Irwin's apple gang: a creative project on word processing in the generation of personal student newspapers

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Lethbridge, Alta.: University of Lethbridge, Faculty of Education, 1986

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A CREATIVE PROJECT ON WORD PROCESSING IN THE GENERATION OF PERSONAL STUDENT NEWSPAPERS

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Faculty of Education
The University of Lethbridge
1985/86 Research Colloquium in Education Series

April 10, 1986, 4:30-6:30

ABSTRACT

Word processing is considered by many computer advocates to be one of the potentially most significant contributions of computers to education at all levels. Most research has concentrated on the post-secondary and secondary application of computers in composition and very little has been done at the elementary level. As vice principal of the Vauxhall Elementary School, I have been involved for the past four years with the implementation of computers in elementary education. My major focus during the past two years has been the use of word processing in writing instruction and particularly in the generation of student newspapers. This project was intended to describe, analyze and interpret a particular classroom experience, to explore issues arising from the experience and from similar experiences of others, to synthesize conclusions and implications and suggest directions for the future.

INTRODUCTION

A noted professor of law was advising his students on the best way to handle a case.

"If you have the facts on your side," he said, "then hammer on the facts. If you have the law on your side, then hammer on the law."

"But if you don't have either the facts or the law," asked a student, "then what do you do?"

"In that case," he said, "then hammer on the table."

In several significant ways, that anecdote illustrates my experience with the case of THE USE OF WORD PROCESSING IN THE GENERATION OF PERSONAL STUDENT NEWSPAPERS. Just over a year ago, I initiated and was personally involved in a curricular event that
turned out to be recognized as educationally significant. My interest in the case and in its broader ramifications and the encouragement of others prompted me to undertake an investigation intended to lead to a major study. Cast in the role of an advocate, I began immediately and continued for a year to collect evidence that would be relevant to the investigation. As in most legal cases, the investigation could not begin until after the event had transpired, and since, like a legal event, it could not be exactly replicated, the investigation had to be conducted in a "post-hoc" fashion. While concentrating on the product of that original event and on evidence collected from participants and interested parties following the event, the investigation has also encompassed the study of precedents and parallel cases. After a year of investigation, the evidence was still not considered sufficient to support a major study and, due to lack of more time, it was scaled down to a minor study with more modest aspirations. In looking back today, it seems that, with respect to this project, I have spent the past year hammering sometimes on the facts and sometimes on the law and rather often on the table.

BACKGROUND

In the fall of 1984, I was teaching a grade six class in the Vauxhall Elementary School and was enrolled part time in this graduate program. For several years, I had been working to improve parts of my program, particularly writing and the use of computers to facilitate learning. My students had been involved in daily writing for several years and had also generated significant products, including autobiographies and hand-written newspapers. With the arrival of computers and word processing software, I assumed that this technology could be used effectively to enhance student progress and achievement in writing and that it would in particular help students to generate much more significant personal newspapers.

THE EVENT

That fall, with the help of a parent volunteer, I introduced my 21 students to typing and taught them to do word processing on Apple computers using the Bank Street Writer. By Christmas, each one was able to type and edit a story, and these were printed and published in a class newsletter.

In January, we began to work toward the generation of a complete newspaper by each student. It was an experimental project from the beginning and there were no models to follow. It was not previously known whether students in elementary school could master word processing sufficiently to use it effectively. Nor was there evidence that students could produce either the quantity or the quality of the required writing. The project developed as it progressed, out of teacher intuition and practical knowledge.
APPLE GANG WINS AWARD!

The Apple Gang, a Vauxhall Grade 6 class taught last year by Irwin Warkentin, has won a runner-up award in the 1985 Apple Computer International Merit Competition with a classroom set of 21 personal student newspapers.

The Vauxhall project was one of 17 winners announced in May by John Marvelle, Associate Director of Apple Computer Clubs based in Lowell, Massachusetts.

"Yours was the only Canadian entry to win," he told Warkentin in a congratulatory phone call. "You should be receiving your prize in the mail in the near future."

In a press release announcing the awards, Marvelle explained the competition, saying that entries had been accepted in several categories, including programming, community service projects, club plans, and lesson plans. "Winning entries were those that best demonstrated overall excellence," he said.

"Mr. Warkentin's plan not only integrates the Apple computer into his language arts curriculum," Marvelle announced, "but also integrates it into the current events, art, and mathematics curriculums."

The Vauxhall entry placed second to a Pennsylvania school in the lesson plan category.

Apple Computer Clubs is an organization of more than 15,000 clubs and 300,000 members worldwide.

SCHOOL GETS SOFTWARE

Vauxhall Elementary School will receive about $500 worth of computer software from the Apple Computer Company as a prize in their recent Merit Competition.

In a press release, John Marvelle announced that runners-up would receive the Appleworks and Apple Logo programs, a year's renewal of club membership, and an Apple tote bag.

"Appleworks is a bestselling program for administrative use," Warkentin said. "We have been using the other program, Logo, for several years but will welcome a second package. What was worth the most to us, however, was the recognition and honor of getting such an award."

KIDS USE COMPUTERS TO WRITE NEWSPAPERS

The award winning Apple Gang student newspapers were created almost entirely with the aid of microcomputers.

"Researchers are still wondering whether kids at this age can learn to do word processing," Warkentin said. "These students proved that they could master the skills very well."

Students learned to type material into computers, save it on disk and call it back from disk to revise and edit.

"Word processing will soon be a very important life skill," Warkentin predicted.
The particular approach to writing that I was using, together with my interests in journalism, combined in my first attempts to stimulate students to write their own newspapers. I launched my voyage of this nature by suggesting to each student that I was a companion of my students as we together discovered ways in which to create newspapers that were true in form and fact and also in content. Each of those grade 6 students produced a four-page handwritten paper. This voyage took me on to expanded and refined voyages in which I helped students with the addition of more and more departments and other journalistic details. The newspapers also became more personal than in the previous voyage on student autobiography for content, resulting also in increased motivation and enhanced self-esteem.

I was at this time also pursuing another area of interest which took me on a fourth voyage of discovery. The previous "voyages of discovery" had been "simultaneous voyages" and "voyages of discovery". I went to the word processing project of my first voyage and determined how best to use them in the classroom. I enrolled in a computer course, our school received its first "Black Apple", and purchased my own system. Within the next two years, I became competent in four major applications. At home, I began to do all my own writing by means of word processing and in support of a church building project I mastered a hobby in computer programming. In school, I started a computer club for LOGO activities and began to implement computer-assisted instruction.

Early use of computers in some schools caused concern that they might be misused and abused as a result of insufficient knowledge about the most appropriate uses and as a result of getting hardware without adequate software. From the beginning I sought to avoid such perception of computing for entertainment and games on the one hand and obsession with programming on the other.

It was about this that I began studies at the University of Lethbridge, and from the beginning of that program I focused on microcomputer applications in the schools. In connection with numerous courses, I have written papers on various aspects of this topic. Of particular relevance here is the emphasis in the literature on the value of word processing.

Parallel to this process of discovery of computers, I launched a voyage also into a second major area of interest, namely that of writing and instruction, and it is important to consider these voyages as simultaneous and interrelated. For many years I had been interested in writing and had done a fair amount of it. At one time I had been at the point of becoming a journalist, but turned to teaching instead. My interest in writing has persisted and has led me in recent years to set up a writing program in my class and in our school. This was a voyage of discovery in the sense that proceeded very much on the basis of personal experience, but how I went about it seems significant to initiation and success of the word processing program.

At that unlikely moment, it hit me as an "AH-HA!" that was not to be mistaken: I would do the thesis or project as a newspaper. Just the way my students did. The implications of what was proposed were not immediately clear, but as I have reflected often on that experience, they have continued to emerge. It was as though the project was a project that my intuition, as the student project had been a year before. That conviction has survived setbacks and well-intentioned suggestions. So here it is, in a more modest form -- my own "personal student newspaper", a "collage" (thank you, Dr. Butt!) emerging out of one teacher's autobiography.
PROPOSAL to Write a PERSONAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER

For credit as a one-course project, at the University of Lethbridge,
Supervised by Dr. D. Burnett and Dr. R. Butt
To be created by Irwin E. Warkentin

Objectives:
1. To explore and master educational software created to facilitate the generation of student newspapers, especially NEWSROOM, by Springboard.
2. To use the software to create a "personal student newspaper" directed toward upper elementary teachers, focusing particularly in an autobiographical way on my own experiences in the classroom.
3. To synthesize research findings and my own thoughts and writings on the use of word processing in writing instruction.
4. To "show and tell" the story of the Apple Gang Newspaper Project carried on at Vauxhall Elementary School in 1984-5.
5. To demonstrate the viability and propriety of personal student newspapers in upper elementary curricula.

Activities:
1. Master the NEWSROOM software package and determine its suitability. Prepare to use it together with PRINTSHOP and perhaps Microzone's NEWSPER MAKER in this project.
2. Review relevant research and writing done in my previous coursework during the past 18 months in order to select and synthesize material for the project.
3. Review data collected in support of the Apple Gang Newspaper Project, including student newspapers, questionnaires, interviews, and other sources, in order to select and synthesize material for the project.
4. Collect and write articles for the personal newspaper to be called "IRWIN'S APPLE GANG," including news stories, editorials, commentary, advice, surveys, columns, feature stories, and other departaments, as accomplished by the students in the Apple Gang Newspaper Project of 1984-85.
5. Use appropriate software to generate graphics in support of newspaper articles and stories.
6. Carry out layout of articles and graphics page by page in the manner used by the Apple Gang as well as by professionals.
7. Use material directly from each student's paper in order to provide samples for perusal and enjoyment.
8. Develop and include resource material likely to be useful to upper elementary teachers.
9. Develop articles of an autobiographical nature to give glimpses of the working realities and curriculum-in-use of one classroom teacher.
10. Produce multiple copies of the project for personal use and for professional development sessions in writing, word processing and creation of student newspapers.

Evaluation:
1. Does the project reveal mastery of appropriate software?
2. Does the project establish a case for personal student newspapers in the upper elementary curriculum?
3. Does the project demonstrate the value of word processing in the upper elementary curriculum?
4. Does the project provide a case study of one teacher's experience with writing, computers and student newspapers?
5. Is the project itself comprehensive, creative and worthwhile as an autobiographical "collage" and statement on writing, word processing, and student newspapers?

Details:
Starting Date: January 17, 1986
Completion Date: April 1, 1986
Anticipated Contents:
Student material: about 20 pages
Personal writings: about 40 pages
Total length: about 60 pages

I was a 98 pound weakling both mentally and physically till I bought my first educational product from SPRINGBOARD. Now I'm a Hunk!

SPRINGBOARD
The guaranteed educational software
CAN KIDS DO IT?

Ever since the arrival of microcomputers in the schools a few years ago, educators at all levels have been asking this question.

Can kids learn to operate computers and use them successfully in school?

Can they learn the necessary keyboarding skills? Can they learn accurately and quickly enough to use these skills as means to greater ends?

What effects will computers have on students and on student motivation?

What unique contributions, if any, can be made by microcomputers to learning especially at the upper elementary level?

And in particular in this project, does word processing have a rightful place in elementary education?

Some of these questions have been at least partly answered in The Apple Gang Personal Student Newspaper Project completed in a third grade classroom in the 1984-85 school year.

This Special Project is an attempt to capture the substance as well as the spirit of that newspaper project.

The purpose in creating this journalistic collage is twofold: first in an impressionistic way to present some of the original work as published by the students themselves, and second, to portray the teacher/student relationship. The Project began in a third grade classroom.

The project might have led to greater things, a full-scale research project and academic thesis would have been timely and feasible, but more "hard data" was needed. An even larger "creative project" over a longer period of time might have made a greater impact on academia. But my purpose has become more modest.

Instead, this is an attempt to explore the feasibility and worth of journalism as a medium of teaching and learning at any level. Convinced as I am of the value of "the personal student newspaper," I am determined to investigate its possibilities for myself. At the same time, this is also an exploration of the potential value of various microcomputer programs for enhancing writing instruction in general and journalism in particular.

I express my affection for The Apple Gang with whom I was privileged to share one of the most significant teaching-learning experiences of my life. It is in this spirit of honor that I present this story and it is to them that this "personal student newspaper" is dedicated.

DAILY WRITING PRACTICE

In teaching at the upper elementary level for the past five years, I have discovered the value of daily writing practice.

For a number of years, I followed the still common practice of teaching writing by following an end-of-language exercise book. Students hated it as much as I did and obviously they never learned to enjoy writing either.

One year in September, I determined to make a clean break and "go for broke." I threw away the textbook and began to have students write their own material. It was not a glorious beginning, nor were students instantly converted. But I kept at it, working entirely alone in an experimental fashion, appreciating the freedom that came with being an administrator. If I had looked around, I might have been helped by people in writing projects elsewhere, such as Donald Graves. He came upon the scene almost at the same time I had travelled a fair distance down our own road. When the experience of others did come to our attention, we were in some ways affirmed and in some ways disaffirmed in our approach, but we continued to learn and progress in various ways.

It was this decision to have students write every day that was the first turn down the road that led me to this special project, and it is a decision that I continue to uphold in my teaching.

PERSONAL NEWSPAPERS

From the very beginning, daily writing in a practice book has been supplemented by special projects which have added interest and excitement.

An early special project was a personal newspaper that students wrote by hand. Each student wrote a series of short articles and copied them by hand into columns. Topics at that time were more varied and students in general had not been exposed to what they could imagine. The projects were newspapers only in the sense that the writing was in columns and had a few departments paralleling those of a newspaper, such as ads and jokes.

The Apple Gang papers resembled "real" papers more closely in several ways. Students actually wrote news stories, editorials, columns and feature stories that were much closer in form to the real thing. The papers contained many more departments, more articles per department and more variety in content. The Apple Gang papers were also much more "personal" in the sense that much content was about and written by the students. The projects were newspapers only in the sense that the writing was in columns and had a few departments paralleling those of a newspaper, such as ads and jokes.

Personal student newspapers have proven to be effective instruments of promoting self-awareness and of building positive self-worth in my students.
APPLE TREATS SWEETEN NEWSPAPER PROJECT

Regular apple treats cooked and served by the students themselves helped to ensure success according to the teacher and the students.

"At the end of each month," the teacher said, "a pair of students together with a parent planned and prepared a special treat made with apples. While the rest of the students enjoyed the snack, the students described how they had prepared it."

Parent room representative Linda Thiessen coordinated the parent help and served as chefs' advisors when other parents could not come. She also donated a set of cooks' hats and aprons complete with Apple Gang decorations, which added realism to the students' roles as chefs.

A survey of students revealed a variety of treats that had been served, including apple pie, apple donuts, apple salad, apple squares and more.

"All of the people in the class enjoy having these treats," Cherie reported.

BANK STREET WRITER

WORD PROCESSING PROGRAM
BY BRODERBUND SOFTWARE

BANK STREET WRITER

MASTERED BY STUDENTS

Bank Street Writer, a simplified word processing program produced by Broderbund Software, was mastered by all 21 grade 6 students in the newspaper project, their teacher reported.

"Each student learned to type articles into the computer and save them on disk," Warkentin said. "Upon returning to continue work on an article, each student was able to recall articles from the disk."

"He did not go into all the features of the program in order to keep the project manageable," he explained. Features not mastered included more advance ones such as text movement.

Some features were used only by the teacher and parent volunteer, such as the setup and printing commands.

"The program is simple enough for all students to learn the basics," Warkentin said, "but it also has more complicated features which require more expert attention."

A common problem in word processing is the loss of information resulting from keyboard errors, but according to the teacher, only one of the hundreds of articles typed by the Apple Gang was lost.

"That scared everybody," he said, and after that everyone was very careful." Safety was also ensured by giving every student a personal disk, which avoided a lot of confusion and disk swapping.

Bank Street also produces a spelling checker program. Warkentin reports that he used the program with the students on one occasion.

"It's a great idea, since it highlights words that it does not recognize. Students may then either learn the word as it is (it may be a name, for example) or they may correct it. But we couldn't use it much because it was rather time consuming and complicated."

Computer project sparks parent interest

Parents were intrigued and impressed by their children's work on the newspaper project, according to interviews with the teacher.

"Most of them seemed very pleased with that their children were learning to use computers," Warkentin said. "They were also surprised at the amount and quality of writing in the papers."

Some parents reported learning more about their own children just by reading their papers.

"The students worked hard on their papers and took a lot of time, both at school and at home, but no parent questioned the worth of the project or the amount of time or effort that it took," Warkentin said. "Their main concern was whether the students would continue to get opportunities to use these skills in later school life. Some expressed interest in learning about computers themselves."

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Parents could not recall having these features, including apple squares and apple donuts, which were also donated by the Apple Gang right.

"We used them to avoid the loss of information," the teacher said. "We also ensured that every student had a personal disk, which avoided a lot of confusion and disk swapping."

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"Bank Street products have served us well in this project," Warkentin said.
APPLE THEME MOTIVATES STUDENTS TO ACHIEVE

Following an apple theme is one reason given for the success of the Apple Gang newspaper project.

"I've tried to follow a different theme each year," Warkentin reported. "It has helped both me and the students and has made school more interesting."

Although the idea came from the use of computers, Warkentin considered it appropriate in other ways as well.

"Apples have often been a symbol of education. The apple shape is easy to use to decorate bulletin boards, worksheets and notes to students or parents. I've also used it as a symbol in my marking system and in various other ways," he said.

Warkentin feels that an annual theme helps to provide a class with continuity from month to month and that it can also help the teacher to build and maintain good relationships with students.

"This was especially true the year we used a star theme," he said. "Obviously, I could emphasize that each student is a star. This year, we could also build self worth with a 'good apple' emphasis."

Warkentin feels that themes are being increasingly used, especially by elementary school teachers

**V.E.S. HAS 8 COMPUTERS**

Vauxhall Elementary School now has eight Apple II computers. Seven are kept together as a computer center in the library while the eighth is in the office.

Warkentin explained that his 21 students use both the seven in the library, while he used the eighth for editing and printing. "Most of the time, we used a rotation system so that every student got computer time every day," he said.

Computers have been in the school for about three years. Warkentin reports that usage is increasing each year as the school gets more software and as teachers begin to recognize the

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THANK YOU,

MRS. WARKENTIN!

PARENT VOLUNTEER PAR EXCELLENCE

ONE PARENT VOLUNTEER MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

One parent volunteer made a great contribution to the success of the Apple Gang newspaper project, Applemaster Warkentin said.

"I want publicly to thank my best friend, companion and wife, Hertha, for the great dedication and effort she gave to this class over a period of several months."

Mrs. Warkentin spent many hours helping students to edit their work, to print it out on paper, to layout their articles and graphics and finally to photocopy the completed pages.

"I certainly learned to do word processing," she said. "I think I came out of there every day with square eye-balls." As an experienced teacher herself, Mrs. Warkentin was able to offer professional help together with a loving concern for the students.

But Warkentin says that even non-teaching parents can make important contributions as volunteers.

"Parent volunteers are helping out in an increasing number of schools," he said. "The advantages are obvious: better communication, better relations, greater progress and achievement in the classroom. I don't think we could have accomplished this project without her."

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capabilities of computers and the unique contribution that they can make to teaching and learning.

"I noticed lately that the computer schedule is getting rather crowded and that it is not so easy any more to get computer time," Warkentin observed. "This is because of the new courseware that the school has purchased, especially in the area of math." As yet, the school has no plans to purchase more computers, though discussions on that subject have begun.

"It's only a matter of time," Warkentin concluded. "Computers will make an ever-increasing impact on life in our society and on education in our schools."
TRIP TO TIMES GIVES "AH-HA!" EXPERIENCE

Students in the Apple Gang had a very special learning experience when they visited the offices of the Taber Times, their teacher reported.

"We went there after we had completed our papers," Warkentin said. "What struck us most was how we had made our papers in much the same way as the professionals. That really helped the kids to see how authentic their experience had been."

Students saw journalists entering information on computers and printing it out. Then the editor of the Vauxhall paper, Donna Cheyne, showed them how to do layout of pages.

"That especially was an eye-opener for them because they had been doing the very same thing with scissors and tape," Warkentin said. "Some educators stress the importance of giving student adult experience to impress them with its relevance to the real world."

David Bly, editor of the Taber Times, was familiar with the students' papers and was able to give them a very knowledgeable tour.

Bly also accepted two students to work with him for a day to allow them to experience the life of an editor. Warkentin said. "The total experience with the Times was a strong confirmation for the kids."

STUDENTS REWARDED WITH "GOLDEN APPLES"

Every student in the Apple Gang was awarded the "Golden Apple" for newspaper production, their teacher reported.

"We have a system of apple awards," Warkentin said, "and this is the highest any student could get. I really believe that these papers represent the best or nearly the best from every student."

"I was hoping for a real golden apple from Apple Computers to add to my apple collection," Warkentin said, "but I had to settle for a picture of one."

NEWSPAPER PRODUCTION PARTY CELEBRATES COMPLETION OF PROJECT

The Apple Gang celebrated the completion of their newspapers with a barbecue and party.

"We needed to reward ourselves in a very special way," their teacher said. "We also needed a few hours to finish the job."

Mr. Warkentin and his parent volunteer had photocopied the pages of all papers in preparation for the party.

"One Friday the kids all stayed at school for the party," Warkentin said. "They played games while another parent and a few students prepared the hamburgers."

After another special apple treat, the students received their pile of pages, which had to be collated into papers and folded.

"Students had made arrangements to buy one another's papers," Warkentin said, "so this gave them an opportunity to deliver them."

Warkentin said that he had used such special celebrations in previous projects and that he found them to be highly motivating and exciting for the students. "It creates a strong and memorable ending for an unforgettable experience."
WHEN CAN COMPUTERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

The rapid onslaught of the microcomputer revolution has left many teachers understandably confused about how they might best use this new technology to use in the classroom. In an article by the above title in THEORY INTO PRACTICE, Autumn 1983, Alan Lesgold identifies abuses of computers and makes the case for applications for which they are best suited.

Lesgold proposes first of all that computers be used to carry out RAPID DIAGNOSIS of learning. Assuming acquisition of adequate software and hardware and assuming mastery of the process, teachers should soon be able more accurately and much more quickly to diagnose the source of any problem as well as to greatly enhance their ability to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of learning activities and would enable them to make much more accurate than other methods of diagnosis. Related to diagnosis is the need to tutor for the diagnosed errors, and Lesgold discusses current research into the creation of effective computer-based tutoring. Both applications still have their limitations, but this writer encourages to be alert to new developments in this field of research.

Lesgold proposes, secondly, that computers be used to provide QUICK RESPONSE and ATTENTIONAL FOCUS. If the response time of students in various learning situations can be accelerated, then the efficiency of the activity can be improved. If interest is short-lived, then student interest is more readily maintained. A serious criticism of early uses of computers was that response time was too long, and the steps were too small to hold interest. Computers are undoubtedly able to provide that needed response more quickly and therefore hold student interest more effectively than other methods.

Lesgold proposes, thirdly, that computers be used to provide IMPROVED LABORATORY EXPERIENCES. Since concrete experiences contribute to effective learning, and since computers are able to provide effective simulations of concrete experiences, the writer contends that the learning of students will be enhanced by opportunities to encounter such experiences vicariously by computer. Citing such obstacles as the cost of providing the real experiences universally to students, the simple motor problems that frequently undermine the effectiveness of real laboratory experiments, and the danger associated with some valuable laboratory activities, Lesgold demonstrates and illustrates from research that computers can indeed contribute uniquely to improved laboratory experiences.

Lesgold proposes, fourthly, that computers be used to promote COMPUTER LITERACY. As society moves increasingly into a technological era, increasing demands will be made on students preparing for entrance into that society to gain competence over that technology. To gain this competence, they must obviously not only be exposed to the use of computers but also also be provided with experiences that will lead to mastery over this technology. Most important to education are those experiences "that reveal to children the structure of their own ideas and the structure of the computer's program." Although he acknowledges PROGRAMMING as a legitimate use of computers, he avoids the error of making this the "only" application at computer's program. As society moves increasingly into "mind-numbing discussion of bits, bytes, floppy disks and peek instructions."

Lesgold proposes, finally, that computers be used to provide instruction and opportunities for practice in WORD PROCESSING. He justifies his grounds that it has the potential for reducing the tedium that is often involved in the process of writing. Thus, the learning activities require writing are made more efficient, more effective and much more highly motivating to students. This has been borne out in the experience of The Apple Gang, as illustrated in this project.

One major current application of computers not mentioned by the writer is the rapidly growing field of COMPUTER ASSISTED INSTRUCTION. The advocates of the "every student a programmer school" have been quoted by a veritable flood of readymade, often very appropriate, software. A major thrust is needed now to assist teachers and administrators to make wise selections from the thousands of programs now available to schools.

Lesgold's article has contributed significantly to a rationale and justification of this computer project. It was one of the first articles to influence me to consider the implications of word processing at the upper elementary level. Lesgold's views have been corroborated by others who have conducted research into the use of computers in writing and composition, though to date there has been very little work at the elementary level. The Apple Gang newspaper project illustrates that Lesgold and others may be correct in their views on computers in writing.
HOW DID THEY DO IT?

"The tools of the trade" played an important role in making the newspapers, according to student accounts.

"We began by writing articles in our daily practice books," one writes. "We wrote many paragraphs and compositions."

"We took turns using the computers to type our articles," they report. "This was after several months of typing and keyboarding practice. We spent time every day in writing and typing and everyone got a turn."

The teacher reports that students also typed in their free time. All learned to do word processing on Apple II computers with the Bank St. Writer.

After articles had been typed, students spent time revising and editing. They worked alone, together with others, and with the parent volunteer or teacher.

"Once articles are on disks, they are easy to recall and work on," the teacher explained.

After articles had been edited by both students and teachers, they were printed. Most of this was done by adults, but students could easily do it too, their teacher says. "We needed to save time, and avoid the noise so a lot of it was done outside of school time."

"Students are very pleased when their work gets printed," Warkentin said.

The project was greatly assisted by being able to use the school copiers, the students said.

"We were able to use a lot of our art work and other graphics because we could always enlarge or reduce them to fit into the spaces between our articles." Their teacher had emphasized the importance of a balance between text and graphics.

Students said that this stage took a lot of effort. "There was a lot of cutting, taping, and arranging of material on each page," they said. "We had to use a lot of black lines to separate articles and to put boxes around graphics." Another challenge was to make sure that continued articles would be finished somewhere else and that pages were correctly numbered.

When all 21 papers were complete, each was photocopied, Mr. Warkentin explained.

"Each student had taken orders and so we had to make a certain number of copies of each paper."

Students received one copy free but had to pay the school for the cost of making copies for others, he said.

The project was completed on schedule, lasting from January to Easter.

"What a great day that was," Mr. Warkentin recalls. "Each student received a pile of pages to collate, fold and hand out to customers. Some had ordered copies for family members and relatives."

Obviously, more than just kids and computers was involved in this project!
A heavy influence on the developments at the school certainly originated in California, home of the Apple Computer Company and source of its products. Warkentin spent many hours in study of the documentation and the many manuals that accompany computer products. Discussions at seminars and conferences reflected this influence from the Silicon Valley, both with respect to products and developments in schools. His brother-in-law, while on assignment to the south brought back the hardware for an 80 column display for a II+ computer, thus allowing Warkentin at least to emulate the II computer which had come out just after he had bought the older II. During the next year, the school also purchased several additional Apple computers.

The Government of Alberta appointed a Task Force on Computers in Schools in 1981, and in 1983 its Report was delivered to the schools. It marked the beginning of a flurry of activity in Education with the Department of Education almost rushing to implement major recommendations. Many of these confirmed Warkentin's conviction that computers would be introduced rapidly and also affirmed the school's developing program.

Also in 1983, the Department of Education through its Curriculum Branch released materials to assist teachers in the implementation of computers in elementary schools. A Curriculum Guide was supplemented by an implementation guide and several proposed teaching units that complemented the government's Computer Curriculum. The Vauxhall Elementary program thereafter shifted significantly from an emphasis on Logo programming to CAI, and this was accelerated by the increasing number of purchases of software from publishers.

There were other sources of influence as well, as represented by various people and publications. By and large, these were such as Warkentin, in the absence of experts, were left to find their own way. They did this by expending many hours in personal self-instruction, by collaborating with fellow enthusiasts, by attending conferences and seminars, and exchanging ideas with other schools and universities. This Warkentin did while on Professional Leave in the graduate program of the University of Lethbridge and decided that he would design and carry out three computer related projects. It also proved to be an opportunity to synthesize, evaluate, and consider future alternatives.

In the summer of 1982, Irwin Warkentin was invited to be a "special lecturer" in the Calgary Summer School for Gifted, Creative and Talented Students. Among the parents of his grade three students were a couple who had purchased an Apple II computer for home use. One of those computers was brought to the school, and Warkentin discovered both a new technological tool and a special program, one that had been designed to take advantage of the unique capacities of the computer for the benefit of young children.

In the same fall, a fortunate coincidence, the Taber School Division decided to take advantage of special government terms to purchase ten "black Apple" computers for the Division, one per school, to be delivered following approval of a plan of implementation. Warkentin's Montreal experience, that is, an unfortunate with a variety of influences arising from his own background, especially his interest in innovation, novelty and change, prompted him to see these computers for the schools on the basis of a proposal that he presented to the principal and computer literacy. During the 1982-83 school year, he operated a noon hour Logo club for students in grades 5 and 6 and he personally mastered word processing, spreadsheet, utility and "freebie" CAI programs which were being circulated among schools.

That same fall, Warkentin purchased his own Apple II+ computer system, which permitted him to spend many extra hours in self-instruction at home. He bought the system in Calgary, where he also taught English at the University Elementary School and was exposed to the use of programming and CAI with some early software. His brother-in-law, an engineer and computer programmer in Calgary, provided expert consulting service in the early stages of hardware and software perusal and acquisition. Attendance at computer conferences also stimulated him and introduced him to many of the rapidly increasing applications of microcomputers in education.

Influences on the development of the computer program at Vauxhall Elementary School have originated in geographically scattered sources.
Students learned to express themselves on many topics in different subject areas, he said. Most of the time, topics were selected by the teacher, but this is one aspect of the writing program that Warkentin would change.

"I'm realizing more and more how important it is for students to have the power of choice, especially self-expression. That's also confirmed in some of the research, such as that of Donald Graves, who has done a lot with the process approach to writing."

Warkentin's program has been based quite closely on a detailed government curriculum. "More student choice might move us away from that a little," he concluded, "but the gains should be worth it."

**Autobiographies**

But even larger weekly assignments were not challenging enough, Warkentin concluded, so he organized seasonal special projects.

"The most impressive work that my students have done," he said, "is to publish their own life story. They write it out in give chapters and publish it in a book which they have personally made, bound, and illustrated. It's an excellent memoir, especially at the end of grade six when they're about to launch out into junior high."

"Students worked hard at those books," Warkentin said, "and they and their parents were certainly proud when they were finished."

**Newspapers**

A most important predecessor to the Apple Gang papers was a set of hand written newspapers that Warkentin's students wrote two years ago.

"They wrote small, first doing the whole thing in pencil and then in ink, so that we could photocopy them," he said.

The idea for those papers came from his own interest in Journalism, he said. They had included a variety of articles in a rather mixed up fashion, not organized into departments.

"Students were so interested in reading about one another that I decided to refine and extend the idea, and this was made easier by word processing." "Even I had no idea how large the computer produced papers would be."

When the papers reached more than 20 pages in length, complete with many articles and of course, all student produced, Warkentin and some university classmates sensed that the entry would win a prize. That it ultimately did was due partly to these curricular predecessors.
### "REAL" NEWSPAPERS?

#### A Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>REAL NEWSPAPERS</th>
<th>APPLE GANG NEWSPAPERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper banner on top of front page</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper organized in columns of text</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles appear as printed text</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics material appears with text</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departments are present and marked</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed on both sides of loose folded sheets</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reveals information gathering about meaningful events</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many articles have been written</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers have been used in word processing</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editing has been an important part of the process</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles and graphics have been combined in layout</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction and enlargement have been used</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopying has been used</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papers have been distributed and sold</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contain local, provincial, national, international news</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contain editorials and interpretive articles</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contain commentary and opinion articles</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contain feature stories and interviews</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contain polls and surveys</td>
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<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contain cartoons, wit and wisdom and humor</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contain letters, tributes and announcements</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contain ads, advice, instructions, reviews</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written by many writers working together</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrate many subjects into one project</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective, reveal little about the writers themselves</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build self esteem by making personal things newsworthy</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producers have achieved significant personal voices</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papers represent a creative and worthwhile personal achievement</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the criteria of relevant curricula is that, as much as possible, opportunities are provided for students authentically to simulate real adult experiences. Was that objective achieved in the Apple Gang Personal Student Newspaper Project?
WHAT THEY SAID
ABOUT WRITING AFTER
THE NEWSPAPER PROJECT

When it was all over, the teacher of the Apple Gang students tried to find out how the experience had affected them. In one of the questionnaires, they expressed their attitudes toward writing.

Writing is one of the worst things about school.

You would rather edit your own work.

You are confident about writing in junior high school.

Writing is very difficult to learn.

You have to think hard in order to write well.

Good writers never have to edit their material.

Your writing is better than it was last year.

Writing is the best solution to bad handwriting.

Computers make writing more interesting.

It is more interesting to write than to do exercises.

It is easier to punctuate on computer than on paper.

Writing is exciting when you have a good idea.

It is hard to tell whether your writing is getting better.

Thinking at the computer is harder than with a pencil.

You will need good writing skills in later grades.

Writing is one of the most useful skills in school.

Word processing can help you become a good writer.

Writing can be enjoyable for both writer and reader.

Editing the hardest part about writing.

Most of your mistakes result from carelessness.

The data reveals that word processing and the generation of personal student newspapers had an overwhelmingly positive effect on the attitudes of the students toward writing. Writing seemed to become more manageable and more pleasant and it seemed to be seen increasingly as an important part of academic progress and personal self-expression.
WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT WORD PROCESSING

Children have only recently begun to use computers on a regular basis in school. Little is known about the effects that this technology is having on students.

The Apple Gang students worked intensively on computers for a period of about five months. When it was over, what were their attitudes toward word processing?

**Table 1:**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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**Table 2:**

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</thead>
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<td>5</td>
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**Table 3:**

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Apple Gang newspaper project is one of the most intensive word processing experiences that has been tried with upper elementary students. Data such as that on this page reveals that the experience is overwhelmingly regarded by the students as manageable, feasible and desirable, and many also consider word processing essential to the tasks which they accomplished in this project. The data reveals that students gained a great measure of confidence in their newly developed ability and its relevance and utility in later studies and adult life.
The questionnaires required students to decide which types of changes are easier to do with paper and pencil and which are easier to do by word processing.

The data reveals that grade six students concluded overwhelmingly that all types of editing changes are more easily accomplished by means of word processing than with pencil on paper.

Whether their satisfaction with "clean" changes and resulting "clean" copy affected their choices or not, this data seems further support of the contention that grade six students can not only master word processing, but they can become comfortable with it to the point of believing that microcomputer technology reduces the tedium of writing corrections and thereby increases the pleasure of writing, self expression, and the production of newspapers.
WHAT THE PARENTS SAID

In a number of critical ways, the Apple Gang newspaper project was an experiment. Computers were new, the emphasis on more writing was new, and the concerted effort to create newspapers was new. What did the parents think of all this?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students had better learn to use computers.</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students in Gr 6 can master many computer uses.</td>
<td>0 0 0 7 14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers can probably improve writing ability.</td>
<td>0 0 1 10 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers have made school more interesting for students.</td>
<td>0 0 4 5 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students can do more with computers than by hand.</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computers in Gr 6 will help students in Junior high.</td>
<td>0 0 2 4 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers help students to do bigger projects.</td>
<td>0 0 2 6 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects are more interesting than textbook exercises</td>
<td>0 0 2 4 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects give students practical experience.</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students take more pride in projects than in exercises.</td>
<td>0 0 2 3 16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects have stronger effects on learning.</td>
<td>0 0 0 7 14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects can be done by all students regardless of ability.</td>
<td>0 0 2 6 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All parents of the 21 students in the Apple Gang responded to this questionnaire. The data reveals a high degree of consensus on the issues. Parents are convinced of the value of computers in facilitating the learning of students at the upper elementary level. They also support the use of large-scale projects to give students opportunity to practise their skills.
THE APPLE GANG
STUDENTS
REFLECT ON THE
PROJECT

After the papers were finished, the students commented on different parts of the project.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT WRITING YOUR OWN NEWSPAPER ALL BY YOURSELF?

It was really fun. I learned a lot about writing paragraphs. It really helped me learn how to type. It helped me learn skills that I never knew I had. It made me feel independent.                Dwayne

WHAT WAS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART IN WRITING THIS NEWSPAPER?

I think the most difficult part was the advertisements and the tributes. Shannon

WHAT KINDS OF WRITING HAVE YOU LEARNED BY DOING THIS PROJECT?

I have learned to write editorials and news articles. I have also learned to write what they said and an interview. Bruce

WHAT PARTS OF THE PROJECT DID YOU ENJOY THE MOST?

I especially like sorting out the articles on different pages. I like to cut the articles and fill in with jokes. Cherie

WHICH ARTICLES WERE THE MOST INTERESTING TO WRITE?

The comments were the most interesting. I have always been a news watcher and with the comments it gives me a chance to express my opinions on it. Dana

WHICH ARTICLES DO YOU MOST ENJOY IN OTHER PEOPLE'S PAPERS?

I enjoy the news articles...they tell about different things that happened to people and interesting facts about them. Scott

WHAT DO YOUR PARENTS THINK ABOUT THIS?

My parents think that this is a good education. They think I am learning many new things. Christina

HOW DID YOU AND YOUR PARENTS FEEL WHEN YOUR ARTICLES APPEARED IN THE ADVANCE?

We were excited and we cut the article out. It went with the papers from my school years. Jolyne

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT COMPUTERS BY DOING THIS PROJECT?

How to use them, edit with them and how to print things faster with less errors. Ronald

IN WHAT WAY MIGHT THIS PROJECT HELP YOU IN THE FUTURE?

If you are going to be a reporter, you will already have made a newspaper. Or if you want to become a computer expert, you will already know how to use a computer. Dwayne

WHICH ARTICLES IN YOUR PAPER DO YOU THINK ARE YOUR BEST?

One of them is my Feature Story. It tells about the Apple Theme in my class. The other is my editorial on open area classrooms. Sheldon

WHICH ARTICLES WOULD YOU IMPROVE IF YOU HAD MORE TIME?

I would improve the Tributes because they were done very fast. I would also made my pictures neater. Johann

WHAT DO YOU ADMIRE IN OTHER PEOPLE'S PAPERS?

I enjoyed their pictures. They were very nice and some were funny. Kim

WHAT GOOD THINGS HAVE OTHERS SAID ABOUT YOUR PAPER?

People comment on how long and good my articles are. They like the way I write. I made my pictures too. Kyla

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT NEWSPAPERS BY DOING THIS PROJECT?

I have learned that there are many different articles in a newspaper. You need lots of information. Rhonda E

IF YOU HAD ENOUGH PAPERS, TO WHOM WOULD YOU GIVE COPIES AND WHY?

If I had enough papers, I would give them to everyone. I would give them to my grandparents, friends, cousins, etc. I would give them one because I want to show them what I can do. William

WHY MIGHT THIS PAPER BE VALUABLE ENOUGH TO KEEP FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE?

It will be valuable because I want my kids to see it. Also, it will be neat to look back at. Tattianna

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE HARD WORK YOU HAD TO DO TO GET IT FINISHED?

I feel that it was worth the hard work. It was fun to learn the new skill of making a newspaper. It was even very interesting. Richard

DO YOU THINK THAT OTHER STUDENTS WOULD HAVE LIKED TO DO THIS PROJECT?

They would have like it because we got to work at computers a lot. They were waiting to get papers. Rhonda F

Many people say we are lucky to be doing this project. Tuyet

WHAT HAS BEEN THE BEST THING ABOUT THIS PROJECT?

The computers. Mark, etc. Making newspapers. Writing articles. Organizing the pages. Doing a big project. Getting it done and knowing you have done well. The fun we had. Others
THE EXPERTS SPEAK OUT:
Dr. Garnet Millar, Ph.D.
ALBERTA EDUCATION, LETHBRIDGE

DO YOU FEEL THAT THIS WAS A WORTHWHILE PROJECT FOR GRADE 6?

Yes. The significant aspect of this project is the opportunity it affords to apply language arts skills in a meaningful context.

DID THE STUDENTS GET A FEEL FOR JOURNALISM?

This project provided the students with an opportunity to become aware of the various aspects of a newspaper. It involved not only writing ability but the ability to elicit and isolate salient components of a story.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE NEWSPAPERS IN TERMS OF THEIR EDUCATIONAL VALUE?

The main benefit in my opinion is that school experiences can be meaningfully applied to the life of the students in and out of the school building.

DO YOU SEE ANY MERIT IN DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION AND ACCOMMODATING STUDENT DIFFERENCES IN THIS WAY?

Indeed! This approach will accommodate various levels of ability and motivation. In addition, various talents are given a chance to shine through various aspects of the newspaper.

WHAT FACTORS TO YOU THINK MIGHT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF THE PROJECT?

The teacher has to be expert in computer usage - word processing, and be willing to devote time to traditional methodology. The support of the principal is vital to allow for this type of project. The teacher has to plan well in advance.

WOULD YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR SOMEONE PLANNING SUCH A PROJECT?

A guidebook might be developed indicating some important steps in preparing the students for such a project.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT SUCH A PROJECT CAN BE JUSTIFIED TO EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES?

The Alberta Program of Studies for Language Arts (1982) states clearly that language arts skills should be applied, reinforced and extended by teachers of all subjects. It is obvious that the project contributes to the overall goal. The writing objectives of Alberta Education are reflected in the project.

DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER THOUGHTS THAT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO SOMEONE CONTEMPLATING SUCH A PROJECT?

I think criteria need to be developed to measure the technical aspects of word processing and their creative application in a written assignment.

Mary L. Miller
WORD PROCESSING EXPERT, New York

I feel that the project was extremely important because you provided students with the opportunity to develop extensive writing skills and at the same time they learned how to use a word processor which is a very important skill in our society.

From reading your newspapers, it would seem that your students have obtained a feel for journalism as well as many areas of publishing. Interviewing people for articles and meeting deadlines are two very real areas that journalists face everyday.

The Apple Gang newspapers contained all of the areas that one would normally read in a newspaper. The layout also impressed me as being very much like a regular newspaper and that must have involved a new area of learning that the students had not explored.

From my perspective, the main benefit of this project was that you provided your students with an interesting way to develop written communication skills.

Since you used a word processor to complete your newspapers, equity was created among your students. Had students used a pencil to produce the final product, there might have been problems with your resource room students:
- might have badly given up because of the length of the motor task
- might have been unwilling to edit their work, resulting in poor, unorganized expression of ideas
- final copy might still include cross-outs and erasures and therefore be more obvious as to the level of the student producing the work

Sometimes pairing up gifted and resource room students has a great benefit. Resource room students probably need the word processing more than anyone. It should be used as soon as a student is able to express himself using written language. It is a tool that will improve writing skills.

The newspapers combined with the word processor were the tools that you selected to teach the skills required. I think the approach is refreshing and unique and that the students still mastered the objectives, probably in a much more enjoyable manner.

The use of the software package Newsroom would still develop students' writing skills. However, it includes graphic and layout features that might assist the project. Do you have writing samples from the students prior to the project? Also, it would be interesting to do a readability level on the writing.

The two key factors that I see as contributing to success were the teacher's enthusiasm and use of the word processor.
BEING THE OLDEST

Being the oldest is more than a problem to me sometimes. It sometimes is a very confusing life. But having only a sister is even worse.

Being the oldest gives me many advantages at home. I can watch some hockey games that last past my bedtime. I get to do more things, like mow the lawn.

I once was with my sister and dad in the shop, and I got to do most of the things. My dad said to her, "Do you want something to do?"

She said, "Yea, sure!"

"Okay, go listen to the radio and find out the time."

But that isn't the only time it was an advantage for me. I can get away with more if I try. When I'm at home, I can do most anything. Once in a while, I can be bossy. I don't think I'm spoiled, even if everyone says I am.

All of these advantages lead to disadvantages too. Sisters never want to play football or baseball. My sister always has to do the same thing I do. One night I went out to ride our go-cart, to relax and have fun. But five minutes later, she comes out, waiting for me to get off.

I said to her, "What do you want?"

She replied, "I want a turn!"

So I ignored her and took off somewhere quiet. But soon I had to give her a turn, to be nice. But then after five minutes, she stops and says, "I'm tired."

Sometimes a sister can be real nagging.

Being the oldest has its disadvantages and advantages. But I will always be the oldest in my family and I like it.

FOOTBALL RADIOS

I think that radios should be put in football helmets to help the players. The radios would be handy to them. They could tell the other players what plays to play. The coach can tell them what to do too. They might talk to each other for fun during timeout.

BAD MEMORY

Scott has a bad memory from when he was nine. He had an unexperienced swim at the deep end of the pool just after his friend asked if he could swim. Dana wanted to go to the deep end so Scott went along. But when Scott jumped in, he started squirming and splashing water. The life guard dived in and brought him out. Dana didn't jump in at all. He just sat on the side, trying to help Scott to shore. It was pretty lucky that the life guard saved his life, or he could have drowned.

BOY MAKES NEW BOX

Scott succeeded in making a new box while out in his father's shop. His dad was doing something else.

He made a front swinging door that was pretty big. The box was made just of scraps of junk and old wood. It was made of wood that looked okay and an old handle for the door. But it had hinges that were new.

Scott likes building with almost anything that isn't needed around the shop. He enjoyed making the box that now contains his junk, pencils, erasers and chocolates.

LETTERS

I like the pictures in your paper. They are terrific! SHeldon

You picked some very good topics for your newspaper. JOHANN

Your article "Pothole City" was enjoyable. I'm in favor of paving the streets too. But aren't you afraid of how much it will cost? Taxes could go sky high. DANA
CAT MAULS GIRL

On the first five days of January Kyla Skretting was attacked by Grover (her cat) when she was rubbing his stomach.

Grover got hyper and started biting and clawing her hand. Kyla's hand is now itchy and has 24 scratches on it.

Even though her cat is cute and cuddly, he gets hyper and hurts people: When he does this, he rolls over on his back and starts clawing and biting peoples' fingers and hands.

"My Mom always says that if he does that again, she will make him very sorry," Kyla said.

GIRL FALLS OFF TRAMP

Kyla Skretting fell off the neighbor's trampoline when she was 8 years of age. She hit her head on the metal part of the swing set. Her head had a bump at least half an inch high.

Kyla was jumping quite high when she lost her balance and, being near the edge, she fell backwards. Her head was hurt and she had to put ice on it so the swelling would go down. Kyla had great difficulty walking to her house because her head hurt so much.

She has been more careful about what she has been doing on the trampoline.

MORE TRAINS

There are going to be more trains in Canada, but hardly any people take trains anymore. Trains cost a lot and they're never on time anyway. They are going to cost millions. If these trains don't get much business, then there goes millions of dollars down the drain. The trains better work this time.

NOT ENOUGH PRIVACY

At home I think that I should get more privacy.

Dawn, my sister, always barges in on me and starts a fight. She doesn't care what I'm doing, she just walks in on me. She doesn't stay out of my room when my friends come over either. Dawn is always in my room.

It's not that I don't like her or anything because she usually does. But the morning she comes in to see if her clothes look okay I don't like her in my room but I would like her to knock.

She is always coming into my room and turning off my radio when one of my favorite songs is on - I can't stand that. She also comes downstairs and turns on my light comes over to my bed and asks if I am awake. When I am doing my homework, someone is always looking over my shoulder to see what I am doing. There is absolutely no place in our house that is private except the B-room.

I think that I would like to get moved upstairs where there is more privacy. I wouldn't have to sleep in the same part of the house as my sister. My sister would not be able to barge in on me either. There wouldn't be a light shining in my eyes when I'm trying to sleep. She wouldn't be able to turn off my radio when I'm listening to my radio.

DEAR EDITOR OF KYLA'S KLIPPINGS:

Your paper has very good titles. They will surely attract peoples' attention. Sometimes you should be more careful with the felt pens. You are making marks through the writing which makes it hard to read. The story about being the youngest is very funny. Your stories are all put in a good order. On the black felt pen where you mucked up you shouldn't use any paper. Sometimes the stories you print are too short. Your paper was very interesting to me.

Cherie, Christina, Tuyet

MINI MINI BASKETBALL

I think that there should be mini mini basketball for short people. The tall kids usually block my way so that I can't pass. Most of the kids never pass to me because I am short. The mini basketball team they have now has a lot of tall kids on it and I can't make any baskets. There should be only short kids.
STOP MAKING MORE WEAPONS

I think that the USA and the USSR should stop making more weapons.

They should stop so nobody will get killed. If they use those weapons, innocent people will get killed, and even on purpose. If they don't stop making weapons like the Cruise missile, in the future they will be used and the world's population will be very low. This is like letting two guys come out of a store and kill you.

I think that both those countries should and destroy all those weapons.

RICHARD'S REVERSE

PRIZE WINNING NEWSPAPER

BOY GETS ACHIEVEMENT

A ten year old boy named Richard Sakaguchi got one of his most wanted achievements at a ping pong tournament in Lethbridge in 1984.

Richard won it by winning Ten Year Olds and Under Games. He came first and got a medal for it.

"The games were tough, but I had practised a lot," Richard said.

Then he went in 15 Year Olds and came in fourth but he never got a medal.

Richard had been playing ping pong for one and a half years. Sometimes he had homework so he couldn't practise.

Richard started playing when his dad got a table.

At the tournament, Richard's father and brother both got first place medals.

Richard's brother was also supposed to get a second, but they ran out of second place medals.

"I wish I had other times like this one," Richard said.

That was an achievement he will remember for a long time.

OUR FAVORITE RESTAURANT

The place where my family likes to eat most is the Golden Bridge. The food that they serve is just mouth watering. The building is nice and big. The prices aren't expensive like some other restaurants. Golden Bridge has very good service for everyone. If you look at the plates, knives, forks, cups, etc., you can see that it is hot water clean. I think this place is a very nice place to eat.

BUILD THREE RIVERS DAM

I think the Three Rivers Dam is a good thing to have. It is good because there is irrigation for several years. Some farmers might run out of water if the dam isn't built. The dam could make people come to the dam for water sports. Other people might come for the beauty of the parks. This dam creates a lot of jobs, and that is good for Alberta. I think the dam will be useful to farmers.

HOW TO MAKE AND KEEP FRIENDS

Some people don't know how to have friends, so I will tell you how. First, you should go over to a friend and greet him kindly. Talk to him with anything kind on your mind. Be honest, kind and caring with your friend. If he or she is in trouble, try to help him out. When he is lonely, play and comfort him. Try to be helpful to your friend. Be patient and concerned. That is how to make and keep friends.

MORE CARNIVALS

I think there should be more carnivals in school. Children need the entertainment. With the money the school makes it can buy school supplies. If the school has more carnivals, the kids might like school better. The school could get more children to move here because of the carnivals. The carnivals can have games which could be really fun. I think if this school had carnivals people would like it here.

DEAR EDITOR OF RICHARD'S REVENGE:

Richard's Revenge is an excellent newspaper. The pictures are really good. The stories are really interesting. They don't drag out. They aren't too long and they aren't too short. This is pretty well the best newspaper I have ever read.

Grant
PEOPLE EAT WITH THEIR MOUTH OPEN

It bugs me a lot when people eat with their mouths open. My little cousin does it and it sounds gross. My uncle's whole family does. Whenever he eats with his mouth open, my mom yells at him. Also it looks very bad with all this chewed up food in his mouth. Whenever he comes to our house, he gets yelled at so much for doing that. When my uncle's family comes, they don't, because they know it makes my mom and me very mad. When we're not around, they smack a lot. When we go to their house, they smack a lot. They shove food into their mouth and it looks gross. That's what's wrong with them all.

An idea to make them stop is to tell them not to smack or eat with their mouths open when they're eating.

To make them stop, I can remind them not to smack when they eat. But when I tell my little cousin, he says, "No." He is the one who is the brat because he acts so big. Whenever he smacks, we can tell him he can't eat anymore. That will probably stop him from eating with his mouth open. We can tell him he can't go out to play. We can tell him at the beginning of every meal, "If you eat with your mouth open, you will get the strap." That is what they do and how we can stop them.

GIRL BREAKS WRIST

Kimberly Wright was sleighing four years ago when she was in grade two. When she was sleighing, her wrist bent back the wrong way and broke.

Her parents had to rush her to the hospital. They took her in around 10 in the morning. She was released the next day.

The thing that caused it was going down the hill too fast. She volunteered to go down to see if it was safe. It wasn't for her. Kimberly never had anything to eat or drink that day except for hot chocolate.

GIRL SKATES 20m IN RECORD TIME

Kimberly Wright beat her sister Deidre and her cousin Sheldon Pickett in skating on the pond near the Wright's home on January 2.

Kimberly skated 20m in 3 seconds, Deidre did it in 3.5 seconds, Sheldon also in 3.5 seconds. Deidre was just a bit faster than Sheldon. Kim just about did it in 4, but she never.

Sheldon had played hockey when he was little. Deidre had skating lessons, but not very many. Kim had not taken any lessons.

GIRL LOST IN ZOO

A year ago, Robyn Wright got lost in Stanley Park in Vancouver, B.C.

Her family was looking all over. They were at the monkeys and then left to go to the ducks. She got lost at the monkeys.

One of her sisters said, "Where is Robyn?" They looked all over for her. They never found Robyn, but Robyn found them. She was yelling at them, but they never heard her. Then one of them saw her and told the rest. They went to get her and then they went home. They were so glad they found her.

Dear Editor: I like your paper and agree with the article about people eating with their mouths open. It looks gross and shows bad table manners. Disgusting. Kyla
ACID RAIN

I think acid rain is bad. The U.S.A. should use other things such as solar energy instead of coal and oil. Lots of lakes around the Great Lakes are dead because of acid rain. The U.S.A. should control acid rain because they are running out of water in some places and want to buy water from Canada. The rain is killing many plants and animals, especially fish. I think the U.S.A. should do something about acid rain.

HUNTERS—STAY AWAY!

I don't think hunters should be allowed on other peoples' land. People might get hurt or killed by hunters. Many don't like the noise of the guns. Lots of hunters shoot ducks and geese and leave them there. Lots of hunters leave vehicles in the yard and they get in the way. Hunters dig holes and don't close them, and in spring the wheels almost break off the equipment. I do not like hunters.

On September 29, Gromyko and Schultz met to discuss arms control. I think it is a very good idea for two countries that are enemies of each other to meet and talk together. I don't think they will become friends right away. They might even become friends. In even one hour, they can talk lots, not to say sometimes they talk up to seven hours. People don't like long but people do lots in a lifetime. Talking is better than not talking when the world wants peace. I think the arms talks will continue.

CANADIAN ASTRONAUT

Marc Garneau of Canada went up in space on October 5. I personally think it is good to have Canadian astronauts go up in space because it helps Canada. It's a good idea because Canada won't have to rely on the U.S.A. so much. The U.S.A. won't have to do Canadian experiments. It gets Canada involved in bigger things. Canadian astronauts might find something that may affect the whole world. I think Canada will become more involved in space.

ARMS TALKS

William's Wrap-Up

WORKING IN THE BARN

In our family we have to work in the barn.

I have to do more work than all of my brothers and I have to do dirtier jobs and harder jobs. I work in the barns from 9 to 3 and from 4 to 5.

The barns are not inside, and in the winter when it's cold outside, I walk out to the barn and by the time I get to the house, my hair is frozen. The barns have fog in the alleyways and I can't see where I'm going. I smash into pens and trip and slip. In one barn there is mud another has dust and another has straw. Sometimes the feeding systems don't work, so I have to feed the pigs by hand. There are flies all over the place. Pig barns are dirty places to work in.

It would be better if we kept the barns clean. One advantage is that there would be hardly any flies. There would be less mud on the floors. It wouldn't stink as much if it was clean. It would also be easier to see. A disadvantage is that it would take too much time. It would also get dirty again right after we cleaned. I still think keeping the barns clean is a good idea.

MILLION DOLLAR DREAM

William had a dream at home a few months ago. He dreamt that he was the one who won the $14.6 million lottery. He was taking the money home and was attacked from behind by two masked men. They didn't find the money because it was hidden in the seats. He was brought to the hospital and had his leg put in a brace.

He got his money home safely. The first thing he bought was a large safe. He bought a new house, truck, motor home and car. He gave two million to his mom and dad, two million to his wife's mom and dad, and three million to his sons. He said later, "I was lucky to win."
INTERVIEW WITH MS JONES

TT: I am interviewing Ms. Jones because I like her for many reasons. She is a nice person, she helps people and is not hard on us. This is what I asked her. When did you start teaching gymnastics?


TT: Why did you want to teach gymnastics?

MJ: I have always enjoyed P.E. and I wanted to see if I could help other kids.

TT: Do you think that the kids you teach behave well?

MJ: I think that most of the students behave well.

TT: Does your family like having a gym teacher for a mother?

MJ: Sometimes my little girl wants me to stay home.

TT: What did you have to get to be a gym teacher?

MJ: Bachelor of Physical Education and a teaching certificate, not even a whistle!

TT: Were you ever in gymnastics when you were little?

MJ: No, but in university, and it was hard.

TT: When did you get involved in gym?

MJ: I got involved in Junior High.

TT: What age group did you first teach?

MJ: College students.

TT: This is what I found out from Ms. Jones.

NO PARTY

One of my main problems is not being able to have a party.

The main reason is that I'm too young. Another reason is that my brother has a heart defect and he has to go to Toronto for an operation. Another reason is that my sisters bosses everyone around. The other sister is too little to have around in a party. My mom wouldn't let me have a party because I wouldn't clean it up and it would cost too much.

My friends get parties and I get invited. I go to have a party, and my parents get mad. They think I'm a little kid, but if my friends are old enough, so am I! Parties are fun and exciting.

GIRLS MAKE TOOL HOLDER

Tattianna and her cousin Deidre made a tool holder for Deidre's father some time last summer.

They made it out of wood and nails and a tree. They took a piece of wood about 50 cm long and nailed it to a tree. Then they put in more nails to hold tools. They went to another tree and nailed a piece of wood to each side of the trunk. They put in two nails to fasten it. They also put in more nails for coat hangers. They did this so they could put their coats on the side away from the wind.

Tattianna and Deidre liked making things out of wood for Deidre's father and for themselves.

"The things we made are still there," Tattianna said with satisfaction.

TATTIANNNA GETS INJURED

Tattianna got injured two years ago at Kim's old house. She was chasing chickens and fell on barbed wire.

She yelled for Kim to come and she showed Kim her leg. "It looks like fish eggs," she said. Deidre and Robyn (Kim's younger sisters) ran into their house to get their older sisters, Darcy and Deborah. They took her in their car and started to go to Taber.

She had been chasing a chicken over a clump of grass. Under the grass was barbed wire. When she went to jump on the chicken, she fell on the wire.

TATTIANNNA'S TITANIC

PRIZE WINNING NEWSPAPER
BOY REMEMBERS ADOPTION

Ronald's good memory is when he was adopted five and a half years ago.

Ronald was not allowed to buy many things at his foster home in Calgary. But when his birthday came, he got one present.

"I was bored all the time at the foster home," said Ronald. "When I went to school, it was okay because I made lots of friends."

Now Ronald has a real mom and dad who adopted him, his brother and his sister. Ronald's parents asked for three kids and the people at the foster introduced them one day at the zoo.

They had fun at the zoo. They stayed there for hours and then went out for supper. They talked about adoption for a long time.

Until that time, Ronald never knew that he had a sister. "Is she my real sister?" he asked, and they said, "Yes, she is." He was glad when they met again in their new home.

"Now I am here and I love it because not I have a real family."

DEAR DISPATCH EDITOR:

You have some very good paragraphs in your paper. You could improve your pictures a little more. You have at least one picture on every page, which makes it more interesting. I think that you have some good titles for your articles. You also have some interesting stories. Keep up the good work!

JOHANN

MCDONALD'S

My family likes to go to McDonald's because they have good food. The service is very fast at times when they are not busy. The restaurant is always clean.

Dad said, "I enjoy McDonald's because it is cheap and there always is something new, like chicken McNuggets."

The rest of the family agreed. So take my advice. Try McDonald's. You will probably like it as much as we do.

KID COLLIDES WITH VAN

Ronald had an accident when he was 11 years old. At Thorpsby, Alberta, he ran into a van mirror when his cousin chased him.

He had to get seven stitches on his forehead. Ronald still has the scar from the stitches being too tight. His mom said,

"When Ronald grows up he will have to go for plastic surgery."

TOO SHORT

I wish I was not so short so I wouldn't have to ask my sister to get me something, like a glass, for example. It's too high for me to reach. I should carry a stool everywhere I go. Then when I need something and it's too high, I will not have to wait for my sister to come and get it down for me. That is how I could beat the problem of being too short.

RECESS ACTIVITIES

I think that there should be more noonhour activities. If we had outside activities, crafts or noonhour sports, then there would be less running around the school. We could have the Playroom for activities and use the Science Room for games like Trivia. We could have a group reading in the library. We would need a chart to let kids know what to do. Keep rotating so that everyone has something to do at noon-hour.
**GIRL THROWN OFF HORSE**

On June 27, 1984, at Ron Friesen's farm, Rhonda Friesen was thrown off her horse.

She only hurt her leg a little so she didn't have to go to the hospital. She got help from her Mom on the horse right after the accident.

Her Mom worked on the horse for awhile to teach him not to buck. Rhonda has been taking him to shows and he has not bucked again.

**MOTHER GETS BLACK EYE**

Rhonda Friesen was a witness to an accident October 14. A horse threw back her head and hit Rhonda's mother Kathy in the face.

The accident was caused by the horse spooking. Kathy had a black eye for about three weeks. The horse was spooked when a cow jumped over a sprinkler pipe. The cow hit the pipe and the horse got scared from the sound.

**RHONDA'S COUSIN DROWNS**

In January of 1984, Gene Forchuk drowned while ice fishing in southern Alberta. The accident was caused when their truck broke through the ice. All five of his friends escaped and were rushed to the hospital.

It was thought he might have drowned because he was unconscious. They found a big bruise on his forehead.

The funeral was held in Vauxhall about a week after the accident. There were many people at the funeral. Eugene was Rhonda's first cousin. He is sadly missed by his family and friends.

**CHEATING**

Cheating on your school work is a bad thing to do. It could even lead to failing a grade. In some universities they have a chart on people who cheat. I think that is good. If a person has his name on this list, he won't be able to find a job. People don't want cheaters working for them. When you go to university, don't get your name on that list.

**BEING THE MIDDLE CHILD**

Being a middle child is not all you think it is but sometimes it is not all that bad.

There are lots of advantages of being a middle child. Because I am one of the older children, I get to do more than my younger sisters. Like, I get to go places more often. I can stay up later. The best one is that I get to have friends over.

I am really glad that I am not old enough to go babysitting yet. I have gone to babysit with my older sister a couple of times. She wanted me to change the diaper, but I totally refused to go near the dirty stuff.

I am glad that I have two younger sisters so I can boss the little twirps around. It is kind of fun, but I always get in trouble.

A disadvantage is that my older sister always bosses me around. Like right now she has a sore arm and she makes us her slaves.

One thing that I hate the most is that I always get the blame for what my little sisters do. I get in trouble most of the time when my sisters bug me and I get mad at them. They just love bugging me because they never get in trouble and probably never will. When I have friends over, they are the worst pests in the universe. They drive me up the wall.

If my mom yells at my older sister, she just ignores her or gets mad at her.

Now do you understand the introduction and know what I mean when I say, "Being the middle child is not all what you think it is."
NOTLEY

I think Grant Notley was murdered. Why were hundreds of airplanes flying in the air and the one with Grant Notley in it crashed. They don't know why the plane crashed either. Maybe the criminal in the plane had something to do with it. Or when the plane crashed the criminal might have killed him. Why come the criminal didn't try to save him?

SHUTTLE FLIGHT

They should send more shuttles into outer space. We could increase space technology. We might know what is happening on the earth. We could play tricks on people on the other side of the world. We could figure out more about other planets. Some people could live up there. There wouldn't be any problem of lack of space on earth.

I think the reporters should stay out of peoples' hair. The shuttle is supposed to be secret, but nobody is listening. They go and ask questions, and somehow they figure out what's going on. The Russians know what is going on.

MAN GETS ARTIFICIAL HEART

William Schroeder received an artificial heart. The heart is working well for now, but for how long? There's only a machine keeping him alive. How long will it be before the machine breaks? The heart will have to have new batteries some time. They have to open him up when the battery runs dead. He will die if something goes wrong.

UNRUH MAKES BIG SCORE

Grant Unruh scored the final goal in a basketball game last year in intramurals. He scored the goal in the last two seconds from the center line.

It was a perfect goal. It didn't hit anything while it was going in. He thought the score was tied, so in the last few seconds he just threw the ball and it went in. Grant was the champion for the day. "I was proud to make the winning basket," Grant said afterward.

BOY MAKES IDIOT OF SELF

Grant Unruh got caught in some bales. They were playing and Grant fell and caught his stuck in a hole. Nobody would help him out because they were laughing so hard. He tried to push someone to dig him out of the hole but he couldn't.

Finally, somebody jumped at him. He moved out of the way and the other person got stuck.

NOT ENOUGH PAY

One of my problems is that I don't get enough pay at home. I could work harder than my brother and I wouldn't get anything. Sometimes I do lots of work and I don't get anything. So when I do some work, my brother says it was nothing. The only time I get money is when I go to town. I've always given my dad money from my 4-H calf but I never get it back. If I got paid just a little, even one dollar, I would be happy. I'd have to keep my money in a safe place so my brother wouldn't take it. I could put some in the bank and I could get interest. If I saved enough, I could get something big, maybe even a nice car.

DEAR EDITOR OF GRANT'S GAZETTE:

Your article "No Gum in School" is baloney. You said that everybody would be happy if they could chew gum in school. I know kids that can't stand the sight of gum. You said that if gum gets stuck on desks, the person who put it there would take it off. In some schools it's detention for getting gum on desks. If you got the opinion of the people who had to clean the desks, I don't think you'd feel this way.

DANA

I am very pleased with the work on your newspaper. You have some excellent paragraphs. You use some interesting words.

JOHANN
FOCUS

on

GRANT

Former Resource Room Student

The Apple Gang included students of a wide range of abilities, from identified 'gifted' to students such as Grant, who had previously spent years getting extra help with language in the Resource Room. How did students of perceived "low ability" fare in the newspaper project? Their teachers expressed their views on this issue in a class with Richard Butt.

"Grant is the son of a local couple and has lived here all his life. He is the youngest by many years in a family of five or six. He comes from a stable home in which the traditional values are supported and taught. The family's guardedness, honesty and hard work and is active in local organizations such as 4H and minor sports. His older brothers and sisters made it through school with no significant academic problems."

"And then Grant entered school and everything changed, especially for a sincere and sensitive mother who was not used to being called to school for interviews to discuss the learning problems of her son. The main problem was that Grant had terrible handwriting could not spell even the simplest words and that he had related problems in language arts."

"From his earliest years, he was sent for extra help to the Resource Room where the most devoted teachers tried hard to help him overcome his handicaps. By the end of grade 5, the teachers had made was deemed insufficient for further promotion, so he was retained in that grade for a second year. Grant was a well behaved and well mannered boy and he adjusted quickly to his new social group. He made further progress that second year, partly because he was still receiving special help each day."

"When Grant came into my grade 6 class last year, I decided to treat him the same as the rest; that is, all his formal education within my classroom. I started him off immediately in the writing program and expected him, like the rest, to undertake and complete all projects."

"Of course, he continued to have problems. His handwriting was nearly illegible and he struggled with spelling, often working at home independently in preparation for spelling tests. Little by little, things began to change. Perhaps it started with an improving sense of self worth and self esteem as he realized that he could do the same assignments as other students."

"As he realized that he was not as 'dumb' as he had thought, his work improved. He concentrated increasingly on self evaluation and self improvement and began to realize that he too knew the importance of correct spelling, punctuation and paragraphing."

"In spite of years of struggle and obvious discouragement with mechanics, Grant's self expression had not lost his voice. He was an able story teller and often attracted an audience with his tales. He performed at a high level in oral language and nearly won the local 4H speak-offs. The same voice, in spite of the mechanical hurdles, still penetrated his writing."

"He kept up at his level with all assignments throughout the year and never lost points for lapses in his sense of responsibility."

"Given the particular combinations of Grant's weaknesses in language and his interest in composing, he took naturally to word processing. With characteristic patience and persistence, he learned keyboarding and typed his articles into the computer. The computer editing was an important part of the project, and Grant accepted help from other students in the effort to correct his work. His work required extra attention from the teacher, but Grant did not seem to tire from the concerted effort to produce publishable copy."

"In the end, his paper was as technically correct as that of any other student, to Grant's great satisfaction. And in Grant's words and in the words of his mother, his confidence has improved more than anything..."}

"In the words of his mother: 'He has definitely improved in his writing... His confidence has improved more than anything... maybe because he's part of the group... Writing is ABSOLUTELY important...He enjoyed grade 6...I don't think he felt pressured... The newspaper was his own stuff, not doctored up by someone else, FANTASTIC... I was probably in shock (at the variety of articles in his paper)...fantastic idea... I am impressed to no end...out of class time you took it, helped his spelling and his reading, I think... It was not too hard... not too much work... Word processing is great for kids...they're going to need it. The whole town was proud of the award)... I think he could do it because you expected him to.' "

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"When Grant came into my grade 6 class last year, I decided to treat him the same as the rest; that is, all his formal education within my classroom. I started him off immediately in the writing program and expected him, like the rest, to undertake and complete all projects."

"Of course, he continued to have problems. His handwriting was nearly illegible and he struggled with spelling, often working at home independently in preparation for spelling tests. Little by little, things began to change. Perhaps it started with an improving sense of self worth and self esteem as he realized that he could do the same assignments as other students."

"As he realized that he was not as 'dumb' as he had thought, his work improved. He concentrated increasingly on self evaluation and self improvement and began to realize that he too knew the importance of correct spelling, punctuation and paragraphing."

"In spite of years of struggle and obvious discouragement with mechanics, Grant's self expression had not lost his voice. He was an able story teller and often attracted an audience with his tales. He performed at a high level in oral language and nearly won the local 4H speak-offs. The same voice, in spite of the mechanical hurdles, still penetrated his writing."

"He kept up at his level with all assignments throughout the year and never lost points for lapses in his sense of responsibility."

"Given the particular combinations of Grant's weaknesses in language and his interest in composing, he took naturally to word processing. With characteristic patience and persistence, he learned keyboarding and typed his articles into the computer. The computer editing was an important part of the project, and Grant accepted help from other students in the effort to correct his work. His work required extra attention from the teacher, but Grant did not seem to tire from the concerted effort to produce publishable copy."

"In the end, his paper was as technically correct as that of any other student, to Grant's great satisfaction. And in Grant's words and in the words of his mother, his confidence has improved more than anything..."
BEING PICKED ON

In the Ngo family most of them pick on Tuyet.

They pick on Tuyet and her brother when they play on the way home and get dirty. When she gets home, the family picks on her for letting them get dirty. They pick on Tuyet and it is not fair. It is not fair because they get themselves dirty when she tells them not to get dirty. Then she gets her parents picking on her. Then when her sister sees them dirty she blames it on Tuyet. Then her brother also blames it on her. Then her parents tell her, "Do not get them dirty." But they get dirty again on the way home, and Tuyet gets blamed for it.

I will suggest a solution to the whole thing. My solution is that Tuyet will stay close to her brothers and when they want to play she will hold on to them so that they cannot get dirty.

The advantage of this is that then they might not get dirty. Another one is that they won't be able to play anymore. Another is that Tuyet won't get picked on. Another one is she won't get the blame because they won't be dirty.

Now I will tell you about the disadvantages of the solution. One is that Tuyet might have to keep doing it over and over again. Another disadvantage is that the brothers might tell her parents what she has been doing. Those are advantages and disadvantages of the solution. I think I will use that solution.

HOW TO MAKE A PIZZA

I will tell you how to make a pizza. The first thing you do is get some flour. Then you get some tomato sauce. Then you get any kind of thing which you want in the pizza. Then you put something to put the flour in. Then you have to make the flour flat. Then you put the tomato sauce on the flour. Then you add many different kinds of herbs and spices. Then you put it in the oven. Then when it is all finished, you eat it.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOD?

JOLYNNE: Pizza. SHELDON: Hamburgers.

CHERIE: Pizza because you can have a lot of different tastes.

DWAYNE: Pizza.
BOY ALMOST DROWNS

Sheldon Warkentin of Vauxhall almost drowned when he was swimming with his family and friends, the Browns, up north in a dugout when Sheldon was little.

"Our friends said the dugout gradually got deeper, so I waded in and suddenly went down," Sheldon recalls. When he went down, he stuck his hands above the surface of the water.

Sheldon's dad was standing nearby and saw Sheldon's hands. He pulled him out and brought him back to the side.

"The bottom of the dugout was muddy, which made the water muddy, so if I had gone completely under, the others couldn't have seen me," said Sheldon.

Brouns kept their little girl near the edge after that.

KID GETS BIKE

Sheldon Warkentin received a new bike during the summer of 1964.

He got the bike after a trip to Taber. During the trip, Sheldon traded bikes with his dad for awhile. His dad found out what it was like to ride a one-speed bike with small wheels for a long distance.

That day they started to shop for bikes in Taber. The next day they went to Lethbridge.

The Warkentins got three bikes, one for Sheldon, one for his brother Bruce and one for their mom. Their father already had one. All the bikes are ten-speeds.

Sheldon's bike is silver and Bruce's is his favorite color, red. The Warkentins intend to go on long distance bike trips.

BOYS GET TRUCK FOR CHRISTMAS

Sheldon and Bruce Warkentin of Vauxhall received a remote controlled vehicle for Christmas.

The remote controlled vehicle is a blue pick-up with the name Ranger. The Ranger has two speeds. The slow speed is for climbing. When the batteries are strong, it is supposed to be able to climb at a 40 degree angle. It will try to climb almost anything.

Ranger has big balloon tires which help it to climb. The boys got the truck from their parents.
FIELD TRIPS -- WHY NOT?

One of the things we used to have in our school and we don't have any more is field trips.

Since grade one, there have been fewer field trips every year. I think that teachers just want kids to learn more these days.

You can surely expect teachers to want kids to learn more these days because of all the new jobs in the world.

But why cancel the field trips? I really do think that teachers should give us kids more field trips, don't you think so? There must be a way the teachers could give us kids more field trips and the same amount of work. Boy, I sure hope we can think of a way to provide more field trips and the same amount of work.

The only solution I can think of is to give students less time to play at recess.

Now some bad things and good things about that. One bad thing about that is the kids might be mad because they would get less time to play. One good thing is they would get more field trips. Do you know that the field trips might actually be good for us kids? Do you know why? Well, I will tell you. The reason why it would be good is because we would learn from the things around us. The teachers might think it wasn't good, but I think it is. So we could have more field trips after all.

GIRL SHINES AT POOL

Shannon Van Hal, an out of town girl, perfected her pool playing when she was staying at her grandma's house in town.

She spent many hours just shooting the pool balls into all the pockets. Pretty soon she noticed that she was getting really good at the game.

She asked her father, a very good pool player, to play her a game. She very well knew that she would not beat her father in a pool game. To her surprise, she won. Before Shannon learned how to play well, she lost almost every game she played. One day she asked her brother Michael to play her a game. She won again. Now Shannon Van Hal is a very good pool player.

GIRL SCORES GREAT ACHIEVEMENT

Shannon's greatest goal was to win a ribbon in one of the competitions in the Southern Alberta Games.

When Shannon arrived at Brooks, she was very worried because all the best gymnasts from all over southern Alberta were there.

It was really late in the afternoon when the girls from Shannon's age group started. When she was on the vault the first time, she almost broke her two fingers while going over the vault.

When the competition was over, Shannon found out that she had won third place on the vault.

GIRLS HURTS ARM

Shannon Van Hal of Vauxhall pulled her arm out of her socket a while ago as she was carrying a pail of water to her horses.

She was taken to the hospital the next day. Her arm was put into a sling so she could rest it.

Her arm can pop out any time it wants to now, especially if she is carrying something too heavy. It has popped out of the socket only once so far.

"It hurts every time I move it," she complained.
VIOLANCE IN HOCKEY

In my opinion, violence in hockey is very bad. One reason for this is that hockey players can get hurt very bad or very injured. There was a hockey player last fall who got his throat cut with a skate. The player died from the cut when he was lying down on the ice. If someone gets injured, it is not funny at all. One thing they could do about violence is to be very strict. If a player would start to fight, they should throw him out of the game because someone else could get hurt badly. I think that violence in hockey should be stopped by coaches or referees.

BALLS ON THE ROOF

One problem our school has is that too many balls are being kicked on the roof. In my opinion, it is bad because as soon as there are five balls on the roof, someone has to get down, like a student. The student could fall off the ladder and break his neck. One thing we could do about it is to put fences on the roof that are slanted toward the ground. Then if somebody would kick a ball too high, the fence would stop the ball. Another thing we could do about it is to have a special building outside for kicking balls. This is my comment on balls on the roof.

TOO MUCH MUSIC

One of the problems our family has is music in the house.

Music is a problem because at 7:30 in the morning, my sister puts on her stereo so loud that it wakes me up. Every time my sister puts on her stereo on the stairs, she dances with the music. Then when she dances, I can hear a BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, when I am in my room. That makes the light in my room make an irritating noise. Most of the time when I am reading, my sister turns up her music and I can't read.

Then at about 9:00 in the evening, my sister puts on her music in the room next to me. Then I can't even get to sleep. My sister finally puts it off at about 10:00. My mom does not like it when my sisters put on their music in their room. So you can see that music is one of the problems in our family.

One solution we could have is to have a family meeting to talk about saving energy. If we could all agree to save energy, then we would have less music in the house.

There are some advantages in having less music in the house. One is that it would be more peaceful and quiet in our house. Another is that we would save money which would lead to less payment for the power bill. Then we could maybe even take a long vacation. One disadvantage is that my sisters would always be arguing with my mom and dad. Another advantage is that our house might last longer.

Music is a big problem in our family and if my solution works, I will be very happy about it.

DEAR EDITOR OF MARK'S MONITOR:

I read your newspaper and I think that it is pretty good. I like it where you tell about things that happened to you and that you did. Your articles are long and interesting. The articles that you write also have good content. Do you like to write? It sure seems like it. Keep up the good work.

SHELDON

I agree with your opinion on the hijack-ers. I think that Iran should be more careful. People who hijack are crazy people and should be locked up. Some day people will get killed if they're not careful. That's how I feel about your opinion article.

SCOTT
COW CHASES KID

Last July, Christina Pederson got chased by one of their cows at their place outside of Vauxhall.

Roween and Kendra Grams were over. Christina and her friends went over to the corral. Christina dared herself to walk through the cows without getting chased.

Christina was in the middle of the herd when she decided to come back. Next thing, a cow was right behind her. Christina ran like crazy.

Christina hit the board fence, jumped over and went flying on the ground.

Roween and Kendra were laughing like crazy, so Christina started laughing too.

They finally figured out why she started chasing Christina. The cow had a new born calf.

DUMB NAMES

In my family, I get called too many names by my brother.

One school night on the way home, I turned around and looked to the back. I started talking to my friend Lori.

Garry said, "Turn around, pea brain." I did or else I would get hit.

After a while, we started playing a card game called "Cheat." I laid down the wrong cards. "Pick them up, pea brain," Garry said.

We continued with our game. When it was time to get off, we quit our game "Cheat." I have described my problem of being called names.

I will suggest some solutions. I could tell my parents. They would probably give him heck. I could tell him myself to stop calling me names. I could lock him in his room to teach him a lesson.

I will give some advantages and disadvantages to my solution. The first advantage is I'm not one who will get in trouble. He might lose his allowance. I might get to go more places if he's grounded.

A disadvantage of being called names is everyone will think he's cool. Some people might call me those names too. Another disadvantage is I might be bugged about them.

An advantage of being called "pea brain" is that I will be the one who can take being called names. Those are some advantages and disadvantages of a family problem.

GIRL WINS TWO GOLDS

In July, Christina Pederson went to the Alberta Southern Games in Medicine Hat. She won two gold medals.

Christina won her gold in running broad jump and and the 50 metre run.

Christina said, "I think the trackers in southern Alberta are very good trackers."

Christina's broad jump leap was very far.

"I will go to more games if I can win a first or second in the Taber Games," she said.
SNOWBALL FIGHTS

This problem that the school has is that snowball fights sometimes get out of hand. When this happens, someone gets hurt because of it and has to go to the hospital. It's not bad when it's snow, but when it's ice, you have a problem. People will get hurt because of it. One time this happened at school. A person threw an ice ball and it hit a person in the eye. The person that was hurt was taken to the hospital to see if he would lose his eye. The doctor said, "He will not lose his eye. He is fortunate." Most of the kids have learned what an iceball can do.

My solution is not to have snowball fights. They are a lot of fun to have. You get a lot of exercise from that game that everybody plays. You also get a lot of fresh air. It's a fun sport to enjoy with friends.

Now I will tell you the disadvantages of snowball fights. You could hurt somebody anywhere on the body. You also could catch a cold because you want your team to win. You could get frostbitten on the hands or in the face. These are the advantages and disadvantages of snowball fights. They can be enjoyed or disliked by all ages.

EYE INJURED AT SCHOOL

A student named Bruce Thiessen was hit with an iceball at the Vauxhall Elementary School on Nov. 8.

The person who threw the iceball said, "He walked right into it."

Right away the eye started to swell. He immediately ran into the school. The nurse, Mrs. Sassa, immediately applied ice cubes to his eye.

Mr. Markentin phoned his mom and she came right to the school. She took him to the hospital and they x-rayed his facial bones. The doctor said, "He will still be able to see out of his eye."

"My eye still hurts a little." Bruce said, after he left the hospital.

ACID RAIN IS A TROUBLE

One of the problems that Canada as well as the US has and that I think that Canada and the US should take immediate action on is the problem of acid rain. This is causing rust on vehicles in both countries. The worst thing about it is you don't know when it is coming. This so-called "acid rain" is killing the wildlife in Canada as well as the US. If these countries don't take action it will keep on killing the wildlife.

DEAR DOCTOR:

Do you think that I should ask my grandparents for money? MONEY THIEF

No, they may not like you after a while.

One of my habits is chewing my nails. What should I do? NAILS

Trim them when they get too long.

My parents don't give me much money. BROKE

Why don't you do some work?
FOR THE CARNIVAL

At school, I think we should have the carnival every year because it is very fun. It is fun for everybody. They have something to drink and eat for everybody. Everything they have to eat is very good. Some people make cakes and some people judge them to see which is first, second, third, and so on. Then people bid to get one of the cakes. Whoever bids the highest, wins the cake they want.

We have entertainment like singing, doing gymnastics, poetry and much more. They have computers to play games with. If you succeed on the game you’re playing, you get a coupon. With that coupon, you go in the room beside it and buy something with your coupons. Carnivals are very fun for everybody of all ages.

I think we should keep the Carnival in our school because everybody likes it.

RHONDA’S HAPPY MOMENT

The happiest moment of Rhonda’s life was when she went to watch the Edmonton Oilers play hockey against the Calgary Flames. It was the last game for her to go and watch the Oilers. The Edmonton Oilers are her favorite team.

Rhonda sat in the blue seats at the top. Her seat was the second last one from the top. She sat in seat number 17. The game was good and there were many highlights. There were just a few of them.

Rhonda went to watch the Oilers because they weren’t going to be very far from their relatives. Red Deer is where Rhonda went to have Christmas.

Rhonda was so happy to see the Oilers play. When she heard they were going to Edmonton, she almost jumped to go. It was the most exciting thing in the world for her.

It was a very good game because the Oilers pounded the Flames 7 to 1. The game was a great game for everybody in her family because they are all Oiler fans.

RHONDA’S PROUD MOMENT

Rhonda Enns of Vauxhall is proud because she has the ability to do gymnastics. She learns and practises doing very difficult things. Some of the things the kids are supposed to do she is the first one to do. Rhonda Enns is a very good gymnast.

Rhonda and her friends work very hard on their assignments. Rhonda practises gymnastics at home, at school, and at gymnastics classes, of course. She has built herself into a good gymnast. Rhonda had to practice very hard every day to get her assignments marked off.

The teacher, Mrs. Reynolds, watched Rhonda at gymnastics. The teacher thought that Rhonda was good, but she still had to practise some more. So Rhonda practised harder and harder on her assignments. The next day at gymnastics, the teacher asked Rhonda to show her if she could do her assignments yet. Rhonda showed her what she could do. The teacher thought Rhonda was very very good.

Rhonda was so proud of herself. Rhonda always does her best at gymnastics.

I read your lead and found it interesting. JOLYNNE

I find a very large variety in your newspaper. I also find some of your articles very interesting. I also find that you have lots of filling. SHANNON

I really enjoyed reading your newspaper. It was very good. I especially enjoyed the editorial about getting all the blame. One thing that I noticed is that one page does not have any pictures. You should take time to draw some. All of your stories were interesting to read. I think that it will be a good paper when you are finished. CHERIE
NOT ENOUGH PRIVACY

In my opinion, schools should have more privacy.

For instance, bathroom aren't very private, especially the toilets. The walls are also too small. The classroom doesn't have enough privacy either. The walls should reach to the ceiling. Most classrooms don't have doors. The library has no walls at all. Students can't concentrate on their reading or tests. The school should at least put something on the windows.

I think that every school should have more privacy. One advantage would be having peace and quiet. Another would be better report cards, because students can do better on tests when it is quiet. Another advantage would be that when there is a fire, it wouldn't get into another room so easily.

One disadvantage would be the cost of having solid walls in each classroom. Another would be that some rooms would not get any heat because others would block off the registers. Doing all this work would take some school time. The other class wouldn't have a speaker so they couldn't hear the announcements.

In some ways, it would be good to have solid walls, and in some ways, it would be bad.

BOY NEVER FORGETS

Johann Wiebe has a good memory stored in his head. It is when he and his family came to Canada from Mexico when he was seven.

They enjoyed the beautiful sights as they travelled through the United States.

"He went to Ontario where our relatives live," Johann remembers. On the way they stayed in some wonderful motels for the night. Sometimes they ate in fancy restaurants. After a while in Ontario, they came to Alberta. The family lives a happy life here in Vauxhall. The parents have jobs and the four boys go to school.

"Canada is a wonderful country to live in," Johann says.
POLL: WHAT BUGS KIDS?

I wanted to know what bugs or irritates kids in grades 5 & 6. Some questions were what habits and smells bug kids most. It also included what their opinion was. I found out what textures bug kids most. The worst was the feel of salamander and animal hair. No one was bothered by sirens or soft voices. I hope that you found this poll interesting.

TEXTURES

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SNOOPY COUSINS

Some of my cousins are very snoop-y when they come to my house. They are always getting into my things. Sometimes they even wreck my stuff. The only time they are good is when they are downstairs. When they are upstairs in my room, they look in my drawers. My cousins don’t snoop too much when the door is open, but when it is closed, I don’t know what they are up to. Candace is the worst one. I’d say. She gets into everything. I don’t think that there is one thing of mine that she has not seen. My sister and another cousin aren’t that bad. My sister knows not to go into my room. If I want some privacy for my stuff, I should ask for my own room.

BIRD IS A REMINDER

Jolynne Cichy of Vauxhall once had a bird and claims she saw it a few years after it flew away. She says that she was feeding the bird outside with her parents. When she opened the cage door to put in some crumbs, it flew away.

A few years later when she was eating breakfast, Jolynne said, "There is a bird in the tree that looks just like my budgie.” Her parents believe her. She wonders how a bird could find its way home.

GIRL PASSES, GETS GHETTO BLASTER

Jolynne Cichy, a student now in grade 6, successfully passed grade 5 and got a ghetto blaster for doing so. Before she got out of school, her dad went to Edmonton. When he got back, she got it.

In school, she got a certificate saying she tied for the highest score in a reading test.

IN OR OUT

I believe that everyone in school should have a choice between staying in or going out at recess.

In the grades 4 to 6, the students usually get to pick. From ECS to grade 3, the students have to bring a note to stay in. They should be able to choose.

To me, it just does not seem fair for any grades 4 to 6 to be able to decide while the younger ones have to bring a note. Usually, they bring a note that they can stay in only when they are sick.

Both ends should be able to do the same. It would be nice if this could happen. The teachers may have to bring in games or puzzles for their students. There might be something that like going out though. Since I haven’t been down there for a while, I don’t know how they feel about it. Parents should still send notes to the teacher asking to make sure that they stay in.

I think all of the grades should be able to do the same things.
BOY REMEMBERS MEMORY

Dwayne Schielke of Vauxhall remembers a memory. His memory was about when he got his motorbike. It was sometime in April, a little before his birthday.

"It is an excellent memory," he always says. He said it was really fun the day he got it. He got it from his mom and dad.

He used it almost all day and part of the night. It does not have a light, so he can't use it very late at night.

He started using it as soon as he got it home.

BOY GETS HURT

In April sometime, Dwayne Schielke got a motorbike and didn't know how to ride it very well and he flipped it over backwards.

He didn't have to get rushed to the hospital but his parents treated his cuts.

The reason that it happened is that he didn't know how to use it very well.

His dad investigated the problem. There was no problem. After he was better, he rode it again.

BOY GETS SPECIAL GIFTS

On Christmas day, a boy named Dwayne Schielke got two special presents. They were about 9 cm long and 6 cm wide. When he opened the presents, he found that they were video games for his video system.

They were SPIDER FIGHTER and FROSTBITES. They are fun games to play. He got one from his mom and dad and the other from his sister. His other sister got him a controller for his games.

All the games worked fine. He used the games almost all night and found out that the controller didn't work right. But he liked the presents anyway.

From KRAZY GEORGE

DEAR KRAZY GEORGE:

I want a motorbike so that I can ride it on the farm, but my parents won't let me get one. What should I do?

DEAR SAD:

I would ask if you raised the money and then they would let you get it.

DEAR KRAZY GEORGE:

My parents are going to Banff. My sisters and I don't want a babysitter but my grandparents are coming to take care of us. They want to come but we don't want them to come. How can we show that we are old enough?

DEAR OLD:

I will ask Looney Larry and then get it will get back to you.

DEAR KRAZY GEORGE:

I would like to get a dog but my parents say they cost too much and are messy. What should I do?

DEAR MAD:

Say to your parents that you will earn some extra money and you will clean up after him and your parents will let you get one.

DEAR KRAZY GEORGE:

I need extra money but my parents refuse to give it to me. How can I make extra money?

DEAR POOR:

You can make extra money by getting a paper route or in winter shoveling walks and in summer mow grass.

HOW TO MAKE POPCORN

It is very easy to make popcorn. The first thing you have to do is get some popcorn. Then you put it into a popcorn machine. Then you put a bowl when the popcorn comes out. Then you turn it on and wait about five minutes. Then you put half a block of butter in the microwave for about 20 sec. Then pour it on the popcorn. Put all the things you used back where they belong.
REFUSE THE CRUISE

The Mulroney government should refuse Cruise testing and the deployment of nuclear weapons in peace time. The world should lock up nuclear weapons and never touch them again.

NIGERIA ON ALERT

Nigerian government leaders put the Armed Forces on full alert Nov 12 and have kept the red light on for more than a month. They are fearing a U.S. invasion of the country. I think it's pure nonsense and they're just trying for publicity. They want to get tourism up, but keeping the army on always should refuse orders won't help very much. Nigeria has been fighting a civil war for years. They're lucky the US hasn't brought in the Marines.

RUSSIANS IN AFGHANISTAN

Soviet troops have occupied Afghanistan for 4 years. The guerrillas fighting the Russians are being mowed down. The Soviets should take their army out and let Afghanistan live in peace. The Soviet occupation lost many western athletes in the 1980 Moscow Olympics. But the US should not bring in a peace keeping force. That would encourage the Russians to keep on fighting. That could mean trouble for the whole world. Russia should get out of Afghanistan. They've killed enough already. We need peace in the world!

NO CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

I am not in favor of bringing back capital punishment. I think it's unfair because if the police get the wrong guy, he could be six feet under. We live in a democratic and free country. Human rights are violated by the death penalty. The Humane Society is totally against the death penalty, and so am I. Actually, I must admit that when the chips are down, my sympathy lies with the criminal. Capital punishment is a bad idea.

OLYMPIC TRAINING

I strongly object to the rule against running in the hallways. I personally have run many times and have avoided collisions every time. I was caught three times, which resulted in a trip. Hallways are singles and you have to run to survive. I have never seen an accident in the hallways of Vauxhall Elementary School and that is why I oppose the rule against running.

TACKLE FOOTBALL WANTED

There has been no tackle football in this school for the three years I've been in the intermediate end, and I don't know how long before that. I think something should be done about it.

In reply to the question, "Why isn't there tackle football?" Vice Principal Mr. Hanken replied, "Too many kids get hurt. Then the parents get after us."

If the staff is worried about kids getting hurt, why are there intramurals? In every event, I have been shaken up. Even in Neucombeball, I've had a collision. In baseball, kids throw the bat and I've seen more than one catcher get hit in the eye. I'm sure that hurts more than getting tackled on the 20 yard line.

When a kid does get hurt, I explain by saying, "If he doesn't want to get hurt, he shouldn't play." And I must add that I am supported in this. Then the "softies" can play by themselves.

The only disadvantage in football is that sometimes there aren't enough players. I think that there should be a school football team and a league to play in. I think that there should be some kind of a vote to make it an intramurals sport. You always hear people say, "The majority is wrong."

REVIEWING TV SHOW "NIGHT COURT": Have you ever seen this show? You should. It's about a courthouse of wacky law enforcers. The leading character is Judge Stone, whose methods are very immoral. But I think it's too far-fetched. A judge that decides cases on the flip of a coin could never get a law degree. It gives kids the wrong idea of justice.
FOCUS on

**FOCUS on**

**Identified **

"Gifted" Student

An influential member of the Apple Gang was a student who had been identified as "gifted" in the School Division's Challenge Program. His teacher shared the case study in one of his classes.

"Dana was a boy whose story would make an ideal thesis into the roots of leadership. There are many similarities between his case and that of Grant (profiled elsewhere in this paper). Dana too was the youngest member in a fairly large family but, unlike Grant, he was considered 'spoiled' and accustomed to having his way. He too had frustrated his teachers from his youngest years, but the reason was that he was bright and very fast. Horse than that, he soon turned his considerable energies in the direction of non-conformity and resistance toward teachers who tried to make him "fit" the mold. Dana was young for his grade, but he was big and commanded respect and involuntary subordination of most of both boys and girls in the class. He was a recognized leader and his word alone was often enough to determine action on the playground.

"He irritated teachers in particular with his messy handwriting which they blamed on the backward way he held his pencil and they tried in various ways to reform him. Most important, he was in a strict religious home, he was respectful and fairly well mannered, but he could not very well control his mischievous nature nor his propensity for goading teachers.

"I had been interested in 'gifted' education for some time and I welcomed the challenge of Dana, my classroom. The obvious task that faced me was how to keep this boy's energies productively directed. Looking back, I think I can make several conclusions about the relationship I had with this uniquely challenging boy.

"First of all, I respected his considerable potential and taught consistently for methods of teaching that would put him into situations in which he would be challenged to the limit. Fortunately for me, he had common interests as politics, current events, journalism and computers, and so I was able to challenge him often in those areas. He had a peculiarly precocious ability for political commentary, far beyond his years, and he effortlessly gave his interpretations of events in the Middle East, Afghanistan, superpower relations, the Star Wars scheme, and especially the emission of foul odors from Vauxhall's dehydrating plant. Naturally, he plunged with near passion into the Apple Gang newspaper project, because it appealed to all his major interests.

A perusal of Easthope's Express reveals evidence of his giftedness. He chose topics that were usually more advanced than what other editors were writing about, and even a flair for, journalistic styles, from the use of the inverted pyramid development of his story of the development of the newspaper to the use of persuasion in editorials and commentary, to the give and take in letters to other editors. His writing carried an unmistakable message, communicated without a sense of abandon and he was always able to drive his point home. He loved the newspaper project and worked tirelessly at it, with a minimum of the nonproductive behavior that had often characterized him in other contexts.

"Secondly, in my relationship with Dana, I resolved never to make an issue of those things that were not essential. I let him write in any way that he pleased. I do not make him clean up his books as long as I could see him with reasonable effort. I penalized him for messiness on a point system, but it did not affect his morale, and did not make him change. It was also beneficial not to make Dana or others always to be on their best behavior. It helped me to be accustomed to rewarding my own upbringings, and provided the degree of freedom that Dana needed to express himself in 'harmless' ways. Not all colleagues approved of that approach, and an aura of suspicion followed Dana around his school throughout his stay and he was often considered guilty until proven innocent.

"Thirdly, in my relationship with Dana, I determined to retain a healthy respect for his power and influence over others and if possible to turn it to my advantage. That was more easily said than done. His leadership was never to be seen as that of a monitor who writes names on the board in the teacher's absence. But he was always looking out for the interests of the teacher in other ways. He would gladly help with computers or equipment and would even help weaker students if the important contribution was to organize the class for various activities.

"I had two interesting years with Dana. I too had problems with him, but generally we got along well because of a mutual respect and understanding. He contributed a source of stress to my life that turned out to be positive because it kept me constantly alert, often on edge, and always groping for new ideas and approaches, to use in his case, in the gifted in the regular classroom. As a result, he contributed more to the success of my class than either of us will ever know.

"An interview with his father and a note from both parents confirmed my sense that the needs of this gifted student had been handled more observantly...more critical in his thinking...I think this has been his most productive year. This project has made him more committed and able...thank you for the help and instruction you've given Dana... He has enjoyed being in your class... and has been challenged enough to think and work a little harder. He's geared and rarin' to go to junior high!"
**FIX THE VAUXHALL ROADS**

The Vauxhall roads are just terrible. Cherie Gunther thinks that the town should do more about the streets.

"The streets cause dust and complaints from all the people," says Cherie. "When you drive into Vauxhall, you are disgusted. The people would pave the roads, but some people say they don't want it. "Why?" is what Cherie asks. The Town of Vauxhall grades the streets, but that isn't good enough. Some of the potholes are so bad that if you drive through them you will damage your car!

Cherie said, "I sure don't know why they don't do anything. I am sure that it will please a lot of people. If the town would fix the streets, I am sure that Vauxhall would be a better place to live in."

**THROW OUT THE GUM**

Cherie Gunther doesn't think that there should be any gum in all schools.

People that chew gum annoy other people by smacking. The people who chew gum also annoy other people by blowing bubbles. They stick their gum under desks, tables and other things. That is very hard to clean!

Cherie thinks that people who chew gum in school are disobeying an important rule. Cherie thinks that it ruins the whole school if they allow people to chew gum. Those are some of the reasons Cherie thinks that chewing gum in schools is not a very good thing to do.

**CAPITAL PUNISHMENT**

I don't think there should be capital punishment.

I think that they should have capital punishment only if they deserve it. If they aren't smart enough not to kill, then they deserve it.

If they do this, then maybe the criminals will stop killing more people.

These are some of the opinions that I have about capital punishment.

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**STOP WATCHING T.V.**

I think that children should stop watching so much TV. Lots of people just sit around watching TV all day and don't get anything else done. In the Gunther house they can't watch any TV shows after school. I think that is a good idea because after school you should be finishing your homework. I like it because now I can relax after supper.

**GIRL DOES FAVOR FOR SISTER**

Cherie made a little bag for her sister Tracy last month. She made it on a sewing machine at her house. She had nothing to do so she started to sew. She made the bag a pretty color of blue. Tracy was very happy when she received it because she never had a place to keep her doll clothes. Cherie was proud of what she had made.

**GIRL LOST IN MEDICINE HAT**

Cherie got lost in Medicine Hat Park last year. Cherie went on a picnic with her family and grandparents. Cherie was playing on the swings when her mother said, "Time to go, Cherie!" She called back, "Coming, Mom!" Cherie said that she would run all the way to her grandparents' house while the rest of the people drove. She thought she could beat them home. Cherie ran the wrong direction and got lost. She ran and ran all over the place and never saw a familiar house. Cherie's dad was driving around and saw her and picked her up. She was crying and frightened. At the table, everyone sighed and said, "Cherie, Cherie, Cherie, what a girl!"
THINKING about WRITING in the SCHOOLS

How can writing best be taught? Can it be taught effectively as all or just of it be "caught"? How much, if any, structure or content can be taught without taking away the "voice" of the student? How important is "ownership" and how can it be preserved and enhanced in student writing? Is writing "systematic" and can it be taught in an organized way? Should different types of writing be taught differently and if so, which approaches might suit which types of writing? Which approach has the greatest potential for attaining a proper balance between "content," "development," and "mechanics"? How can a teacher teach children how to write?

These questions and many more were the topics of discussion in a class taken by Warkentin and taught by Kathy Berry on "Teaching Writing in the Schools." Each class was organized into "Yours, Mine and Ours" to permit professor input, student input and cooperative class activities.

"I learned a lot in this course mainly from the way that it was taught," Warkentin said.

The students each wrote a short paper to the professor each week and received a written response.

"Kathy had a hard time keeping up with that even with eight students," Warkentin was demonstrating a way of teaching writing that has been found to be very effective. It was a great opportunity for us to reflect seriously on aspects of writing and to get a serious response. We carried on a personal dialogue."

One of the questions addressed by Warkentin in his journal was whether or not writing can be taught "systematically".

He related his commitment to having students "write every day, they would write in the same scribbler in order to collect their writing 'systematically'." The purpose of many ideas would be the curriculum guide and a systematic approach would be used to try and meet the requirements. A week could be spent on each major type of writing listed in the guide, and students could 'systematically' practice that type each day for five days. In this way, instead of moving at random across one's mind, teachers could 'systematically' introduce children to a variety of types of writing. Many of these types of writing are of a non-fictional nature and lie more restrictive limits than fiction or poetry. In summaries, outlines, reports and editorials, for example, patterns are common and recognition of those patterns is another aspect of teaching writing 'systematically'. Finally, he concluded, most writing tends in the process itself to proceed in a systematic manner from the idea generation stage to an outline or first draft, through the editing stages to the final draft.

The professor responded graciously with lengthy comments, saying, "This helps me think of what systematically means to teaching writing we ought destroying what writing really is..."

Students in the class also read books and papers about writing and discussed them in a seminar context where one or two would take the author's point of view and seek to explain and defend the position in the book or paper. According to Warkentin, the work of Donald Graves influenced these discussions more than that of any other scholar.

Students were required also to write a major paper. Unlike requirements in other courses, the emphasis was on the process. "We were asked to submit a copy of each stage of the writing," Warkentin said, "including outline, rough draft and final draft. The idea was that we would get feedback on each step and would thus be able to make significant improvements. Obviously, it was an illustration of how we might work with our own students."

One day was spent on a field trip to Gleichen and Calgary to see writing programs in action. There are not many schools around here with active writing programs," Warkentin said, "so we were pleased to be able to make this trip." While in Gleichen they observed a McCracken type approach in the primary grades and in the Calgary Cappy Smart School they saw a similar program being used with grades 1 through 6.

Although he had worked with a writing program for several years himself, Warkentin took the course in order to learn what others had been doing. His own main focus was on the use of word processing in teaching writing, especially at the upper elementary level.

"This course helped me toward a deeper appreciation of the complexities of the writing process," he concluded. "Some of the approaches we had been using were confirmed in the research and experiences of others. Our main strength is that we have at least been struggling to improve our writing program and he had some good results. We still have a lot to learn, especially about strategies such as teacher-student conferencing. But we're getting there."
"Writing in the schools is getting a lot of attention these days," says Irwin Warkentin, graduate student at the University of Lethbridge. In the past five years, Warkentin has taken his own interest in writing into his grades 5 and 6 classrooms as a teacher and into his graduate studies program.

He credits this renewed interest to a number of factors.

"In the era of the 'back to the basics' movement, critics of education started looking especially at students' writing ability, and mostly they didn't like what they saw. Many graduates were not able to communicate well in writing."

Warkentin says that traditional approaches to language art have, in my experience, often been ineffective. "Research shows that most teachers relied rather heavily on teaching mechanics. In my own experience, we were usually required to write one draft of an assignment which was graded by the teacher and returned. Frequently, there were many red teacher marks which we may or may not have looked at. The grade was what counted. There was no emphasis on a process of learning to write."

Warkentin feels that most teachers were themselves neither experienced nor trained as writers and very few, he says, were interested in writing.

"Obviously, then, they were not able to educate us very well in this important life skill."

His own interest is what kept him working at improving his writing, Warkentin says. "I enjoyed the challenge of putting words together in different ways to find the combination that seemed the best way of saying something."

Over the years, he has written many papers and has had some published. He hopes to put some of his new found knowledge about writing to use in the classroom.

"One of my classes, in particular, has helped me to understand the nature of writing," he reports, referring to the course, 'Teaching Writing in the Schools."

"We discussed, and visited schools, we gained a new appreciation for the challenge of learning to write and of helping others to learn."

Effective writing projects reveal that a process has been successful in helping students to learn to write.

"It seems very important to communicate the fact that good writing is the result of a process," he says. "Students must realize that even the best writers take their work through more than one or two drafts," he said.

Warkentin summarized recent research by saying that it emphasizes that writing is a process and that, when most effectively done, it is highly individualistic.

"Effective teachers of writing have found that it is important for students to write often, preferably every day," he explained. "Mechanics are not stressed in the daily practice because the writing is private and because fluency of ideas is important. Teachers may respond in different ways to this daily practice."

But more than quantity is needed to create writing ability, he continued. It is common for teachers then to require students to choose a selection of their own writing in order to revise and improve it for publication.

"That's when mechanics become important," he emphasized. "It is when we write for others that we need to follow the rules of communication. Learning the conventions of language can be a productive effort. We all know that students, like ourselves, often know more than is applied. Once students enter into the spirit of writing for publication, they become amazingly effective as peer editors and thus take a lot of pressure off the teacher."

Warkentin reports that publication can take many forms, from classroom readings to newspapers to bulletin board displays to bound books that are made and circulated among class members.

"It is this whole process, from pre-writing activities to revision and finally to publication, that has gained a lot of credibility in academic circles," he concludes. "At our school, we're also on this track, we have a long way to go, but at least we're moving that way."

In addition to the Apple Gang newspapers, students of UES have published books in a variety of ways. "It's amazing to an outsider how well they can learn to write and how much they actually seem to enjoy it," Warkentin says.
TEACHING WRITING

STUDENT-TEACHER CONFERENCING: Promoting Improvement in Writing

One-to-one conferencing between the teacher and each individual student is the most effective way to promote development in writing.

So says an overwhelming amount of research, according to Irwin Warkentin, teacher of the Vauxhall Elementary School currently on sabbatical leave at the University of Lethbridge.

By putting together the findings from two of his recently published books, CONFERENCING: Promoting Improvement in Writing and ANALYSIS OF TEACHING, Warkentin was able to reach conclusions that were relevant to his own teaching situation, particularly the teaching of writing.

"I had done some background reading and was interested in conferencing especially after reading about the work of Donald Graves," he said. "Graves stressed the need to stimulate writing by providing each student with autonomy, and the freedom to make a lot of choices with respect to writing. Naturally, then, writing becomes very individualized and this requires a strategy of individualizing the teacher's attention. That calls for one-to-one conferences."

Toward the end of the Apple Gang project, Warkentin began to try this strategy with his six students. He immediately encountered the obstacle that is mentioned first as an objection to using this teaching method: How do you find the time?

"I was fortunate to have a parent volunteer who was also a teacher. She took charge of the rest of the class while I held individual conferences."

Warkentin explained that Graves writes in detail in his books about how teachers might confer effectively, but that it is still a challenge to carry on a conference without teacher domination of the student.

"I was concerned that my conferencing was not allowing the student enough control," he explained. "so I decided to develop an instrument that would let me compare my conferencing with that of an expert such as Graves."

Graves had published word-for-word transcripts of some of his interviews, so Warkentin read them onto tape and analyzed them to see what he could learn. He concentrated especially on finding out how much of the conversation was by the student and what the teacher was saying. He developed a time-dependent instrument to measure the amount of time spent in talking, asking, answering or reading the student's story." he explained.

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OBSERVATIONS

1. About half the time in an expert and a small percentage of time in an amateur conference is spent on student comment.

2. About a fifth of the time in an amateur conference and a small percentage of time in an expert conference is spent on teachers' writing.

3. The total time spent on student talk is about twice as large in an expert as in an amateur conference.

4. About three times as much time is spent in the teacher answering questions in an expert than in an amateur conference.

5. About one tenth of the time in an expert and one third of the time in an amateur conference is spent on teacher comments.

IMPLICATIONS

This study in his Analysis of Teaching course also revealed other significant differences between the way that Graves was conducting conferences and the way that they had worked out in the early attempts made by Warkentin.

Since he agreed with Graves on such as objectives as student autonomy and ownership, Warkentin determined to make changes in the way that one-to-one conferences would be conducted in the future.

"Obviously, I need to find ways of reducing the amount of teacher talk and of encouraging students to talk more about their writing," he observed. "I need to devote more time to reading student text and more time to listening to student comments."

The study also revealed other relevant information.

"Teachers really need to work on finding a way to talk to each student individually," Warkentin concluded. "How do that is a problem that challenged even an expert such as Graves."

"I've been involved in writing and in teaching writing for many years. Studying about it has been a valuable experience and a real encouragement."

"I was concerned that my conferencing was not allowing the student enough control," he explained. "so I decided to develop an instrument that would let me compare my conferencing with that of an expert such as Graves."
"We gained valuable insights into ourselves and into our classmates during and after the sharing time," Warkentin reported. "Each of us would read a part or all of a paper to the class, and the professor would encourage us to discover patterns and themes in that person's life."

Dr. Butt stressed the importance of confidentiality, empathy, and compassion, and warned against a judgmental attitude, saying that such postures would greatly hinder the effectiveness of the approach. Instead, students were encouraged to be supportive and to try to help others mainly by being positive and affirming.

"That helped us to be honest with ourselves and with one another," recalled Warkentin, "and in this non-threatening context we were able to look at ourselves more realistically."

The second assignment required them to go back into their own history to recall and describe the influences that shaped their beliefs, including people, events and experiences that seemed to have a significant impact.

"That turned out to be very useful for me," Warkentin related. "It was something that I was interested in anyway. It helped me to appreciate in new ways what work, persons and people and it helped me to recognize how I came to be the way I am today, why, for example, I have such an interest in computers."

In addition to this fondness for technology, Warkentin discovered such themes as a strong sense of independence and a continuing quest for adventure.

The third assignment brought them back to the present with a focus on their present curriculum practices. This assignment went well beyond the usual descriptions of what subjects or topics we teach," Warkentin said. "We were encouraged to describe our own unique way of teaching, how we function, how we actually function in the classroom." He stressed the value to himself of having to think through the pedagogical approach that he uses in his classroom teaching.

"Again, we were asked to think of themes, but Dr. Butt also nudged us to look for possible ways of changing and improving on the way we normally did things." This assignment gave Warkentin an opportunity to evaluate also the Apple Gang Project.

The last assignment, as can be anticipated, required them to try to look into their future and, on the basis of themes and patterns/courses of action, to identify and to confirm their own strengths and to plan ways of correcting weaknesses.

Although such an autobiographical approach has many detractors, it was to have a profound impact on Warkentin's personal philosophy. "For one thing," he said, "it confirmed my conviction that this approach could also be used with younger students, as I had begun to discover in my writing program. But most significantly, it encouraged me to undertake a rigorous self-evaluation which will definitely affect me when I return to the classroom."

My sincere appreciation to Dr. Richard Butt."
SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE?

Principles of Differentiated Instruction

Did the Apple Gang Newspaper Project provide worthwhile learning experiences for students at all levels of ability? Did it incorporate these principles?

1. Present content that is related to broad-based issues, themes and problems.

2. Integrate multiple disciplines into the area of study.

3. Present comprehensive, related and mutually reinforcing experiences within an area of study.

4. Allow for indepth learning of a self-selected topic within an area of study.

5. Develop independent or self-directed study skills.

6. Develop productive, complex, abstract and/or higher level thinking skills.

7. Develop research skills and methods.

8. Focus on open-ended tasks.

9. Integrate basic skills and higher level thinking skills into the curriculum.

10. Encourage the development of products that use new techniques, materials and forms.

11. Encourage the development of products that challenge existing ideas and produce "new" ideas.

12. Encourage the development of self-understanding, that is, recognizing one's abilities, becoming self-directed, and appreciating likenesses and differences between oneself and others.

13. Evaluate student outcomes by using appropriate and specific criteria through self-appraisal and through criterion-referenced and/or standardized instruments.


Comment: While not all of these criteria were achieved (4, 7, 11), others were recognized by the judges in the Apple Computer Clubs competition (2, 3, 9, 10, 12) as contributing to the success of the project.
Computers for Composing

A Study of Student Writers and Word Processing Programs, by Chris Mann, University of British Columbia, September, 1984

After a three month case study of composing on computers, involving three grade five students and the Bank Street Writer program, Chris Mann reached a number of conclusions, many of which would be true also of the Apple Gang Newspaper Project. Here are some major findings of this study:

1. Students demonstrate a high level of motivation for writing.
2. Students are enthusiastic about writing whether they write individually or in groups.
3. Students enjoy reading their words on the screen.
4. Students who have usually done little or no writing show a greater desire to compose and do so enthusiastically.
5. Students are exposed to exciting and new technology, but maintain their enthusiasm once the novelty has worn off.
6. Students demonstrate a reduction in anxiety toward writing.
7. Students are less inhibited about writing.
8. Students are able to overcome the blank page block.
9. Students feel comfortable writing.
10. Students are eager to examine their ideas in writing.
11. Students demonstrate a willingness to explore meanings more fully.
12. Students are relieved that their writing does not have to be perfect the first time.
13. Students compose longer pieces of writing.
14. Students spend more time composing.
15. Students demonstrate greater creativity and freedom in their composing process as errors are so easily fixed.
16. Students feel more positive about revising.
17. Students demonstrate a willingness to revise because it is easy and enjoyable.
18. Students revise and edit more.
19. Students do a more careful, thorough job of editing.
20. Students revise and edit more quickly than usual.
21. Revision becomes a more creative process where strategies for re-visions, seeing again, are applied.
22. Younger students edit by inserting or deleting, while older students move sentences or sections around.
23. Students move from changing typing, spelling and punctuation errors to changing words and sentences and finally to changing and reorganizing whole segments of material.
24. Students generally learn to edit less for details and develop systems for concentrating on sequence, organization and meaning.
25. Students put more thought into the overall structure of their writing.
26. Many people, including student writers, feel that the quality of the writing improves.
27. Writing becomes communicative rather than just mechanical.
28. Students love seeing the printed version of their writing.
29. Students are willing to share their writing with others.
30. Students are proud of their writing efforts.
31. Students with poor handwriting feel much better about what they can produce.
32. Students do not need sophisticated typing skills in order to compose.
33. Students found the Bank Street Writer word processing program easy to use.
34. Students had no difficulty operating the keyboard, disk drive, monitor and printer.
35. Students enjoyed learning about computers and felt they were developing skills which would have future applications.
36. Students learned to value their own experiences and thoughts due to writing about them almost daily.
37. Students more than doubled the quantity of written work.
38. Students spent more time editing some pieces than they did drafting them.
39. Students were very fluent typists, typing faster than they were able to write longhand.
40. Although students did not make major changes involving moving large amounts of material around, they did use a variety of editing strategies.

Comments: Nearly all conclusions reached by Mann with three students were confirmed in the Apple Gang project with a grade six student. The evidence in both points overwhelmingly to very positive learning experiences for all students.
SO WHAT?

Implications for Educators
From the Chris Mann Study

Word processors have revolutionized the professional writing industry and have the potential to do the same in the writing class.

Educators have a responsibility to ensure that enough computers and accompanying word processing programs are purchased in each school.

Teachers and other educational staff need to become familiar with computers and word processors in order to be comfortable the technology.

Parents, trustees, school board officials, and sometimes even principals and teachers need to have the value of computers and word processors demonstrated to them in order to guarantee appropriate allocation of funds for this significant technology.

Teachers and other educational staff who learn to use a word processor for their own purposes can develop efficiency in many areas of their personal lives, and familiarize themselves with the word processing program and its value at the same time.

Teachers become comfortable and at ease with word processing by spending ample time using them.

Student writers deserve opportunities for developing excellent writing and editing skills, and word processors are powerful and successful tools for aiding that purpose.

Computers and word processors can be used effectively to diverse variety of job-related tasks in education.

In order to allow student writers' maximum growth in the writing process, several computers per classroom is a minimum requirement to work toward.

Like teachers who provide strong modeling in writing classes by writing themselves, those teachers who demonstrate the use of a word processing program are powerful role models.

Teachers will need to learn editing skills and how to teach them effectively.

Student writers feel very positive and enthusiastic about writing, editing, and publishing using word processors, and teachers should capitalize on this eagerness.

Conferencing with a teacher is still needed as it will prompt student writers to revise.

Teachers will need to give much more instruction on revision, especially since writing and re-writing on word processors can be done so quickly and more drafts will be produced.

That computers mechanize and personalize instruction is a misconception. Teachers are still very much needed to guide writing and editing activities.

Teachers must be sure to let students use word processors for composing, not just for typing final drafts.

Teachers will spend less time evaluating and correcting final drafts and more time consulting on intermediate drafts and revising stages.

Time spent proofreading student papers for punctuation and spelling errors will be reduced as a result of the various spelling and dictionary accompany word pro-

programs which cессors.

Teachers must remember that improvements in written expression will only be made when students edit and revise their work with a knowledge of the standards of good writing.

Successful writing programs require teachers to value the expression of students' own writing, to talk with them about their writing, and to teach them how to write effectively.
LOOKING BACK into COMPUTERS in WRITING INSTRUCTION

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE on the use of computers in writing instruction reveals that some important questions have been answered.

1. COMPUTERS CAN BE USED IN A MASTERFUL WAY BY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS.

Seymour Papert: Even very young children can learn to program computers and use them as word processors.

Robert Lawlor: A five year old girl was able to interact with the computer and to make it achieve meaningful objectives.

Virginia Bradley: All grade 6 students in a certain class mastered word processing over a period of several weeks.

2. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE HIGHLY MOTIVATED BY COMPUTERS AND SEEM TO PERFORM AT A HIGHER LEVEL.

Papert: Heightened motivation resulted at least in part from the capability of being able to produce neat and clean copy.

Bradley and Stromberg & Kurth: Computers seem to encourage children to perform at a higher level of involvement and achievement.

Most researchers: Children have a positive attitude toward working with computers.

3. COMPUTERS CAN BE TOOLS THAT HELP STUDENTS TO ACT LIKE ADULTS AND LIVE VICARIOUSLY IN AN ADULT WORLD.

Papert: Computers helped children to act like adults by providing experiences in problem solving that seemed more real, especially when they were involved in programming. Computers could help students act like writers.

4. STUDENTS AT THE GRADE 6 LEVEL CAN MASTER WORD PROCESSING.

Papert: Word processing is a legitimate application of computers, even with very young children.

Lawlor: Young children struggled with keyboarding skills.

Bradley and Kurth & Stromberg: Word processing can be mastered by students in grades 6 and 8 after only a few weeks of practice.

5. WORD PROCESSING MAKES EDITING EASIER FOR STUDENTS.

Papert: Increased motivation at computers resulted in part from ease of making corrections.

Bradley: Students found editing changes easier on the screen than on paper. Even first graders, although relying heavily on teacher keyboarding, seemed highly motivated by the ease with which they could change what they had dictated earlier.

Stromberg & Kurth: Eighth graders found that changes were made more easily on a word processor.

WHILE A CONSENSUS HAS BEEN ACHIEVED ON SOME QUESTIONS, OTHERS HAVE NOT YET BEEN CONVINCINGLY ANSWERED.

1. Can elementary age students learn to compose as well at computers as they can with pencil and paper?

2. Does skill in word processing lead to the application of better revision strategies?

3. Does skill in word processing lead to an improvement in the quality of student writing?

4. Does word processing contribute to more effective mastery of basic writing skills than paper and pencil methods?

5. Are certain types of writing, such as structured writing, taught more effectively by word processing than other types, such as creative writing?

6. Does skill in word processing make it possible for students to complete larger and better writing projects?

7. Does the use of computers and especially word processing affect the way students think about language and the writing process?
WHAT'S IN AN M. Ed.?  
Teacher I. Warkentin of the Apple Gang took professional leave for further studies the year after the project described here. What did he study?

1. Education 661-663; EDUCATION OF THE GIFTED, CREATIVE AND TALENTED, taken at McGill University; lectures, seminars and four week practicum in McGill Summer School for Gifted and Talented Students; directly affected Apple Gang Project

2. Education 5200 CURRICULUM STUDIES AND CLASSROOM PRACTICE, Dr. D. Common; first class in which Warkentin began to examine the use of computers in schools, especially for word processing; proved to be essential to major thrust into critical analysis of philosophical thought in later courses

3. Education 5950 STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH, Dr. C. Coates; first class in which Warkentin began to consider the Apple Gang project as a subject of research; proposed several alternative approaches; problem with data; proved to be critical to understanding of research

4. Education 5520 ANALYSIS OF TEACHING, Dr. R. Whitehead; first course in which Warkentin began to study the process approach to writing instruction, especially teacher-student conferencing, an area on which he planned to concentrate in future writing instruction; became comfortable with strategies of analyzing teaching

5. Education 5300 GREAT EDUCATORS I, Dr. R. Anderson; a critical study of the works of Plato, Comenius, Rousseau, Whitehead and Dewey; opportunities to develop and defend philosophical position papers; Warkentin wrote five papers and dialogued on 50 others

6. Education 5201 IMPROVING THE CLASSROOM CURRICULUM, Dr. R. Butt; first course in use of autobiography to improve instruction; gave Warkentin opportunity to examine historical roots of present classroom practices and to analyze need for improvement; wrote about 100 pages of autobiography

7. Education 5930 EVALUATION METHODS, Dr. M. Greene; study of approaches to methods of evaluation; second attempt to come up with project for thesis; problems with design; course useful for evaluation of school programs

8. Education 5301 GREAT EDUCATORS II, Dr. R. Bruner-Joffre & Dr. R. Gall; further opportunity for critical analysis of philosophical works - Durkheim, Freire, Brandt, Skinner, Bruner, Rogers; Warkentin wrote six papers and dialogued on 30 others

9. Education 4271 TEACHING WRITING IN THE SCHOOLS, Prof. K. Berry; further opportunities to review research on writing and analyze own classroom teaching, including the Apple Gang papers; dialogue with language arts specialist; Warkentin made third attempt to propose the Apple Gang project for thesis project; problems with purpose; many insights into writing

10. Education 4217 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR IN MUSIC, visiting professor from U of C; nothing to do with the Apple Gang project; relevant to administrative decision making regarding use of computers in music instruction

11. Education 4405 TEACHING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL INTELLECTUAL OR CREATIVE ABILITIES, Dr. G. Millar; Warkentin had opportunities to study models of G/C/T teaching and to develop curriculum materials

12. Management 3060 INFORMATION SYSTEMS, Prof. A. Spackman; introduction to IBM computers and software; heavy demands in word processing, spreadsheet, database, programming and financial applications; very useful for personal and administrative applications

13. Computing Science 3980 APPLIED STUDIES, Prof. B Conrad; opportunity to design and carry out own project in database construction and application; Warkentin gained mastery of software packages useful in home, school, church

14. Education 5910 INDEPENDENT STUDY IN CLASSROOM USE OF COMPUTER SOFTWARE, Dr. D. Burnett; Warkentin had opportunity to survey and appraise the software obtained by his school and propose it on a computer database for school use

15. Education 5530 INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION, Dr. J. Tu; follow-up to analysis of teaching; opportunity to train as clinical supervisor; useful in career

16. Education 6002 ONE-COURSE PROJECT; A PERSONAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER, Dr. D. Burnett & Dr. R. Butt; culmination of previous attempts to come to terms with the Apple Gang project; opportunity to simulate process used by his students in creating a personal newspaper; opportunity to explore personal interest of journalism, opportunity to synthesize personal learnings of the past few years in the classroom and in the Master's program

Comments: My Master's studies came at the just the right time in my career and have helped me tremendously in my personal and professional life. I have appreciated these many opportunities to study in areas of interest to me, with colleagues and faculty, who in their devotion to excellence, have been a source of constant inspiration and encouragement. My thanks to a great University!
"THY KEYBOARD"

"Silicon!" roars the king, "you're into curriculum, I hear. Take a look at this. Doesn't it look good?" I回答, "And be quick! We need a headstart on this whole computer thing. The Americans are ahead of us again, but we'll be the first in Canada, I declare. I'm going to turn this province into the Kingdom Come, but I'll need your advice on this document. Is it any good? Will it get us where we want us to go?"

He frisbees the document in my direction and it lands with a smash in front of my nose on the floor. "CURRICULUM GUIDE FOR ELEMENTARY COMPUTER LITERACY," I read.

"I'll be happy to oblige," your Highness. Please allow me, one of your wise men as consultants, permit the use of your time machine so that I can tap the wisdom of the ages, and give me three years to do a study worthy of a royal commission," I conclude, humbly.

"Silicon," he roars again his face turning red. "You are out of your mind! How much time do you think Ontario is going to give us? I want to know in one hour what to do with this thing for the next ten years. What you say is what you get!" With that his royal guards thrust me into a padded cell containing a desk and a chair and—what a touch!—a Black Apple computer complete with a printer and a Mountain clock card and a set for 60 minutes. "Use that," his voice still penetrates the walls, "and your common sense!"

That was the introduction to a critique in a university class written by Warkentin.

"I enjoy trying to make assignments more interesting," he said, "and creativity is appreciated also at the graduate level!"

In this critique, Warkentin's task was critically to analyze a curriculum guide.

"I usually try to speak to a certain audience, and use this case as an opportunity to be the Minister of Education," Warkentin explained.

The class had been asked to develop criteria with which to evaluate a curriculum document.

"That class helped me a lot to recognize the philosophic framework. I didn't know, Warkentin said, "and in this case I pretended that I had to do that for the Minister."

The criteria which Warkentin develops include the goals of education, justification of the manual on various grounds, presentation in an interesting and attractive manner, and the inclusion of references.

"After developing our own criteria, we were then to apply them to the document and establish its worth accordingly," he said.

"It's possible to be very critical of such material, especially when it has been produced in a rush," Warkentin said, "but we also try to find the good qualities. This document is actually quite good and useful exercises such as these help us to understand and express our own philosophy better."

The critique ends as it began, in the lighter vein.

I have a sigh of relief as the printer begins hammering away and as heavy steps approach my cell.

"Have you reached a verdict, Silicon?" the King demands.

"I have, your Highness."

"Well?" Not a man of many words.

"It's still coming off on the printer, sir, and when it's finished, you can read it for yourself." I don't want to read it, Silicon! Tell me in plain English whether it's what I want."

"I give it a score of 74%. Your Highness," I begin; "it has some strengths. . . ."

"Never mind," he cut in. "Good work. Fix up the rest and it'll be great. Do that, and I'll remember you some day in my Kingdom. By the way, where, in only one hour, did an ordinary mandarin like you find so much common sense?"

But too tired to move, I slump in my cell and smile.
DESCRIPTION: What is it?

INTRODUCTION

"NEWSROOM was created for journalists of all ages. Experienced journalists will find it has the tools and flexibility to create surprisingly stylish, sophisticated publications. Novices, young and old, will find it provides a fascinating introduction to the world of journalism and newspapers. It's fun to write your own newspaper and doing so challenges organizational skills, writing abilities and creative processes.

"When you are working in the NEWSROOM, you are busy organizing thoughts, translating them into prose, creating photos out of clip art, laying out the pages and rolling them off. You can develop newspapers, newsletters, flyers, brochures and information packets for your business, school, class, club, team, family and neighborhood. You can write, edit, illustrate and add a personal touch to each publication. The use of NEWSROOM is limited only by your imagination."

SPECIFICATIONS

1. Disks:
   a. One Master Program disk included
   b. One Clip Art disk containing graphics on both sides
   c. Data disks required to collect banners, photos, panels and pages
   d. First additional volume of clip art is available

2. Documentation: one 86 page handbook containing description, instructions, tips on journalism, and depiction of graphics available on disk

3. Equipment:
   a. Available for Apple II+, IIe or IIc
   b. Commodore 64
   c. IBM PC and PCjr
   d. Will run on one-drive or two-drive system
   e. Accepts input from keyboard, joystick, koala pad or mouse
   f. Makes use of modem to send information to NEWSROOM on other computers - compatibility among Apple, IBM and Commodore
   g. Supports a large variety of combinations of printers and interface cards

4. Work Areas
   a. the BANNER work area
   b. The PHOTO LAB work area
   c. The COPY DESK work area
   d. The LAYOUT work area
   e. The PRINTING PRESS
   f. The WIRE SERVICE

"The banner is the place where a newspaper identifies itself by printing the paper's name. This work area combines the features of the other work areas and formats the results as a banner.

b. The PHOTO LAB work area

"The photo lab allows you to create your own photos for inclusion in your newspaper. It is possible to select from the library of clip art, either as it is or modified, or to create graphics "from scratch" by using the graphic tools. Graphics can be changed "dot by dot" by moving them, flipping, or altering them with such tools as drawing, erasing, filling patterns, circles, lines, boxes and the addition of text in two sizes and several styles. Photos are created to illustrate banners and stories or for their own sake as graphics (such as an advertisement, for example).

c. The COPY DESK work area

"In the copy desk work area you write the copy for your newspaper. You will work on one panel at a time by combining text and photos from the Photo Lab work area. A panel is a convenient way of dividing up the page to be printed, whether of letter or legal size. Stories may run to any number of panels. The screen holds one panel at a time, which must be saved before clearing the screen and resuming work on the next panel. Text for panels is available in the same sizes and styles as in the photo lab. Text cannot encroach on space occupied by photos unless it has previously been incorporated in the photo lab.

"When the panels and banner have been made, they can be arranged onto a page in the layout area." The screen presents a page and calls panels from the data disk. When all panels for a page have been selected, the page format is saved separately.

5. The WIRE SERVICE

"The wire service allows you to use your modem, if you have one, to send or receive pages, panels, banners or photos. This allows you to work with people in different places and to exchange information for newspapers without sending disks or printed copy by mail.

6. The PRINTING PRESS

"Once a page has been defined in the layout area, you can begin to roll the presses and actually produce your newspaper!" The program will also allow printing of individual panels, banners and photos.

7. "The Complete Guide to Creating a Newspaper" is a 20 page section intended to provide instruction in the concepts and skills of journalism."
INSTRUCTIONS: How to create a newsletter

1. GET READY

Be prepared with the two NEWSROOM disks and plenty of data disks for storing banner, photos, panels and pages.

Have the manual ready for constant reference.

Be prepared to spend several hours with the first page, since it will take some time to get accustomed to the procedures.

Paper and pencil might come in handy to make notes and to plan the newsletter.

2. LOAD THE PROGRAM

Keep the Master Program disk in drive one and be prepared to swap disks often, even if you have two drives. You can keep banners, photos, panels and pages on the same disk. If you do, expect disks to fill up after several pages, depending on how many photos you take. If you keep separate disks, be prepared for much more disk swapping.

3. GOTO BANNER WORK AREA

Choose a banner name and create the banner, using graphics and text. Save the banner on disk.

4. CHOOSE A STORY TOPIC

Decide what your first article will be about. Look through the graphics for one or more pieces that would illustrate your story. If none is suitable, look for some that could be modified. Decide on an approximate length for the article and identify the graphics that you will use.

5. GOTO THE PHOTO LAB

If you have chosen a ready-made graphics, call it into the photo lab. Take a photo and save it to disk. If you are modifying an existing piece, call it up and use the graphics tools to make desired changes. If you need something original, create it "from scratch" with the graphics tools. Always remember to take a photo and save it to disk before leaving the lab.

5. GOTO THE COPY DESK

If you want a photo in the first part of the article, call it up and locate it. Choose a text style and enter the heading. Choose a small text style and type the article. The text will automatically avoid the space taken by the photo. You may relocate the photo after you have begun typing. Finish typing the panel and save it to disk by a code name that will tell you where you want it on a page (for example, IA). Call up other photos, type other panels and save them in the same way. It might be useful to keep track of panels on a sheet of paper for later stages in the process. Repeat this for all stories until your newsletter is complete.

6. GOTO THE LAYOUT WORK AREA

Choose the type of page you are planning to layout and the size of the sheet on which you will be printing. As the program prompts you by listing the panels on disk, arrange the page according to your plan. Save the layout to disk under a suitable code name. Do this for all pages which are ready to print.

7. GOTO THE PRINTING PRESS

The first time you use this feature, you will need to set up the printing configuration. Then follow the prompting to print the pages whose formats were saved in the layout step. If you have been using separate data disks for photos, panels and pages, this is where you will be busy swapping. The program then calls separately for each photo and each panel. The program helps to label and organize. It takes longer to print a page than you might expect. Multiple copies are thus best made by means of photocopier.

COMMENTS:

This Apple Gang paper was produced on three different computers. The program runs most slowly on a 128K Apple IIe or IIc, transitions between the Photo Lab and Copy Desk are made more quickly. Graphics are from the original slide disk and from the Volume 1 which was released separately. On average, it has probably taken two to three hours to produce one page. The program has the purpose of creating this "personal student newspaper."
Many systems have been developed for the purpose of evaluating computer software. The process of evaluation often begins with an informal assessment by the developer or user, but this is not considered sufficient. Many systematic approaches use a checklist of criteria or standards, such as the one used here, which was developed by Stanford University's School of Education. Criteria are often grouped into three general categories. Where comparisons are required, numerical values are sometimes used to generate a total score for each "candidate" software. Evaluations can also take the more sophisticated forms of open-ended reviews, field trials, and formal research-based evaluation projects. In this evaluation of NEWSROOM, a combination of the first three approaches will be used.

**QUALITY OF CONTENT AND GOALS**

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**STRENGTHS of NEWSROOM**

It is not difficult to appreciate the observation that this software program is likely to become an educational bestseller. Suddenly, any class with access to microcomputers and the ability to put up about $70 in the capacity to act like professional journalists and to create complete newspapers. The program is well set up and could easily be followed by elementary school students, but at the same time, as an effective utility, it could be valuable even to adults. It has a very consistent command structure and always performed reliably on all three computers on which it was run. The manuals are simply written and easily understood and very soon becomes superfluous. NEWSROOM runs best on a 128K ile or ltc equipped with a mouse.

**WEAKNESSES**

1. The word processing features do not operate as smoothly as those of a dedicated word processor and take some getting used to, especially in the graphics or photo lab work area.

2. The program comes with hundreds of graphics but relatively few of them seem applicable to students in the middle grades -- too many animals and too few bicycles, motorcycles, students in sports, school activities, hobbies, games, and no graphics at all on newspaper production.

**CONCLUSIONS**

I have probably spent more than 100 hours with NEWSROOM in the past six weeks and have generated 60 pages containing one banner and 478 panels of text and graphics. I have repeatedly searched the manuals, at first for instructions but also for suitable graphics. Much of the time was spent in creating or modifying graphics and in conceptualizing content of panels. Much time could have been saved if I had sooner started using a mouse for graphics.

My personal conclusion is that grade 6 students could master and enjoy using NEWSROOM. The program would not replace word processing but would be a useful and effective supplementary tool for promoting writing skills in an elementary school.
THE GOLDEN APPLE
An Unacademic Tribute to Each Member of the Original APPLE GANG!

A casual observer of the Apple Gang Personal Student Newspaper Project in the spring of 1985, might have been forgiven for missing something. Certainly, in the hurry and bustle of those three months in that classroom, there were enough distractions to engage the most eager spectator and in the melee something may well have passed him by.

It wouldn't have been the writing itself, for that is how it all began and that was obviously the foundation of the whole project. It was evident that every student had collected a large number of written articles of varying lengths from single paragraphs to compositions of up to 100 words, and these were systematically filed for reference in students' binders. It was evident that the writing was being produced in the stages of the process approach, from pre-writing through several drafts to final publication, and that they formed an impressive collection of works from which students were drawing for their newspapers.

It wouldn't have been the student autobiography that the observer missed, for what could be more attractive to a visitor than to learn about real happenings in the lives of the students? As he perused the articles that the students had written, he began to appreciate the range and brilliance, the depth and personal.

He noticed that the students had, for example, developed new stories about happenings in their lives, that they had written, and had written them up as newsworthy events, complete with headlines and third person description. Stories like "Boy of the House" and "Girl Sees Oilers" spoke vibrantly of action and excitement and subtly also of the deliberate cultivation of self-esteem and self-confidence. The deliberate cultivation of personal experience. Most obviously, also, the names of the papers — GRANT'S GAZETTE, BRUCE'S BULLETIN, KIM'S KATALOG, TATTIANNA'S TITANIC, and 17 others — revealed that personal names had been combined with newspaper names to create a truly personal claim in ownership.

It wouldn't have been the journalism that escaped attention, for that too was quite obvious to anyone familiar with the format of a daily newspaper. Each student, he noticed, was producing a complete newspaper, complete with classified ads, the "real" thing. The most obvious similarities were those of format. Each paper began with a banner and was arranged in columns of about 100 words. Each made use of a combination of articles, lines, headlines and graphics. But as he looked more closely, he noticed more significant parallels. Each paper also had opinions. News stories began with a lead story on the front page and continued to other pages inside. Editorials followed, with comments on family or world issues and with an editorial cartoon. He noticed that each paper was made up of at least 15 departments and must have included at least 50 opinion articles about various current events issues and reviews of books, movies and restaurants. He noticed columns about the various types of bests or youngest or the scapegoat in the family. He noticed polls that students had conducted on each other on such topics as favorite television shows and what was presented in graphics and text.

He noticed "advice" columns and letters to the editor from editors of rival newspapers. He noticed advertisements for movies and plays and reviews and classified ads. And how could he have missed the graphics -- the headings, lines, fillers and original artwork? The journalism in progress in that classroom could not have passed him by.

Nor could he have missed the word processing for the computers would hardly fail to stare down even a casual passer-by. Like most visitors, he was especially to watch "kids at computers." He noticed how the students had learned to type. He noticed how the students had learned to be adept at other tasks. He noticed how the students had, in the process, become more confident, more skilled, more capable.

He noticed that the students, for the most part, had learned to type. He noticed how the students had come to be adept at other tasks. He noticed how the students had, in the process, become more confident, more skilled, more capable.

But it wasn't the word processing that the visitor would have missed in that classroom.
Neither would it have been the differences among the students that he missed for it was rather obvious that all were cooperating happily on the project. He knew that this class, like any other, included students with a very wide range of abilities, from "gifted" to "resource room" categories. Yet, where were they? Where were those who should be laboring over spelling lists and drills? Where were the geniuses who should be dabbling with lasers? They must be here, somehow, he thought, as he looked at the partially completed papers for the mistakes that usually give away the "dumb" kids, but the usual tell-tale errors had been eliminated by word processing. There were differences in the stories, to be sure, differences in length and complexity of sentences, choice of topics and words, style, development, but every student had a story to tell with a meaning that could unmistakably communicate and each had a message that was personally significant.

After inspection he thought he could pick the labelled ones, but the students were too busy to care.

It wouldn't have been the integration of subjects that he missed, for who could escape the anomaly of the "art" on one desk, the "language" on a second, the "social studies" on a third and the "science" on a fourth? He had noticed already that the integration had actually begun in the first step of the process. Collections of writing, his students were familiar with "writing across the curriculum" and that writing to them was a way of communicating a message. In the newspapers, he noticed, they had now brought articles from different subjects together to produce a composite interdisciplinary product not unlike the real thing, and he thought that the integration had been commandeered to serve the interests of the students and the objectives of the project. Students were not working in singlepet project subjects to take up another every 35 minutes, but rather they were working in sustained efforts for large blocks of time that had reached an overlap and free time, at the choice of the students themselves.

It wouldn't have been the role of the teacher that the visitor missed, for his presence was "felt" by everyone in the room and his influence was evident in the interaction. Student biography was important here, he conceded, but this was also a classic case of the influence on a curriculum of teacher influence. How else could he explain this particular approach to writing, for example? From whence this peculiar approach to classroom newspapers, where each student generates a complete newspaper about himself? And the interest in computers to produce computer-generated newspapers? And playing havoc with the timetable and with the traditional separation of academic areas? And the desire about keeping all students together and using commonly structured experiences to challenge each one to create an authentic and unique paper, or such a similar one that he would put such a task to "resource room" students? It was obvious that such a project could emerge only from a particular teacher's autobiography.

And of course he couldn't have ignored the enthusiasm and involvement and frequent abandon of the students, for they totally ignored him and almost ran him down. The room was literally swarming with activity as students pursued their individual tasks. Some were working at the writing. Some were typing at computers and some were editing. Some were drawing and creating graphics and laying them out on pages. Some were consulting an on-line dictionary or with an adult as they waited their turn at computers or cutters or copiers. The visitors looked for examples of aimless and "off-task" behavior. Naturally, he said, like the big kid beating on his friend when the teacher wasn't looking or the scrap paper occasionally hurled across the room. The visitor found the talk totally engrossed, cutting, drawing, arranging, taping, copying and talking -- why wouldn't they be preoccupied?

What is it then that might have passed this visitor by? What is it that would have come to him only as he sat down with the students and talked with them, as he conferenced with them and helped them with their writing or graphics, as he talked about their papers and read their articles, as he helped them cut and lay out and photocopied, as he enjoyed their art and their jokes and their witticisms, as he entered into meaningful relationships with them? What is it that, more important, than even the international award which eventually came to them, made this project, for the teacher and for every student, an experience that will never be forgotten? The visitor could be forgiven for thinking that he had really "seen it all."

Nor could he have missed the apple theme which rather obviously characterized this class. No visitor could miss the apple decor and the numerous "app- cations" of the theme in different subject areas. In talking with the students, he found them enthusiastic about apples, about their use in room decorations, in art projects, in the classroom management and awards system, but especially in the regular monthly apple treats which the students themselves, together with parent volunteers, cooked in the staff-room kitchen and served on the last day of each month. The students were obviously also aware of the symbolism of apples in education and especially of the significance of the symbol in computer literacy. Known as The Apple Gang, they made much of the theme and cultivated it also in various ways in their newspapers.
BIBLIOGRAPHY on the USE OF COMPUTERS in WRITING


(Note: See also the unpublished major paper by Chris Mann reviewed elsewhere in this paper.)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS and APPRECIATION

TO: The Board of the Taber School Division No. 6
and the staff of the Division Office for granting and supporting my professional leave.

TO: The University of Lethbridge
For Providing a Master of Education Program and to Individual Faculty for Instruction, Friendship and Professional Leadership, especially:

Dr. R. Anderson, Philosophy
Prof. K. Berry, Writing
Dr. R. Bruno-Jofre, Philosophy
Dr. D. Burnett, Computers
Dr. R. Butt, Autobiography
Dr. C. Coates, Research
Prof. D. Conrad, Computers
Dr. R. Haill, Philosophy
Dr. M. Greene, Evaluations
Prof. A. Spackman, Management
Prof. M. Steed, Computers
Dr. J. Twa, Supervision of Teaching
Dr. L. Walker, Writing
Dr. R. Whitehead, Analysis of Teaching

And to all fellow classmates in the Graduate Program, especially Faye Boer, Lynne Edwards, Paul Hawryluk, Carollion Purvis and Jennifer Smith. Thank you for the "comradeship-in-arms" and for contributions to the beginnings of a graduate community of scholars.

TO: The Vauxhall Elementary School
For access to the school and use of the computers and software and for continuing to give me a sense of belonging.

Especially to Carol Jones for working so graciously and competently with me in the Supervision of Teaching course.

TO: My Wife and Sons
For patience, support and love throughout the 20 months of the graduate program.

A FINAL WORD
FROM THE EDITOR

And there it is at last -- a sixty page personal student newspaper that tries to depict one teacher's experience with writing instruction and word processing at the upper elementary school level.

From the beginning, I have been aware of the limits described in the research. The most serious of these has been the attempt on my part to understand the original word processing project in a "post modern" fashion. The lack of data or "thick description" led inevitably to uncertainty of purpose, as I sought for a satisfactory way to account for what had transpired. Three unsuccessful attempts to formulate the questions in terms of acceptable research questions and designs led me finally to abandon intentions to do a major study. I decided instead to use a more modest project to present what data I had accumulated in a medium that would illustrate the process. Thus, this newspaper was intended in an impressionistic manner to open a window on the Apple Gang Project, to explore some of the issues about writing and computers that were raised, and to bring synthesis and closure to that project as well as to my graduate studies program.

In an informal way, the project has confirmed some of the conclusions that are being reached about the role of computers in teaching children to write and to express themselves more effectively. It is becoming obvious that elementary school students can use computers in a masterful way. Further, they are obviously also highly motivated by computers and perform at a higher level. Computers have been shown in this project as capable of acting as tools that help students to act like adults and to participate seriously in the expression of the adult world, namely journalism. In a word processing project with elementary students that was more intensive than this paper and the research articles, all 21 students in this project proved themselves capable of mastering word processing. Attitudinal surveys also revealed an overwhelmingly positive response toward computers, toward newspaper production and toward writing itself.

So what of the future? Next year will probably see me back in a grade six classroom and back to working with children and computers. I can see myself continuing to explore the ways in which computers are most appropriately used in elementary school to accomplish the goals of education. I would like to undertake another major word processing project, and perhaps this time I will be able to reach more carefully substantiated conclusions. The experience has certainly left me convinced of the "destiny" of computers in elementary schools and of word processing in writing classes at the elementary level, if the Apple Gang Personal Student Newspaper Project has in any way illustrated or verified the conclusions of others, then for me personally, it will have been worthwhile.
### For Sale

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<td>Used books in good condition, some exciting and some boring. Call Tuyet.</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldfish, big or little, three months old, eat little, asking $1 for three fish. Call Kimberly.</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black pedal bike in fair condition, good grip wheels, asking $100 or more. Call Scott.</td>
<td>$125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used VooDoo Motorcross bike, good condition, 3 yrs old, asking $75. Call Mark.</td>
<td>$50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Used Intellivision cartridges, 12 of them, excellent shape, $40 firm. Call Ronald.</td>
<td>$40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used bicycle, two years old, good condition, $35 firm. Call Johann.</td>
<td>$35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One year old cat, excellent pet, asking $5. Call Tattiana.</td>
<td>$5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used Raleigh Tracker bicycle, 3 yrs old, terrific condition. Call Sheldon.</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used two wheel dirt bike, 5 yrs old. Good condition $125. Call Kyla.</td>
<td>$125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used sticks and wire, excellent shape. Call Ronald</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used 88 gun, 3 yrs old, good condition, $35. Call Grant.</td>
<td>$35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Personal

- Friend wanted to stay in fancy house, won't cost you a thing; about 12 yrs old, not shy or easily homesick. Call Grant.
- Going to Florida in July by bus; 11 yrs old, companion wanted; must share expenses; staying 3 weeks. Call Rich.
- Get fit, jog lift weights, etc; come to my gym for exercise; 7 yrs and older. Call Kim.
- Used Honda CR 80 in good condition, not rusted or over run, up to $400. Call Scott.
- Farm with large home in Lethbridge area. Large enough for horses. Call Jolynne.
- Coleco Video Game system with games. Good condition, not damaged in any way. Call Scott.
- Small poodle, one foot tall, curly hair. Call Bruce.
- Black skateboard, good condition, no more than $15. Call Scott.
- Huge stereo with radio, tape deck and record player, no more than $250. Call Christine.
- Do you have a pop drinking habit? Call Chris at Popaholics.
- Start liking the sound of scratch ing on the board; pay $3 per hr for 10 hrs of listening to it; call Ronald at Board Scratchers Anonymous.
- Have you ever wanted to Join a club? Here is your big chance! Join the Gum Chewers Club and get free samples every month. Call Sheldon.
- Nail Cheuers Anony mous - for an easy way to stop chewing, call Shannon.
Three months later, all 21 papers were complete, including those of several "resource room" students. The papers ranged in length from 16 to 22 pages and each paralleled a "real" newspaper in length as well as in the variety of articles and graphics. Encouraged in the Research course, I spent many hours in May, collecting data by means of questionnaires and interviews, and I received feedback from educators, journalists and word processing specialists. The papers were submitted to Apple Computer Clubs International Merit Competition and received a second-place award for effective use of word processing, newspaper writing, and integration of subject areas.

PRECEDENTS AND PARALLEL CASES

The research course proved instrumental in getting me into literature in order to study precedents and similar cases experienced by others. Several computer searches revealed that no study of similar magnitude had been done at the upper elementary level. Word processing had been used a lot in composition at the college level and to a limited extent at the high school level. Only a few experiments with word processing at lower levels were reported, and none of these amounted to more than about four weeks of actual computer work by students. A case approach had been used in one instance to study the use of word processing by three grade five students over a period of several weeks. No evidence could be found, either, of projects involving the generation of student newspapers at the upper elementary level.

Researchers were essentially in agreement on the following conclusions with respect to the use of computers in writing at the elementary level:

1. Computers can be used in a masterful way by elementary school students.
2. Elementary school students are highly motivated by computers and seem to perform at a higher level.
3. Computers can be tools that help students to act like adults and to live vicariously in an adult world.
4. Students at the grade six level can master word processing.
5. Word processing makes editing easier for students.

All of those conclusions also followed logically from my experimental project and in these ways the project could be construed as a replication or an affirmation. But there were also other questions relating to the use of computers in writing, and some of these provided the focus of several thesis proposals.

THE PROPOSALS

The first proposal, developed in connection with the research course, posed the following questions:
1. Can students produce better personal newspapers by word processing than by hand?
2. Does a computer-based writing project promote positive student attitudes toward writing and toward school?
3. Does a computer-based writing project promote positive parental attitudes and support?
4. Does a computer-based newspaper project meet expectations for a grade 6 language experience?

It was proposed that both qualitative and quantitative data would be collected in order to make a comparison between the computer produced papers and the hand-written papers of several years before. The emphasis was to be on a description of the processes and the products and on a final evaluation by a number of different individuals and groups. The proposal was abandoned because it lacked specificity and clarity and because it called for the attempted reconstruction of data from a two-year-old project as well as from the current project.

The second proposal, developed in connection with the Evaluations course, was intended to try to separate the project into the four components of "functional writing", "personal student newspapers", word processing, and the personal student newspapers as a method of "accommodating individual student differences," and to evaluate each on the basis of seven criteria:

1. Is it LEGITIMATE in the Grade Six curriculum?
2. Is it FEASIBLE for Grade Six students?
3. Is it ADAPTABLE to a variety of student learning styles and abilities?
4. Does it provide for AUTHENTIC learning experiences?
5. Does it provide opportunities for the expression of student CREATIVITY?
6. Is it EFFICACIOUS in terms of investments and benefits?
7. Is it APPROPRIATE and WORTHWHILE for students in Grade Six?

Again, it was proposed to use both quantitative and qualitative types of data as evidence to be assessed according to these criteria. The emphasis was to be on the study as an evaluation project intended to reach an assessment of the experiment and its resulting products. The proposal was abandoned because of concern about the effects of bias and because it seemed to be trying to answer too many questions.

The third proposal, developed in connection with a writing course, was intended to provide for the generation of a Creative Project that would itself be a "personal student newspaper." It seemed to me that this would be the most authentic way that this project could be done. If my interest was in trying to appreciate the student side of the project and in trying to understand what they were going through, then it made sense to put myself through the same process. If I believe that the newspaper is an effective
medium of personal communication and that it can authentically accommodate a large variety of types of writing, then it made sense for me to explore those possibilities at my level in terms of a thesis project. If I was committed to a creative approach consistent with my own interests and background and if I intended to create a product that would be of interest to practising teachers, especially those interested in word processing and writing, then it made sense to address them in terms of a creative project. Finally, if I was trying to answer too many questions in earlier proposals, then it made sense to separate them into implicit and explicit statements and to devote the written message toward answering the questions relating to word processing and the medium itself toward making an implicit statement about the worth of newspapers as a part of the classroom curriculum.

In particular, the Creative Project was intended to address this question:

"Aside from the main implicit statement about the worth of newspapers as a medium of integrated, individualized and interdisciplinary instruction, the main purpose of this project will be to conduct a case study of how teacher autobiography functioned in the creation of curriculum and within that case study to determine the effects that word processing had on the generation of personal student newspapers and on the students themselves."

The proposal went on to suggest a variety of "departments" that would be included in the project, the types of writing that would be used, and some of the topics about which articles would be written. It was intended, for example, that description occupy the news or narrative sections, that interpretation and analysis would take the form of columns and editorials, and that student papers be excerpted and included as "advertising". The proposal also included a description of the process to be used in creation and of the process and criteria to be used in evaluation.

The proposal caused some concerns. It was concluded that "advocacy" was still a limitation and that the newspaper format tended to accentuate this even more. The project still did not seem to focus on specific and preferably measurable research questions. As a "collage", it seemed that the project would not constitute a single, cohesive statement but that one part might be in contradiction to another. It did not adequately accommodate the five steps of the traditional thesis nor did it reveal a satisfactory basis in the research literature. The absence of quantitative pre-experiment data or of anecdotal "thick description" continued to undermine the proposals. Some of the questions to be answered seemed too simple while others seemed too broad. The proposal might have materialized into a four-course project if the original experiment could have been replicated.
The proposal was not abandoned, but, because of the time factor, it was scaled down to a one-course project and modified to achieve slightly altered objectives. The fourth proposal, then, was for a one-course project that would be very similar to the third but different in degree and would include the objective to master and use computer software in the creation of the final product. This has now been carried out and the final result is the paper known as "Irwin's Apple Gang: A Creative Project on Word Processing in the Generation of Personal Student Newspapers."

THE VERDICT

The final product is my own personal student newspaper that chronicles my academic journey for the benefit of fellow teachers interested in computers and kids. As you can see, it is a compilation of many things. It describes the original project from my point of view and it devotes pages to some of the best writing from each student. It surveys, samples and summarizes the responses of students, parents and others, as extracted from the data that was collected, and it takes into account the experiences of others. Essentially, like the original project, it is meant to be exploratory rather than definitive, impressionistic rather than comprehensive, suggestive rather than declarative, illustrative rather than explanatory, perhaps doing no more than suggesting the need to investigate such questions as these:

1. Can elementary school students learn to compose as well at computers as they can with paper and pencil?
2. Does skill in word processing lead to the application of better revision strategies?
3. Does skill in word processing lead to an improvement in the quality of student writing?
4. Does word processing contribute to more effective mastery of basic writing skills than paper and pencil?
5. Are certain types of writing, such as structured writing, taught more effectively by word processing than other types, such as "creative" writing?
6. Does skill in word processing make it possible for students to complete larger and better writing projects?
7. By what means can word processing most effectively be introduced to elementary school students?
8. Does the use of computers and especially word processors affect the way students think about language and the writing process?

It's been a year of hammering the facts and the law, of hammering quantitative and qualitative methods, of hammering questions, proposals and designs. I've hammered out of advocacy and conviction, out of jubilant discovery, out of frustration and defeat, and out of affirmation and achievement. This presentation is for me the last requirement of the program, and so today, in a personal celebration, I am content to hammer on the table.