HOME LITERACY PORTFOLIOS: TOOLS FOR SHARING LITERACY INFORMATION AND FOR ASSESSING PARENTS' AWARENESS OF AND INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR PREKINDERGARTEN CHILD'S LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the University of North Texas in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

Patricia H. Williams, B.S.Ed., M.Ed.
Denton, Texas
December, 1996
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This qualitative study investigated parents' awareness of and involvement in their prekindergarten child's literacy development. In addition, the feasibility of parents using a home literacy portfolio for the purpose of exchanging literacy information with teachers at a parent/teacher conference was examined. Participants included six parent/child dyads, who qualified for a Texas public school prekindergarten program by meeting the requirements for either free or reduced lunches or for the English-as-a-Second Language program. Research tools included audiotaped interviews with parents and with teachers; observations at parent/child workshop sessions, which were also videotaped; and work samples, including a home literacy portfolio from each child.

Findings indicate that parents are involved in their children's literacy development. Also, at home, children participate in both open-ended literacy activities and drill-oriented literacy activities, with most of the activities falling into the open-ended category.

According to the findings, all of the parents were more aware of their child's literacy achievements after attending the parent/child workshop and developing a home literacy portfolio. In addition, the
home literacy portfolio proved to be a useful tool for sharing information at parent/teacher conferences.

Parents and teachers exchanged literacy information at the parent/teacher conference. In the process of explaining the portfolios, the parents shared information about their child’s drawing development, writing development, and reading development. In contrast, the teachers shared some literacy information with the parents, but much of the information teachers shared reflected the child’s participation in class or general information about the child.

The findings suggest that the parent/child workshop is a cost-effective vehicle for directly involving parents in their child’s education. Moreover, developing a home literacy portfolio provides a means of involving parents with their child and of helping parents’ become more aware of their child’s literacy development.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Literacy ability is vital to academic success, and parents are a critical link to their child's literacy development. According to Weinberger, Hannon, and Nutbrown (1990, p. 4), "Parents and the home are powerful influences on children's early literacy development"; therefore, children benefit from parents who encourage and place value upon their children's acquisition of literacy skills. Because literacy development begins in infancy and is an ongoing process in which the child constructs his/her knowledge about the functions of reading and writing, parents are the child's first teachers.

Since parents are their child's first teachers, they need to be able to recognize their child's achievements in literacy development and need to provide opportunities for growth in literacy development. Holdaway (1979) related that parents need to recall the ways in which their children have been successful learners. Parents need to take the same approach with their child's literacy learning that they took when their child was learning to walk and talk. "They need to be encouraged to delight in the early stages of literacy learning and support them in the same manner as they supported the early stumblings of walking and the early bumbling of talking" (Holdaway, 1979, p. 189).

A national education agenda has grown in response to the low literacy and academic achievement among children in the United States.
The six National Education Goals from the 1989 Education Summit of Governors and Goals 2000, signed into law on March 31, 1994, are results of this education agenda. Both encourage schools and parents to form partnerships to increase parental involvement and participation in promoting their child's academic growth. One objective of the "School Readiness" goal from Goals 2000 is for every parent of preschoolers in the United States to be his/her child's first teacher by spending time each day helping his/her child learn. In addition, parents are to have training and support made available to them (United States Department of Education, 1994). Boyer (1991) in Ready to Learn: A Mandate for the Nation concurred, saying that every state needs to develop a comprehensive parent education program guaranteeing that all parents will have access to such a program.

Helping parents become involved in their child's learning is one type of parent education that has been especially effective for both informing parents and for developing partnerships between home and school. Berger (1987) found that when parents were involved in a study that was both interesting to them and that allowed them to be active participants, they tended to learn more and developed a more positive attitude than when they attended a meeting that was strictly lecture. A parent education program designed to help parents become aware of and involved in their child's literacy learning meets some of the requirements of Goals 2000. Also, regarding setting up home/school partnerships, Spiegel, Fitzgerald, and Cunningham (1993) found that it was not necessary to convince parents of the importance of their role in literacy development because parents understood the importance of
literacy. Parents did want to know how they could help their child (Spiegel, Fitzgerald, & Cunningham). A parent/child workshop to involve parents in their child's literacy development is one way to address how parents can help.

One approach for helping parents become aware of and involved in their child's literacy learning is to instruct parents through a workshop about literacy development and about how to develop a portfolio of their child's literacy development reflecting literacy behaviors observed at home. Roskos and Neuman (1994) described the usefulness of literacy albums, which are similar to portfolios, for helping teachers and caregivers gather, observe, and assess the literacy behavior of children ages 3 years to 5 years. Roskos and Neuman suggested that teachers meet with parents to discuss the concept of literacy albums and to share examples. Moreover, Roskos and Neuman recommended that parents be allowed to review their child's album at school before a parent/teacher conference. Roskos and Neuman further suggested that parents be invited to add items from home and to give reasons for selecting each item. Then together, teachers and parents can plan additional literacy activities and goals for the child.

At parent/teacher conferences, the home literacy portfolio can be used as a tool for exchanging literacy information about the prekindergarten child. The parents can communicate the child's literacy achievements at home to the teacher, and the teacher can share the child's literacy achievements at school with the parents. Both parent and teacher could learn valuable information about the child. The child's literacy development could then be viewed from both sources of
information, the home and the school, creating a partnership between parents and teachers. This exchange of information addresses Edwards' (1995) suggestion that teachers need to understand the home literacy environment of their students and form partnerships with parents.

Statement of the Problem

The problem was to explore and describe parents' involvement in and awareness of their child's literacy development and to explore the feasibility of parents using a home literacy portfolio at a parent/teacher conference to facilitate the exchange of information regarding their prekindergarten child's literacy development.

Purposes of the Study

There were three main purposes of the study. The first purpose was to examine parents' involvement in their prekindergarten child's literacy development. The second purpose was to examine parents' awareness of their prekindergarten child's literacy development. The third purpose was to examine the feasibility of parents using home literacy portfolios at parent/teacher conferences to facilitate the exchange of information regarding their prekindergarten children's literacy development.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the research.

1. In what ways are parents involved in the literacy development of their prekindergarten child?

2. What do parents notice about their prekindergarten child's literacy development before and after attendance at parent/child workshops and before and after developing a home literacy portfolio?
3. What kinds of information are shared between parents and teachers at parent/teacher conferences in which parents use a home literacy portfolio?

Significance of Study

This study was significant because of its contribution to the knowledge base about portfolios. It provides information to help determine the usefulness of a home literacy portfolio for helping parents become aware of and involved in their child's literacy development. Also, it provides information for determining if a home literacy portfolio is feasible for promoting partnerships and communication between parents and teachers regarding the child's literacy development.

Limitations

This study was limited to one school and to the prekindergarten students who fall under the state guidelines for that program. The students and parents were not randomly chosen. Parents were selected by the classroom teachers to receive a letter to attend an orientation. Then, parents attending the orientation volunteered to participate; therefore, results can not be generalized to other populations.

Definitions of the Terms

**Emergent Literacy:** This term "refers to the earliest indications of young children's interest in and abilities related to writing and reading" (Hildebrand & Bader, 1992, p.163).

**Home Literacy Portfolio:** The researcher uses this term to refer to an album of drawings, writings, lists of books read, and literacy activities engaged in by prekindergarten children at home accompanied by comments from parents as to why each item was selected.
Parent-Child Workshop: The researcher uses this term to refer to a workshop that is designed for and attended by both parent and child.

Parent Involvement: This term refers to "the extent to which parents become involved in various aspects of their children's formal education" (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990, p. 58).

Prekindergarten Student: This designation refers to a student who qualifies for the prekindergarten program in Texas public schools. These students must be four by September 1 and either meet the qualifications for free or reduced meals or speak English as a second language.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This review of the literature highlights the theories of Vygotsky and Bronfenbrenner, relating how each theory applies to this study. Also, research in emergent literacy, sharing books, drawing development, writing development, parent involvement, and three areas of family literacy: 1) literacy uses within families, 2) home-school partnerships, and 3) intergenerational programs are summarized to provide a contextual framework for this study.

Theoretical Basis for Study

Vygotsky’s theory of child development and Bronfenbrenner’s theory of human ecology serve as the theoretical basis for this study. Both stressed that interactions between people, as well as interactions between people and their environments influence learning. Parents involvement in their child’s literacy learning within the home environment is central to this study.

Vygotsky

According to Vygotsky (1978), there are two developmental levels in children. One level is a measure of what a child can do without assistance, the "actual level". The actual developmental level can be determined by tests of mental functions and shows developmental cycles that are completed. The other developmental level is the zone of proximal development, which is the difference between the actual
developmental level and the level at which the child functions with the aid of an adult or a more capable child. "The zone of proximal development defines those functions that have not matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that will mature tomorrow but are currently in an embryonic state" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

Social interaction is vital to Vygotsky's theory. He stated, "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological), and then inside the child (intrapsychological)" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). For example, speech is first used to communicate to others. Later a child is able to internalize speech so that he/she also has inner speech. Social interaction is also vital to the zone of proximal development. Vygotsky used the idea of "scaffolding" to define the help given by an adult or more capable child (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky wrote about young children and writing. He said that the gesture is the first visible sign of writing and can be viewed in different ways, such as writing in air, scribbles on paper, or symbolic play. He suggested that the development of written language advances from speech, to symbolic play, to drawing, and to writing. He determined that children must change their "drawing of things to drawings of speech" (Vygotsky, 1978 p. 115) in order to write. He stated that writing activities needed to be meaningful and relevant to the child. "If we wished to summarize all these practical requirements and express them as a single one, we could say that children should be
taught written language, not just the writing of letters" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 119).

In summary, Vygotsky's theory acknowledges that learning takes place when children and more knowledgeable others, such as parents join together in activities. Parents are "scaffolding" when they help their child's literacy learning by such actions as naming an environmental sign or by asking questions that lead to the child's discovery of the sign's name. By being available to respond to a child's questions and pleas for assistance, a parent can facilitate and encourage a child's learning through social interaction. By modeling reading, parents can help their child develop an understanding of the whole task of reading. The child can begin to understand that there is a purpose for reading and can begin to develop a sense of what reading is.

Bronfenbrenner

Bronfenbrenner's theory of the ecology of human development is based upon the relationships and interactions of the developing person and the environment. The ecological model is made up of circles that lie within each other and that have a common center. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), at the common center of the ecological model is the microsystem, which is the immediate setting containing the developing individual with all of the factors impacting the individual. Spiraling out from the center is the mesosystem, which is composed of the interrelations among two or more settings involving the person and which contains influences outside the microsystem that directly impact the individual. The third level is the exosystem, which is composed of factors and events that affect the person; however, the person is not
present in this level. The fourth level, the macrosystem, includes influences of the culture and subculture.

To understand human development, Bronfenbrenner (1979) believed that observations should go beyond directly observing one or two people in the same setting. To better understand the observed people, aspects of other environments influencing the observed people need to be included. For a child, the relations between the home and school comprise a mesosystem, or more than one setting.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) believed that the interconnections between settings can be as important as what actually takes place within a setting; therefore, for a child the relations between the school and home impact the child's learning. Bronfenbrenner (1979) said, "A child's ability to learn to read in the primary grades may depend no less on how he is taught than on the existence and nature of ties between the school and the home" (p. 3).

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), motivation to learn is influenced by dyads or relationships between a child and someone who pays attention to or participates in the child's activities. A primary dyad is established when a child and another person have thoughts of each other and are influenced by the other person even when that person is not present. Motivation for learning is strongly influenced by primary dyads. "Thus a child is more likely to acquire skills, knowledge, and values from a person with whom a primary dyad has been established than from one who exists for that child only when both are actually present in the same setting" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 58).
Bronfenbrenner (1979) listed intersetting communication, messages that provide specific information about the child in one setting to persons in another setting, as an important aspect linking two settings for a child. Intersetting communication can occur in several ways, such as parent/teacher conferences, telephone conversations, brief face-to-face meetings, written messages, newsletters, and announcements. Intersetting communication can be one-way or two-way communication.

In summary, Bronfenbrenner believes that a child's development is affected not only by his or her immediate setting, for example home, but also by other settings such as school, daycare, or church, as well as influences from settings such as a parent's work. Since the interactions and relations between the immediate setting and other settings affect the child's development, parents can have a positive impact on their child's development by communicating with the school and by participating in the child's activities at home and school. Furthermore, children would benefit from parents and teachers sharing literacy materials and information about the child. In addition, schools can encourage children and parents to develop a primary dyad by helping parents become involved in their child's literacy learning.

Emergent Literacy

Research regarding emergent literacy has revealed that literacy learning begins at birth rather than in school. Literacy learning is viewed as multidimensional and connected to the child's natural environments resulting in studies of literacy learning that include children fourteen months and younger with sites in homes, as well as in schools (Teale & Sulzby, 1989).
Learning language, writing, and reading do not occur in isolation. Genishi and Dyson (1984) said that children develop language use, speaking, writing, and reading through interactions that are social or through genetic characteristics that interact with their environment. Strickland (1990) reported that "learning to read and write are interrelated processes that develop in concert with oral language" (p. 19).

Cazden (1983) acknowledged ways that parents help their children acquire language. One is by scaffolding, through such activities as sharing books, playing word games like peek-a-boo, and encouraging their children to say, tell, or ask something specific. Second, parents model language for their children by talking about past events and carrying on everyday conversation.

In the early 1950's, to find out why some children read early, Durkin (1966) researched early reader's backgrounds. She found that these children had supportive environments. Almost without exception, the children were read to from an early age. Some were read to by one parent, some by both, and some by a sibling; however, the majority of the time, it was the mother who read to the child. An important finding was that children sat so that they could see the pictures and print as it was read. Also, the children were interested in the meaning of words. In addition to being read to, many of these children were interested in writing early. In fact, many of the children wrote words before they could read. Furthermore, all but one could print by the time they entered first grade, and all forty-nine children had blackboards at home. When attempting to write and to read, these
children's parents answered their questions. Their parents told them what a word said or how to write a certain word when asked. Rather than being formally taught by their parents, the children led the learning with the parents responding in a warm and nurturing manner. In addition, these children were provided books, paper, pencils, and other materials that are needed for literacy learning.

Words found in the environment are important to children's literacy development. Durkin (1966) found that words from environmental print generated many questions from children to adults regarding the identity of the words. Environmental words of interest were found on signs, calendars, television commercials, packages of food, records, and cars and trucks.

In summary, this research on emergent literacy shows how important parents are to their child's literacy development. Attending a parent/child workshop would offer an opportunity for parents to learn the importance of providing a supportive environment. Writing materials, such as paper, pencils, and markers could be provided for children to use at home, creating what Bronfenbrenner called an interconnection between the settings of school and home. Moreover, parents could be encouraged to point out environmental print and to respond to their children's questions about literacy, providing the scaffolding or guided assistance that Vygotsky encouraged.

**Book Sharing**

Children benefit in many ways from being read aloud to or from book sharing. Research generally shows that most children who are early readers were read to at an early age (Clay, 1991; Durkin, 1966;
Holdaway (1979) stated, "Children with a background of book experience since infancy develop a complex range of attitudes, concepts, and skills predisposing them to literacy" (p. 49). Furthermore, according to Becoming a Nation of Readers, "The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children" (Anderson, Heibert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985, p. 23).

Schickedanz (1986) claimed that through book sharing children learn about concepts of print and the way books work. Children learn there is a front and a back to a book, that books begin in certain places and end in a certain place, that books are read left to right and top to bottom, and that it is the words that are read (Schickedanz, 1986).

From book sharing, children learn that the print has meaning and makes sense. Clay (1991) said that from children's earliest understandings of print, they form hypotheses about letters, words, and written language in books and messages. As they interact more with words and books, they adjust their thinking. McMakin (1993) encouraged parents to point out picture clues to help children gain meaning from books. Furthermore, parents can create more meaningful book readings by choosing books that reflect their child's experiences and by talking about them with their child.

Through read-a-louds, a child's oral language is increased and children learn the difference between oral language and the language of books. The child finds that book language is much more complex. Clay (1991) said, "When the language of books is read aloud, this introduces
new language forms to hear making them a little easier to listen to next
time" (p. 264). Sulzby (1985) believed that parent-child interactions
during story book readings increase a child's speech so that it begins
to sound more like the language of books. Holdaway (1979) found that
children develop new vocabulary as they look at books, thus building a
broader store house of words from which to relate their experiences.

Through book sharing, listening comprehension is increased (France
& Hagar, 1993). Trelease (1989) emphasized that "listening
comprehension must come before reading comprehension" (p. 2). Reading
aloud increases listening comprehension by familiarizing children with
words that were previously unknown.

Children learn about school behavior through book sharing.
Newkirk (1989) pointed out that through book sharing, children learn to
talk about labels and to answer "what" questions about picture books.
Answering specific questions about books proves to be a difficult task
for children with little book sharing opportunities. These question and
answer routines prepare students for school language and activities.

Children learn about story structure from listening to stories.
Applebee (1980) said, "Studies show that by the time children enter
school, they have a firmly developed sense of story that influences their
reaction to new stories" (p. 137). Through read-a-louds, children learn
about settings, plots, characters, and events. They learn how to
organize their thoughts so that they can tell stories and can retell
familiar stories. Sulzby (1985) developed a classification scheme for
storytelling. When children begin telling stories, they consider each
page to be a distinct unit. Later, they consider the book to be a
complete unit. Also, their language changes from sounding like oral language to sounding more like written language. Their language advances to the point of having books memorized.

Many authors have stressed the importance of repeated readings. Yaden (1988) said that parents and teachers should not expect an immediate response to a story after the first reading. It may take several readings to gain a sophisticated degree of comprehension. In addition, Durkin's (1966) studies revealed that through repeated readings, a child's interest in particular words grew. Also, children memorized stories that were often repeated and enjoyed telling the parent when to turn the page or if a word or portion of the story was misread or omitted. Schickedanz (1986) reminded us that through repeated readings, children learn that the story is identical each time it is read; it does not change. According to Martinez and Roser (1985), children reacted differently when listening to familiar stories than when listening to an unfamiliar story. Children made more comments when the story was a familiar one. From repeated readings, Conlon (1992) said that children's comprehension increases and that children's questions become more complex. At first, children are more interested in the pictures. However, after hearing the story repeated, the child becomes more interested in the print and its relationship to the pictures.

Reading aloud benefits children's emotional development by creating warm memories between parents and children. According to Conlon (1992), sharing books is a social experience that satisfies emotional needs. Children lean against their parent as they listen and interact, bringing a sense of happiness and security to the child.
Sometimes sharing books can have a calming effect on children. Holdaway (1979) said that it is an extremely pleasurable time, one in which the parent gains satisfaction from the interaction and enjoys the questions and remarks from the child about the story. The child enjoys the undivided attention of the parent.

Parents are instrumental in helping their children learn to value and enjoy books. Parents provide a model that helps their children value and love books when they read to their children. Furthermore, parents model the value of reading when they read for their own enjoyment or for business purposes. Hill (1989) concluded that most children who are successful in school come from "families where reading is valued, shared, and nurtured" (p. 314). Graves and Stuart (1985) stated that children need to see that their parents enjoy and value literacy activities so that their children will internalize their attitudes. Clay (1991) believed that the best preparation of young children for learning in school is to have a love of books and to realize that books contain interesting ideas.

In summary, the importance of parents sharing books with their children by reading aloud to them has been well documented. Through participation in a parent/child workshop, parents could be encouraged to read to their children, possibly developing what Bronfenbrenner refers to as a primary dyad with their children. Also during a parent/child workshop, reading aloud could be modeled. In addition, parents and children could have opportunities to choose books and read them together at the workshop and to choose books to check out of the school library to take home for the week. Through a workshop, parents
could be encouraged to reread books to their children when asked and
to serve as models for their child by reading for business purposes or
for personal enjoyment.

Drawing

There is a distinct relationship between drawing and writing.
Brittain (1979) stated, "Both are expressive, both communicate, and both
need the development of comparable skills" (p. 206). In addition, the
beginning stage for both is scribbling and both have an impact on
literacy development.

There are definite developmental stages of drawing. Brittain (1979)
divided the early stages of drawing into random scribbling, controlled
scribbling, early representational stage, and preschematic drawing.
Each stage is equally important as one stage builds upon the preceding
one. Rhoda Kellogg (1969) studied thousands of pictures drawn by
children. She classifies drawings into scribbles, diagrams, combines,
aggregates, and pictorials.

The importance of scribbling is well documented. Whitener and
Kersey (1980, p. 84) stated, "Scribbling is to writing as babbling is to
talking." Zurmuehlen (1983, p. 117) said, "Repetitions of babbling
sounds and scribbling marks may be assimilated into collections of
objects and collections of sentences that constitute almost pictures and
almost stories."

According to Lowenfeld and Brittain (1964), in the random
scribbling stage which begins around two years of age and in the
controlled scribbling stage which follows, the child's marks are the
result of active kinesthetic motions; there is no creative intent. The
child merely moves the crayon or pencil and may even be looking somewhere other than the paper. The enjoyment that the child feels comes from the kinesthetic movement. Once the controlled scribbling stage begins, the child finds enjoyment in the visual aspects of scribbling, as well as the kinesthetic ones. This enjoyment normally begins about six months after the beginning of the random scribbling stage. In contrast, Kellogg and O'Dell (1967) said that there are seventeen placement patterns and that the child's scribbles "are placed in definite patterns" (p. 13) on the space provided. By the age of three, children use all of the placement patterns.

Lowenfeld and Brittain (1964) said that the next step is the naming scribbling stage which occurs around the age of three and a half or four. This stage signifies that the child no longer looks upon scribbling as strictly a motor activity, but has equated his motions to his experiences and the world around him. The child now uses imaginative thinking and can think in terms of pictures. "The importance of this change can best be understood if we realize that as adults most of our thinking is done in terms of mental pictures" (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1964, p. 99).

Kellogg and O'Dell (1967) found that at about three years of age the child can draw outlines of shapes which lead to the design stage. The design stage is characterized by two or more outlined shapes that are put together. Then at around the age of four or five the child comes into the pictorial stage. The child is now equipped with a knowledge of basic scribbles, placement patterns, shapes, and designs. Their drawings now begin to be recognizable objects to adults. Pictures
of humans are usually the first sign that they are beginning the pictorial stage.

Herberholz and Hanson (1985) stressed that the child's future growth and development is dependent on fostering these early stages of development and insisted that adults encourage children to do spontaneous scribbling. Connell (1987) indicated that drawing is one of the most essential activities for building a foundation for literacy in young children. Furthermore, Connell said, "Drawing also builds visual imagery for later reading comprehension. As an expressive activity, drawing balances the many receptive activities imposed by many current kindergarten curricula" (p. 31).

Brittain (1979) maintained that drawings give insight into a child's intellectual development and are many times better indicators of reading readiness than teacher's perception. He found that children who draw often fared better on intellectual tests based on drawings than children who seldom draw. Goodnow (1977) also felt that drawings give insights into a child's mental development and the skills that the child possesses, especially into his/her problem-solving skills. Goodnow (1977, p. 145) said, "Graphic work is truly 'visible thinking'." Brittain also found that a child's writing and drawing development parallel. A child who is still in the scribbling stage in drawing will still be in the scribbling stage in writing. However, a child who can draw closed forms, such as circles, will also be able to draw closed letters. A child who draws objects that can be recognized will also be able to make letters that are recognizable. Brittain suggested that having children draw and paint could be a productive way for children to develop writing skills. In
In this way, the child can develop at his/her own pace. If a child has not discovered that a line is a symbol, then the child can not be expected to recognize several lines as a word. "Certainly children who have not made this discovery themselves in their own drawings would have difficulty seeing written words as conveying meaning" (Brittain, 1979, p. 201).

In summary, the importance of drawing has been stated. Practically speaking, in a parent/child workshop, parents could be encouraged to support their children's drawing. The children could be given paper and markers to use at home. Furthermore, parents could learn how important scribbling and drawing is to literacy. In addition, parents could be asked to encourage their children to draw and to respect their children's drawings in their current stage of development.

Writing

Clay said that "discovering print is a preschooler's luxury" (1987, p. 51), and she encouraged all parents to assist their children before they began formal schooling. Parents need to understand why writing is important and how writing develops so that they can support their child's literacy development.

Marie Clay and Dolores Durkin both considered writing to be part of the foundation of emergent literacy. Clay (1991) said that writing may be the means through which young children first explore print. Durkin (1966) said that writing might precede reading. Durkin studied a group of early readers in California in the late 1950's and in New York in the early 1960's. Her findings indicated that more than half of the children involved in the study developed an interest in printing
before or at the same time as they developed an interest in reading. Durkin said, "in fact, for some early readers, ability to read seemed almost like a by-product of ability to print and to spell" (p. 137). These children went through a sequence of "(a) scribbling and drawing, to (b) copying objects and letters of the alphabet, to (c) questions about spelling, to (d) ability to read" (Durkin, 1966, p. 137).

Graves and Stuart (1985) said that reading is easier to learn if children write first. Graves and Stuart reported that one first-grade teacher found that beginning first-grade students have a better understanding of phonics now that the kindergarten teachers encourage their students to write rather than to do phonics exercises. A research project in Florida that involved five hundred kindergarteners and first-graders, almost half of which were black and almost half came from economically disadvantaged families demonstrated the importance of writing. For this study, the children were allowed to write before they could read. The children's median reading scores increased by twenty-five percentile points above the scores of previous years.

Generally, before children learn to write, they learn certain concepts and graphic principles by exploring print. Marie Clay (1975) described some concepts and graphic principles of writing development. 1) The recurring principle is the idea that the same shapes are used over and over in writing. For example, a child may make several hearts or may write AAABAAA. 2) The generative principle states that the same variety of signs are used in many combinations. An example of the generative principle is that "d" is used in the word, dad, and in the word, did. 3) The sign concept is the idea that particular graphic
displays stand for something else. 4) The inventory principle is demonstrated by lists that children have made showing what they know. The child will list all of the words that he or she knows, such as names of family members. 5) The flexibility principle states that there is a set number of signs with only certain ways of making them. If an upper case L has the stick on the right side, it is not a letter. 6) The space concept is evident when a child leaves a space to separate words. 7) According to Clay (1975), four stages comprise the directional principles for English: "1) Start top left. 2) Move left to right across the word or line. 3) Return down left. 4) Locate next starting point" (p. 23).

Writing and art have an impact on each other. Harste, Woodward, and Burke (1984), found that children would often move from writing to art and vice versa. Children would draw pictures of words they could not spell; therefore, using the pictures as placeholders for meaning, just as words are used as placeholders for meaning. Another interesting finding was that by the age of three, children can distinguish between drawing and writing. According to Harste, Woodward, and Burke, "Scribble writing is different than scribble drawing" (p. 93). Whatever form children's drawing and writing takes, children are able to tell one from the other and the form remains stable. Hubbard (1990) agreed, saying that writing and art continue to have an impact on each other after children can distinguish between drawing and writing.

According to Graves and Stuart (1985), as children work with written language, they "not only seem to be inventing written language for themselves, but seem to be in the process of resolving for themselves all of the problems which the inventors of written language
across various cultures have had to resolve" (p. 178). One indicator of literacy growth for a young child is to decide what a mark stands for before making it. Another indicator of literacy growth occurs when the child both intends for marks to have a particular meaning and can recall the original meaning when he/she sees it at a later date (Graves & Stuart).

Temple, Nathan, Temple, and Burris (1993) listed several ways in which children learn to write. Children learn to write by observing other people using print and by seeing meaningful examples of print. Children learn by sharing their writings with other children, by having other children share their writings with them, and by talking about how they wrote. Using their own strategies, children learn to write through discovery. Three discoveries that children can make are the following: "1) what writing looks like, or how to make marks that look like letters; 2) how letters work, or how to spell; and 3) how writing organizes and communicates ideas, the area of composition" (Temple, Nathan, Temple, & Burris, 1993, p. 14).

Holmes (1993) studied children in a kindergarten class to determine the impact that adult writing models would have on young children's journal writing. To model writing, an adult would sit at a table with a group of children who were writing in their journals. The model would write in his/her own journal while the children wrote in their journals. Holmes found that children did more writing when an adult writing model sat with the children. The children had less entries that were entirely drawings and wrote more letters and strings of letters when an adult writing model sat at the children's table. Of the
children who previously only drew pictures, most wrote labels when encouraged by their adult model. Many children ventured into inventive spelling after ten days of having an adult writing model available.

Newkirk (1989) suggested that labels and captions for pictures are among the first items that children write. Often the first label that children write is their name. Durkin (1966) said that after becoming interested in writing their own name, children often become interested in learning their parents', siblings', and friends' names. Graves and Stuart (1985) found that young children who write at home "begin with labels, signs, notes, and lists, rather than full-fledged stories." They encouraged parents to let their children know what they do well.

Parents can help their children develop writing skills in many ways. According to Clay (1987), parents can provide a space at home for writing and can provide writing materials, such as pencils, markers, crayons, and blank paper. Parents can talk about what they are writing as they are writing and can involve their children by having them write their own parallel list. Parents can be available to their children to answer questions about writing or spelling when asked. Most important, parents need to model writing and show that it is an important part of everyday life. Graves and Stuart (1985) encouraged parents to let their children see them going through the writing process. "A child who sees a parent crossing out lines and crumpling up paper understands that writing is a process that may go through several stages before completion" (Graves & Stuart, 1985, p. 200).

In summary, writing is part of the foundation of emergent literacy. In a parent/child workshop, parents could be informed about
the importance of writing along with the stages of writing development. Children could be provided with writing materials to take home, and parents could be asked to encourage their children to write at home, remembering that all stages are important, including the scribbling stage. From Holmes' (1993) study and from the work of Temple, Nathan, Temple, and Burris (1993), it was found that children write more when there is an adult writing model; therefore, parents could be encouraged to model writing for their children by making lists or by writing notes or letters. Also, parents could model writing by writing comments for work samples selected for a home literacy portfolio.

**Parent Involvement**

Berger (1987) stated that parents are a child's first teacher and that they are the ones who can ensure that continuity is provided in their child's educational development. Allen and Freitag (1988) agreed, stating that children are learning all the time, yet they are in school only 13 percent of their waking hours during the first 18 years of life; therefore, parents need to be aware of the necessity for their help in guiding their child's learning.

A model for parental involvement is the Head Start program. In its beginning, Head Start stressed the parent involvement component requiring the programs to emphasize parent-child interaction and the parent's role in child development and learning (Collins, 1993). Epstein (1991) listed Even Start as another promising program for parent involvement. Even Start is a two-generational program linking the education of parents with that of their children. "The aims of Even Start are to increase the literacy skills of parents, to improve the
preschool activities of children, and to help parents understand their role and influence in their children's education so that more children succeed in school" (Epstein, 1991, p. 346).

According to Brandt (1989), data showed that low-income parents want to help their children and be involved in their education. She said that they will participate in school activities for this purpose; however, parents want to be more directly involved in their child's education. Parents want clear information about what they can do at home to help their children succeed at school.

The following section will further explore parent involvement. The emphasis will be on parent involvement in their child's literacy development.

**Family Literacy**

A growing interest in family literacy has emerged partially because of the study of emergent literacy and the realization that the home and the earliest years of a child's life impact a child's success in school. Morrow and Paratore (1993) stated that the importance of literacy learning prior to entering school needs to be of prime importance to schools.

The International Reading Association's Commission on Family Literacy has developed goals to address the need for family literacy. Some of the commission's goals are to "disseminate information that defines family literacy, provide information about existing programs, and describe relevant work of agencies and professional associations" (Morrow & Paratore, 1993, p. 194).
According to Morrow and Paratore (1993), there are three types of family literacy studies. The three categories include: "1) home-school partnership programs, 2) intergenerational literacy programs, and 3) research that explores uses of literacy within families" (Morrow & Paratore, 1993, p. 196). Each type will be explored further in the following section.

**Literacy Uses Within Families**

Denny Taylor (1983) and Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines (1988) studied family literacy using an ethnographic approach. In one study, she observed middle-class families recording their use of literacy in their daily lives. Later, she observed inner-city families and their use of literacy in their daily lives. In both studies, the families had a child or children who were successful at reading. She found that children in all of the families were exposed to literacy in their homes and communities.

Heath's (1983) ethnographic study explored the use of language and literacy in the lives of children from two neighboring communities in North Carolina. Both communities were working class. One was a Black neighborhood. The other was a white neighborhood. Many of these children were unsuccessful in school. Heath's goal was to discover how the children's previous experiences of language and literacy could be used by the teacher to help foster better learning.

Purcell-Gates, L'Allier, and Smith (1995) highlighted four families, two from low literacy level families and two from high literacy level families, from an ethnographic study of 20 low-socioeconomic families regarding the ways each family uses print in their daily lives. They found that the frequency of literacy events in families varied from .06
to 4.21 events per hour. The two families labeled as having high literacy levels averaged eight times more literacy events per hour than the two families labeled as having low literacy levels. Furthermore, literacy events were grouped into nine categories. Most of the high literacy level families' literacy events were grouped into the storybook reading, literacy learning, and entertainment categories; whereas, the low literacy level families' literacy events were grouped mostly in the entertainment and daily living routine categories with none falling into the school or storybook reading category (Purcell-Gates, L'Allier, & Smith). Recommendations from this study are for teachers to closely view each child's home environment, to develop classroom activities to meet each child's need, and to communicate appropriate information to parents.

Schickedanz and Sullivan (1984) conducted a three-month study at home and at the university nursery school of young children who had a high interest in literacy. At home, the most frequently occurring literacy event was story reading. Another finding was that most of the events were initiated by the child rather than the parent. In the home, the children "responded to print, asked about print, and created print..." (Schickedanz and Sullivan, 1984, p. 11). In contrast, at school, the child seldom dealt with print. The teacher did read stories, the children's names were written on art projects, and the children could type on a typewriter, but the types of shared experiences between parent and child were not visible in the school setting. According to Schickedanz and Sullivan (1984, p. 12), "Adult lives at home pull children into the adult world, a world in which literacy skills are
constantly being put to use. Nursery school, on the other hand, pulls adults into a child's world, a world in which literacy skills are not vitally necessary. The result should not surprise us: children engage in literacy events far more at home than at school."

Blatchford, Burke, Farquhar, Plewis and Tizard (1985) studied 343 children with a mean age of 4 years 9 months in London to determine what effect gender and ethnic origin have on children's literacy and numeracy skills before entry to school. A second topic of study was parental influence on children's literacy and numeracy skills prior to entry to school. Results of the first phase of this longitudinal study showed that there was little difference in children's test scores due to ethnic origin. Although girls tested higher than boys on skills, the mother's educational achievement and parents' teaching of literacy and numeracy skills rather than gender were believed to be the significant variable.

Scarborough, Dobrich, and Hager (1991) compared three groups of preschool children by interviewing parents about the frequencies of adult reading, parent-child reading, and children's solitary reading activities. Also, the parents' reading levels were assessed. When the children reached second grade, their reading levels were assessed. The results showed that the children who became better readers had more literacy-related activities than the children who became poorer readers.

Freeman and Wasserman (1987) studied children's home literacy environments to see how they affected the child's motivation to learn to read. The children's engagement in literacy activities were observed in their classroom during free choice time and rated on a checklist to
determine their literacy set. The parents filled out a questionnaire to
determine the children's home literacy environment. A high correlation
between the literacy environment in the home and the literacy set of the
preschool child was found.

Doiron and Shapiro (1988) conducted a study of three and four
year old children from a university preschool comparing the children's
sense of story with their literacy environment in the home. The parents
were given the Home Literacy Environment Index which assesses
"quantity and variety of print material; frequency of children being
read to; types of literacy experiences; exposure to the writing process;
and modeling of literacy skills" (Doiron & Shapiro, 1988, p. 190).
Children were videotaped telling a story using the wordless picture
book, Pancakes for Breakfast. Story elements assessed included title,
setting, identification of main character, identification of problem, story
action, and closing. Also, literacy devices, such as intonation, repetition
of words, word emphasis, literary language, and dialogue used were
assessed. Results showed that four-year-olds from higher literacy
environments used more story elements and literacy devices than those
from lower literacy environments. The results for the three-year-olds
did not show a significant difference.

Hildebrand and Bader (1992) individually interviewed 59 parents of
children ages three to five and a half years to determine the parents'
involve in their child's emerging literacy. All of these parents had
previously responded to the Bader Reading and Language Inventory that
designated their children as measuring either high or low on writing
letters of the alphabet, writing their names, and requesting parents'
help in reading signs. The results regarding the child's home literacy environment were compared with the results from the Bader Reading and Language Inventory. Results showed that the children with higher ratings on the inventory had parents who were more likely to provide blocks, shapes, alphabet books, and recorded stories for their children; were more likely to take their children to the library; and were more likely to discuss television shows with their children.

In summary, the home literacy environment of children has a strong impact on their success in school. Purcell-Gates, L'Allier, and Smith (1995) recommended that teachers learn about the child's home environment and communicate with parents. In a parent/child study, teachers could learn about each child's home environment if the parent shared a home literacy portfolio at a parent/teacher conference. A parent/teacher conference could also provide a time for communication between parent and teacher. Because several studies indicated that children who engage in more literacy activities at home are more successful at school, parents could be encouraged to provide opportunities for literacy activities at home. The Home Literacy Environment Index that Doiron and Shapiro used could be used in an interview format in a study that would assess the children's home literacy environment.

Home-School Partnerships

The Appalachia Educational Laboratory in Charleston, West Virginia developed 30 four-page guides called Family Connections that list developmentally appropriate activities for parents to do with their children. Also included are read-aloud selections, a message covering a
specific topic, such as learning through play or the importance of reading aloud, and a Sunshine Gram that promotes positive communication between teachers and families (Penn and Childers, 1993). The guides were field tested with teachers who found most parents "eagerly welcomed" (p. 51) them each week. For the 1992-93 school year, Kentucky, which field tested the guides, ordered 20,000 sets for their at-risk four-year-old program. Programs in 15 other states had ordered them within six months.

Cooper (1987) used Waterland's apprenticeship approach as a vehicle to share books with parents and children. At the end of each class, parents had the opportunity to check-out books to take home and read to their children. At the end of the first week, 33 of the 39 families had participated in the project. The parents in this project did not want written instructions; however, Cooper did request that each child keep a record of books read and, if desired, the parents could comment on their child's approach to books. At a meeting attended by half of the parents, it was agreed by all parents present that the project should continue.

Winter and Rouse (1990) reported the results of a new program piloted in 1988 as a part of the Parents as Teachers program in the Ferguson-Florissant School District in St. Louis County in Missouri. Ten children aged 2 1/2 to 3 from low-income families with parents who had not graduated from high school were enrolled. A parent educator from the school district visited once a month to focus on literacy activities. So that the parent would have books to read to their child throughout the month, books were left at each visit. An adapted version of Teale's
Literacy Environment Checklist was used to assess the amount of literacy materials in the home. At the conclusion of the study, all of the mothers had enrolled for the following year.

Kirby (1992) was involved in a literacy project in Australia that looked at parents' and teachers' interactions and talk with children during story reading. Six parents kept a diary and tape recorded some of their story reading with their children. Also, parents were informally interviewed. In the classroom, story reading was videotaped. Later during the school year, three weekly sessions stressing the importance of reading aloud to their child, talking to their child, and allowing their child to write were conducted with the parents of half of the kindergarten students. Through informal interviews, parents told how they supported their child's literacy development. Throughout the project, each child's literacy development was monitored in a naturalistic and ethnographic way. At the conclusion of the project, the children were given three formal reading tests that were required by the state. Scores were the highest ever recorded at the school, and Kirby noted a positive partnership between the home and school.

The Talking to Literacy Learners (TTALL) program was a literacy program concerned with parent and child interactions when discussing reading and writing. TTALL focused on the parents rather than on the children by providing a workshop to educate parents so that they would participate in literacy activities with their children (Cairney & Munsie, 1992). To evaluate the program, parents were interviewed before and after the program, parents were videotaped, field notes were taken, a reflective journal was kept by the coordinator, and students and staff
were interviewed in group settings. Results showed that parent/child interactions were positively influenced, that parents made more appropriate choices of resources for their children, and that parents gained a better understanding of schools (Cairney & Munsie).

In summary, the research showed that parents want to learn how to help their children. Just as the parents in Cooper's (1987) study kept a list of books that they read to their children, the parents in a parent/child study could keep a list of books that they read to their children. In Kirby’s (1992) study, data collection included videotaping parent/child interactions while reading stories and interviewing parents about how they supported their child's literacy development. In a parent/child study, a workshop could be videotaped to evaluate parent/child interactions. Also, parents could be interviewed about their awareness of and involvement in their child's literacy development. A parent/child study could also focus on the parent rather than on the child as was the case for Cairney and Munsie (1992) in their study entitled, Talking to Literacy Learners.

**Intergenerational Programs**

Patricia Edwards (1995) developed Parents as Partners in Reading to help parents learn the importance of reading and to model effective book reading strategies to parents. At the conclusion of the program, Edwards chose four parents to lead other parents so that the program would continue. When the parents assumed leadership, they adapted the program for their group of parents. One change that the parent leaders made was to have the children come to all of the sessions and for parents and children to read together from the beginning session.
Parents expressed appreciation for learning how to read to their children. Edwards suggested that there is a need for more information about parents' perceptions and opinions regarding programs that help parents read to their children. Furthermore, researchers need to help teachers understand the home literacy environment of their students and help teachers understand how they can use information about children's home literacy for improving home-school partnerships.

At Pulaski Elementary in Savannah, Georgia, the Families That Read, Succeed program was developed because 45% of their kindergarten students were not read to on a daily basis (Come & Fredericks, 1995). A family workshop for parents was organized into five workshop sessions. The sessions highlighted how to read to children, how storytelling provides a foundation for reading, the importance of talking with your child about the story or book and relating it to your child's life, how to make books, and an awards ceremony for parents. From this program, it was discovered that children needed access to books to read at home. Now, children bring home books for parents to read. Also, one of the most beneficial activities that came out of the program was that parents were interested in checking out books from the school library to read to their children.

The Kenan Trust Family Literacy Model originated in Kentucky during the 1988-1989 school year in seven sites located in public schools (Has, 1989). It is designed to work with families of undereducated adults and their 3 or 4 year old children. The components of the literacy model include early childhood education, adult education, parenting education, parents and children together time, and human
resources development. At the end of the first year, almost all groups of parents and children made gains in academic achievement, social skills, and self concept. The combination of early childhood classes with adult education classes provided modeling for the children and appeared to contribute to higher adult attendance. The Kenan Trust Family Literacy Model is insistent upon the value of educating both parents and children so that parents can become teachers of their children and be models as learners (Seaman, Popp, & Darling, n.d.).

France and Hager (1993) conducted a workshop, the Intergenerational Reading Project, with low-income African American families and their children. The goal of the Intergenerational Reading Project was to teach parents with limited reading skills how to read aloud to their children in six weekly 1-hour sessions. Parents also read "home practice books" (France & Hager, 1993, p. 569) to their children during each week. Choral reading was taught as an effective technique for parents to use with their children. Data were collected through parent logs indicating reading at home and through parent interviews. The children's listening comprehension was assessed by the Listen to the Story section of the Circus and the story structure section of the Early School Inventory. The workshop design evolved from one in which the children attended their preschool class as the parents had an instructional workshop. Then, the children joined the parents to participate in reading activities within a workshop that both parents and children attended together. The instructional part for parents was shortened and more participation was added so that parents and
children could attend all of the evening sessions together (France & Hager).

Thornburg (1993) conducted an intergenerational workshop for two hours a week for six months for nine bilingual families measuring the English proficiency and interaction among the teachers and families during the workshop. One goal was to encourage parents to read in English to their children at home. During each session, teachers led the parents and children by reading aloud a book and by leading an art project that related to the story. The children had free play while the parents were led in an English lesson regarding vocabulary and comprehension of the story. Observations of story hour, children’s free play, and parent’s English lessons were recorded. Parents and adults were interviewed. Parents were given the English version of the California Test of Basic Skills in Reading, and children were given the English version of the Preschool Language Scale, both before the workshops and at the conclusion of the workshop. Significant improvements were found for both groups.

Glover, Jones, Mitchell, and Okey (1991) worked with Weber State University/Standard Examiner project, an intergenerational project. Parents attended General Educational Development (GED) classes while children attended a preschool class using the High Scope curriculum. Then, both parent and child attended the Parent and Child Together (PACT) segment of the program. PACT provides opportunities for improvement of communication skills of both parents and child and a time for positive interactions between parent and child. After five months, the women were more positive about their ability to learn. One
had passed the GED. From teacher’s observations, the children noted increased interest in books, growth in pre-literacy skills, and social development. The study did not determine, however, if these gains were a result of normal development or a result of the program.

In summary, programs that included both parents and children were shown to be effective. In the adapted version of Edwards’ (1995) study, the parent leaders had children attend all sessions with their parents. Also, the parents and children read together at each session. In a new parent/child study, the children could come with their parents to all of the sessions. Each parent could read a story to their own child; however, they would not read in front of all of the other participants as they did in Edwards’ study. The study at Pulaski Elementary showed that parents wanted to be able to check out library books during the school day to take home to read to their children. In a new study, parents could check out books at each workshop to take home for the week.

Portfolios

Portfolios are tools that can help parents and teachers become aware of their child’s literacy development and can help them plan for future literacy learning. Portfolios are multidimensional in bringing together a large picture of the child’s learning. Grace and Shore (1994) said that portfolios are "a record of the child’s process of learning: what she has learned and how she has gone about learning; how she thinks, questions, analyzes, synthesizes, produces, creates and interacts, intellectually, emotionally and socially, with others" (p. 3). Portfolios can contain work samples, observations, anecdotal records, checklists,
audio recordings, video recordings, and photographs.

Portfolios or literacy albums are tools that can be used for assessment by teachers, students, and parents. Used in parent/teacher conferences, portfolios serve as springboards for communication allowing parent and teacher to assess the child's literacy development. They also serve as tools by providing the creators of the portfolio a time to determine what work is important and why, thus, allowing a time to develop awareness about that child's literacy learning.

At parent/teacher conferences the portfolio or literacy album is an example of what Bronfenbrenner refers to as an intersetting communication. Messages are transmitted from the teacher to the parent about the child’s development as seen at school, and parents share information with the teacher about the child’s development as viewed at home. Roskos and Neuman (1994) stated that one goal for the parent/teacher conference is for the parent and teacher to establish new literacy goals by summarizing what the child has accomplished.

In a new study, the portfolio could take on many characteristics of the literacy album that Roskos and Neuman (1994) write about. The literacy album is similar to a scrapbook. However, the literacy album documents the child’s literacy history by showing selected items along with notes regarding why the item was selected. Some suggestions for a child’s literacy album include name-writing attempts, photographs of children engaged in literacy activities, audio tapes of pretend story book readings or retelling of stories, drawings, a list of books shared between parent and child, lists of favorite books, and samples of emergent writing.
Family literacy portfolios are used by some programs that follow the design of the National Center for Family Literacy. According to Hoffman (1995), family literacy portfolios can be used to capture special talents and interests that can be considered when planning for activities and goals. In addition, the portfolio documents change in parent/child interactions. Popp (1992) stated that the content of family literacy portfolios is determined by parents, teacher, and children. Their purpose "is to document parent/child relationships over time" (Popp, 1992, p. 5). The family portfolios also show what types of activities parents and children engage in, along with their assessment of those activities. The activities in the portfolio document activities from the Parent and Children Together time.

In summary, the portfolio is a tool for helping the parent and teacher to become aware of the child's literacy learning and a means for parents and teachers to share literacy information about the child and plan new goals for the child. The family literacy portfolio described by Popp involves the teacher in the decision making process of the contents of the portfolio. Also, it reflects work done during the Parent and Children Together time. A new study could be undertaken that would not involve the teacher in the decision making of the contents of the portfolio, but would rather involve the parent and child in selecting the work samples. The work samples would represent work done at home rather than at a workshop.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This descriptive study explored parents' involvement in and awareness of their prekindergarten child's literacy development. This study also explored the feasibility of parents using a home literacy portfolio at a parent/teacher conference for sharing literacy information with their child's prekindergarten teacher and for setting new literacy goals. A qualitative design using interviews, observations, and work samples for data collection was employed. Further information is found in the section on research design.

Site

The school selected was a suburban public school with about five hundred and forty-three students containing early childhood, prekindergarten, kindergarten, first, second, third, and fourth grades. The early childhood component served children ages three, four, five, and six with special needs. This school served a diverse group of children economically and ethnically. About 54.7% of the students qualified for free or reduced lunches. There is a growing population of limited English speaking children, with Hispanics making up the majority.

Subjects

The students in this study attended the prekindergarten program at a suburban public school. They qualified for the program by meeting the qualifications for free or reduced lunches or by speaking English as
a second language. Since the selected elementary school was the only school within the district to house a prekindergarten program, the students came from the entire school district. No school transportation was provided for these students.

There were six half-day prekindergarten classes at the selected school with three teachers. Classes were limited to fifteen students each. The student population was a very diverse group. Approximately 83% of the 90 prekindergarten students qualified for free or reduced lunches and about 26% qualified for the English-as-a-Second-Language program.

Research Design

The design of this study was qualitative in nature. A qualitative design meets the needs of a descriptive study. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), "qualitative research is descriptive ... The data include interview transcripts, field notes, photographs, videotapes, personal documents, memos, and other official records" (p. 28). In addition, a qualitative study allows for a broad look at how parents are involved in and aware of their child's literacy development. Because of limited research on home literacy portfolios, a descriptive study is useful for generating theory for future studies.

Entry

The Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education was first approached about this research project. She gained approval from the Superintendent and then contacted the school principal. After discussing the project with the principal, it was decided that each of the three teachers should choose three parents to receive a letter regarding the study and the parent/child workshop. The letter told
about the workshop and invited the parents to attend a meeting Tuesday, February 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the school library. Parents representing seven prekindergarten students came to the organizational meeting. The parents were informed of the nature of each workshop and what was expected of them as participants. The group chose Tuesday nights at 6:30 for the weekly workshop meetings. Due to a conflict with one of the parents, it was decided that the workshops would begin in two weeks rather than the following week. Then, the form required by the Human Subjects committee from the University of North Texas was explained by the researcher and signed by the parents. Each parent scheduled a preworkshop interview with the researcher. All seven parents signed the consent form and scheduled a preworkshop interview.

Participants

This study began with seven dyads consisting of one parent and one prekindergarten child; however, one dyad no longer participated after the first workshop. This study includes information about the six remaining dyads. There were two Anglo-American dyads, each consisting of a mother and a son. There were two Hispanic dyads, each consisting of a mother and a daughter. Both mothers and one daughter spoke very little English. One daughter had a better command of the English language. A translator came to all of the workshops and most of the interviews. There were two African-American dyads. One consisted of a mother and daughter. The other consisted of a father and daughter. All four of the Anglo-American and African-American children qualified for the prekindergarten program due to economic reasons. They met
the guidelines for free or reduced lunches. Both of the Hispanic children qualified for the prekindergarten program because of language needs. They each qualified for the English-as-a-Second-Language program. Neither Hispanic child was enrolled in the free or reduced lunch program.

**Workshop Site**

The parent/child literacy workshops were held in the school library, which is a very long narrow room. (See Appendix C.) The meetings were held in the front half of the library, with three tables arranged on each side of the room and a wide walkway in the middle. For the study, books appropriate for young children were placed on the back table on the left side of the room. Chairs were moved to the center, forming a semicircle for the parents and children during the first half of each session. The researcher, who also led the sessions, sat in a chair facing the parents and children. During the last part of each workshop, the parents and children sat at the tables reading books and working on their portfolios.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

Data collection and analysis were composed of four phases, each with a specific emphasis. The researcher was the key instrument collecting data through interviews, observations, and work samples.

Data collection began at the organizational meeting on February 6, 1996, and continued through May 30, 1996. There was only one parent who did not meet with her child’s teacher for a parent/teacher conference. After one failed attempt to schedule a conference, the mother and teacher experienced some conflict in their relationship that
did not relate to the workshop. Then, the parent decided not to meet with the teacher.

Data analyses were ongoing and continued until June 20, 1996. Glaser and Strauss' (1967) constant comparative method was followed. Data from field notes, transcribed notes from the workshop sessions, transcribed notes from the interviews with parents and teacher, Weekly Literacy Logs, and portfolios were analyzed for patterns and emerging categories. Focused observations followed and the cycle of observations and data analysis was repeated.

After data collection, data analysis was continued by reviewing codes, recoding, and summarizing. The information and patterns that emerged were used for developing a description of parents' involvement in and awareness of their prekindergarten child's literacy development and of the feasibility of parents using a home literacy portfolio of their prekindergarten child for exchanging literacy information with teachers at parent/teacher conferences.

Data collection and analysis consisted of 137 pages of typewritten notes representing both the field notes and the transcribed videotapes and audiotapes from the eight workshop sessions. The researcher led the workshops; therefore, the field notes were limited and the researcher relied on the transcribed tapes. In addition, the interviews produced 180 pages of transcribed audiotapes, field notes, and comments. There were 38 pages of Weekly Literacy Logs and 8 pages showing which books were checked out of the library each week. There were 8 videotapes, one for each workshop session along with 7 audiotapes, one for each session except the seventh session. There
were audiotapes for each of the parent interviews which totaled 18 and one for each of the three teacher interviews. There were 6 portfolios, one representing each child's home literacy activities.

**Data Collection—Phase One**

Phase one began February 6, 1996, and continued through February 16, 1996. The focus for this phase was to gather data regarding the parents' awareness of their child's literacy development and of the parents' involvement in their child's literacy development before the first workshop session. The technique used for gathering data was parent interviews. During the interviews, the parents were first asked open-ended questions (See Appendix E.) followed by questions from the Home Literacy Environment Index. The Home Literacy Environment Index was used in an interview format. France and Hager (1993) found that parents felt less threatened by interviews than by other types of assessment. All interviews were audiotape recorded and later transcribed verbatim.

**Data Collection—Phase Two**

Phase Two began February 20, 1996, and continued through April 16, 1996. This phase focused on parents' awareness of their child's literacy development and on parents' ongoing involvement in their child's literacy development both at home and at the workshop sessions. In order to collect data regarding home literacy activities and parents' awareness of and involvement in these home activities, the researcher viewed samples of the children's drawings, writings, other work samples, and Weekly Literacy Logs (See Appendix F.), which listed books that the
parents read to their child and any literacy activities engaged in by the child or the parent and child together.

Observation was the primary technique used for collecting data regarding parents' awareness of and involvement in their child's literacy development at the workshop sessions. All workshop sessions were videotaped and portions of each (except session seven) were audiotaped. Observations focused on parent/child interactions, conversations with the researcher, sharing time, and choosing books. Attendance records were also kept.

The Parent/Child Workshop

Parent/child workshops were held once a week for eight weeks in the school library to educate parents about literacy development and to encourage parents to read to their children, to become more involved in their child's literacy learning, and to become more aware of their child's literacy achievements.

Each workshop followed the same pattern. First, a story was read aloud to the children and parents. The read-aloud time was followed by a brief segment focusing on one aspect of literacy. Beginning with the second week and each week thereafter, parents were given the opportunity to share ideas and children showed the group some of their drawings, writings, or other work samples done at home the previous week. Children were given plain white paper to take home to use for drawing and writing, and parents were given a sheet highlighting information from the workshop. (See Appendix G.) Next, parents and children selected books from a table containing age-appropriate books. These books were placed on a table side by side so that each cover was
clearly visible. The researcher had asked the school librarian, who was a children’s librarian, to choose about 50 books that are appropriate for prekindergarten children each week. Then, each pair sat together while the parent read the story to his/her own child. Beginning with the third session, parents and children chose a few work samples from their folder and placed the samples in their home literacy portfolio. For example, parents chose drawings which had added details. On each sample placed in the portfolio, parents were asked to write a comment stating why that item was selected. Before leaving, each child checked out three library books. The Hispanic children checked out two library books and one book written in Spanish that the researcher brought.

At the first workshop, the children were each given some unlined paper, pencils, markers, and a folder with their name on it to take home with them. Parents were asked to encourage their child to draw pictures and write at home. The researcher also asked the parents to bring their child’s work samples to the next workshop session in their child’s folder.

The literacy topics highlighted at the workshop sessions were 1) drawing development, 2) environmental print, 3) reading aloud to your child, 4) writing development, 5) concepts of print, 6) retelling stories, 7) reading aloud to your child, and 8) portfolios. At the end of each session, the researcher gave each parent a sheet highlighting a few of the ideas presented during the session. In addition, the sheet reminded parents to encourage their children’s literacy activities for the week by reminding the parents to read aloud to their children and to encourage their children to draw. (See Appendix G.)
During the workshop sessions, there was an informal sharing time after the topic of the week was discussed and just before the parents read to their own children. The researcher asked if parents would like to share with each other any literacy activities that their children participated in alone or with them. The parents were encouraged to discuss any literacy concerns or achievements with one another. As the workshop proceeded, this sharing time evolved into a time in which the children rather than the parents did the sharing and most of the talking.

**Home literacy portfolios.** At the third workshop, the parents began placing work samples in their child's home literacy portfolio. Each parent was given a photo album with pages that are covered with a plastic sheet that adheres to the page. The parents were asked to chose work samples of their child's literacy work done at home that reflected the child's drawing and writing development. An example was a drawing of a person that had a round body with no neck, stick arms and legs, and no hands and feet. The child wrote his name, the numeral 3, a backwards numeral 5, and some other marks. Also, cut out pictures of environmental print were suggested to be included along with any other samples of literacy activities done at home. An example was a page that had these words cut out of the newspaper: Krogers, McDonald's, Toys R Us, and M & M's. The parents were asked to write a comment for each sample included in the portfolio stating why the item was chosen. For example, a page in a portfolio containing cut out pictures of labels and signs had a parent comment that said, "These are some signs David knows or can recognize." Also on a drawing by one
child, the father wrote the comment, "Pam wrote her name in her own hand."

The Jigsaw. Each parent was given a Jigsaw (See Appendix H.) at the first workshop session. After the topic for the session was highlighted, the researcher pointed out any pieces of the Jigsaw that were relevant to that session. For example, after the session highlighting environmental print, the researcher asked the parents to look at the Jigsaw as she pointed out each of the following pieces:
1) "Points to print in the environment and asks what it says."
2) "Notices some letters on labels, road signs, etc." 3) "Recognizes familiar print in the environment, eg., food wrappers, advertisements."
4) "Matches logos and labels" (Weinberger, Hannon, & Nutbrown, 1990, p. 12). Then, the researcher asked the parents to observe their children during the week to see if the children had mastered these literacy achievements.

Weekly Literacy Log. At each workshop session, the parents were given a Weekly Literacy Log (See Appendix F). Parents were asked to write the following: a) the date, b) the titles of each book read that week, c) the author of the book, d) and who read the book to the child. Then, parents were asked to list any literacy activities that the child engaged in during the week, along with the date and who initiated the activity, the child or parent.

Data Collection—Phase Three

Phase Three began April 19, 1996, and continued through April 23, 1996. The focus was parents' awareness of their child's literacy development, and parent interviews was the technique used. In the
interviews, the parents went through their child's home literacy portfolio page by page with the researcher. In addition to the comments that the parents had written for each item, parents offered oral comments. Each interview was audiotape recorded.

**Data Collection—Phase Four**

Phase Four began May 16, 1996, and continued through May 30, 1996. One focus for this phase was the teacher's perceptions of the parent/teacher conference and the feasibility of parents using the home literacy portfolio as a tool at teacher conferences for exchanging literacy information. Each teacher was interviewed using open-ended questions after she had conducted parent conferences with each of her workshop participants. Each interview was audiotape recorded. Two of the teachers were ill at the end of the school year and some interviews were delayed until they were well enough to meet with the parents. Teacher C met with two of her parents after the children's last day of school. She met with one the day after the children's last day and the other five days later at the parent's place of work. Their conference was ended when the parent was called back to work. Teacher C did not meet with her third parent. The parent and teacher had a conflict before school ended and the parent would not meet with her.

Other focuses of Phase Four were parents' awareness of their child's literacy development, involvement in their child's literacy development, and parents' perceptions of the feasibility of using the home literacy portfolio as a tool for exchanging literacy information between parents and teachers. Interviews were used to collect this data. The parents were asked open-ended questions regarding the
teacher conference and the usefulness of the home literacy portfolio. In addition, the parents were asked how children learn to read and how the workshops could be improved. Some information from the Home Literacy Environment Index (HLEI) was revisited. All interviews were audiotape recorded.

Data Collection Chart

Table 1

Chart of Interviews and Observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Interviewed parents</td>
<td>Prior to first workshop session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Observed parents and children</td>
<td>During eight workshop sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Interviewed parents</td>
<td>After completion of all workshop sessions and prior to parent/teacher conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Interviewed teachers</td>
<td>After parent/teacher conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Interviewed parents</td>
<td>After parent/teacher conference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher interviewed each parent three times. The first parent interview was before the first workshop session. The focus for this interview was parents' awareness of and involvement in their child's literacy development. The second parent interview was after all workshop sessions were completed and before the parent/teacher conference. In this interview, the parents shared the home literacy portfolio with the researcher. The main focus was on parents'
awareness of their child's literacy development. The third parent interview was after the parent/teacher conference. The focus was on the feasibility of using the home literacy portfolio for exchanging literacy information about his or her child with the teacher. All observations were made during the workshop sessions. The focus of the observations was on parents' involvement with their child's literacy development and parents' awareness of their child's literacy development. The teacher interview was after the parent/teacher conference. The focus was on the teacher's perceptions of the feasibility of using home literacy portfolios for exchanging literacy information with the child's parent.

The interviews following the parent/teacher conferences allowed the researcher to ask the parents what the teacher shared with them and what they shared with the teacher. The researcher also asked the teacher what the parents shared with them and what they shared with the parents. This allowed the researcher the opportunity to compare teachers' and parents' responses.

Data Analysis—Phase One

Phase One began February 6, 1996. The focus was to analyze the parent interviews that were conducted prior to the first workshop. The investigator was looking for patterns of parents' involvement in their child's literacy development along with their awareness of their child's literacy development. All four of the interviews with English-speaking parents were transcribed verbatim. A translator was used for the Hispanic mothers. The researcher only transcribed the questions and the answers that the translator gave in English. Some of the questions
and answers were reviewed by an early childhood doctoral student who is fluent in English and Spanish. She verified the parents answers. The interviews were coded for the following: involvement, awareness, literacy activities, literacy material, open-ended activities, and activities that were drill oriented, as well as other categories.

**Data Analysis—Phase Two**

Phase Two began February 20, 1996. The focus was to search for patterns of parent/child interaction, patterns in parents’ questions and discussions of literacy, and patterns in the Weekly Literacy Logs. The transcribed videotapes of the workshop sessions, Weekly Literacy Logs, and field notes were analyzed for patterns and similarities. The researcher coded the notes, comparing activities and topics of conversations with the notes from Phase One, refining and extending patterns.

**Data Analysis—Phase Three**

Phase Three began on April 19, 1996, with the first parent interview. The focus was to search for patterns of parents’ awareness of their child’s literacy development and also their involvement in their child’s literacy development. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and coded.

**Data Analysis—Phase Four**

Phase Four began on May 16, 1996, with the first teacher interview. The teacher interviews were transcribed verbatim and coded. The focus was to search for patterns in teachers’ perceptions of parent/teacher conferences using the home literacy portfolio, and the usefulness of the portfolio as a tool for teachers and parents to
exchange literacy information about the child. Also, the information that the parents shared with the teachers was compared and contrasted with respect to previous notes.

The focus for analyzing the parent interviews was to further extend and refine patterns of parents' involvement in and awareness of their child's literacy development and of the parents' awareness of their child's literacy development. In addition, parents' perceptions of the usefulness of the home literacy portfolios for sharing information with teachers and for setting goals were reviewed. All interviews were transcribed verbatim. Transcribed interviews with both the parent and teacher allowed for comparisons and support for categories.

Finally, all notes and categories were compared, contrasted and extended. The interviews, workshop sessions, Weekly Literacy Logs, portfolios, lists of books checked out, and informal conversations provided varied sources for use in comparing and contrasting data.

Summary

In summary, this descriptive study was qualitative in nature. There were four phases of data collection and analysis (See Appendix I.), each with a specific focus. A chart listing interviews and observations was included in the section on data collection. Furthermore, the researcher was the key instrument collecting data through interviews, observations, and work samples.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND FINDINGS

This qualitative study explored parents’ awareness of and involvement in their prekindergarten child’s literacy development. Further, the study explored the feasibility of parents using home literacy portfolios at parent/teacher conferences to facilitate the exchange of information regarding their prekindergarten child’s literacy development. This chapter begins with a section for each parent and child dyad, describing the parents’ awareness of and involvement in their child’s literacy development. The next section is a description of the information shared at each parent/teacher conference. Finally, there is a description of the Home Literacy Portfolio, the Jigsaw, the Weekly Literacy Log, and the Parent/Child Workshop.

Parents’ Involvement in and Awareness of Their Prekindergarten Child’s Literacy Development

This section describes each parent’s involvement in and awareness of his or her child’s literacy development in answer to the first two research questions. The first research question asked: In what ways are parents involved in the literacy development of their prekindergarten child? The second research question asked: What do parents notice about their prekindergarten child’s literacy development before and after attendance at a parent/child workshop and before and after developing a home literacy portfolio?
Mrs. A. and David

Family

David is an Anglo-American boy who lives with his mother and father in an apartment. Both of his parents are in their early twenties and are employed. Mrs. A, who participated with David in the study, works at a local grocery store. David qualified for the prekindergarten program because of income. (Note: All names have been changed to ensure confidentiality.)

Pre-workshop Interview

Information about Mrs. A’s involvement in David’s literacy development was gathered from the open-ended questions and from the Home Literacy Environment Index (HLEI) at an interview preceding the first workshop session. From the open-ended questions, Mrs. A expressed the thought that she reads books to him, that they spell words together, and that they write words together. From the HLEI, she said that they go to the library about once a month, that she reads to him daily at home, that a family member writes or prints with him five to six times a week, and that she began reading to him before he was one year old.

Information regarding Mrs. A’s awareness of David’s literacy development was collected from the open-ended questions and from the HLEI. From the open-ended questions, Mrs. A said that David loves to draw and that he makes up his own stories as he looks at the pictures in a book. She indicated that he is interested in words, stating that he asks what some words are. From the HLEI, Mrs. A added that he recognizes a few words in books, can read some signs and labels, can
tell a story about pictures that he paints or draws, attempts to write a message by scribbling, writes letters that mean something to him, and puts letters together to make words.

There are many types of literacy materials in David's home. David has about 30 children's books and a subscription to Discover magazine. He often receives books as gifts. In addition, he has paper, pencils, a blackboard and chalk, crayons, coloring books, magnetic letters, and a chart of the letters of the alphabet. The family has a typewriter and several reference books including a dictionary, atlas, and encyclopedias. Mrs. A and her husband own between 26 and 50 books and subscribe to three magazines.

David's parents serve as literacy models. Mrs. A said that David has the opportunity to see her read three to four times a week, use reference materials sometimes, and write three to four times a week. Some of the ways she uses writing are to pay bills, keep records, make lists, and write letters and messages.

In addition to previous information discussed, Mrs. A shared some of her knowledge of how children learn. She said that she believes "that literacy learning begins at an early age; that children learn to read by people caring enough to show them how. Children learn by their parents working with them." She further stated that children learn by people reading to children and helping them sound out words.

**During Workshop Sessions**

Mrs. A was involved with David's literacy development at the workshop sessions. When she read to David she asked questions, prompted him, answered his questions, and encouraged him. Many of
Mrs. A's questions were simple "what's that" questions such as "What letter is this?" that required a specific but simple answer. Mrs. A also prompted David and gave him clues when he did not know something. For example, while looking at an alphabet book, Mrs. A asked David, "What's that?" David did not respond, so his mother then asked, "What are those?" Still, David did not respond, so Mrs. A said, "You eat them and they're green and little." David said, "A plant." Mrs. A responded, "Well it is a plant but it is called a pea." Then David said, "A pea." That also illustrates another particular pattern. Just as David repeated his mother's answer, she did the same when he gave a correct answer. Mrs. A said, "C is for...," and David said, "crackers." Mrs. A immediately replied, "crackers."

Mrs. A patiently answered David's questions. When reading together, David asked his mother about a picture of an octopus. David asked, "Why do octopuses have sticky things under their arms? They need them so they can stick to you?" Mrs. A responded, "Yes, they grab you and they stick to your skin--so they can stick to you. And they stick to the rocks when they're climbing on the rocks so they don't fall off."

David's mother related the stories she read to his experiences. When David could not name some pliers in a picture, his mother asked him, "What kind of tool does Daddy use?"

Mrs. A demonstrated involvement in and showed awareness of David's literacy development as they talked about an alphabet book together. David said, "K is for camel." His mother said, "No, not k." David began making the hard c sound. Then his mother asked, "What
does camel start with." He said, "C." Mrs. A said, "Yes, it does on certain words." David replied, "but K--C can also say ssss." His mother asked him, "When does it sound like s?" David said, "circle." Then, his mother asked, "When does it sound like a k." David replied, "Cat." His mother said, "Yes." Therefore, Mrs. A was aware that David has some knowledge of sound symbol relationships.

Mrs. A was aware of David's writing development. She told me that one day at home, he had written "IM" for I am and "S" for sorry.

David's mother supported his literacy development. She would smile and praise him. One night, the children were retelling Caps for Sale to their parents. The researcher had read it aloud and had given each child his/her own copy. As David retold the story, the researcher observed that he would often look up at his mother. When he finished retelling the story, his mother chuckled. The researcher asked if he told a good story, and she said, "Yes, especially at the end."

Mrs. A was aware of David's interest in books. At the second workshop after discussing the Jigsaw, Mrs. A told the researcher, "David doesn't really have a favorite book now." She said that he did when he was younger but that he did not now. She wanted to know if she should color in the piece on the Jigsaw. The researcher said to wait, that maybe he would develop a new favorite book.

At the seventh workshop, the researcher observed David reading Marvin K. Mooney Won't You Please Go Now to his mother. David knew most of the book. When he came to a word that he did not know, his mother pointed to the picture to give him a clue. Mrs. A said that David had memorized several Dr. Seuss books. She said that her
mother-in-law had ordered Dr. Seuss books and that he could read several of them. The ABC book was one.

**Attendance and Weekly Literacy Log.** David attended seven of the workshop sessions. Both his father and his mother came to the first session; then only his mother came with him to the remaining sessions. Mrs. A returned five Weekly Literacy Logs. For the week of February 21, three books were read to David. His grandmother read two books and his mother read one book. No other literacy activities were documented. For the week of February 28, three books were read to David. His grandmother read one, and his mother read two. No other literacy activities were documented. For the week of March 3, eight books were read to David. His mother read all of the books; however, for the book, *The Cat in the Hat*, Mrs. A recorded that it was read by both her and David. One literacy activity was documented on March 12. Mrs. A said that David brought her a book and read it from memory and that the activity was initiated by David. For the week of March 26, three books were read to David. All of the books were read by David’s mother. One literacy activity was listed for April 1. Mrs. A wrote that David asked her what letters made certain sounds. She said he would make the sound and then ask her what letter made that sound. This activity was initiated by David. For the week of April 2, four books were read to David. All four books were read by his mother, and no other literacy activities were documented.

The Weekly Literacy Logs documented books that were read to David and his participation in literacy activities. They showed that 21 books had been read to David from the first workshop session to the
last workshop session. His mother read 18 books and his grandmother read 3 books. In addition, two literacy activities were documented. Both were initiated by David.

Pre-teacher Conference/Portfolio Interview

At the interview prior to the teacher conference, Mrs. A shared David's portfolio with the researcher by turning the pages and telling about each work sample. From this interview, Mrs. A showed awareness of many of David's literacy achievements. The sections below highlight some of the information shared at this interview.

**Drawing development.** From the work samples in the portfolio, David's mother discussed his drawing development. While looking at the first drawing in the portfolio, Mrs. A said, "This is a self portrait of him. This is the way he draws pretty much." This was a drawing of a "tadpole" with a large face, very short legs and arms coming out of the face, a big smile, eyes with pupils, ears, and hair. Mrs. A said that David always notices people's faces before he notices their bodies. While looking at another drawing, Mrs. A pointed out that she thought David was starting to add fingers.

Mrs. A pointed out a butterfly and a caterpillar. The researcher commented about the details. Mrs. A stated that David wanted her to draw the wings and she told him he could draw them. After she encouraged David by asking him if there were any spots or anything on their wings, he drew spots on the butterflies.

**Writing development.** David's mother talked about his writing development as she showed the researcher his portfolio. On one page, the letters of the alphabet and numerals were written. Some of the
letters and numerals were written in proper form, but most were not in proper form. His mother said that these are all of his letters and numbers, and that he's been writing his letters for quite a while, especially his name. His name was the first thing he wrote. She noted that some of his letters were turned backwards. The written comment on this page said, "David is just learning to write his letters. But he has learned fast. I enjoy watching him write."

On one paper, David had written his name and "MAX the Dog." Mrs. A said that Max belonged to her mother-in-law and that David loved that dog and thought it was his. Mrs. A's written comment stated, "David has a dog named Max that lives with his Nana and Papaw."

On one paper, David had made marks. Some were recognizable and some were not. The recognizable ones were all numerals: 1, 2, 4, 5, and 7. Mrs. A said that this page was just doodling. He is just writing numbers. She pointed out a five and said that it was really good. She said that he usually makes them backwards. Then, she showed the researcher where he had written the date using numerals with dashes between them. She said that he asked her what the date was. As he wrote it, she told him to put the dashes between the numerals. Next, she pointed out a question mark and said, "It doesn't look like one, but it does look like a question mark to him."

David copied part of Marvin K. Mooney's name and drew arrows such as were in the book. She said that he became frustrated because all of the name did not fit on the page.

At the end of the interview, Mrs. A told the researcher that David had written "I luv you" and "I luv Susie." She commented about how
he had spelled love, l-u-v. She said, "And that kind of hit me that he's really trying to learn how to read."

**Reading development.** David’s mother has noticed his growth in reading development. One page in the portfolio has logos and words found in the environment. Included were Discovery Zone, Children’s World Learning Center, Tom Thumb, and Popeyes. Mrs. A’s written comment said, "These are some signs that David can read or recognize." When she turned to the page, she said that these are some of the signs that he knows. She further stated that he has always been interested in signs and has been able to recognize some signs since he was about two years old. She said that as they drive down the street, he always asks about signs. She said that he knows the one in front of the school that says "Take a Bite Out of Crime."

At the end of the interview when the researcher asked Mrs. A what else she might want to share with David’s teacher about his literacy development, she talked about how he tries to sound out words. She said, "He tries to sound out the letters, but he gets them backwards. He always thinks of an "A" as "ah." So he’s trying. Most of the time he can figure them out. Then she talked about some flash cards that her mother-in-law had bought David and how they had been using them.

**David’s characteristics and interests.** Mrs. A noticed some of David’s characteristics and some of David’s frustrations. She said that he gets frustrated because he wants his writing to look just like an adult’s. His letters vary in size from small to very large letters and he often runs out of space on the paper which causes him to become
frustrated. Later, she pointed out where David had written part of the title, *Marvin K. Mooney*. She said that he got upset when he didn’t have room to write all of it.

Mrs. A also noticed some of his interests and that he uses his imagination a lot. On one page, David had drawn a dinosaur at school using a stencil. She commented that the Tyrannosaurus Rex is his favorite dinosaur. On another paper, David had drawn some shapes and numerals. Mrs. A said that she thinks the triangle is his favorite shape because he always talks about triangles. As Mrs. A commented about one paper, she said that *Marvin K. Mooney* was one of his favorite books.

**Post-Teacher Conference Interview**

From the post-teacher conference, Mrs. A revealed additional information regarding her involvement in and awareness of David’s literacy development. Furthermore, she gave more insight into her perceptions of how children learn to read and write.

Mrs. A shared ways that she was involved in David’s literacy development. She said that she and her husband have worked really hard with David since he was very little. She reads books to him and has read to him since he was about seven months old. Mrs. A responds to David when he asks her to spell words, when he writes, and when he asks her what a sign says.

Mrs. A acknowledged an awareness of some of David’s literacy achievements. She said that he loves to write and that he had written his name on a new large toy in his room. David said that he had written on it in case someone tried to steal it. With his name on it,
they would know it was his. David had written both his first and last names and had split both names. His last name is very long and he had written the last half up higher than the first half. Mrs. A has also noticed that since watching an episode of *Sesame Street* a couple of days ago, rather than calling her "mom", he has been spelling her name, calling her "m-o-m." She continued saying, "I told him, I said come on s-o-n. He asked what that is, and I said that is what you are—a son, and the sun in the sky is spelled s-u-n." She said that he walked into his room spelling son over and over. Mrs. A said that David gets the Sunday comics, lays them across the floor, and makes up his own little story. She said that he also reads the sports. David has memorized several books, most of which are Dr. Seuss books. She said that Marvin K. Mooney is his favorite. She further stated that David tries to read the Dr. Seuss books to his two-year-old cousin when they are at his house.

Mrs. A made additional comments that showed her perception of how children learn to read and to write. She said that it is important to read to them and point to the words so they will know what you are reading. Also, she said that parents should help them write their letters. She said that David sees her read because she reads every night before bed. In addition, she and her husband read the newspaper in the mornings.

**Literacy Activities and Involvement in David's Literacy Development**

Mrs. A showed involvement in and awareness of David's literacy development. Listed in Table 2 are some of the literacy activities that David participated in either alone or with his mother. Two categories
emerged. One was open-ended activities which allow the child and parent to exchange information and interact in a natural way. The activity does not have to have only one answer; these activities do not require drill. The other activities are more instruction based and drill oriented. These drill oriented activities may have only one answer or may require practicing the same skill several times.

Table 2

David’s Literacy Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open-Ended</th>
<th>Drill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read books</td>
<td>Spelled words together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited the library</td>
<td>Wrote words together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read books from memory to his mother</td>
<td>Made sounds and asked what letters made that sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drew pictures</td>
<td>Named letters and asked what sound it said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looked at books and made up stories from pictures</td>
<td>Wrote letters and numerals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read some environmental print</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told stories about pictures he drew</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacted with mother when reading stories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to write messages by scribbling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the ways that Mrs. A has been involved in David’s literacy development are evident in Table 2. Some of the ways she was involved was by reading to him, answering his questions about letter sounds, spelling words for him when asked, and listening to him read books from memory.
During the workshop, Mrs. A demonstrated involvement in David's literacy development. While reading books to him, she would prompt him, ask him questions about the story, answer his questions about the story and pictures, relate the stories she read to his experiences, and encourage him by smiling and with words.

**Awareness of Literacy Development**

Mrs. A showed that she was aware of David's literacy development and that she noticed many of his literacy achievements. After attending the workshop session and developing a home literacy portfolio, she seemed to be more aware of his drawing development by noticing more details in his pictures of people. In writing development, as she viewed his letters and numerals, she was not as concerned that they were not all formed correctly. Furthermore, she noticed that he had begun inventing some spelling. Writing "luv" for "love" was an example. Other achievements that Mrs. A noticed were David's attempt to read simple books more often, to recognize more words, and to sound out more words.

Listed in Table 3 are some of the types of literacy development that Mrs. A was aware of and some literacy achievements that she noticed both before and after attending the workshop sessions and developing a home literacy portfolio.

Table 3

**Mrs. A’s Awareness of David’s Literacy Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Made up stories from pictures in books</td>
<td>Made up stories from pictures in books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made up stories from pictures in books</td>
<td>Made up stories from pictures in books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David asked what some words were</td>
<td>David asked what some words were</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognized a few words</td>
<td>Recognized some words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read some environmental print</td>
<td>Read many signs and labels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to write a message by scribbling</td>
<td>Attempted to write a message by scribbling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrote letters that mean something to him</td>
<td>Wrote letters that mean something to him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put some letters together to make words</td>
<td>Put some letters together to make words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drew mostly tadpole type people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Added fingers to drawings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrote name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrote letters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to write date on paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Began using invented spelling (I luv)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tried to sound out words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Became frustrated when writing book title that did not fit on paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drew shapes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a favorite book Marvin K. Mooney</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked parent to spell words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelled mom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to read books to younger cousin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mrs. G and Jim

Family

Jim is an Anglo-American boy who lives with his mother, stepfather, and younger brother. Both of his parents are employed, with his mother working part-time. Jim qualified for the prekindergarten program because of income.

Pre-workshop Interview

Information about Mrs. G's involvement in Jim's literacy development prior to the workshop was gathered from the open-ended questions and from the HLEI at an interview preceding the first workshop session. From the open-ended questions, it was determined that Mrs. G reads to Jim each night for about 15 minutes. After reading stories, Mrs. G sometimes asks Jim what happened in the story, why something might have happened, and other questions. She points to words as she reads. One of the literacy activities that Jim and Mrs. G engage in is her choosing a word used in the story several times.

While reading, when she comes to that word, she pauses and Jim reads the word. Another literacy activity is writing to a pen pal. Mrs. G said that she writes one word at a time for the letter to the pen pal and Jim copies the word. From the HLEI, it was determined that she began reading to Jim before he was one year old. A family member writes with Jim three to four times a week.

Information regarding Mrs. G's awareness of Jim's literacy development was collected from both the open-ended questions and from the HLEI. From the open-ended questions, Mrs. G said that Jim knows all of the letters and practices writing letters by himself. She said that
he very often will look at the pictures in books and make up a story like he is reading the book. Also, she said he does a good job of recalling information. From the HLEI, Mrs. G verified that he could tell a story about a picture he drew, could try to write a message by scribbling, wrote letters that meant something to him, put letters together to make words and to write messages, and can read some signs and labels.

There are many literacy materials in Jim's home. Jim has over 30 books, and he often receives books as gifts. He has a computer, paper, pencils, coloring books, and crayons. There are some letters of the alphabet in chart form in his room. The family has an atlas and encyclopedia on computer software, and they have a dictionary. Mrs. G and her husband have over 25 books and subscribe to two monthly magazines.

Jim's parents serve as literacy models. Mrs. G said that Jim has the opportunity to see her read and write daily. Some ways she models writing are by paying bills, keeping records, making lists, and writing letters and messages. Also, the family leaves messages and reminders on the refrigerator door.

Mrs. G revealed some of her perceptions of how children learn to read. She said that she points to words as she reads. Also, she said that children learn to read by example. If they see their parents reading, they are more likely to think it is enjoyable.

**From the Workshop Sessions**

Mrs. G was involved with Jim in the workshop sessions. She read to him and to his three-year-old brother, who came to all but one of the
sessions with Jim and his mom. While reading, she would ask specific
questions and help Jim by prompting.

Mrs. G would have Jim interact with the story. In *Make Way for
Ducklings*, she had him count the ducks. Often she would ask questions
that required a higher level of thinking. For example, in *The Very Busy
Spider*, she responded to a question from Jim with a question. She
asked, "Why didn't she answer." Jim replied, "Because she was too
busy." "Doing what?" asked Mrs. G. "Spinning the web." replied Jim.
"Very good," his mother praised. With this same book, Mrs. G would
read the story and pause, allowing Jim to say the repetitive part, "She
was very very busy spinning her web."

Mrs. G also related questions to Jim's experiences. At the fourth
session, as they were looking at an ABC book, Mrs. G asked, "What's
another word that starts with G?" When Jim answered with "go," his
mother asked him if he knew anyone's name who starts with G. He
immediately answered with his brother's name.

One evening Jim's stepfather attended with him instead of his
mother. When it was time to add some work samples to his portfolio, Jim
told his stepfather to add a note to the page he put in his portfolio.
Then the researcher observed Jim telling his stepfather what to write
on the yellow stickies. His stepfather would point to a picture and Jim
would tell him something. Jim had some papers on which he had glued
pictures of environmental print, such as Target and Batman, that he
could read. The researcher observed Jim reading them to his
stepfather.
Mrs. G showed that she was involved with Jim’s literacy development by taking him to the city library. At the pre-workshop interview, Mrs. A said that she did not take them to the library because they could not check out books in the city library. The researcher told her about a relatively new library not far from her home, but within the city limits of their residence. They lived in one city and attended school in a bordering city. At the first workshop, Jim had books that he had checked out of that library. His mother had taken him.

During sharing time at the workshop, Mrs. G shared information that showed some of her involvement with Jim. One night while talking about writing development, she said that whenever Jim brings her something he has written and asks her what it says, if Jim doesn’t tell her what it says, she asks him what he was trying to write. Then she shows him how to write it. Furthermore, she stated, "If he asks me what something says, I help him work it out.”

Mrs. G is aware of some of Jim’s literacy achievements. She is aware that he can copy words. One night at a workshop, she said, "All he does is copy the words on the covers of books. That is all he wants to do." Jim then showed papers where he had copied several titles of books that he had read. Another night as Jim shared some of his drawings and writings from the previous week, he showed some papers with writing. The researcher asked him if he read any of it. Mrs. G said that Jim read it to his brother.

At another workshop session, Jim and his mother were reading a book when Jim found his last name in the text. He showed it to his mother, and she had him show it to the researcher.
Attendance and Weekly Literacy Log. Jim attended six workshop sessions. He attended five with his mother and one with his stepfather. Mrs. G returned five Weekly Literacy Logs. For the week of February 19, nine books were read to Jim, all by his mother. Mrs. G documented nine literacy activities. At the end of each book, they talked about the book and then Jim drew a picture about each one. For the week of March 5, four books were read to Jim, all by his mother. Mrs. G did not document any literacy activities other than reading. For the week of March 18, six books were read to Jim, all by his mother. Mrs. G did not document any other literacy activities. For the week of March 26, five books were read to Jim, all by his mother. No other literacy activities were documented. For the week of April 8, four books were read to Jim. Three books were read by his mother, and one book was read by his dad. No other literacy activities were documented.

The Weekly Literacy Logs documented books that were read to Jim and also his participation in literacy activities. The logs showed that 28 books were read to him from the first workshop session until the last workshop session. In addition, nine literacy activities were documented from the first workshop session until the last workshop session.

Pre-teacher Conference/Portfolio Interview

At the interview prior to the teacher conference, Mrs. A shared Jim's home literacy portfolio with the researcher by turning the pages and telling about each work sample. From this interview, Mrs. G showed an awareness of many of Jim's literacy achievements. The sections below highlight some of the information shared at this interview.
**Drawing development.** Mrs. G pointed to some stars and said she chose this picture because these were his first stars. She said that he kept telling her that he could not do those, and she told him that he could.

**Writing development.** Mrs. G pointed out that on the cover page, Jim wrote the words using block letters. She said that she showed him how to make them and that he was learning that there are alternative letters, not just letters with straight lines. On one page, Mrs. G said that Jim chose this one because he loved it. This page had the words, Mr. Brown and Moo along with some other letters in between. She further stated, "And I think it's because he really got the letters good. Here he messed up a little bit." On another page, Mrs. G's written comment said, "This says, 'I love daddy'." That page had a drawing of a heart and the letters "loAAQAqDY". The researcher asked Mrs. G if he had spelled that on his own. Mrs. G said that he had and that she had shown him how to write I love you. Also, she said that he knows how to write his name, his brother's name, dad, and mom. Furthermore, she said that he used to be able to write Papaw, but she didn't know if he could still write it.

On one page, Mrs. G pointed out a star that she thought was very good. The researcher commented on the numerals. Jim had written 5, 4, 9, 10, 12. Mrs. G said that he sometimes writes the numerals backwards. She said, "Sometimes he'll get them right and sometimes he'll get them wrong."

**Reading development.** Mrs. G said that Jim knows what different letters are if the letters are turned upside down or if a part of the
letter is taken off. Then she asked Jim what an "M" is if you turn it upside down? Jim said, "W." She continued by asking him what "V" is if you turn it up and put a mark across it. With some prompting, Jim said, "A".

Mrs. G showed me a page of environmental print. She said that she and Jim had cut out pictures of toys and movies and that she had him put them in groups. Then, he glued them on the paper. She said that he can name "Barney Songs", Batman Forever, Toy Story, Free Willy, and Puzzle Place. Another page of environmental print contained labels of Wendy's, M&M's, Jell-O, and Campbell's. Mrs. G said that Jim recognized those foods.

Mrs. G's written comment about one page said, "Jim chose this one because he knows the letters." On this page, the words "Go coke" were written.

Interests. "X-Men" was written on one page. Mrs. G pointed to the page and said that X-Men was his favorite book.

Post-Teacher Conference Interview

From the post-teacher conference, Mrs. G revealed additional information regarding her involvement in and awareness of Jim's literacy development. Furthermore, she gave more insight into her perceptions of how children learn to read and to write.

Mrs. G shared ways that she was involved in Jim's literacy development. Mrs. G said that she answers Jim's questions about what a word says. She said that she tries to get him to sound out words. Before, she would always just tell him what the word was. Also, she has taken him to the city library; however, since he started playing
t-ball she has not read to him as much as before t-ball season began. When she does read to him and his brother, she said that she talks to them about the books when the story is over. They talk about what is going on in the story and why. If there are hidden messages, they talk about them. Also, they talk about who was in the book and what they looked like.

Mrs. G acknowledged an awareness of some of Jim's literacy achievements. She said that he is starting to sound out words. For example, she said that although he used to recognize that a word was "Sonic", he didn't know why. Now he knows that the letter "s" says "sss". She said that he likes to copy words and that he knows a few words.

Mrs. G made additional comments that revealed some of her perceptions of how children learn to read and to write. She said that parents can start reading to their children when they are babies. She said that it is important for parents to show children that books are very important, even if it is a math book.

Literacy Activities and Involvement in Literacy Development

Mrs. G showed involvement in and an awareness of Jim's literacy development. Listed in Table 4 are some of the literacy activities that David participated in either alone or with his mother.

Table 4

Jim's Literacy Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open-ended</th>
<th>Drill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read stories</td>
<td>Named one particular word throughout a story</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many of the ways that Mrs. G has been involved in Jim's literacy development are evident in Table 4. Some ways she was involved were reading books to him, taking him to the library, helping him practice writing, asking him questions about stories, and listening to him tell stories about his pictures.

During the workshop, Mrs. G demonstrated involvement in Jim's literacy development. When she read to him, she prompted him, asked him to count objects and label pictures, and related the stories she read to his experiences.

Awareness of Literacy Development

Mrs. G showed that she was aware of Jim's literacy development and that she noticed many of his literacy achievements. After attending the workshop session and developing a home literacy portfolio, Mrs. G seemed to be more aware of his writing development, noticing that he wrote letters more often and seemed to notice the direction they were
turned. Also, she became more aware of his interest in the sounds that
letters make.

Table 5

Mrs. G's Awareness of Jim's Literacy Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognized letters</td>
<td>Recognized letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practiced writing letters</td>
<td>Practiced writing letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made up stories from pictures in books</td>
<td>Made up stories from pictures in books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told stories about pictures he drew</td>
<td>Told stories about pictures he drew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recalled information after listening to a story</td>
<td>Recalled information after listening to a story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put letters together to make some words</td>
<td>Put letters together to make some words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read some environmental print</td>
<td>Read some environmental print</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drew stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Copied words from titles of books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wrote letters, many turned the right direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Began sounding out words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Made some sound/symbol relationships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mrs. S and Maria

Maria is an Hispanic girl who lives with her mother, father, older
sister, and older brother. Both of her parents are employed. Mrs. S,
who participated in the study with Maria, works at a meat processing
plant. Maria qualified for the English-as-a-Second Language program
which made her eligible for the prekindergarten program. She was not
enrolled in the free or reduced lunch program. Her mother has a limited command of the English language so a translator was present at all of the workshop sessions and all but the final interview.

Pre-workshop Interview

Information about Mrs. S's involvement in Maria's literacy development was gathered from the open-ended questions and the HELI at an interview preceding the first workshop session. From the open-ended questions, Mrs. S revealed that she reads to Maria. Furthermore, she and Maria spend time going over the sounds in words. When they do this, Mrs. S always requires Maria to try to identify the word before she will tell her what the word is. Maria and her brother and sister love for her mother to buy them books. From the HELI, it was determined that Mrs. S began reading to Maria when she was three and that she takes her children to the library once a month. She reads to Maria two to three times a week, and a family member prints with Maria three to four times a week.

Information regarding Mrs. S's awareness of Maria's literacy development was collected from the open-ended questions and from the HLEI. From the open-ended questions, Mrs. S revealed that she notices that Maria flips through books and tries to pronounce sounds. Maria also pretends to tell stories as she looks at books. In addition, Maria tries to read the signs on the streets. From the HLEI, it was determined that Mrs. S notices that Maria recognizes a few words in books, tells a story about pictures she drew, tries to write a message by scribbling, and writes letters that mean something to her.
According to the HLEI, there are many types of literacy materials in Maria's home. Maria has between 20 and 30 books and receives one magazine a month. Her parents have between 11 and 25 books and subscribe to one magazine a month. The family has a mini-computer, a dictionary, and a set of encyclopedias. Maria has paper, pencils, a blackboard and chalk, coloring books, and crayons. In addition, she has the letters of the alphabet displayed in her room.

The data collected from the HLEI showed that Maria's parents model literacy use in several ways. She has the opportunity to see them read three to four times a week, use reference materials sometimes, and write daily. Some of the ways Mrs. S uses writing are to write letters and messages, pay bills, and make lists.

Some of the ways that Mrs. S believes children learn to read were revealed when she answered the open-ended questions. She said that she never tells Maria what a word is unless Maria first tries to tell her. She said that as soon as children know their ABC's that you should help them make the sounds and practice with words. She believes that parents should take more time with kids, read to them, and play with books.

**During the Workshop Sessions**

Mrs. S's involvement in Maria's literacy development was observed at the workshop sessions. Mrs. S was observed reading to Maria in both English and Spanish, listening to Maria talk about and interact with the story, explaining and providing more information about the books they shared, and responding to Maria's questions.
As mentioned, the researcher observed Mrs. S reading books in Spanish and books in English to Maria. As she read them, Maria interacted with these books by tracing large numerals with her fingers, counting objects, and pointing to pictures of animals and naming them. Maria talked with her mother about pictures in the book, *Cordoroy*. She pointed to a picture and said, "I want one of these breads." They talked about a baby and a lady pictured in the book. At the end, Maria pointed to a picture and said, "Look at the basket."

Mrs. S read a book in English and had Maria respond to the questions. Mrs. S read, "What has feathers?" Maria pointed to pictures of chickens. Her mother asked, "What has a mane." Maria said, "A horse. A horse has a mane." When her mother asked, "What has a bill?" Maria said, "Quack, quack." In a book written in Spanish, Maria asked her mother about spaghetti and her mother reminded her that spaghetti has meatballs.

Another way that Mrs. S was involved with Maria was by explaining or providing additional information for her about the stories. In the Spanish version of *Cordoroy*, Mrs. S stopped to talk about different ways that eggs can be prepared. She named fried and scrambled. She told Maria that in the story, Frances made up her own story/song while waiting for the bus. She explained to Maria that Frances' father asked her why she says she does not like food when she has not even tried it. When they read the page where Frances has a hard boiled egg, Mrs. S explained to Maria how to peel a hard boiled egg. At the end of the story, Mrs. S told Maria that Frances realized that simply eating bread and jam was not enough for her to stay
healthy. She explained that people cannot eat the same food over and over again. She told her that people need to eat eggs, drink milk, eat fruit, and eat vegetables.

Mrs. S supported Maria's development by talking with her about stories. She smiled at Maria when Maria retold *Caps for Sale*. She often smiled while Maria showed some of her drawings and writings from the previous week.

One night, Mrs. S showed her involvement in her children's education by leaving early to attend her first-grade son's PTA program.

Mrs. S demonstrated awareness of Maria's literacy achievements by showing the researcher a picture that Maria drew and then showing her a marker box and pointing to the same picture. She also showed awareness by having Maria take a book to the researcher to point out and name the numerals in a book.

**Attendance and Weekly Literacy Logs.** Mrs. S attended seven workshop sessions. She came to the first session alone, but she brought Maria with her to all of the other sessions. Mrs. S returned five Weekly Literacy Logs. For the week of February 27, four books were read to Maria—one by her sister, one by her father, and two by her mother. No other literacy activities were documented. For the week of March 5, five books were read to Maria. One by her mother, two by her father, and two by her sister. No other literacy activities were documented. For the weeks of March 5 and March 12, eight books were read to Maria. Her mother read four books, her father read one book, and her sister read three books. For the week of March 19, five books were read to Maria. Her mother read two books, and her father read
one book. Her sister read one book, and someone outside the immediate family read one book. No other literacy activities were documented. For the week of April 2, four books were read to Maria. Her mother read one book, her father read one book, and her sister read two books. No other literacy activities were documented. For the week of April 9, three books were read to Maria. Her mother, father, and her sister each read one.

The Weekly Literacy Logs documented books that were read to Maria and her participation in literacy activities. They showed that 29 books were read to her from the first workshop session to the last workshop session, and that no other literacy activities were documented.

Pre-teacher Conference/Portfolio Interview

At the interview prior to the teacher conference, Mrs. S shared Maria's home literacy portfolio with the researcher by turning the pages and telling about each work sample. From this interview, Mrs. S showed an awareness of many of Maria's literacy achievements. The sections below highlight some of the information shared at this interview.

Drawing development. Mrs. S admired the first drawing because Maria copied the marker box. The mother pointed out the stars Maria drew and all the different colors that Maria used. The researcher commented about how difficult stars are to draw. Another drawing was of two dogs and a large letter M. The mother commented about the size of the dogs, saying that there was a large dog and a small dog. She also pointed out the letter that Maria drew. The next drawing was of Maria's entire family. There were many details in this picture. Mrs. S pointed to Maria's pregnant aunt and said that the marks on her
stomach were the baby. Mrs. S's written comment said, "I like because she drew the whole family." In another picture, Maria had drawn a bike. Her mother said that she stood in front of the bike with her paper and drew it. Her mother was amazed that she could draw with such detail. On the next drawing, Maria drew fish in water. Mrs. S noticed that Maria first colored the entire page like water, then she added the fish. Another drawing was of Maria's birthday party. Mrs. S pointed to the picture and said, "It's a party. This is the cake." Then, she pointed out where Maria had written the numeral four a total of four times. Mrs. S showed the researcher another drawing where Maria had traced her hand and drawn rings on every finger. Mrs. S commented about the rings and a star that Maria drew.

**Writing development.** Maria copied a crayola box. Her mother said that she liked it because she copied the letters for the word, and she copied the picture. On one of the following pages, Mrs. S pointed out the numerals 0, 5, 6, 7, and 8 that Maria wrote along with the letter of her first name. On the next page, Mrs. S noticed that Maria had copied the words "General Mills" and then had drawn a picture of the cereal box including all of the words printed on the box. Mrs. S's written comments on the next page said, "She's learning ABC letters." On this page, Maria had written upper case letters of the alphabet in random order. On another page, Mrs. S noticed that Maria wrote her last name.

**Reading development.** The researcher talked to Mrs. S about the night that Maria read some of the words in the book about dots. Mrs. S said that Maria was very interested in books. Mrs. S said that when she takes Maria to the library, Maria will go to the preschooer section,
get books and start flipping the pages and pretending to read them. She said that she recognizes quite a few words.

**Comments.** Mrs. S said that she feels Maria is doing a great job in drawing and making her numbers. She said that Maria likes reading.

**Post-Teacher Conference Interview**

From the post-teacher conference, Mrs. S revealed additional information regarding her involvement in and awareness of Maria’s literacy development. Furthermore, she gave more insight into her perceptions of how children learn to read and to write. Mrs. S and the researcher were at a disadvantage in this interview because the translator did not come.

Mrs. S shared that she was involved in Maria’s literacy development. Mrs. S said that both she and her husband read to Maria and that they talk about street and restaurant signs. Furthermore, Mrs. S said that Maria tells her stories from the pictures in books. Mrs. S and her husband help Maria write. Mrs. S responds when Maria asks her how to spell a word when using the magnetic letters. Mrs. S said that in the summer, she takes her children to the city library two or three times a month.

Mrs. S acknowledged an awareness of some of Maria’s literacy achievements. She said that Maria likes books, the library, and drawing. She said that Maria looks at pictures and tells her a story. From the HLEI, Mrs. S now is aware that Maria can write some words: her name, her brother’s name, her sister’s name, and daddy. She also copies words from packages. In addition, Mrs. S said that Maria knows the letters of the alphabet.
Mrs. S said that she thinks children learn how to read and write from signs, and with books, magazines, and cartoons.

**Literacy Activities and Involvement in Maria’s Literacy Development**

Mrs. S showed involvement in and awareness of Maria’s literacy development. Listed in Table 6 are some of the literacy activities that Maria participated in either alone or with her mother.

**Table 6**

**Maria's Literacy Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open-ended</th>
<th>Drill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read books</td>
<td>Studied the letter sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited the library</td>
<td>Copied words found in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretended to tell stories about books</td>
<td>Mother helped her spell words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read some environmental print</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to write a message by scribbling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacted with mother when reading stories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drew pictures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told stories about her drawings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the ways that Mrs. S has been involved in Maria’s literacy development are evident in Table 6. Some ways she was involved were by reading to her, helping her spell words, taking her to the library, listening to her pretend to tell stories, and answering her questions when she read aloud to her.

During the workshop, Mrs S. demonstrated involvement by reading books written in both Spanish and English. She provided additional
information about the stories, answered Maria's questions, asked Maria to count objects and label pictures, and encouraged Maria by smiling when she retold stories and shared her work samples.

Awareness of Literacy Development

Mrs. S showed that she was aware of Maria's literacy development and that she noticed many of her literacy achievements. After attending the workshop sessions and developing a home literacy portfolio, she seemed to be more aware of Maria's drawing development. She noticed that Maria drew with more detail when drawing people and objects and that she drew stars. She noticed that Maria copied many words from the environment and wrote her first and last name. She noticed that Maria recognized more words, more signs, and the letters of the alphabet.

Listed in Table 7 are some of the types of literacy development that Mrs. S was aware of and some literacy achievements that she noticed both before and after attending the workshop sessions and developing a home literacy portfolio.

Table 7
Mrs. S's Awareness of Maria's Literacy Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Told a story from pictures in books</td>
<td>Told a story from pictures in books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognized a few words</td>
<td>Recognized several words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read some environmental print</td>
<td>Read many signs and labels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told a story about a picture she drew</td>
<td>Told a story about a picture she drew</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mrs. E and Janet

Family

Janet is an Hispanic girl who lives with her mother, father, older brother, younger sister, and younger brother. Her father is employed and her mother, who participated in this study with her, is a homemaker. Janet qualified for the English-as-a-Second-Language program which made her eligible for the prekindergarten program. She was not enrolled in the free or reduced lunch program. Mrs. E has a limited command of the English language; therefore, a translator attended all of the workshops and was present at all interviews except the interview after completion of the workshops but prior to the teacher conference.
Pre-workshop Interview

Data about Mrs. E’s involvement in Janet’s literacy development were gathered from the open-ended questions and from the HLEI at an interview preceding the first workshop session. From the open-ended questions, Mrs. E expressed that she reads to Janet at least three times a week and talks with her about the pictures in books. She said that she works with Janet all the time writing letters and her name. She guides Janet’s hand when she writes because she has trouble holding the pencil. Data from the HLEI revealed that Mrs. E began reading to Janet when she was one and that a family member prints with her five to six times a week.

Information regarding Mrs. E’s awareness of Janet’s literacy development was collected from the open-ended questions and from the HLEI. From the open-ended questions, Mrs. E revealed that she notices that Janet flips pages in a book and tells a story in her own words. Data from the HLEI showed that Mrs. E notices that Janet tells stories about pictures that she draws, tries to write a message by scribbling, and that letters mean something to her.

Data from the HLEI showed that there are many types of literacy materials in Janet’s home. Janet has between 21 and 30 books and her family receives one children’s magazine a month from the Boy Scouts. In addition, the family receives about four books a month from a children’s book club. Janet has paper, pencils, a blackboard and chalk, coloring books, and crayons at home. Her family has a dictionary, atlas, set of encyclopedias, and cook books. Janet sometimes receives books
as a gift. Her parents have between 26 and 50 books and receive one magazine a month from church.

Information from the HLEI revealed that Janet’s parents model literacy use in several ways. Janet has the opportunity to see her parents read three to four times a week and to write one to two times a week. Some of the ways Mrs. E models writing are by paying bills, making lists, writing recipes, writing stories, and writing letters and messages.

Mrs. E revealed how she believes that children learn to read during the open-ended questions. Mrs. E thinks parents should let children know the importance of school. She believes that parents should set aside a time each day for learning. She thinks parents should teach them the ABC’s and the sounds, and parents should let them draw and be creative. She thinks children learn to read by beginning with vocabulary that is frequently used.

**During the Workshop Sessions**

Mrs. E showed her involvement with Janet’s literacy development by reading to her, answering Janet’s questions, and encouraging Janet to participate in activities.

Mrs. E was involved with Janet by reading with her. She read stories that were written in Spanish and stories that were written in English. While she read, she would run her fingers under the words. As Mrs. E read, Janet would ask questions and a few times turned the pages back to a previous page. One time when Janet turned the page back, she looked at her mother, pointed to the picture and said, “This is the guard.” Her mother nodded her head. Another time Janet
pointed and said, "Look!" At the end, Janet asked her mother who the mother was in the story. Mrs. E turned the pages back to the beginning of the story and showed Janet the picture of the little girl who bought Cordoroy.

Janet and her mother together chose the pictures for her portfolio. They would look at the papers and talk about them.

Mrs. E encouraged Janet to participate in activities. One night after reading the book, Wheels on the Bus, the group sang the song. Mrs. E did the actions and encouraged Janet to participate. Mrs. E smiled as Janet showed pictures and drawings that she made during the previous week.

**Attendance and Weekly Literacy Logs.** Janet attended seven workshop sessions with her mother. Her older brother, younger brother, and younger sister came to four sessions with Janet and her mother. Mrs. E returned six Weekly Literacy Logs. For the week of February 20, three books were read to Janet. Her mother read all of the books, and no other literacy activities were documented. For the week of March 5, five books were read to Janet. Her mother read all of the books, and no other literacy activities were documented. For the week of March 19, nine books were read to Janet. Mrs. E read all of the books. One additional literacy activity for March 15 was documented. Mrs. E wrote that Janet saw a Chucky Cheese label. For the week of April 2, five books were read to Maria. Her mother read all of the books to her. Two literacy activities were documented for March 30. Mrs. E wrote that Janet identified the "Jack in the Box" sign and that she identified traffic signs. For the week of April 9, four books were
read to Janet. Her mother read all of the books, and no other literacy activities were documented. For the week of April 16, four books were read to Janet. Her mother read all of the books, and no other literacy activities were documented.

The Weekly Literacy Logs documented books that were read to Janet and her participation in literacy activities. They showed that 22 books were read to her by her mother from the first workshop session to the last workshop session. In addition, three literacy activities were documented.

**Pre-teacher Conference/Portfolio Interview**

At the interview prior to the teacher conference, Mrs. E shared Janet's portfolio with the researcher by turning the pages and telling about the work samples. From this interview, Mrs. E showed awareness of many of Janet's literacy achievements. The section below highlights some of the information shared at this interview.

**Drawing development.** Mrs. E showed several drawings. She expressed several reasons for choosing these pages for the portfolios. She chose one page because Janet used many different colored markers. She said that Janet likes to use different colors. Her written comment said, "Very colorful." As the researcher and Mrs. E looked at another page, Mrs. E said, "In this picture she saw herself." Mrs. E commented and laughed about how large the face was. The researcher pointed out that Janet had added another dimension by drawing the legs as ovals rather than just as sticks. In one picture, Mrs. E noticed that Janet had added hair to the person she drew. She orally expressed this to the researcher and had included that in her written comment. In the
next drawing, Mrs. E pointed out earrings. On another page, Mrs. E noticed that Janet had drawn a dress on a person. She said, "This is Janet in a dress." The drawing was of a girl in a dress with stick arms and feet and lots of hair. Next, Janet drew a picture of a television screen with a face on the screen. Mrs. E pointed out that it was a television. Janet drew a picture of a person with a crooked smile. As her mother showed this drawing to the researcher, Mrs. E pointed out that this picture had eyes, nose, and a smile. On the last drawing in the portfolio, Mrs. E said that some lines that were drawn up to a house might be a sidewalk. She also noticed that Janet had drawn an earring on the person, a rainbow, and had written her name.

**Writing development.** Janet wrote an entire page of upper case B's. Her mother commented that Janet wrote a lot of B's, and her written comment said, "The letter B is new for her." On the next page, Janet wrote her name. Her mother said that she drew her name, with all of the letters.

**Reading development.** Mrs. E and Janet had cut out logos and signs from advertisement pages of the newspaper. The labels that were included were Whataburger, Toys R Us, Kroger, and 7 Eleven. The researcher commented that on the night that we talked about and looked at signs at the workshop, Janet could name many of the letters. Mrs. E said that Janet also knows many traffic signs.

**Interests.** At the end of the interview, Janet's mother said that Janet likes to dance, write, and draw. Also, she said that Janet likes stories.
Post-Teacher Conference Interview

From the post-teacher conference Mrs. E revealed additional information regarding her involvement in and awareness of Janet's literacy development. Furthermore, she gave more insight into her perceptions of how children learn to read and to write.

Mrs. E shared ways that she was involved in Janet's literacy development. Mrs. E said that when she is reading something, Janet will point to a picture or a word wanting to know what it means. Mrs. E showed that she is involved with Janet by responding to her questions and by reading to her. Also, when Mrs. E looks at magazines, Janet will describe pictures that she sees. In addition, Mrs. E bought a collection of Walt Disney books and has taught her children that they are for reading and not for playing.

Mrs. E acknowledged an awareness of some of Janet's literacy achievements. She said that Janet likes to flip the pages and tell stories. Also, Janet likes to play with pens and pencils. She said that Janet would just start writing anything or scribbling. Mrs. E told how Janet likes to carry paper and pencils around. One day Janet told her sister not to move because she was drawing a picture of her. She loves books and especially likes little books that will fit in her purse. Mrs. E said that Janet can write only her name correctly but does try to write messages by scribbling.

Mrs. E made additional comments that revealed some of her perceptions of how children learn to read and to write. She said that parents can observe their children more to see when they start learning the letters and learning about pictures. She said they can observe
their drawings. She said that she thinks they begin learning to read by identifying letters and signs like McDonald’s and the traffic signs. From the HLEI, Mrs. E is now aware that Janet recognizes a few words in books and reads signs and labels.

**Literacy Activities and Involvement in Janet’s Literacy Development**

Mrs. E showed involvement in and awareness of Janet’s literacy development. Listed in Table 8 are some of the literacy activities that Janet participated in either alone or with her mother.

**Table 8**

Janet’s Literacy Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open ended</th>
<th>Drill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read books</td>
<td>Practiced writing letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacted with her mother</td>
<td>Practiced writing her name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with books</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretended to tell stories about</td>
<td>Mother guided her hand when writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>books</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told stories about pictures she</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drew</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to write a message</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by scribbling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drew pictures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read some environmental print</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the ways that Mrs. E has been involved in Janet’s literacy development are evident in Table 8. Some ways she was involved were reading to Janet, guiding Janet’s hand when she wrote, listening to her tell stories about pictures, and pointing out signs in the environment.
During the workshop session, Mrs. E demonstrated involvement by reading books to Janet written in English and written in Spanish. She answered Janet’s questions and encouraged her to participate. She ran her fingers under words as she read.

**Awareness of Literacy Development**

Mrs. E showed that she was aware of Janet's literacy development and that she noticed many of her literacy achievements. After attending the workshop sessions and developing a home literacy portfolio, she seemed to be more aware of her drawing development. Although, she mentioned that she does not think Janet draws well, she has noticed that she uses many colors, added hair to the people, drew clothes on a few people, and drew a house and a television. She noticed that she wrote her name, practiced some letters on her own, and read some environmental print.

Listed in Table 9 are some of the types of literacy development that Mrs. E was aware of and some literacy achievements that she noticed both before and after attending the workshop sessions and developing a home literacy portfolio.

**Table 9**

*Mrs. E’s Awareness of Janet’s Literacy Development*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretended to tell a story from pictures in book</td>
<td>Pretended to tell a story from pictures in book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told stories about pictures she drew</td>
<td>Told stories about pictures she drew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to write messages by scribbling</td>
<td>Attempted to write messages by scribbling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Drew pictures

Used many colors when drawing

Added hair to tadpole like drawings

Drew a person with clothes

Drew a house

Wrote name

Wrote entire page of B's

Read some environmental print

Asked mother what words say

Liked to carry small books in her purse

Recognized a few words.

Mr. P and Pam

Family

Pam is an African American girl who lives with her mother, father, and two older brothers. Both of her parents are employed. Mr. P, who participated with Pam, goes to work early so that he can be home with the children after school. Pam qualified for the prekindergarten program because of income.

Pre-workshop interview

Information about Mr. P's involvement in Pam's literacy development was gathered from the open-ended questions and from the HLEI at an interview preceding the first workshop session. From the open-ended questions, Mr. P revealed that he helps all of his children with their homework and that Pam likes to do her first grade brother's homework. Mr. P reads to her, and he bought her some paper and
crayons. Then he showed her how to write so that she would write on the paper rather than on the walls. Data from the HLEI showed that Mr. P reads to Pam four to six times a week and that he began reading to her when she was three. A family member writes with Pam five to six times a week.

Information regarding Mr. P’s awareness of Pam’s literacy development was collected from the open-ended questions and from the HLEI. The open-ended questions revealed that Mr. P notices that Pam pretends to read a story and that she learned to write her name before she started prekindergarten. Data from the HLEI showed that he notices that Pam recognizes a few words, reads signs and labels, writes letters that mean something to her, and writes her brother’s name.

There are many types of literacy materials in Pam’s home. She has an electronic game called Alphie that teaches the shapes and colors. She has crayons and paper, and Mr. P lets her play with his computer. According to the data from the HLEI, the family has over 50 children’s books, subscribes to *Highlights* magazines, and has over 200 adult books. Pam often receives books as gifts, and the family has a dictionary, atlas, encyclopedias, and "how to" books. Pam has coloring books and crayons, magnetic letters, and letters of the alphabet displayed in her room.

Pam’s parents model literacy use in many ways. Pam has the opportunity to observe her father studying, using reference books daily, reading three to four times a week, and writing three to four times a week. Some ways that Mr. P models writing are by writing
letters and messages, paying bills, writing on a calendar, and making lists.

During the open-ended questions, Mr. P acknowledged how he believes children learn to read. He said that children first start learning how to read by seeing their parents read and that parents should let children write before they go to school.

During the Workshop Sessions

Mr. P was involved with Pam's literacy development in several ways. He invited Pam to interact with the books, read to her, and answered questions and provided information about the story content.

The researcher observed Mr. P pointing to pictures and asking Pam to label them, asking questions about colors, pointing out particular words, and talking about the cover of the book. As he read, Mr. P would say aloud a few words and Pam would repeat the words after him. Her mother came with her one night when her father was unable to come and they did the same thing. Pam sat on her mother's lap as Mrs. P read The Very Hungry Caterpillar. Mrs. P's face was touching Pam's head. Mrs. P pointed to the words and read them aloud; Pam repeated the words just after her mother said them.

Another technique that Mr. P used when he read aloud to Pam was to read a sentence leaving out the last word in the sentence. Pam would fill in the missing word.

Mr. P was observed answering questions and providing Pam with additional information. At one session while reading Curious George Goes to the Hospital, Pam asked, "What is barium?" Mr. P told her that it helps them know what is in his stomach.
Mr. P involved Pam in the home literacy portfolio. The researcher observed Mr. P flipping through Pam's papers while Pam pointed and said, "That one and that one." Also, Mr. P allowed Pam to put the yellow stickies with his comments on her papers.

Mr. P demonstrated that he encourages Pam's learning and his other children's learning. He was observed encouraging Pam by smiling as she wrote and by nodding and saying "good" as she labeled pictures. The night of the seventh workshop session, he and Pam left early to see his son perform in the PTA program.

Mr. P was aware of some of Pam's literacy achievements. At the third workshop session, the researcher observed Pam reading the words to Bears on Wheels as Mr. P pointed to the words. Pam was able to read most of the words. When she faltered, Mr. P pointed to the picture which gave a clue to the word. When the researcher remarked about how well Pam could read the book, Mr. P expressed surprise. The researcher commented to him about how Pam realizes that there are spaces between words. He seemed very proud of her. At the fourth session, Mr. P expressed an awareness of Pam's drawing development. He said, "What I'd like to say is that it is kind of amazing how coming here--how it speeds up the process." He said, "Drawing pictures--now she is drawing pictures of people and eyelashes. It just amazes me how it speeds up the process."

**Attendance and Weekly Literacy Log.** Pam attended all eight sessions. Her father came with her six times and her mother came twice. Mr. P returned six Weekly Literacy Logs. For the week of February 20, six books were read to Pam by her father. Five literacy
activities were documented in addition to reading books. All were initiated by the father. The activities were 1) reading along with her father, 2) spelling words such as to, shop, bus, Owliver, 3) recognizing some months of the year, 4) reading some parts of the book, Owliver, and 5) drawing in which she draws grass and mountains and starts to place things. For the week of February 28, two books were read to Pam. Both were read by her mother and no other literacy activities were documented. For the week of March 19, six books were read to Pam. Five were read by Mr. P and one was read by Pam. Five literacy activities were documented. One activity was initiated by Pam and that was drawing people. The other activities were initiated by a parent. These activities were 1) drawing a person, 2) drawing letters, 3) reading to parent, 4) writing letters, and 5) drawing a picture. For the week of March 19, four books were read to Pam. One was read by her mother and three were read by her brothers. No other literacy activities were documented. For the week of March 27, five books were read to Pam. All were read by Pam and her father. Four literacy activities were documented. All were initiated by a parent. The activities were drawing the letters, practicing writing letters, practicing reading road signs, and practicing reading My Three Book. For the week of April 2, six books were read to Pam. Her father read one, and her mother read four. Pam read one by herself. Five literacy activities were documented. All of the activities were initiated by her father. The activities were writing letters, drawing pictures and writing letters, reading road signs, practicing writing letters, numbers, and drawing pictures, and drawing pictures and reading road signs.
The Weekly Literacy Logs documented books that were read to Pam and her participation in literacy activities. They showed that 29 books were read to Pam from the first workshop session to the last workshop session. Her father read 17; her mother read 7; her brother read 3; and Pam read 2. In addition, 24 literacy activities other than reading were documented.

Pre-teacher Conference/Portfolio Interview

At the interview prior to the teacher conference, Mr. P shared Pam's home literacy portfolio with the researcher by turning the pages and telling about each work sample. From this interview, Mr. P showed an awareness of many of Pam's literacy achievements. The sections below highlight some of the information shared at this interview.

Drawing development. The first drawing that was in Pam's portfolio was a rainbow. Mr. P said, "This is the first one that she actually knew what she was trying to draw, which was a rainbow. She wasn't just scribbling; she really tried to draw all of the different colors. That's what I like about that. She had a goal in mind that she drew." He continued by saying that she likes to draw rainbows because they are easy for her.

For the second picture, Mr. P noticed that Pam had added grass, ground and sky. He related this to the workshop session on drawing and the discussion about how children start grounding their pictures, rather than drawing people and objects in the air. He said that he liked how this picture showed the brown ground topped with the green grass and showed the blue sky at the top of the page. Mr. P said, "These are becoming grounded now and not just all over the page."
Pam drew a picture of her father and brother holding hands. Mr. P said that this picture surprised him because she drew one person with just the head and legs. It had no body, but the other person had a body. Mr. P spoke of Pam's drawing development saying, "Yes, she's developing."

The next picture was of Pam and her mother. Mr. P pointed out that they had feet and that Pam had colored the people brown.

The next page was a page of several circles or closed shapes. Mr. P said, "It is just amazing that they know how--what they want to draw. They may not draw it as well as they like but they can draw it. And you can understand what they're drawing now, where first when she used to draw she would just take the pencil and just scribble."

On another page, Mr. P noticed that Pam had drawn her house. He said that she couldn't make it as good as she wanted but this was her house and this is the door. He pointed out flowers and the ground and grass.

Writing development. As Mr. P turned to one page, he said, "And now she started writing her numbers and she is writing her name."

Pam had written the numerals to five. At the top of the page, she had written her first name in all upper case letters and below it she had written her last name in all upper case letters. Mr. P's written comment said, "She wrote her name in her own hand."

On another page, Pam wrote the numerals to 13. She had drawn lines above them. Mr. P explained that Pam had copied them from her brother's math book and that the numerals had the lines above them in the book.
On one page, Pam wrote letters on the first three rows and then she wrote four rows of circle-type writing. The researcher commented about how the letters went across the page and how they came down and began another row. Mr. P said that even at her age, she was able to keep a straight line of letters or circles. He said that his son in first grade has a hard time keeping them straight.

Post-Teacher Conference

From the post-teacher conference, Mr. P revealed additional information regarding his involvement in and awareness of Pam's literacy development. Furthermore, he revealed some of his perceptions of how children learn to read and write.

Mr. P shared ways that he was involved in Pam's literacy development. Mr. P said that he helped all of his children with their homework. He said that Mrs. P helped them with spelling and vocabulary and that he helped them with everything else. He worked with Pam everyday at a set time and that she was very motivated now that she had an assignment from the workshop. He said Pam would remind him to read to her and help her. He further stated that it was kind of like eating. Pam knows that at 6:00 it is time to eat and at 6:30 it is time to read. He said that he and Pam read books together and that the workshop sessions gave him a time to bond with Pam.

Mr. P acknowledged an awareness of some of Pam's literacy achievements. He said that Pam still makes up stories, making up the stories and the words if she gets a book that is too hard for her to read. He stated that she knows a lot of words and can read quite a few books like Bears on Wheels, One Monday, Two Tuesday, and One
Fish, Two Fish. The HLEI showed that Mr. P now is aware that Pam can read a few books, can tell a story about a picture that she drew, and tries to write a message by scribbling. Each of those items he answered no to at the pre-workshop interview.

Mr. P made additional comments that showed his perception of how children learn to read and to write. He said that Pam watches him read and write and that is important. He said that having a definite time and assignment each day is important. He expressed the importance of choosing books that are easy to read. He said that Pam has made progress by using books where each page builds on the last and words are repeated in the text. He told of how he would ask Pam to identify a picture, then he would point to that word on the page. He said he would only have to do that once and she would know it. The researcher said that Pam has a very good memory.

Literacy Activities

Mr. P showed involvement in and awareness of Pam's literacy development. Listed in Table 10 are some of the literacy activities that Pam participated in either alone or with her father.

Table 10

Pam's Literacy Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open-ended</th>
<th>Drill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Was read aloud to</td>
<td>Practiced writing letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read books (Pam)</td>
<td>Wrote her name and family members' names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretended to read books by telling stories</td>
<td>Spelled words with father from story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drew pictures</td>
<td>Wrote numerals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read environmental print</td>
<td>Drew shapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told stories about pictures she drew</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to write messages by scribbling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacted with books and parent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the ways that Pam's father has been involved in her literacy development are evident in Table 10. Some of the ways he was involved included reading to Pam, helping her practice writing, listening to Pam read simple books, and pointing out environmental print.

During the workshop sessions, he demonstrated involvement by answering questions, providing additional information about the stories, asking Pam to label pictures, talking about the cover of books, and encouraging her by smiling and nodding. He also would read a word and just after him, Pam would repeat his words. In addition, he would read a sentence leaving out the last word and let Pam fill in the word.

Awareness of Literacy Development

Mr. P showed that he was aware of Pam's literacy development and that he noticed many of her literacy achievements. After attending the workshop sessions and developing a home literacy portfolio, he seemed to be more aware of her drawing development. He noticed that she drew rainbows, began drawing people, grounded her pictures, drew circles, and drew houses. He noticed that she wrote her brother's name, recognized many words, and read some simple books.
Table 11

Mr. P's Awareness of Pam's Literacy Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretended to read a story from pictures in books</td>
<td>Pretended to read a story from pictures in books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrote her name and brother's name</td>
<td>Wrote her name and brother's name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognized a few words</td>
<td>Recognized a few words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read some environmental print</td>
<td>Read some environmental print</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drew first picture that she knew what she was drawing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liked to draw rainbows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grounded drawings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Began drawing people with bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drew circles or wrote closed shapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drew a house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wrote numerals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wrote last name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wrote letters in a line across the page (left to right progression)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognized many words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read a few simple books like Bears on Wheels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Told a story from a picture she drew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attempted to write messages by scribbling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ms. F and Latoya

Family

Latoya is an African American girl who lives with her mother. Ms. F, who participated in the study, is employed part time at a bank in the accounting department. Latoya qualified for the prekindergarten program because of income.

Pre-workshop Interview

Information about Ms. F's involvement in Latoya's literacy development was gathered from the open-ended questions and from the HLEI at an interview preceding the first workshop session. Data from the open-ended questions revealed that Ms. F works with Latoya on phonics and the letters of the alphabet. They play computer games together. Ms. F will show Latoya a letter and then ask her to find the capital letter. Ms. F writes words from *Sesame Street* on paper so Latoya can copy them. She says that this helps Latoya remember the word. Ms. F reads books, sometimes reading a page and then asking Latoya to read it. Often they reread stories. Data from the HLEI showed that Ms. F takes Latoya to the library twice a month, prints with her daily, and began reading to her when she was two.

Information regarding Ms. F’s awareness of Latoya’s literacy development was collected from the open-ended questions and from the HLEI. Data from the open-ended questions revealed that Ms. F notices Latoya has favorite books and that she pretends to read from the pictures. Latoya does not always know the title of a familiar book, but she will know who is in the story. Latoya is learning to write the letters and to fit small words together. Ms. F said that Latoya learns a
lot from television and from books. The HLEI showed that Ms. F notices
that Latoya reads some signs, tries to write a message by scribbling,
writes letters that mean something to her, and puts letters together to
make a few words.

There are many types of literacy materials in Latoya's home. She
has an electronic game, a little library shelf, flash cards, and watches
Sesame Street on television. The HLEI showed that Ms. F has over 50
books and receives over three magazines a month. Latoya has between
21 and 30 children's books and each month receives two children's
magazines. Latoya sometimes receives books as gifts. In addition,
Latoya has paper, pencils, coloring books and crayons, her own desk
and chair in her room, and the letters of the alphabet hung on the wall.
Ms. F has a dictionary, atlas, set of encyclopedias and cook books. She
writes notes and messages and displays them on the refrigerator.

According to data from the HLEI, Ms. F models reading daily, uses
reference material daily, and writes on a daily basis paying bills, and
writing letters and messages.

Ms. F's views about how children learn to read were revealed
through the open-ended questions. She said that parents should begin
teaching children the names of the letters, shapes, and colors right
when they first begin to speak. She said that parents can do this by
asking their child about their blue shirt and such on a daily basis.
She said that children learn to read by sight and by saying words and
identifying what they see.
During the Workshop Sessions

Ms. F was involved in Latoya's literacy development in several ways. She related stories to her experiences, asked Latoya specific questions about stories, provided opportunities for Latoya to interact with the stories, and played school with her at home.

Ms. F was observed asking Latoya questions while reading to her. Ms. F asked, "How many school buses are there?" "Which one is the large one?" "Where do you see the stop lights?" "Why are they going that way?" With another book, on each page she asked where a certain object was.

The researcher observed that Ms. F related a story to Latoya's personal experiences. As she read a book, she asked Latoya to remember how she dressed up to go trick or treating.

During sharing time, Ms. F told about playing school with Latoya on Saturdays. She said she would write the alphabet in pencil down the page and have Latoya write the letters using markers.

The researcher observed Latoya and her mother interacting with the stories. When Ms. F read *Hands Hands Fingers Thumbs*, she had Latoya show her hands, fingers, and thumbs. Then she had her show her the thumbs of the monkey in the picture. Each time as Ms. F got to the part that had an action, Latoya performed the action. She beat her thumbs on the table. She shook her hands. She said, "I know how a fiddler goes." Then she pretended that she was playing a fiddle.

The next book that they read was *Mr. Brown Can Moo, Can You?* Once again, she physically interacted with the story. When her mother read
"pop pop pop." She hopped as she said the pops. She moved like a train and whistled when she read about a train.

Ms. F would laugh when Latoya imitated some of the actions. She responded by laughing and smiling as Latoya retold *Caps for Sale*.

Ms. F asked Latoya's opinion when choosing work samples for the portfolio. She also suggested that they place certain work samples in the portfolio.

The researcher noticed that Ms. F was aware of some of Latoya's literacy achievement. Ms. F brought a notebook of Latoya's work to the first session. It contained pictures she had drawn, numerals and letters she had written, and items that she had cut out and glued on pieces of paper. Ms. F told the researcher that she could take it home and look at it.

**Attendance and Weekly Literacy Logs.** Latoya attended all eight of the workshop sessions with her mother. Her grandmother came to all but one and sat observing in the back of the room. Ms. F returned eight Weekly Literacy Logs. For the week of February 20, six books were read to Latoya. All six were read by her mother. Seven literacy activities other than reading were documented by Ms. F. Four were initiated by Latoya and three by her mother. The activities initiated by Latoya were a) drawing picture of Easter Eggs, b) fingerpainting letters of the alphabet, c) fingerpainting, and d) drawing a picture of shapes. The activities initiated by her mother were a) drawing a picture of a spring day, b) practicing the letters of the alphabet, and c) drawing a picture about a story. For the week of February 27, four books were read to Latoya. All of the books were read by her mother. Four
literacy activities were documented. Three were initiated by Ms. F, and one was initiated by Latoya. The three initiated by Ms. F were a) drawing a picture relating to a story, b) making a picture collage of signs and words Latoya knows, and c) practicing writing her numbers. The activity initiated by Latoya was drawing pictures. For the week of March 5, four books were read to Latoya. All of the books were read by her mother. Four literacy activities were documented. Latoya initiated one activity and Ms. F initiated three activities. Latoya initiated water painting. The activities initiated by her mother were a) water painting, b) drawing a picture about a book, and c) practicing her numbers. For the week of March 12, four books were read to Latoya. All of the books were read by her mother. Five activities were documented. Two activities were initiated by Latoya. They were practicing writing her numbers and a group of creative activities including painting, cutting, and drawing shapes. The activities initiated by Ms. F were a) drawing a picture of what she would like to do someday, b) looking at a picture and drawing one like it, and c) finding the pictures. For the week of March 19, four books were read to Latoya. Two were read by her mother; Latoya read one; and a librarian read one. Eight literacy activities were documented. Three were initiated by the mother. Four were initiated by Latoya, and one was initiated by both the mother and Latoya. The literacy activities initiated by Ms. F were a) a drawing of *Harold’s Flyaway Kite*, b) drawing of the Easter Bunny, and c) practicing writing words. The activities initiated by Latoya were a) drawing of lunch room lady, b) drawing and message for her friend, c) drawings, and d) practicing writing by forming words.
The activity that was initiated by both was Latoya reading the book 
*Out! Out! Out!* while her mother wrote words. For the week of March 26, 
four books were read to Latoya. All of the books were read by her 
mother. Eight literacy activities were documented. Seven were initiated 
by Latoya and one was initiated by her mother. Activities initiated by 
Latoya were a) drawing of *Swimmy*, b) drawing of duck, c) practicing 
alphabet, d) drawing of *The Tiny Seed*, e) drawing about *Spots, Feather, 
and Curly Tail*, and f) writing a letter to her grandmother. Ms. F 
initiated the activity of identifying parts of a book. For the week of 
April 2, six books were read to Latoya. All of the books were read by 
her mother. Nine literacy activities were documented. Two activities 
were initiated by Ms. F and seven were initiated by Latoya. The 
activities initiated by the mother were drawing a picture for each letter 
of the alphabet and drawing a picture of colors. The activities initiated 
by Latoya were a) pretending to read a story and drawing a picture 
about the story, b) practicing writing the letters, c) drawing a picture 
of a spider, d) drawing a picture of her potato plant, e) drawing a 
picture of Casper, f) drawing a picture about Easter, and g) pretending 
to read and drawing a picture of the story. For the week of April 9, 
four books were read. All of the books were read by her mother. Nine 
literacy activities were documented. Five activities were initiated by the 
mother and four activities were initiated by Latoya. The activities 
initiated by the mother were a) copying a picture and making a 
drawing, b) drawing a picture about *Smelling*, c) copying words, d) 
drawing about *Abuela*, and e) drawing about *Going to the Dentist*. The 
activities initiated by Latoya were a) drawing of family, b) drawing of
caterpillars, c) copying words from *Mr. Brown Can Moo*, and d) copying words in work area.

The Weekly Literacy Logs documented books that were read to Latoya and her participation in literacy activities. They showed that 36 books were read to Latoya from the first workshop session until the last workshop session. In addition, 54 literacy activities other than reading were documented.

**Pre-teacher Conference/Portfolio Interview**

At the interview prior to the teacher conference, Ms. F shared Latoya’s portfolio with the researcher by turning the pages and telling about each work sample. Ms. F had organized the portfolio by dividing Latoya’s work samples into sections according to the workshop session’s topic. She made a title page, a page about Latoya’s personal history, and a table of contents. In addition to organizing the portfolio, Ms. F had color coded the pieces of the Jigsaw according to the date that she observed the activity. On the side of the Jigsaw were squares colored in different colors and designs along with the dates representing the key. From this interview using the portfolio, Ms. F showed awareness of many of Latoya’s literacy achievements. The sections below highlight some of the information shared at this interview.

**Drawing development.** After Ms. F read *Harold’s Flyaway Kite*, she had Latoya draw a picture of the story. As the researcher and Ms. F observed the picture, the researcher said that Latoya had added another dimension to her drawings. Ms. F immediately said, "to make it look more like legs."
Another example of Latoya’s drawing development came from a book her mother read to her. The researcher pointed out that she had added clothes to this person and that the arms were more than sticks. Then, Ms. F related this observation. She said that she thinks the pictures that Latoya imagines in her head are more like stick figures; however, when she looks at pictures in books and sees people with clothes on, then she draws the people with clothes on. She said that Latoya draws what she sees.

**Writing development.** Ms. F had written the letters on a piece of lined paper, and Latoya had copied the letters. Ms. F said that she knows how to make the letters but that she has trouble staying on the lines. Ms. F’s written comment said, “On 2-22-96. A school day at home. She enjoys practicing alphabets.” On the next paper, Latoya had fingerpainted the letters of the alphabet. Her mother wrote, “Another way to resight the alphabet by memory. She finger painted the letters and taped to a sheet of paper. Combination of cutting, painting, and taping while having fun. Picture completed 2-22-96.”

Ms. F allowed Latoya to write without copying and using paper with no lines. Latoya had written numerals randomly on unlined paper. Ms. F’s written comment said, “Practicing her Number allows me to see what number she can identify.”

Latoya wrote letters across the top of a page that had a drawing of a face. Ms. F said that she thought it was supposed to be a message. She pointed out that all of the letters were capitals and that Latoya has the capital letters strung on yarn on her wall above her desk.
Ms. F cut out some words from the newspaper advertisements and glued them on paper. She had Latoya copy them. Latoya forms the letters well, but has yet to learn to leave space between words. Her mother’s written comment was, "By showing her different word then asking her to copy exactly what she see. This allows me to see her printing ability. She enjoys coping letters and words." Another day Latoya copied words. Ms. F said that they were from print around the room. Some of the words were Vogue, Where, and classic markers. On another page, Latoya had copied words from the book, Mr. Brown Can Moo, Can You?

On Easter Sunday, Latoya drew a picture and wrote the words "Happy Easter" at the top. The researcher asked Ms. F if Latoya had asked her how to spell "Happy Easter." Ms. F said that Latoya picked up the church program and asked her mother if it said something about Easter. Ms. F read her the words on the bulletin. Latoya said that was what she wanted, and then she copied it.

Reading development. Ms. F showed the researcher a page that contained environmental print. She said that she and Latoya went through the newspaper and magazines. When they came to a logo or sign, Ms. F asked Latoya if she knew what it said. If she did, she cut it out and they glued it on the paper. Some of the signs included JELL-O, Chevron, McDonald’s, and FRUIT by the FOOT. Ms. F’s written comment said, "Learning to Read Signs was a task enjoyed by child, it also was a way for me to identify all the signs she knew. Task complete on 3-2-96."
At the fifth workshop session, the topic was concepts of print. The researcher had each child choose a book and show each concept to his or her parent. The concepts were listed on the hand-out sheet for that night, and the parents were asked to do them again at home to see which ones their child knows. Ms. F created a chart listing each concept with two rows in front. One row had a line to check if Latoya knew the concept. The other row had a line to check if she did not know the concept. Latoya checked each of the following concepts in the row labeled "Know": a) the cover of the book, b) the back of the book, c) the title page, d) the title on the title page, e) the author, f) the place where the story begins, g) the first page, h) the last page, i) the place where the story ends, j) a word, and k) which direction we read. Latoya was unable to identify where we begin to read on a page and after we finish a line, which way we look to read.

**Literacy Activities**

Ms. F showed involvement in and awareness of Latoya’s literacy development. Listed in Table 12 are some of the literacy activities that Latoya participated in either alone or with her mother.

Table 12

**Latoya’s Literacy Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open ended</th>
<th>Drill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Was read aloud to</td>
<td>Studied phonics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drew pictures</td>
<td>Wrote letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacted with books with mother</td>
<td>Copied words mother wrote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited the library</td>
<td>Copied words from environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pretended to read books from pictures | Fingerpainted letters
--- | ---
Read some environmental print | Drew shapes
Attempted to write messages by scribbling | Wrote numerals
Drew pictures relating to books | 
Created actions to go with stories | 
Told stories about pictures she drew | 

Many of the ways that Ms. F has been involved in Latoya's literacy development are evident in Table 12. Some ways she was involved included reading to Latoya, asking questions about books, taking her to the library, listening to her tell stories about pictures she draws, watching as she put action to stories, and helping her practice writing letters.

During the workshop sessions, Ms. F demonstrated involvement by relating stories to Latoya's experiences, asking Latoya specific questions, asking her to label pictures, watching her perform actions related to the stories, and encouraging her by smiling and laughing at her.

**Awareness of Literacy Development**

Ms. F showed that she was aware of Latoya's literacy development and that she noticed many of her literacy achievements. After attending the workshop sessions and developing a home literacy portfolio, she seemed to be more aware of her drawing development. Ms. F noticed that Latoya added clothes to some people she drew and added more
details to her drawings. Ms. F noticed that Latoya could copy words found in the environment and that she knew many concepts of print, such as the front of a book and where a story begins.

Listed in Table 13 are some of the types of literacy development that Ms. F was aware of and some literacy achievements that she noticed both before and after attending the workshop sessions and developing a home literacy portfolio.

Table 13

Ms. F's Awareness of Latoya's Literacy Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had some favorite books</td>
<td>Had some favorite books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretended to read books from pictures</td>
<td>Pretended to read books from pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read some environmental print</td>
<td>Read some environmental print</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practiced writing letters</td>
<td>Practiced writing letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to write messages by scribbling</td>
<td>Attempted to write messages by scribbling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put letters together to make a few words</td>
<td>Put letters together to make a few words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drew pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drew pictures related to stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Added clothes to people when she copied from something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practiced writing numerals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Copied words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knew the cover of a book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knew where the back of a book is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Found the title page</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This section described parents' awareness of and involvement in their prekindergarten child's literacy development. Each parent/child dyad was examined and described separately; however, Table 14 lists the numbers of activities that parents were aware of before and after attending the parent/child workshop and before and after developing a home literacy portfolio.

Table 14

Number of activities parents were aware of before and after attending workshop and developing portfolios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. A</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. G</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. S</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. E</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. P</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. F</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parent/Teacher Conferences

This section describes the kinds of information that were exchanged at parent/teacher conferences answering the third research question, namely "What kinds of information are shared between parents and teachers at parent/teacher conferences in which parents use a home literacy portfolio?" All conferences were held after the completion of the eighth workshop and after an interview with the researcher in which the parent shared their child's home literacy portfolio.

Teacher A and Mr. P

Teacher A was Pam's teacher. When she met with Mr. P, his wife and one of his son's also came. Teacher A said that the "conference went real well." When asked what kinds of information Mr. P shared with her, she said that he went through Pam's portfolio. In the portfolio, Pam had been practicing writing some letters—"just different letters and writing with some help, 'I love you mom and I love you dad'." Teacher A said that Mr. P told her that he was planning to buy Pam some of the first grade readers so that she could practice at home. He told Teacher A that Pam could read some of them by herself. In addition, Mr. P said that Pam had been very interested in her brother's homework and had been doing some of his work. She added that she did not send homework home and that Pam was jealous of her brother's homework.

When asked what kinds of literacy information she had shared with Mr. P, Teacher A responded that she shared how Pam almost always is the first one to have her hand up and to have the correct answer when the class does its calendar work and answers questions regarding
printed work on the wall. She said that Pam can name the number of
the day without starting at one and counting to today's date. She
explained that they do not do a lot of reading, but that they do read
together. She added that Pam is getting a lot at home, which is great.
The researcher shared with the teacher how the parents seemed very
interested in drawing development, and she drew a "tadpole" as she
explained. Teacher A then replied that Mr. P talked about that. She
said, "I don't remember what he said now, but when you drew that
picture, I remember him talking specifically about it, and it was right
after we looked at one picture. So obviously it stood out to him." She
said that Mr. P also talked about pictures being grounded.

Teacher A said that Mr. P asked her what he can do for Pam over
the summer. She said that he should just keep doing whatever he's
been doing because it has been helping. She encouraged him to read to
Pam, allow Pam to read, and for Pam to see him reading. She said that
way, Pam would at least maintain what she knows until next year.

The researcher asked if there were any literacy goals developed,
any needs identified, or any strengths recognized. Teacher A replied,
"not really." She said that they really didn't set any goals because in
prekindergarten they focus more on social development and that each
child learns what he or she can. The researcher said that Teacher A's
response to what Mr. P could do this summer could be considered a
goal. Teacher A said, "I would say a goal would be to maintain what
she's already gained--what she's already learned."

When asked how the conference with Teacher A went, Mr. P said,
"It was fine but it was disappointing to the extent that she was going
on about what they were doing in class and what they would be doing next year in kindergarten.” He said that he felt Pam had progressed to a certain level and that there should be something to keep her progressing.

Mr. P said that Teacher A shared some literacy information with him. According to Mr. P, Teacher A told him that Pam knows all the days of the week and knows the months. He said that Teacher A also said that Pam was the first with her hand in the air when she asks a question and that Pam always knows the answer.

Teacher B and Mrs. S and Mrs. E

Teacher B was Maria’s and Janet’s teacher. She said that both conferences went well and that she noticed that both parents seemed excited and very willing to share their portfolios and what they had learned. Teacher B said that Janet’s mother was very receptive to learning anything she could to help her children. Teacher B continued, saying that whenever she had worked with Mrs. E, she had carried what she had learned over to the home. When the researcher said that she had bought some books in Spanish for the Hispanic parents to read, Teacher B said that she also encouraged her to read in both English and Spanish so that Janet would not lose her ability to speak in Spanish. Teacher B said that with Mrs. E she stressed the importance of reading to Janet and of noticing "Stop" signs and other words that they see on a daily basis so Janet will start recognizing those words. She said that she encouraged Mrs. E to point out letters to Janet. When the researcher told Teacher B that she had explained to the parents that pretending to read was a literacy step, Teacher B said that
she discussed that also. She said that she told them that even if they are not reading yet, that knowing the front and back of the book and knowing how to turn the pages is a first step.

Teacher B talked about what the parents shared with her. She said that Janet’s mother was excited about the labels. She said that Mrs. E was very excited that Janet could actually read them or at least recognize them; however, Mrs. E seemed disappointed that Janet was not drawing with much detail. Teacher B told Mrs. E that drawing does not start that way.

Teacher B said that Mrs. S explained every picture in the portfolio. She said that Mrs. S told her how surprised she was to realize how well Maria draws. Mrs. S was very impressed with all of the details that Maria uses, such as painting the fingernails on people.

When asked about developing literacy goals, Teacher B said she guessed the goal was reading to their child on a daily basis. Teacher B pointed out that Janet and Maria are on such different levels. She confirmed that Janet had made progress in learning the English language, but that she still had a long way to go. On the other hand, Maria had learned English very quickly and had scored on the highest level on the Language Assessment Scale. She commented about how Maria would have to continue in the English-as-a-Second-Language program through the first grade as required by law. Additional goals for Janet were to practice the alphabet and the letter sounds. For Maria, she had volunteered to run off some pages in a workbook for her to use at home because she caught on to the letter sounds so well.
Mrs. E and Mrs. S both said that the conferences went well. Mrs. E said that she talked to Teacher B about Janet's drawing. She said that even though she thought her drawings were not very good, that Teacher B said that Janet was improving. Mrs. E said that Teacher B pointed out that now Janet is drawing fingers and hair on the people she is drawing. Mrs. E said that she had asked Teacher B about Janet's language, and Teacher B had expressed that Janet has some problems. She said that Janet speaks more to her than to the children, but that her language has improved. Teacher B speaks Spanish fluently so she could communicate with Janet in her home language.

At the interview between the researcher and Mrs. S the translator did not come so Mrs. S and the researcher were at a disadvantage; however, Mrs. S said that Teacher B told her that Maria draws very good pictures for a five year old and that Maria learns very well.

Teacher C and Mrs. G, Mrs. A, and Ms. F

Teacher C taught three of the children participating in the study. Ms. F never met with Teacher C. She made one attempt and then Mrs. C became ill. Ms. F wrote a letter to the researcher expressing that she would not meet with Teacher C due to a conflict between them. Both Mrs. G and Mrs. A met with Teacher C after the student's last day of school. Mrs. A met with her in the dining section of the grocery store where she works. Their meeting ended abruptly, when her boss called her back to work.

Teacher C said that the conferences with both mothers were great. When asked what she shared with the parents, she said, "Oh, well, just what I've already observed that they've been doing since day one in
the classroom." Teacher C enjoyed talking about her students and volunteered her perceptions of them and what they did in class. The researcher said that both parents stated that Teacher C talks with them every day. Mrs. C confirmed that she does talk to them almost every day when they pick up their children.

The researcher asked Teacher C if either parent showed her the Jigsaw. Teacher C replied that neither had, consequently the researcher explained how the parents were asked to look for certain pieces of the puzzle depending on the topic for the evening. Teacher C then replied, "Now some of these, kind of were brought up when we were looking at different pages, but not as a whole. I'd like a copy of this." She said, "Well they mentioned several of these, but it was things like 'writes his name' that didn't have to be said because I already knew this. The researcher said that one of the purposes was to see what the parents were becoming aware of and if they were able to share that with the teacher. Teacher C then said that both mothers have done that, especially David's mother. She said that she and Mrs. A had talked about his imagination and creativity. When asked what Jim's mother shared, if she shared any particular literacy achievements such as those on the Jigsaw, Teacher C said that a lot of them told me about what their favorite books were and that they know parts of some books by heart.

Mrs. A said that the conference went well but did not last as long as they would have liked because it was time for her to go to work and her boss was calling her. She said that Teacher C said that David has
learned a lot since school started. She said that he has learned how to write his numbers better and his letters.

When asked if David’s teacher developed any goals and or pointed out any strengths, she said that Teacher C did talk about his memory. She said that he has a very good memory.

Mrs. G said that the conference was fine and that Teacher C was very enthusiastic. She stated that you could tell Teacher C was feeling better. When the researcher asked what Teacher C shared with her, she said that she asked the teacher if Jim had gotten any better and that Teacher C said that in general he got better in everything. She did not see improvement in any certain area, just all over.

When asked if Jim’s teacher helped her develop any goals or pointed out any strengths, Mrs. G said that Teacher C always says that the other children look up to Jim as a leader and that they will follow him.

**Kinds of Information Shared**

The parents shared several kinds of literacy information at the parent/teacher conference. First, all of the parents explained the work samples in their child’s home literacy portfolio to the teacher. Most shared information regarding drawing development. From the interviews, it was apparent that information about “tadpoles”, pictures being grounded, and more details being added to people and objects was shared. Several types of information about writing development were shared. Parents noted that their child wrote her name, practiced writing letters and numbers, wrote a few words, and wrote a few simple sentences, such as, “I love you.” Types of achievement related to
reading development that were shared included recognizing some environmental print, having a favorite book, being able to read a few words, being able to read some books from memory, and being able to read a few simple books. Other comments from parents were that one child was very interested in her brother's homework and that the parent was going to buy some simple books for his child to read.

Teachers shared information about the children with their parents. Some of the teachers' comments were that a child had improved in her ability to draw, that a child had improved in his ability to write the numbers and letters, and that a child had made overall improvements. Teachers also commented about the children's participation in class. One teacher noted that a child was quick to raise her hand and correctly answered questions about the calendar. For example, the teacher said that this child knows the days of the weeks and the months.

When asked if any literacy goals were developed, some parents and teachers said that one was to read to the child. Another goal was to maintain what the child had learned over the summer. The teacher of the Hispanic children suggested that the parents read books written in English and books written in Spanish. Other suggestions for parents from teachers were to point out environmental print, to practice the alphabet and the letter sounds, to assist them in learning the front and back of books, and to read to their children.

There were a few strengths identified at the conferences. One teacher stated that a child has a good memory. One mother was told that her child was a leader and that the other children would follow her
child. Another parent was told that her child’s drawings were very mature for her age.

One area of need was determined. A mother of one of the Hispanic children asked the teacher how her child was doing with the English language. The teacher shared that the child had made progress but still needed to improve in this area.

The Home Literacy Portfolio

Each parent created a home literacy portfolio of their child’s literacy activities. They took the portfolio with them to the teacher conference so they could share literacy information with their child’s teacher.

The teachers all said that the portfolios were useful for helping parents and teachers exchange information. Mrs. A said, “Well, it’s kind of strange to say, but it gave us something to talk about—something specific to look at.” She continued by saying that even though Mr. P had specific questions or topics to talk about, the items in the portfolio gave her a springboard for conversation. She said if parents ask how their child is doing and she is not prepared for them, she often cannot think of something specific to say. She felt that with a portfolio she can tell the parent what she sees and ask them for their opinion.

Teacher B felt that the parents came to the conference excited about their child’s portfolio and eager to share it. She said that both Mrs. S and Mrs. M were very proud of the portfolio and that they explained every picture to her. She then continued by telling about the detail in Maria’s drawings. Teacher C said that she really enjoyed them and that she thought they were great. When asked how she saw them as being
helpful, she said that they were a summative tool for language arts for her. She said that by looking at the portfolio, she could remember the books that they had read, and from the pictures, the units they had studied. She mentioned Jim's drawings of dinosaurs and the drawings of insects in the portfolios. From this, she could tell which units the children really enjoyed. When asked if she thought the parents felt the portfolios helped them in the conference, she said that for Jim's mother and Latoya's mother the portfolio was a shining moment for them to have the opportunity to get their work together in a book and see how much they had learned.

The parents expressed the usefulness of the portfolios for exchanging information with the teachers. Mrs. A said that David was at the conference and that he showed Teacher C all of his pictures. She said that it helped her share information too. She said that on one page he had written all of the letters and the numbers to 20. She said that he had never done that before. Mrs. G said that Teacher C loved it and that Jim was at the conference and showed her his work. In addition, Mrs. G said that her son shared his portfolio with his brother, daddy, and anyone who came to their house. She said that each year, Jim can pick out his favorite work and put it in the portfolio. Mrs. E said that it was while she was showing Teacher B Janet's portfolio when the teacher told her how Janet was improving. She said that Teacher B liked the way she used a lot of color and how she dressed the people in the drawings. Mrs. S agreed that it was useful and talked about the teacher praising her daughter's drawings. Mr. P said that he thought the portfolio was most helpful in showing teachers what your child can
do. He said that often parents will exaggerate but that the pictures in the portfolio tell the story. The pictures also reinforce what the parent believes. He gave an example. Pam had written the numerals with little dotted lines above them. He said the teacher didn’t understand why the lines were there. He explained that the numerals were written that way in his first grade son’s math book, and that Pam had copied them from his book. Mr. P. said that from the portfolio the teacher could see how well she could write her name and write the letters. He said, “That’s what I like about the portfolio. She can see for herself what the child is doing.” He went on to say that because the teacher is familiar with the stages of development, she could see for herself that child’s development.

The Jigsaw

The Jigsaw was a tool to help parents become aware of their child’s literacy achievements. All parents seemed to find the Jigsaw somewhat useful. A few parents seemed to thoroughly grasp how to use the Jigsaw for the most information. Other parents did not; however, the Jigsaw seemed to help all of the parents become more aware of what kinds of activities are literacy activities.

The parents’ comments about the Jigsaw were varied. Mr. P said that the Jigsaw was the most helpful part of the workshop. He said that he didn’t realize that there were any stages showing how children progress. He said that he had no idea that children’s drawings and writings show their progress. Mrs. A said that the Jigsaw caused her to watch to see what David did. Also, after observing David, she found that he could not do some of the things that she thought he could do.
She said that at first she just colored the pieces in and then she got to thinking about it, so she watched him and some of the things he wasn’t really doing. She added that now he is starting to do some of them.

At the second workshop session, Mrs. A said that David doesn’t really have a favorite book now. She said when he was younger he did but that he doesn’t now and wanted to know if she should color in the piece on the Jigsaw. The researcher told her that he might develop a new favorite one. Later during the study, Mrs. A mentioned that Marvin K. Mooney was one of his favorites.

One teacher, Teacher C wanted a copy of the Jigsaw after she saw it. She said she had never seen anything like it before.

**Weekly Literacy Log**

Each week, parents were given a Weekly Literacy Log to take home and use to document the books that were read to their child that week, the date the book was read, and who read the book to the child. The Weekly Literacy Log proved very useful for gathering this information. The number of books documented for the six children individually was 21, 22, 28, 29, 29, and 36. According to the Weekly Literacy Logs that were returned, the children were read to most often by their mothers. There were 121 books that were read by mothers. There were 25 books documented that were read by fathers. One father read 17 books to his daughter, which was more than the mother read. Sisters, grandmothers, and brothers were also listed as having read to the children.

The other purpose of the Weekly Literacy Log was to document literacy activities in addition to reading that the child engaged in either
alone or with the parent during the week. Also requested was the date and whether the parent or child initiated the activity. Participation from parents in documenting these activities ranged from no participation to active participation. The number of literacy activities listed for the six children individually was 0, 2, 3, 9, 24, and 54. Although very few literacy activities were documented for four of the children, their home literacy portfolios showed that the children were engaged in many more activities, especially drawing and writing. Two children's Weekly Literacy Logs showed that the children engaged in several activities throughout the study. The Weekly Literacy Logs were returned from the second through the eighth workshop session. One child averaged three documented activities weekly, and the other child averaged almost eight documented activities weekly.

Table 15
Information from Weekly Literacy Logs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child's Name</th>
<th>Number of Books Read to Child</th>
<th>Number of Literacy Activities Documented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pam</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latoya</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Parent/Child Workshop**

A description of the researcher's observations during the workshop sessions are detailed in the parent/child dyad section of this
chapter. Following are descriptions of three categories not discussed in the parent/child dyad section. They are choosing books, sharing time, and remarks about the workshop from participants.

**Choosing Books**

At the first workshop session, the researcher observed the children and parents choosing books to read. Most of the time, the children chose the books alone. The parent would wait in his or her chair for the child to bring the book to him or her. There were two exceptions that the researcher observed. When Pam chose a book at the first session, her father watched her. When she chose the second book, she pointed to one in the middle of the table and he picked up the book for her.

At the second workshop session, Janet’s mother chose four books. She took them to the table where Janet was sitting and asked Janet to choose one. Later, Janet went to the table alone, walked around the table, picked up a book, and then took it to her mom.

After the second session, this was no longer a focus for observation. The children almost always chose the books alone. Occasionally, at the end of the session, when the children chose three books to take home, a parent might help if she or he was in a hurry.

**Sharing Time**

At the second workshop session, a time for sharing was begun. The researcher asked if any parents wanted to share with the other parents anything that they did with their child or that they found interesting. Ms. F told about an activity that she does with Latoya. She said that she reads a book and then has Latoya draw a picture that
is related to the story. Then she told about how they play school on Saturdays and how she has Latoya write. Then when the researcher asked the children if they drew during the week, the children held up drawings and talked about them or waited for the researcher to ask questions about them. From then on, the sharing time was a time for the children to show some of their work samples. Both parents and children seemed to enjoy this time. The children would smile and talk about their work. For example, Latoya drew a large face and wrote some letters above the drawing. She said that this was a picture of the lunch room lady. Maria's mom smiled and appeared pleased when Maria would show the researcher her work. Occasionally, she would point out something in her drawings or writing. One example was when she picked up the marker box and showed the researcher that Maria's picture was copied from it. Everyone seemed more comfortable with the children sharing rather than the parents. There were a couple of other times parents shared. Once Mrs. G talked about what she does when Jim asks her what something says that he has written. The other time was when Mr. P talked about how amazing it was to see how Pam's development had progressed since coming to the workshop sessions.

Remarks about the Workshop from Participants

During the workshop sessions, some parents and a grandparent made positive comments about the workshop. Latoya's grandmother came to all but one workshop session. She sat in the back of the library and observed. One night, she said that the workshop had been so good for Latoya, that she had learned so much by coming. She said that Latoya tells her mother to hurry; it is time to go. The topic for that night was
reading aloud to your child and the grandmother commented that just as
the researcher had said, if she reads a book that Latoya is familiar with
that Latoya will correct her if she does not read all the words right.

Mr. P said that he really enjoyed the class. He said that it gave
him time to bond with Pam.

Mrs. S said that the workshop was very helpful. From the
workshop, she said she learned "very very wise tips for the children--
for parents to help learn for their children."

Mrs. A said that the workshop was very helpful to her. She was
especially interested in the topic of writing development. She said that
when the researcher showed the writings of other young children that
it showed her that it was natural for young children to write their
letters backwards. She had been very concerned about David writing
letters backward.

Mr. P said that he used some of the things that we do in the
workshop with his son who is in first grade. He said that it helped him
tremendously. He said they set a time every day to read and go over
his work.

Mr. P mentioned the importance of the children having their own
folder to keep their supplies and papers in. He said, "The idea of
having their own folder and paper and markers and the whole works--
that really motivated them to do something with it because it was theirs.
It had their name on it. It wasn't anybody else's but theirs and they
were so proud of that. She still keeps her stuff in there."

Mr. P also thought that the books that were set out at each
session were well chosen. As previously mentioned, the school librarian
chose them for the researcher. The researcher had asked that she select about fifty books appropriate for prekindergarten students.

Mrs. G said that Jim really liked to come to the workshop. She said that every night he asks, "Is my workshop tonight? Is my workshop tonight?" She further stated that being able to bring her younger son was beneficial because he was included in everything. Jim's brother is just one year younger than he is and will be in prekindergarten next year. At the workshop, he participated in everything, but he did not make a portfolio or receive the supplies the other children were given. Mrs. G said that she did not know that the author was important. She had not thought about someone using their imaginations and writing books, that the writing did not just appear. She liked the idea that Jim could use his imagination to create things.

At the beginning of one session, Jim said that he saw the book we read last week on television. I asked him if Amazing Grace was on Reading Rainbow, and Mrs. G said that she thought it was on Storytime.

Mrs. E said that Janet became more interested in reading and drawing after attending the workshop sessions. She said that Janet is shy in groups but that she got involved in this group.

One evening the translator told me that Mrs. E was wanting to improve her English and ability to read in English now that she is coming to the workshop. She said that Mrs. S is thrilled to see how well Maria draws.

The researcher asked each parent how they would improve the workshop sessions. Was there something that they would add or something that they would have deleted from the session? Mr. P said
that he would have started with the topic of environmental print. He said that by looking at signs, advertisements and labels, the children began to be able to read these words and understand that a "STOP" sign always said "stop." The researcher said that the reason she began with drawing development was so they could begin collecting drawings for the portfolio, but that was a very good suggestion. She said that it is probably best to start with what will interest the children the most. Then Mr. P said that the drawing was important because if the children did not want to read that night, the parent could tell them that when they were through reading, they could draw.

Mrs. G said that it would be good to allow a time for children to write or to draw at the workshop sessions. She said that sometimes she read two or three books and that the children could have drawn rather than listened to another book. She said that would have helped her because she would forget to have him draw until a couple of nights before the workshop.

Summary

This chapter described parents' awareness of and involvement in their prekindergarten child's literacy development. Also described were the kinds of information that teachers and parents shared at a parent/teacher conference in which parents used a home literacy portfolio.

Included in this chapter are the analysis and findings of the first two research questions as they pertain to each of the six parent/child dyads. The first question asked: In what ways are parents involved in the literacy development of their prekindergarten child? The second
question asked: What do parents notice about their prekindergarten child's literacy development before and after developing a home literacy portfolio and attending a parent/child workshop.

After the descriptions of the parent/child dyads, the analysis and findings of the third research question were provided. The third research question asked: What kinds of information are shared between parents and teachers at parent/teacher conferences in which parents use a home literacy portfolio?

The remainder of the chapter described some of the tools used in the study and some aspects of the parent/child literacy workshop. The tools described are the Home Literacy Portfolio, the Jigsaw, and the Weekly Literacy Log. The aspects of the parent/child literacy workshop that are addressed include choosing books, sharing time, and remarks about the workshop from the participants.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This research study began as a vision of a parent/child literacy workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to encourage parents to be involved in their own child's education and to prepare parents for a teacher conference in which the parents would share a home literacy portfolio with the teacher. Following the parent/teacher conference, both parent and teacher would be interviewed to determine the feasibility of using a home literacy portfolio for the purposes of exchanging literacy information and extending partnerships between parents and teachers.

A summary of this study, the findings, significance and implications, recommendations for further research, and a conclusion are presented in this chapter.

Summary

The purposes of this study were to (a) examine parents' involvement in their prekindergarten child's literacy development; (b) examine parents' awareness of their prekindergarten child's literacy development; and (c) examine the feasibility of parents using home literacy portfolios to facilitate the exchange of information regarding their prekindergarten child's literacy development.

Participants of this study included six parent/child dyads. The children were prekindergarten students from a suburban public school.
The parents, who were selected by the teacher, received a letter inviting them to come to an orientation, if they were interested in participating in a parent/child literacy workshop. The participants consisted of two African-American dyads, two Hispanic dyads, and two Anglo-American dyads.

This study was qualitative in nature. The data consisted of observations, interviews, and work samples with the researcher serving as the key instrument for gathering data. Interviews were conducted with both parents and teachers. All observations were conducted at the eight parent/child workshop sessions, and the work samples consisted of home literacy portfolios for each child.

There were four phases of data collection and data analysis. Each phase had a specific focus and used a particular technique. Data collection began February 6, 1996, and continued through May 30, 1996. Data analysis began February 6, 1996, and continued through June 20, 1996.

In Phase One, the focus of data collection was parents' awareness of and involvement in their child's literacy development. The technique used for gathering data was parent interviews. The focus for data analysis was to look for patterns of parents' involvement in and awareness of their child's literacy development. The techniques were transcribing and coding audiotapes from parent interviews.

In Phase Two, the focus of data collection was parents' involvement in their child's literacy development at home and at the parent/child workshop sessions. The techniques used for gathering data were observation at the workshop sessions and collection of Weekly
Literacy Logs and children's work samples from home. The focus for data analysis was to search for patterns of parent/child interactions at the workshop, patterns in questions and discussions about literacy, and patterns in the Weekly Literacy Logs. The techniques used were to transcribe observations and to code notes and Weekly Literacy forms comparing activities and topics of conversations with notes from Phase One.

In Phase Three, the focus of data collection was parents' awareness of their child's literacy development. The technique used was parent interviews in which the parent shared the home literacy portfolio with the researcher offering oral comments in addition to the written comments placed on each work sample. The focus for data analysis was to search for patterns of parents' awareness of their child's literacy development. The technique included transcribing and coding the parent interviews.

In Phase Four, one focus of data collection was teacher's perceptions of the parent/teacher conferences and the feasibility of parents using the home literacy portfolio as a tool for exchanging literacy information. The technique for this focus was teacher interviews. The focus of data analysis was to search for patterns in teachers' perceptions of the parent/teacher conferences and of the usefulness of the portfolio as a tool for sharing literacy information with parents. The techniques used were transcribing interviews, coding interviews, and comparing and contrasting with other notes.

The other focuses of data collection in Phase Four were parents' perceptions of the feasibility of using the home literacy portfolio as a
tool for exchanging literacy information with the teacher and the parents' involvement and awareness of their child's literacy development. The technique for this focus was parent interviews. The focus of data analysis was to search for patterns regarding parents' perceptions of the teacher conferences and the usefulness of the home literacy portfolio for sharing information with the teacher. In addition, patterns were refined and extended regarding parents' awareness of and involvement in their child's literacy development. The techniques for this focus were transcribing and coding interviews followed by comparing, contrasting, and extending all categories.

Findings

The findings are related to the three research questions that guided this study. The first research question asked: In what ways are parents involved in the literacy development of their prekindergarten child? The second research question asked: What do parents notice about their prekindergarten child's literacy development before and after attendance at parent/child workshops and before and after developing a home literacy portfolio? The third research question asked: What kinds of information are shared between parents and teachers at parent/teacher conferences in which parents use a home literacy portfolio?

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), motivation to learn is influenced by dyads or by a relationship between a child and a person who pays attention to or participates in the child's activities. Bronfenbrenner stated that primary dyads are one of the strongest sources of motivation for learning. A primary dyad is established when
a child and another person have thoughts of each other and are influenced by the other person even when that person is not present. While it can not be determined by this study if any of the parent/child dyads were primary dyads, the study does show that the parents in this study were involved in their child's literacy learning. In fact, according to the preworkshop parent interviews, all parents were involved in their child's literacy development before the workshop began. All of the parents read to their child before attending the parent/child workshop, and all homes had some literacy materials available for their children. Some of these literacy materials were children's books, pencils and crayons, and paper. In addition, all parents modeled some literacy use, even if limited to writing lists and paying bills.

The findings show that the children participated in many kinds of literacy activities. The parents were involved in these activities with their children either by encouraging their children to enter into these activities or by actively participating with them. Two categories of literacy activities emerged. One category includes open-ended literacy activities. These literacy activities do not have only one answer; they do not require drill. These open-ended activities allow for the child and parent to exchange information and to interact in a natural way. The second category includes drill-oriented literacy activities. These activities are more instruction based. These drill-oriented activities may have only one answer or may require practicing the same skill several times. The findings show that all children engaged in more open-ended activities than drill-oriented activities; however, only one child showed
that she engaged in twice as many open-ended activities as drill-oriented activities.

The findings indicate that all six children participated in the following open-ended activities. All six participants were read aloud to by a parent. All drew pictures; pretended to tell stories from the pictures in books; read some environmental print; interacted with books with their parents; and attempted to write messages by scribbling.

The findings indicate that there was only one drill-oriented activity that was engaged in by all six children. They all wrote letters. All children engaged in other drill-oriented activities; however, the activities varied. Some parents were more inclined to lead the child with drill-oriented activities; whereas, some parents chose more open-ended activities for their children.

According to the findings, all of the parents were more aware of their child's literacy development after attending the parent/child workshop and developing a portfolio. Table 14 on page 122 lists the numbers of literacy events that the parent was aware of before attending the parent/child workshop and developing a portfolio and after attending the parent/child workshop and developing a home literacy portfolio. The increase in the number of literacy activities that parents were aware of before attending the parent/child workshop and developing a home literacy portfolio compared with the number of literacy activities that parents were aware of after attending the parent/child workshop and developing a home literacy portfolio ranged from 6 to 16.
Bronfenbrenner (1979) said that intersetting communications link two settings for a child by providing specific information about the child in one setting to persons in another setting. In this study, the parent/teacher conferences served as an intersetting communication for each parent and each teacher.

The findings in this study indicate that the parents and teachers exchanged some literacy information during the parent/teacher conferences. The parents shared several kinds of literacy information. Each parent explained the work samples in his or her child's portfolio. In the process of explaining the portfolios, the parents shared information about their child's drawing development, writing development, and reading development. In contrast, the teachers shared some literacy information with the parents; however, much of the information the teachers shared reflected the child's participation in class or general information about the child. According to the findings from the interviews with parents and with teachers in this study, the parents seemed to have shared more literacy information than the teachers shared.

The findings of this study suggest that the home literacy portfolio is a useful tool for sharing information at parent/teacher conferences. Two parents stated that the portfolio helped them show the teacher one of their child's literacy achievements that the teacher had not seen before. One teacher suggested that the portfolio gave her a springboard for conversation with parents. Another teacher said that the portfolios served as a summative tool for language arts. From the
children's drawings and lists of books read, the teacher was able to determine the units that attracted the children's attention.

In addition to helping parents and teachers exchange literacy information, the findings in this study show that the home literacy portfolio helped parents become more aware of their child's literacy achievements. One parent stated that the portfolios reinforced what the parent believes because the work samples show how the child is developing. For example, from the home literacy portfolio, the parent could observe and confirm that the child can write her name.

Brandt (1989) said that parents want to be more directly involved in their child's education and that parents want clear information about what they can do at home to help their children succeed at school. The findings in this study show that the parents all found the parent/child workshop to be helpful. In fact, one parent said that as a result of coming to the parent/child workshop, he had set aside a special time each day for working with each of his children. In addition, it was an opportunity for parents to spend time with their child, focusing on the child's literacy development.

Significance and Implications

The parent/child workshop is a cost-effective vehicle for involving parents in their child's education. By conducting the parent/child workshop in the school library, the parents can check out books from the school. The costs include a leader, an album for the home literacy portfolio, and paper, pencils, markers, and a folder for each child.

If schools are interested in providing parent education to help parents promote their child's academic growth and encourage
partnerships between teachers and parents as recommended in Goals 2000, then the parent/child workshop is one program that encompasses both goals. The parent/child workshop allows parents to be active participants in their child’s education and offers the parents specific ways to help their child at home. Furthermore, the workshop provides the school with a form of parent participation that actively involves the parent. In addition, the parent/child workshop creates a time for children to learn about reading on a social level, by having stories read aloud to them. Vygotsky (1978) said that children learn everything on two levels. First, the children learn on a social level and then on an individual level. Furthermore, the workshop provides a time for parents to facilitate their child’s literacy through guided learning. For example, as one father listened to his daughter read the words of a predictable book, he would point to the pictures giving his daughter clues to the words that were difficult for her.

At the parent/teacher conferences, the parents shared more literacy information than the teachers. The teachers shared more information about class participation and general information without seeking information about the child’s home literacy activities. Perhaps one reason that the teachers in this study did not seek more information about the child’s home literacy activity was because all of the conferences were held during the last two weeks of school or after the school year had ended. The teachers may have viewed the conferences as after-the-fact or more of a year-end-conference; however, teachers might benefit from reviewing early literacy development. Having the same tools, such as the Jigsaw, that the
parents have and reviewing literacy development might help the teacher and parent to view the same activities as important. Moreover, if teachers developed a portfolio reflecting the child's literacy achievements at school, the exchange of information might be richer.

The role of the early childhood teacher as a parent educator needs to be addressed through teacher preparation and teacher inservice. Teacher educators need to evaluate how to prepare teachers to include the parent educator role as one of their responsibilities as a teacher of young children. Moreover, teacher educators need to consider how to prepare teachers to help parents facilitate their young children's literacy development and how teachers and parents can cooperatively develop literacy goals for young children.

Both parents and teachers indicated that the home literacy portfolio was useful for exchanging literacy information. By facilitating the exchange of literacy information, the home literacy portfolio served as a form of an intersetting communication. In addition, the home literacy portfolio seemed to empower parents to assist their children's learning. Another way the home literacy portfolio might be useful is for the parents to meet at the beginning of the new school year with their child's new teacher to share the home literacy portfolio.

Parent attendance at parent education classes is often a concern for program directors. Attendance did not become a concern during this study. One factor that might have contributed to regular attendance was that the children came with their parents, allowing parent and child to spend time together rather than spending time apart. Also, one mother indicated that she was so glad that her
younger son could come too. Three out of the six parents brought other children from the family with them at least once. Also, two of the three parents who did not bring other children with them to any of the sessions, have only the one child.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following recommendations for further research are based on the findings of this study:

1. A longitudinal study should be conducted to determine if the children who participate in a parent/child workshop achieve more success in school than children who do not participate in a parent/child workshop.

2. Further research is recommended for a similar study with the addition of teachers preparing a literacy portfolio of the child's school activities and achievements for use in the parent/teacher conference along with the home literacy portfolio.

3. Further research is recommended to study parent/teacher conferences to determine what approaches result in the exchange of information about home and school between parents and teachers and to determine how parents and teachers can work together to develop common goals for children.

4. Further research is recommended to study how teacher preparation and inservice can be designed to help teachers in their role as parent educators.

Conclusions

The findings of this study indicate that parents are involved in their children's literacy development. Also, the findings show that a
parent/child workshop is helpful for providing parents with ways of becoming involved in their child's literacy development and for helping them become more aware of their child's literacy achievements. Furthermore, a parent/child workshop is a cost-effective means to involve parents in their child's education.

The findings of this study indicate that the home literacy portfolio is useful for helping parents and teachers exchange literacy information. Further research is needed to help determine how teachers and parents can share and use information from parent/teacher conferences for developing goals for children.
APPENDIX A

ORIENTATION LETTER TO PARENTS
January 30, 1996

Dear Parent,

Central Elementary is going to have a special program for some prekindergarten children and their parents. It is a parent/child workshop that will meet one night a week for an hour for nine weeks. The purpose is to help parents provide opportunities and activities that will help their child develop skills for reading and writing. The children will receive paper for drawing and writing, markers, and the opportunity to check out books from the library each week. Together, parent and child will make a scrapbook of the child's work. The scrapbook can be used to help the parent share information of the child's home activities that relate to reading and writing with the child's teacher. This is a wonderful opportunity to spend quality time each week with your child and to help encourage your child's learning. Only a limited number can participate. Your child was chosen to be offered this opportunity. There is no cost to you.

If you would like to learn more about this workshop, please come to a meeting at Central Elementary on Tuesday, February 6, at 6:30 p.m. in the school library. At this meeting, you will learn more about the workshop which is associated with the University of North Texas. We will discuss what we will do at each workshop and what kind of commitment is involved. We do need parents and children who can attend all of the meetings and parents who are willing to be interviewed.

I look forward to meeting you. These workshops should be a fun way to spend time with your child and learn more about your child's developing skills. Furthermore, the school can learn how to be a better partner with parents through your participation.

Sincerely,

Patricia Williams
Workshop Leader
APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORMS
Dear Parents,

I am conducting a study in association with the University of North Texas that will describe parents' involvement in and awareness of their prekindergarten child's literacy development and parents' development of a home literacy portfolio. During the Spring 1996 semester, I will be conducting a workshop once a week for nine to ten weeks in the school library for parents and their prekindergarten children about literacy development. During these workshops, I would like to take photographs, videotape, audio tape, and keep written notes of observations and conversations. I would also like to collect samples reflecting student's literacy work done at home, such as drawings and samples of writing.

The study will also involve interviews with all parents. Teachers will be interviewed regarding parent/teacher conferences about literacy.

ALL INFORMATION GATHERED WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. YOUR CHILD'S NAME WILL NOT BE ASSOCIATED WITH ANY OF THE INFORMATION COLLECTED.

This study may help your school provide more effective parent workshops and learn more about how parents encourage literacy development at home.

Sincerely,

Patricia Williams

I consent to my participation and to my child's participation in this study. This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of North Texas Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (817) 565-3940. I understand that participation is voluntary and that all identities will remain completely confidential. The video and audio tapes will be destroyed at the completion of this study. In addition, I understand that I may withdraw at anytime without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits.

If you have questions, please call me at 390-6126.

Date____________________________________

Signature of Participating Parent__________________________________________

Child's Name_________________________________________________________
APPENDIX C

DIAGRAM OF LIBRARY
Front Half of Library

Chair
Group Time

Double Doors

Book Shelves
APPENDIX D

HOME LITERACY ENVIRONMENTAL INDEX
The Home Literacy Environment Index (HLEI) was developed solely as a research tool for use with parents (guardians) of preschool age children (3-5). The content of the HLEI was originally based on the work of Harlan Hansen (1969, 1973) and focused initially on reading. It has undergone some changes to more accurately reflect views of emergent literacy. Items now deal with both descriptive and usage categories in the areas of reading and writing.

The present version of the HLEI was found to have a split-half reliability of .92 and a classification accuracy rate of 78%. In a factor-analytic study the HLEI did not load on any factor in which two print awareness measures, the Concept of Print Test and the Linguistic Awareness in Reading Readiness Test, were implicated.

The HLEI is completed by parents in their home although it could be used in an interview format. The sixteen items require a checked response. Items 1-10 (including the double items #1 and 2) require only one check mark and are scored as 0-4 in descending order. Items 11-16 require one or more check marks. Item 11 and 12 are scored as zero if no materials are present or as a total of the number of material types checked (i.e. Dictionary and Atlas checked = two, computer, crayons and pencils = three). Items 13-16, if answered NO receive a zero. If answered YES then the number of check marks equal the score for that item.
HOME LITERACY ENVIRONMENT INDEX

Jon Shapiro
Department of Language Education
The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, B.C. Canada

Child’s Name: ____________________________  Birthdate: ________________

Child’s Sex:  M _____  Language(s) of the Home (1) ________________
F _____  (in order of frequency of use): (2) ________________

Older Children (age & sex): _______________________________________

DIRECTIONS: Please respond to each item by placing a check (√) mark on the appropriate line or lines.

1. Approximately how many books do you have in your home?

   Adult Books
   0-2 ______
   3-10 ______
   11-25 ______
   26-50 ______
   over 50 ______

   Children’s Books
   0-2 ______
   3-10 ______
   11-20 ______
   21-30 ______
   over 30 ______

2. Approximately how many magazines are purchased or subscribed to on a monthly basis in your home?

   Adult Magazines
   0 ______
   1 ______
   2 ______
   3 ______
   over 3 ______
Child's Name: ____________________________

Children's Magazines

0  ____
1  ____
2  ____
3  ____
over 3  ____

3. Which best describes how often your child might see reference-type books (see previous question) being used in your home?

Never  ____
Rarely  ____
Sometimes  ____
Often  ____
Daily  ____

4. Please indicate how often your child observes his/her parents reading on a weekly basis.

Never  ____
1-2 times  ____
3-4 times  ____
5-6 times  ____
Daily  ____

5. How often do you or a member of your family bring your child to the library on a monthly basis?

Never  ____
1 times  ____
2 times  ____
3-4 times  ____
over 4 times  ____
Child's Name: ____________________________

6. Please indicate how often your child is read to, at home, on a weekly basis.

Never
1 times
2-3 times
4-6 times
Daily

7. At what age did you begin reading to your child?

4+ years
3-4 years
2-3 years
1-2 years
0-1 year

8. Does your child receive books as gifts for holidays or birthdays?

Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often
Always

9. How often does your child observe his/her parents writing on a weekly basis?

Never
1-2 times
3-4 times
5-6 times
Daily
Child's Name: ________________________________

10. How frequently do you or another member of your family write/print with your child on a weekly basis?

   Never ______
   1-2 times ______
   3-4 times ______
   5-6 times ______
   Daily ______

11. Which of the following types of materials are in your home and used by your child?

   No writing/drawing intend ______
   Typewriter or computer (play or real) ______
   Paper or pencils (something to write with) ______
   Blackboard and chalk (feltboard) ______
   Colouring book & crayons or something to colour with ______

12. Which of the following reference-type books are in your home?

   No Reference Books: ______
   Dictionary ______
   Atlas ______
   Encyclopedia ______
   "How To" Books ______
   (cook books, home repair, etc.)

13. Does your child try to read? YES ______ NO ______

   If you checked yes, please respond to the next statement. Check the statement or statements which describe your child's attempts to read.

   Pretends to read storybooks ______
   Recognizes a few words in books ______
   Reads signs, labels, etc. (cereal box labels, supermarket names, etc.) ______
   Reads his/her own storybooks ______
Child’s Name: ________________________________

14. Does your child try to print, write and/or draw? YES  NO

If you checked yes, please respond to the next statement. Check the item(s) which describes what your child does.

- Tells a story about a picture he/she drew, painted or coloured
- Scribbles in trying to write a message
- Writes letters that mean something to him/her
- Puts letters together to make words and/or tries to write messages

15. Which of the following types of print in your home are able to be seen by your child?

- Letters of the alphabet (wallpaper or charts)
- Manipulative letters (magnetic letters or blocks)
- System of messages (bulletin boards, refrigerator door)
- Lists (shopping, words, etc.)

16. What types of writing do you do that your child is able to see you do?

- Paying bills, record keeping, etc.
- Making lists, writing recipes, etc.
- Keeping a diary, writing stories, poems, etc.
- Writing letters, messages, etc.
Pre-Workshop Parent Interview

1. What does your child do that will help him/her learn to read and to write?

2. What do you and your child do together that will help him/her learn to read and write?

3. What does your child do with books?

4. What do you and your child do together with books?

5. Do you think there is anything that parents can do to help prekindergarten children learn to read and to write?

6. How do you think children learn to read?
Pre-Teacher Conference/Portfolio Interview with Parent

1. Tell me about your child's portfolio. (The parent turned the pages and told about each work sample.)

2. What else would you like to share with your child's teacher?
Teacher Interview

1. How was your conference with (parent)?

2. What literacy information did (parent) share with you about (child's name)?

3. What literacy information did you share with (parent)?

4. Was the home literacy portfolio helpful in sharing information?

5. Were any literacy goals developed, any areas of need determined, or any strengths recognized?
Final Parent Interview
(After-Teacher-Conference)

1. How was your conference with (teacher)?
2. What kinds of information did (teacher) share with you about (child's name) literacy development?
3. Do you think that the portfolio was helpful?
4. Did you and (teacher) talk about goals or any needs or strengths of (child's name)?
5. What does your child do that will help him/her learn to read and to write?
6. What do you and your child do together that will help him/her learn to read and to write?
7. What does your child do with books?
8. What do you and your child do together with books?
9. Do you think there is anything that parents can do to help prekindergarten children learn to read and write?
10. How do you think children learn to read?
11. What part of the workshop sessions were helpful?
12. How could the workshop sessions be improved?
APPENDIX F

WEEKLY LITERACY LOGS
### Weekly Literacy Log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child's Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Books Read This Week:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Read By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Literacy Activities</th>
<th>Initiated By Child or Parent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>
APPENDIX G

REMINDER SHEETS FROM PARENT/CHILD WORKSHOP SESSIONS
February 20, 1996

Remember:

• Drawing and writing are related.
• Scribbling is the first stage of drawing and writing.
• Drawing is important for learning to write and to read.

This Week:

• Read to your child.
• Encourage your child to draw. Write the date on his or her picture and place in your folder.
• Observe your child. Write down any literacy activities. (Did your child ask you what a sign said? Did your child ask you to spell something or to write something down? Did your child draw?)

Next Week’s Topic:

Print is all around us.
February 27, 1996

Remember:

• One of the ways young children learn about literacy is through noticing and beginning to recognize print that is all around them.

This Week:

• Point out signs. When your child asks what a sign says, tell them.

Talk about some of the letters in the signs.

• Read to your child.

• Encourage your child to draw. Write the date on his or her picture and place in your folder.

• Write down any literacy activity on your Weekly Literacy Log.

Next Week:

• Bring 3 drawings.

• Bring your Weekly Literacy Log.

• If you’d like, bring some environmental print that your child can read (a picture of a sign, food wrappers, name from a cereal box, or a picture from a magazine or advertisement.)

Next Week's Topic:

The importance of reading aloud to children.
March 5, 1996

Remember:
The most important activity parents can do to help their children learn to read is to read aloud to them.
• It builds oral language.
• Reading aloud helps children learn the language of books.
• Listening comprehension is improved.
• It creates warm memories for children.

Studies show that children who read early:
• were read to from an early age.
• sat so they could see the pictures and print as the book was read.
• were interested in the meaning of words.
• all had chalkboards.
• had parents who told them what a word said or how to write certain words when asked.
• had books, paper, pencils, and other literacy materials.

This Week:
• Read to your child.
• Encourage your child to draw. Write the date on his or her picture and place in your folder.
• Observe your child. Write down any literacy activity on the Weekly Literacy Log.
• Model reading to your children. Let them see you reading a book, the newspaper, a magazine, or mail.

Next Meeting's Topic:
Writing Development

No meeting during Spring Break, March 12. Our next meeting will be March 19. Have a nice break!
March 19, 1996

Remember:
Children learn to write by exploring their own attempts at writing. In this way, a child learns the writing system and its rules. Help your child learn to write by--
• providing writing materials and opportunities for writing.
• showing interest in your child’s writing.
• supplying information when asked.
• following your child’s lead.
• modeling writing for your child.

This Week:
• Encourage your child to write or mark on paper, to write stories or lists, etc. Write the date on his or her paper and place in your folder.
• Model writing for your children. Let them see you write a letter, a note, a list, or checks to pay bills.
• Read to your child.
• Encourage your child to draw. Write the date on his or her picture and place in your folder.
• Observe your child. Write down any literacy activity on the Weekly Literacy Log.

Next Week’s Topic:
Concepts of Print
March 26, 1996

Remember:
Through concepts of print, children can learn the way books work. Ask your child if he or she can show you:
- the cover of a book
- the back of a book
- the title page
- (on the title page) the title
- (on the title page) the author
- where the story begins
- the first page
- the last page
- where the story ends
- a word
- a letter
- where we begin on a page
- which way we read
- where we go when we get to the end of a line

This Week:
- Ask your child to point out all of the concepts above. Write on your Weekly Literacy Log under literacy activities.
- Encourage your child to write or mark on paper or to write stories or lists, etc. Write the date on his or her paper and place in your folder.
- Read to your child.
- Encourage your child to draw. Write the date on his or her picture and place in your folder.
- Observe your child. Write down any literacy activities on the Weekly Literacy Log.

Next Week's Topic:
Retelling stories
April 2, 1996

Remember:
• Children learn about story structure from listening to stories.
• From listening to stories, children learn about settings, plots, characters, and events.
• From listening to stories, children learn how to organize their thoughts so that they can tell stories and can retell familiar stories.

When children begin telling stories:
• First, they consider that each page is a separate unit.
• Later, they consider that the book is a complete unit.
• Their language changes from sounding like how they talk to sounding more like how the book is written.
• Last, they have parts or all of the book memorized. They tell it almost exactly as it is written.

This Week:
• Read a story and have your child retell it to you.
• Ask your child to point out some of the concepts of print.
• Encourage your child to write marks on paper or to write stories or lists, etc. Write the date on his or her paper and place in your folder.
• Read to your child.
• Encourage your child to draw. Write the date on his or her picture and place in your folder.
• Observe your child. Write down any literacy activity on the Weekly Literacy Log.

Next Week's Topic:
Reading Aloud to Your Child--We will watch the video, Parents, Kids, & Books: The Joys of Reading Together.
April 9, 1996

Remember:
• It is never too early to start reading to a child.
• When reading to very young children, the parent does almost all of the work.
• When reading to older children, the children take over part of the interaction.
• Repeated readings are very important.
• Ask questions or make comments about the book as you read.
• It is good for children to ask questions while you are reading.
• Help your child make connections between books and the child’s world.
• Read to your child in all the languages that you speak.

This Week:
• If you’d like, make or help your child make a special title page for his or her portfolio.
• Encourage your child to write.
• Read to your child.
• Encourage your child to draw.
• Observe your child. Write down any literacy activity on the Weekly Literacy Log.

Next Week’s Topic:
Portfolios
April 16, 1996

Remember:
• Over time, portfolios can show us our children's development.
• Portfolios can help us become more aware of our children's literacy achievements.
• Portfolios can help us share information with teachers.

This Week:
• If you'd like, add more pages to your child's portfolio.
• If you'd like, make or help your child make a special title page for his or her portfolio.
• Continue engaging in literacy activities with your child.
APPENDIX H

JIGSAW
Jigsaw

(Weinberger, Hannon, Nutbrown, 1990, p. 23.)

Copyright Jo Weinberger, Peter Hannon, & Cathy Nutbrown
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before 1st Workshop Session</td>
<td>Home: Demographic data; become familiar with parents' perceptions of child's literacy development; become familiar with parents' involvement in child's literacy development</td>
<td>By Researcher: Individual parent interviews using Home Literacy Environment Index and open-ended questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>During Workshop</td>
<td>Home: Parents' ongoing involvement in their child's literacy development</td>
<td>By Researcher: From parents, collect samples of drawings, writings, lists of books read, and Weekly Literacy Logs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School: Parents' involvement in their child's literacy development</td>
<td>By Researcher: Field notes of workshop—observing parent/child interactions, discussions, parents' attendance, and other categories identified.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Before Parent/Teacher Conference</td>
<td>Home: Parents' awareness of their child's literacy development</td>
<td>By Researcher: Individual interviews with parents using the home literacy portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 4</td>
<td>After Parent/Teacher Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Home:</strong> Parents' awareness of their child's literacy development and the feasibility of using the home literacy portfolio as a tool for exchanging literacy information between parents and teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>School:</strong> Teacher's perceptions of parent/teacher conference, and the feasibility of parents using the home literacy portfolio as a tool at teacher conferences for exchanging literacy information</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>By Researcher:</strong> Individual interview with parents using open-ended questions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>By Researcher:</strong> Interview teachers using open-ended questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Techniques</td>
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<td>-------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Phase 1**  
Before 1st  
Workshop Session | Recognize patterns of parents' involvement in their child's literacy development | Code Home Literacy Environment Index and audio tapes of parent interviews |
| **Phase 2**  
During Workshop | Search for patterns of parent/child interaction; search for patterns in parents' questions and discussions of literacy; search for patterns in Weekly Literacy Logs; refine and extend patterns | Code field notes; transcribe video tapes of workshops and code; code Weekly Literacy Logs |
| **Phase 3**  
Before  
Parent/Teacher Conference | Search for patterns of parents' awareness of child's literacy development | Transcribe audio tapes of interviews with parents; code transcribed notes of interviews |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After Parent/Teacher Conference</td>
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</table>

| Refine and extend patterns of parents' involvement in and awareness of their child's literacy development and of parents' perceptions of the usefulness of home literacy portfolios for sharing information with teachers regarding their child's literacy development and for setting literacy goals |

| Transcribe audio tapes of interviews with parents; code transcribed notes of interviews; compare, contrast, and extend hypotheses |

| Search for patterns in teacher's perceptions of parent/teacher conferences; search for patterns in teacher's perceptions of usefulness of home literacy portfolios as a tool for parents' sharing home literacy information regarding their child's literacy development with teacher and for setting literacy goals |

| Transcribe audio tapes of interviews with teachers; code transcribed audio tapes of interviews; Compare, contrast, and extend hypotheses |
Our Ref: ph\b\letters\6pw

12 January, 1994

Patricia Williams
7317 Boisenberry Lane
Dallas
Texas 75249
USA

Dear Patricia Williams

By all means use 'The Jigsaw' by Jo Weinberger, Cathy Nutbrown and myself in the manner you propose. I hope you find it useful.

If you are over in England we would love to meet you (but there is no 'project' as such to visit).

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Dr P W Hannon
Senior Lecturer in Education
Dear Ms. Williams:

Thank you for your letter of June 17, 1996 requesting permission to use my Home Literacy Environment Index in your dissertation entitled Home Literacy Portfolios: Tools for Sharing Literacy Information and for Assessing Parents' Awareness of and Involvement in their Pre-kindergarten Child's Literacy Development.

I have pleasure in authorizing the use of the Index as requested.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Jon Shapiro, Ph.D.
Acting Associate Dean
Office of Graduate Programs and Research
REFERENCES


Connell, D. (1987). The first 30 years were the fairest: Notes from the kindergarten and ungraded primary (K-1-2). *Young Children, 42*(5), 30-41.


Education, 62(4), 324-326.


