

**A PATCHWORK OF FRIENDS:
AN INTERGENERATIONAL PROJECT**

JOANN ST.JOHN

B.Ed., University of Lethbridge, 1975
D.P.E., University of Lethbridge, 1992

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Dedication

I dedicate this project to my granddaughter, Raven.
You continue to share with me, the delights and joys
of connecting our generations and our hearts.

Abstract

This project discusses the potential of schools to be venues or meeting places where people of different ages and generations can connect in order to support the “raising of a child.” It describes one such venture, *A Patchwork of Friends – An Intergenerational Project*, conducted in a grade two classroom at an elementary school in southern Alberta during May and June 2000. The project involved natural or adopted grandparents, who participated for six weeks in a variety of literacy, craft and technology activities alongside one or two students for one and one-half hour weekly visits. Many theme activities and lessons relating to various elementary curriculums were implemented before, during and after the project was completed. This study attempted to ascertain to what extent participation in this type of program affected the views and attitudes of the children and grandparents involved. Methods of investigation included interviewing the children and grandparents, recording observations and comments, writing anecdotal notes, and examining the reflections written by students about the project. The findings from the study indicate that this program positively affected the views and attitudes of not only the children, but also the grandparents who were involved in this project. Such an intergenerational program was a rewarding, worthwhile and vibrant part of the school life for all who participated.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

An intergenerational program is a planned intentional interaction of different age groups, infant to elderly, in a variety of situations at a level that provides close communication, sharing of feelings and ideas and cooperative activity in meaningful tasks. (Peacock & Talley, 1984)

Intergenerational programs are growing in scope and number throughout the world's developed countries. These programs are the systematic and deliberate interactions that bring senior adults and younger generations together for mutual service and nurturance. Intergenerational initiatives help to build understanding and promote greater appreciation between people of differing ages (Newman, 1997). Over the past 30 years, the intergenerational human service field has evolved into a cohesive area of research and development. This has resulted from the ongoing work of a group of practitioners, researchers, and administrators from health, education and social work backgrounds who have begun to study and expand this relatively new field. Ongoing research, practice and evaluation of intergenerational programs have provided a framework that is used to identify and understand the budding social phenomenon of intergenerational programs.

Rationale

We are entering a unique time in much of the developed world, when the majority of the population is aging at an ever-increasing rate and living longer. Canada's elderly population is growing rapidly. Early members of the huge "baby boom" generation (those born between 1946 and 1965) will soon begin to reach age 65. According to projections

by Statistics Canada, the proportion of the total population who are elderly will almost double, from 12 percent today to 25 percent by 2031. This doubling is due not only to the baby boom generation, but also to increased life expectancy. Population aging is not unique to Canada. It is being experienced in most developed countries and in many third world countries as well. It is an established fact that we are living longer and are having fewer children (Report of the Auditor General of Canada, 1998). This situation has huge implications not only for our economy and labor force, but more importantly for the need to create and sustain high quality of life for members of all generations today and in the future.

✧ Demographic shifts are not the only changes facing society today. Change in every aspect of life seems to be accelerating. The very young and the very old are reaping the results of being under-valued and under cared for, as exemplified in the words of writer and poet Shel Silverstein in the poem “The Little Boy and the Old Man”:

Said the little boy, “Sometimes I drop my spoon.”

Said the old man, “I do that too!”

The little boy whispered, “I wet my pants.”

“I do that too,” laughed the old man.

Said the little boy, “I often cry.”

The old man nodded, “So do I.”

“But worst of all,” said the little boy, “it seems

Grown-ups don’t pay attention to me.”

And he felt the warmth of the wrinkled old hand.

“I know what you mean,” said the old man. (1981)

There is also a growing tendency in modern society to segregate age groups. Popular media perpetuate stereotypical images of the young and old, both in programming and advertising, and such stereotyping often results in fewer opportunities for these generations to experience first-hand interaction. In addition, as technologies expand and we focus more on connecting with computers and other forms of technology designed to make life easier, our human contact decreases even more. Intergenerational programs attempt to respond to these negative images and alienation of both seniors and youth. They also work to reduce the segregation of these generations, to decrease age-related competition over service dollars, and to alleviate some of the misunderstandings resulting from the varied lifestyles among each generation.

In most arenas of life in post-industrial societies today, social problems are escalating as a result of constant change. Traditionally, family living arrangements and common value systems thrived in informal neighborhood support structures. People who shared common belief systems through their religion or shared place of origin molded their neighborhoods and communities. Often two or three generations of families would live together or near to each other. This increased the opportunities for passing down history, culture and common values to the young people in the community. Because of a broad range of social, cultural, economic and political forces, these family and neighborhood support systems are declining in scope and numbers. Higher population, greater mobility, increased immigration, growing multicultural neighborhoods and communities, increasing poverty, and changing family structures are continuing to set the stage for a host of social problems.

One of the primary contributors to a variety of social concerns is the changing family structure. Divorce is at an all-time high, causing a steady decrease in traditional two-parent families. The resulting single-parent families face the reality of double the workload and responsibility, with usually half the emotional and financial support. Many live great distances from their grandparents or extended families, who may have offered the kind of support that a single parent family may need. As a result, these single parents experience more stress and guilt about their situations, and in many cases children have less time for quality interaction with a caring adult.

Since World War II, women generally have taken up new roles in the working world, and thus neither parent is available to be the primary caregiver of their children on a daily basis. Childcare has become a societal issue, and as a result, social organizations and agencies are being asked to develop and implement effective and nurturing child-care centers. This challenge has been undertaken through necessity and not always with the most noble of intents, nor the greatest success. We still undervalue the work of caring for young children by underpaying and under educating these people who have an immense responsibility not only to our children, but also to society as a whole.

While there are many legitimate reasons or rationales for these changes in family structures, there have often been less than positive implications for the children and youth in our post-industrialized societies. A growing number of children and youth are not getting their needs met in safe and supportive family and community settings. We are seeing a rise in childhood poverty, neglect and abuse. These contribute to the escalating problems of teen pregnancy, higher school dropout rates, drug and alcohol abuse and increased violence in society. Many community agencies, educators and policy-makers

are looking to senior volunteers to make a difference in the lives of these young people and to help alleviate these societal problems.

However, it is not only children and youth who are experiencing the fallout of our changing society. There is a growing isolation of the elderly, who no longer live with extended families, as was often a custom in many traditional cultures. Although some senior adults live alone through choice and find it satisfying, many experience great loneliness and isolation. Because of increased segregation by age, we are also experiencing a form of discrimination against the elderly, known as *ageism*. Ageism is based on attitudes and behaviours on the part of young people and those in positions of political power, who devalue the worth and contribution of senior adults in our society. Doing so often results in the use of political power for their own generation's interest (Newman, 1997). There has also been an increase in the number of grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. This role poses a unique set of problems and challenges for both the senior adult and the children or youth. Some intergenerational programs are structured to alleviate some of the stress inherent in this unique form of grandparent-child relationship.

Alongside these societal changes, the tension and misunderstanding between generations continues to increase (Newman, 1989). This can be attributed partly to the growing shift in how people within our western world are grouped. There is an increasing trend towards segregating specific age groups and generations for almost every aspect of daily living from recreational and social activities, educational settings to physical housing structures. Adult Only housing developments, senior complexes, day-care facilities, and teen centers abound, and there is a move away from K-12 schools. Rarely

are community activities organized for inter-age or cross-generation interaction. Rather, we see groups or pockets of individuals who do not have a shared place or common vision. As a result, these differing age groups display a greater sense of alienation, fear and judgment concerning the group to which they do not belong. This results in “a kind of toxicity from age segregation” (Pipher, 1998, p. 8).

Community in some form is intrinsic to humanity, both for survival and for satisfaction in life. Community provides us with a sense of belonging and continuity, and provides ways of connecting to others in order to make our lives meaningful (Sergiovanni, 1994). However, a sense of community is becoming an exception rather than the norm in most settings in our western world. Instead of encouraging and supporting meaningful and safe connections with others, we tell our children to be afraid of all strangers – even when these strangers may have the skills and desire to support and nurture that child. Many older adults too have a growing distrust of children and especially youth, often fearing their needs or their property will be somehow compromised or harmed. They have little or no contact with the younger generation and thus are unable to develop meaningful connections with them. As a result, there are few or no opportunities for ongoing quality interactions between these two groups. As one grandfather from *A Patchwork of Friends* stated, “We don’t invest in our youth. We give them things, but we don’t share our time.” We live in a world where children are becoming afraid of adults and adults afraid of children.

Such fear is detrimental to any community, large or small. We begin to see signs of potential political conflict between generations based on economic decisions where they fight over available service dollars. One example is the rising perception that we

need to choose between the funding of education and the funding of senior health care, facilities and programs. Terms such as *generational equity*, *greedy geezers* and *selfish, disrespectful youth* are creeping into the media, souring the hopes for more positive intergenerational attitudes. Seniors must return to a belief in seeing education as a civic and not just a parental responsibility (Halford, 1998). Noddings (1992) agrees with this premise in *The Challenge to Care in Schools*: “It is a form of civic mindedness to think of children as precious resources” (p. 13).

If older adults have regular and ongoing interaction with the younger generation, they may more easily see the benefits of quality educational systems that help to raise healthy, happy, well-adjusted children and youth. Connecting with children on a regular basis also offers older adults the joy of experiencing vibrancy in their lives and a sense of making a valuable social contribution. In the same fashion, younger generations can come to view elder care as a service of respect and gratitude. If children experience ongoing, meaningful relationships with older adults throughout their growing years, they will more likely respond positively to the needs of older people as they themselves become contributing members of society. If children do not experience meaningful interactions with older adults, they are denied opportunities to share stories and develop a sense of history and the continuity of life (Halford, 1998).

When we foster intergenerational relationships, we encourage the reshaping of the perceptions that each generation has of each other. Both generations need to become actively involved in each other’s lives for their mutual enjoyment and benefit. Connecting generations in a variety of settings and programs has the potential to allow

for a multitude of emotional, physical, social and spiritual benefits (see Appendix A for a list of Intergenerational Program Benefits).

On the other hand, a personal and political bias that alienates and pits generations against each other will continue to generate a belief that there can never be enough for everyone. This misconception in turn can give rise to suspicion, hoarding and conflict, rather than a sense of shared abundance and gratitude, which are hallmarks of healthy, vibrant and caring groups of people. Communities grow and flourish in environments where people operate from a framework of cooperation, collaboration and shared respect. Such environments are based on a balance between respect of communal values and a healthy autonomy, regardless of one's generation.

Connecting with others, a basic human need, is becoming a more and more elusive quest in many people's lives. This is evident in the move towards age segregation in post-industrialized societies. The pattern of changing family structures and greater physical distances between members of many extended families is becoming more common. However, the quest for human connection is nowhere more pronounced than for the very young and the very old. Although change and evolution are the essence of life, creating a balance between the order of the old and the chaos of the new calls for creativity, wisdom and connection. Without this balance, alienation between individuals and groups increases, including the very young and the very old. We can expect that this trend will continue as the baby boomers enter their senior years and our elder population increases dramatically.

What is called for, in this natural evolution of maintaining the old to prepare the way for the new, is a process to let the past flow into the present. According to Vanier

(1998), this process can be furthered through dialogue, working with others, searching together, and creating a sense of belonging. Others, including Palmer (1998), have called for the development of a sense of connection and community through a commitment to spirituality in our schools. Palmer does not call for more structured religion in schools, but rather for “the ancient and abiding human quest for connectedness with something larger and more trustworthy than our egos – with our own souls, with one another, with the worlds of history and nature, with the invisible winds of the spirit, with the mystery of being alive” (p. 6). Such concerns may be addressed in our schools through a process of transformational learning. Traditionally, only intellectual development has been addressed through transmission from teacher to student or transaction between student and teacher. Transformational learning focuses on every aspect of a child’s learning and growth, including intellectual, physical, emotional, aesthetic, moral and spiritual (Miller, 1999).

However, teachers’ working realities are becoming more and more consumed with intellectual learning and student assessment. Yet many teachers are becoming increasingly aware of their students’ need for meaningful adult relationships in their lives. In 1989, Girl Scouts of America did a survey and found that one child in 100 said that no adults really cared for him/her. Because of rapidly increasing social change over the past thirteen years, one can assume that this sad commentary on care has increased. According to Noddings (1992), the first theme of schooling should be learning how to care for oneself. Noddings envisions a change in education, where the main aim of schooling is nurturing the growth of competent, caring, loving persons and where a school’s focus is not solely on a student’s intellectual development, as in many schools

today. In the midst of sweeping social changes, we need to move into a world that supports care and responsibility towards each other, the environment, and ourselves. Such teaching and modeling must be part of everyday life. Care and connection to self, to each other, to the earth, and especially to other generations can help lead students to their own wisdom, compassion, and a deep sense of belonging to something larger than themselves. What better way is there to share our history, learn to communicate with and become responsive to another generation, reduce fear of aging, and create a sense of grounding in youth, than by bringing young and old together in well thought-out, meaningful interactions?

The intergenerational research project described here was intended to address many such concerns. *A Patchwork of Friends* was designed and implemented to address both the needs of grade two students and older volunteers. In addition, the study sought to discover whether the views and attitudes of both groups were changed as a result of participating in this intergenerational project.

Historical Perspectives and Recent Initiatives

“It takes a village to raise a child” is a common African saying. Traditionally, socializing and guiding children and youth into responsible adulthood was an intrinsic part of living in community with like-minded others. The parenting role was shared by members of several generations. Each generation knew and supported the role and identity of the others. Older family members were respected and deferred to, while they in turn provided a sense of past and present generational connection to the youth of the extended family. The world these children and youth were guided into was expected to

be, for the most part, similar to the one in which their parents had been raised. This is no longer true. In the past, generations would either live together or live close by. In 1900, for example, 26% of elderly persons in America lived with a married relative, as compared to 4% in 1980. Living together provided ample opportunities for generations to share, listen, and truly respond to each other. While this arrangement may have been common in many traditional societies and cultures, it is no longer typical of child rearing and eldercare practices in our modern western world (Newman, 1989).

Our fast-paced world is exploding with change on every front. It is new not only to youth, but to senior generations as well. Our elders cannot guide us with a list of “what to do” in a world they have not previously known – nor would most youth listen. The generation gap that was so pronounced and evident in the 1960s has become a commonplace and generally accepted phenomenon in today’s world. The generation gap is physical, social and emotional. There is hope though. Children and youth can teach older generations about technology and share their youthful energy and open spirits. Our elders can, with caring and wisdom, support and guide young people in “how to be” as we navigate this new world together. Intergenerational programs provide a vehicle for doing just this.

Responding to the recognized needs of society’s most vulnerable populations (the very young and the very old), early programs began to emerge and develop in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Their primary focus was to address issues related to generational separation. The initial intergenerational program outcomes were studied and documented, and a new field of human service began to emerge. During the 1980s and 1990s the early intergenerational researchers and programmers began to see the

benefits of increased multi-generational connections for individuals and groups and realized their broader positive social implications. More intergenerational programs were being implemented as a response to growing societal problems: drug and alcohol abuse, poverty, neglect and increased violence (Newman, 1997). As a result, intergenerational programs were developed in a variety of systems, including health, education and social welfare of young and old. In many cases these separate agencies joined together to create and implement intergenerational programs and initiatives.

Consistent growth of intergenerational programs has occurred at local and national levels in many western countries. The United States, more than Canada, has been pro-active on a national level in developing and addressing awareness for intergenerational programming needs. There is more public policy and infrastructure support of such programs in the United States at the local, regional and national levels of government. Private foundations and organizations have also responded more positively because of national recognition of the need for intergenerational programming. In Canada, although there has also been a steady increase in intergenerational programming, it has been more piecemeal and regional rather than a national or provincial policy-making and organizational thrust. It is difficult to ascertain the scope and number of intergenerational programs in Canada because there has been no formal inventory. Following is a brief description of some intergenerational initiatives in Canada and in the United States.

Oaks & Acorns Corporation. Founded in 1975 in San Diego, California, this corporation continues to provide service to the local and wider communities. Its mission

is “to support, sustain, and enhance the programs which bring older adults together with young children in joyful, meaningful, and rewarding activity in all communities.”

The Center for Intergenerational Learning. Established in 1979 at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, this center is dedicated to strengthening communities by bringing generations together. It provides technical assistance to over 500 organizations in the service areas of education, youth, aging and family.

The Generations Together Center. The University of Pittsburgh’s center for intergenerational studies has the following mission statement: “to further program development, education and training, research, and dissemination, and technical support that helps professionals acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills to integrate intergenerational components into their work. Furthermore, it supports university/community collaboration and public policy initiatives that result in effective intergenerational partnerships that positively impact children, youth and older persons in our communities.” This center has done much to further the design, implementation and study of intergenerational programs and is clearly a leader in this relatively new human service field.

CYFERnet: Children, Youth and Families Education and Research Network. Created in 1992, this Internet information site is a national network of university faculty and extension educators working to support community-based educational programs for children, youth, parents and families. The materials are screened, peer reviewed and posted by an editorial board drawn from universities across the United States. Information is made available through national conferences, printed publications and

electronic technology. Many excellent, up-to-date resources are provided relating to intergenerational studies and programs.

Generations United: National Advocacy Agency for Intergenerational Programs.

Created in the United States in 1993, Generations United has created a database of information on intergenerational community service programs across the country, developed resource guides, and identified specialists who can provide technical assistance for program directors.

The White House Conference on Aging. In 1995 a set of intergenerational resolutions was adopted as part of the United States national agenda for older adults for the next decade. These resolutions included the following: (a) to promote older people as mentors in public and private educational systems; (b) to involve older persons in the promotion of high-quality child care, early childhood and youth development programs; (c) to engage the productive and humanitarian potential of the older population to meet the human, educational, social, environment, health, and cultural needs of children; (d) to support policies that promote intergenerational programs; (e) to encourage older persons to use their power and influence to advocate for all children; (f) to develop public education campaigns to combat against ageist stereotypes; (g) to promote intergenerational programs to strengthen the family unit in grandparent-headed households; and (h) to develop and fund ongoing public education campaigns that highlight the diverse roles and activities of older adults (cited in Newman, 1997).

The National Academy for Teaching and Learning About Age. This academy was formed in conjunction with the University of North Texas in 1995.

Additional initiatives have been undertaken, both in Canada and the US, and resources are steadily being developed on the subjects of age, youth, and intergenerational concerns.

[A wide range of manuals and handbooks, including print and non-print resources, have been written and developed by numerous practitioners and programmers. } A detailed listing can be found in *Intergenerational Readings/Resources 1980-1994: A Bibliography of Books, Book Chapters, Journal Articles, Manuals, Papers/Reports/Studies, Curricula, Bibliographies, Directories, Newsletters, Data Bases, and Videos* (Wilson, 1994). In addition to this, much has been written since 1994 that can supplement and extend these resources for anyone exploring the field of intergenerational relations.

The International Year of Older Persons was officially declared by the United Nations in 1999. Canada supported this initiative by launching its own theme, entitled “Canada, a Society for all Ages.” Both were designed to recognize the contributions seniors have made and continue to make in society. In the same year, the Canadian government announced and supported three projects, two of which involved intergenerational programming and one that was concerned with the health needs of older adults.

The Alberta Council on Aging developed a *Senior Friendly Community Guidebook* to encourage the creation of senior-friendly communities and programs across Canada.

United Generations Ontario was established in 1993 by the provincial government. It has become a vibrant umbrella organization for intergenerational programming in Ontario and a model for other provinces. At present approximately

150,000 individuals and several hundred agencies are actively involved in promoting relationships between the young and old.

Groupe de Recherche sur les Pratiques Sociales et Religieuses (Research Team on Social and Religious Practices, GRPSR). This research group of the Faculty of Theology, University of Montreal was formed in 1999 as a result of grants from Health Canada. This project encourages actions linking young adults and seniors, through a needs assessment analysis in four metropolitan Canadian communities: Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Moncton. The group intends to create an accessible toolbox that may trigger other projects across Canada.

Intergenerational Literacy Connections

Intergenerational literacy refers to educational programs that are designed to strengthen literacy by involving at least two generations. There is an underlying assumption in most family and intergenerational literacy studies that relationships formed between generations have a positive effect on literacy development (Weinstein, 1998). Although the majority of family literacy programs target parents and children, either in the home or a school setting, there is a growing interest in and practice of involving seniors in children's literacy development.

The design of such programs depends upon the goals or intentions of participating groups and/or individuals. Many intergenerational programs have a literacy component built either formally or informally into their overall curriculum. Some programs, such as Generations CanConnect and the PAL Projects, center on a literacy and technology base.

Literacy activities are common in many intergenerational programs and they include the following:

- The child and the senior adult engage in shared reading, reading orally to each other or together.
- Seniors act as reading tutors to children who experience reading difficulties or are ESL (English as a Second Language) students.
- Children or youth interview seniors and record the relayed experiences and memories through handwritten records, visual representation, or documentation by using a computer where either the students or the seniors type their stories.
- Children and seniors establish dialogue journals that are exchanged on a regular basis.
- Both generations compile separate or joint scrapbooks that record memories and/or joint activities and journal entries.
- Children and seniors participate in another form of a dialogue journal called the *grandletter*. In one form (as seen in an example from the Kansas State Cooperative Extension Service), natural or adopted grandparents and children exchange approximately ten letters. Seniors, parents and professionals choose the topics by their importance to both generations. Some topics included family and heritage, affection and friendship, respect for elders, honesty and commitment, conflict and violence, sadness and grief, helpfulness, responsibility and courage, and competition and justice. Both generations learned more about one another by exchanging letters on these topics.

Other umbrella literacy initiatives have been established in Canada and the United States to support and encourage the union of intergenerational programs and literacy development.

In Canada, the National Literacy Secretariat funded a national demonstration project, “The Intergenerational Literacy Project” in 1992-93. The mandate of this project was to provide information to literacy and community stakeholders on how to incorporate literacy learning in its broadest forms into their ongoing provision of intergenerational service. The project raised consciousness regarding intergenerational literacy, gave suggestions for analyzing and designing programs to meet community literacy-related needs, and shared examples and models of successful intergenerational literacy programs. Isserlis, McCue, Weinstein, and Sauve (1994) describe the resulting report and process guide in *Community Literacy: An Intergenerational Perspective*.

A plethora of high quality children’s literature is now available having an intergenerational component either at the core or in the supporting theme of the story. The wisdom of age and the innocence of youth are melded together beautifully in the wide array of children’s literature available to intergenerational programmers today (see Appendix B for a listing of such books). Picture books are often characterized by stunning illustrations, an economy of words, quickly moving plots, and universal themes (Smallwood, 1998). These cross-generational picture books and young adult fiction deal with life issues within the context of an intergenerational relationship. Opportunities to read, listen and discuss these books impress upon the young the struggles and triumphs of past generations, giving them models of resiliency in light of the dilemmas they may themselves be experiencing. Reading and sharing these books can help seniors appreciate

the depth of thought and emotions that a child or youth may be experiencing at various developmental stages. Such books can act as catalysts for the sharing of stories and experiences. They can help to open discussions concerning personal relationships and social dilemmas between individuals from either or both generations.

Loss and death of a loved one are recurring themes in many of these books. They provide rich opportunities for both young and old to discover and share concerns, questions, fears and unattended grief over past, present and future personal losses. Books such as *Granddad's Prayers of the Earth* (Woods, 1999) and *Knots on a Counting Rope* (Martin, 1987) not only present the issue of death and loss, but also demonstrate how the characters embrace the continuity of life before and after loss. These literary genres also reinforce the value of generational connections, caring and respect among the age groups.

Multicultural themes are also addressed in many children's books that have an intergenerational relationship between characters. In fact, some such books are often used in learner-centered literacy activities for adult ESL classes, because of the educational benefits of presenting such universal themes to adult learners using a relatively simple vocabulary. There is an added bonus when two or more generations share these books with each other, which in turn builds cross-generational collaboration and appreciation of other cultures. If the stories also touch upon intergenerational conflict, emigration, and immigration, they can help to lessen feelings of isolation and alienation of new immigrants in an unfamiliar world. Books such as *When Jessie Came across the Sea* (Hest, 1997) and *Petronella* (Waterton, 1980) bridge a familiar past with a new and challenging future.

Another form of a less well-known traditional intergenerational literature includes elder tales such as, *In the Ever After: Fairy Tales and the Second Half of Life* (Chinen, 1989). Chinen has assembled an anthology of “elder tales,” fairy tales from diverse cultures. As in all fairy tales, the characters are ordinary people dealing with basic human struggles that resolve themselves through some form of magic into a predictable happy ending. In these folk tales, however, the male and female protagonists are elders instead of youth; and instead of growing up, the protagonists grow psychologically and spiritually, whereby a new image of maturity evolves. This image centers on wisdom, self-knowledge and transcendence:

Elder tales portray a new set of virtues – wisdom, not heroism...elders affirm mediation and communication, rather than battle and conquest. Faced with the djinn, the fisherman talks and tells stories. He does not seek to destroy the monster, as the young hero typically does. The elder’s role is to raise bridges, not swords. (Chinen, 1999, p.152)

When youth and seniors share these stories, there is a potential for a new respect for aging to arise and flourish in both generations. In addition, in “elder tales” children and youth are given models for conflict resolution that involve effective communication and mediation rather than the more prevalent violent solutions to problems.

Using literacy activities has proven successful as a base for intergenerational programs. If this could be expanded on a larger scale, there would be an even greater potential for literacy activities to impact both generations in ways that could lead to a more peaceful and respectful way of life

Chapter 2: Literature Review

There has been an explosion of intergenerational programs in much of the post-industrialized world, including Canada. Human service agencies are seeing these programs as effective ways to respond to the needs of their clients, especially in light of corporate and government downsizing at almost every level. As mentioned earlier, social intervention under a framework of community participation increases a sense of caring and sharing, which in turn often contributes to happier and more responsible people of any age. Linking generations often provides immediate benefits to participants.

Cross-generational programs may be initiated by a variety of social structures or organizations. These include educational institutions, child-care facilities, religious or community-based service groups or senior-care agencies. The initiating agency may then solicit the collaboration of another agency in order to establish the program, or may invite individuals within a community to participate in its delivery. Many intergenerational programs have promoted agency partnership and mutual support in ways never before undertaken. However, it is important to note that whatever the type or scope of a particular program, all programs stem from a perceived need in one or more groups, or in the community at large. Public awareness and exemplary programming in many instances has only added to this popularity and demand for cross-generational initiatives.

Public awareness in Canada has been growing. In 2002, workshops with an intergenerational approach to helping children and youth were conducted at a national conference sponsored by the Child Welfare League of Canada and the Ontario

Association of Children's Aid Societies. The conference was entitled "Canada's Children...Canada's Future." Dr. Shipman, director of United Generations Ontario, was invited to give a paper at the Vanier Institute of the Family on the linkage between intergenerational programming and a vision of civic, caring society.

The Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, a peer-reviewed research journal, is to be published in 2002 (<http://www.gt.pitt.edu>). Sally Newman of the University of Pittsburgh's Generations Together Center, a well-known leader and researcher of intergenerational studies, is its editor. This will be the only journal focusing on the intergenerational field that integrates practical, theoretical, and empirical and policy perspectives. This journal is cross-disciplined and therefore will address the interest and needs of many agencies in the human service fields: social work, community development, health, psychology, anthropology, sociology, gerontology, child development, education, political science, social policy, and communications.

What are some of these existing programs, and how do they address the interests and social needs of society, and more specifically, the needs of the participants? Although it is difficult to generalize about existing intergenerational initiatives because of their diversity, these programs seem to fall into three main types or categories. Where they fit depends upon the group they are intended to serve. (For organizational purposes, I have placed those programs that could fit under several categories into one of the major groups, even though they seem to have evolved into a more hybrid program.) The first category includes programs in which older adults serve as mentors, guides or coaches to children or youth. In the second type of program, children or youth serve older adults in some capacity. The third type of program involves children or youth and older adults

combining their talents and efforts to serve others in their community. In effect, these are programs designed to help, mentor, offer a service, or provide child-care in an interactive setting. Although one generation is often the intended primary recipient in these programs, it is evident that the benefits are reciprocal to both generations (Newman, 1997). It is important to note that intergenerational programs do not limit themselves to one type of setting; they can be found in community centers and service agencies, senior care complexes, churches, schools, and private businesses or organizations that have an interest and investment in the betterment of the community at large. Although some other programs are mentioned, the primary focus of this literature review will be on programs initiated and/or delivered within a school setting.

Because there has been such a diversity of interest in and implementation of intergenerational programs over the past two decades, the following descriptions represent only a sampling of each type of intergenerational program. Many programs are either school-based or occur at senior centers or residences; others occur at a religious or community facility. I have included samples from Canada, the United States and Japan to demonstrate that intergenerational programs can be and are implemented in almost any culture and geographic area (see Appendix C for a sample listing of current intergenerational program and research sites). I have also attempted to select programs that model the wide array of intergenerational program structures and curriculums that are being undertaken and embraced by many communities today.

Senior Adults Mentoring/Coaching/Tutoring Children and/or Youth

PAL Program – Partnership Approach to Literacy (<http://www.nald.ca/pal/>).

PAL is a non-profit tutoring model for school children in many southern Alberta communities. Existing programs were developed through schools and communities working together to provide one-on-one support for school students who struggle with reading. Participants encompass all age groups, as tutor volunteers range from high school students to parents to grandparents. The goals of the PAL Program are to make reading fun and to develop a relationship between the child who is experiencing reading difficulty and the volunteer. Tutors undergo a specific training program that ensures they are able to use a variety of techniques in order to assist students who have a specific learning style. Emphasis is placed on a student's strengths rather than on the reading weaknesses.

In one such program in Coalhurst, Alberta during the 2001-2002 school year, forty students were paired with forty tutors. These tutors were required to participate in twelve hours of inservice before working with their student partners. Also, regular information nights were held throughout the school year. Topics included children's literature, a games night, and introducing phonemic awareness concepts. Organizers found that these sessions needed to be for short periods as opposed to a full Saturday, for example, as tutors tended to be overwhelmed with too much information. The tutors then met in the school for one half hour per week with their student partners. Some tutors have been so dedicated to the program and its goals that they have continued to volunteer year after year. Program organizers report many success stories. In most cases the students'

reading skills have improved, but more importantly their self-esteem has been lifted from despondency to increased competence and confidence.

An Intergenerational Writer's Workshop Project: Telling and Writing Stories Across Generations (Kazemek & Logas, 2000). This project has operated for four years in a small community of 10,000 people in Minnesota. Francis Kazemek, a teacher and researcher of senior writers, and Beverly Logas, a multi-age elementary teacher, are the architects of this intergenerational program. The first project, which began with seniors visiting an elementary school, has expanded into a wide variety of visiting arrangements and writing projects between seniors and students in grades three to five. All of the elder writers are active, independent seniors; none live in care facilities. The goals of the project were to provide elders and students with additional opportunities to learn more about writing and publishing their work. Organizers also wanted to counter popular stereotypes and foster understanding across generations through the intergenerational writing.

This intergenerational group has become increasingly skilled and excited about writing because they write for real purposes and real audiences. Teachers in the project ensure that the writing is closely linked with the curriculum, and therefore, at times participants may meet twice a month and then not meet the next month. Although meeting times are ongoing throughout the school year, they are closely linked with authentic purposes and not the calendar. The writer's workshop format allows the children and seniors to explore various forms of writing: letters, poetry, books, biographical sketches, CD-Rom multimedia books, and published stories on the school's Web site. Their books and multimedia projects have been presented and displayed during

an authors' reading at a local bookstore and are also published for their families on their WebFolios (web-based digital portfolios). During the initial meetings, teachers needed to introduce the seniors to the philosophy and practice of process writing, so that they were not overly concerned with the mechanics of writing rather than content. Celebrations were an integral part of the ongoing project, including authors' parties, articles and pictures in local newspapers, and an interview on a local radio talk show featuring two children, two seniors and the teachers. Specific mini-lessons were taught in separate writing groups. Kazemek and Logas (2000) found that the project's goals were certainly met but more importantly, as with other intergenerational projects, the real magic came from the relationships that the children and senior adults developed with each other.

Knitting Generations Together (<http://www.intergeugo.org>). This initiative has been implemented in more than 100 Ontario communities and now also in B.C. This program involves seniors passing on the skills of yarn crafts to young people. KGT supplies background guidelines for the senior adults and a starter kit of materials and instructions to interested groups. Most groups make items that can be donated to others, such as bonnets for babies in hospitals, afghans for a women's crisis shelter or slippers for children at inner-city schools. One such program was located in Creston, BC, where troubled teenaged mothers were paired with homebound seniors. By the end of the program the teens (who were at first skeptical and reluctant) were hugging and thanking the grandmothers for sharing their skills and actually bringing samples of their own work to show their grandmothers.

Bunka Denshou (Passing Down Tradition) in Miyoshi Village, Japan (Kaplan, Jusano, Tsiuyi & Hisamichi, 1998). Bunka Denshou is only one of many

intergenerational programs in Japan today. It is similar to *Knitting Generations Together* in that its intent is to pass down the skills involved in traditional handicrafts. Local seniors, who are recruited on the basis of their craft skills, teach these skills to the village's junior high school students. Each week the board of education organizes Bunka Denshou Club meetings where local seniors show and assist students in making things with bamboo, carve wood, rice straw sandals, and other handicrafts that might otherwise be lost in our modern world. Both youth and senior participants have recorded positive experiences (Kaplan, 1998). The students expressed more positive attitudes towards the elderly, and the elders reported a sense of satisfaction in passing down traditional crafts to the young people of their community.

Konodai Elementary School Intergenerational Otedama Project in Ichikawa City, Japan (Kaplan, Jusano, Tsiuyi & Hisamichi, 1998). In this recreation-oriented program, seniors teach Otedama, a beanbag juggling game, to elementary students. Six senior women volunteer at the school twice a week and teach all students in each grade on a rotating basis during twenty-minute recreation periods. Researchers evaluated the program through observations, interviews with teachers, administration, selected students and all volunteers, and review of written materials. Most teachers noted that students' interactions with the seniors became more informal over the school year. Seniors commented on the courtesy and caring demonstrated by the children, and said that they (the seniors) had not expected to observe these attributes. According to Kaplan (1998), one senior commented, "It's my pleasure to take part in this kind of activity. It's a meaning in my life. Unless I participate, I will get senile. So, it makes me stay healthy." Another said, "It is a great pleasure, which gives me a sense of pride in contributing a

little to society.” For the children, the most repeated comment was, “It is fun.” Most students also reported that they were more willing to initiate other types of contacts with elderly people, including relatives. Comments included “It’s amazing to see those grandmothers doing otedama. They are so good at it,” and “The most impressive thing was that there are many grandmothers who care about us and who are willing to play with us” (pp. 79-80).

DOVES (The Dedicated Older Volunteers in Educational Services Program) (<http://www.penpages.psu.edu>). DOVES is an intergenerational educational program in Los Angeles, California. Senior adults are matched with academically at-risk children in grades K-3, with the intention that their assistance will help improve the children’s self-esteem, reading comprehension and other academic skills before grade four. DOVES are placed in low-achieving schools whenever possible, so that the greatest needs are being addressed by this additional one-on-one support and tutoring of at-risk children. However, before working with students, DOVES must participate in a training course at local schools several times each year. Each week for six weeks they meet for two and one-half hours for classes to learn about early reading intervention and the impact they can have on a child’s confidence and love of books. They also learn to develop educational games and ways to encourage problem-solving skills. Yearly evaluations are done to ensure program success. One of the reasons for the program’s success is the careful matching of DOVES with children and teachers, which builds the rapport and communication behind the success of this type of intergenerational program.

Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Madison, Wisconsin (Newman, 1997). RSVP sponsors a variety of care programs. One follows a “Mature Friends

Model” where older adults act as support persons for non-related young people, a role which may or may not involve any physical contact. *Talk to Me* is a telephone contact program in which students who are home alone can phone senior volunteers. They receive reassurance and often develop friendships through these phone calls and through monthly social events. The *Key Calls* program provides the flip side of the *Talk to Me* program. Sometime during the school day, students phone home-alone seniors to check on the seniors and to discuss their days. If a senior cannot be contacted, the student notifies the local police.

Elderhostel Intergenerational Programs (<http://www.elderhostel.org>).

Elderhostel programs are thriving throughout both Canada and the United States. Elderhostel’s main goal for over 26 years has been to provide “a love of learning with exceptional people in engaging environments.” The Intergenerational programs pair elderhostelers with their natural grandchildren or other young people, usually on a one-to-one basis, to explore a wide variety of subjects together. There is a cost for both the elder and the child, and the adult is expected to be the primary supervisor of the younger participant in his/her charge. Most of these programs cater to children no younger than seven. Although most intergenerational programs are a week long during the summer months and Christmas and spring breaks, many sites also welcome commuters who live in the local area. Elderhostel sites are often affiliated with universities, colleges and national parks. Some of the trips and programs include a Grand Canyon River Trip, Exploring the Environment and Wilderness Survival in the San Bernardino National Forest, Sharing an Interest in Art at the Art Institute of Chicago, Sailing, Horses, Exploring and Fishing in Alabama (sponsored by the University of South Alabama),

Finding Common Ground Across Generations: Sharing Jewish Experiences in California (sponsored by the Brandeis-Bardin Institute), and The World of Theatre, From Backstage to Onstage at the Southern Oregon University in Ashland, Oregon. As can be seen from this brief listing of available programs, topics of exploration are directed to almost every learning appetite.

Senior Citizen School Volunteer Program (SCSVP) (<http://www.gt.pitt.edu>).

Generations Together at the University of Pittsburgh created SCSVP in 1978. It is now established in over 100 Pennsylvania schools and has received both state and national awards for its quality work in establishing intergenerational school volunteer programs. SCSVP's goals are similar to those in other such programs: to expand opportunities to generations to connect, to provide opportunities for older persons to become directly involved in promoting aging awareness among students, to utilize the experiences and skills of older persons, to involve senior citizens in the education of students and to enhance the growth and learning of these students, and to strengthen the link between the school and the community. Volunteers are over 55 and work one half-day per week with kindergarten through grade twelve students, including special needs students. Activities may involve tutors, listeners, career models, oral historians, resource people, artists, and crafts people. Team members (senior volunteers, teachers and administrators) are given an orientation and four two-hour workshops. Follow-up meetings are usually held separately for teachers and volunteers. Administrators, teachers, students and parents recognize these volunteers on a continual basis and at special events.

A crucial component of this program is its regular and ongoing evaluation.

Organizers have found that the three most common roles of volunteers in the classrooms

are tutoring, assisting with special projects, and providing enrichment. Ninety-nine per cent of teachers reported that students reacted positively to volunteers, and that they had a positive impact on students' growth in academic areas. Teachers also stated that volunteers had a positive impact on students' self-esteem, understanding of aging, attitudes towards older persons, and behaviour towards others. Seventy-three percent of volunteers reported positive changes in their attitudes toward public schools. They also reported a positive impact on their well being and satisfaction with life. Fifty-two percent of teachers reported improved attitudes towards their own aging.

Family Friends Program (Kuehne, 1989). Family Friends was first developed in 1984 by the National Council on Aging to assist and support families who have children with chronic illnesses living at home. Now, almost twenty years later, it has grown into a national American program that oversees 43 projects in almost every state, and which has a mix of rural, urban and suburban sites. Family Friends also has established a National Resource Center that provides training and technical assistance to all the projects.

However, the premise and basic goal of the initial program has remained the same, "to nurture children with disabilities or chronic illness." Some project models also cover children in foster care or in homeless shelters, the abused and/or neglected, and those dealing with teen pregnancy.

The strength of these programs has been that senior Family Friends become part of the family as friends, grandparents and community resource people. These volunteers are recruited from the community at large and receive 60 hours of training over their year of service. With this type of program, matching volunteers appropriately with children and families becomes a crucial factor in the program's success. Because these matches

are so well done, the volunteers often stay together with families for many years, even when the children have grown and the family has moved on. The bonds tend to remain strong. In one such program in Omaha, Nebraska, the volunteer (age 55 or older) visited the family home at least once weekly. During these visits, the volunteer would play games and do educational activities with the child and siblings, in addition to engaging in supportive conversations with the parents. According to a study done on this particular project, Kuehne (1989) found that 100 percent of the responding parents said it had a positive effect. They found the respite from childcare and the caring and support for themselves when needed to be most beneficial and appreciated. One parent stated, "It's so nice to see someone want to spend time with my son." The Family Friends program acted as a stress reliever to the family and in some cases brought families closer together. Parents noted that their child's social skills with other persons and their independence had also improved.

Children and Youth Serving and Caring For Senior Adults

Generations CanConnect program is a Canadian federal government initiative to create a national digital archive of seniors' memories and contributions to their communities. Schools in every province are opting into the program and as a result, the stories and memories are put on-line for everyone to read (<http://www.generations-canconnect.ic.gc.ca/english/index.asp>). This program not only provides an opportunity for school-aged children to interview seniors about their memories and/or past experiences; it also has helped to build relationships that may not otherwise have been possible.

One project was implemented at an elementary school in Lethbridge, Alberta for approximately four months in 2002. It was initiated by a resource room teacher, the school librarian and the technology support person who saw the need for certain students to be challenged with a meaningful project. Twenty strong academic students from grades 1 – 6, who also had very good writing and computer skills, were selected by their teachers to participate in the program. These students and their families were responsible for finding a senior citizen willing to be interviewed and having the seniors' responses published on a national Generations CanConnect website. Some of the students were siblings and thus were able to involve their grandparents as the interview respondent. Others enlisted the support of individuals from a local Senior Citizens Center, their church community or an older parent who worked in the school. These twenty students were then coached on social etiquette and interviewing techniques before they were to meet the senior interview volunteers. Students decorated the staff room in their school for the first session. While half of the students interviewed their senior friends, the other half gave their partners a tour of the school and then switched. The interview questions to be asked were stipulated by Generations CanConnect. Students asked their senior partners either about a favorite memory or a treasured object. After this session, students wrote and edited their reports under the direction of the two adults who initiated the project. At the second session, the students either read or showed their matched senior partner a copy of the report they had written about the senior's memories. At this time, the senior volunteers were able to clarify or expand on some of the written memories. Both generations had an opportunity to continue building connections with each other. At this time, the seniors were also shown and encouraged to be involved in searching for and

reading the reports on the Generations CanConnect website. Photographs were taken at each of these sessions and then published with the reports on the national website. At the third session, senior volunteers found and viewed the completed project on the national website.

All of the planners and participants reported positive outcomes from this project. Both groups had fun, bonds were formed with the seniors, and the parents were very impressed. The two project initiators noticed that the experience involved kids with the community who would not normally have the opportunity to do such a project; it improved their writing and technology skills and gave them an awareness and use for improved social skills. Most importantly, each participant discovered a new friend. One student (with his parent's permission) also attended his senior friend's display and demonstration at a community event. As one planner stated, "Kids discovered that these elders were actually people." One senior said, "I enjoyed it. I just love that little guy. He's real earnest about everything. I think they've got a good student there. He's going to prove that to his mom and dad." When asked whether or not the project would be undertaken again, planners said that it definitely would if they saw the need in more children as they did for those students who were participants on this occasion.

Teaching Computers to Senior Citizens (Lundt and Vanderpan 2000). A middle school intergenerational project in Missoula, Montana, this program attempts to provide a vehicle for students to employ their technology strengths and competence in ways that benefit the community at large. Students first learn how to construct web sites for their personal and school use. They then seek out business and community agencies to serve, such as the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and The National Transformations Project.

Faculty and students have established a service link between the school and a local retirement home, where students help the residents become computer literate. Two local corporations have offered their support by donating free Internet hook-ups and computers and tables. Initially, twenty-four senior residents signed up for training sessions, and students worked at the retirement center on a rotation schedule. However, both students and seniors expressed an interest in spending more time with a particular partner in order to develop an ongoing relationship. Therefore, more permanent partnerships were established. According to Lundt and Vanderpan (2000), "The senior residents of Grizzly Peak Retirement Center are not only impressed by the new skills that they have acquired, but also express admiration for their instructors (p. 21). Seniors have learned not to be afraid of technology and have begun to use it in their everyday lives, for example by emailing faraway family members, playing solitaire, and searching for information on the Internet. Project coordinators claim that four major goals have been achieved: 1. The project brought generations together in a way that would not have otherwise have happened. 2. Students have an increased authentic sense of personal worth because of their worthwhile community contributions. 3. The students' learning environment has expanded out and into the community. 4. The school is experiencing wider community support because seniors recognize the value of supporting the community's educational systems. Since this project opened the door for more intergenerational interaction, the school band and choir programs have visited the seniors center, and senior residents have invited art students from the middle school to form a partnership much like the computer-teaching program.

Generations of Hope (<http://www.hope4children.org/index.htm>). This non-profit organization evolved from a vision and ten-year research study by two sociology professors at the University of Illinois. Brenda Krause Eheart and Marty Power wanted to assist families who had adopted deeply troubled, abused, neglected, or chronically ill young people, but who were not receiving the information or emotional support to undertake such a task. The mission was to create a diverse intergenerational neighborhood and to support the adoption of unwanted children. Adoptive families would get the information and emotional, intellectual and financial support they needed. The first program site, a five-block residential community in central Illinois called Hope Meadows, integrates generations to improve the quality of life for children, families and seniors. At the hub of this community is an Intergenerational Center that has become the social heart of Hope Meadows. It houses a children's library, a computer room, rooms for individual tutoring, a kitchen and a large multi-purpose space. Here, the seniors help children with homework, have formal tutoring sessions, read to and with children or youth, do crafts, or go outside for other activities. Over 90 intergenerational activities occur every month. One Hope Meadows senior commented, "I love to tutor. It is such a pleasure to see a small face shine with an awakening. What a challenge to find just what each individual child has missed in the search for knowledge."

A Senior-Centered Model of Intergenerational Programming. (Griff, Lambert, Fruit, & Dellman-Jenkins, 1996). Its design and rationale focused on the development, needs and interests of not only the children, but also the older adult participants. Specific emphasis was placed on eliciting the input of senior adults during the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of the program. As a result, interactions with the

young children were enthusiastic and positive because the senior adults had contributed to the planning and content of activities. The purpose of the project was to determine the types of activities that could be used successfully with three different types of older adults: frail but cognitively intact adults, community-living seniors who were highly independent, and those seniors who were in the early or middle stages of Alzheimer's disease. The project involved twenty seniors and ten four- and five-year old participants over a twelve-month period; it involved 120 intergenerational activities. One of the objectives of the study was to provide preschool-age children with opportunities to interact with older adults in a variety of roles and settings. The curriculum included planned contact in the school setting with familiar seniors, such as natural grandparents; regular contact with senior classroom volunteers; and interaction with less able seniors at a nursing home. The children were also exposed to a wide variety of non-stereotypic information about aging. Pretest and posttest analysis showed that the children who participated in the program were more willing to share, help, and cooperate with seniors than were those without the experience. Adult participants revealed a heightened sense of well being as a result of the children viewing them as interesting and fun to be with. They also exhibited more patience when around young children. In addition to these findings, program organizers found that older adults with Alzheimer's disease and children should be integrated only after careful planning and extensive training of all adult and child care staff.

Joint Visits between Tremont Nursing Care Center and Pine Grove Area Middle School (Bengston & Achenbaum, 1993). In Tremont, Pennsylvania, students from the school visit the elder residents bi-monthly. The students decorate the center for holidays,

serve refreshments, visit, read to the seniors and often write letters for them. Organizers and participants report positively about the impact on both groups, and how much the seniors look forward to these visits.

Seniors' Integrated Home-Assessment and Home-Maintenance Program of Ontario (<http://www.intergenugo.org>). This program teaches high-risk, unemployed youth how to be of service to seniors in their community. It has succeeded in helping seniors to make household improvements and at the same time, trained youth in the skills and sensitivity needed to assess seniors' homes, make repairs, and do cleaning and painting. Several seniors have mentioned how much they appreciate their more attractive surroundings created by the young workers, and that the experience has given them a more positive attitude towards youth in their neighborhood.

Santropol Roulant's Meals on Wheels in Montreal, Quebec (<http://www.santropolroulant.org>). This program was begun in 1995 by two men who had previous experience with the Meals on Wheels program, and who saw an increased need for this type of service because of budget cuts, hospital closures and an aging population. They also believed that the skills and attributes of young people were suited to this type of service. They were right. With the help of the Volunteer Bureau of Montreal, Café Santropol, and Youth Service Canada, they have delivered over 40,000 meals to seniors and others who are not able to live completely independently and need some forms of assistance. Currently, there are five students based in Santropol Roulant clubs and over 250 volunteers who serve as many as 140 meals a day. These young people enter the unfamiliar worlds of the elderly and sick while serving hot dinners from Monday to Saturday. Organizers and program leaders see the success of this program not

only for the seniors who receive a hot meal and the chance to interact with youth, but also for the young people themselves. Comments by youth include, “I’ve never done anything like that before,” and “That was really special.” One of the greatest commendations of this intergenerational service program is the fact that this endeavour has crossed not only generational lines, but also cultural and linguistic barriers. In a sense, the young people involved in this project have unwittingly become models and ambassadors for inclusion rather than segregation based on age, language or culture.

*Children or Youth and Senior Adults Combining Talents and Efforts to Serve the
Community*

Intergenerational community service projects are designed to create opportunities for youth and older adults to work together to study community issues, improve local conditions, and help people in need (Kaplan, 1997). Not only do the participants often accomplish their goals, which improve the quality of life for both generations, but they also improve and expand each other’s understanding of social problems and their individual roles as responsible citizens.

Such projects are also closely tied to the practice of *Service Learning*, which is either voluntary or mandatory in some school districts today. Service Learning is an instructional strategy that blends community service with academic learning. An added emphasis is placed on active student participation, reflection, and connecting the academic curriculum to real-world scenarios and contexts. Learning is further enhanced when seniors work alongside youth for their mutual benefit and for the betterment of the community as a whole.

Neighborhoods 2000: An Intergenerational Community Service Program

(Kaplan, 1997). Neighborhoods 2000 began as a demonstration project at the Center for Human Environments at the City University of New York Graduate School in 1987.

Through experimentation and ongoing evaluation of this project, other very successful initiatives have since been formed. What first evolved from Neighborhoods 2000 was the Long Island City 2000 Project, where residents of all ages worked together to create their future neighborhood. The project had several phases. First, several intergenerational special events were planned, in which residents discussed their development ideas.

Second, local school district staff and senior citizen organizations established a school-based curriculum. Senior adult volunteers were recruited who worked in school settings on communication and neighborhood exploration activities. The third phase consisted of activities presented over a six-month period. Some of the activities included land-use mapping, photographic neighborhood surveys, reminiscence interviews where seniors recounted their community memories and experiences, autobiographical walking tours, model building of the “ideal neighborhood,” and presentations to community planners and human service professionals (Kaplan, 1998). From 1987 to 1994, seven neighborhoods followed this program. Some projects involved up to 48 seniors and classes from grades four through six.

The findings of each project were reported primarily by the participants and by observations of staff and college student interns. Some of the major benefits of Neighborhoods 2000 included the eradication of age-related stereotypes, the emergence of a sense of cooperation and camaraderie, a sense of growing citizenship, responsibility and community activism, the evolution of community improvement themes, and a

general sense of cultural continuity. One senior involved in this project commented, “Yes, the years are any that exist between us, but the basics – the foundations of love, respect, sacrifices and caring for one another – must always be carried on, without change.” A student wrote, “If I were old and a senior citizen, I would be living in a nice house and still be working as a volunteer at some good project. I would exercise every day by walking or jogging around the block.... I hope to also maybe be one of the senior citizens of Downtown 2000. I think I would do a lot of things when I am a senior citizen” (Kaplan, 1998). Program designers concluded that one of the main values of these projects was planting the seeds of community activism in young people.

4-H Horticulture Intergenerational Learning as Therapy

(<http://www.fourhcouncil.edu/>). This program is designed to use horticulture service learning to connect young and older people. As a result, the elderly have increased their physical activity and mental stimulation and renewed their decision-making capabilities. Youth have been introduced to horticultural concepts and have cultivated relationships with the elderly, and at the same time have co-created outdoor gardens.

Illinois Intergenerational Initiative (<http://www.siu.edu>). This statewide effort to stimulate and publicize intergenerational linkages began at a founding retreat in 1986. Its mandate is to encourage and support links of even the smallest size, from a teacher, older person, and student to larger coalitions that span the community and the entire state. Its main strategies are these: 1. Communicate the importance of intergenerational contact. 2. Stimulate the creation of intergenerational programs and coalitions. 3. Establish support and endorsement of agencies and organizations. 4. Promote continuity by supporting intergenerational programs with recognition, technical support, encouragement, and

media attention. The Intergenerational Initiative has recently joined forces with the Illinois Association of School boards to develop and support service learning to all levels of education. The many programs within this initiative have seniors flocking to schools and young people teaching them about computers, the Internet, and e-mail. The older people have begun to praise their young teachers. One senior stated, "They have such patience. In the beginning I had difficulty with the mouse because of my arthritis, but they helped me try over and over. Now I can do it." Teachers observe students being more confident and more engaged with their own learning. Another component of this initiative involves retirees helping students find careers through a Senior Exchange Program. This program invites residents age 55 and over who live within the school district to share their expertise with students and staff. As an incentive, the district reimburses the seniors through tax relief. For example, a retired organic chemist in the Palatine School District of Illinois describes the impact of chemistry on our daily lives. Joseph Arrigois takes a show of 26 sciences from astronomy to zoology to many schools, hoping to entice young people to consider a career in science.

Self-Esteem Through Service (SETS) (<http://www.interages.com/Sets.html>).

Kensington, Maryland is the location of this service-learning program where students visit nearby older-adult apartment complexes on a regular basis during their school term. This program also has a strong classroom component. School personnel choose at-risk middle school students to participate in performing joint activities with seniors, learning about the needs and lives of their community's older adults and reflecting on the meaning of their experiences. The goals are threefold: to provide opportunities for these students and isolated senior adults to interact and build relationships; to assist youth and seniors in

developing a positive self-image and increasing their self-esteem; and to encourage senior adults to be active listeners for youth who want to share their experiences (Newman, 1997). The school undertakes student orientation and training in the classroom. The activities are chosen by school personnel, senior complex staff, and eventually by the participants themselves. Some activities involve music, dance, sharing mementos, playing favorite games, gardening together and engaging in other community service projects. One unique aspect of this program is the joint reflection sessions, where facilitators lead both groups in their discussions about the program. A highlight for both groups is the final luncheon at a local restaurant where participants and honored and project successes are celebrated. The *SETS* program includes formal and informal evaluations throughout the year. Questionnaires and anecdotal information are the main evaluation tools. A strong indicator of success beyond the participants' positive feedback is the fact that it has maintained continued funding by the Maryland Governor's Commission on Service.

Finally, in many communities across the United States and Canada, seniors and youth volunteer together at local food banks or health fairs. Although not as structured (nor as formally researched and reported) as some other programs, the volunteers see the value of helping youth to develop social responsibility and a desire to serve their community.

It is evident from the literature that intergenerational programs are successful in meeting the needs of not only individuals of differing ages, but also some family and community needs as well. Therefore, because of this evidence and a strong personal

interest and desire to bring generations together for mutual benefit, I chose to design and implement an intergenerational project in my elementary classroom.

Chapter 3: Overview of Project

A Patchwork of Friends was an intergenerational project that promoted connections between grandparents or senior volunteers and grade two children at an elementary school in southern Alberta, Canada. The project examined the attitudes and relationships between these two differing age groups both before the project and after its completion.

The actual intergenerational project was conducted over a six-week period in the spring of 2000. Grandparents came to the school every Tuesday afternoon for one and one-half hours and engaged in literacy, art, music, social and computer activities with the students. Although the joint child and grandparent time was limited to one and one-half hours weekly, the preparatory, ongoing and follow-up activities for each session overlapped into significant additional class time. Activities and studies were generally focused on meeting Language Arts Learning Outcomes, but they also related to the Social Studies, Music, Art and Health Programs of Study. In Social Studies we addressed outcomes related to the study of seniors and how their needs and wants are met in communities. In Health, we discussed and expanded our understanding and ability to relate to self and others, by introducing and using communication and social skills. Music and art activities supported many learning outcomes in these respective curriculums.

During the month prior to the initial meeting, the class and parents were introduced to the idea of an intergenerational project. A letter was sent home to parents explaining the rationale, purpose, organization and time lines for the project (see Appendix D). It included a permission form for parents to sign so that their child could

participate. The entire school community was also informed about the project, and room changes for specific sessions were arranged.

The first task was to determine how many natural grandparents were willing and available to come to the school during the days and weeks that the project was to be undertaken. Out of a class of 24 children, 10 had grandparents able to participate. Where did the other “grandparents” come from? One woman was a regular volunteer at this elementary school; others were adults I knew personally who wanted to volunteer their time, care and skills in working with children. Several took time from their regular jobs to come to the school during the assigned times. Some of their previous or current occupations included homemaker, farmer, insurance adjustor, university professor, roofer and construction worker, medical record technician, teacher, day-home provider and secretary. I saw a definite need for students to have the opportunity to work alongside a balance of men and women who were willing to become grandparents to this group of children. At this time, program explanations and consent forms were also distributed to and collected from the grandparents (see Appendix E). If I were to implement this program at another time, I would also survey grandparents to identify their areas of interest so as to match students more easily with grandparents based on similar interests (see Appendix F for a Sample Adult Volunteer Resource Inventory).

In addition, permission forms were distributed to both students’ parents (see Appendix G) and to grandparents (see Appendix H) to indicate whether or not photographs and/or project artifacts could be used for professional publishing purposes.

Several weeks before the project was to begin officially, we read a variety of books about the history, meaning and tradition of making quilts. Some of the most

significant books which related to this topic included *The Keeping Quilt*, by Patricia Polacco, *Selina and the Bear Paw Quilt*, by Barbara Smucker, *The Josephina Story Quilt*, by Eleanor Coerr, and *The Patchwork Quilt*, by Victoria Flourney. Other quilt books were either read as a class or made available for students to take home and share with their parents, as part of our Home Reading Program (see Appendix I for bibliography of children's literature quilt stories). The children became aware that the variety of colors, fabrics, and textiles used in making a quilt added to its richness and beauty. We also discussed the notion that certain components of a quilt may hold the memories of a person who is either making or using the quilt. The quilt could then become an artifact of a certain individual or group of people. As we discussed our upcoming project, the students, parents and I decided that a quilt would be a valuable vehicle and keepsake for recording our time together with our grandparents. With the assistance of parents, our class undertook the making of a paper quilt. Each student chose a color for his or her square and sewed that square to the quilt with yarn. (This activity also met some of the Art Learning Outcomes concerning using different textures in creating a three-dimensional product.) When completed, the quilt was laminated in readiness for the pictures and projects each child and grandparent might want to display on their block. This quilt was eventually displayed in the hallway in front of our classroom, where both the project participants and the entire school community were able to recognize and appreciate the project. Both children and grandparents took great pride in recognizing their contribution to *A Patchwork of Friends* (see Figure 1).

Many literacy activities flowed from reading and responding to these selections. One writing assignment was to continue the flow, writing from the prompt, “Grandparents are....” The responses exhibited many similarities and some varied perceptions that seemed to flow from personal experiences. Reading these selections allowed me to have a greater awareness of the children’s personal experiences and attitudes towards grandparents and seniors.

In addition to reading and writing about grandparents and seniors, six students were interviewed individually. They were asked about their views and attitudes concerning this age group. The anticipation about actually meeting their grandparents rose steadily until the week before, when the class was constantly asking if it was the day for the project to begin. Parents, children and I joined in the excitement over eventually meeting and working with the grandparents.

Initial Meeting with Grandparents

With the assistance of parents one month before the project began, I compiled a list of names and phone numbers of adults who would be willing to act as either natural or adopted grandparents for my grade two class of 24 children. There were an equal number of boys and girls. As I created the list of grandparents, I wanted a balance of men and women as volunteers. In the past, it has been rare to have men involved in a Division I classroom, and yet I believe that their involvement would help to meet the emotional needs of both the boys and girls of this age. Boys need role models and mentors in their developing years, and girls need to see that men are willing to enjoy and participate in activities with children.

One week before the project began, I invited the grandparent volunteers into the school to discuss the goals of “A Patchwork of Friends.” I met with the grandparents in the school staff room to explain the project’s rationale, organization, format and timelines, and to answer any questions or concerns. Because some of the adults had not previously worked with children in a school setting, it was important to describe and explain the differing natures and abilities of grade two children and my expectations in relation to their interactions with the children. This meeting also helped the grandparents to feel more at ease in a school setting, to get to know me in a school setting, and to meet each other. It was exciting to sense the grandparents’ shared positive energy and excitement about the project. I was also able to address some of the grandparents’ concerns about their weekly visits. The specific purposes of this meeting were these:

- To familiarize the grandparents with the setting and administration of this elementary school
- To enable the grandparents to acquaint themselves with each other and with the teacher and student teacher
- To outline and discuss the purpose and organization of the project
- To inform grandparents of the expected role they would play in the project
- To review the contents and purpose of the joint Grandparent/Child Folder, which would be used at each session
- To discuss the most effective ways to read with a child, reminding them of the strategies included in the Grandparent/Child Folder
- To explain and discuss the differing natures and social and academic abilities of seven- or eight-year-old children

- To discuss the contextual situation of this particular classroom and to answer questions concerning this aspect of working within this classroom
- To inform grandparents of the need for confidentiality concerning the abilities and family situations of students and to accept their agreement to honour this need
- To ascertain grandparents' concerns about this project and to adjust project plans and organization where necessary
- To recruit six volunteers and to gain written permission to use the results of pre- and post-project interview questions for this qualitative study

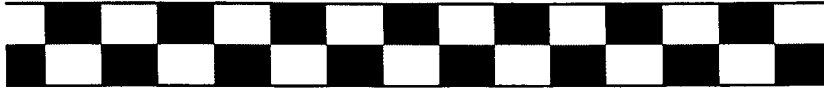
I was surprised to see the grandparents' level of anticipation, excitement and some apprehension about their role in the project and their growing willingness to be involved. I also observed their appreciation of the opportunity to meet others who would be involved in the same capacity. Although not all grandparents were able to attend this meeting, there were enough to give a sense of their questions and concerns. After the meeting I contacted those grandparents who were not able to attend and reviewed the topics covered in the meeting, so that they were prepared to be fully informed participants.

Preparatory Lessons and Activities

During the final week before the project began, our class undertook many preparatory lessons and activities, including the following:

- Made and colored individual name buttons for their grandparents and themselves, which were then taken to the Southern Alberta Rehabilitation Society to be assembled (see Appendix J for directions).

- Compiled material to be included in their Patchwork of Friends Grandparent Project folders (see Appendix K for samples).
- Role-played and practiced the social skills of proper introductions and general social etiquette
- Reviewed the organization, format and behavior expectations for each weekly visit
- Continued reading and responding to a variety of children's literature concerning grandparents and seniors (see Appendices B and I for bibliographies of intergenerational children's literature and books about quilts)
- Signed out these same intergenerational books to be read with parents as part of our Home Reading Program
- Wrote a letter of introduction to their grandparent, letting them know a little bit about themselves (see sample letters in Figures 2, 3, 4). At this age, the students were quite open about sharing their lives in their writing.
- Practiced many songs to share with grandparents, that in many cases related to intergenerational activities; many were part of our regular classroom musical repertoire (see Appendix L for a list of songs used).

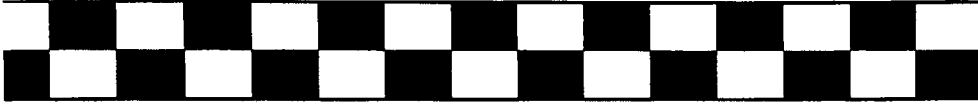


'A Patchwork of Friends'

Hi! My name is _____. Here are some things I'd like you to know about me.

I am a very good friend. I am very good to get us all to.
I'm very glad you are here. I am 8 years old, I was born in the year of 1992. I love horses. When I was a little bit younger I rode a horse and fell off! and broke my arm! That's of people wrote on it

Figure 2. Student Letter of Introduction, Sample A



'A Patchwork of Friends'

Hi! My name is _ . Here are some things I'd like you to know about me.

My favort food is spaghetti,
 I like to de games and sports,
 I used to have Fish dut they did.
 Now I have a cat hre name is tease
 My sistrsc name is Meline I think she
 is a Pest, dut I like hre anyway

Figure 3. Student Letter of Introduction, Sample B

Hi! My name is _ . Here are some things I'd like you to know about me.

My favorite food is Pizza. I have two brothers and I am the third and youngest brother, no sister. My favorite sports is soccer and football. I eat carrots every day for snacks. I do piano I don't like piano, my mom signed me up I didn't want to go piano t hate it. My birthday is on Oct. 25th.

Figure 4. Student Letter of Introduction, Sample C

During this time, I also prepared space, materials and supplies for the coming week. I made sure we had access to the school's digital camera, prepared bulletin board letters and space, arranged a corner in the classroom for our project artifacts, requested that enough "adult-sized" chairs be placed in the classroom every Tuesday afternoon, and checked again that administration and school staff would know who all the extra people were who would be in the school for the following eight Tuesdays. Such preparations continued throughout the project and varied only slightly, depending on the type of activities in which we would be engaged.

Format of Weekly Sessions

Although each week that these two generations met carried its own flavour or theme, a general format evolved. We were fortunate to have the support of administration and the staff, and because of their openness to room re-allocation and rescheduling, our activities were not limited to our own classroom. Arrangements were made and we were able to use the art room, computer room, staff room, hallways and outside courtyard, depending on the activity. Most sessions followed this general format:

1. Children and teacher greeted grandparents individually and gave them their name button and folders.
2. Groups joined together at the Reading Corner to sing a welcome song, review the day's anticipated agenda, expectations and any special announcements.
3. I explained specific directions for the day's activities.

4. Children and grandparents chose several books from the collection of related literature and then went to various quiet places in the school (library, hallways, staff room, etc.) to read to each other.
5. Participants engaged in a joint grandparent and child activity, depending on the week's schedule. Some choices included playing checkers, chess, or Connect 4, writing and sharing a journal letter, doing a joint craft, sharing collections, building blocks, using individual chalkboards, or playing a memory game.
6. The groups returned to the Reading Corner to share further songs and highlights of the time together.
7. Together we outlined a tentative agenda for the next gathering.
8. We thanked grandparents and said goodbye.
9. The class processed, discussed and reflected on the day's events.
10. We began the cycle of preparation, follow-through and post-activities anew, for the coming week.

Each week also had a particular theme or themes. These included meeting the requirements of specific learner outcomes relating to various curriculums within the Alberta Department of Learning Elementary Program of Studies (see Appendix M for a list of intended learner outcomes). Following are outlines for the six weekly sessions in the Patchwork of Friends Intergenerational Project.

Session #1

- Child hands out name button and folder to grandparents.
- All join at the reading corner and sing the "Welcome Song" to grandparents, using sign language.

- Each child reads a letter of introduction to his or her grandparent.
- Together partners choose a book, find a quiet shared space and read to each other.
- Partners discuss common likes and dislikes.
- Partners create a joint collage of “Favorite Things.”
- All join as a large group and sing the “School Song” and “My Favorite Things.”
- Closure includes thank you and farewell to grandparents.
- Students discuss and process the day’s activities and do a general clean up before and after recess.

Session #2

- Child hands out name button and folder to grandparents.
- All join at the reading corner and sing the “Welcome Song” and the other songs shared last week with grandparents.
- I read “Wilfred Gordon MacDonald Partridge,” by Mem Fox, to the large group.
- We discuss what a memory is and what makes one.
- Child gives grandparent a previously made bookmark, and partners choose books and find a quiet space to read with each other.
- Child interviews grandparent about what his or her memories are (see Appendix N for sample interview questions).
- Both partners paint a favorite rock, which the child has brought to class prior to this session.
- All join as a large group and sing the “School Song,” “My Favorite Things” and “One Dark Night.”
- Closure includes thank you and farewell to grandparents.

- Students discuss and process the day's activities and do a general clean up before and after recess.

Note: This session met with an unexpected timing challenge because of school photos, which were taken during this time block.

Session #3

- Child hands out name button and folder to grandparents.
- All join at the reading corner and sing the "Welcome Song" and the other songs shared last week with grandparents.
- Children read letters they have written in their Home and School Journals to their grandparents.
- During this session, grandparents made time to write back to their grandchildren in their Home and School Journal.
- Children and grandparents were divided into six groups that rotated to six centers in various parts of the school. These centers included shared reading, rock painting completion, pounding nails in cardboard tubes to make rain sticks, playing the Memory Box game, and HyperStudio, where each child was to show the grandparent a project he or she was doing on the computer. (See Appendix O for a sample list of center activities, information and directions.)
- All join as a large group and sing previously mentioned songs, adding "I Like Bugs" and "You Are My Sunshine."
- Closure includes thank you and farewell to grandparents.
- Students discuss and process the day's activities and do a general clean up before and after recess.

Session #4

- Child hands out name button and folder to grandparents.
- All join at the reading corner and sing the “Welcome Song” and the other songs shared last week with grandparents.
- Partners go to the Art Room where materials have been previously arranged to papier-mâché their cardboard tube rain sticks.
- Partners complete their rotation through last week’s centers.
- All join as a large group and sing familiar songs.
- Closure includes thank you and farewell to grandparents.
- Students discuss and process the day’s activities and do a general clean up before and after recess.

Session #5

- Child hands out name button and folder to grandparents.
- All join at the reading corner and sing familiar songs.
- Partners choose books and find a quiet space to read with each other.
- All go to the Art Room where children and grandparents have previously set up displays of their collections and hobbies.
- Children interview grandparents about their collections and hobbies.
- Both groups tell others about their displays.
- When finished, they make a paper doll “Friendship Star.”
- Child gives his or her grandparent an invitation to the School Volunteer Pancake Breakfast.
- All join as a large group and sing familiar songs.

- Closure includes thank you and farewell to grandparents.
- Students discuss and process the day's activities and do a general clean up before and after recess.

One grandfather brought in two pre-fabricated birdhouses, which he then helped his boys to assemble. The collections and hobbies that were displayed included a wide range. Grandparents displayed tole painting, Ukrainian eggs, wax-casting cowboys, a teddy bear collection, Bunka (Japanese embroidery), cross-stitch, a cottage miniatures collection, and birdhouses. Children displayed frogs, ornaments, rocks, animal pictures, Beanie Babies, favorite chapter books, Star Wars, Lego, homemade crafts, and glass ornaments.

Session #6 Final Gathering and Celebration

- Child hands out name button and folder to grandparents.
- All join at the reading corner and discuss the day's agenda.
- Partners choose books and find a quiet space to share their books.
- The large group goes to the Art Room for an ice-cream party and visit with each other.
- Each child gives his or her grandparent a certificate and the promise of a *Patchwork of Friends Newspaper* (see Appendix P for a sample newspaper).
- One grandparent and child prepare and sing "Russian Love Song."
- All join in a sing-along of favorite songs.
- In closing, children and teacher express gratitude and sing a final song for the grandparents, "Linger."

- Students discuss and process the day's activities and do a general cleanup before and after recess.

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to ascertain whether or not the views and attitudes of the children and grandparents involved in an intergenerational project in an elementary school setting would change as a result of participation in this project. In order to determine the type of methodology that would be most effective in uncovering any change in views and attitudes, a closer examination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies was necessary.

Quantitative research relies on observations that are converted into units so that they can then be compared to other units using statistical analysis (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). It supports the assumption that a particular reality can be known, studied and tabulated. Much can and has been learned from quantifiable research, which can then positively impact educational practice. This positivist approach to research has explanation, prediction, and proof as its hallmarks (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). However, in studying human interactions, quantitative research also attempts to clarify what I believe reality cannot do: to give an ordered and objective interpretation of those human interactions, which are inherently complex by the very nature of humanity. Connections between individuals, groups, organizations and ideas are often multi-level and complex associations that are constantly evolving. These evolving relationships are not easily studied and analyzed through mathematical probabilities and predictions.

Qualitative research, however, is designed to examine complex human interactions and looks at these lived experiences as a cyclical and evolutionary process rather than as exact linear events. It is based on a phenomenological position and is concerned with interpreting the lived experience (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). In fact, interpretive inquiry is defined as “the systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds” (Neuman, 1997, p.69).

The study *A Patchwork of Friends – An Intergenerational Project* reflected the actual experiences of the children and grandparents who were involved, and the results of their communications and interactions. It was not designed to meet specific measurable outcomes according to some predetermined criteria, but rather it focused on understanding the meaning that these intergenerational events had for each participating generation. The goal of this research was to reflect upon and determine any changes in participants’ attitudes and views. Another goal was to have this type of intergenerational project act as a template for future projects in the Southern Alberta community being studied.

Like most qualitative research, this study was open to the idea that there may be several different realities amongst the participants, and not just one version of the “truth” as is often proposed by quantitative research (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). In this study I wanted ample room for the individual voices of the children, the senior adults and other participants in the overall project. Therefore, for this type of study it seemed most effective to employ a qualitative rather than quantitative form of research methodology.

Individual interviews were conducted with six children (two boys and four girls) in this grade two classroom, both before and after the project completion (see Appendix Q for Student Interview Questions – Pre and Post-project). Children also did some personal writing pre-project, individually reflecting their thoughts, feelings and experiences with their own grandparents. After project completion, they wrote again about their views and experiences, with either their natural or adopted grandparent.

Rather than interview the entire group of grandparents, I chose to interview six grandparents randomly (three *grandmas* and three *grandpas*) both pre and post-project, to ensure a balanced representation of the adult group (see Appendix R for Grandparent Interview Questions – Pre and Post-project). After the project was completed, all grandparents also completed an evaluative form outlining their appraisal of the project.

During the actual project times, my student teacher and I made observations and recorded comments we heard from participants and administration. At other times we were also able to record comments made by other school staff and parents. A digital camera was used to record visually some of the activities and projects

Chapter 4: Findings

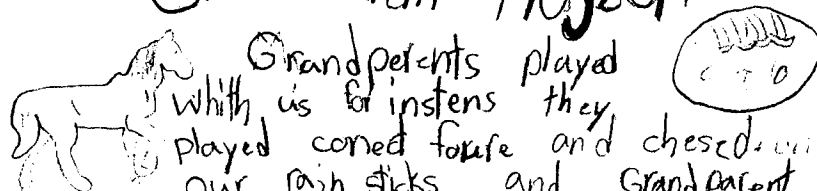
Pre-Project Writing Prompt

After reading many stories about intergenerational relationships and before the actual project began, the entire class wrote responses to the prompt, “Grandparents are...” Many of the children’s comments showed a direct correlation to their own grandparents and the experiences they had shared with them. For example, Dana wrote, “Grandparents are fun because they take me places.” Shane, whose grandparents live in Medicine Hat, gave this response: “Grandparents are nice. I get to go to my grandparents almost every weekend. We get to do things together like building things together and talking.” Kristy, who does not get to see her grandparents very often, wrote this: “Grandparents are fun. I wish that my grandparents lived closer because I don’t get to see mine very much.” Most were unable to see beyond their own experiences with their own grandparents.

Post-Project Writing Prompt

After the project was completed the entire class was asked to write a response to the project. They had the choice to respond to the prompt, “I’ve learned that grandparents...” or to write using any other words that they wanted to use (see samples of student writing, Figures 5, 6, 7, 8).

Grandparent Project





Grandparents played with us for instens they played corned forese and chesed. We did our rain sticks and Grandparent project. When we started our grandparent project I was Norris. Then when I started to know my grandparent I wasn't so Norris. another project is a interview my favorite thing to do was the rainsticks.

Figure 5. Post-Project Student Writing, Sample A.

Grandparent Project

I really liked doing side walk chalk because my Grandma Lane is a really good artites. Grandparents are nice because they help you get up when you are hurt. our help you read. I wish that we could coude do it again because it was fun i really liked when we had are ice. cremparty. I learned that you coude do any thing like paint one draw and lots of stuee.

Figure 6. Post-Project Student Writing, Sample B


 Grandparent Project 




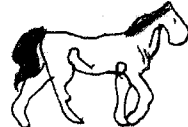
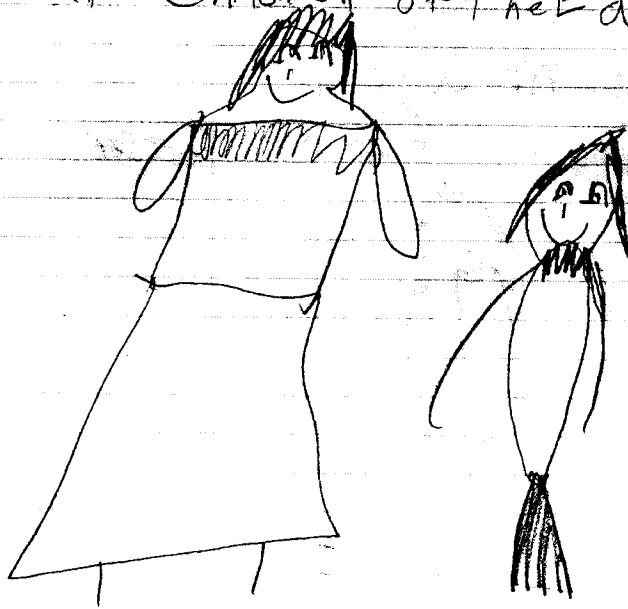
I liked the wax casting
 and the teddy bear alex
 chan. My favorite thing to
 do was the sidewalk
 chalk and some graph
 papers are nice. I
 liked making kamin sticks.
 It was fun having the
 ice cream party. I liked
 singing songs. and I liked
 painting the rocks of the pond.
 Toby  is   nice. 

Figure 7. Post-Project Student Writing, Sample C

Grandparent
project

I liked when we did the
sidewalk chalk and when
I miss grandparents
They were a ~~gate~~ gift. I love
~~their~~ friendship stars
My favorite book we read was
Dear Children of the Earth



I had that friends can take
 The place of a grandparent
 I like the songs
 I especially like the one
 it is the best song
 we sung to the
 grandparent. I will miss
 my grandma I hope
 I see her again
 she was the best

Figure 8. Post-Project Student Writing, Sample D

The children also wrote thank-you letters to their grandparents. The students' impressions of the project and its effect on their experiences seemed most evident in these personal letters, which were given to their grandparents (see examples in Figures 9, 10, 11).

Dear Grandpa Howard,
 Thank you for coming
 in. I liked playing cards
 with you. I liked being
 my bro-house. I taught
 grandpa Howard to
 play 31. He likes very
 quick. I like to read.
 I liked. I hope you have
 a great summer and I hope
 you have a great
 year.

Figure 9. Student Thank-You Letter, Sample A

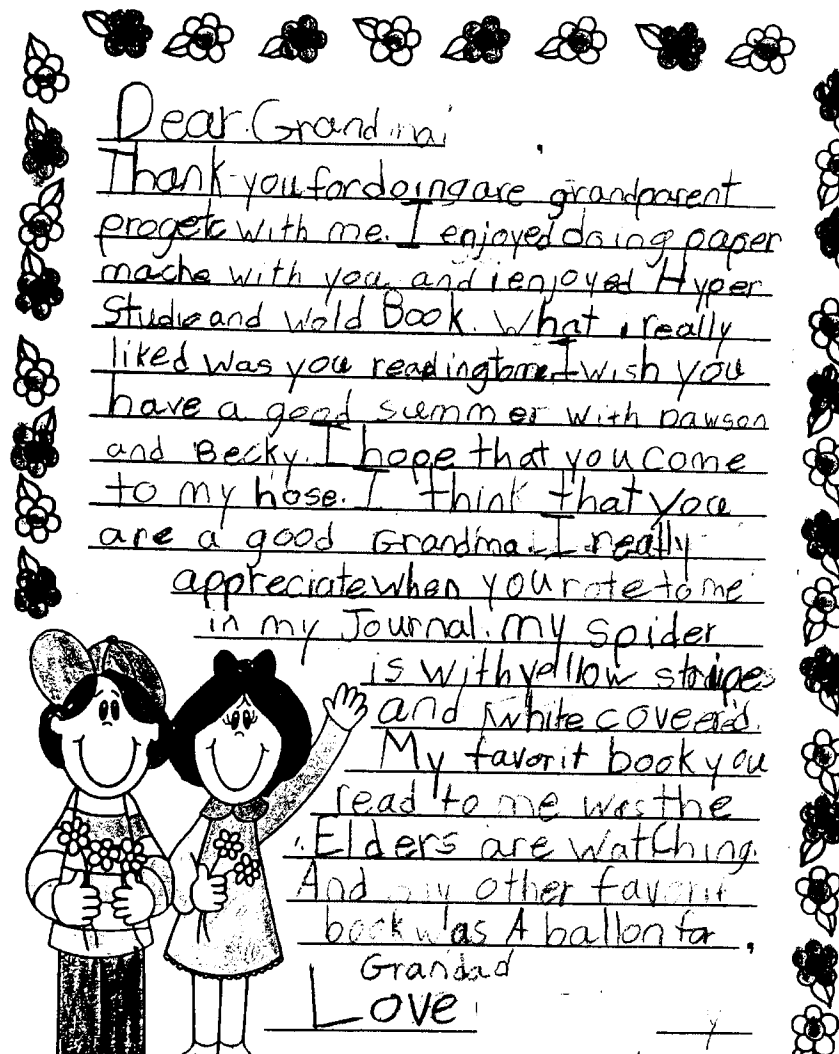


Figure 10. Student Thank-You Letter, Sample B

As is shown in some of these letters, the children developed a deep trust of their grandparent and often invited them into their personal lives (see Figure 11).

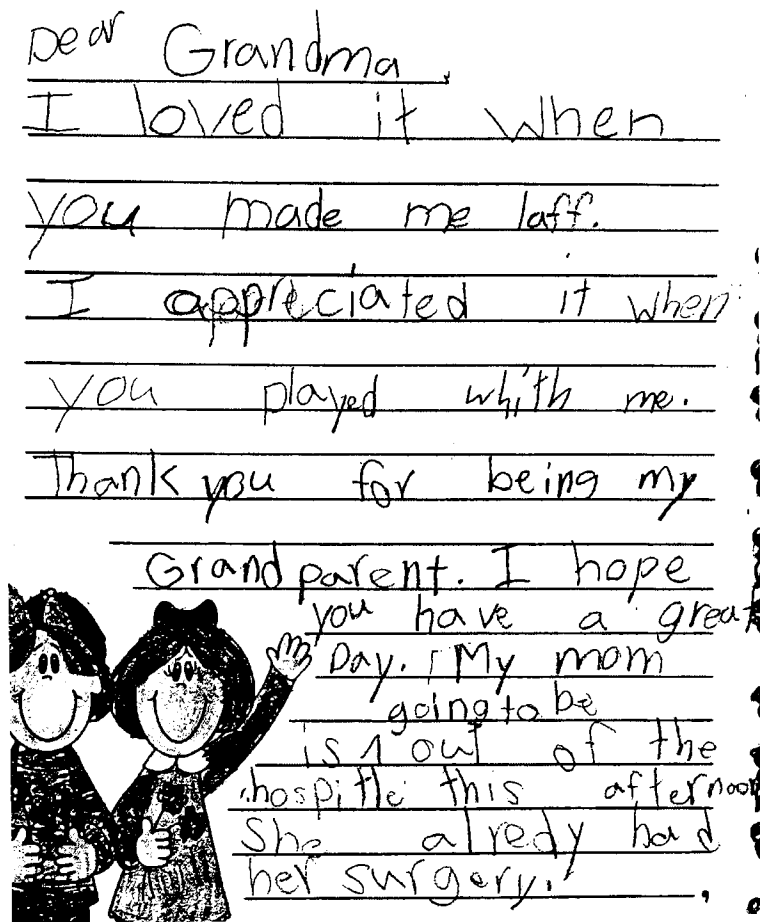


Figure 11. Student Thank-You Letter, Sample C

Pre-Project Interviews with Students

In the pre-project interview questions directed at the six students who were interviewed, I attempted to uncover the existing knowledge and perceptions they had about their own grandparents and other seniors (see Appendix Q for student and grandparent interview questions pre- and post-project).

By asking students about their interests and strengths, I hoped to discover other topics or ways in which I could make the project more meaningful to them. I also wanted to know their feelings about the project and any doubts, expectations or questions they

had about its unfolding. In doing so, I could allay some of their fears about working individually with these new volunteers.

The children gave similar responses about things they liked to do with their grandparents, but when asked about something they wanted to know about their grandparents their responses were more varied. Most wanted to know very concrete things about their grandparent's lives, such as "Why they 'got retired'" and "Why her grandpa had to take needles every morning and night." Those children who knew their natural grandparents were volunteering were very excited, whereas the children who were to have an "adopted" grandparent were more nervous about doing the "right things" during the project. When asked what they wanted to do, most of their responses were not related to the project but rather to their general desires. Some of these included "Ride my new roller blades," "Go to West Edmonton Mall," or "Learn how to ride my bike on my own."

When asked about what they hoped, several children responded that they hoped their grandparents would live for a long time: "I hope my grandparents live to one hundred," and "I hope my Nana will still be alive for her one hundredth birthday."

Post-Project Interviews with Students

In composing the questions for these post interviews, I had several objectives in mind. I wanted to know the students' impressions of the project, how it could be improved, what they had learned from their grandparent, and whether it made a difference that they were with their natural or adopted grandparent. Underlying these

questions was the effort to uncover changes in their perceptions and/or attitudes about grandparents and seniors.

All of the children responded that the project was fun, whether or not they were with their own grandparent. None of the children mentioned anything they did not enjoy doing with their grandparent. They all wanted to do this project again and would have liked it to continue longer. One child who had an adopted grandparent thought he should have the same grandparent again next year.

When asked what they liked doing with their grandparents, the children's responses varied from playing games to reading, using the computer, talking and many more of activities. It was surprising to see what the children said they had learned from their grandparent, for these were not the outcomes I had originally anticipated. Some of these responses follow: "I learned she likes children"; "I learned to do cross-stitch"; "I learned how to play chess and make a birdhouse"; "I learned not to get mad when I can't do things." All of the children's responses about the project were positive.

Pre-Project Interviews with Grandparents

When composing these questions, my intention was to discover certain information about these grandparent/senior volunteers. How did they hear about the project, why did they want to become involved, what did they hope to gain, and what were some of their perceptions about schools and education? The grandparents' thoughtful responses often spoke highly of the type of person who would be willing to commit time and energy to this type of intergenerational project.

All of the adults who volunteered had done so because of a personal invitation from a child, or parents from our classroom community, or from me. They chose to volunteer either because they had a grandchild in the project, because they had enjoyed working with children in the school or another setting, or because they were willing to volunteer for their community in a different way. Their hopes about being involved varied from wanting to make a positive difference to doing something different and just being interested in children. Some comments included “I’m just interested in kids” and “I want to have a good influence on a child.” All of the adults believed their involvement would have a positive impact on the children in some way: “I want them to think of us as grandparents”; “I hope they might pick up on something that will assist them in life”; “Some little children have older people in their lives who are kind of grouchy and maybe this will give them a new experience of grandparents who play.” They wanted the children to see grandparents/seniors in a different and positive light. When asked to suggest the types of activities they would enjoy doing with the children, they offered only a few suggestions: reading, crafts, games, and talking with the children.

Four of the grandparents interviewed saw the purpose of a school to be a place “to give kids an education,” which included reading, writing, math and respect. One respondent stated that, “Schools need to teach skills about life, to get to know others, to be part of a community. It should be the hub of a community.” All respondents were looking forward to meeting and working with other adult volunteers.

When asked whether this type of intergenerational project might support the Alberta Elementary Program of Studies (curriculum), the adults seemed confused about how to relate this question to their perception of how they would be volunteering in the

classroom. Some responses follow: “I think kids will get something from a different point of view”; “So many kids don’t have grandparents”; “It’s a good idea for kids to be exposed to seniors. It’s a two-way street. It could make a close bond and that’s important.” There was an underlying agreement that *A Patchwork of Friends – An Intergenerational Project* would relate to the curriculum, but some were confused by the terminology. For example, responses included “I don’t know what a curriculum is,” and “I suppose so, to a point.” Several grandparents seemed reluctant to say too much in response to this question, fearing they might not sound highly educated or might not have understood the intent of the question. One grandparent felt strongly that this type of project would relate very well to the curriculum and saw great value in its existence: “Yes, definitely. Doing this is a statement of value to kids that there are people who want to get to know them. Kids need to study community, and grandparents are part of a community.”

Post-Project Interviews with Grandparents

In asking the grandparent volunteers this series of interview questions, I hoped to uncover any changes in their perceptions and/or attitudes about children, schools, effective ways to help children to learn, and the project itself. I found an increased sense of ease and openness in their responses and discussion with me, as compared to the pre-project interviews. This was understandable since we had interacted freely on a weekly basis for the seven weeks prior to this interview.

There was little change in perceptions about schools for the grandparents who had had prior experience in schools. However, others were amazed at how schools had

changed from when they or their children were students. They perceived an increase in the level of caring about children, in complex and busy schedules, and in the innovations that are being implemented in schools. One commented, “The classes are so busy.”

Another responded as follows: “I saw that the school cared more about the kids. I used to think they were just there to teach the kids, and I saw the teacher and the whole school get involved with the kids and grandparents. It wasn’t like that when I went to school.”

Another commented that, “It was exciting that a school would grant permission for this project and that teachers had an innovative idea that needed to be tried.” I found it curious that one respondent kept referring to the teachers who did the planning, when in fact it was only one teacher, but the respondent did not perceive this, in spite of having been in the classroom.

All of the grandparents responded positively about being involved in the project. They saw the value in its implementation, and some even wished their own children had had an opportunity to be involved in this type of intergenerational program. One grandparent responded, “It’s an excellent idea. Parents are so busy and don’t take or have the time to be with the kids. It gives them a different perspective.” Another said, “It made me realize how many kids don’t have grandparents.” One commented this way: “We connected. We were able to communicate. We were close and she ended up being my friend. She became a different child – more open and more friendly.”

When asked if there were any surprises in the project, the respondents named many. They were amazed at the scope of available print resources in the school, at the variety of songs the children could sing, at the number and scope of activities that the school undertakes, at what the children knew about computers, and particularly at the

maturity and depth of some children's understanding of the world. One commented, "We sang old songs!" Another said, "The books! They were so different and there was a modern version of Snow White." A third said, "I was surprised at some of the answers they gave. They're so much more aware of what's happening that I was at that age. I found they were mature in their answers. I was surprised by the questions they would ask me and that they liked to hear stories about my life and wanted to compare it to theirs." Clearly many of the grandparents came to have a deeper understanding of the complex roles of a teacher: "I wasn't expecting the teacher to be as organized as she was. Other grandparents felt the same way...you let us be us."

All of the grandparents/seniors stated that some things in their lives, often their attitudes, had changed because of being involved in the project. These responses ranged from appreciating their own grandchildren more, to appreciating that their grandchild had them for a grandparent. They acknowledged themselves as valued human beings. One stated a belief in the serious sense of responsibility he took in being a mentor to a child: "I think I learned that kids need a safe parental figure from other places and they're receptive to this. It's lots of responsibility on adults in this position and I don't think we took it lightly." Several respondents stated that they had changed their attitudes and even behaviors towards young children. One "grandma" stated, "I've learned to spend time with other little kids in my area. They are so refreshing. It gave me a chance to expand. If you give yourself to kids you get self-satisfaction." Another responded, "Yes, I think I've become more open to young kids. I can get involved in and with children. There's an old saying that 'children should be seen and not heard.' Well, it's not right. Kids need to be seen and heard. Kids need to be involved as much as we do."

Besides experiencing general changes in attitudes and perceptions, the grandparent volunteers noticed specific changes in their relationship with their individual grandchild. As the weeks continued, the bonds between the two generations seemed to become more trusting and open. This was reflected in many of the respondents' comments. One responded, "She talked to me about her father's death which happened two years before. I'd love to have spent more time with her. She wanted me to herself." A second said, "After a few times together they were more comfortable with me and they'd horse around and I'd play with them." Another answered, "It wasn't a long enough time, but they opened up like little buds." One grandparent noticed that, "At first we were more reserved (both of us) and then after more sessions we became more open to each other."

Grandparent volunteers stated that interactions with their own grandchildren and other children have changed. One stated that he went home and painted bug rocks with his youngest daughter and stepson because of the project. Another stated that both she and her daughter are more grateful that they live close by each other and that it was good for the grandchildren. One grandmother in particular noticed how she had changed some of her behaviors around young children: "Yes. I'm more open and willing to listen to their opinions. I want to hear why they don't agree with me. They should be allowed to express their opinions. Often they have a better idea about some things than I do."

When asked if they had made contact with other adults in the project, most respondents had positive feelings about working with the other grandparents. One grandparent even realized that one of the other grandparents lived near her, and they now

see each other often. However, for most of the grandparents the connection was important during the time of the project but never moved beyond this school parameter.

All of the respondents thought the *A Patchwork of Friends – Intergenerational Project* was successful and should be repeated. One commented, “It was well worth all the work and effort put into it. It’s a shame it couldn’t continue.” Another said, “It’s an excellent idea and project.” Another grandparent felt, “It was very good. It was well organized and well carried out. People got along. I think we all got a whole lot out of it. It made us better people.” Those who thought the project should be repeated stated the following: “Definitely, the whole thing was fascinating”; “Especially for kids who didn’t have grandparents or they lived far away”; “Oh yes! So many children need this”; “Yes, it certainly should - over and over and over again. It should be an ongoing project.”

The grandparent volunteers also had some ideas about what could be done to improve the project. Some felt the pressure of time: “When we read or did crafts, it was rushed.” Most thought that the time should be extended – either the length of time the generations spent together for each session or the number of sessions: “There was not enough time. It should go on for a least a term. The time was rushed. There should be a continuation off-campus. I’d like to have had my granddaughter come to my house.” Some believed that it should have been continued with the same grandchild into the following year(s): “It was so good in the first place. There was not enough time in a day or do it longer than two months.” One suggested, “A letter-writing after the project might work to stay in touch with each other.” Another commented, “Longer time would be better. One negative side is that kids and grandparents would have a loss when the project’s over...What could have worked would be to meet parents. More bonding means

more loss.” Additional suggestions included these: “Once a month the grandparents could bring lunch and eat with the kids”; “It should last the whole year round, year after year. I’d be with my girl until Junior High.” Many adopted grandparents clearly wanted the opportunity to have extended the connection between themselves and their grandchild.

All of the respondents stated most emphatically that they would be willing to volunteer for this type of project again: “Yup, and I know that my friend would too”; “Especially if my grandson were in the class” “Oh, yes!”

Analysis of Findings

The analysis of the findings for *A Patchwork of Friends – An Intergenerational Project* is derived from a variety of sources: the pre and post interviews of children and grandparents, observations and reflections which I made during and after the project, photographs, comments made by children, grandparents, parents, school staff, administration and support staff, results from the grandparent evaluation sheets and student work samples. The findings are organized in a chronological manner so as to reflect the findings of each session; at the same time they contain comments, to reflect the overall findings of the project.

Before and during the actual project time, I found that it was crucial to have administrative support in order to inform the entire school of this endeavor and its possible impact on them. The administrative team and staff at this elementary school were extremely supportive and were more than willing to rearrange schedules for various rooms and resources that we would need for the project. The project required extra support from office staff, who needed to answer inquiry calls from grandparents and

parents, in addition to greeting them as they entered the school on the project days. The maintenance staff had extra work in arranging the physical space and moving chairs when necessary. It was not only beneficial but also crucial to the success of this intergenerational project to have established positive working relationships with these individuals prior to this project commencing, ongoing and after its completion.

Before the project even began, the children's excitement and anticipation about the idea of visiting grandparents were like a seed that germinated and grew with each discussion and activity. Their budding eagerness continued to grow with each passing week leading up to the opening session. The preparatory activities engaged their curiosity and ownership of the venture we were to undertake. Writing letters to their grandparents and making name buttons (See Figure 12) personalized their anticipated connection to the older adults.



Figure 12. Project Student-made Name Buttons

From a teacher's point of view, this time was crucial in relating the project to curriculum outcomes. We read, discussed and responded not only to a wide range of quality children's literature, in order to facilitate the children's literacy skills, but also to many books related to social studies or health themes. (See Appendices B and E for bibliographies of books used.) The fine arts activities we did before and during the

project also addressed a variety of music, art and drama curriculum outcomes. (See Figure 13)



Figure 13. Child & Grandparent Painting

It was not difficult to recruit an adequate number of grandparent volunteers. Only a few were natural grandparents of the children in my class. Other senior adults became interested, mainly through personal contact with parents, friends or myself. Their common characteristic was most definitely the fact that they all liked children and wanted to have a positive impact upon a child's life. This characteristic is clearly evident in some of the comments the grandparents made in their initial interviews: "I want to have a good influence on a child"; "I hope it will help their self-esteem"; "I hope they might pick up on something that will assist them in life. I hope that the kids will be interested in this connection. By being exposed to more people who take an interest, it may help show them a road to their interests or may increase their interests."

I found that the majority of these grandparents had had little exposure to schools since they were young or since they had raised their own children. They were clearly

amazed at the differences they observed at this school compared to their previous experiences in an educational setting. Some observations follow: “The classes are so busy”; “I can’t remember being that busy when we were kids”; “The kids had so many different things to do. We were busy all the time.” A few of the grandparents were not surprised by the full days, because they either volunteered regularly in a school setting or were in a school to pick up their grandchild on a regular basis: “I never noticed any changes because we went in with our other kids too, so I was used to schools”; “I didn’t have any changes in what I saw because I volunteer on Tuesdays and Thursdays at this school.”

I found many of the grandparents unprepared for working with the varying abilities of the children and for the complex and wide scope of activities we undertook during our time together. I remember a grandpa asking me how I was able to accommodate my teaching to the wide variations in abilities – just after he worked with two very different boys who were preparing their rain sticks. Some grandparents also commented on how polite and honest the children were as they worked with them: “They were so well-behaved”; “I noticed how honest the children are.” They seemed very surprised by this, and I wondered if it was an opportunity for them to readjust their preconceived ideas about children.

I found that I too had some underlying assumptions about how the grandparents would work with the children. I observed several grandparents trying to correct students’ writing conventions in a letter that the students had written to them. I realized then that I needed to share some information with the grandparents about how we now approach the teaching of reading and writing. I had covered the reading aspect during the initial

meeting with the grandparents but had neglected to mention the basics of writing development. I also remember thinking during this meeting that I did not want to overwhelm the grandparent volunteers with information that might intimidate them, because it had been so long since many of them had been in a school setting.

On the first day it was extremely difficult to attend to morning lessons because the class was so excited about meeting their grandparents for the first time, or having their own grandparent come to the classroom. They asked many questions: Is it time yet? Will they be here after recess? When are they coming? Can I show my Grandpa how I can kick the soccer ball? Can I show my Grandma my journal? They also returned very early after the lunch break, hoping that the grandparents would be there. Equally exciting, many grandparents also arrived early and exhibited parallel feelings of excitement, anticipation, nervousness and some insecurity. It surprised me to see the grandparents' levels of anxiety and discomfort about being in a classroom, mixed with excitement about meeting their grandchild.

It was interesting to see how at times child and grandparent seemed to “trade off” confidence and certainty, depending on the activity being undertaken. When one exhibited a sense of confusion or insecurity, the partner seemed to rise in ability and confidence. Where this did not happen, I would step in and give further direction or answer any questions or inquiries concerning the activity. Several teachers commented on “how proud and confident the individual students were as they gave their grandparent a tour of the school.” I observed the students demonstrating a project they were doing on the computers; I noticed the grandparents being more timid and unsure, allowing the student to take the lead in the activity. (See Figure 14) At other times, the child would

easily watch and listen as the grandparent explained something or showed them how to do a certain task. I saw that the students seemed more secure and began to ask their grandparents questions about how to do something as soon as an activity was begun. However, the grandparents would ask the child more questions about resources, facilities or about familiar routines and class expectations rather than about directions. In all situations, both the children and the grandparents needed praise, recognition and encouragement from me and from each other.



Figure 14. Computer Demonstration

An attendance difficulty occurred during the second week, and then again sporadically throughout the project. One grandfather was not able to attend three out of the six sessions. Had I been aware of this situation beforehand, I would have discouraged this person from volunteering for the project. Although the child handled his grandpa's unexplained absence extremely well, his disappointment was clearly evident. I arranged for another grandfather to adopt him, but Harrison still felt the loss of his special grandpa. Some of this was reconciled when his grandpa returned from Florida after the project was completed, spent time with Harrison, and brought him souvenirs and gifts from his

holiday. However, I sensed that having his own grandpa during the project was more important to Harrison than the post-project gifts.

Several explained and unexplained absences occurred with other partners also, and last minute adjustments had to be made. I found both children and adults to be extremely cooperative and understanding at these times. It was interesting to note, however, that in some cases when another child was introduced into the grandparent-child partnership, the original child did not appreciate sharing her grandma. One grandmother expressed this in an interview: “She wanted me to herself and didn’t want another child with us when someone’s grandparent couldn’t be there that day.”

The relationships between the grandparent and child, and between the grandparents themselves seemed to evolve over the six-week period. Although both groups were excited on the first day, they were still unsure of each other and needed added time and opportunities to find a comfort level in being together. Predictably, the children who were with their natural grandparents (or aunt or great-grandma) were more comfortable with each other. (See Figure 15) “He was just pleased that his grandparents were there,” reflected a natural grandfather. However, I noticed that even these adults were unsure about being in a school setting and also about being with each other.



Figure 15. Child & Natural Grandparents

During the second session, a day of unexpected challenges brought a bonus instead of a downfall. Although I had arranged with administration to schedule the whole school picture photograph session either before or after our project, the children were unexpectedly called out during our time together. I was concerned about what the grandparents would do in our absence, but I need not to have worried. This interruption gave them an opportunity to visit and start to develop some connections with each other. I heard them making very positive comments about the school and education in general when the class and I returned. After this point, they seemed more at ease and were more willing to interact with each other. In my reflective journal for the day, I wrote, “In our absence, the grandparents realized how flexible we must be in the classroom and it also gave them an opportunity to visit with each other without me being there and without the children. I’m realizing that these bonds between the grandparents themselves are necessary and will help them feel more comfortable in a school setting.” The interview comments by the grandparents also reflected this atmosphere: “Everybody has connected with each other in the project”; “We visited each other while the project was on.”

Another response indicated that these seniors desired more contact with each other in order to further develop friendships with each other: “We should have had a coffee party or something with just the grandparents about half-way through.”

Every session began and ended with a group time at the carpet area. We reviewed the day’s agenda and often sang familiar songs that related to our activities (See Appendix J for a list of songs.) This allowed time for grandparents who were coming in late to join us and gave the children an opportunity to sing and share the familiar classroom songs they enjoyed. Some of these included “You are my Sunshine,” “My Favorite Things,” and of course our classroom “Welcome Song,” which we sang with sign language (and which the children would consistently remind me of, if I happened to forget). Several of the grandparents mentioned this in their interview responses: “I liked the singing”; “I was surprised at all the singing and we sang old songs!” By coming together at the end of the session, we were able to review what we had done, thereby giving me a direction for future planning. By this second session, several grandparents made a point of coming early and staying later, in order to help with setting up or cleaning up. During this time they engaged in further interaction with each other, which helped to establish even closer connections.

At the third session I gave directions for each of the six centers they were to go to. I was surprised at how many of the adults were unsure what to do when they got to the center. Because of time, each group was able to do only three of the centers. It was interesting to note that a few grandparents assumed they were to be observers of the activities rather than full-fledged participants. Pounding nails into the cardboard tubes for

rain sticks was definitely a highlight for the children, as some of them had never had an opportunity to use a hammer before. (See Figure 16).



Figure 16. Making Rain Sticks

During the fourth session, magic just seemed to happen! We were to finish the work begun in the centers from the previous week and papier-mâché the rain sticks. Before we got to this, the children had definite requests for the songs they wanted to sing with their grandparents and many of these grandparents started to join in rather than see the children's singing as a performance. I noticed that the physical arrangement was not always conducive to the types of connections that the children and grandparents wanted to have with each other. Usually the children sat on the carpet with the grandparents surrounding them on their adult-sized chairs. On this day, I noticed the children wanting to sit either beside or on the laps of their grandparents. Therefore, several grandparents (those who were able) chose to sit on the floor with the children, and several children made their way to their grandparent's lap. This seemed to set a tone for the day. (See Figures 17 & 18). One grandpa, who was paired with two boys, brought in prefabricated

birdhouses. He spent the entire time helping “his boys” to assemble their own birdhouse. The pride and joy evident in their faces as they completed their project with “Grandpa Howard” was evidence of the magic of connection that we witnessed and experienced throughout this project.



Figure 17. Reading Buddies – Sample A



Figure 18. Reading Buddies – Sample B

A colleague mentioned at the end of the day seeing the grandparents with their grandchildren: “They walk around as if there’s no one more important than their grandchild. The grandparents are just glowing. They feel so important too.” Other colleagues mentioned how wonderful it was to walk into the staff room and see so many

grandparents reading with the children and how comfortable they seemed to be. (See Figure 19) I observed grandparents being mesmerized as their grandchild demonstrated some work they were doing on the computer. My journal reflections for the day summed up the experiences I witnessed during this session: “Today it seemed as if magic happened between the adults and children. After doing the papier-mâché project together, cleaning up and returning to the classroom to read or play games, they were immersed in each other. It was a wonder to watch and enjoy. One grandma, who walks with a cane, was on the floor building blocks with her granddaughter. Another child was teaching her grandma how to play Connect 4, and many were reading together. When I announced that it was time to clean up for recess, there were frowns and audible moans from both the children and the adults.”



Figure 19. Child & Grandparent Discussing a Book

Throughout the project, parents came to me with stories about experiences and budding relationships between their child and grandparent (natural and adopted). One mother reported that her daughter, who never liked to talk about school, came home after the first session and talked for half an hour about what she and her grandmother had in

common. She was especially pleased that both she and Grandma Laurie liked doughnuts! Another mother spoke of how her son was going to persevere and learn to play chess with his grandpa – which he did! Two grandparents, who lived in Medicine Hat, arranged for a special trip to our school to be part of our project for one session because their grandson wanted so much for them to be part of the fun. One girl, whose family usually made limited time for her, was thrilled when she noticed her adopted grandma at the Sunday service she and her family attended. (This was my hope when I paired these two individuals together, because I knew they belonged to the same denomination). Her mother made arrangements with the grandma for Jennifer to spend extra time with her during the project. I heard later that they continued this connection throughout the summer months. Another girl, who had a more unstable home life, developed a very strong bond with her adopted grandparent. For her, the bonus has been the fact that this grandparent volunteered in the school weekly and therefore, has more ongoing contact with the child. The following letter gives testimony to this meaningful bond between generations. (See Figure 20).

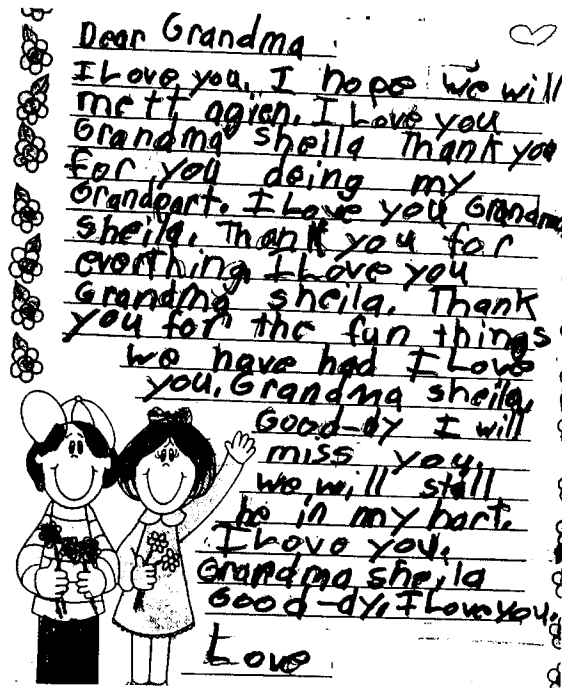


Figure 20. Student thank You Letter

The stories of connections that the parents shared with me seemed endless and rewarding. One humorous comment showed how much some of the grandparents valued and looked forward to coming into the classroom every Tuesday afternoon. A parent had asked her mother (a grandma in our project) to do something for her on a Tuesday morning. She declined saying, “Oh no, I can’t do that because I have to get ready to go to school this afternoon!” Some interview responses further supported this investment in and value of the project. One grandmother stated, “Before the project I sat at home and did nothing. I enjoyed the people contact.” Another responded, “It was something else to talk about with my grandson.”

Even more rewarding, two years later I continue to hear stories from either the parents or grandparents about further connections that have been made as a result of this project. One girl was thrilled when she and her mother received an invitation to a Christmas Open House at her adopted Grandma Laurie’s home. They attended, and her

mother told me it was one of the highlights of her daughter's holiday. This connection has continued, and the grade two child is now a regular visitor at her Grandma Laurie's to play with her grandmother's natural granddaughter. Another grandmother had shown her granddaughter, Krista, some of her cross-stitch. Krista then learned to do some needlework under her mother's direction and gave her first project to her grandmother after the *Patchwork of Friends Project* was over.

Literature played a major role in this intergenerational project. When the grandparents came into class, they would select books with their grandchild and then find a place to read. Both of Anthony's grandparents were part of the project. They had moved to our community from their family farm and loved to share stories about farm life with Anthony. One of their favorite books was *The Dust Bowl*, by David Booth. Anthony's grandma asked to borrow the book for a week so that she could read it again to herself and then with Anthony in the upcoming week. I noticed that if I had read certain books to the class the previous week, they wanted to take those same books home in their Home Reading Bags or to share these books with their grandparent at the next *Patchwork of Friends* session.

The following comments by grandparents clearly indicate the perceived value of using quality literature in such a project. One grandparent noted, "I really enjoyed the reading. The books! They were so different and there was a modern version of Snow White and a book I really enjoyed about manners. I'd like to have taken some of all the books home with me." Another mentioned, "I liked the time in the library. I enjoy the literacy part and liked reading to the kids and having them read to me." (See Figures 21 & 22). Some of the children's favorite books included *At Grandpa's Sugar Bush* by M.

Garney, *Miss Rumphius* by B. Cooney, *Strega Nona's Magic Lessons* by T. DePaola, *Wilfred Gordon Macdonald Partridge* by M. Fox, *Something From Nothing* by P. Gilman, *Knots on a Counting Rope* by B. Martin and J. Archambault, *Mrs. Katz And Tush* by P. Polacco, and many, many others.

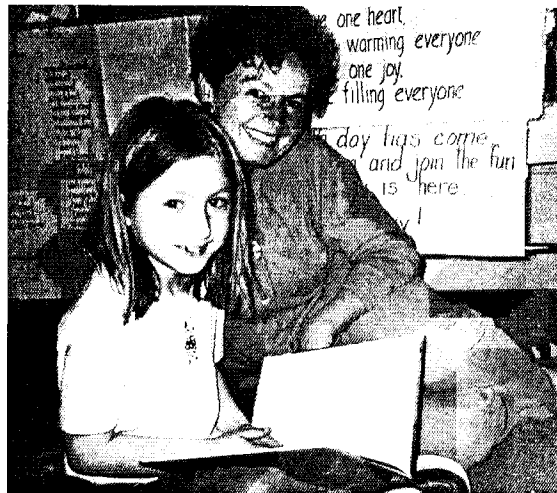


Figure 21. Enjoying the Reading Corner



Figure 22. Enjoying Books & Each Other

At the fifth session we had our “Collections Day.” After reflecting upon this session, I will organize it differently should I undertake this project again. Students and

grandparents had the option of displaying and presenting a talk or demonstration about their collection. There was not enough time for everyone to hear and see the collections, in addition to reading and completing other projects. However, I heard and observed many positive comments and interactions during this session. The children were fascinated with Grandma Emma's and Grandma Beryol's teddy bear collections and the stories about the origins of each of the bear. Jessica's writing that week reflected this interest in collections. (See figure 23). They also wanted to know more about Grandpa Tony's bronze casting sculptures and Grandma Julie's Ukrainian egg collection. As the grandparents shared their collections, they told the children about how they needed to practice something before it became the finished product. These grandparents were wonderful examples of life-long learners. Although lack of time did not hinder the enthusiasm about the collections, it did curtail much discussion and inquiry about certain items, skills or hobbies. In spite of this, it was equally rewarding to see the response the children gave each other when showing their own collections. The effort that many of them put into organizing and presenting their collections was evident. Some collections included rocks, animal pictures, Beanie Babies, Star Wars Lego, glass ornaments, and favorite chapter books. Although most children were engaged, the few who had not brought collections and who were not interested in viewing the others' seemed to have difficulty staying focused today and their behavior became a problem at times. I would definitely structure this day differently.

Collections
 Collections are lots of things.
 They can be a treasure to one
 person and junk to another.
 They can be part of your
 imagination and your dreams.
 Collections can be models or
 toys. You can collect lots of
 things. Collections are mostly
 made up of things people
 like. For instance, collections can
 be animals or ~~knobs~~ bears or ~~stamps~~
 or ~~Beanie babies~~ ^{Teddy bears} Collections can
 be a loving thing I started
 collecting when I was 2 my
 mom started collecting. When she
 was 3 she collects stuff ~~family~~
 is.

Figure 23. A Student Writing, "About Collections"

I also noticed a growing change in my role as the sessions progressed, and especially on this one day. Leading up to this fifth session, my role was mainly initiator, organizer, teacher, coordinator and public relations person of this intergenerational project. As the grandparents became more at ease and familiar with the educational

setting, each other and expectations, they became more comfortable with their connection with me. As a result, they began a wide variety of conversations concerning the learning progress or the wellbeing of their grandchild. During the week prior to this and especially during this session, I noticed that more and more grandparents wanted to talk to me personally about their adopted child's growth, about comments the child had made, or about the influence of the home situations upon their natural grandchild. They were clearly inviting me into the concerns they had about the wellbeing of the child they had mentored for the past five weeks. One commented, "She talked to me about her father's death which happened two years before. I'd love to have spent more time with her." I reflected in my journal, "Overall, I could see the satisfaction in both adults and children today. However, inside I felt the frustration and dissatisfaction of not having things run as smoothly as I would have liked. I also felt more of a pull today to interact with more people who needed and wanted that contact with me."

On this day the children gave their grandparent an invitation to the School Volunteer Breakfast to be held on the Tuesday morning of the following week. As a school function, it was meant to recognize the adults themselves and did not include student attendance. Although the school's intent to honor volunteers was commendable, I heard the disappointment in both groups when the adults asked the children if they would be there also. In spite of their shared disappointment, it was a pleasure to serve and visit with many of the grandparents who did choose to attend the breakfast. It was also great to see how they interacted with each other. While visiting with them I was astounded at the statements of genuine regret from each one of them about the fact that project was ending

that afternoon. I had already been hearing similar comments from both the children and their parents, wishing that *A Patchwork of Friends* could go on longer.

As each of the weeks progressed, the children, parents, grandparents and indeed the rest of the school community were following the progress of *A Patchwork of Friends* by “checking out” the displays outside of the classroom. (See Figure 24) Children and adults looked for their collages of “Our Favorite Things” on the walls. They admired the needlework the children had done in creating the patchwork quilt, read the quotations about intergenerational connections that were mounted on the quilt, and searched for and reminisced about the events pictured in the photographs on the quilt sections. Other classes wondered about the pounding they heard (doing rain sticks) and were curious about the papier-mâché painted tubes they saw in the art room. These were some of the tangible products of the project, demonstrating ways that children and grandparents could celebrate their time together. (See Figure 25).



Figure 24. “A Patchwork of Friends” – A School Hallway Display



Figure 25. Sidewalk Chalk Activity

It was evident from the children's responses to the interview questions that they both enjoyed and learned something from these intergenerational connections. One child responded, "I learned how to play chess and make a birdhouse." And another answered, "I learned how to do cross-stitch." One girl, paired with her natural grandma, responded, "I think grandparents are the best person to have when you're sad or mad or something like that." One child who typically had difficulties in social situations responded, "I learned not to get mad when I can't do things." When asked if there was anything they did not enjoy doing with their grandparent, all the children responded with a definite, "No!"

Bonus lessons and projects seemed to evolve out of our time together. One such project was making a "gift rain stick." We had two extra-long tubes that we could use to make rain sticks. Therefore, as a class project we made one for the class and another one for a disabled eleven-year-old cousin of one of the children. This resulted from an unexpected lesson on the balance of giving to self and other. The experience of this teachable moment was the pure joy of teaching and learning for me. It was not planned or anticipated; however, my students and I were open to and appreciated such rewarding moments together.

Another product that evolved from our time together was the *Patchwork of Friends Newspaper*, which the students and I created with the assistance and expertise of my student teacher, Deb Magyar. As we prepared for our last session, the children and I wanted to capture the essence of our time spent together with the grandparents; hence, we wrote and produced our newspaper as a class venture. It was an opportunity to surprise and give each grandparent something that the children had created. I also saw this as another opportunity not only to integrate technology, but to enrich the student's literacy skills. Each child also received a copy of this newspaper. Some sections simply reported activities, and some were written by individual students about their grandparent. These were entitled, "My Grandpa/Grandma _____'s the Greatest." Use of a digital camera greatly enhanced the newspaper by adding a visual component to this form of classroom-created media. It was rewarding and inspiring to see the feedback from the children as they each worked on their portion of the newspaper and then to see their faces when they received their final product (see Appendix N for a sample *Patchwork of Friends Newspaper*).

On the final afternoon, a sense of sadness was mixed in with the excitement of an ice-cream party. The children read with their grandparents and then created sidewalk chalk creations on the pavement in the school courtyard. Grandparents seemed genuinely thrilled with this newfound form of creativity. By this session an even larger sense of family and community seemed to have evolved among the children and grandparents. Their familiarity and pride in being together seemed to enhance this sense of togetherness. Kyndrilyn and her great-grandmother, who was a regular volunteer in our project, offered to sing a song together in Russian that the great-grandmother had taught

Kyndrilyn. The entire group was thrilled with this sharing of courage and talent. The anxiety and nervousness that were clearly evident in the first session were non-existent at this final session. Children and grandparents pitched in, sang together, and worked together to serve each other and clean up after the celebration. I observed that, as the students became increasingly familiar with their grandparent, they felt freer to be themselves and thus needed more than usual reminders about appropriate behaviors in a social setting.

At the ice cream party the children gave their grandparent thank-you cards and enclosed letters telling what they enjoyed or learned during their time together. I prepared and gave Grandparent Certificates to each grandparent, as well as a thank-you letter and chocolate treat. This added to a sense of completion and celebration. I noticed that several children and many grandparents had brought special gifts for their particular partner. These were exchanged privately and a sense of goodwill continued among the group.

For some of the children and most of the adults, the farewells were sad. They seemed less so for many of the children, because they were already on to the next activity and knew they would still be with their classmates in the days to come. However, many of the adults knew this would be the last time to be together in this way, and many expressed their sadness about the ending of the project. In the days and weeks following, many children kept asking if the grandparents would still be coming in to see them, and I could sense their loss also. This was especially true for several children who had various challenges in their home situations and who had developed bonds with their adopted grandparents. In the days and weeks to come, I saw that they truly missed the connection to this older adult who cared about them. When I met various volunteer grandparents in

the community, they would express similar feelings of loss and often inquire about their grandchild.

In the week following the final session, I had the class write about their experience of the *A Patchwork of Friends – Intergenerational Project* in order to discover whether or not this connection would have a lasting impression. Following are some of the comments that the children wrote about grandparents: “I wish that you could come to my classroom every day”; “Grandparents are nice and generous. I really liked when he wrote in my journal.” Another wrote, “I miss grandparents. They were great. I love the friendship stars. My favorite book we read was *Dear Children of the Earth*.” Some children wrote longer reflections of their experiences and memories of their time with grandparents (see Figures 26, 27, 28). In all cases, the experience seemed positive for the child and the grandparent.

Grandparent Project

made, and I really liked doing paper mache, and she wrote Chalk I learned that
 Grandparents are fun and like to play
 I really enjoyed having the ice cream party
 Whether are grandparents it was fun, I really
 enjoyed painting rocks with grandparents it was
 fun to. my favorite Book was. When I was
 young in the mountains, and just Grandpa
 and my and thunder cakes when my
 grandpa was young he lived on a
 farm, and he was afraid of the
 dark when he was young, he was nice
 because he was always helping me out
 with my words.

Figure 26. A Student's Writing About Project Experiences, Sample A

Grandparent Project

Grandparents are nice and
 fun. I really liked
 when he got in my journal.
 I wish he could come to
 my house for summer.
 I learned that grand-
 parents are nice they
 are nice because they talk
 nice. I liked reading books
 to him because he helps me
 sound out words very nicely.
 I learned that grandparents
 are not different from
 others. I wish he was my
 grandparent.

Figure 27. A Student's Writing About Project Experiences, Sample B

Grandparent Project
 I really liked Grandma Sheila's collection.
 I liked doing the sidewalk chalk. I like the
 newspaper alot. I showed Grandma Sheila
 Hyper studio and world book on the comput
 er. When Grandma Sheila was young
 she wanted to be a nurse. I liked making
 the rain sticks. I remember reading
 and writing the journals. *

Figure 28. A Student's Writing About Project Experiences, Sample C

What began as nervous excitement in both adults and children transformed into genuine caring and authentic relationships between the generations. (see Figure 29). The variety and simplicity of activities allowed both groups to increase their levels of comfort and confidence in being together. The early tentativeness and discomfort evident in some participants decreased as they focused on an activity. If an individual felt unsure of expectations, either a child or fellow grandparent was eager to step in and offer advice or encouragement. As the adults became more confident in the classroom and elementary school setting, they too enhanced and/or directed learning experiences for their grandchild. It was a delight to witness the children's pride and confidence as they explained a procedure or directed their grandparent in an activity.



Figure 29. Group Connections

For me, because I had the advantage of seeing the larger picture, the true successes were the numerous seemingly small celebrations that occurred each time these two generations came together. However, although these may have seemed like simple events of the moment, for the individuals involved they often represented much larger hallmarks of social, personal and academic growth. When a pebble is thrown into a pond, the ripples extend beyond the actual impact of the stone meeting the water. I believe that this intergenerational project will send its ripples to people and places unknown at this time

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The purpose of *A Patchwork of Friends* was to provide a rewarding and worthwhile intergenerational project for the students and the grandparent/senior volunteers. This study was designed to determine how this program would affect the views and attitudes of both the children and the adult volunteers. Based on the responses from the pre- and post-project interviews, observations, anecdotal notes and journal reflections, comments from staff and parents, and the written work from the children and grandparents, I conclude that this intergenerational project had a positive impact on the views and attitudes of all who were involved.

As mentioned in the literature review, successful intergenerational projects have worked because of the need for some type of connection in both generations. I created *A Patchwork of Friends – An Intergenerational Project* because of a need I sensed in many children to have an additional and extended relationship with an adult other than their parent(s). As I made personal connections with the adult volunteers before the project began, I sensed a need in many individuals to either contribute to their community in some way, to broaden their scope of social interactions with people, or to expand their sense of purpose in the world. This project had the domino effect of increasing a sense of self-esteem and belonging in the children and some of the adult volunteers. Other adult volunteers experienced an increased sense of purpose in being part of a community. Further conclusions about this intergenerational project arose from the findings and are explained below.

- Both generations came to have an expanded view of the other generation and began to see each other in a different and more positive light. Adults, who prior to the project had made generalized statements about children, came to see them as individuals who were “so smart” and “well mannered.” They were amazed at what children could do at this age and at the scope and depth of their ability to think about various life issues. It was unclear from these findings whether or not the children were less apt to generalize about older adults. Perhaps they viewed their grandparent as an individual and still did not put them into the category of an old person, with a particular label.
- The grandparent/senior volunteers had an opportunity to transfer culture, knowledge, skills and values to this next generation. This was evident at every session where children were taught to build, play unfamiliar games, have a passion for a certain type of collection, sing traditional songs, or simply visit with each other. It was a delight to watch the two generations begin to interact positively with each other in this learning and social environment. They instinctively demonstrated respect for each other. Many of these intergenerational relationships seemed to deepen as the weeks unfolded.
- The children experienced nurturing, support and a special acceptance by positive role models. Many children in this class exhibited a need for extra individual attention and care beyond what I was able to provide in our regular classes. Their natural and adopted grandparents provided this support and nurturing. However, at the end of the time together, it was difficult for some of the children not to have this become an ongoing connection.

- There was an increased motivation to learn. While the children were working, learning and visiting alongside their grandparents, they were generally fully engaged in the tasks at hand and wanted to learn and do their best. Typical classroom management and discipline issues showed a marked decrease in occurrence during these shared times. I noticed also, that during the week, that the children would often think about and plan ahead for the books they wanted to read to their grandparent at the upcoming session. They showed increased motivation to write meaningful letters in their Home-School Journals to which their grandparents could respond. After recess or during our “Show ’n’ Share” times, the children often indicated that they wanted to show a special object or tell their grandparent about a personal experience or achievement.
- Both groups expressed a sense of loss at the end of the project. However, this generally occurred at different times for each group. Many grandparent/senior volunteers shared these thoughts and feelings of loss with me for a few weeks prior to completion and on the last day; however, many children did not do so until the last day, or even in the days and weeks following. One explanation is that children are more adept at living in the moment, whereas adults are more adept at anticipating or looking ahead to what might be. I was mildly surprised that more children did not express regret on the last day. However, on the days and weeks following our project completion, many seemed to experience the reality of loss in the absence of their grandparent’s regular classroom visits.
- This project met some of the emotional and social needs of the grandparent/senior volunteers as well as those of the children. All of the adult volunteers saw the

need to have such a program in place for the benefit of the students. However, depending upon their life situations, some of the grandparents expressed a greater sense of loss than some of the others, at not being with their grandchild or of not having the opportunity to interact with other volunteers when the project was completed. These grandparents stated even more emphatically that they wanted to see this or a similar project continue throughout the school year or even beyond a certain grade level. This response was more evident from those seniors who did not have regular employment outside of the home, than from those still actively employed. Thus, it was not surprising that, although all of the adult volunteers saw the value in this project, they expressed differing opinions about the continuation of this project at this time.

- It was crucial to provide for a wide variety of activities and choices to meet the needs of the students and the adult volunteers. Children at this age have shorter attention spans and need a variety of activities that meet their interests, needs and learning styles. I found that some of the adults also needed and wanted choice in the activities they did with their grandchild. If such a project were ongoing, I could foresee adult volunteers becoming more confident and proactive in suggesting and co-creating a wider variety of activities. I believe that they would bring forward more of their personal interests, skills and strengths to share with the children. Thus, the richness of experiences would be ever expanding.
- Both generation groups needed praise, recognition and encouragement from me and from each other as they worked on or completed their activities. As a teacher, I recognize the importance of giving children positive feedback. I was surprised

that the adults also inadvertently asked for and required support and encouragement in ways that were similar to but subtler than those of the children. Although I quickly came to recognize and respond to those adults who also needed this positive feedback, I had thought that only the children would require this type of ongoing feedback. I wondered if perhaps many of these adults had not had positive experiences in their school years, or were just not confident doing new things in a new setting where they were being encouraged and expected to be role-models.

- Ongoing opportunities for celebration were imperative. In *A Patchwork of Friends* celebration took the form of class and hallway displays of completed projects and pictures of participants as they engaged in the various activities. One particular celebration involved displaying the patchwork quilt that students and grandparents had made, showcasing projects and pictures. Gathering together at the end of each session provided opportunities to review and celebrate the day's accomplishments. The last session also provided for closure and celebration of the intergenerational connections formed and time spent together.
- The adult volunteers displayed and spoke about a continued sense of satisfaction, purpose and enhanced self-esteem. They were contributing to their present community, while at the same time investing in its future. I have spoken to many of these volunteers since the project's completion, and they still see its value and would willingly volunteer for such a project again. They expressed a desire for continued involvement in their community and especially with young children.

- This intergenerational project has enhanced public relations. The adults who no longer had a direct link to the educational system through their own children have become advocates and ambassadors of the public school system. The adult volunteers increased their knowledge and understanding of schools, appreciated the uniqueness of each child, began to see the ways in which children best learn, and gained a better understanding of the role of teachers in today's elementary schools. They continue to talk about their intergenerational experiences with people with whom they come into daily contact, and thus they bring a fresh perspective of schools to the general public. This type of direct connection between generations continues to increase community acknowledgement and support of education.

Recommendations for Future Intergenerational Projects

As a result of the planning, implementation and evaluation of this project, I make several recommendations. If this type of intergenerational project is undertaken in the future, the following issues need to be addressed in project design.

Undertaking an intergenerational project is a joint venture. It requires belief in the program, support, encouragement and active participation by many individuals and groups. There must be a committed, knowledgeable and organized coordinator or leader, supportive administration and staff, interested parents, and a willing group of dedicated seniors. The program requires a relatively firm commitment for regular attendance on the part of the senior volunteers because of the sense of loss experienced by students who do not have a regularly attending grandparent at each session.

Goals must be established early in the planning stages of the program. It is imperative that those planning such a project have a clear sense of purpose and intent. They must know what outcomes they hope to achieve both during and at completion of the project. For projects located in a school environment, the goals should relate to one or more of the subject curriculums as stated in the Alberta Program of Studies.

Adult volunteers require thorough and respectful preparation before they work with the children. Many adult volunteers are unaware of the research on child development and the reading and writing approaches that are employed in schools today. Since these volunteers will be working with individual children, it is important that they employ positive and non-critical approaches.

The physical needs of children and grandparent/senior volunteers must be considered and addressed. Schools make an ongoing concerted effort to ascertain and address the needs of the children with physical challenges. When planning and organizing an intergenerational project, the physical needs of senior volunteers also need attention. For example, in this project, a grandmother with Multiple Sclerosis found it very difficult to navigate the staircase to the computer lab, so she and her granddaughter worked on a computer in another classroom. Also, some of the grandparents had difficulty in sitting on the carpet or smaller chairs.

The grandparent/senior volunteers need ongoing opportunities to interact and connect with each other. Although the children are familiar with a school environment and with each other, many adult volunteers were not familiar with a school setting and found that it took several weeks to become comfortable with the environment and with each other. If planning such a project again, I would provide time for the adults to meet at

least once or twice mid-way through the project to connect with each other and to discuss with me, as a group, any questions or concerns they might have.

These suggestions arose from my observations of and reflections on the daily interactions between the two generations. Before setting the purpose and goals for this type of project, it is crucial to look at the contextual variables in addition to the needs of each group. I have no doubt that this type of intergenerational project could be successfully implemented in a variety of school settings.

Closing

Many world leaders and writers have spoken about intergenerational connections and the resulting benefits to society. One such respected elder was Chief Dan George. In *My Heart Soars* (1984), he expressed the hope for the world when we touch a child:

The young and the old are the closest to life.

They love every minute dearly.

If the old will remember, the very young will listen...

Touch a child – they are my people. (pp. 57-58)

Intergenerational projects such as this one carry the hope that people of different generations can have a positive impact on children in ways that will inspire them to learn and grow as vibrant and contributing community members. *A Patchwork of Friends – An Intergenerational Project* has provided only a glimpse of the potential that intergenerational projects have in our schools for creating positive and caring communities for our children, for our seniors, and in turn, for our world.

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Appendices

Appendix A: List of Benefits of Intergenerational Programs

(adapted from Douglas, R. & Macaulay, R.M. Intergenerational Resource Book.)

For Children

Emotional Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve understanding of elders Improve self-esteem Improve confidence in own intelligence and abilities Provide unconditional love
Mental Stimulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn about various stages of the life cycle Become acquainted with physical limitations of elderly Learn about illness and death as a natural occurrence
Physical Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide varied experiences Active participation Become aware of the need for all ages to exercise
Social Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to serve others Friendship on a continuing basis Role outside the family Develop social skills
Sensory Stimulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Touch Listening Visual, auditory and tactile experiences through art, music and technology
Meeting Special Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual attention, time Learn skills of another generation Develop a positive attitude towards elders Learn about the process of aging Reduce the fear of aging (a common fear of children)

For Elders

Emotional Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide something to look forward to Provide non-threatening situations
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities to experience unconditional love Provide laughter Provide a sense of newness and fresh energy Provide a sense of satisfaction in mentoring a child/youth Provide opportunities to share wisdom Less loneliness, boredom, depression Improve self-esteem Improve confidence in own intelligences and abilities Improve understanding of children and youth
Mental Stimulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminiscences, and opportunities to share history Opportunity to contribute, to share Learn about children and youth in today's society Openness of children's questions and feedback
Physical Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage activity Encourage participation in new and familiar activities
Social Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to serve others Develop friendships on a continuing basis Motivation to converse with peers Increases sense of purpose Feel valued and needed
Sensory Stimulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Touch Listening Visual, auditory and tactile experiences through art, music, games and computer activities
Meeting Special Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having visitors or being a visitor Become responsive to a child or youth when the level of communication is otherwise low Develop a positive attitude towards children and youth Reduce fear of aging when actively involved in community

Appendix B: Bibliography of Intergenerational Children's Literature. Age 3 - 9

- Ackerman, K. (1988). *Song and dance man*. New York: Knopf.
- Addy, S. H. (1989). *A visit with great-grandma*. Morton Grove, IL: Whitman.
- Allen, R. (1976). *The violin*. Toronto, ON: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
- Andrews, J. (1992). *The auction*. Toronto, ON: Groundwood, Douglas & McIntyre.
- Bauer, M. D. (1999). *An early winter*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Berenstain, S., & Berenstain, J. (1986). *The Berenstain bears and the week at grandma's*. Toronto: Random House Canada.
- Berger, B. (1988). *Grandfather twilight*. New York: Putnam.
- Bloss, J. (1987). *Old Henry*. New York, NY: Mulberry.
- Bogart, J. (1997). *Jeremiah learns to read*. Richmond Hill, ON: North Winds.
- Boo, M. (1995). *The butterfly kiss*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace.
- Booth, D. (1996). *The dust bowl*. Toronto: Kids Can.
- Bosak, S. (1997). *Something to remember me by*. Whitchurch, ON: Communication Project.
- Bouchard, D., & Vickers, R. (1990). *The elders are watching*. Vancouver: Raincoast.
- Bruchac, J. (1993). *Fox song*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford.
- Carney, M., & Wilson, J. (1997). *At Grandpa's sugar bush*. Toronto: Kids Can.
- Castenada, O. (1993). *Abuela's weave*. New York: Lee & Low.
- Cooney, B. (1985). *Miss Rumphius*. New York: Puffin.
- Cooper, M. (1993). *I got a family*. New York: Holt.
- Cowen-Fletcher, J. (1994). *It takes a village*. Markham, ON: Scholastic Canada.
- Dengler, M. (1996). *The worry stone*. Flagstaff, AZ: Rising Moon.

- DePaola, T. (1973). *Nana upstairs and Nana downstairs*. Toronto: Longmans Canada.
- DePaola, T. (1982). *Strega Nona's magic lessons*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Drucker, M. (1992). *Grandma's latkes*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Edwards, F., & Bianchi, J. (1992). *Grandma Mooner lost her voice*. Newburgh, ON: Bungalo.
- Erdrich, L. (1996). *Grandmother's pigeon*. New York: Hyperion.
- Fife, D. (1973). *Ride the crooked wind*. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan.
- Flournoy, V. (1985). *The patchwork quilt*. New York: Dial.
- Fox, M. (1984). *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge*. Toronto: Puffin.
- Fox, M. (1989). *Shoes from grandpa*. New York: Orchard.
- Gackenback, D. (1990). *With love from Gran*. Houghton Mifflin.
- Gauch, P. (1972). *Grandpa and me*. Toronto: Longmans Canada.
- Gilman, P. (1990). *Grandma and the pirates*. Richmond Hill, ON: North Winds.
- Gilman, P. (1992). *Something from nothing*. Richmond Hill, ON: Scholastic Canada.
- Goldman, S. (1976). *Grandma is somebody special*. Chicago: Albert Whitman.
- Goldman, S. (1980). *Grandpa and me together*. Toronto: General Publishing.
- Gray, L. M. (1993). *Miss Tizzy*. New York: Simon & Shuster.
- Grindly, S. (1998). *Flag for grandma*. A, New York: Dorling Kindersley.
- Henriod, L. (1981). *Grandma's wheelchair*. Toronto: General Publishing.
- Hest, A. (1997). *When jesse came across the sea*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press.
- Hodge, J. (1999). *Finding Grandpa everywhere: A young child discovers memories of a grandparent*. Omaha, NE: Centering Corporation.

- Hoffman, M., & Binch, C. (1991). *Amazing Grace*. New York: Scholastic.
- Houston, G. (1992). *My great-aunt Arizona*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Jennings, S. (1992). *When Jeremiah found Mrs. Ming*. Toronto: Firefly.
- Jessup, H. (1999). *Grandma summer*. Toronto: Penguin Canada.
- Johnson, A. (1990). *When I am old with you*. New York: Orchard Books.
- Kesselman, W. (1993). *Emma*. Scarborough, ON: HarperCollins Canada.
- Lakin, P. (1999). *Grandparents around the world*. Farmington Hills, MI: R.R. Bowker.
- Martin, B., & Archambault, J. (1987). *Knots on a counting rope*. New York: Holt..
- Mayer, M. (1983). *Just Grandma and me*. New York: Western.
- McFarlane, S. (1991). *Waiting for the whales*. Victoria, BC: Orca.
- Mellonie, B., & Ingpen, R. (1987). *Lifetimes*. Surrey, GB: Dragon's World.
- Munsch, R. (1986). *Love you forever*. Scarborough, ON: Firefly.
- Oberman, S. (1994). *The always prayer shawl*. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills.
- Pellegrini, N. (1991). *Families are different*. New York: Holiday House.
- Peck, R. (1997). *Monster night at grandma's house*. New York: Viking.
- Pitts, M. (1986). *Justin and the best biscuits in the world*. Toronto: HarperCollins
Canada.
- Polocco, P. (1988). *The keeping quilt*. New York: Simon & Shuster.
- Polocco, P. (1990). *Babushka's doll*. New York: Aladdin.
- Polocco, P. (1992). *Chicken Sunday*. New York: Scholastic.
- Polocco, P. (1992). *Mrs. Katz and Tush*. New York: Dell.
- Polocco, P. (1993). *The bee tree*. New York,: Putnam.
- Raffi. (1988). *One light, one sun*. New York: Crown.

- Raymor, D. (1977). *Grandparents around the world*. Morton Grove, IL: Whitman.
- Reeder, C. (1993). *Grandpa's mountain*. Toronto: Crown.
- Reid, S. (1992). *Grandpa Dan's toboggan ride*. Markham, ON: Scholastic Canada.
- Rogers, P. (1987). *From me to you*. Markham, ON: Orchard Books.
- Rosa-Casanova, S. (1997). *Mama Provi and the pot of rice*. New York: Atheneum.
- Rylant, C. (1985). *The relatives came*. New York: Bradbury.
- Rylant, C. (1996). *The old woman who named things*. Toronto: Harcourt.
- Sakai, K. (1990). *Sachiko means happiness*. San Francisco, CA: Children's.
- Say, A. (1993). *Grandfather's journey*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Schachner, J. B. (2001). *The grannyman*. New York: Penguin.
- Shook Begaye, L. (1993). *Building a bridge*. Flagstaff, AZ: Northland.
- Smucker, B. (1995). *Selina and the bear paw quilt*. Toronto: Lester.
- Stark, U. (1996). *Can you whistle, Johanna?* Oakland, CA: RDR.
- Stevens, C. (1982). *Anna, grandpa and the big storm*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Stevens, M. (1979). *When grandpa died*. Canada: Regensteiner.
- Stevenson, H. (1994). *Grandpa's house*. New York: Hyperion.
- Stolz, M. (1988). *Storm in the night*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Tarlton, J. (1985). *Going to grandma's*. Richmond Hill, ON: Scholastic.
- Vaage, C. (1995). *Bibi and the bull*. Edmonton, AB: Dragon Hill.
- Vyner, T. (1995). *The butterfly kiss*. Hong Kong: Harcourt Brace.
- Ward, N. (1995). *Don't worry grandpa*. Toronto: Random House Canada.
- Waterton, B. (1980). *Pettranella*. Markham, ON: Houghton Mifflin Canada.
- Wild, M. (1993). *My granny*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Winch, J. (1996). *The old woman who loved to read*. Hong Kong: Scholastic Australia.

Woods, D. (1999). *Grandad's earth prayers*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

Yolen, J. (1994). *Grandad Bill's song*. New York: Putnam.

Yolen, J. (1997). *Miz Berlin walks*, New York: Putnam.

Appendix C: Sample Listing of Current Intergenerational Program and Research Sites

Canadian Sites:

Alberta Council on Aging: <http://www.seniorfriendly.ca>

B.C. Council for Families – Connecting Generations :
http://www.bccf.bc.ca/learn/gen_links.html

Elderhostel: Adventures in Lifelong Learning: <http://www.elderhostel.org>

GenerationsCanConnect:

<http://www.generations-canconnect.ic.gc.ca/english/index.asp>

National Forum on Generational Issues: <http://www.theo.umontreal.ca/forum>

Senior Friendly Community Guidebook: <http://www.seniorfriendly.ca>

United Generations Ontario: <http://www.intergenugo.org>

Vanier Institute of the Family: The Intergenerational Movement:

<http://www.vfamily.ca/tm/284/4.htm>

Volunteer Grandparents Society of BC:

http://www.vcn.bc.ca/citizenshandbook/2_11_intergenerational.html

Volunteer Grandparents Society of Canada: <http://www.volunteergrandparents.org>

American Sites:

Connecting Generations at the Temple University Center for Intergenerational Learning
in Philadelphia, PA: <http://www.Templecil.org>

CYFERnet (Children, Youth and Families Education and Research Network):

<http://www.cyfernet.org>

Generations of Hope: <http://www.hope4children.org/index.htm>

Generations Together at the University of Pittsburgh, PA: <http://www.gt.pitt.edu>

Generations Together Intergenerational Sites:

http://www.gt.pitt.edu/intergenerational_sites.htm

Interages: The Montgomery County Intergenerational Resource Center:

<http://www.interages.com/index.htm>

Intergenerational Programming Quarterly: <http://www.IPQjournal.ucsur.pitt.edu/>

Illinois Intergenerational Initiative: <http://www.siu.edu/offices/iii/>

Oaks and Acorns: Provider of Intergenerational Programs for San Diego and Area:

<http://www.oaks-acorns.org/>

Points of View Incorporated (intergenerational information, workshops, speakers,

training, videos and resources): <http://www.pointsofviewinc.com/>

Senior Corps: Foster Grandparents Program: <http://www.seniorcorps.org/joining/fgp/>

Appendix D: Introductory Letter to Parents and Consent Form

(School heading and date)

Dear Parents:

Our grade two class will be involved in an intergenerational project called “A Patchwork of Friends” on six consecutive Tuesday afternoons in May and June. The purpose will be:

- To continue expanding the students’ ability to communicate effectively through reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and representing information
- To increase their sense of pride and confidence in their own abilities
- To enhance their artistic creativity
- To develop and showcase their expanding skills in using technology
- To develop their social skills and ability to cooperate with someone of a different age.
- To understand the differing needs and wants of older adults
- To enhance their sense of personal strengths and abilities
- To develop a positive relationship with an older adult

During this project, your child and his/her grandparent mentor will be involved in a variety of activities, including reading, writing, singing, doing crafts, playing games and sharing common interests and hobbies. All activities will be done within the school setting in large or small groupings. Please be aware that if your child’s natural grandparent is not available to volunteer, other caring adults (whom I know, or who have come highly recommended) have agreed to be grandparent mentors.

As part of this project, I will be conducting a study of whether the attitudes of children and adults will change as a result of participating in this intergenerational project. I will be interviewing several children before the project commences and after it is completed. I will also be observing and jotting down notes during sessions and possibly using some students' work in the final results.

No names, locations or identifying information will be used in reporting the results. You will have an opportunity to read the final results when completed, and you may choose to withdraw your child from the project at any time.

Your willingness to have your child participate in this project is greatly appreciated. I can already sense the excitement of the children about their grandparent mentors. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. I can be reached at school _____ or at home at _____.

I am working with several people from University of Lethbridge on this project:

Dr. Michael Pollard (Faculty Supervisor – phone number _____)

Dr. Richard Butt (Ethics committee – phone Number _____)

Sincerely,

JoAnn St.John
Grade Two Teacher

Consent Form for Student Participation

Please fill out the following consent form and have your child return it to me.

A Patchwork of Friends: An Intergenerational Project

I, _____ give my child _____

Parent/Guardian

Child's Name

permission to participate in the intergenerational project in Ms. St.John's grade two class.

I also give permission for his/her work to be used as a sample in reporting the results.

Actual names and identifying information will not be used.

Appendix E: Introductory Letter to Adult Volunteers and Consent Form

(School Heading and Date)

Dear Grandparent:

As discussed in our initial phone call, you are invited to be a grandparent mentor for a grade two child for six weeks during May and June of this current year. I believe that this project will be rewarding to both you and your adopted or natural grandchild and am looking forward to working and playing alongside you and your grandchild.

During this intergenerational project entitled “A Patchwork of Friends”, you will be involved in reading with your grandchild, singing, doing crafts, playing games and sharing common interests and hobbies. It is my hope that all who are involved will benefit from this experience, by building a relationship with a person of a different age.

As part of this project, I will be conducting a study of whether the attitudes of children and adults will change as a result of participation in this intergenerational project. I will be interviewing several adults and children before the project commences and after it is completed. I will also be observing and recording notes during and after the sessions.

No names, locations and identifying information will be used in the results. You will have an opportunity to read the results of this study when completed, if you wish to do so. You may choose to withdraw from the project at any time.

Your willingness to participate in this project and study is greatly appreciated. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions. I can be reached at school _____ or at home _____.

I am also working with several people from the University of Lethbridge on this project. Should you wish to contact them, their names and phone numbers are:

Dr. Michael Pollard (Faculty Supervisor _____)

Dr. Richard Butt (Ethics Committee _____)

Sincerely,

JoAnn St.John

Grade Two Teacher

Please fill out the following consent form and return it either to me or the school office.

“A Patchwork of Friends: An Intergenerational Project”

Volunteer Grandparent Consent Form

I, _____ agree to participate in this intergenerational project
Name of Grandparent
 and study.

I also give my permission for the work I have done with my grandchild, to be used as a sample in the results.

Date _____

Volunteer's Signature _____

Appendix F: Sample Adult Volunteer Resource Inventory

Name _____

Address _____ Phone _____

City _____ Postal Code _____

Former or Present Occupation(s) _____

Hobbies and Interests (Check hobbies of interest to you)

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> coin collecting | <input type="checkbox"/> cooking | <input type="checkbox"/> cards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> chess | <input type="checkbox"/> woodworking | <input type="checkbox"/> flowers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> crafts | <input type="checkbox"/> photography | <input type="checkbox"/> fishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> reading | <input type="checkbox"/> team sports | <input type="checkbox"/> painting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> gardening | <input type="checkbox"/> knitting | <input type="checkbox"/> computer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> camping | <input type="checkbox"/> swimming | <input type="checkbox"/> car restoration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sign language | <input type="checkbox"/> board games | <input type="checkbox"/> needlework |
| <input type="checkbox"/> writing | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture | <input type="checkbox"/> singing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> playing a musical instrument | <input type="checkbox"/> golf | |

Other _____

List any collections you may have and would like to share with students.

(This does not have to be a sophisticated collection. Remember that children will be fascinated with the simple fact that you even have a collection, no matter how small.)

Availability - I may be most available to volunteer:

Mondays ___ mornings ___ afternoons

Tuesdays ___ mornings ___ afternoons

Wednesdays ___ mornings ___ afternoons

Thursdays ___ mornings ___ afternoons

Fridays ___ mornings ___ afternoons

___ Fall ___ Winter ___ Spring

Transportation (Check the one that applies.)

___ I can provide my own transportation to the school.

___ I rely on others for transportation.

Thank you for completing this survey. It will help us to design and implement the most rewarding program for both you and the students. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please contact the classroom teacher:

Teacher's Name _____

School Phone Number _____

Appendix G: Permission for Professional Use of Student Photographs and Work

Our intergenerational project has been successful for both the children and the adults who participated. If you have any comments about your child's reaction to our shared grandparent experiences or suggestions for future projects such as this, I would appreciate your comments.

Since many other teachers are interested in doing a similar project, I may give presentations to such groups in the future. Part of these presentations may include pictures of the students and samples of their work.

If you would give permission to show some of your child's pictures of work samples, without last names being printed or mentioned please sign the form below and have your child return it to me. Thank you.

_____ Yes, I give permission for my child's picture and/or work samples to be used in presentations about "A Patchwork of Friends: An Intergenerational Project" that took place in Ms. St. John's grade two classroom during May and June 2000. I understand that no last names will be printed or used.

_____ No, I do not give permission for my child's picture or work samples to be used for any purpose.

Date _____

Child's Name _____

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Appendix I: Bibliography of Children's Literature Quilt Stories: Ages 3-9

- Atkins, J. (1999). *A Name on the quilt: A story of remembrance*. New York: Atheneum.
- Bourgeois, P., & Jorisch, S. (2001). *Oma's quilt*. Toronto: Kids Can.
- Brumbeau, J. (2001). *The quiltmaker's gift*. Markham, ON: Scholastic.
- Buchberg, W. (1999). *Quilting activities across the curriculum (Grades 1-3)*. Markham, ON: Scholastic.
- Corer, E. (1986). *The Josefina story quilt*. USA: Harper Collins.
- Ernst, L. C. (1992). *Sam Johnson and the blue ribbon quilt*. New York: Morrow/Avon.
- Flournoy, V. (1985). *The patchwork quilt*. New York: Penguin.
- Franco, B. (2000). *Grandpa's quilt*. Markham, ON: Children's.
- Guback, G. (1994). *Luka's quilt*. New York: William Morrow.
- Hopkinson, D. (1995). *Sweet Clare and the freedom quilt*. Vancouver: Random House.
- Howard, E. (1997). *The log cabin quilt*. New York: Holiday House.
- Johnston, T., & dePaola, T. (1985). *The quilt story*. Toronto: General Publishing.
- Jonas, A. (1984). *The quilt*. New York: Greenwillow.
- Kinsey-Warnock, N. (1989). *The Canada geese quilt*. Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside.
- Laury, J. R. (2000). *No dragons on my quilt*. Markham, ON: American Quilters Society.
- Leedahl, S. (1999). *The bonetalker*. Red Deer, AB: Red Deer Press.
- Love, A. (1995). *Bess's log cabin quilt*. New York: Holiday House.
- Moss, B. (1999). *Reuben and the quilt*. Markham, ON: Good Books.
- Polacco, P. (1988). *The keeping quilt*. Toronto: Alladin.
- Ransom, C. (1999). *The promise quilt*. New York: Walker.
- Ryan, C. (1999). *The dream quilt*. Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook.

Smucker, Barbara (1995). *Selina and the bear paw quilt*. Toronto: Lester.

Tenorio-Coscarelli, J. (1996). *The tortilla quilt story*. Lake Elsinore, CA: Quarter Inch.

Tenorio-Coscarelli, J. (1998). *The tamale quilt*. Lake Elsinore, CA: Quarter Inch.

Whitford Paul, A. (1996). *Eight hands round: A patchwork alphabet*. Scarborough, ON:

HarperCollins Canada.

Appendix J: Grandparent/Child Folder

The following pages were copied on coloured paper and collected into a manila folder.

A PATCHWORK OF FRIENDS

An Intergenerational Project

Dates

Ms. St. John's Grade Two Class

School Name

Grandparent _____

Student(s) _____

WELCOME!

It takes a village to raise a child. (African Proverb)

Thank you very much for agreeing to be part of a grade two child's school-life for the next six week. We will explore, teach and learn together, as we assist children in uncovering and developing their academic, physical, creative and social skills.

Our project will run from Tuesday, May 9th through to Tuesday, June 13th from 1:00 to 2:15 pm.

Each session will involve reading with your child(ren) and doing some pre-arranged craft, game or activity together. If you have special books, games, hobbies or collections, please do not hesitate to bring them in to class and share them.

If you have any questions or concerns, please drop into our classroom or call me at school (403-...) or at home (403-...). I am looking forward to working together!

Sincerely, JoAnn St.John

A school map and a listing of school contact phone numbers was included here. School administration and office staff names and positions were also included.

READING LOG

These are the books I have read with my grandparent.
(More pages to be supplied as needed.)

Book Title	Grandparent's Initials
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____
11. _____	_____
12. _____	_____
13. _____	_____
14. _____	_____

SHARED READING SUGGESTIONS

Adapted from *From Your Child's Teacher* by Bright, R., et al. (1999)

HELPING CHILDREN READ

WHY?

- To practice reading
- To enjoy reading
- To learn new information
- To figure out new words quickly

WHAT?

- Books your partner has read before
- Easy books recommended by the teacher
- Books your partner is interested in reading

HOW?

- Sit beside your partner
- Be sure you can see the words
- Let your partner hold the book
- Help your partner figure out new words
- Talk about what's happening in the story

STUCK ON A WORD? Steps to Help Your Partner

- Wait 3-5 seconds to see if he/she can figure out the word without your help.
- Make the first sound(s) of the word to get him/her started.
- Suggest looking at the picture for clues.
- Read the sentence again and stop before the trouble word.
- Say, "Let's skip that word for now," and have her/him read to the end of the sentence.
- If your partner still cannot read the word, tell her/him what it is. Explain why it was a difficult word.

BEFORE YOU READ

1. Read the story TITLE.
2. Look at and talk about the ILLUSTRATIONS.
3. Check out information about the AUTHOR.
4. PREDICT what the story might be about.
5. Some QUESTIONS you might ask:
 - What do you think might happen to...?
 - What do you know about...?
 - What kind of personality might this character have?
 - Why did ...?
6. Point out SPECIAL WORDS and talk about their meaning.

WHILE YOU READ

1. Check understanding.
2. Does what you are reading make sense?
3. Talk about what is happening in the story.
4. Show how you feel about what is happening in the story.
5. Picture in your head what is happening in the story.
6. Ask questions like:
 - What do you think about...?
 - What do you think will happen next...?
 - Do you like...? Why or why not...?
 - What would you have done if...?

AFTER YOU READ

1. Share your opinions of the story.
2. Ask questions:
 - Did you like this story? Why or why not?
 - What was your favorite part of the story?
 - Who was your favorite character? Why?
 - Has anything like this happened to you?
3. Compare this story to others you or your partner have read.
 - How are they the same?
 - How are they different?
 - Are there other books these stories remind you of? Why? What are they?

WHAT CAN WE DO AFTER WE'VE READ TOGETHER?

1. Play Connect Four.
2. Do a puzzle together.
3. Play checkers.
4. Build with the blocks, unifix cubes or The Gear Box.
5. Color a mandala together.
6. Have your grandchild(ren) show you what they can do with HyperStudio on the computer.
7. Have your grandchild(ren) share their writing folders and composition scribbles. Have them read their favorite stories and poems.
8. Play the Memory Box game.

If at any time you have brought something to do or share with your grandchild, please feel free to do so. All games and activities are to be returned to their appropriate space. Have children take care not to lose game or puzzle pieces.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE
CHILDREN – AND THE TEACHER!**

Appendix K: List of Songs Used Before and During Student/Grandparent Weekly

Gatherings

I Belong

If I Knew You Were Coming I'd Have Baked a Cake

I Like Bugs

I Like to Eat

My Favorite Things

One Dark Night (Adaptation by Marlene and Robert McCracken)

One Light, One Sun

On Top of Spaghetti

School Song

Teamwork

Um-Hm I Want to Linger (adaptation of a familiar campsong)

Uncle Charlie

Welcome song (adapted) with sign language: "Come and sit together in a circle of
friends..."

You Are My Sunshine

Appendix L: Intended Learner Outcomes

(from Alberta Learning, (2002). Elementary Program of Studies, Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning Curriculum Branch.)

The main focus of this intergenerational project is literacy and social development in the context of interacting with people of a different generation. In doing so, we also address a variety of outcomes from other subject areas through an integrated learning approach.

Language Arts:

Specific activities done in our classroom and/or with grandparent mentors will address the following components of the Language Arts curriculum.

General Learner Outcomes GLO's

All literacy activities done prior, during and after the project will encompass these GLO's. Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to:

- Explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences
- Comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts
- Manage ideas and information
- Enhance the clarity and artistry of communication
- Respect, support and collaborate with others

Information and Communication Technology:

Within this intergenerational project, the ICT curriculum will not stand alone, but rather it will be infused within the other subject areas that are addressed.

General Learner Outcomes GLO's

- *Communicating, inquiring, decision making and problem solving*
 - students will access, use and communicate information from a variety of technologies
 - -students will seek alternative viewpoints, using information technologies
- *Foundational operations, knowledge and concepts*
 - students will demonstrate an understanding of the nature of technology
- *Processes for productivity*
 - students will compose, revise and edit text
 - students will organize and manipulate data
 - students will communicate through multimedia

Social Studies:

Specific activities done in our classroom and/or with grandparent mentors will address the following components of the Social Studies curriculum.

General Learner Outcomes GLO's

- *Responsible Citizenship* – understanding the role, rights and responsibilities of a citizen in a democratic society and a citizen of a global community
 - participating constructively in the democratic process by making rational decisions
 - respecting the dignity and worth of self and others
- *Knowledge Objectives* – to be a responsible citizen, one needs to be informed about the past, as well as the present, and to be prepared for the future by drawing on the history and the social science disciplines.
- *Skill Objectives* – skills will be taught in the context of use rather than in isolation. These include process, communication and participation skills. It also includes inquiry strategies that will help students to answer questions, solve problems and make decisions using these skills.
- *Attitude Objectives* – describe a way of thinking, feeling or acting and will be developed through a variety of learning experiences that encompass knowledge and skill objectives. These experiences include participation in specific activities, the development of positive attitudes toward one another, learning in an atmosphere of open inquiry, and the excitement in learning.

Grade Two Topic A: “People Nearby”

- Generalization – *People in my community cooperate to meet the needs of its members.*
- The focus of Grade 2 is on people in a community and how people have similar and different needs.
- Inquiry will be based on, “How are the needs and wants of older adults different from mine and how are these needs and wants met in our community?”

Health:

Specific activities done individually or with grandparent mentors will address the following components of the Art curriculum.

General Learner Outcomes GLO's

- *Wellness Choices* – students will make responsible and informed choices to maintain health and to promote safety for self and others.
- *Relationship Choices* – students will develop effective interpersonal skills that demonstrate responsibility, respect and caring in order to establish and maintain healthy interactions.
- *Life learning Choices* – students will use resources effectively to manage and explore life roles and career opportunities and challenges.

Specific concepts to be addressed are:

- Safety and responsibility
- Understanding and expressing feelings
- Interactions
- Group roles and processes
- Learning strategies
- Life roles and career development
- Volunteerism

Fine Arts:

This intergenerational project will provide an opportunity for the child to experience:

- pride in achievement
- valuable group activities
- a sense of worth and practice in making decisions

It will also provide an opportunity for enabling the child to grow in:

- independence
- individuality
- self-realization, self-awareness and creativity

Art:

Specific activities done individually or with grandparent mentors will address the following components of the Art curriculum.

Reflection - responses to visual forms in nature, designed objects and artworks

Concepts

- designed objects serve specific purposes
- designed objects serve people

Depiction - development of imagery based on observations of the visual world

- Concepts - textures form patterns

Composition - organization of images and their qualities in the creation of unified statements

- Concepts - finishing touches (accents, contrasts, outlines) can be added to make a work more powerful.

Expression - use of art materials as a vehicle or medium for saying something in a meaningful way

- Concepts - everyday activities can be documented visually
 - special events, such as field trips, visits, and festive occasions can be recorded visually
 - family groups and people relationships can be recorded visually
 - students will use media and techniques, with an emphasis on exploration and direct methods in drawing, painting, print making, sculpture, fabric arts, photography and technographic arts.
 - make two and three dimensional assemblages from found objects

Music:

Specific activities done individually or with grandparent mentors prior, during and after the intergenerational meeting times will address the following General Learner Outcomes (GLO's) and components of the Alberta Music curriculum.

General Learner Outcomes GLO's

- Enjoyment of music
- Awareness and appreciation of a variety of music, including music of the many cultures represented in Canada
- Insights into music through meaningful musical activities
- Self-expression and creativity
- Musical skills and knowledge

Concepts

- Rhythm
- Melody
- Harmony
- Form
- Expression

Skills

- Singing
- Listening
- Moving
- Creating
- Reading and writing
- Playing instruments

Appendix M: Sample List of Project Activities: Information & Directions

SAMPLE A:

Interview Questions About Collections, Interests and Hobbies

1. What is the most important thing about your collection?
2. When did you start collecting? Why did you start this collection?
3. Where did you get all your artifacts?
4. Describe the place in your home where you keep this collection.
5. Do you share it with any of your family or friends?
6. Do you have a favorite artifact? Why or why not?
7. Have you ever traded or given some of your collection away?
8. If you could trade your collection for anything you wanted, what would it be? Why?
9. What future plans do you have for your collection?

SAMPLE B:

Favorite Things Activity

The child and grandparent discuss favorite things and then complete the following activity sheet. When completed, they glue it into the middle of a larger colored sheet and create a collage of magazine pictures of their favorite things around the center page.

MY GRANDMA/GRANDPA AND ME

I am _____ and this is my Grandma/Grandpa _____

I like _____

My Grandma/Grandpa likes _____

We both like _____

SAMPLE C: An Interview About Memories

Interviewer (Student) _____ Grandparent _____

(At this age, the child reads the questions and listens for the response. The grandparent writes in the responses.)

1. Do you remember your grandparents?

2. Did you like to do things with them? If you did, what was your favorite thing to do together?

3. What kind of pets did you have when you were young?

4. What was your favorite holiday and what did you like about it?

5. Tell me about some sports or games you played when you were young?

6. What else did you like to do in your spare time?

7. What chores did you have to do when you were young?

8. Tell me about a favorite teacher if you had one.

9. Tell me what you liked and did not like about school?

10. Were you scared of anything when you were young?

11. What did you want to be when you grew up?

12. When you were young, what was something you were good at?

SAMPLE D:

Memory Box Game

(Two to eight people may play this game. Adults and children each take a turn. A decorated box is placed in the middle of the circle. Inside the box are various objects that no one can see.)

1. Sit in a circle with the decorated (and closed) box in the middle.
2. One person puts his/her hand in the box, without looking inside, and then draws out one object.
3. As he/she looks at the object, he/she says, "This reminds me of..." the person can then tell of a memory related to the object.
4. Each person in the circle may either ask the person a question about the memory, or pass.
5. The object is not returned to the box until the end of the game.
6. The next person draws an object out of the box and direction #3 is repeated.
7. This continues until everyone has had a turn.
8. All items are then returned to the box.

SAMPLE E:

Making a Rain Stick

Materials:

30-50 cm hard cardboard tube (tubes used in fabric stores to roll fabric work well)
35-40 small roofing nails
hammer
2 cardboard discs to fit both ends of tube
masking tape
papier-mâché paste (see following recipe for papier-mâché paste)
newsprint (colored paper for final coat is optional) torn into approximately 10 cm strips
acrylic paint
rice, cereal, beans, pebbles etc.

Directions:

1. hammer roofing nails randomly all over the cardboard tube
2. tape a cardboard disc over one end of the tube
3. choose the type of objects you wish (rice, beans etc.) and pour into the tube
4. tape the remaining cardboard disc over the other end of the tube
5. papier-mâché the tube by coating each newsprint strip with paste and randomly layering it over the tube until the tube is completely covered
6. let dry overnight
7. repeat the papier-mâché process and let it dry
8. either paint the rain stick with acrylic paint or give it another coat of papier-mâché using colored paper
9. paint with a clear acrylic finish

Optional:

You can decorate the ends with pieces of leather or ribbon for a more authentic look.

Recipe For Papier-Mâché Paste:

Ingredients:

1 cup (250 ml) of white flour
1 cup (250 ml) of white sugar
1 cup (250 ml) of cold water

4 cups (1 litre) boiling water
1 tbs. (15 ml) powdered alum or
1 tbs. (15 ml) either peppermint or lemon oil (optional)

Directions:

1. mix first 3 ingredients in a medium saucepan
2. add 4 cups (or 1 litre) of boiling water
3. bring to a boil for 1-2 minutes
4. remove from heat and stir in 1 tablespoon (or 15 ml) of powdered alum
5. add either peppermint or lemon oil to each batch to give it a pleasant smell (optional)

This paste will last quite a while if refrigerated. You may add a bit of cold water before working with it, if it seems too thick.

LEGEND OF THE RAIN STICK

The rain stick is an ancient musical instrument made from a branch of a cactus with its thorns pressed into the hollow shaft and filled with desert pebbles. It is an interactive sound sculpture. When held at an angle, the stick produces a rain sound. This rain sound, according to legend, gives the rain stick spiritual power that serenades the RAIN GODS. When held up to the ear, as the contents are falling, it sounds like raindrops. Listen to the soothing sounds of your rain stick.

Sample F:

Individual Name Buttons

Individual Name Button Masters

(These can often be made into metal buttons at a local Rehabilitation Center, for a minimal cost per button. Students are asked to make one for themselves and one for their grandparent mentor.)

1. Each child receives 2 paper buttons. The dimensions are $2 \frac{5}{8}$ inches for the outside edge and 2 inches for the inside circle.
2. Any color of paper may be used.
3. Artwork and printing must be done on the inside circle (in from the edge of the outside circle by about $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch).
4. Have the child or adult print his or her name with black felt marker on the inside circle.
5. Color the background or add designs around the edge of the buttons, leaving the outside circle blank.
6. Collect and check all buttons for correct spelling and take to a local organization or business to make the finished products.

"A Patchwork of Friends"

Grandparent Project

Volume 1, Issue 1

June 2000

Grandparents Return to School

On Tuesday afternoons from May 9th to June 13th, 2000 about twenty-three grandparents joined Ms. Lacey's Grade Two class at Mike Mountain Horse School in Lethbridge, Alberta.

Many sights and sounds were seen and heard to come from this classroom during this time together: singing, nail-pounding, reading, laughing, talking and sharing, paint brushing (and some splashing), cutting, writing, building and game playing.

Grandparents shared memories, practical advice and some tricks with their grandchild. Children shared their stories, excitement, curiosity and energy with their grandparent. Would the children want this to continue? All responded with a definite YES!

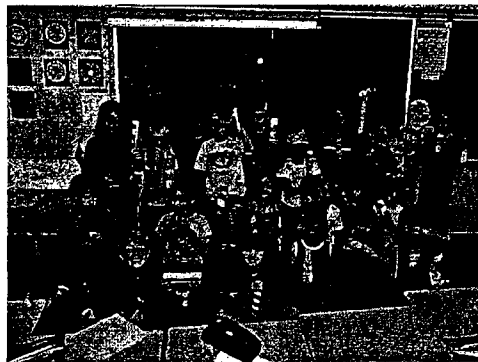
Bring on the Rain!

Amazing rain-sticks; Magical powers.

Grandparents and children did their best to create magical and soothing musical instruments, which if played often enough may just "bring on the rain" to the dry land around Lethbridge.

In fact, something may have worked because it rained and poured all day when the grade two classes went to the Calgary Zoo on June 8th. Now we just have to bring it further south.

Each child (with the assistance of his or her grandparent) pounded many nails into a heavy cardboard tube one week and then filled it with either rice, beans or macaroni and then covered the ends with pieces of cardboard.



The next week both adults and children covered the tube with three layers of paper mache and then a final layer of colored paper. There was an amazing variety of designs and colors! Let's bring on the rain!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Bring on the Rain
- 2 Grandparents are the Greatest!
- 2 Paper Mache Recipe
- 3 Collection Highlights
- 3 Our Favorite Books
- 4 Linger

continued from page 1

My Grandma Donna is the Greatest!!!

Jessica A

My Grandma Donna is nice, fun and she understands children. I like playing chess with her. I won once and she won twice. We played Connect Four and I kept winning. We got our hands all gooey when we were making our rainsticks and put it all over our faces. We had to wash it off. That was fun. Thank you for being my Grandma.



"Patchwork of Friends"

Top Ten Hits

Our time together often began and ended with some singing. These were some of the songs we enjoyed singing together.

- M.M.H. School Song
- I Belong
- Teamwork
- Uncle Charlie
- I like to Eat

Recipe for Paper Mache

Now that you've seen the wonderful results of this creative process, you may want to make something else this summer. Here's the recipe that we used to make our rainsticks.

1 cup of white flour	or	250 ml
1 cup of white sugar	or	250 ml
1 cup of cold water	or	250 ml

- Mix this in a saucepan and add 4 cups (or 1 litre) of boiling water and bring to a boil for one or two minutes.
- Remove and stir in 1 tablespoon (or 15 ml) of powdered alum.
- Added either peppermint or lemon oil to each batch to give it a pleasant smell. However, this is optional.
- This will keep for quite a while if it is refrigerated.
- You may need to add a bit of cold water before working with it.



- My Favorite Things
- On Top of Spaghetti
- One Light, One Sun
- Linger
- One Dark Night

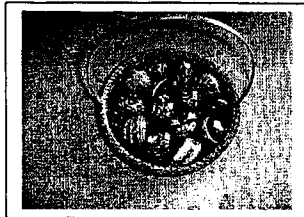
COLLECTIONS HIGHLIGHTS

"My favorite thing was Anthony's frog...I absolutely loved Anthony's Grandpa's wax-casting cowboys!"

"I liked all the collections. The best part was showing my collection."

"My favorite things were Grandma Emma's teddy bears and dolls."

"Anthony's Grandma did a good job on the habitat for the frog."



Rock and Roll Bugs!

"I like bugs, any kind of bugs...."

We are reporting live from Mike Mountain Horse School in Lethbridge, where we have come across an amazing discovery in a grade two classroom.

Everyday pebbles and rocks have transformed into creepy, crawly, slithery, wildly colorful bugs. Grandparents and children painted, cut, and glued simple stones and then used their creative powers to bring them to life.

"So tell me Harrison, how can I tell if your bug is an insect or a spider?"

"Well, from a scientific standpoint, you just have to observe the number of legs. You see, insects have six legs and spiders have eight. But look out. Some spiders have eight eyes and they may be watching you!"



Grandparent Book Notes

Grade Two children read many books about grandparents and seniors, either during class time or with their grandparent. During each session they read many books that were added to their Home Reading Totals to help them get into the next Reading Club.

Here are some of the childrens' favorite titles and authors.

- Ackerman, Karen **The Song and Dance Man**
- Berger, Barbara **Grandfather Twilight**
- Bogart, Jo Ellen **Jeremiah Learns to Read**
- Castaneda, Omar S. **Abuela's Weave**
- Dengler, Marianna **The Worry Stone**
- Fitch, Sharee **I Am Small**
- Fox, Mem **Wilfred Gordon Macdonald Partridge**
- Gilman, Phoebe **Grandma and the Pirates**
- Gilman, Phoebe **Something From Nothing**
- Gray, Nigel **A Balloon for Grandad**
- Mayer, Mercer **Just Grandma and Me**
- Mayer, Mercer **Just Grandpa and Me**
- Oberman, Sheldon **The Always Prayer Shawl**
- Rylant, Cynthia **The Relatives Came**
- Rylant, Cynthia **When I Was Young in the Mountains**
- Sakai, Kimiko **Sachiko Means Happiness**
- Say, Allen **Grandfather's Journey**
- Visage, Carol **Bibi and the Bull**
- Wild, Margaret **Our Granny**
- Wood, Douglas **Granddad's Prayers of the Earth**
- Yep, Laurence **The Butterfly Boy**

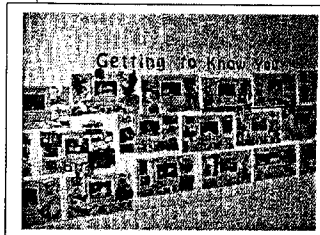


Linger



Um-hum, I want to linger.
Um-hum, a little longer.
Um-hum, a little longer here with you.

Um-hum, you played a special part.
Um-hum, we'll hold you in our heart.
Um-hum, and think of you in days to come.



Um-hum, and come September,
Um-hum, we'll all remember,
Um-hum, the special times we had with you.

Um-hum, and as the years go by,
Um-hum, we'll all sit back and sigh,
Um-hum, it's just so long and
Not good-bye.



Appendix O: Student Prompts and Interview Questions: Pre- and Post-Project

Pre-Project Writing Prompts:

Students were asked to do a written composition, with the prompt “Grandparents are...”

Pre-Project Interview Questions:

Students were asked to respond individually to the following, with the prompt, “I’m going to start a sentence and then I’d like you to finish it”:

1. I think grandparents are...
2. When I think about this project I feel... because...
3. I hope that...
4. One thing I do well is...
5. One thing I want to learn is...
6. One thing I want to do is...

Then they were asked to answer the following questions:

1. Do you have grandparents, and if you do, where do they live?
2. How often do you get to visit them?
3. What do you do with your grandparents?
4. What do you wish you could do with them?
5. Tell me about a favorite time with your grandparent.
6. Tell me something that you’ve always wondered about your grandparents, but haven’t asked.

Post-Project Writing Prompts:

Students were asked to do a written composition, with the prompt, “I’ve learned that grandparents...”

Later, they were asked to respond individually to these questions during an interview:

1. What did you think of the project?
2. Were you with your own grandparent or an adopted grandparent?
3. How was that for you?
4. Tell me some things that you enjoyed doing with your grandparent.
5. Was there anything that you did not enjoy doing with your grandparent? *If so, the interviewer would prompt and then let the child complete the statement, “You didn’t enjoy this activity because...”*
6. Tell me about anything that you learned from your grandparent.
7. Tell me about some things that you did well.
8. Would you want to do this project again? Why?
9. What would you change about it?
10. What do you think should stay the same?

Appendix P: Grandparent Interview Questions: Pre- and Post-Project

Pre-Project Interview Questions:

1. How did you hear about this project?
2. What has drawn you to become involved?
3. What do you hope to gain from being a grandparent mentor to a grade two child?
4. Do you think that your involvement will help children? If so, describe in what way you think this will happen?
5. What types of activities with the child would you be interested in doing?
6. Describe what you think is the purpose of a school.
7. What (if any) thoughts do you have about working and playing alongside other grandparent mentors?
8. From your present understanding of education, do you think this type of intergenerational program might support the Alberta elementary program of Studies (curriculum)? In what way?

Post-Project Interview Questions:

1. Describe (if any) changes in your perception of the role of schools today.
2. What has been your experience of being involved in *A Patchwork of Friends: An Intergenerational Project*?
3. Were there any surprises and if so, what were they?
4. Has anything changed in your life because of something you learned through this project?
5. Describe any changes that you observed, heard or felt in your relationship with the child(ren) you mentored.

6. Has your involvement in this project changed your interactions or views and attitudes towards your own grandchildren or other children? If so, how?
7. Has this project helped you to make contact with other adults who volunteered in the project?
8. What is your overall opinion of this project?
9. Should this project be repeated another time?
10. If so, what could be done to improve the project?