their innovative writing lessons. And I tend to agree with Ted Sizer (1984) and John Goodlad (1984) that their chances for continuing to be as successful at teaching with writing, especially with alienated students, are slim. After his team of researchers visited thousands of public school classes, Goodlad concluded:

As already suggested, there may be something self-protective for teachers in maintaining classroom control and a relatively flat emotional tone...Teaching is what teachers expect to do every day. To reach out positively and supportively to 27 youngsters for five hours or so each day in an elementary-school classroom is demanding and exhausting. To respond similarly to four to six successive classes of 25 or more students each at the secondary level may be impossible (p. 112).

I agree, and it especially doesn’t seem possible to teach writing in the present context of high schools. For this reason, Sizer (1991) has been advocating the
restructuring of American high schools so that teachers
don't have to compromise on teaching writing or on knowing
and caring about their students. In his newly-designed
schools, described in *Horace’s School*, teachers (by
collaborating across the disciplines) typically meet with
only 50 students a day, a more sustainable load of papers
and emotional burdens than the usual 150-200.

Recent studies have indicated that American teachers,
at least when compared to East Asian counterparts, spend
much more time--nearly the whole day--in charge of a
classroom and face heavy administrative burdens as well. By
contrast, East Asian teachers spend only 3 to 5 hours in
their classrooms and are given the rest of the time to read,
reflect, plan with other teachers (Stevenson, 1992).

Part of the MET reform goal is to end this isolation
from colleagues that American teachers suffer from. But
programs for school renewal like the MET also need to
address the time and energy demands inherent in the "new
paradigm." Like Ann, the new paradigm writing teachers in
this study sometimes found themselves thinking longingly of
the old text-book days of short answers to one-answer
questions at the end of chapters--answers that could be
checked off, perhaps while watching television.

The writing literature describes whole language
inspirations created against all odds by teachers whose jobs
are their whole lives. These are admirable, even heroic
people, but I question the message that they send to novice teachers. Take the following example of award-winning (and workaholic) writing teacher Guy Doud’s typical work day.

Doud thrives on getting to school an hour before classes begin, staying two and a half hours after they end, and taking work home for evening hours that aren’t devoted to his family. (Silberman, 1989, p. 125).

If we really want to make writing a tool for learning--both in classrooms and in teachers’ own lives--we’ll need to make it do-able for people like Ann, who, in addition to washing clothes and preparing meals, wants time at the end of the day to read to her own children, wants to be a "real mommy." Lawyers are well-rewarded monetarily for their twelve hour days. Teachers are not--at least not in Hawaii. And until we learn how to clone Guy Douds, we’ll have to accept the fact that the profession will continue to attract people who, like Sizer’s Horace, will have to work a second job to make ends meet (especially in Hawaii). There will be others, equally committed to their students, who will want to raise gardens, go fishing, train for marathons, renovate old houses, take care of aged parents in their after school hours. In terms of writing-to-learn, this means that we will have to give much more serious attention to the time (and exhaustion) burdens taken on by teachers who use these approaches.
Part 9: Final Caveats and Exhortations

I have to thank Kate for reminding me, in her Plan B (final Masters paper), that writing is not a panacea for promoting the MET inquiry-based, constructivist learning we all believed in so whole-heartedly. As she discovered experimenting with her math logs, it's what you write about that leads to the inquiry, reflection, creativity, or problem finding and solving. Writing can be a powerful tool for constructing one's own learning, but only when it's used to those ends, only when the writing is seen is worthwhile by the student writers, and only when they are not simply regurgitating content.

Teacher educator Judith Newman (1990) is uncomfortable when she hears people announce, "I'm doing whole language" as if it's just another instructional approach. Instead, Newman sees it as "fundamentally a philosophical perspective." The same can be said for writing-to-learn. Like whole language, it is what Newman (1990) calls a "door opener," allowing teachers to "realize that by adopting an interpretive, learner-directed stance, we are embarking on a never ending journey" (p. p. 144).

Kate was not satisfied with the writing prompts supplied by her new math textbook, many of which seemed like "just a long way to do an addition problem." She had to learn how to structure her own prompts that would enhance
students' critical thinking, force them to "actually grapple with the problem on paper," as she expressed it. Similarly, Rosie wrote in her final paper about her discovery that a bad prompt could invalidate the whole lesson, that she now rarely planned a lesson without considering the learning log prompts.

In conclusion, therefore, I am also compelled to admit that the well-revered "Writing Process" is not guaranteed to produce the ongoing conversation described above--or the "ethic of caring" that seems an essential ingredient of "new paradigm" instruction. It's the way the process is implemented--the carefully-crafted classroom climate, the modeling of the belief that students are already writers (Perl and Wilson, 1986)--that empowers students to work together, to take control of their own learning.

Still, in this study, in many classes, writing did produce these results, sometimes against great odds. Using writing as a tool for learning, I have seen students grappling with problems, shaping their own lived experiences, discovering--sometimes for the first time--that their opinions counted.

Of the eight volunteers who began the study, Sue, Fran, and Lee had difficulties teaching with writing and/or personal events that intervened. These three eventually dropped out of the MET program. The other five--Kate, Ann, Rosie, Christine, and Martin--actually surprised me with
their success in teaching with writing, in using their own writing for personal growth, and in coming to see themselves as writers.

I've seen these novices relying on journals and learning logs to better know their students and to communicate their ethic of caring. I've also seen journals being used as a powerful tool for these novices' own learning. I saw Ann, who began the MET program afraid of having to write papers, confidently presenting a paper at a statewide conference. I saw Rosie, who began the study seeing herself as "only good at one of the three R's" (i.e., mathematics), beginning to think like a writer, to ask herself the kinds of questions experienced writers ask as she shaped her final masters paper.

And if a student like Rosie, who once saw writing as "like pulling teeth," can become a writing-to-learn convert, then there must be something to it, as she herself explains in her final paper.

It is ironic to think that I approached this subject with a dislike for writing and eventually derived my greatest learning through writing. In fact, I still dread it. But if I can learn through writing then it is almost a certainty that my students can accomplish the same.

Some veteran math teachers at Windward High School have noticed Rosie's "weird" practices, and there is talk about introducing math logs in their own classes. In all three semesters we worked together, I saw MET students fulfilling their roles as agents of change in the classrooms.
they were assigned to. Often these innovations were in the form of writing lessons: Ann convincing her cooperating teachers that primary children could write; Kate challenging the fifth grade English curriculum and filling her classroom with student publications; Martin and Christine creating a writing curriculum for students many teachers had given up on.

I had started this study with a strong commitment to the MET ideals and to the powerful effects of writing-to-learn. But even I was unprepared for the extent to which these novice writing teachers seemed to be influencing their schools, undermining the status quo in the way Langer and Applebee (1978) described:

Process oriented approaches are not just an alternative way to achieve subject-area goals. Instead, when implemented effectively, they bring with them a fundamental shift in the nature of teaching and learning. Rather than augmenting traditional instruction...such approaches undermine—or are undermined by it in turn" (p. 70).

For Hilgers (1992) writing-to-learn is "part of a conspiracy...a shift in emphasis that is going to change how we teach, how we stop being talking heads and move toward helping students become responsible participants in their own education." Walitzer (1987) makes a parallel point that "teachers who write, whether they write fiction or factual accounts, are teachers who are in charge of their own teaching and learning" (p. 246).
Like the teachers in our study group, teachers who write can share their stories with one another and keep raising the big questions as part of the conspiracy. In the following quote, Walitzer (1987) suggests an image of our study group crowded around a table at Burger King, debating invented spelling or passive voice:

If we can keep helping each other to tell better stories, we will be evaluating our own work, articulating what we know, enlarging the body of knowledge about our work, and, I believe, becoming better teachers" (p. 247).

A story is, after all, a theory of something. According to Carter (1993), "What we tell and how we tell it is a revelation of what we believe" (p. 9). After telling the stories in this dissertation, I'm a believer in Noddings' (1991) statement that "stories have the power to direct and change our lives" (p. 157). Furthermore, in spite of all the caveats, I believe in the potential of writing as a tool for learning even more than when I started this study. I'm also more convinced than ever of its further potential for making schooling happier, more caring, for living up to Noddings' (1984) educational priorities.

The primary aim of every educational institution and of every educational effort must be the maintenance and enhancement of caring...If what we do instructionally achieves the instructional end- -A learns X--we have succeeded instructionally, but if A hates X and his teacher as a result, we have failed educationally (Noddings, 1984, p.174).

Noddings' quote leads me back to the excited, happy faces in the many classrooms I have visited, to a memory of
Ann asking herself why she was making herself so much work, why she didn’t just teach the old way. We were standing in the sun-baked playground where Ann was assigned to lunch recess duty (after having gulped down a sandwich), watching the swirl of small, excited bodies. "Except that I love it," she finally said. "The kids love it, and I really get to talk to individuals. My contact with them is so much richer, so much more valuable. I get to know who they are and what they think about."

In spite of their workload, these teachers were, on most days, happy to get up in the morning and go to school, excited about what they were doing that day. Christine best described these "shining moments" in her final paper.

I guess that we are doing something right. The students seem to sense the difference...I know that I don’t dread getting up and going to work in the mornings. There isn’t a day at school where I don’t laugh. To me that is a miracle.

A researcher in the old paradigm would not have been allowed to conclude a dissertation with miracles or shining moments, but in the classrooms I visited, I saw so many of them that they have to become part of this report. Even Lee, who had struggled to master the dominant discourse and eventually dropped out of the program, has had her share. Christine asked in her conclusion, "What is it that causes us to have so many of these shining moments? Maybe it is our attitude and our philosophy?"
It seems to me that writing was part of the miracle, part of the transformative power of continued dialogue. As I stated in Chapter One, the teacher/researcher movement started with writing teachers watching their students and asking the larger questions, with teachers "actually engaged in doing what they taught," and asking questions of themselves as writers (Bissex, 1987). According to Jacobs (1992),

When teachers have a conversational relationship with the others in their professional community, and when the structures for periodic meeting, reading, writing, and conversation are in place, then teachers behave much as the children did from Suzanne’s class. They feel authority. They take responsibility for granted. They act. Responsible and creative classroom change is pushed along, like water in a stream, by the currents of professional conversation (p. 253).

Like Perl and Wilson’s (1986) writing teachers, my subjects are "changing even as I write," reshaping both theory and practice, recasting their own pasts as well as creating their presents.

In the year following the end of the data collection period, Martin and Sue have both left the state. Fran has dropped out of the MET program and out of sight. Lee is teaching part time and has switched to a program that will prepare her to teach vocational classes. I keep in touch with her and with Ann, Kate, Christine, and Rosie, who are all teaching in Hawaii’s public schools. And as I watch them working and writing with new students in new communities, I reach the same conclusion as Perl and Wilson: "As our pages
fill up, they are filling new ones. As we end our story, theirs continue" (p. 261). And like Jacobs (1993), I believe that the "currents of creative classroom change" (p. 253) are still flowing.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


