

THE EFFECTS OF STUDENT
SELECTION OF SHORT STORIES
ON STUDENTS' MOTIVATION AND
PERFORMANCE

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An Abstract
Presented to
the Faculty of the Graduate School
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Education Specialist

by
Carolyn L. Wells
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ABSTRACT

Since motivation often rested on the student and his self-perceptions, this field study was designed to determine the possible effects of student selection of short stories on students' levels of motivation, their academic performance, and their retention of knowledge. Thus, three related hypotheses were tested: (1) did student selection of short stories create a more pronounced level of student motivation; (2) did student selection yield significant differences in the students' academic performance; and (3) did student selection yield significant differences in their retention of knowledge.

To draw conclusions relative to the hypotheses, four homogeneous groups of English II students at Todd County Central High School during the 1979-1980 school year were used in this quasi-experimental non-equivalent control-group design. A five-day short story unit was utilized with Groups I and III studying stories of student choice, Group II functioning as a control and studying stories based on this researcher's preferences, and Group IV studying ones chosen randomly by the researcher.

Student motivation and attitude questionnaires were used prior to the unit and later during the unit to obtain data for comparisons of the students' personal attitudes and levels of motivation. A teacher-completed motivation

checklist was also used in order to draw conclusions about the possible effects of student selection on students as perceived by the researcher. To secure data relating to student performance and retention of knowledge, objective-type tests were used at the end of the unit and then five weeks later. The same test was used both times, yet no student review of any type was provided for the second test. The t-Test for Independent Samples was then used with both tests' results to determine if significant differences in mean scores occurred.

In relation to the three hypotheses tested, data collected did not support that student selection yielded increased levels of motivation within the students themselves or as perceived by the researcher. Furthermore, the variable of student selection did not reveal significant differences in the academic performance of students at the close of the unit or in their retention of knowledge when they were retested five weeks later.

However, students of each group on both tests were consistent in their performance and in their retention of knowledge. Thus, even though no significant group differences were noted, it was concluded that allowing the students involved in this field study the opportunity to share in subject matter selection and to be involved in decision-making within the classroom produced no adverse results in either their apparent levels of motivation, in their academic performance, or in their retention of knowledge.

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Field Study written by Carolyn L. Wells entitled "The Effects of Student Selection of Short Stories on Students' Motivation and Performance." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Specialist in Education degree.

D. B. Lambert

Major Professor

We have read this field study
and recommend its acceptance:

George Rawlins

Second Committee Member

Helen A. Hitzger

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Accepted for the Graduate Council:

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Chapter 1

NATURE OF THE STUDY

Most people have found that motivation to achieve a goal existed in a much stronger form when that motivation emerged from within the individual. This often was the situation, and many examples could be cited to support this idea. The story of Glenn Cunningham's mastering the use of his scarred legs after almost all hope had vanished served as one illustration for others to overcome physical weaknesses. The more familiar story of Franklin Roosevelt's conquering a similar hardship also reinforced this concept of internal motivation inspiring others to succeed.

Thus, many have concluded that the most significant difference between these persons' successes and others' failures in comparable situations centered on their attitudes. The American writer Ralph Waldo Emerson earlier stated, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." Naturally, the greatness attached to any goal varied; however, to accomplish any goal, a person must have possessed motivation. Whether that motivation emerged from within the individual or from without, it had to be present as he worked toward accomplishment of his set goal.

Without a doubt, motivation has long been reported a primary concern of teachers, administrators, and parents

since all three groups have been involved in the education of all students, including those who possessed higher levels of motivation to learn and obviously those who were lacking in it. Naturally, these groups daily saw the reflection of motivation from students, and some students' faces continually beamed as they grasped eagerly for knowledge. Sadly enough, however, there were also those whose faces or attitudes unknowingly betrayed their feelings of boredom, disgust, or continued failure.

Obviously, the signs of motivation also appeared within the classroom as many students reflected their personal types of motivation by disrupting others, by daydreaming, and many times by falling asleep during the class period. Their lack of motivation was also mirrored in the halls and rest rooms of schools and within the classrooms themselves. Broken windows, abused school equipment, wall and desk graffiti among many other acts all demonstrated that students were not being motivated to learn, for their expressions of motivation found other outlets and their own special forms of reward.

No school has found itself immune from concern in this area. The same problem hovers at Todd County Central High School with teachers and administrators realizing that many students have not been motivated to excel academically. The marks of nonmotivation also present themselves both on the students' faces and in the school itself. Regretfully, all teachers are not concerned that students lack motivation

to achieve. However, many others are wondering why and are seeking answers that will better prepare them to cope with this instructional dilemma. Because of the magnitude and importance of this problem, it is one that merits a detailed study into the components of motivation, the factors that affect student motivation, and the needs that teachers must consider as they strive to motivate all students to learn.

Hypotheses

It became apparent then that one question of much interest to administrators, teachers, and parents would be: does student motivation, performance, and retention of knowledge increase when material studied is of the student's choice. It seemed logical that the most relevant factor in the area of motivation was the student himself. Since it ultimately was the student who had the self-motivation to learn or the one who had to be motivated to acquire knowledge, it was reasonable to infer that the student was the one who was the major determiner of his success or failure within the classroom. It was likewise arguable that a student who selected material to be studied or had in some way partially determined what was studied would display a more pronounced level of motivation than the one who had material assigned to him.

Thus, this field study will test three related hypotheses. First, does motivation displayed by a student become more pronounced when material studied by the student

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is of his choice. Secondly, will a student's academic performance be significantly different when material studied is student-selected. And thirdly, will a student's retention of knowledge be significantly different when material studied is selected by the individual student.

Procedure

In testing the hypotheses, three classes of English II students at Todd County Central High School will be studied. One class of 22 students will be divided into two groups of 11 with care given to equalize the two as much as reasonably possible. Two other classes each with 14 students will also be involved in this study.

A brief five-day unit on short stories will be presented to these four groups. In the class composed of two groups, one group will be allowed to select and study five short stories receiving the majority of student votes. However, the other group within this class will serve as a control group and will study five short stories based on this researcher's preferences. The third group of 14 students will also study five short stories selected by a majority of that class. The fourth group of 14 will be assigned five short stories using the ones previously selected randomly by this researcher.

The two classes selecting their own short stories will be provided a list of 10 short stories with brief descriptions from which they will make their choices. This

same list will also be used for the random selection of short stories. All four groups will be administered an objective test over the stories studied by each group. Five weeks later all four groups will be given the same tests without any type of review to determine the students' retention of knowledge.

In drawing conclusions about the first hypothesis, attitude and motivation checklists and questionnaires will be used prior to the treatment to pinpoint existing levels of motivation and attitudes toward English with comparisons to be made from findings collected during the short story unit. In concluding the performance and retention hypotheses, differences in mean scores will be used to determine if the test results reveal significant differences.

The three classes included in this study were selected because of comparable abilities in reading and language skills along with similar capabilities academically. The students also share analogous socio-economic backgrounds with students basically being of the middle or lower class. The students are also relatively alike in terms of motivation with most of the students being concerned mainly with receiving either a C or a passing grade in English II; each group, however, does have a few students who show greater concern with doing their best. The four groups also have students who are either repeating English II and/or have already failed the first semester of the class. One above average student involved in individual work will be omitted

from this study because of the student's greater ability and greater level of self-motivation. Two other students will be excluded because of their exceptionally low reading abilities.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A purple-faced, wide-eyed witch painted on the door commanded, "Trust Me!" The witch in this case was Mel Prowse, and the door opened into a sixth-grade classroom at Mariemont Elementary School in suburban Sacramento, California. Inside this room was an eye-boggling array of posters, sculptures, stage coaches, and zombie motorcyclists riding across a mural. Labeled "five-star" by a former student, this classroom was one where student motivation was paramount.¹ Of course, all classrooms and all teachers have not been as unique as the ones described, yet many administrators, teachers, and parents have been greatly concerned with changing, increasing, or improving the levels of motivation of students, particularly of those of high school age who often expressed the attitude that school had become a constant drag.

Definitions of Motivation

Motivation was defined as the practical art of using incentives and arousing interest for the purpose of

¹Nancy Westerburg, "Kids Give Their Classroom a ***** Rating," Learning. 4:56-57, 59, December, 1975.

causing a student to perform in a desired way. Others added that it involved the art of choosing study materials and presenting them in such a way that they appealed to the students' interest and caused them to work willingly until a task was completed. In addition to these definitions, many stated that motivation to learn in school included that which gave direction and intensity to a student's behavior in a school situation.²

Of great importance was the concept that motivation was a generalized state of tension that tended to increase all responses; thus, when a human was in a highly motivated condition, he was more active, ran faster, and jumped with greater vigor.³ It should also be remembered that the level of motivation was not permanent; however, it did not change much except over extended periods of time. This point was particularly significant and worked both in a positive and negative way. It was particularly beneficial when a student had a teacher who lacked enthusiasm, for it became difficult for that teacher to quickly dull a positively motivated student's desire to learn.⁴

Motivation was also likened to blood pressure. Too much of it was bad, and obviously too little was

²Jack Frymier, Motivation and Learning in School (Bloomington, Indiana: The Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1974), pp. 5-6, 16.

³Eva D. Ferguson, Motivation: An Experimental Approach (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1976), p. 67.

⁴Frymier, pp. 7-8.

undesirable.⁵ According to one teacher, motivation occurred when a student knew that the teacher was interested and cared. In addition to the teacher's caring, motivation involved building relationships among the students so that they also became caring of one another.⁶

The Importance of Motivation

The importance of student motivation within the classroom was greatly emphasized. Marilyn Van Derbur, a former Miss America and a motivation specialist, stated the greatest educational need today was that of motivation. She also stressed the need for every school in the country to have motivational mini-courses, faculty meetings, and PTA meetings to reach every student, teacher, and parent.⁷

Moreover, motivation of students was important because educators were questioning why some students lost their interest in learning after they entered school. By the time students reached junior high school, the average level of motivation among girls was more positive than that of boys.⁸ It was also found that in general students'

⁵Frymier, p. 8.

⁶Jane Manzelli and others, "Motivation Is a Matter of Trust and Dialogue," Learning. 3:30-31, January, 1975.

⁷Marilyn Van Derbur, "Motivating Students," Today's Education. 63:70, September-October, 1974.

⁸Frymier, pp. 6-9.

feelings of personal adequacy in school gradually became less positive with the passage of time with approximately 84 percent of third grade students proud of their work compared with 53 percent of eleventh graders.⁹

The Significance of the Self-Image

The concept of motivation naturally revolved around the student and his perceptions of himself. When a student undertook a task, he set goals for himself based on his perceptions of himself. Those achievement goals were viewed in relation to others with whom the student made comparisons. If the student compared himself with a group that he believed did well, he set goals below their expected performances. If the group was expected to be less skilled, his goals were at about their performance level. If, however, he had tried the task before, he set his goal slightly above his average performance. Therefore, his success or failure depended not on an absolute measure of performance but on how his performance compared with his level of aspiration.¹⁰

The significance of the self-image became even clearer when looking at research that reconfirmed how powerfully a student's mental outlook affected the outcome of

⁹W. C. Morse, "Self-Concept in the School Setting," Childhood Education. 41:198, December, 1964.

¹⁰Elton McNeil, George Fuller, and Jackie Estrada, Psychology Today and Tomorrow (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1978), p. 317.

life situations. Research conducted with two groups of college students established that students who were schooled in the hopelessness of a first situation did not attempt to resist in a second one where they could have succeeded. This student group had self-imposed a sense of helplessness upon themselves, and this led to their self-defeat. On the other hand, a second group of students, who were previously successful in their first situations, were found successful in a second one. It was also established that the giving-up attitude became more pronounced in the tenth grade since many students had had several more years to verify the uselessness of trying.¹¹ This state of learned helplessness, thus, led to persons low in achievement motivation perceiving that their effort did not affect their learning outcomes.¹²

It was also found that enthusiastic students generally tended to have a positive concept of themselves while unenthusiastic ones tended to have negative self-concepts. Data also clearly supported that students from disadvantaged backgrounds possessed less positive motivation to learn than those students from advantaged ones.¹³

¹¹Albert Rosenfeld, "'Learning' to Give Up," Saturday Review. 4:36-37, September 3, 1977.

¹²Bernard Weiner, "Attribution Theory, Achievement Motivation, and the Educational Process," Review of Educational Research. 42:210, Spring, 1972.

¹³Frymier, p. 8.

According to one researcher, black students, especially those from poor families, gave up more easily than white students of comparable economic status. White students, unlike the black students involved in the research, were found to stay with a problem longer and did not assume that they could not solve one problem because they failed in solving another.¹⁴ Another researcher concluded that black students were handicapped with a lack of academic motivation because of their inadequate early reinforcement of that effort.¹⁵ Moreover, girls were inadvertently programmed to feel more helpless about improving their situations, for teachers generally believed that girls, unlike boys, already were doing their best since girls usually were neater, better behaved, and harder working.¹⁶

What Motivation Does

Motivating conditions provided a means of control over students' behavior that was of the greatest interest and importance to parents, teachers, coaches, and others. Ways in which student behavior was improved varied tremendously with reported results of greater persistence in long and arduous undertakings, deeper concentration, and better attention to instruction and communications.¹⁷

¹⁴Rosenfeld, p. 37.

¹⁵Weiner, p. 210.

¹⁶Rosenfeld, p. 37.

¹⁷William S. Ray, The Science of Psychology: An Introduction (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1964), p. 422.

Almost all theories of motivation revolved around the ideas that motivation activated behavior or provided the energy necessary for it. Secondly, motivation directed the activated behavior toward a specified goal.¹⁸ Even though observations about people's behavior were made and facts were gathered, it was never absolutely conclusive that all the relevant details were collected. However, it was concluded that people engaged in activities that appeared to have a particular purpose or goal, and motivation was the tendency to act to achieve a particular goal or state.¹⁹

The theory or idea of motivation clearly involved three basic needs possessed by all humans--identity, stimulation, and security. If students were secure, adequate, and unthreatened, then they were more likely to reach out and seek the unfamiliar. If, however, they were insecure, afraid, and uncomfortable, they were more likely using their energies conserving and defending what they were rather than moving toward what they could become. And when they were insecure and unstable, they were not usually reaching out toward a world of unknown data.²⁰

In all motivated behavior three essential elements existed. The first of these was the events that caused a

¹⁸Richard A. Kasschau, Psychology Exploring Behavior (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980), p. 275.

¹⁹McNeil, pp. 305-306.

²⁰Frymier, pp. 10-11.

need for the behavior to occur, and these were learned, inherited, or a combination of the two. The second important element centered on the internal result which included a drive or urge, a purpose, or a motive. The third must was the goal itself, and this often was referred to as an incentive. Consequently, in all motivated behavior all of these elements were combined to help the individual achieve a particular goal that he found significant.²¹

The Cycle of Motivation

The operation of these three elements of motivated behavior shared two significant traits. One of these related to the repetitive nature of the operation itself along with the exactness of the operation with the events always occurring in the same sequence. First in this cycle of motivation was the need itself, which was defined as an internal state motivating our behavior. In education, the concern centered on learned goals which pulled students toward them. Thus, the value of the goal itself became the major motivating factor. Second in the cycle was the factor of drive, an aroused state that deprived a student of the goal object or provided the incentive necessary for him to satisfy it. Naturally, all needs created specific kinds of drives and gave various cues as to their existence.

²¹Kasschau, pp. 276-277.

Next in the sequence was the response which was directed toward a specific goal object. Moreover, almost all responses were learned. If the attempt to reach the goal was successful, the next phase of motivation was the reaction to the goal which varied according to the nature of the goal. The final phase in this continuous cycle, before it started anew, was deprivation; this resulted when the goal was either consumed, avoided, or escaped. However, with the passage of time, the student once more became deprived, and this, of course, created more needs which had to be fulfilled.²²

Clearly, no one goal existed that insured success for everyone, and several variables had to be considered when viewing the goal-seeking behavior of others. One of these was the individual's need for success coupled with the appeal he had for the goal. Secondly, the distance that existed between the individual and his goal was also influential with incentive gradually increasing as the distance between the two decreased. Another point to consider focused on the individual's expectation of success.²³ Work in the late 1970's emphasized that a person's own standards of excellence affected both the nature and the severity of

²²Kasschau, pp. 277-279.

²³Robert A. Goodale and others, Experiencing Psychology (Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1978), p. 125.

the tasks he personally selected.²⁴ A fifth variable to consider was the level of pride that the individual expected to receive from the accomplishment of that goal.²⁵ In relation to this, teachers had to help students realize that they did not have to defeat someone else to achieve excellence for themselves; instead, teachers had to stress that effort was the most important motivational factor under the students' direct control.²⁶

Motivation and the Teacher

Teacher Concerns

Research repeatedly showed that motivation was either affected by or was a function of the number, quality, richness, intricacy, and complexity of stimulus material. This was particularly important since all humans needed stimulation. Those people who existed and functioned in a rich and varied stimulus environment developed higher mental abilities and their intelligence increased. Those who existed in a stimulus-deprived environment developed lower mental abilities and their intelligence suffered.²⁷

Furthermore, student motivation was a function of several variables--what resided within the student and what

²⁴Kasschau, p. 295.

²⁵Goodale, p. 125.

²⁶Steven Owen, H. P. Blount, and Henry Moscow, Educational Psychology, An Introduction (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1978), p. 424.

²⁷Frymier, p. 18.

was a part of the external world that he encountered.²⁸ Clearly, students did not stay motivated by situations in which they experienced more failure than success, nor was motivation only affected by situations as they were but also by things as students perceived and valued them and by the way students saw themselves. Evidence also suggested that the way students felt about themselves and their abilities to do school work was positively related to what they thought others expected of them.²⁹

Teacher Characteristics

Because of their influence, teachers needed to first understand that they taught what they were and their own self-concepts more than they taught subject matter. It was also imperative that teachers understand that anything said or done within the classroom could significantly change a student's attitude about himself for better or for worse.³⁰ Because teachers were a source of feedback for their students, they had to consider as important the thousands and thousands of specific instructions, demands, responses, and reactions which were made regularly during the day and often without much careful thought.³¹

²⁸Frymier, p. 23.

²⁹Don Hamachek, Motivation in Teaching and Learning (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1968), pp. 5-6.

³⁰Hamachek, p. 8.

³¹Frymier, p. 29.

Evidence also suggested that teachers who were warm, flexible, tolerant, interested in students, and possessed a sense of humor seemed better able to positively affect the attitudes and learning of students more so than did teachers in whom these personality traits were less evident.³²

Flanders also considered it essential in classrooms in which learning, motivation, and attitudes were superior for teachers to provide spontaneously a range of roles varying from fairly active, dominative supervision to a more reflective, discriminating support. Those teachers found to be successful were inclined to use the same instruction procedures and interaction styles in a more or less rigid fashion.³³ Moreover, teachers were encouraged to be democratic but give direction and involve students in decision-making. Through these techniques, motivation was cultivated.³⁴

Other evidence suggested that when a teacher was able to personalize his instruction he was inclined to be more successful, particularly when motivating his students to do better work. The use of personalized comments on students' work was found to have a greater effect than letter grades, and even a short, standard comment written on a paper produced measurable achievement gains. Definitely,

³²Hamachek, p. 11.

³³Hamachek, p. 12.

³⁴A. S. Alschuler, D. Tabor, and J. McIntyre, "Teaching Achievement Motivation," Developing Motivation in Young Children, ed. Stanley Coopersmith (San Francisco: Albion Publishing Company, 1975), p. 229.

those teachers who showed an active personal interest in their students' work were also likely to be more successful motivators than those teachers who were inclined to be impersonal and distant.³⁵

Teachers who were found superior in encouraging student motivation and learning seemed to exhibit several other important characteristics. First, they were willing to be flexible in class as the situation demanded. They also saw the world from the students' point of view and were willing to experiment and try out new ideas in the classroom. In addition, they possessed skills in asking questions and possessed knowledge in their subject area and related areas as well. These teachers also had skill in establishing definite examination procedures and were willing to provide definite study helps for students.

Furthermore, these teachers also reflected an appreciative attitude toward their students through smiles, nods, and comments along with possessing an informal, easy, and conversational manner in teaching.³⁶ Such teachers did not have to be the so-called fountains of knowledge who sought only to impress themselves and those around them. Instead, they were the type who willingly related to others, giving affectively as well as cognitively.³⁷

³⁵Hamachek, pp. 13-14.

³⁶Hamachek, p. 15.

³⁷Gary Gilmore, "Some Major Factors Influencing Motivation: Implications for Educational Setting Events," Journal of Education. 156:35, November, 1974.

Classroom Skills

Of equal importance within the area of student motivation was teacher methodology. According to Kleinert, no methodology was successful unless it had inherent motivational factors--something to move the student to want to learn and to try until he succeeded. For the student to become interested in learning a new skill or new facts, he needed to quickly experience the reward of being successful. Thus, when a student learned to perform a simple task or to feed back a correct answer, even the low-achiever was much more likely to continue to learn.³⁸

Personal involvement of the student in the new topic was another effective approach to gain motivation. Few students resisted the chance to find out how well they did on a self-test as long as they were going to be the judges and no grades were to be given. Using these tests before and after a learning experience better assisted the student in gaining insight into his progress. Again, motivation was strengthened.³⁹

The use of games and group competitiveness were also well known for motivating high student interest.⁴⁰ However, competition was a stimulus to achievement only if the conditions were right. Students naturally loved to compete, yet teachers had to prevent students from facing frequent

³⁸E. J. Kleinert, "More Ways to Motivate," Instructor. 83:89, August-September, 1973.

³⁹Kleinert, p. 90.

⁴⁰Kleinert, p. 90.

failure by controlling the competition to insure opportunities for each student to succeed.⁴¹

Closely related to games was problem-solving which was focused on the individual rather than the group effort. This provided opportunities for the student to compete individually against a problem. To be motivational, the problem presented had to be new to the student and simple enough for him to at least attempt.⁴² Motivation also tended to improve when the student was given the opportunity to pursue his objectives by his own methods.⁴³

Emphasis also was given to the student's discovering the answers he was seeking through the critical thinking method rather than by merely telling him particular facts.⁴⁴ The use of convergent or memory-type questions also had a place in the classroom, yet teachers seriously hindered motivation and learning if they only encouraged convergent rather than a combination of convergent and divergent or thought-provoking questions.⁴⁵

Perhaps the most common technique teachers used to generate motivation with content material involved working on an individual basis with each student. Interest was also

⁴¹Ivan Russell, Motivation (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1971), p. 74.

⁴²Kleinert, p. 90.

⁴³Russell, p. 65.

⁴⁴Gilmore, p. 30.

⁴⁵Hamachek, p. 26.

aroused when students helped other students to learn.⁴⁶ Curricula also needed to be designed so that students felt self-pleasure by performing prescribed activities. Then teaching was considered as the providing of opportunities to allow for self-enhancement rather than resorting to motivating students through incentives, fear, or threats of punishment.⁴⁷

Variety, often said to be the spice of life, also stimulated motivation. Optimum levels of motivation and learning seemed to be created through multisensory inputs. Almost any student, even one who was unmotivated, derived some learning from a varied visual experience.⁴⁸ The practice of beginning a topic with a variety of intriguing materials--books, objects, or games--also provided variety and generated student curiosity in a new topic.⁴⁹

Moreover, teachers were encouraged to seek materials that were relevant and to link new learnings with earlier student associations.⁵⁰ The need also existed to develop objectives out of student concerns rather than by limiting objectives to only subject matter concerns. Working to clarify goals and stating objectives in behavioral terms also helped students to learn. This was especially true when the goals were acceptable to them.⁵¹

⁴⁶Russell, p. 65.

⁴⁷Gilmore, p. 34.

⁴⁸Russell, p. 88.

⁴⁹Kleinert, p. 90.

⁵⁰Kleinert, p. 90.

⁵¹Frymier, p. 29.

Research likewise confirmed that learning should be appropriately spaced and not "crammed" to encourage and maintain high student motivation. In addition, nothing stifled student motivation more than for students to wait two or three weeks to get an examination or paper back. Accordingly, students were more likely to remain at a higher level of motivation if they were given information about their performances as quickly as possible and with a personal comment or two attached to each paper or test.⁵²

Most common among the social motives were the human needs to be accepted, approved, and recognized. Showing a student that a teacher knew and valued him as an individual was also achieved by a word of praise, a positive written comment, or a nonverbal nod, smile, or touch.⁵³ However, according to research findings, praise or compliments were often negative in arousing uneasiness, defensiveness, or cynicism.⁵⁴ Rowe discovered that praise was habituated in many teachers' speech with as many as one out of every four words uttered in a classroom being praise. Rowe argued that praise cut into a student's task performance, undermined the student's confidence in his answers, and encouraged him to go for a quick payoff of praise rather than involving himself in more complex or innovative reasoning processes.

⁵²Hamachek, pp. 23-24.

⁵³Kleinert, p. 90.

⁵⁴Charles Edgley and R. Turner, "The Bitter-Sweet Compliment Problem," Today's Education. 66:28, January-February, 1977.

Along with these, it taught the student that reward came from one external source--the teacher--rather than from the internal sources of self-satisfaction.⁵⁵

There were, however, some positive aspects of using praise. First, people expected praise so they could feel valued by others. Secondly, praise was easy to give, and it was also a way of gaining status or recognition in the eyes of others.⁵⁶ Praise was also considered beneficial when it was specific and directed at tasks and not at the persons performing the tasks. To improve the value of praise, Rowe suggested that teachers slow their pace in praising and be silent more often.⁵⁷ In addition, the frequent use of praise was not considered to be as significant as the type of praise used. The use of mild forms--saying "uh huh" and "right"--was considered more effective than stronger forms.⁵⁸

Myths Related to Motivation

Several myths revolved around the study of motivation required clarification. Of utmost importance in the study of motivation was the fact that learning did not depend upon motivation, for some learning occurred whenever a response was made. However, motivation was significant in

⁵⁵David Martin, "Your Praise Can Smother Learning," Learning. 5:43-44, February, 1977.

⁵⁶Gilmore, p. 32.

⁵⁷Martin, pp. 48, 51.

⁵⁸Russell, p. 90.

learning because of the indirect effects it had since it was necessary for performance and affected the nature of that performance.⁵⁹

Secondly, the level of motivation was sometimes too high for efficient learning; however, there appeared to be an optimal level for the learning of any task with the optimum depending upon the difficulty of the task. It was generally found that the more difficult the task the lower the level of motivation necessary to promote efficient learning. With a lower level of motivation, performance was slower with a student more likely to observe small distinctions and relationships.⁶⁰

Another misconception focused on the belief that teachers motivated students. In reality, however, no one actually motivated anyone. Even though teachers made teaching situations attractive and stimulating, they did not control the students' perceptions of themselves, their values, their personalities, or their judgments, and these were the elements that ultimately decided the issue of student motivation. Thus, a student was influenced by the teacher, yet the teacher did not directly motivate him.⁶¹

⁵⁹Frank A. Logan, Fundamentals of Learning and Motivation (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1969), pp. 153-154.

⁶⁰Logan, p. 154.

⁶¹Raymond J. Wlodkowski, Motivation and Teaching: A Practical Guide (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1978), p. 14.

A fourth misconception that merited attention was the idea that learning automatically improved when student motivation was increased. On the contrary, no conclusive evidence supported that motivation directly improved learning, for the effects of motivation depended on the type of learning, the type of task, the cognitive style of the learner, and the type of classroom setting with motivation usually considered a necessary but not a sufficient element for learning.⁶²

Motivation and the Learning Task

Within any teaching situation, three stages of learning had to be considered, and each of these in turn were of much concern in relation to a teacher's stress on motivational factors. The beginning of any learning task was of necessity influenced by the student's attitude toward the subject, teacher, and himself. Moreover, the needs which existed within him were all operating as he began each learning situation. During the task, he was influenced by stimulation as he hopefully found the task interesting and relevant. At the same time, he was also influenced by the affective climate of the classroom.⁶³ This aspect served to bind the cognitive and affective domains as allies since a student's feeling good about a subject facilitated the

⁶²Wlodkowski, p. 16.

⁶³Wlodkowski, p. 14.

learning of it. Naturally, feeling bad about it became an impediment to the task.⁶⁴

The ending phase of the task was affected by the student's competence or his feelings of success or failure as he completed the task.⁶⁵ If he failed, then he may have blamed his failure on low ability or a difficult test, two factors that he could not likely alter. Thus, he was inclined to expect continued failures. If, however, he considered it bad luck or lack of effort on his part, then his future chances of success seemed better since these factors were subject to change.⁶⁶ Another category of motivation to consider in this third phase was that of reinforcement.⁶⁷ Consequently, reinforcement served as a builder of attitudes toward the self with the student who saw himself as successful willing to try again.⁶⁸

Student Performance and Retention of Knowledge

In relation to learning, the solidity of any learning that took place became the best preventive against the student's forgetting. Consequently, material that was over-learned or studied beyond the minimum required level was more likely to remain with the learner. Secondly, learning

⁶⁴Owen, p. 403.

⁶⁵Wlodkowski, p. 19.

⁶⁶Goodale, p. 136.

⁶⁷Wlodkowski, p. 19.

⁶⁸Robert Gagne, The Conditions of Learning (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1977), p. 244.

was more complete when the student was actively involved in the learning situation. Thus, stress given to meaningful material brought with it the rewards of better learning and better retention of material.⁶⁹

When working with lists of nonsense syllables, Ebbinghaus concluded that when something new was learned, much of what was learned was forgotten quickly; however, subjects recalled at least some of it for a longer period. He reported that after twenty minutes only 58 percent of what was learned was recalled. This decreased to 44 percent after an hour, 34 percent after one day, and 28 percent after two days. This leveled to 21 percent after a month's time.

Other findings indicated that motor skills were remembered more than verbal skills. Moreover, the least forgetting was shown when subjects were tested for recognition. The next highest score was made for relearning, and the lowest scores were found in the area of recall. Furthermore, learning was easier and remembered for longer periods of time when it was achieved by rule or logic and not by rote.⁷⁰

Since needs strongly influenced learning and reinforcement of behavior provided its special rewards, student

⁶⁹Norman Tallent and Charlotte Spungin, Psychology Understanding Ourselves and Others (New York: American Book Company, 1977), p. 413.

⁷⁰Jerome Kagan and Ernest Haveman, Psychology: An Introduction (2nd ed.; New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1972), pp. 86-87, 89, 123.

performance was probably repeated and learned when a need had been satisfied. Furthermore, those students with a high need for achievement were found to volunteer for experiments, took a more active part in school, tried harder to obtain feedback, and considered themselves more responsible for the learning outcomes.⁷¹

To enhance retention of knowledge, the organization of material to be learned into tables, graphs, charts, or diagrams served as a source of cues that led to both retrieval of knowledge and stimulation of learning. Similarly, performances that demonstrated what had been learned helped both the teacher and student to realize that learning had reached its objective. Following the performance, feedback, whether of the verbal or nonverbal type, also served to provide knowledge to the student about his performance.⁷²

Bodoin and Pikunas, who conducted an experiment to determine the effects of motivation on elementary students' performance and retention of knowledge, concluded that no significant differences were found in student performance at the conclusion of the unit. However, when students were re-tested six weeks later, students who were in an affective learning class did significantly better. These researchers quoted the theories of Carl Rogers, who stated, "Self-initiated learning which involves the whole person of the

⁷¹McNeil, p. 314.

⁷²Gagne, pp. 296-298.

learner--feelings as well as intellect--is the most lasting and pervasive."⁷³

Definitely, the area of student motivation was found to be a crucial one in the broader area of learning. Even though the meaning of motivation varied from one teacher and person to the next, it did include the involvement of each student in the learning situation. Many times the level of motivation experienced by the student was not outwardly visible with signs of student eagerness or interest. However, student motivation of some type was always present. It became important, therefore, that the teacher assist each student in reaching for some goal that the individual student found valuable. Hopefully, then the student and the teacher both gained through increased interest in the learning situation. And hopefully, the knowledge or skills acquired by the student became a more lasting part of his total skills which were retrieved for his later use.

⁷³Nicholas Bodoïn and Justin Pikunas, "Affective Learning and Content Achievement in Grades Three and Four," Journal of Educational Research. 70:236, May-June, 1977.

Chapter 3

DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH

Description of Todd County Central High School

At the close of the 1979-1980 school year in May, 1980, Todd County Central High School, a 9-12 standard-rated high school accredited by the Southern Association of High Schools and Colleges, had an enrollment of 649 students. Of that number, 336 were males with the remaining 313 or nearly 48.2 percent being females. Freshmen at the close of the year numbered 191; sophomores, 180; juniors, 156; and seniors, 104. Another 18 students were enrolled in special education.

Approximately 17 percent of the students attending Todd Central at the close of the year were black with the remaining 83 percent being white. Of the 17 percent black, almost half of those were equally male and female with the whites being primarily male students with an approximate percentage of 53.3. Since the population of Todd County is primarily agriculturally oriented both occupationally and economically, the greater percentage of the students who attended Todd Central shared an agricultural background.

Description of the Sample

Of those fifty English II students involved in this field study, over 60 percent indicated they lived more than a mile from a city or town within the county. Thus, many of these students' parents or guardians were engaged in farming with other students' parents or guardians employed in factories or other forms of blue-collar work including plumbing, electrical work, mechanics and the like. Four of the students' parents owned or operated a business of their own.

When the students involved in the field study were questioned about the accessibility of newspapers or magazines in their homes, almost all indicated that magazines and/or newspapers were available. However, three of the students answered that neither of the two was available in their homes. When questioned concerning the students' use of the reading material, most of the students indicated that they had more material available for their reading than they read.

The students also indicated that they usually spent little time reading at home, not considering the time they devoted to homework. Approximately 32 percent indicated they read less than 15 minutes daily while another 46 percent indicated they read from 15 to 30 minutes daily. Approximately 10 percent indicated reading from 30 to 45 minutes with 8 percent reading 45 to 60 minutes and 4 percent devoting more than an hour to outside reading.

When the students studied were asked if they enjoyed reading, nearly 68 percent answered in a positive manner with the other 32 percent being negative toward reading. Another 18 percent indicated that they found the reading of short stories in class difficult while 82 percent did not. Furthermore, 28 percent of those questioned indicated that they found no value in reading short stories while the other 72 percent indicated they did find some value in short story reading.

In April, 1980, Form S of the CTBS (Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills. Manchester, Missouri: CTB/McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1977) was administered to 178 students classified as sophomores during the 1979-1980 school year. Mandated by the Kentucky Education Improvement Act of 1978, this state-selected achievement test was given in April, 1980, to all tenth grade students statewide and tested students in the areas of reading, language arts, reference skills, mathematics, social studies, and science.

Of those 178 students tested at Todd Central, 74 or nearly 42 percent showed deficiencies in at least one of the areas tested. Of those 74 students, 19 were involved in the research of this field study. In relation to those 19 students, weaknesses were found in at least one area of Total Reading, Spelling, Language Mechanics, or Language Expression with 11 of the 19 being deficient in two or more of four reading and language areas. Four of the students involved in the field study were given Form S of the CTBS in

April, 1979, and were found deficient in the same areas as those tested in 1980.

Of the 46 students tested in April, 1980, the average score of Academic Aptitude in the area of Language was 87.39. The average score obtained for the 178 students tested in that same area was 89 or nearly 1.6 points higher than that of the 46 students. In comparison with the Total Academic Aptitude score of 91 for Todd Central, the average for that of the 46 was 89.17 or approximately 1.8 points lower than that of the total group tested. In terms of a stanine for Language Academic Aptitude, the average score obtained was 3.4 or slightly more than half a stanine less than that obtained for the larger school group. Of the four students tested in April, 1979, the average score obtained for them in Language Academic Aptitude was 74.75 while that for the 191 tested at that time was 89. For this group of four, the average stanine was 2.00 while that of the larger group was 4.00.

Method of Selection of the Sample

In the selection of the students for this field study, three classes of English II students were used for the research because of several similarities between the three groups. First, students in each class included primarily students who were average or below average academically. The average score of Academic Aptitude on the CTBS for Group I students was 88.70; for Group II, 91.18; for Group III,

89.62; and for Group IV, 87.17. In relation to the students' abilities in Language Academic Aptitude on the CTBS, the groups were again relatively the same. The average for Group I in Language Academic Aptitude was 84.60; for Group II, 87.09; for Group III, 92.85; and for Group IV, 85.00.

Secondly, each group did have some students who were relatively stronger and others relatively weaker in ability. Group I had two students with Academic Aptitude in Language of 113 and 96 and two with scores of 60 and 65. Group II had three students with scores of 110, 102, and 97 in addition to two students with scores of 60 and 73. Group III had four students with scores of 108, 104, 101, and 97 along with five students with scores of 68, 76, 76, 77, and 78. Group IV had three high scores of 93, 93, and 94 and two low scores of 62 and 71.

In addition, the groups selected were also predominately male with Groups I and II having 73 percent males; Group III, 64 percent; and Group IV, 71 percent. Seventy-six percent of the students studied were white which was very typical of the 83 percent white population at Todd Central. Each group of students also had several who were repeating English II as a requirement for graduation. Groups I and III each had three students while Groups II and IV each had two students repeating the class.

Since Groups I and II were subdivided from a larger group, care was also given to include students in each group who demonstrated that they put forth much effort in class

even though they were weaker students academically. Care was also taken to divide these two groups so that they would be relatively the same in terms of sex, race, age, ability, and in effort exerted in class. Two students in Group IV, both on a primary reading level, were omitted from the research because of their low reading abilities. Two other students were also excluded from Group IV because of a lack of current achievement test information on their academic abilities. One other student involved in individualized work was also omitted from the study.

In relation to the age of the students, most of the students in each group were either 15 or 16 years old. However, each group did have at least one student who was 17 or 18. Altogether, 20 percent of the students studied were 17 or 18 years of age.

Another point of similarity between the four groups related to another set of scores obtained from the April, 1980, results from the CTBS. These scores pertained to the students' total reading abilities in vocabulary and comprehension. Group I's average score based on stanines was 5.00; Group II, 4.00; Group III, 4.07; and Group IV, 4.00.

Description of Steps Taken in Completion of the Project

Ten short stories were selected for this field study based on this researcher's past teaching experiences with them. The ten had proven to be short stories that were

high-interest, varied from approximately 700 to 1600 words in length, averaged approximately 1100 words in length, and had been found to be favorites of previous classes of English students (see Table 1, page 38). After the initial selection of the four student groups, Groups I and III were provided the list of ten short stories along with brief descriptions of each story from which they selected their five choices (see Appendix A, page 76). Those five stories which received a majority of student votes were studied by them during the short story unit. Group II, which served as a control group, studied five short stories based on this researcher's preferences among the ten stories while Group IV studied five stories selected randomly by this researcher (see Table 1, page 38).

To secure information on the typical number of students responding during class discussion following the reading of a short story, a response tally was made to indicate the total number of students making responses in each group before the short story unit was begun. In addition to the response tally, the Teacher-Completed Motivation Checklist (see Appendix A, page 80) was also completed by the researcher at that time to more objectively pinpoint the existing levels of motivation of the students. Both of these were also used to provide data for comparison with responses and levels of motivation during the short story unit.

Moreover, to pinpoint the students' attitudes toward literature, grammar, and English II, the Student Attitude

Table 1
Short Stories Studied by Groups

| Short Story | Total Word Length ^a | Group I | Group II | Group III | Group IV |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|----------|-----------|----------|
| "Bill" | 1100 | | X | | X |
| "The Sniper" | 1600 | X | | X | |
| "Pilot's Choice" | 1500 | | X | | |
| "The Hungry Winter" | 1100 | | X | X | |
| "Later" | 1000 | | X | | X |
| "Good Morning" | 1100 | | | X | |
| "Half a Sheet of Paper" | 700 | X | | | X |
| "The Long-Distance Telephone Call" | 900 | X | | | X |
| "Snapshot of a Dog" | 1000 | X | X | X | X |
| "The Open Window" | 1100 | X | | X | |

^aNumbers are given to the nearest 100.

Questionnaire (see Appendix A, pages 78-79) was given to each student prior to the unit to determine existing attitudes and to provide a basis for comparison. The Student Motivation Questionnaire (see Appendix A, page 77) was also completed by each student and served to more objectively ascertain the students' existing levels of motivation.

During the short story unit, which lasted five days, students in each group were given daily reading and written assignments to complete before the next class session. During each group's daily oral discussion, a tally was made of the number of different students making responses either voluntarily or when called upon to answer questions. The Teacher-Completed Motivation Checklist (see Appendix A, page 80) was also utilized daily by the researcher to indicate more objectively the apparent levels of student motivation.

On the second day of the unit, students in each group were again asked to complete the Student Motivation Questionnaire in order to determine their feelings during that day's class. On the fourth day, students in each group completed the Student Attitude Questionnaire. In using both questionnaires, students were asked to respond honestly to each question. To provide anonymity, student names were not used on the questionnaires, but students were asked to indicate their group, sex, race, and age.

Following a short review of literary terms and authors on the fourth day, the students in each group were tested over their group's stories using objective-type tests

(see Appendix B, pages 81-97). Five weeks following the completion of the short story unit the students were again administered the same test. However, for the second test, no student review of any type was provided to prepare the students for it.

Descriptions of the Measures Used

Because the major concern of this field study related to the effects of student motivation, several measures were used to more accurately determine the levels of motivation apparent in the classroom and within the students themselves. However, since the level of motivation within others circumvents easy detection and necessitates as much objectivity as possible, research tools were developed to furnish a more objective basis for conclusions relative to its existence.

Tally of Student Responses

Of the two measures completed by the researcher, the first was a seating chart used to check the number of different students making oral responses during daily class discussions. A tally was made for each student if he responded orally to questions asked either when he was called upon during discussions or when he answered voluntarily. After his first response, no other tallies were made for that student.

Teacher-Completed Motivation Checklist

Since motivation could be based heavily on subjectivity, the Teacher-Completed Motivation Checklist (see Appendix A, page 80) was used and developed by the researcher to determine in a more objective manner the daily levels of apparent motivation within each group.

The first two items were included since students' interest in material studied and their personal involvement in class work or discussion had been reported by Kleinert to foster motivation in others. Items 3 and 4 more clearly defined the level of classroom cooperation. Since students found to be insecure, afraid, or threatened devoted their energies to preserving what they were rather than moving toward what they might become, these two areas of cooperation were rated.¹

Items 5 and 8 were designed to reveal the overall classroom environment. Again, it was noteworthy to recall that student motivation was affected by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Because teachers were often labeled the dominant force in shaping the classroom environment, another very integral part of motivation centered on an environment based on teacher warmth, understanding, and care.² In

¹E. J. Kleinert, "More Ways to Motivate," Instructor. 83:89, August-September, 1973.

²Jack Frymier, Motivation and Learning in School (Bloomington, Indiana: The Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1974), p. 23.

addition, it was reported essential that teachers provide a variety of roles ranging from active, dominative supervision when necessary and reflective, discriminating support at other times.³

The sixth and seventh items were regarded as significant since enthusiastic students generally tended to have positive self-concepts, a factor providing much control over student motivation. Furthermore, because people become involved in activities appearing to have a particular purpose or purposes for them, remaining attentive in class would have indicated that some personal value was found by the students in the class's work or discussion.⁴

The ninth item on the checklist tended to be the most subjective and the most inclusive of the other items. Since many of the other points were more easily detected by an observer, this ninth item relied greatly on the observer's reaction to what had been perceived by him during the period of observation. Thus, it became especially important for the observer to remain as objective as possible in the rating of it.

Student Motivation Questionnaire

To determine the students' personal feelings during the class period, the Student Motivation Questionnaire (see

³Don Hamachek, Motivation in Teaching and Learning (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1968), p. 12.

⁴Frymier, p. 8.

Appendix A, page 77) was used and developed by this researcher. Because of the stress given to the students' self-images in relation to motivation, Items 1 and 2 were of major interest since the teacher could not control the students' self-perceptions, for those perceptions resided within the minds of the individual students.⁵ Item 3 related to the students' feelings of failure and was regarded as significant since Weiner concluded that students' sense of helplessness led to their self-defeat.⁶ Moreover, the seventh item pertaining to student pride was included since Morse reported that the level of pride among students lessened as they progressed through school.⁷

Items 4, 5, and 6 were inserted in the questionnaire because the needs for relevant material and the linking of new learnings with earlier student associations had been reported as significant teacher concerns in the area of motivation. Similarly, the importance of meaningful material was stressed, for learning was thought more complete when a student was actively involved in the learning situation.⁸

⁵Hamachek, pp. 5-6.

⁶Bernard Weiner, "Attribution Theory, Achievement Motivation, and the Educational Process," Review of Educational Research. 42:210, Spring, 1972.

⁷W. C. Morse, "Self-Concept in the School Setting," Childhood Education. 41:198, December, 1964.

⁸Kleinert, p. 90.

Because the teacher was a major source of feedback for each student, Item 8 was thought to be crucial, for it was reported that a student's image of himself was developed as he daily built his personal feelings of importance or adequacy through the many verbal and nonverbal actions and comments of teachers. Moreover, feelings students had about themselves and their abilities related positively to what they thought others expected of them.⁹

Item 9 focused on the student's feelings of being challenged during the class period while Item 10, on the other hand, centered on his actual performance. Naturally, feelings about actions and the actions themselves have not always been found in agreement. Earlier research by Rosenfeld led him to conclude that girls felt more helpless about improving their conditions since teachers were thought to believe that girls were already doing their best.¹⁰ Again, the importance of the student's self-image and his adequacy were significant determiners of his level of motivation. Furthermore, Kasschau emphasized that personal standards of excellence affected both the nature and the severity of tasks selected.¹¹

⁹Hamachek, pp. 5-6, 8.

¹⁰Albert Rosenfeld, "'Learning' to Give Up," Saturday Review. 4:36-37, September 3, 1977.

¹¹Richard A. Kasschau, Psychology Exploring Behavior (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980), p. 295.

Student Attitude Questionnaire

To identify student attitudes toward literature and toward English II, the Student Attitude Questionnaire (see Appendix A, pages 78-79) was developed and used. The first six items centered on the feelings of each student toward the broader area of English II as one of his subjects. As with the Student Motivation Questionnaire (see Appendix A, page 77), emphasis concentrated on the student's image of himself, an all-important factor of motivation related to self-importance. Items 1 and 5 were specifically included since students did not stay motivated by situations wherein they experienced more failure than success.¹²

Items 7-12 focused on the student's feelings toward himself during the study of literature. Item 8 was significant when considering that motivation involved having study materials that appealed to the student's interest and caused him to work willingly to complete a task. Items 7 and 9-12 identified student attitudes toward reading and toward themselves in terms of what they could do and what they actually did. To explore the confidence of students, Items 9-13 provided information concerning the students' feelings of helplessness and of giving-up, two feelings reported as becoming more pronounced with age.¹³ Moreover, to explore the pride of students, a factor reported to decrease as students progressed through school, Item 13 was

¹²Hamachek, pp. 5-6.

¹³Rosenfeld, pp. 36-37.

included in this section of items related to the student and his perceptions of himself.¹⁴

In addition to the first two sections of the questionnaire, Items 14-17 were included primarily to offset the emphasis placed on English II and on literature. However, Item 17 was designed to supply information to compare with Item 6 concerning the importance and value of grammar versus that of literature.

Objective-Type Tests

In order to secure data pertaining to the effects of motivation on student performance and on retention of knowledge, each group was administered an objective-type test developed by this researcher both at the conclusion of the unit and five weeks later (see Appendix B, pages 81-97). With a total raw score of 45, repetition of several test items on the four tests occurred since each group studied "Snapshot of a Dog" and several literary terms.

Design of the Research

Since random assignment of students to each of the four groups was not possible, the quasi-experimental non-equivalent control-group design was employed in completion of this field study. Moreover, this design was utilized since students studied and included in this research had

¹⁴Morse, p. 198.

already been assigned to particular English II class sections at the beginning of the 1979-1980 school year. With Groups I and II subdivided from the larger class, care was given to equalize the two groups as much as possible. Thus, consideration was given to match these two groups with Groups III and IV in relation to ability, effort demonstrated, age, sex, race, and previous numbers of English II failures. Therefore, a random selection of students was not employed or practical with each of these two sub-groups.

In completion of the student questionnaires by sex, age, group, and race, stress was given to students to answer items honestly. To benefit weaker readers and to provide needed clarifications, each item was read aloud by this researcher with students asked to complete them simultaneously. However, a few of the students did complete the questionnaires at their own speed. This was particularly true on the second completion of each one. Care was also taken to provide students with an understanding of the scales used in answering each of the two questionnaires. Since each group completed the same questionnaires, comparisons of the total groups' average responses could be made.

When the objective-type tests were given both times to each group, testing occurred on the same day for most of the students with careful explanations of the test sections provided. Care was also taken to prevent cheating by asking students to use cover sheets and to avoid talking until all tests were completed. This researcher also maintained close

observation of the students as they took the test to more fully minimize student efforts at cheating. Those students absent on the test dates were given the test on the day of their return to school in a reserved section of the classroom away from other students in their group. In the statistical analysis of the data obtained from the test results of each group on the tests administered twice, a t-Test comparison of the results was made.

To minimize researcher variations in discussing and working with each group of students, each group's class period was divided into two parts to allow group discussion time daily along with time to work on the following day's reading and written assignments. Since Groups I and II shared the same classroom, time for both activities was alternated at the beginning of the period so that each group had discussion at the beginning of the period two days and time for their next assignment at the beginning of the period two days.

One problem that arose periodically from this arrangement with Groups I and II was the need to curtail apparent student interest in class discussion in order to move to the second group. A second problem that became apparent was the need to equalize time allotted with Groups III and IV so that class discussion was of the approximate length of Groups I and II. Thus, Groups III and IV usually had longer periods of time for work on their next day's assignment.

Another problem found in working with Group III was the need for the researcher to gain control over several of the male students without adversely affecting the atmosphere of the total class. Rather than using a stronger form of classroom control which could have affected the nature of the class, several of those students were allowed more freedom from teacher control than might have been true if the unit were not being completed.

The greatest problem evident in the design and completion of this research project related to the nature of motivation. Since levels of motivation within a group were perceived and nebulous, it became extremely difficult for an observer to remain totally objective. Another difficulty arose also because of the need for the construction of the checklists by the researcher although other sources and ideas from those sources were considered in the formation of them. One of these was a self-awareness manual by Phil Speer.¹⁵ In addition, ideas obtained from the review of the literature were also valuable in the structuring of the checklist and questionnaires. However, this problem of subjectivity was lessened by the implementation of rating scales on both the student questionnaires and on the teacher-completed motivation checklist. Thus, the use of these scales provided for a higher degree of both student and teacher objectivity.

¹⁵Phil Speer, Adventures in Self-Awareness (Hermitage, Tennessee: Superior Educational Media, Inc., 1976).

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Motivation, a factor of much interest to educators, served as the focal point in this field study. Since literature on motivation was often found to rest on the student and his perceptions of himself, the thrust of this field study centered on student motivation, its effects on student performance, and its effects on student retention of knowledge. Moreover, to determine the consequences of these elements, this study also centered on short stories selected by students in opposition to those selected randomly by this researcher and to those based on researcher preference. Thus, four groups of students evolved with Groups I and III studying material of their choice, Group II functioning as a control and studying material based on this researcher's preferences, and Group IV studying material chosen randomly by the researcher.

Initially, this field study was designed to test this hypothesis: will the level of student motivation be more pronounced when material studied is of the student's choice. Since it appeared logical that students studying material of their choice would participate more in class discussion, a response tally was made for each student if he responded orally during daily class discussions. In

order to secure comparisons to determine if participation increased, tallies were made before the short story unit began and daily during the class discussion periods (see Table 2, page 52).

However, no data from Table 2 clearly supported that participation increased because of the variable of student choice. Moreover, Groups I, II, and III all showed an average increase in participation even though each group had days with marked decreases. On the contrary, Group IV, studying material chosen randomly by the researcher, had increased participation each day of the unit. Furthermore, since each group prior to the unit varied in percentage of responses while discussing the same story and since only one day's discussion prior to the unit was recorded, it was reasoned that student selection did not produce greater student participation.

A second measure used to more objectively determine the effects of student selection on motivation was the Student Motivation Questionnaire (see Appendix A, page 77). Rated by the students once prior to the unit and later on the second day of the unit, this instrument provided data for comparisons of each group's average responses to each item.

One observation revealed by Table 3 (see page 53) related to the consistency in the students' ratings of the various items. Since Frymier reported that levels of motivation did not vary much except over extended periods of

Table 2

Percentages of Students Present Making
Oral Contributions During Class
Discussion Periods

| | Prior to Unit | Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | 4- Day Ave. |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------|
| Group I (Student) | 62.5 | 55.6 | 62.5 | 77.8 | 90.0 | 71.5 |
| Group II (Researcher) | 66.7 | 87.5 | 63.6 | 90.0 | 70.0 | 77.8 |
| Group III (Student) | 83.3 | 72.7 | 53.9 | 91.7 | 92.3 | 77.6 |
| Group IV (Random) | 81.8 | 72.7 | 76.9 | 85.7 | 100.0 | 83.8 |

Table 3

Group Averages Obtained on Student Motivation
Questionnaire Prior to and During the Unit

| Item | I | II | III | IV | |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------|
| 1. I felt at ease with myself and other students today. | 3.3 3.8 | 3.9 4.3 | 3.4 3.4 | 3.5 4.1 | P D |
| 2. I felt I was an <u>important</u> part of my class group today. | 2.4 3.6 | 2.2 2.8 | 2.5 2.9 | 3.6 3.4 | P D |
| 3. I <u>did not fear</u> I would fail in my work in class today. | 3.8 3.9 | 4.0 3.6 | 3.1 4.2 | 3.4 3.6 | P D |
| 4. I was interested in my group's oral discussion today. | 4.0 3.4 | 3.7 4.2 | 3.6 4.1 | 3.4 3.4 | P D |
| 5. I learned something new today that will help me to understand other people. | 3.4 3.1 | 3.0 3.4 | 2.6 3.2 | 4.1 3.8 | P D |
| 6. I re-learned something today that will help me to understand other people. | 2.5 2.8 | 3.3 2.6 | 2.4 2.7 | 3.7 3.7 | P D |
| 7. I <u>am proud</u> of my work and my participation in class today. | 3.9 3.1 | 3.0 3.3 | 3.1 3.3 | 3.7 3.0 | P D |
| 8. I felt that the teacher thought I was an important person today. | 2.8 3.3 | 2.8 2.8 | 2.6 2.9 | 3.6 2.9 | P D |
| 9. I <u>felt challenged</u> to do my very best in class today. | 3.6 3.4 | 2.8 4.1 | 2.8 3.5 | 3.7 3.3 | P D |
| 10. I <u>did</u> my very best work in English class today. | 3.5 3.4 | 3.1 3.9 | 3.3 3.5 | 3.6 3.3 | P D |

Key to Numbers

- 5 _____ All of the Time
 4 _____ Most of the Time
 3 _____ About Half of the Time
 2 _____ Some of the Time
 1 _____ None of the Time

time, an examination of the groups showed the most consistent averages with Group IV, which maintained stability with 7 of the 10 items (70 percent) having neither positive nor negative changes exceeding .5. In addition, the consistency of Group III remained at 60 percent while that of Groups I and II, one studying student selected stories and the other those of the researcher's, had 50 percent consistency. Thus, considering Frymier's earlier statement, it appeared that Group IV maintained a more consistent level of motivation.¹

Again viewing Table 3, Group I students indicated increases equal to or exceeding .5 in relation to their ease with themselves and the class, their feelings of importance, and their perceptions concerning their importance with the teacher (Items 1, 2, 8). Group III also experienced similar gains in lessened fear of failure, interest in class discussion, learning of something new, and in feelings of challenge (Items 3, 4, 5, 9). Moreover, Group II shared corresponding increases in feelings of importance, interest in discussion, and in feelings of challenge (Items 2, 4, 9), and, unlike any of the other groups, feelings of doing their best (Item 10).

Thus, from the results shown Group II students indicated feelings of motivation most often shared by Groups

¹Jack Frymier, Motivation and Learning in School (Bloomington, Indiana: The Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1974), pp. 7-8.

I and III. One variable common to each of these groups was that of preference based on that of either the student himself or the researcher. However, having weighed the possible implications of the Hawthorne effect, the significance of these increases was lessened since students were aware of their involvement in research.

One loss greater than .5 which appeared with Groups I and IV was that of self-pride (Item 7). However, Morse earlier reported students' levels of pride decreasing as they progressed in school.² Furthermore, Groups I and IV originally expressed levels of pride relatively higher than those of the others; with the second response students may have become more realistic in their evaluations of pride since they showed a more consistent score with that of the other groups.

In addition, teacher consideration (Item 8) was also found to be a loss with Group IV, and perhaps this resulted because of students not sharing in the selection of material studied by them. Since the need for teachers to be democratic and involve students in decision-making was stressed, this factor of teacher consideration provided some insight into the loss indicated by Group IV students.³

²W. C. Morse, "Self-Concept in the School Setting," Childhood Education, 41:198, December, 1964.

³A. S. Alschuler, D. Tabor, and J. McIntyre, "Teaching Achievement Motivation," Developing Motivation in Young Children, ed. Stanley Coopersmith (San Francisco: Albion Publishing Company, 1975), p. 229.

Because motivation revolved so frequently around the student and his perceptions of himself, data for comparisons was obtained by the use of the Student Attitude Questionnaire (see Appendix A, pages 78-79). Again, considering the element of consistency, Group I students maintained 77 percent stability with its average responses not fluctuating above or below .5 (see Table 4, pages 57-58). Similarly, Groups III and IV remained stable with percentages of 65 and 71 respectively. Thus, Group II disclosed less overall consistency of items with a percentage of 53. However, when noting the changes resulting in increased agreement with the questionnaire items, Groups II and III each moved more toward agreement with six items; Group IV with five items; and Group I with only two items.

Furthermore, Group II was found to share increased agreement in items more frequently with Group III followed by Group IV and then by Group I. When comparing Group II, the control group influenced by researcher preferences, with the student selected Groups I and III, it was noted that students' attitudes toward their importance, effort exerted, willingness to work, volunteering during oral discussions, and their confidence in ability (Items 2, 3, 8, 10, 12) all moved .5 or more upward in their expressed attitudes of agreement with those items. However, students' pride and their confidence in their ability (Items 12 and 13) were also found to increase with the students of Group IV.

Table 4

Group Averages Obtained on Student Attitude Questionnaire
Prior to and During the Unit

| Item | I | II | III | IV | |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------|
| In English II I feel that . . . | | | | | |
| 1. I can personally succeed if I try. | 1.6 1.6 | 1.5 1.8 | 1.5 1.8 | 1.3 1.5 | P D |
| 2. I am an important part of the larger group. | 2.6 3.0 | 3.0 2.5 | 2.9 2.4 | 2.3 1.9 | P D |
| 3. I willingly put forth much effort to do my best. | 3.4 2.7 | 2.7 2.1 | 2.2 2.1 | 2.2 2.1 | P D |
| 4. I am challenged to do my very best. | 2.8 2.5 | 2.4 2.4 | 2.5 2.1 | 2.1 2.1 | P D |
| 5. I am expected to do too much. | 2.9 3.7 | 3.7 3.5 | 3.2 3.2 | 3.7 3.7 | P D |
| 6. I find grammar more important than literature. | 3.1 3.8 | 2.6 3.4 | 2.5 2.9 | 2.5 2.6 | P D |
| Studying literature, I feel that . . . | | | | | |
| 7. I can relate to characters we meet through our reading. | 2.3 1.9 | 2.0 1.8 | 2.2 2.2 | 2.3 2.2 | P D |
| 8. I am a self-starter and do not have to be pushed to read. | 2.4 2.1 | 2.7 2.0 | 2.7 2.2 | 2.4 2.6 | P D |
| 9. I can answer some questions orally when we discuss. | 2.2 2.1 | 2.0 1.9 | 2.0 1.9 | 2.1 1.6 | P D |
| 10. I often volunteer to answer questions orally. | 3.1 2.8 | 2.7 2.1 | 3.2 2.5 | 2.6 2.6 | P D |
| 11. I can answer written questions assigned for homework. | 2.6 2.4 | 2.6 2.3 | 2.8 2.2 | 1.9 1.7 | P D |
| 12. I do not have to put forth much effort for a test over material studied. | 3.6 3.6 | 3.6 2.8 | 4.1 3.0 | 3.9 3.4 | P D |
| 13. I am proud of my work and participation in class. | 2.3 1.9 | 3.1 2.4 | 2.4 2.4 | 2.3 1.8 | P D |

Table 4 (continued)

| Item | I | II | III | IV | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Studying grammar, I feel that . . . | | | | | |
| 14. I am studying material that I already know fairly well. | 2.6 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 3.1 | P |
| | 2.6 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.6 | D |
| 15. I am challenged to learn more about grammar. | 3.1 | 2.3 | 2.9 | 1.9 | P |
| | 2.4 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 1.8 | D |
| 16. I can succeed in learning material difficult for me if I try. | 2.0 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 1.7 | P |
| | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 1.6 | D |
| 17. I am forced to do exercises that have little value for me. | 2.8 | 3.6 | 3.5 | 4.1 | P |
| | 2.9 | 3.7 | 2.6 | 3.6 | D |

Key to Numbers

- 5 _____ Strongly Disagree
 4 _____ Disagree
 3 _____ No Opinion
 2 _____ Agree
 1 _____ Strongly Agree

Thus, it appeared evident from the data that students' feelings of importance, effort exerted, willingness to work, and volunteering to discuss (Items 2, 3, 8, 10) became more pronounced with the variable of preference. Since Group II students were not aware that their stories were based on researcher preferences, then it also seemed plausible that the variable of teacher preference may have resulted in these items of increased student agreement. Since this group's stories were also based on their high-interest level and their success with former English students, these factors may have also indirectly influenced the results with Group II. As was true with the Student Motivation Questionnaire results, the implications of the Hawthorne effect had to be considered in analyzing and interpreting this data since these students were conscious of being involved in research.

A fourth instrument designed to provide information pertaining to levels of motivation within each group was the Teacher-Completed Motivation Checklist (see Appendix A, page 80). Used once prior to the beginning of the short story unit and then daily during the first four days of the unit, this instrument was planned to provide data for comparisons of the four groups. From that data, conclusions relating to the possible effects of student selection on motivation as perceived by the researcher were drawn.

In studying the data of Table 5 (see page 60), emphasis centered on what decreased by .5 or more in each of

Table 5

Comparisons of Teacher-Completed Motivation Checklist
(Prior to Unit and Unit Averages)

| Item | I | II | III | IV | |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------|
| Today's group . . . | | | | | |
| 1. showed interest in class work. | 3.0 2.5 | 3.0 3.5 | 3.0 3.3 | 3.0 3.3 | P A |
| 2. showed interest in class discussion. | 3.0 3.0 | 2.0 3.8 | 2.0 3.0 | 3.0 3.3 | P A |
| 3. cooperated with me. | 5.0 5.0 | 5.0 5.0 | 4.0 4.3 | 5.0 5.0 | P A |
| 4. cooperated with and showed understanding for each other. | 5.0 5.0 | 5.0 5.0 | 4.0 4.3 | 5.0 5.0 | P A |
| 5. created a warm and relaxed classroom atmosphere. | 4.0 2.3 | 4.0 3.0 | 4.0 2.5 | 4.0 2.5 | P A |
| 6. displayed enthusiasm for learning. | 4.0 2.5 | 3.0 3.3 | 3.0 2.5 | 4.0 2.5 | P A |
| 7. remained attentive. | 3.0 3.3 | 3.0 3.8 | 2.0 3.0 | 2.0 3.5 | P A |
| 8. remained highly structured. | 5.0 4.3 | 5.0 3.8 | 4.0 4.3 | 5.0 4.3 | P A |
| 9. appeared to be motivated to learn. | 4.0 2.5 | 3.0 3.0 | 3.0 2.5 | 4.0 2.8 | P A |

Key to Numbers

- 5 _____ Always
 4 _____ Usually
 3 _____ Sometimes
 2 _____ Seldom
 1 _____ Never

the groups. Thus, Groups I and III did not experience increased ratings in terms of students' interest in class discussions, their warmth, enthusiasm, and overall motivation (Items 2, 5, 6, 7, 9). In addition, lower scale ratings were also observed with Group IV in relation to students' warmth, enthusiasm, and overall motivation (Items 5, 6, 9). Thus, it did not appear evident that student selection of material produced increases in students' interest in class discussion, their warmth, enthusiasm, attention, or overall motivation (Items 2, 5, 6, 7, 9). More importantly, since only one class period was rated prior to the unit, it seemed impractical to draw any definite conclusions pertaining to whether or not motivation did increase with student selection of class material.

In summarizing the data pertinent to the first hypothesis, it must be remembered that participation percentages did not support increased student participation in discussion with student selection of material. Secondly, data obtained from the Student Motivation Questionnaire did seemingly show the importance of preference, yet the preference could not solely be attributed to that of student selection. Thirdly, the information collected by the use of the Student Attitude Questionnaire again revealed the importance of preference, yet the preference may have been influenced by not only the student but the researcher and previous students as well. Finally, since data on the Teacher-Completed Motivation Checklist lacked reliability, definite

conclusions about student selection were withheld. Thus, in reaching a conclusion about the first hypothesis, these four sources of data did not clearly reveal that student selection resulted in increased student motivation.

The second hypothesis of this field study was to conclude: will student selection of material yield significant differences in academic performance of students. Again, emphasis was given to the variable of student selection. In order to test this concept, each group of students was administered an objective-type test at the conclusion of the unit based on the short stories studied by them (see Appendix B, pages 81-97). To determine if student selection did produce significantly different results in performance immediately at the close of the unit, the t-Test for Independent Samples was employed.

After calculating the mean scores for Groups I, III, and IV compared with Group II (the control), it was observed at first glance that each group's mean raw score varied at the most only 3.9 points from the other groups with Group I's mean raw score being 26.6; Group II, 28.7; Group III, 26.5; and Group IV, 30.4 out of a possible raw score of 45. Moreover, the closeness of the four groups' mean scores seemed to suggest that neither student selection, researcher preference nor random selection of material to each group produced substantial increases or decreases in the mean performances of students.

To conclude whether or not significant differences in mean scores occurred, data was secured from the t-Test (see Table 6, page 64) and upheld that neither method of selection significantly altered the mean scores of Groups I, III, and IV when compared with Group II (the control). Thus, allowing students the opportunity to select short stories to be studied produced neither positive nor negative differences when their mean performances were compared with those of Group II, the control group which studied stories based on researcher preferences.

The third hypothesis in the field study again stressed the variable of student selection and was stated: will student selection produce significant differences in students' retention of knowledge. To provide data for this hypothesis, each group was retested five weeks after the ending of the unit. No review of any type was given, and the same tests were used for the retesting. Furthermore, to ascertain whether significant differences between mean scores did exist, the t-Test for Independent Samples was again utilized.

First, data from the t-Test (see Table 7, page 65) pointed out the closeness of the mean scores of the groups on Test 2 with Group I's mean raw score being 29.6; Group II, 28.2; Group III, 27.9; and Group IV, 29.9 out of a possible raw score of 45. Additionally, it was observed that the four groups differed no more than two points from each other. Thus, it can be inferred that the various methods

Table 6

Results of the t-Test for Independent Samples for Test 1
Groups I, III, IV Compared with Group II

| Group | N | Mean Raw Score ^a | <u>df</u> | <u>t</u> | Probability |
|--------------------|----|--------------------------------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| II (Researcher) | 11 | 28.7 | | | |
| I (Student) | 11 | 26.6 | 20 | -.65 | >.05 |
| III (Student) | 14 | 26.5 | 23 | -.77 | >.05 |
| IV (Random) | 14 | 30.4 | 23 | .43 | >.05 |

^aPossible Raw Score=45

Table 7

Results of the t-Test for Independent Samples for Test 2
Groups I, III, IV Compared with Group II

| Group | N | Mean Raw Score ^a | <u>df</u> | <u>t</u> | Probability |
|--------------------|----|--------------------------------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| II (Researcher) | 11 | 28.2 | | | |
| I (Student) | 11 | 29.6 | 20 | .51 | >.05 |
| III (Student) | 14 | 27.9 | 23 | -.09 | >.05 |
| IV (Random) | 14 | 29.9 | 23 | .40 | >.05 |

^aPossible Raw Score=45

of short story selection created no marked increases or decreases in these students' retention of knowledge.

Of more meaningful value, the data from the t-Test results provided the information necessary to conclude whether or not Groups I, III, and IV obtained mean scores significantly different from those of Group II. As with the second hypothesis related to student performance, the second application of the t-Test yielded no significant differences between either the variables of student selection or random selection when compared with the control.

Furthermore, Table 8 (see page 67) supplied additional data illustrating the stability of each group's students on the two tests with Groups I and II increasing their mean scores by 3 and 1.4 points respectively. Even though Groups III and IV decreased their mean performances, the decrease was limited to .5. Moreover, the consistency of many students' individual performances on the two tests was evident (see Table 9, page 68) as 7 of the 50 (14 percent) maintained their earlier score, 28 of the 50 (56 percent) increased their score while 15 of the 50 (30 percent) had decreased test performance on Test 2.

With regard to the results obtained in relation to the second and third hypotheses, the element of consistency between groups and individual students surfaced. This consistency could possibly be explained by the homogeneous nature of the groups with approximately 70 percent of each group being males and ranging from 87 to 91 in academic

Table 8
Total Groups' Mean Raw Scores^a
for Tests 1 and 2

| | Group I (Student) | Group II (Researcher) | Group III (Student) | Group IV (Random) |
|--------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Test 1 | 26.6 | 28.7 | 26.5 | 30.4 |
| Test 2 | 29.6 | 28.2 | 27.9 | 29.9 |

^aPossible Raw Score=45

Table 9

Number of Students Increasing, Maintaining, or Decreasing
Raw Scores^a on Test 2 Compared with Test 1

| | Increased Raw Score | Maintained Raw Score | Decreased Raw Score | Total Number |
|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Group I (Student) | 9 | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| Group II (Researcher) | 4 | 3 | 4 | 11 |
| Group III (Student) | 8 | 3 | 3 | 14 |
| Group IV (Random) | 7 | 0 | 7 | 14 |
| Total Number | 28 | 7 | 15 | 50 |

^aPossible Raw Score=45

aptitude scores. Moreover, the students' ages, agricultural background, reading habits, and their effort demonstrated in class likewise contributed to the uniformity of the four groups.

Secondly, another potential explanation for the discerned consistency of the mean scores related to observations by Kagan and Haveman that subjects forgot least when tested for recognition followed by relearning with the greatest forgetting in the area of recall.⁴ Since the two tests administered to each group were exactly the same and were objective-type tests using true-false, matching, and multiple-choice items, the larger percentage of test items had answers available whereas short answers were required of each group's students for only ten questions. Moreover, since each group's test had several literary terms stressed throughout the year, the factor of relearning may have influenced the findings of each group.

Because of this consistency of individual students on the two tests, the experimental variable of "testing" could further explain the performances of students on the second test. Since "testing" often produced improved scores when similar tests were used, the improvements made by 56 percent of the total number of students could have well been the outcome of this variable. This was especially made more

⁴Jerome Kagan and Ernest Haveman, Psychology: An Introduction (2nd ed.; New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1972), pp. 86-87, 123.

feasible since students were retested using the same test only five weeks after the first test was given. Consequently, a longer period of time between test dates of one of the two groups based on student selection could have supplied more internally valid data into whether or not student selection produced significant differences in knowledge retention. Thus, as with the first and second hypotheses, student selection of material did not support significantly different performances in retention of knowledge by the students involved in this field study.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Because many students were found to have lost interest in school as they progressed, this field study centered on the element of motivation, a factor considered by many to be a crucial one in the betterment of student attitudes toward school and toward themselves as well. Moreover, this field study was designed to determine the possible effects of student selection of class material on students' levels of motivation, their academic performance, and their retention of knowledge. Thus, three hypotheses were tested: (1) did student selection of class material create a more pronounced level of student motivation; (2) did student selection yield significant differences in the academic performance of students; and (3) did student selection produce significant differences in the students' retention of knowledge.

To draw conclusions relative to these hypotheses, four groups of English II students at Todd County Central High School were studied, and a short story unit was selected for use in securing necessary data. Thus, two student groups studied stories selected by a majority of them. One other group studied stories chosen randomly by the researcher while the control group studied those of researcher

preference. Student motivation and attitude questionnaires and a teacher-completed motivation checklist (see Appendix A, pages 75-80) were used prior to the unit and later during the unit to obtain data for comparisons of student attitudes and levels of motivation. To secure data relating to student performance and retention of knowledge, objective tests (see Appendix B, pages 81-97) were administered once at the end of the unit and then five weeks later. From that data, the t-Test for Independent Samples was used to determine if significant differences in mean scores occurred.

In relation to the first hypothesis concerned with student selection of material and its effects on students' motivation, the collected data did not clearly support that the variable of student selection yielded more pronounced levels of student motivation. Moreover, neither the variables of random selection nor researcher preference produced motivation results that were significantly different from those based on student selection.

Thus, one recommendation arising from this data would be to involve students in the selection of course content. Even though no marked advantages were evident from the student-selected groups, no negative ones were clearly apparent either. Furthermore, allowing students the opportunity to choose course content will hopefully serve to bind the student with the subject since he is being encouraged to take an active part in the classroom and to partially determine what he wants to study.

In addition, the data collected relative to the second hypothesis led to the conclusion that student selection of class material did not support significant differences in the academic performance of students. Since the results from the four groups were very consistent, the conclusion was made that neither student selection, researcher preference, nor random selection affected significantly the performance of the students involved in the research. Consequently, the suggestion emerges that involvement of students in determining course content produced no marked disadvantages that should lead to students not being allowed to share in decision-making within the classroom.

In terms of the third hypothesis concerned with student selection and retention of knowledge, the conclusion was drawn that student selection did not support significant differences in students' retention of knowledge. Again, the variable of student selection was not found to produce significant differences when compared with the variables of random selection and researcher preference.

Consequently, the recommendation to involve students in decision-making and in determining course content surfaced from the findings. Even though no significant differences between groups were noted, it can be concluded that allowing these students the opportunity to share in the selection of subject matter produced no adverse results in their apparent motivation, performance, or retention of knowledge. Moreover, since these student groups were very

typical of each other, generalizing these findings to all students would be invalid. As a result of the research, modifications in the design of this field study with the use of homogeneous and heterogeneous groupings, varied testing procedures, or altered lengths of time devoted to the unit could provide increased insight into these areas of learning and the effects they have upon students.

Thus, one final recommendation becoming apparent from the field study is the need for teachers to be willing to experiment and involve students in decisions relating to what is studied by them. However, at the same time, teachers should also be willing to determine what effects those changes have on students and on their learning. Moreover, they must be willing to critically evaluate those changes and their results, and, even more importantly, they should be willing to discard them if the effects on students prove to be detrimental.

APPENDIX A

SHORT STORIES, QUESTIONNAIRES, AND CHECKLIST

APPENDIX A. Short Story Descriptions

Place an X on the line before the titles of the five (5) short stories that you would like to study. Brief descriptions of the stories have been provided for you.

_____ "Bill"

A father must make a decision that will affect the life of his daughter.

_____ "The Sniper"

A sniper kills his enemy and finds out later who his enemy really was.

_____ "Pilot's Choice"

Brady, pilot of a rescue plane, must decide how far he can go on a limited supply of fuel.

_____ "The Hungry Winter"

An Indian nicknamed "Uncle" revealed his love for others in a very unusual way.

_____ "Later"

John Carmody's concern for his work causes him to unknowingly postpone reading to his daughter forever.

_____ "Good Morning"

A young boy accepts money to do a job and later regrets his decision to do it.

_____ "Half a Sheet of Paper"

A small piece of paper brings back many memories for a young man moving out of his apartment.

_____ "The Long-Distance Telephone Call"

Colonel Freeleigh temporarily finds his telephone a happy escape from the imprisoned life he leads.

_____ "Snapshot of a Dog"

A picture of his dog brings back memories of the author's childhood and the unusual love his dog possessed for his masters.

_____ "The Open Window"

A young girl jokingly entertains an unwelcome visitor with a very unusual story.

APPENDIX A. Student Motivation Questionnaire

Please mark each statement to show how you honestly feel about each one. Think about how you felt in today's class. Use the following scale to circle each answer.

- 5 _____ All of the Time
 4 _____ Most of the Time
 3 _____ About Half of the Time
 2 _____ Some of the Time
 1 _____ None of the Time

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| <u>1</u> 2 3 4 5 | 1. I felt at ease with myself and other students today. |
| <u>1</u> 2 3 4 5 | 2. I felt I was an <u>important</u> part of my class group today. |
| <u>1</u> 2 3 4 5 | 3. I <u>did not fear</u> I would fail in my work in class today. |
| <u>1</u> 2 3 4 5 | 4. I was interested in my group's oral discussion today. |
| <u>1</u> 2 3 4 5 | 5. I learned something new today that will help me to understand other people. |
| <u>1</u> 2 3 4 5 | 6. I re-learned something today that will help me to understand other people. |
| <u>1</u> 2 3 4 5 | 7. I <u>am proud</u> of my work and my participation in class today. |
| <u>1</u> 2 3 4 5 | 8. I felt that the teacher thought I was an important person today. |
| <u>1</u> 2 3 4 5 | 9. I <u>felt challenged</u> to do my very best in class today. |
| <u>1</u> 2 3 4 5 | 10. I <u>did</u> my very best work in English class today. |

Group _____
 Sex _____
 Race _____
 Age _____

APPENDIX A. Student Attitude Questionnaire

Please circle the number of each statement that most nearly shows how you honestly feel about each one. Use this scale as you answer each statement.

- 5 _____ Strongly Disagree
 4 _____ Disagree
 3 _____ No Opinion
 2 _____ Agree
 1 _____ Strongly Agree

As one of my subjects, English II is a class in which I feel that . . .

1 2 3 4 5

1. I can personally succeed if I try.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I am an important part of the larger group.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I willingly put forth much effort to do my best.

1 2 3 4 5

4. I am challenged to do my very best.

1 2 3 4 5

5. I am expected to do too much.

1 2 3 4 5

6. I find the study of grammar is more important for me than the study of literature.

When we study literature, I feel that . . .

1 2 3 4 5

7. I can relate to characters that we meet through our reading.

1 2 3 4 5

8. I am a self-starter and do not have to be pushed to read.

1 2 3 4 5

9. I can answer some questions orally when we discuss them in class.

1 2 3 4 5

10. I often volunteer to answer questions orally.

1 2 3 4 5

11. I can answer many of the written questions assigned for homework.

1 2 3 4 5

12. I do not have to put forth much effort to prepare for a test over the material studied.

1 2 3 4 5

13. I am proud of my work and participation in class.

APPENDIX A. Student Attitude Questionnaire (continued)

When we study grammar, I feel that . . .

- | | |
|--|---|
| <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u> | 14. I am studying material that I already know fairly well. |
| <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u> | 15. I am challenged to learn more about grammar. |
| <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u> | 16. I can succeed in learning material that is difficult for me if I continue to try. |
| <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u> | 17. I am forced to do exercises in grammar that have little value for me. |

Group _____

Sex _____

Race _____

Age _____

APPENDIX A. Teacher-Completed Motivation Checklist

Group _____

Date _____

Key to Numbers

- 5 _____ Always
 4 _____ Usually
 3 _____ Sometimes
 2 _____ Seldom
 1 _____ Never

Today's group . . .

- | | | | | | |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. showed interest in class work. | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| 2. showed interest in class discussion. | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| 3. cooperated with me. | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| 4. cooperated with and showed understanding for each other. | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| 5. created a warm and relaxed classroom atmosphere. | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| 6. displayed enthusiasm for learning. | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| 7. remained attentive. | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| 8. remained highly structured. | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| 9. appeared to be motivated to learn. | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |

APPENDIX B

UNIT TESTS FOR GROUPS I, II, III, IV

APPENDIX B. Group I Unit Test

I. MATCHING Match items in the first column with the second. Some items in the second column will not be used.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ___ 1. James Thurber | A. English bull terrier |
| ___ 2. H. H. Munro | B. "The Long-Distance Telephone Call" |
| ___ 3. Apothecary | C. Swedish writer |
| ___ 4. August Strindberg | D. Fight or struggle with |
| ___ 5. Liam O'Flaherty | E. "Snapshot of a Dog" |
| ___ 6. Ray Bradbury | F. Conflict outside a country |
| ___ 7. "Straight-arm" | G. Mexican friend |
| ___ 8. Civil war | H. "The Sniper" |
| ___ 9. Jorge | I. American bull terrier |
| ___ 10. Rex | J. Talk or argue with |
| | K. Alice |
| | L. Conflict inside a country |
| | M. Wrestler |
| | N. A druggist |
| | O. Saki |

II. TRUE-FALSE If an item is true, use a +. If it is false, use a -.

- ___ 1. The sniper tricked his enemy into thinking he was killed.
- ___ 2. Among dogs, Rex was a bully known for starting many fights.
- ___ 3. James Thurber writes in a very formal style.
- ___ 4. Vera quickly explained Mr. Nuttel's sudden departure from the Sappletons.
- ___ 5. Jorge was the only friend that Colonel Freeleigh had.
- ___ 6. The young widowed man was bitter as he walked out to leave his apartment.
- ___ 7. Style refers to the way a writer expresses himself.
- ___ 8. Colonel Freeleigh's son had threatened to have his phone removed.
- ___ 9. Settings of short stories are always pinpointed exactly for the reader.
- ___ 10. Swimming was Rex's favorite recreation.
- ___ 11. Alice and her husband both enjoyed attending the opera.
- ___ 12. Ray Bradbury's writings are often science fiction.
- ___ 13. The sniper never knew who the enemy on the other roof top really was.
- ___ 14. Mr. Nuttel's aunt had given him a letter of introduction to Mrs. Sappleton.
- ___ 15. The entries on the half sheet of paper were all written legibly in the same handwriting.

APPENDIX B. Group I Unit Test (continued)

- III. MULTIPLE-CHOICE Select the best answer for each of the following.
- ___1. A type of conflict would include all of the following except
A. man vs. man.
B. man vs. nature.
C. man vs. society.
D. man vs. himself.
E. none of the above.
F. all of the above.
- ___2. Which of the following is the only true event of "The Sniper?"
A. The sniper was a Free Stater, who killed his brother.
B. The sniper was wounded by the gunner in the armored car.
C. The sniper killed an old woman coming down the street.
D. The sniper fainted because of the pain from his wound.
E. The sniper decided against lighting a cigarette.
- ___3. A writer develops his characters
A. through his personal description.
B. through their actions.
C. through their thoughts.
D. through other characters' comments about them.
E. B, C, D above.
F. all of the above.
- ___4. Which of the following did Rex not do?
A. He carried a ten-foot wooden rail in his mouth.
B. He caught baseballs thrown high.
C. He carried a small chest of drawers home.
D. He killed cats and squirrels.
E. He jumped eight-foot fences.
- ___5. An example of irony would include the following except
A. The make-believe story told by a young girl fooled an older person.
B. Rex "straight-armed" death like he fought other battles in life.
C. Colonel Freeleigh died after he knew his phone would be removed.
D. B, C above.
E. A, B above.
F. All of the above.

APPENDIX B. Group I Unit Test (continued)

- ___ 6. Which of the following is not a clue that should have led Mr. Nuttel to realize that Vera's story was not true?
- A. The house showed signs of the presence of men.
 - B. Vera laughed jokingly as she told him about the "accident."
 - C. Vera was fifteen years old at the time of Mr. Nuttel's visit.
 - D. Vera would have been three years younger when the accident occurred.
- ___ 7. Which of the following is not a characteristic of Thurber's style of writing?
- A. He writes in a very formal manner.
 - B. He writes in a relaxed, conversational manner.
 - C. He uses a great deal of description.
 - D. He creates characters who are not typical of him.
 - E. A, B, C above.
 - F. A, D above.
- ___ 8. When a piece of literature arouses our feelings of pity, it is said to have
- A. conflict.
 - B. pathos.
 - C. irony.
 - D. tragedy.
 - E. characterization.
- ___ 9. Which of the following was not one of the pleasures of Colonel Freeleigh's life?
- A. talking to Jorge.
 - B. telling stories to three young boys.
 - C. talking to friends in other countries.
 - D. none of the above.
 - E. A, B above.
- ___ 10. Which of the following was not an entry on the yellow sheet of paper?
- A. the bank.
 - B. the livery stable.
 - C. the dairy.
 - D. Dr. L---
 - E. the undertaker.
 - F. none of the above.

IV. FILL-THE-BLANK Supply answers for the following questions. Write your answers on the lines provided.

- _____ 1. The country where "The Sniper" occurs was ?
- _____ 2. A ? is a main idea that a writer is stressing through the events of the story.

APPENDIX B. Group I Unit Test (continued)

- _____ 3. "Romance at short notice" was a pastime of ?
(whom)
- _____ 4. ? refers to the events of a story.
- _____ 5. A ? occurs when a writer returns to an earlier
time period.
- _____ 6. Colonel Freeleigh and Rex both ? Death as long
as they could.
- _____ 7. ? occurs when the opposite of what is expected
happens.
- _____ 8. A ? is a struggle between two or more opposing
forces.
- _____ 9. ? refers to the time and place of a story.
- _____ 10. ? caskets were needed for the young man in
"Half a Sheet of Paper."

APPENDIX B. Group II Unit Test

I. MATCHING Match items in the first column with the second. Some items in the second column will not be used.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ___ 1. Zona Gale | A. Reindeer |
| ___ 2. James Thurber | B. Collie |
| ___ 3. Robillard | C. English bull terrier |
| ___ 4. Cache | D. Marge |
| ___ 5. Famine | E. "Pilot's Choice" |
| ___ 6. John Carmody's daughter | F. Lack of food |
| ___ 7. Rex | G. "Snapshot of a Dog" |
| ___ 8. Caribou | H. American bull terrier |
| ___ 9. Hunt Miller | I. "Later" |
| ___ 10. Michael Foster | J. Visitor |
| | K. Hidden supply of food |
| | L. Newspaper writer |
| | M. "The Hungry Winter" |
| | N. Priest |

II. TRUE-FALSE If an item is true, use a t. If it is false, use a f.

- ___ 1. Brady and his copilot discussed their situation before they decided to rescue the survivors on the raft.
- ___ 2. The Indian village traveled by sled through a blizzard to try to locate food.
- ___ 3. Bill turned down his sister because she was a "tired" woman.
- ___ 4. Settings of stories are always pinpointed exactly for the reader.
- ___ 5. Swimming was Rex's favorite recreation.
- ___ 6. The Indians accept events of their lives rather than fighting them.
- ___ 7. The story the priest told was too unbelievable for Spencer.
- ___ 8. Bill at first hoped his daughter's adopted parents would be wealthy.
- ___ 9. Brady easily made his decision to rescue the two men in the raft.
- ___ 10. John Carmody was busy reading a stockholders' report when his daughter asked him to play a game with her.
- ___ 11. John Carmody recalled the events of his daughter's last few minutes of life shortly before leaving for her funeral.
- ___ 12. Jules, the young Indian boy, was given the name "Uncle" by his people.
- ___ 13. All the people except the priest sat down and wept when the cache was found empty.

APPENDIX B. Group II Unit Test (continued)

- ___14. Among dogs, Rex was known as a bully who started many fights.
- ___15. Before Minna left with her parents at the end of the story, Bill kissed her good-bye for the last time.

III. MULTIPLE-CHOICE Select the best answer for each of the following.

- ___1. In order to be a better parent for Minna, Bill
 - A. learned to cook oatmeal and vegetables.
 - B. patched Minna's clothes.
 - C. gave Minna a kitten to keep her company.
 - D. listened to her prayers and took her to church.
 - E. B, D above.
 - F. all of the above.
- ___2. Which event was not a true one from "Later?"
 - A. The father was too busy to take time for his daughter.
 - B. The mother, according to the daughter, was much busier upstairs.
 - C. The new book was dented and thumbed at the end of the story.
 - D. The daughter was killed by an elderly driver.
 - E. The daughter was very patient when talking with her father.
 - F. The father was filled with hate for the one who killed his daughter.
- ___3. Which season is most preferred by the Indians?
 - A. fall.
 - B. winter.
 - C. spring.
 - D. summer.
 - E. none of the above.
- ___4. Which of the following did Rex not do?
 - A. He carried a ten-foot wooden rail in his mouth.
 - B. He caught baseballs thrown high.
 - C. He carried a small chest of drawers home.
 - D. He killed cats and squirrels.
 - E. He jumped eight-foot fences.
- ___5. A writer develops his characters
 - A. through his personal descriptions.
 - B. through their actions.
 - C. through their thoughts.
 - D. through other characters' comments about them.
 - E. all of the above.
 - F. B, C, D above.

APPENDIX B. Group II Unit Test (continued)

- ___ 6. The most unusual event of the priest's story that Spencer could not easily accept was
- A. the weather was abnormally below zero.
 - B. the village could not borrow food from nearby Indians.
 - C. the young boy in the story did something hard to believe.
 - D. the village people were forced to eat their dogs.
 - E. A, D above.
 - F. none of the above.
- ___ 7. An example of irony would include the following except
- A. the rescued survivors saved the rescue plane's crew.
 - B. Bill gave his daughter to the carpenter and his wife instead of to the wealthy woman.
 - C. the young Indian boy of fourteen failed to give up hope when the older ones did.
 - D. John Carmody had no hatred for the one who killed his daughter.
 - E. Rex "straight-armed" death like he fought other battles in his life.
 - F. D, E above.
- ___ 8. Which of the following is not a factor that had to be considered in "Pilot's Choice?"
- A. the supply of gas.
 - B. the weather conditions.
 - C. the condition of the plane.
 - D. the distance back to the base.
 - E. the safety of the crew.
- ___ 9. When a piece of literature arouses our feelings of pity, it is said to have
- A. conflict.
 - B. pathos.
 - C. irony.
 - D. tragedy.
 - E. characterization.

IV. FILL-THE-BLANK Supply answers for the following questions. Write your answers on the lines provided.

- _____ 1. A ? occurs when a writer returns to an earlier time period.
- _____ 2. ? refers to the events of a story.
- _____ 3. ? was finally used to bait the hook to first attract the fish.
- _____ 4. Minna opened a ? as she walked away from her father.

APPENDIX B. Group II Unit Test (continued)

- 5. ? refers to the time and place of a story.
- 6. A ? is a main idea that a writer is stressing through the events of his story.
- 7. A conflict is a ? between two or more opposing forces.
- 8. Brady commented that no man is an ?
- 9. ? refers to a writer's ability to make characters seem real.
- 10. ? occurs when the opposite of what is expected happens.

APPENDIX B. Group III Unit Test

I. MATCHING Match items in the first column with the second. Some items in the second column will not be used.

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ___ 1. Robillard | A. Hidden supply of food |
| ___ 2. H. H. Munro | B. Conflict inside a country |
| ___ 3. Famine | C. "Good Morning" |
| ___ 4. Old Ranger | D. Fight or struggle with |
| ___ 5. Liam O'Flaherty | E. Framton Nuttel |
| ___ 6. "Straight-arm" | F. English bull terrier |
| ___ 7. Mark Hager | G. Talk or argue with |
| ___ 8. Cache | H. Visitor |
| ___ 9. Civil war | I. Conflict outside a country |
| ___ 10. Rex | J. American bull terrier |
| | K. Lack of food |
| | L. "The Sniper" |
| | M. Mr. Epperly's dog |
| | N. Priest |
| | O. Saki |

II. TRUE-FALSE If an item is true, use a +. If it is false, use a o.

- ___ 1. Among dogs, Rex was a bully known for starting many fights.
- ___ 2. Settings of short stories are always pinpointed exactly for the reader.
- ___ 3. The community demanded that Old Ranger be killed, yet none of the men would do it.
- ___ 4. James Thurber writes in a very formal style.
- ___ 5. The Indians accept events of their lives rather than fighting them.
- ___ 6. Vera quickly explained Mr. Nuttel's sudden departure.
- ___ 7. Jules, the young Indian boy, was given the name "uncle" by his people.
- ___ 8. Style refers to the way a writer expresses himself.
- ___ 9. Joe killed Old Ranger to please the people of the area and to get his first dollar bill.
- ___ 10. Swimming was Rex's favorite recreation.
- ___ 11. The story the priest told was too unbelievable for Spencer.
- ___ 12. The sniper never knew who the enemy on the other roof top really was.
- ___ 13. All the people except the priest sat down and wept when the cache was found empty.
- ___ 14. Mr. Nuttel's aunt had given him a letter of introduction to Mrs. Sappleton.
- ___ 15. The Indian village traveled by a sled through a blizzard to try to locate food.

APPENDIX B. Group III Unit Test (continued)

III. MULTIPLE-CHOICE Select the best answer for each of the following.

- ___ 1. Which season is most preferred by the Indians?
A. fall.
B. winter.
C. spring.
D. summer.
- ___ 2. Which of the following did Rex not do?
A. He carried a ten-foot wooden rail in his mouth.
B. He caught baseballs thrown high.
C. He carried a small chest of drawers home.
D. He killed cats and squirrels.
E. He jumped eight-foot fences.
- ___ 3. The most unusual event of the priest's story that Spencer could not easily accept was
A. the weather was abnormally below zero.
B. the village could not borrow food from nearby Indians.
C. the young boy in the village did something hard to believe.
D. the village people were forced to eat their dogs.
E. C, D above.
F. none of the above.
- ___ 4. A type of conflict would include all of the following except
A. man vs. man.
B. man vs. nature.
C. man vs. society.
D. man vs. himself.
E. none of the above.
F. all of the above.
- ___ 5. A writer develops his characters
A. through his personal descriptions.
B. through their thoughts.
C. through their actions.
D. through other characters' comments about them.
E. all of the above.
F. B, C, D above.
- ___ 6. Which of the following is the only true event of "The Sniper?"
A. The sniper was a Free Stater, who killed his brother.
B. The sniper was wounded by the gunman in the armored car.
C. The sniper killed an old woman coming down the street.

APPENDIX B. Group III Unit Test (continued)

- ___6. (continued)
D. The sniper fainted because of the pain from his wound.
E. The sniper decided against lighting a cigarette.
- ___7. Which of the following did Vera not tell the afternoon visitor?
A. Her aunt kept the window open each day waiting for the return of the men.
B. The men went hunting with two of their best hunting dogs.
C. The "accident" occurred three years ago to the day.
D. The men went to their favorite snipe-shooting ground.
E. Mrs. Sappleton's husband and brothers were lost in a bog and never returned.
- ___8. An example of irony would include the following except
A. Rex "straight-armed" death like he fought other battles in life.
B. The older people of the community expected a youngster to do what they could not do themselves.
C. The make-believe story told by a young girl fooled an older person.
D. The courage and quick thinking of a young Indian saved the lives of his people.
- ___9. Which of the following is not a clue that should have led Mr. Nuttel to realize that Vera's story was not true?
A. The house showed signs of the presence of men.
B. Vera laughed jokingly as she told him about the "accident."
C. Vera was fifteen years old at the time of Mr. Nuttel's visit.
D. Vera would have been three years younger when the accident occurred.
- ___10. After Joe agreed to kill Old Ranger,
A. The money burned in his pocket.
B. Joe hid the money in a castor-oil bottle.
C. Mrs. Epperly criticized Joe for killing the dog.
D. The Epperly children would not walk to school with Joe.
E. A, B, D above.
F. A, C, D above.

APPENDIX B. Group III Unit Test (continued)

IV. FILL-THE-BLANK Supply answers for the following questions. Write your answers on the lines provided.

- _____ 1. ? refers to the events of a story.
- _____ 2. ? was finally used to bait the hook to first attract the fish.
- _____ 3. ? refers to the time and place of a story.
- _____ 4. ? occurs when the opposite of what is expected happens.
- _____ 5. "Romance at short notice" was a pastime of ? (whom)
- _____ 6. ? refers to a writer's ability to make characters seem real.
- _____ 7. The country where "The Sniper" occurs was ?
- _____ 8. A ? is a struggle between two or more opposing forces.
- _____ 9. Joe was given a ? dollar bill to kill Old Ranger.
- _____ 10. A ? is a main idea that writer is stressing through the events of his story.

APPENDIX B. Group IV Unit Test

I. MATCHING Match items in the first column with the second. Some items in the second column will not be used.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ___ 1. Zona Gale | A. "Snapshot of a Dog" |
| ___ 2. Michael Foster | B. Marge |
| ___ 3. Ray Bradbury | C. Mexican friend |
| ___ 4. John Carmody's daughter | D. Enemy |
| ___ 5. Jorge | E. A druggist |
| ___ 6. August Strindberg | F. English bull terrier |
| ___ 7. James Thurber | G. "The Long-Distance Telephone Call" |
| ___ 8. "Straight-arm" | H. Alice |
| ___ 9. Rex | I. Talk or argue with |
| ___ 10. Apothecary | J. "Later" |
| | K. Newspaper writer |
| | L. Fight or struggle with |
| | M. Swedish writer |
| | N. Wrestler |
| | O. American bull terrier |

II. TRUE-FALSE If an item is true, use a +. If it is false, use a o.

- ___ 1. The entries on the half sheet of paper were all written legibly in the same handwriting.
- ___ 2. Bill turned down his sister because she was a "tired" woman.
- ___ 3. Among dogs, Rex was a bully known for starting many fights.
- ___ 4. Alice and her husband both enjoyed attending the opera.
- ___ 5. Settings of short stories are always pinpointed exactly for the reader.
- ___ 6. John Carmody was busy reading a stockholders' report when his daughter asked him to play a game with her.
- ___ 7. James Thurber writes in a very formal style.
- ___ 8. The young widowed man was bitter as he walked out to leave his apartment.
- ___ 9. Bill at first hoped his daughter's adopted parents would be wealthy.
- ___ 10. Style refers to the way a writer expresses himself.
- ___ 11. Colonel Freeleigh's son had threatened to have his phone removed.
- ___ 12. Before Minna left with her new parents, Bill kissed her good-bye for the last time.
- ___ 13. Swimming was Rex's favorite recreation.
- ___ 14. Jorge was the only friend that Colonel Freeleigh had.

APPENDIX B. Group IV Unit Test (continued)

- ___15. John Carmody recalled the events of his daughter's last few minutes of life shortly before leaving for her funeral.

III. MULTIPLE-CHOICE Select the best answer for each of the following.

- ___1. Which of the following was not an entry on the yellow sheet of paper?
- A. the bank.
 - B. the livery stable.
 - C. the dairy.
 - D. Dr. L---.
 - E. the undertaker.
 - F. none of the above.
- ___2. Which event was not a true one from "Later?"
- A. The father was too busy to take time for his daughter.
 - B. The mother, according to the daughter, was much busier upstairs.
 - C. The new book was dented and thumbed at the end of the story.
 - D. The daughter was killed by an elderly driver.
 - E. The daughter was very patient when talking with her father.
 - F. The father was filled with hate for the one who killed his daughter.
- ___3. In order to be a better parent for Minna, Bill
- A. learned to cook oatmeal and vegetables.
 - B. patched Minna's clothes.
 - C. gave Minna a kitten to keep her company.
 - D. listened to her prayers and took her to church.
 - E. B, D above.
 - F. all of the above.
- ___4. Which of the following did Rex not do?
- A. He carried a ten-foot wooden rail in his mouth.
 - B. He caught baseballs thrown high.
 - C. He killed cats and squirrels.
 - D. He carried a small chest of drawers home.
 - E. He jumped eight-foot fences.
- ___5. Which of the following is not a characteristic of Thurber's style of writing?
- A. He writes in a very formal manner.
 - B. He writes in a relaxed, conversational manner.
 - C. He uses a great deal of description.
 - D. He creates characters who are not typical of us.
 - E. A, B, C above.
 - F. A, D above.

APPENDIX B. Group IV Unit Test (continued)

- ___6. A type of conflict would include
A. man vs. man.
B. man vs. society.
C. man vs. nature.
D. man vs. himself.
E. all of the above.
F. A, B, D above.
- ___7. A writer develops his characters
A. through his personal descriptions.
B. through their actions.
C. through their thoughts.
D. through other characters' comments about them.
E. B, C, D above.
F. all of the above.
- ___8. When a piece of literature arouses our feelings of pity, it is said to have
A. conflict.
B. pathos.
C. irony.
D. tragedy.
E. characterization.
- ___9. Which of the following was not one of the pleasures of Colonel Freeleigh's life?
A. talking to Jorge.
B. talking to friends in other countries.
C. telling stories to three young boys.
D. none of the above.
E. A, B above.
- ___10. An example of irony would include the following except
A. Bill gave his daughter to the carpenter and his wife instead of to the wealthy woman.
B. John Carmody had hatred for the one who killed his daughter.
C. Rex "straight-armed" death like he fought other battles in life.
D. Colonel Freeleigh died after he knew his phone would be removed.
E. B, C, A above.
F. A, D above.

IV. FILL-THE-BLANK Answer each of the following questions.
Write your answers on the lines provided.

- _____1. ? refers to the events of a story.
- _____2. ? refers to the time and place of a story.
- _____3. ? caskets were needed for the young man in "Half a Sheet of Paper."

APPENDIX B. Group IV Unit Test (continued)

- 4. A ? occurs when a writer returns to an earlier time period.
- 5. A ? is a struggle between two or more opposing forces.
- 6. Minna opened a ? as she walked away from her father at the end of the story.
- 7. A ? is a main idea that a writer is stressing through the events of his story.
- 8. ? refers to a writer's ability to make characters seem real.
- 9. ? occurs when the opposite of what is expected happens.
- 10. Colonel Freeleigh and Rex both ? Death as long as they could.

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