EFFECTIVE TEACHERS IN AN EFFECTIVE SCHOOL: A CASE STUDY

DISSERTATION

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

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

By

Delores Stubblefield Seamster, B.A., M.A.

Denton, Texas

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The purpose of this investigation was to describe the behavior of effective teachers working within the context of an effective school. The study focused on both the content and techniques of instruction utilized by the teachers. In addition, the research examined teacher behaviors that were external to the classroom setting, including teacher-to-teacher relationships, teacher-to-parent relationships, and teacher-to-principal relationships.

A qualitative research design was selected for this study. The site was an inner city elementary campus. Data were collected from eleven K-3 teachers using participant observation and interviews over a seven-month period. Documents were also used as a source of data. The analysis of data was ongoing and cyclical based on the constant comparative method.

The final analysis of data resulted in nine themes based on recurring patterns of teacher behavior. The findings suggest that a caring school culture plays an important role in a school's success and the effectiveness of its teachers. Furthermore, there does not appear to be a universal description that fits all effective teachers. Instead, effective teachers in an effective school function as autonomous decision makers in their classrooms, choosing the curriculum and techniques that work best for them and their students. They tend to focus on
basic skills, especially reading and mathematics, using explicit direct instruction methods. However, these teachers frequently digress from their planned lessons to teach life skills and test-taking strategies.

Findings for this study also support the creation of structured school and classroom environments for low-income inner city students. Student self-esteem and parental support are not negatively impacted when firm discipline is administered fairly in a caring, supportive school climate.

The conclusions of this investigation have implications for teacher staff development and campus administrator training. The findings also suggest further research in the areas of school culture, direct instruction, student discipline, and classroom management.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Educational researchers have long sought to identify the variables in a school that impact the academic performance of its students. Can every school succeed with every type of student? The Coleman Report in 1966 concluded that "schools bring little influence to bear on a child's achievement that is independent of his background and general social context" (p. 637). Following this report, schools were generally believed to have a minimal impact on the students who attended them. If the children lived in high socio-economic households with well educated parents they would succeed in school, according to Coleman. Conversely, the children of low-income families were expected to derive little benefit from schooling no matter what success their teachers tried to produce. Coleman's findings were reported in several studies throughout the decade. The conclusions were summarized by C. S. Jencks (1972): "Schools seem to have very little effect on any measurable attribute of those who attend them" (p. 399). Thus, children who entered schools as economically disadvantaged students were believed to be permanently locked into a low achieving academic state.

In the early 1970s, the pessimistic tone of the Coleman report (1966) and studies like it stimulated a new line of research. Educators who disagreed with the assumption that family background was the primary determinant of a child's
learning ability challenged the view that schools did not and could not make a difference. Subsequent studies were concerned with identifying and analyzing those schools which seemed to contradict the findings of the Coleman Report. Research conducted by Edmonds in the early 1970s and continued by Brookover and Lezotte (1979) and others helped create a set of descriptors that came to be accepted as the framework for defining an effective school.

While the researchers agreed that there was no magic formula for guaranteeing student achievement in schools, their studies identified certain pervasive common elements among successful schools that appeared to positively impact their effectiveness. These common elements included high expectations for student performance, strong instructional leadership, an orderly school climate, emphasis on basic skills, and careful monitoring of student progress. Evidence from the effective schools research indicated that, "successful schools exhibit characteristics that are correlated with their success and that lie well within the domain of educators to manipulate" (Bickel, 1983, p. 5). This new evidence stimulated new dialogue about the effect of schooling in America. Apparently Coleman was wrong. Schools could make a discernible difference in the education of all children.

Since the determinants of school effectiveness clearly fell within the control and management of the schools themselves, the educational reform effort turned to the possible generalizability of the research. Unfortunately, there have been problems in harnessing the potential power of effective schools research. For the
past 20 years, educators have attempted to use the effective schools correlates to improve student performance in what has come to be known as the effective schools movement. So far, widespread school improvement has not been an automatic result of the research. Levine and Orstein (1989) noted, "Many efforts are underway to improve the effectiveness of classrooms and schools in big cities through utilization of research from these and other research literatures dealing with improvement of public schools. While considerable success has been reported in some big cities, it appears that few if any gains have been registered in many others" (p. 93).

One problem with the generalizability of the effective schools research has been the widespread uncertainty of exactly how to utilize the findings. The correlates were not simply a one-size-fits-all program for guaranteed school improvement. The correlates represented issues and challenges that faculties must grapple with to make their schools effective—they were not detailed prescriptions for attaining that status. No specific action or set of actions was right for every school. "While research may identify the kinds of actions faculties should consider to make their schools more effective, it cannot tell exactly how to proceed in what, inevitably, are each somewhat unique situations" (Levine & Lezotte, 1990, p. 69).

A second problem with the effective schools research has been that little attention focused on the individual teaching activities within those schools. Instead, there has been a tendency to focus on organizational structures that are
primarily a function of the principalship (Doll, 1969; Edmonds, 1979; Lipham, 1981; Purkey & Smith, 1983). These structures—an orderly climate, high expectations, an emphasis on basic skills, frequent assessment of student progress, and high levels of parental involvement—were linked to the principal of an exemplary school, rather than its teachers. Hechinger (1981), in the foreword to Effective Principal, Effective School by James Lipham, stated:

I have never seen a good school with a poor principal or a poor school with a good principal. I have seen unsuccessful schools turned around into successful ones and, regrettably, outstanding schools slide rapidly into decline. In each case, the rise or fall could readily be traced to the quality of the principal. (p. v)

Even class size, grouping, and the abundant availability of materials, the determinants cited most often as classroom variables, lie almost completely within the domain of administrative leadership. Because of this administrative emphasis, many educators believe the effective schools movement has generally bypassed the individual classroom teacher.

According to Levine and Lezotte (1990), the first phase of the movement focused on the identification of effective schools. The second phase emphasized the description of effective schools. A third phase progressed from description to the development of guidelines and approaches for improving school effectiveness. The current phase examines the larger organizational context for the single school. Rather than turning inward from a schoolwide focus to a classroom one, the focus has apparently moved outward away from the teacher, to district, state, and national levels.
Rosenshine (1979), Brophy (1979), and others contrasted the practices of effective and ineffective teachers in their research on exemplary teaching. Although it was certainly useful to study effective teachers in both effective and ineffective schools, this line of research did little to enhance the specific description of what goes on in an effective school. As one researcher stated, "School performance is unlikely to be significantly improved by any measure or set of measures that fails to recognize that schools are institutions—complex organizations composed of interdependent parts, governed by well-established rules and norms of behavior and adapted for stability" (Chubb, 1987, p. 29). Most studies of exemplary teachers described teaching behaviors without reference to the institutions where they occurred. The classroom was viewed as an isolated organization with no mention of how the effective teaching behaviors impacted the larger context of the school.

Levine and Lezotte (1990), in their summary, "Unusually Effective Schools: A Review and Analysis of Research and Practice," stated that: "Educators seem justified in assuming that teachers in effective schools are more likely to use effective teaching and classroom management practices than faculty in less effective schools. Unfortunately, this conclusion is not well established by systematic research" (p. 30). Thus, there remains a need for research that specifically addresses the role of the individual teacher in the effective school.
Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this investigation is to describe how effective teachers function within an effective school.

Research Questions

1. What do effective teachers in an effective school teach, and how do they teach it?

2. How do effective teachers in an effective school address individual student needs?

3. How do effective teachers manage student behavior in an effective school?

4. How do effective teachers interact with parents and peers within the context of an effective school?

Background and Significance

The target school for this investigation, Martin Luther King Elementary, was part of a large urban school district in north central Texas. The campus was located in an inner-city neighborhood consisting mainly of small frame houses. The more than 350 liquor establishments in the 13 square mile area surrounding the King Elementary neighborhood represented the greatest concentration of alcohol-related businesses in the city. In addition, this neighborhood was the source of the city's highest per capita homicide rate during 1993.
During the 1993-94 school year, 247 children attended Martin Luther King Elementary School. The student body consisted of 245 African American and 2 Hispanic students enrolled in pre-kindergarten through third grade classes. More than 95 percent of King students qualified for free or reduced lunch based on low family income. Students were organized into self-contained classes with an average of 18 students in each class. The average number of years’ teaching experience for King teachers was 16 years.

In the early 1900s, African American landowners donated a tract of land in their community as the site for a school to be built. The school, Martin Luther King Elementary, was incorporated into the segregated white school system in 1919. Since that time, King’s predominantly African American students have consistently scored in the top quartile nationally on norm-referenced standardized tests. Many former students of this low socioeconomic, inner-city school went on to become principals, doctors, attorneys, and judges. One King alumnus was even elected as a state senator.

The Texas Education Agency issued certificates of commendation to King for outstanding student achievement on the 1985, 1986, 1988, and 1989 state criterion-referenced assessments. In addition, in 1992 and 1993 King was awarded the local district’s Academic Excellence Award based on student performance on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. King students scored higher than any elementary school within the surrounding 25-mile geographic area, ranking as the number three K-3 school in the district for 1992 and number two for 1993.
Martin Luther King Elementary School represented an excellent opportunity to address some criticisms of existing effective schools research. Most researchers agree that long-term performance is critical to the designation of a school as being effective (Edmonds, 1979; Levine, 1991; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Stedman, 1985). The King campus had demonstrated excellence on both norm- and criterion-referenced standardized tests over a period of several years. Moreover, the achievement of King students had been outstanding across grade levels. Test scores for kindergarten, first, second, and third grades had collectively earned the school its recognition rather than high performance at a single grade level. Previously, researchers had criticized investigations that labeled schools as exemplary based on outstanding student achievement at only one grade level (Purkey & Smith, 1983; Rowan, Bossert, & Dwyer, 1983).

Critics have also been concerned about the lack of integration between effective schools and effective teaching research. The target school, King Elementary, provided both effective teachers and an effective school at a single location. All the teachers received the top evaluation rating, "Clearly Outstanding," for the 1992 and 1993 school years using the Texas Teacher Appraisal System. Furthermore, for two consecutive years, King teachers were each awarded a $1,000.00 personal check for their individual roles in the pupils' exemplary performance on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. The money was paid as part of the district's Academic Excellence Program. No K-3 school in the city with similar pupil demographics had achieved the record of teacher and school
excellence earned by Martin Luther King Elementary School. Consequently, a study of this campus offered the opportunity for significant insight into the function of effective classroom teachers in an effective school.

Methodology

Qualitative case studies are a form of descriptive, non-experimental research. This methodology is particularly suited to investigations where the researcher is interested in insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing. The main concern of case studies versus surveys or experimental research is interpretation in context (Cronbach, 1975; Shaw, 1978). Since this investigation focused on the study of effective teachers in the context of an effective school, I selected a qualitative case study research design as most appropriate. Miles and Huberman (1984) explain, "Qualitative data are attractive. They are a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes occurring in local contexts" (p. 15).

A qualitative case study provides an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single phenomenon. The end product is a rich, 'thick' description of the phenomenon. "Thick description" is an anthropological term that refers to the complete, literal description of the persons or situation being investigated. According to Guba and Lincoln (1981), 'thick' description also means interpreting demographic and descriptive data in terms of the cultural norms and deep-seated attitudes of the subjects.
Such qualitative research is especially well suited for helping close the gap between (a) researcher and teacher, (b) educational research and educational practice, and (c) theory and practice (Woods, 1986). Merriam (1988) states:

Because of its strengths, case study is a particularly appealing design for applied fields of study such as education. Educational processes, problems, and programs can be examined to bring about understanding that in turn can affect and perhaps even improve practice. (p. 32)

Data Collection

Data for this study were collected through participant observation, guided interviews, informal interviews, surveys, and a researcher's journal. In addition, historical and current documents related to the study such as staff newsletters, parent newsletters, teacher lesson plans, notes from teachers, and notes from parents were collected. These documents permitted me to further address specific questions that related to the content and delivery of instruction at King and teacher relationships with other adults within the school context. Multiple data collection methods enhanced validity and reliability through increasing the number of perspectives employed. "Multiple perspectives permit cross checking of all types of data for accuracy and completeness. They also add to depth and breadth of interpretation" (Dobbert, 1982, p. 265).

I acted as a participant observer in the classrooms of Martin Luther King Elementary School from August, 1993 through March, 1994. Observer credibility was enhanced by my knowledge and proficiency in classroom observation.
techniques as certified by completion of the Texas Education Agency Administrator Appraisal Training Program.

Participant observation afforded several advantages as a data-collection method. It (a) permitted easy entrance into the bounded setting of the case study by reducing the resistance of group members being studied; (b) decreased the amount of researcher disturbance to the natural situation; and (c) allowed the researcher to experience and observe norms, values, conflicts, and pressures with the group that cannot be hidden over a long period from someone performing an in-group role. Data from these observations were recorded as field notes in a researcher's notebook. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) explain that through participant observation "you will learn firsthand how the actions of your others correspond to their words; see patterns of behavior; experience the unexpected, as well as the expected; and develop a quality of trust with your others that motivates them to tell you what otherwise they might not" (p. 39).

Guided and informal interviews were used with informants based on questions that emerged from the ongoing analysis of data. The purpose of these interviews was to (a) provide a sense of history for the King staff, (b) uncover patterns rather than answer questions, (c) access the perspective of the person being interviewed, and (d) provide alternative explanations of behavior that the researcher has no other means of knowing.

Informal conversational interviews with key and ancillary informants were used to further strengthen the validity of the field notes. The informants included
classroom teachers, special staff members who did not have homeroom classes, parents, and students.

Key informants were chosen who knew the school, had access to the teachers involved, possessed good communication skills, and were willing to share their insights with the researcher. These key informants were a representative group that included teachers who had varying years of experience, who taught various grade levels, and who performed different teaching duties in the building. Parental key informants were representative of as many King classrooms as possible.

Ancillary informants were used to (a) provide reliability checks, (b) obtain complementary or opposing data, (c) help distinguish informants' personality patterns from cultural patterns, and (d) counteract whatever personal biases led to the choice of key informants. Those parents and students who were not personally close to the researcher served as ancillary informants in this study. In addition, staff members who were not key informants were used as ancillary informants.

It is generally agreed that good informants share the following characteristics: (a) they appear comfortable and unstrained in interactions with the researchers; (b) they are not hurried and are willing to spend time with the researcher; (c) they are generally open and truthful, although they may have certain areas about which they will not speak or where they will cover up; (d) they provide solid answers with good detail; (e) they stay on the topic or related
important issues; and (f) they are thoughtful and willing to reflect on what they say (Dobbert, 1982, p. 263).

Data Analysis

Analysis of data occurred in three stages. The first stage of analysis proceeded simultaneously with the collection of field notes, interview records, and documents related to the investigation. During this early stage of analysis I (a) made decisions that narrowed the focus of the study based on the emerging data, (b) developed analytic questions that aided in the generation of formal grounded theory, (c) planned ensuing data collection sessions to build on previous ones, (d) generated frequent observer's comments that stimulated speculation and critical thinking, and (e) summarized after reviewing field notes, interviews and documents using informal memos. Further analysis involved continuous member checks and triangulation of the data. Guba and Lincoln (1981) defined member checks as taking data and interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible. Such member checks were used throughout this study to enhance researcher perceptions of observed participant behaviors and especially to fill in the holes of description (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). Triangulation of data was achieved through the ongoing comparison of data from several different sources obtained at several different times. Triangulation greatly enhances the validity and reliability of a qualitative study (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Merriam, 1988; Taylor & Bogdan, 1984).
I began a second more intensive stage of analysis after data collection was completed. This stage utilized data analysis procedures outlined by Taylor and Bogdan (1984). At this point, all forms of data were sequentially numbered including interview notes, field notes, and documents. Next, the researcher began reading and rereading the data while searching for preliminary coding categories. Again, this included all interview notes, field notes, and documents. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) explain:

During coding, the researcher will have another chance to become intensively involved with his data and to see relationships between categories more clearly. Coding is a way to sort out data, but perhaps more important, it is a technique to delve deeply into the notes in search of understanding (p. 6).

The final data analysis stage involved making inferences and developing theory grounded in the data itself (Merriam, 1988; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Dobbert, 1982). In addition to categories, a theory consists of properties and hypotheses. Properties are concepts that describe a category, and hypotheses are the suggested links between categories and properties. During final data analysis, hypotheses were developed as explanations for the research questions of this study. "When the categories and properties have been reduced and redefined and then linked together by tentative hypotheses, the analysis is moving toward the development of a theory to explain the data's meaning" (Merriam, 1988, p. 146).

**Assumptions**

The major assumptions underlying this study were:
1. Martin Luther King Elementary was an effective school based on the definition of an effective school as one that "brings the children of the poor to those minimal masteries of basic school skills that now describe minimally successful pupil performance for the children of the middle class" (Edmonds, 1979, p. 16).

2. Teachers at Martin Luther King Elementary were effective based on "how much of the content a teacher's students master in how brief a period of time with allowances made for relevant characteristics of the particular group of students being taught and other factors affecting pupils' learning that are beyond the teacher's control" (Medley in Peterson & Walberg, 1989, p. 17).

Limitations

Several limitations are usually associated with qualitative research methods. One limitation involves the investigator's role as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. Observer bias, the extent to which the researcher's preconceived perceptions of the target school and its staff affect the findings, must be effectively controlled. "While the idea that researchers can transcend some of their own biases may be difficult to accept at the beginning, the methods that researchers use aid this process" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 42).

One method to deal with the limitation of observer bias was use of a personal researcher's journal. I used the journal to follow Dobbert's (1982) suggestion for controlling bias by reviewing my personal prejudices, likes, and dislikes at the beginning of the study, during the study, and at the end of the
study. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) note, "Initial thoughts and assumptions become fragile as they smack up against the empirical world you encounter. Put up front they can be confronted and measured against (compared with) what emerges in the course of the study" (p. 88).

My personal prejudices were based on a belief that all King teachers always employed outstanding techniques for classroom management, instruction, and parental relations. To prevent my opinion from distorting the findings of this investigation I employed multiple methods of data collection.

Interviews were conducted with dissatisfied parents, former King administrators, and support personnel. These ancillary informants were used as cross checks on data that possibly reflected my personal biases. In addition, I studied notes from parents, student discipline referrals, teacher lesson plans, and other documents seeking negative examples of the behavior patterns I discovered. Again, the goal was to achieve what some ethnographers describe as "a certain washing clean of one's own thought process" (Woods, 1986, p. 34).

Finally, I recorded observer comments in the margins of my field notes. These comments included personal reactions, frustrations, errors in judgment, and other subjective statements that helped me address the possibility of observer bias affecting how data were recorded and interpreted. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) state that "... most opinions and prejudices are rather superficial. The data that are collected provide a much more detailed rendering of events than even the most creatively prejudiced mind might have imagined prior to the study" (p. 42).
Another methodological problem was observer effect, the possible distortion of the setting caused by the presence of the principal as a participant observer. This study took place during my third year as principal at King Elementary. As instructional leader of the school, my leadership style most closely resembled the human relations model advanced by Follett (1941) and Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939). The human relations model was based on the notion that "developing and maintaining dynamic and harmonious relationships within an organization were fundamental to the success of that organization" (Drake & Roe, 1986, p. 68).

At King I attempted to function as a teammate who had a different role on the team, though not necessarily a more important one. Consequently, for the two years prior to this study, my principalship had been characterized by the following attributes of the human relations leadership model: (a) shared decision making, (b) group authority, (c) collegiality, (d) high morale, and (e) high levels of positive group interaction.

Because of my established role at King as a professional colleague rather than a boss, it was possible for me to conduct classroom visits with no more obtrusiveness than routine visits from another teacher. I continuously compensated for possible observer effect by (a) making sure my researcher role was clear, (b) using informants to watch for my influence on the study, (c) interacting in an informal, social manner with subjects, and (d) occasionally conducting covert
observations to note whether behaviors viewed were natural or changed by my presence (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Dobberts (1982) states that "the validity can only be assessed by examining its fit into the total body of data" (p. 264). This examination of fit was another technique used to control for observer effect in this study. The total data from King classrooms did not suggest teacher fear of repercussion or reprisal as an observer effect. In fact, the language and behaviors observed indicated that after 2 1/2 years, I had acquired the "status of 'trusted' person" desired by every participant observer (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 39).

Teacher apprehension toward the participant observer in this investigation was further reduced by the postponement of all formal teacher appraisal visits until completion of the study. This helped eliminate teachers' concern that their behavior was being judged for job evaluation purposes. Also, several "pre-study" visits took place to enhance the comfort level of students and teachers with the observer's presence. Finally, no feedback was given to any of the participants until the entire case study was completed.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This study examines effective teaching in an effective school. Consequently, the literature review initially focuses on effective schools and effective teaching as separate bodies of research. In addition, a review of literature integrating the study of effective schools with the study of effective teaching is included.

Effective Schools

Although many studies differed on the overall characteristics of effective schools, there were several factors that have been repeatedly identified across the entire body of research. In their comprehensive report, *Unusually Effective Schools: A Review and Analysis of Research and Practice*, Levine and Lezotte (1990) described eight characteristics as "the most effective and economical way to summarize and communicate the most important conclusions from the vast literature" (p. 16). The characteristics were: (a) productive school climate and culture, (b) focus on student acquisition of central learning skills, (c) appropriate monitoring of student progress, (d) practice-oriented staff development at the school site, (e) outstanding leadership, (f) salient parent involvement, (g) effective instructional arrangements and implementation, (h) highly operationalized expectations, and (i) requirements for students. These recurring factors, or
correlates as they were later termed, became the starting point for school improvement efforts using the effective schools research.

In 1971, Weber studied the characteristics of four instructionally effective inner-city schools. The effectiveness of these schools was based on high performance by students on norm-referenced reading tests. Weber was among the first to employ outlier methodology to respond to the negative conclusions of the Coleman Report. Outlier schools were schools that deviated by a specific amount from the line regressing test scores on student background. Positive outliers were identified and labeled as effective schools while negative outliers were described as ineffective. Next, surveys and observations were completed to describe the characteristics of the positive schools. The four positive outlier schools in Weber's (1971) study demonstrated unusually high achievement on norm-referenced reading tests. According to Weber, the characteristics that contributed to their unusual success included (a) strong leadership by the principal, (b) high expectations by the staff, (c) an orderly school climate, (d) strong emphasis on reading instruction, and (e) frequent evaluation of pupil progress. He concluded: "Their (the four schools') success shows that the failure in beginning reading typical of inner-city schools is the fault not of the children or their background - but of the schools" (Weber, 1971, p. 30).

Weber revisited two of the schools two years later. At that time, he found one school had shown a small increase in effectiveness. The other campus had declined significantly and could no longer be classified as an effective school.
Good and Brophy (1985) observed that Weber failed to offer an explanation for the deterioration of the school program on the campus that declined. Such an explanation would have been enlightening to the body of research on effective schools. Nevertheless, according to Good and Brophy, the lesson is that conditions of effectiveness may be temporary; they may change as principals, teachers, or student cohorts change.

Edmonds was also involved in the early research on effective schools. In 1979, Edmonds and Fredericksen published their seminal work *Search for Effective Schools: The Identification and Analysis of City Schools that are Instructionally Effective for Poor Children*. In the first phase of their research, Edmonds and Fredericksen used mathematics scores from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the Stanford Achievement Test to compare 20 Detroit inner-city schools. Careful matching was made on 11 economic, family, and community factors. Resulting differences in achievement supported the argument that instructionally effective schools did, in fact, exist.

The second phase of the Edmonds and Fredericksen (1979) research reanalyzed data from the 1966 Equal Educational Opportunity Survey. This survey was used earlier by Coleman, et al. (1966) to suggest that schools have little effect on student achievement that is independent of the student’s background and social context. From the Equal Educational Opportunity Survey data, 55 schools were identified as instructionally effective when students’ family background and home environment were controlled. According to Edmonds and Fredericksen,
the more effective schools were characterized by strong instructional leadership and a climate of academic expectations in which all personnel sought to be instructionally effective for all students. No children were permitted to fall below minimum levels of achievement. Furthermore, it was made clear that the acquisition of basic skills in these schools took precedence over all other school activities. These effective schools frequently monitored student progress in order to relate the progress to instructional objectives. Edmonds (1979) wrote, "Our findings strongly recommend that all schools be held responsible for effectively teaching basic school skills to all children.... We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us" (p. 35).

Noteworthy studies on school effectiveness were conducted in Michigan schools using process-product and case-study methodology (Brookover, Gigliotti, Henderson, & Schneider, 1973; Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer, & Wisenbaker, 1979; Brookover & Lezotte, 1979). Process-product research involved attempts to link school processes to student outcomes. The school processes used most frequently as input variables in the Michigan studies were: (a) student body demographics [socioeconomic status and ethnicity], (b) school social structure [time allocations, differentiation in students' programs, parental involvement, and teacher satisfaction with the school structure], and (c) school climate [staff and student beliefs and feelings about the school]. Output variables included reading achievement, mathematics achievement, and student self-concept. Brookover, et al. concluded that complex social system characteristics were more related to the
school outputs than the individual input variables they identified. Unfortunately, the analysis of the process-product data could not identify which social system variables had the greatest impact on the achievement in all schools.

The case study observations and interviews conducted by Brookover, et al. (1979) provided a detailed supplement to the large-scale statistical studies of Michigan schools. Four low socioeconomic schools were selected. Two were predominantly white, and two were predominantly African American. One school in each pair was effective; the other was ineffective. Each school was visited for a period of three to sixteen weeks. Some of the findings included the effects of time spent on instruction, commitment of teachers, expectations, grouping, reinforcement practices, and the role of the principal. The researchers found that in the high-achieving schools, almost all available class time was used for instruction. "Teachers stayed with a particular lesson until the students understood it" (Brookover, et al., p. 117). Students in the high-achieving schools were assigned to flexible groups based on objective criteria. In addition, the students were given positive reinforcement after correct answers and immediate reteaching when incorrect responses were given.

The article, "Creating the Total Quality Effective School," by Lezotte (1992) integrated effective schools research with Deming's Total Quality Management (TQM) theory for organizational management. Lezotte noted that "it is unlikely that the schools will be able to manage the more lofty principles of TQM if they
are unable to meet the challenge of successfully installing the tenets of effective schools" (p. 22).

Deming's first quality principle called for creating constancy of purpose toward improvement of product and service. Lezotte correlated this principle with the fundamental tenet of effective schools research: every child can learn and enters school motivated to do so. Lezotte suggested strong and frequent use of disaggregated test data by schools to answer the question: "Who is profiting how much from our current program of curriculum and instruction?" (Lezotte, p. 7).

Deming's second quality management principle called for companies to adopt a philosophy that states that commonly accepted levels of mistakes, delays, and defects will no longer be tolerated. Lezotte pairs this principle with the effective-schools belief that because all children can learn, what they learn in school depends on what the adults in that school do. He suggested that schools must assume responsibility for student learning by (a) abandoning policies, programs, and procedures that are not working, (b) installing new policies and procedures that have a proven record of effectiveness, and (c) attempting to perfect those programs that are currently working, below their maximum level.

The third principle of Total Quality Management stated that organization should replace annual mass inspections with statistical evidence that quality is built internally. Similarly, the effective schools correlates advocated frequent
monitoring of student learning by the school's stakeholders rather than the infrequent inspections currently conducted by state and federal policy makers.

Total Quality Management principle four rejected the practice of awarding business on the basis of price tag alone. Lezotte's corresponding effective schools tenet suggested that schools allocate whatever resources are needed to ensure student success at all levels.

Deming's next three principles were: improve constantly the system of production and service, institute modern training techniques, and get leaders to take responsibility for quality. All three of these principles were related to the instructional leadership thrust of the effective schools research. These instructional leadership tenets centered around the notion that the principal of a school "must accept the primary responsibility for re-inventing the school as a place that assures learning" (Lezotte, p. 10).

Principle eight from TQM urged organizations to eradicate fear, permitting everyone to work effectively for the company. Parallel effective schools research suggested that schools reassure employees that risks taken for purposes of improvement would not be punished.

Deming advocated the elimination of posters and slogans that seek new levels of productivity without suggesting new methods. The same concept was supported by Lezotte using effective schools research. Lezotte stated that "posters, slogans and other quick fixes are never encouraged as a substitute for quality staff development" (p. 16).
Management principle 11 from Deming advocated the elimination of numerical quotas for the work force. This corresponded to the effective schools research that discouraged the use of numerical goals for classroom practice. Lezotte stated that quantified goals for student outcomes often cause real school improvement to get lost in the test scores. He also noted that when numerical goals are set they usually become the maximum target for student achievement rather than the minimum.

Principles 12, 13, and 14 related to employee training and performance within the organization. These total quality techniques promoted removing barriers to employee pride of workmanship, instituting a vigorous program of employee self-improvement, and putting everyone in the company to work to accomplish transformation.

According to Lezotte, these principles corresponded to effective schools research based on the same concepts. Lezotte argued for a "moratorium on most of the unproductive evaluation models currently in use" (p. 19). In their place he called for teacher self-evaluation, peer observation, and peer coaching. Lezotte also suggested that local school boards (a) spend at least 2 percent of their budgets on a programmatic approach to training and retraining teachers, (b) develop assessment systems that are locally generated and curriculum based, and (c) decentralize central office functions to provide individual schools with greater autonomy.
Lezotte's integration of Total Quality Management principles and effective schools research offered a more varied approach to school improvement than the effective schools research alone. This broader focus, however, generally moved from the campus level to the central office and school board levels rather than narrowing to focus on the classrooms in effective schools.

Lezotte and Jacoby (1991) described successful school solutions to a variety of problems in the report "Effective Schools Practices that Work." The authors stated "that in each instance, schools focused on student achievement—or the lack thereof—then suspended business as usual and took on the challenge of directly committing their energies to teaching for learning for all" (p. iii). Scenarios presented in this study included one school's attempt to reverse a trend of high dropout rates and low student achievement. The school established a partnership with the surrounding community through door-to-door campaigning, telephone canvassing, and group meetings in the local housing project. Through this newly formed partnership, the following strategies were suggested to raise academic achievement, improve self-esteem, and encourage self-discipline: (a) a parent center would be opened in the school, (b) adult education would be offered, (c) classes would be self-contained in prekindergarten through fifth grades, (d) an extended day program would be set up until 5:00 p.m. each day, and (e) a clothes closet and household item exchange program would be established.

The solutions described by Lezotte and Jacoby (1991) in their report were completely based on effective schools research. Most of the ideas discussed
involved organizational changes external to the classroom. Only three innovations
directly targeted instruction; those innovations related to student mastery of basic
skills.

A 1992 study of effective schools by Meyers and Sudlow reported the results
of a study project validated by the New York State Education Department. The
project, conducted in Spencerport, New York, was based on the findings of the
effective schools research and research on school improvement. The authors
examined the four categories of claims used to identify effective school programs.
The categories of claims recognized by the Program Effectiveness Panel of the
U.S. Department of Education were: (a) improved achievement resulting in
greater knowledge or increased skill, (b) improvements in teachers' attitudes and
behaviors, (c) improved student attitude and behavior, and (d) improved instruc-
tional practices that contributed to student achievement. Meyers and Sudlow
suggested the possibility of a fifth category of improvements in the organizational
culture and policies. They concluded, "Modern important ideas for improving the
learning of all children call for changing the culture and/or climate of the school.
To ignore these ideas is to ignore much of the underlying knowledge base for
current attempts at restructuring schools" (Meyers & Sudlow, 1992, p. 21).

The article, "School Effectiveness: A View from the School" (Townsend,
1991), focused on explaining the complexities of how a school becomes effective
in practice. According to Townsend, other parts of the world "were particularly
concerned that the concentration on simple inputs and outputs of schools and the
subsequent recipe approach to school improvement adopted by American
researchers and policy makers ignored the complexities of what took place in
individual schools" (p. 21). The article proposed new techniques for measuring
effective schools based on a 1991 Australian project. Several qualities were
suggested as part of a new model for understanding school effectiveness. The
variables identified in Townsend's model were leadership, decision-making,
involvement, resource allocation, curriculum implementation, school environment,
communication, and school goals. He explained that "in the same way that
touching any of the strands of a spider web will make the whole web vibrate, so
changing the nature of one of the elements in the school effectiveness web will
have an effect on, if not alter the characteristics of, each of the other seven"
(1991, p. 32). Townsend's study and others like it (Doyle, 1979; Brophy, 1980;
Wynne, 1980) expanded the effective schools research to include greater emphasis
on the social structure of a school rather than the organizational structure alone.

Critics of the effective schools literature pointed out that the outlier method-
ology employed in many of the studies had serious weaknesses because it
employed a multiple regression equation to identify the outlier schools. Accord-
ing to Purkey and Smith (1983), "One drawback of this method is that in
equations that are imperfectly fit, by chance there will be some false positive and
negative residual outliers" (p. 430). Consequently, many researchers called for
studies to examine a school's success over time before affixing the label "effective
school" (Klitgaard & Hall, 1973; Rowan, Bossert, & Dwyer, 1983; Purkey &
Smith, 1983). Purkey and Smith further noted that very few effective school studies controlled for random variations by examining schoolwide achievement test scores over several years. Consequently, it is not clear from the literature whether a designated exemplary school will remain effective in the future or whether it was clearly effective in the past. Purkey and Smith suggest: "It seems reasonable and prudent to expect an effective school to have been so historically and remain effective before raising the banner of success over its door" (p. 43).

In the most significant longitudinal case study to date, researchers observed 12 inner-city schools in London, England from 1970 to 1975 (Rutter, Maugham, Mortimore, Outson, & Smith, 1979). Only two of the target schools could be considered effective. Nevertheless, Rutter offered a balanced intake theory on school effectiveness citing the characteristics of schools as social institutions and the "style and quality" or "ethos" of school life.

Other critics of the school effectiveness studies have pointed out the tendency of effective schools researchers to base their conclusions on narrow segments within a school's population. "Often, researchers assessed school effectiveness from achievement at only one or two grade levels and in only one or two curriculum areas. Yet a school's effectiveness may vary across grades or subjects" (Rowan, Bossert & Dwyer, 1983, p. 25). For example, the Michigan study by Brookover, Gigholti, Henderson and Schneider (1973) was based on data from only fourth grade students in the 24 schools involved. The Weber (1971)
study examined effectiveness based solely on third grade reading scores. The Edmonds and Fredericksen study (1979) only sampled sixth grade students.

Most of the research on effective schools has focused on campus level organizational variables such as class size, monitoring of student progress, and an orderly school climate. The studies are characterized by an emphasis on the principal as the key to school effectiveness. The investigation of Martin Luther King Elementary School can add significantly to this body of research by shifting the focus from the district and campus levels to the classroom level. Rather than focusing on the principal as instructional leader, this study focused on the classroom teacher's role in an effective school. Furthermore, few existing studies of effective schools have examined more than a single grade level within a school. The investigation at King Elementary included data from every classroom to develop a more complete picture of school effectiveness.

Effective Teaching

Dunkin and Biddle (1974) noted that the majority of the research on teacher effectiveness was based on systematic observation of nonteaching variables such as teacher experience, teacher background, and classroom interaction. Also, a great number of the investigations concerned the effects of grade level, subject matter, and student ethnicity on teacher effectiveness. The authors further stated that "Perhaps the beginning of wisdom is to discover how very little we know as yet and what to do to rectify that lack" (p. 7).
Dunkin and Biddle (1974) concluded their book with several suggestions for future research. The following are some of their recommendations: (a) Support for research on the processes, causes and effects of teaching should be substantially increased; (b) A center should be set up to collect and disseminate information from research on teaching; (c) Data from research on the processes of teaching should be presented with the simplest of appropriate statistics, preferably raw scores, rather than gain scores; (d) Researchers should be encouraged to replicate strong studies in alternative contexts; and (e) Process-process experiments concerning teaching should be supported only for the purpose of validating crucial relationships previously discovered in field studies or with strong theoretical justification.

Several large-scale correlational studies on effective teaching were conducted during the 1970s. This correlational, or process product, research involved the search for relations between classroom process (teaching) and products (what students learn). Process variables included teacher behavior, student behavior, and teacher-student interaction. Product variables referred to student achievement on all types of educational objectives.

One major generalization supported across these correlational studies was the value of direct instruction to student learning of basic skills. Although the studies varied in the type of teachers and students observed, the variable of teacher-led instruction appeared to be most important for the early acquisition of basic skills (Soar & Soar, 1972; Stallings & Kaskowitz, 1974; Brophy & Evertson,
Brophy conducted further investigations in the field of effective teaching using correlational research. His work with Evertson and Anderson (1979) employed several methodological improvements such as the use of sophisticated multivariate classroom observation systems that combined high inference rating with low inference coding of specific behaviors, allowed for separate coding and analysis of behavior that occurred in separate contexts, and expressed classroom process measures not merely as frequencies per unit of time but as percentages of the total number of times that the behavior in question might have been observed or expected.

Several of the effective teaching studies supported the belief that quantity of instruction is strongly correlated to student achievement. Coverage, time allocation, and opportunities for learning were confirmed as important variables in the study of teacher effectiveness (Berliner, 1985; Walberg, 1984; Stallings, 1986). Other noteworthy studies include research on questioning and wait time in effective versus ineffective classrooms (Rowe, 1974a, 1974b, 1974c; Deture & Miller, 1985; Ornstein, 1987). Tobin (1987) reviewed 18 research studies on wait time. He concluded, "wait time appears to facilitate higher cognitive level learning by providing teachers and students with additional time to think" (p. 145).
The findings of much of the important correlational research were synthesized by Rosenshine (1986), whose research and reviews resulted in the formulation of six classic principles of explicit teaching. The principles were: providing daily review, presenting material in small steps, checking for understanding, providing feedback and correctives, supervising independent practice, and providing weekly and monthly reviews.

According to Rosenshine (1986), "all teachers use some of the six principles some of the time" (p. 44). However, he found that effective teachers used these principles most of the time and implemented them in a consistent and systematic manner. In the classrooms, effective teachers used art, creativity, and thoughtfulness to employ these ideas effectively with different students and different subject areas.

The process-product paradigm in teacher research broadened its focus from simple observation of teacher-pupil exchanges to a concern with the mechanisms by which teaching affects learning. At a conceptual level, investigators began to argue that teachers did not cause achievement but rather caused students to engage in behaviors which produced learning (Powell, 1979; Brophy, 1980; Borsch, 1988; Porter & Brophy, 1988).

Yet as Brophy (1980) observed, additional correlational studies with the same general design were "doomed to continue replicating these basic relationships without adding important new findings" (p. 2). Fortunately, recent research on effective teaching has indeed evolved from the correlational studies of the
1970s to experimental and long-term naturalistic studies that link research on teaching to research on learning.

For example, Anderson, Evertson, and Brophy (1979) organized 232 principles of small-group instruction derived from earlier correlational work into a treatment for first grade reading teachers. Researchers studying teaching effectiveness at Stanford University organized principles drawn from earlier correlational work by Brophy and Evertson (1974), Stalling and Kaskowitz (1974), Soar and Soar (1972), and McDonald and Elias (1976) into an experimental study of third grade classrooms. Both studies produced statistically significant results favoring treatment teachers over control teachers as measured by student increases on standardized achievement tests. Good and Grouws (1979) conducted three classic experimental studies on teaching and mathematics learning. They utilized a system of instruction that was based on these requirements: (a) Instructional activity was reviewed in the context of meaning; (b) Students were prepared for each lesson stage to increase participation and to minimize errors; (c) Distributed and successful practice was built into the program; and (d) Active teaching was required, especially during explanation of the concept. Experimental teachers were provided training in the Good and Grouws system. Pre- and post-testing results indicated that students in the treatment classrooms performed significantly better than those in the control classrooms. Good and Grouws summarized, "The results indicate to us that it is possible to improve student performance in important ways in inner-city schools" (p. 43).
Borich (1988) described research-based effective teaching practices in his book *Effective Teaching Methods*. He listed five teacher behaviors as essential for effectiveness: clarity, variety, task orientation, engagement in the learning process, and moderate-to-high success rate. Clarity referred to the teacher's ability to communicate clearly and directly to the students. According to Borich, many teachers are unable to communicate to their students without wandering from the topic, speaking in overly complicated sentences or using vague, ambiguous language. Variety referred to ways of creating variety during the presentation of a lesson. This included both instructional materials and techniques. Task orientation related to the "teacher's concern that all relevant material gets covered and learned as opposed to a preoccupation with procedural matters or an exclusive concern that the students enjoy themselves" (p. 9). The fourth behavior cited by Borich was engagement in the learning process. This related to student time on task in the classroom. Borich noted that time on task was negatively impacted by student mental detachment and student misconduct. A final key behavior for teaching effectiveness was moderate-to-high success rate. "Researchers have found that students who spend more than the average amount of time in high-success activities had higher achievement scores, better retention, and more positive attitudes toward school" (p. 11).

Porter and Brophy (1988) developed a synthesis of the research on effective teaching. In their report, they described effective teachers as semi-autonomous professionals who were: (a) clear about their instructional goals, (b) knowledge-
able about their subjects and how to teach them, (c) knowledgeable about their students' differing individual needs, and (d) thoughtful and reflective about teaching. These professionals (a) communicated learning expectations to their students, (b) made expert use of existing instructional materials, (c) taught metacognitive strategies, (d) addressed both higher- and lower-level thinking skills, (e) provided regular feedback to students, (f) provided interdisciplinary instruction, and (g) accepted responsibility for student outcomes.

Recently, the results of the research on effective teachers have been used to generate a number of practical sources to improve instruction. Good and Brophy (1991) described teaching as an art. Their book, *Looking in Classrooms*, was primarily a prescriptive work describing how to become an effective teacher. Key concepts included essential teacher attitudes and personal qualities that are basic to successful classroom management. According to Good and Brophy, teachers "who approach classroom management as a process of establishing and maintaining effective learning environments tend to be more successful than teachers who place more emphasis on their roles as authority figures or disciplinarians" (p. 193).

Teacher professionalism literature was part of an emerging paradigm shift in the study of effective teaching. The trend was toward an expanded and more autonomous (empowered) role for teachers in the push for effective schools (Davis & Thomas, 1989; Berry & Ginsberg, 1990). There was also a move to integrate knowledge about learning with effective teacher research. According to
Berry and Ginsberg (1990): "At the heart of teacher professionalism is the creation and utilization of a knowledge base to advance student learning. If teacher professionalism is not going to disintegrate into self-aggrandizement, then the focus of the teachers' effort must be on the student" (p. 148).

Brophy (1977) and Doyle (1979) were two prominent researchers who argued for balancing the emphasis on effective teachers in the classroom with an equal focus on the student. Doyle further described "the classroom as an ordered and bounded setting with demands unique to that environment" (p. 2). According to Brophy (1979), these kinds of investigations appeared to be a first step in what will eventually become an integration of research on teaching with research on learning.

The body of literature on effective teaching has addressed several classroom variables including teacher talk, teacher questions, wait time for student responses, student off-task behavior, classroom climate, instructional strategies, and use of homework. However, most of the research has been based on data collected from unrelated classrooms rather than from a single campus. The studies that examined teachers at a single site usually involved attempts to contrast ineffective teachers with effective ones.

The investigation at King Elementary School offers insight into what Purkey and Smith (1983) call the reciprocal relationship between the classroom and the school where that classroom is located. In addition, this study will add to the
literature on effective teaching by providing a description of effective teachers working in the larger context of an effective school.

Effective Teaching in Effective Schools

There have been few studies designed to focus specifically on teaching in effective schools. Austin and Holowenzak (1985) described the characteristics of exemplary teachers in effective schools in the summary of a longitudinal study of 30 outlier schools in Maryland. They concluded that exemplary teachers in effective schools "tend to be the most able teachers in the school system" (p. 77). These schools had faculties that were stable and experienced. The teachers had higher degrees of education, and greater diversity of educational background both socially and geographically, than staff members of less effective schools.

Berliner (1985), in his article "Effective Classroom Teaching: The Necessary but Not Sufficient Condition for Developing Exemplary Schools," wrote, "It is a reasonable belief to hold that effective teachers can exist outside exemplary schools, but an exemplary school cannot exist without a large number of effective teachers" (p. 127). He suggested that effective teachers in effective schools were able to find ways to have students engage with and succeed with materials and activities that have empirical links with the desired outcomes. The ways teachers found to increase the students' understanding of the desired outcomes included monitoring, structuring, questioning, creating environments for learning, testing, grading, and providing feedback.
The book *Effective Schools and Effective Teachers* by Davis and Thomas (1989) included minimal integration of effective schools and effective teaching studies. Instead, the authors generally presented both bodies of research as separate, but parallel, fields. This perspective occurred commonly across the body of literature. There was little discussion of the exemplary teacher working within the effective school.

Levine and Lezotte (1990) theorized that the study of effective teaching practices is "relatively weak" in effective schools literature because teaching practices are difficult to assess and there are perplexing difficulties which researchers have encountered in trying to reach generalizable conclusions regarding optimal use of reinforcement, lesson sequencing, wait time after questions, teacher-student interaction guidelines, and other teaching techniques. Levine and Lezotte further suggested that:

The widespread tendency of school officials to substitute limited staff development focusing on effective teaching for the comprehensive interventions required to substantially improve school effectiveness sometimes resulted in a pattern wherein many ineffective schools score relatively high on effective teaching measures, thereby muddling comparison with more effective schools. (p. 36)

According to the book *Effective Schools and Classrooms: A Research-based Perspective* by Squires, Huitt, and Segars (1983), teachers in effective schools emphasized a curriculum of reading, writing, and mathematics in an orderly environment with little or no time off task. Teachers began and ended lessons in a timely manner and they routinely assigned and corrected homework. These
conclusions supported similar findings by other researchers of effective teaching in
effective schools (Borich, 1988; Good & Brophy, 1991).

Wynne's book, Looking at Schools: Good, Bad, and Indifferent (1980),
presented a study designed to "describe real operating schools as total organisms
and to show how the different parts of a school fit together—or fail to fit"
(Wynne, 1980, p. xv). Qualitative methodological tools such as interviews,
classroom observations and analysis of school documents were employed to create
reports on 40 schools in and around Chicago, Illinois. The schools selected for
the book were both public and private, elementary and secondary, and inner city
and suburban.

Wynne (1980) criticized traditional educational research as being misdirected
and focusing on the wrong issues. He stated that most investigations revealed
that the variables studied have only a small effect on improving student achieve-
ment. As a result, Wynne suggested that researchers concern themselves "with
what it 'feels' like in schools, the practices that cause these feelings, and the
effects of such feelings on pupil conduct and learning" (p. xx). The book exam-
ined the following areas in the 40 schools: character development, discipline,
school spirit, instruction, and supervision of teachers.

The role of character development in students was given strong emphasis by
Wynne (1980). He called for schools to evaluate and develop positive character
traits in their pupils through (a) peer tutoring, (b) peer mentoring, (c) student
fundraising, (d) practicing solicitude for persons in distress, (e) developing self-
control, (f) observing role models, and (g) forming student councils. Wynne stated, "researchers apply a very narrow focus when they look only at the effects of schools on students' book skills as compared to seeing how schools shape students' character—for better or worse" (p. xxii).

Recently, three school effects projects have been carried out as part of the Louisiana School Effectiveness Study (Teddlie, Kirby, & Stringfield, 1989). These studies were significant because they nested teacher-level process-product data within larger studies on school effectiveness. Sixteen schools were selected and paired according to schoolwide standardized test scores. Observation teams visited each school and constructed detailed case histories. Because the entire sample was taken from a single school district, and the study involved less than 150 hours of classroom observation, the findings should be interpreted as suggestive rather than generalizable. In a summary of this research, Teddlie and Stringfield (1991) reported that the long-term school effect of several ineffective teachers is considerably greater than the sum of the individual teacher effects. "A linear increase in the number of ineffective teachers produces a geometric decrease in positive school effects" (p. 174).

Teddlie and Stringfield further concluded that there may be a symbiotic relationship between school effectiveness variables such as quality of leadership and academic mission and teacher effectiveness. Teddlie, Kirby, and Stringfield (1989) suggested that "an astute, highly visible administrator and clear academic focus facilitated effective teaching," but they recognized that there may also be a
"reciprocal increase in school effectiveness variables resulting from the cultivation or appointment of effective teachers" (p. 221).

At the positive outlier schools in the Louisiana studies, teachers regarded academic time as a valuable commodity. Effective teachers established effective routines to handle unforeseen occurrences such as rain showers at recess time. Conversely, in one of the negative outlier schools the researcher noted, "Had student time been water and the classrooms swimming pools, the halls of the school would have been flooded and the pools virtually empty" (Waxman & Walberg, 1991, p. 166).

Overall, the data from the research by Teddlie, et al. (1989) suggested that effective teachers in high-achieving schools demonstrated clearly distinguishable behaviors. These teachers (a) were consistently more successful in keeping students on task, (b) used more time presenting new material, (c) provided more independent practice, (d) maintained higher expectations for student success, (e) gave more positive reinforcement, (f) experienced fewer discipline problems, (g) created more pleasant classroom climates, (h) had fewer classroom interruptions, and (i) provided classrooms that were more academically focused when compared to less effective teachers in low outlier schools.

Summary

During the 1970s, researchers conducted studies that disproved the idea that schools have little effect on the students who attend them. The resulting body of literature, called effective schools research, listed a number of variables believed
to impact school effectiveness. All of these variables, or correlates as they came to be known, were related to the building principal and the organizational structure of the school. Later, widespread attempts were made to use the effective schools research for school improvement efforts. However, critics pointed out that the correlates did not adequately address the complex culture of effective schools. In fact, the teacher and classroom were virtually ignored in the effective schools literature. Recent studies have moved toward defining the role of central administration in creating successful schools, rather than focusing on the teacher.

A separate area of research investigated effective teaching; however, the effective teacher was examined without reference to the larger school context where the instruction was occurring. Researchers moved from a process-product paradigm that focused on quantifiable variables to structured observational studies that sought to describe how student learning took place in the classroom.

Integration of effective schools and effective teaching literature has been very limited, although researchers have called for additional studies to focus on effective teaching in effective schools. Recently several correlational studies have examined effective teachers in effective schools. These studies have suggested a symbiotic relationship between a school and the teachers who teach there. More research is needed to clarify the role of the effective teachers in the effective school. A qualitative case study of King Elementary can add to the limited
existing research in this area by describing the role of effective teachers in an effective school setting.
CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Previous studies of successful schools have emphasized the role of the principal and various campus organizational structures on effectiveness within a school. Generally, this effective schools research has focused on building level factors rather than individual classroom factors that impact student achievement. A separate body of research developed to focus on the investigation of effective teachers. This effective teaching research has usually ignored variables related to schoolwide effectiveness when studying effective teachers.

The purpose of my investigation at King Elementary was to describe how effective teachers function within an effective school. Because qualitative methodology is most appropriate in situations where it is not possible to separate the phenomenon's variables from their context, a qualitative case study design was selected for this study. Qualitative researchers assume that "meaning is embedded in people's experiences and mediated through the investigator's own perceptions" (Merriam, 1988, p. 19). I collected and analyzed data from classroom observations, interviews, documents, and surveys in order to answer the following research questions:

1. What do effective teachers teach in an effective school?

2. How is the instruction delivered?
3. How do effective teachers in an effective school address individual student needs?

4. How do effective teachers manage student behavior in an effective school?

5. How do effective teachers relate to the parents, the principal, and other staff members in an effective school?

Research Design

Site. The site selected for this study, Martin Luther King Elementary School, was located in the inner city of a large urban school district in north Texas. The school served 247 African-American pupils in kindergarten through third grade. The main structure consisted of ten classrooms, the cafeteria, the office, the auditorium, and the library. Two classes were housed in a portable building at the rear of the campus. The facility was originally constructed in 1929 and remodeled in 1987. At the time of this study, all the classrooms at King were carpeted. Although most of the carpeting was stained, puckered, and threadbare, each classroom was thoroughly cleaned and vacuumed daily. In fact, the linoleum hallways were kept so shiny that the district's maintenance supervisors routinely brought visitors to King to show them "what a good school should look like."

The classroom furniture generally consisted of individual student desks where the seats and the writing tops were constructed as one piece. The exceptions were two kindergarten and one third-grade classroom that utilized trapezoid-shaped tables large enough to seat two or three students together at a
time. Each classroom had two Apple Macintosh computers, purchased during the time this investigation took place using district funds. The school had no playground equipment; however, the campus was adjacent to a large, well-equipped park owned by the city.

The King professional staff consisted of 11 classroom teachers, a physical education teacher, a part-time librarian, and a part-time counselor. The principal had served the school for two years and was its sole administrator.

This site was selected to study effective teachers in an effective school. King had been described as an excellent school by a number of independent sources. A 1988 article in a national publication, *Ebony Magazine*, stated: At King Elementary School, "... teachers educate their pupils, parents motivate their children, and students work to dispel the myth that low-income inner-city Black youth cannot learn" (McKinney, p. 56). During the 1990 district accreditation visit by the Texas Education Agency, King Elementary School received only commendations for excellence. No citations were listed for improvement. King students had performed above district levels on norm-referenced tests for more than 60 years. In addition, for the two years immediately preceding this study, King Elementary School had earned the school district’s annual award for academic excellence. Using a regression analysis formula, the district’s school evaluators determined that King Elementary students performed above predicted levels on the campus variables of student test scores, promotion rates, and attendance.
Subjects

The subjects for this investigation were all self-contained classroom teachers at Martin Luther King Elementary School. There were two kindergarten teachers, three first grade teachers, three second grade teachers, and three third grade teachers on the staff.

At King, teachers were encouraged to express opinions that differed from the principal's without fear of negative consequences. Frequent teacher input was valued and solicited. Although one or two of the younger teachers regularly spoke out during staff meetings, most of the teachers preferred to stop by the office during the day when they wanted to express an idea they felt disagreed with the principal. For example, two years earlier, the principal had developed a teacher lesson plan model and format. The teachers were told that use of the form was optional. About five of the eleven teachers at King chose to use the form. The other six teachers decided to use something different for lesson planning. They felt no pressure to use the principal's form.

King teachers were often permitted to decide whether they would participate in schoolwide events. They could decide whether or not to bring their classes to awards programs, holiday observances, or musical performances. The year prior to this investigation, the principal had suggested that the school carnival date be postponed because of a large number of activities that month. Three teachers were in favor of the postponement. Two teachers spoke out against moving the carnival date. The principal allowed the staff to vote by anonymous ballot on the
issue. Two teachers stopped by the office to express their opposition to post-
poning the carnival. After considering the preferences of the majority of the staff, 
the principal withdrew her suggestion to change the carnival date and proceeded 
with the original date.

In addition to encouraging verbal input from teachers, a small receptacle was 
kept on the office counter for notes from teachers. These notes included sugges-
tions, criticisms, or sometimes questions from the staff. As a result of the 
previously established pattern of free expression afforded to King teachers, their 
voluntary participation in this study may be considered as genuine. Staff mem-
bers were not coerced in any way to participate as informants or subjects. After 
an explanation of the purpose of this study, all of the teachers were willing to 
participate. One teacher remarked to the principal:

Oh sure! I don't mind you coming in to watch as long as I don't have to 
plan anything special (field notes, set 10/2).

The kindergarten team at King consisted of two teachers, both White. 
Teacher A had taught kindergarten for 19 years, 13 of them at King. Teacher B 
had taught at King since she graduated from college three years earlier. Teacher 
A believed that traditional methods of instruction worked best with students. She 
was the grade level chairperson. She was also a frequent appointee to district-
wide curriculum committees because of her expertise in early childhood educa-
tion. During the nine months of this case study, eight ineffective kindergarten 
teachers from other schools were sent by their principals to observe Teacher A at 
work in her classroom.
Teacher B stated that she had been taught the latest early childhood education strategies during teacher education courses the previous year; however, she immediately embraced the more traditional approach of King teachers, at one point saying, "A lot of the stuff they taught me in college about teaching was a bunch of garbage. It won't work in the real world."

This team worked closely together and conducted weekly grade level meetings about instruction. Although Teacher A was regarded as an expert by the rest of the school district, Teacher B developed her own style of teaching that was reflective but independent of her more experienced teammate. Teacher B appeared to integrate the traditional discipline techniques of Teacher A with her own more current pedagogical knowledge from college. Both teachers' classes performed above district level for kindergarten on the 1993 and 1994 Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

The first grade team at King Elementary School consisted of three members: Teachers C, D, and E. Teachers C and D were African-American; Teacher E was White. Teacher C was the most experienced classroom teacher in the building, having taught first grade at King in the same classroom for the past 26 years. Teacher D had taught at King for five years, since moving to Texas from Louisiana. Teacher E had been on King's staff for all 13 years of her teaching career.

First grade teachers were very concerned about the ability levels of students assigned to their classrooms. It was not clear whether their concern was a cause or an effect of their consistently high standardized test scores. For the three
years immediately preceding this study, King grade one students had ranked first in the district on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Throughout the school year, first grade teachers were concerned about the level of new pupils. Each teacher complained that she was deliberately being given lower students than the other two. Actually, students were randomly assigned to homerooms at King without regard for teacher preference. Despite their competitiveness, King first grade teachers freely shared materials and ideas with one another. They also practiced the same discipline management style but differed widely in their instructional techniques. When I asked Teacher C about the wide variation in teaching methods at this grade level, she commented, "I think it's because the three of us come from three separate generations of experience. I graduated from college in 1954 and started teaching the same year. Teacher D is only 29 years old and she started her teaching career with strategies right out of college five years ago. Teacher E is from still another era because she's been teaching 13 years. That's three different generations of teachers with three different perspectives on how to teach" (field notes, set 1/1).

On the second grade team, Teacher F was White; Teachers G and H were African-American. Teacher F had 13 years' teaching experience, 9 of which had been spent at King. Teacher G had nine years of experience in the district, and two years at King. Teacher H had taught at King for the three years since she graduated from college. The year of this study was the first year these teachers worked together as a grade level team; nevertheless, they demonstrated greater
collaboration on instruction than any other grade level teachers in the school. The principal selected these teachers to work together as a team because of their similar personalities. Second grade teachers frequently used their team meetings to design and develop instructional activities. All three teachers were very product-oriented. Hands-on teaching aids, student projects, and other visuals filled King second grade classrooms and overflowed into the hallways. A teacher from another grade level remarked, "I have to come here every week to see what they have out here [in the hallway]. There's no telling what this second grade team will be doing next" (field notes, set 2/1).

Second grade 1994 test scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills were 30 points above district level. This was the second best grade level test performance in the school. Although this team routinely employed less traditional instructional methods such as cooperative learning, role playing, readers' theater, and student projects, their classroom management techniques were very traditional.

At King, the lowest student performance on the 1994 Iowa Test of Basic Skills was at the grade three level. Although test scores ranged from 10 to 17 points above district averages for third grade, their above-district margin was not as great as at other grade levels in the school.

The third grade team was made up of three African-Americans. Teacher J had been teaching for 25 years, 13 of them at King. She served as the grade level chairperson. Teacher K had been teaching eight years, five of them at King.
Teacher L was in her second year as a teacher after graduating from college and coming to King two years earlier.

The teachers in grade three all taught the same way, generally relying on the teacher editions of their state adopted textbooks. These teachers shared materials and lesson plans. They gave the longest homework assignments in the school. They also tended to assign lower report card grades to their pupils than other grade level teachers, as evidenced by the lower number of third grade A and B honor roll students at awards assemblies each six weeks.

Data Collection

This study was conducted from August, 1993 through March, 1994. Data were collected from a number of sources including classroom observations recorded in field notes, informal interviews, guided interviews, a researcher's journal and documents. Data collection was broad and inclusive during the first few weeks. Later it was narrowed to focus on the following research questions:

1. What do effective teachers teach in an effective school?
2. How do effective teachers deliver the instruction in an effective school?
3. How do effective teachers in an effective school address individual student needs?
4. How do effective teachers relate to the parents, principal, and other staff members in an effective school?

The focus shifted from data collection to data analysis after seven months, when the stage of theoretical saturation had been reached. Theoretical saturation
refers to the stage when successive examination of sources yields redundancy, and 
the data already collected appear to be complete and integrated (Strauss & 

**Classroom Observations**

All ten of the classroom teachers at King were observed, including two 
kindergarten, three first grade, three second grade, and three third grade 
teachers. Each teacher was observed for 25 nonconsecutive hours from August, 
1993 through March, 1994. The observation periods were approximately one hour 
in length. No classes were observed on days immediately preceding a school 
holiday. Observations did not begin until after the first three weeks of school in 
order to allow enough time for teachers to complete school opening activities 
such as enrollment and class size leveling.

Field notes were collected using the process of participant observation. 
Participant observation can be described as assuming a real role within the group 
or institution, contributing to its interest and function, and personally sharing in 
the groups' experiences (Woods, 1986). According to Taylor and Bogdan (1984), 
"Participant observers enter the field with the hope of establishing open 
relationships with informants ... Ideally, the informants forget that the observer is 
there to do research" (p. 32).

As principal of the Martin Luther King Elementary School, I was already 
highly visible in the corridors and classrooms of the school each day; conse-
sequently, my presence in classrooms was viewed as routine and did not seem to
affect teacher or student behavior. Teachers were advised before the study began that the data from my classroom observations would not be used for any purpose other than the case study. In addition, all annual teacher evaluations were postponed until after the close of the study.

As an administrator in the state of Texas, I had been required to complete 36 hours of training on teacher appraisal. This training included strategies for observing and documenting both teacher and student behaviors in a classroom. At the end of the training, I was tested and received a certificate in teacher observation and appraisal. Subsequently, I had conducted and recorded more than 86 classroom observations during the four-year period immediately preceding this study. Because of this background experience, I was able to effectively note and record behaviors that occurred during my observations for this research.

According to Merriam (1988), "... the success of participant observation rests on the talent and skill of the investigator. Like any other data collection instrument, the human instrument can be refined, through training, to be attentive and responsive to data gathered through this method" (p. 103).

In my role as participant observer at King, I visited classrooms Monday through Friday at varying times between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Some of the observations were for the purposes of this study. Other occasions were random classroom visits designed to help teachers and students maintain a sense of normalcy during my presence in their classes. According to Taylor and Bogdan (1984), participant observers should "conduct themselves in such a way
that they become an unobtrusive part of the scene, people whom participants take for granted" (p. 32).

I sat in the back of the classrooms during all my observations. I selected a small student chair rather than a teacher chair. Whenever possible, I placed the chair behind a bookshelf or room divider to partially obstruct myself from the full view of the teacher and her pupils. Again, the goal was unobtrusiveness. Woods (1986) noted, "It is necessary as far as possible to blend in with the scenery and disturb the action within it as little as possible. One's appearance and situation should be inconspicuous" (p. 40).

Throughout this study, qualitative interviews were used as a technique to add to the data collected during classroom observations. Interviewing helped uncover the feelings, thoughts, perceptions, and intentions of the informants. I followed the recommendation of Merriam (1988) and other qualitative researchers by avoiding the following types of questions during the interviews: (a) multiple questions that do not allow the informant to respond to each item one by one; (b) "why" questions, (c) leading questions that set up the informant to accept a certain point of view; and (d) questions that can be answered by a response of "yes" or "no."

During the early stages of the research, all the interviews were informal. This was to prevent my questions from narrowing the focus of the participants' responses (see Appendix A for an example). Taylor and Bogdan (1984) warn that "by asking directive questions initially, the researcher creates a mind-set in
informants about what is important to talk about that can make it difficult if not impossible to get at how they really see things" (p. 89). Informal interviews are a mixture of conversation and embedded questions that typically evolve from the conversation. In some cases, the questions are serendipitous and result from comments by the informant. In most cases, the researcher has a schedule of questions to ask the participant and will wait for the most appropriate time to ask them during the conversation.

The informal interviews for this research were shaped by the following guidelines: they (a) began with nonthreatening questions embedded in dialogue before addressing sensitive or threatening issues; (b) were "flexible and dynamic," following the turns of the participant's or the questioner's interests; (c) created a relationship between the interviewer and the respondent that transcended the research; and (d) established a neutral role for the interviewer, who served as a reflexive, non-judgmental listener.

Guided interviews with teachers, parents, and support personnel were conducted during the last half of the study as themes and categories began to emerge from the data (see Appendix B for an example). During a guided interview, the topics and issues are specified in advance by the interviewer, but not the questions. Guided interviews are most useful when the researcher has already gained information about informants through fieldwork or preliminary interviews (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984; Woods, 1986; Merriam, 1988). Fetterman (1989) stated that a guided interview is "most valuable when the fieldworker
comprehends the fundamentals of a community from the 'insider's' perspective. At this point, questions are more likely to conform to the native’s perception of reality than to the researcher’s" (p. 48).

The guided interview questions used in this study served to expand the data collected from other sources in the following ways: (a) by locating contradictions or inconsistencies ("Does it necessarily follow that ...?"), (b) by searching for opinions ("Do you believe ...?"), (c) by seeking clarification ("What do you mean?"), (d) by making comparisons ("How does that relate to ...?"), (e) by aiming for comprehensiveness ("Have you anything more to say on that?"), (f) by seeking opposing viewpoints ("What would you say to criticism that ...?"), and (e) by putting things in a different way ("In other words ...").

Interview notes were made during each interview session. The notes included details about the setting of the interview and its duration. Also, impressions of the respondents’ moods, gestures, and body language were recorded. Because teachers were uneasy about being taped, tape recorders were not used during interviews. A few years prior to this study, local teacher union groups had advised teachers never to permit audio or visual recordings of themselves without union representation. Merriam (1988) suggested that malfunctioning equipment and respondent's uneasiness with being recorded were major drawbacks to tape recording interviews. Woods (1986) further noted: "Often, too, some key information is imported when the recorder is switched off, in the relaxation and general chit-chat that precedes or follows sessions—golden moments for hard
truths and shared confidences. Sometimes, interviewees will request that the machine be turned off, so they can convey some confidence that they do not wish to have recorded" (p. 81).

Documents

Documents collected for this research included information from staff members, parents, and students. Teacher documents consisted of weekly lesson plans, teacher notes to parents, teacher notes to the principal, grade level meeting summaries, student discipline referral forms, and parent conference sign-in sheets. Documents from parents included parent notes to teachers, parent notes to the principal, and a parent survey (see Appendix C). Documents from students included report cards and attendance data. According to the book *Case Study Research in Education*, document data are particularly good sources for qualitative case studies because "they can ground an investigation in the context of the problem being investigated" (Merriam, 1988, p. 105).

These documents were systematically collected each week and organized according to the teacher involved. The parent survey was administered during the last month of the study on parent conference night. Approximately 90 parents responded to the survey.

Data Analysis

The problem of this investigation was to describe the behavior of effective teachers in an effective school. The study was conducted using a qualitative case
study design since qualitative methods are most appropriate when the researcher's goal is description and explanation rather than hypothesis testing. Data analysis occurred in three phases. The first phase was an ongoing discovery phase where initial themes and concepts were identified. The second phase involved coding the data and refining interpretations. The final data analysis phase was used to discount the data. Discounting data meant interpreting them according to the context in which they were collected. Taylor and Bogdan (1984) stated: "All data must be discounted in this sense. You have to look at how the data were collected in order to understand them" (p. 140).

Some analysis of data was ongoing and occurred simultaneously with data collection. This analysis, called the discovery phase, included observer comments in field notes, a researcher's journal, and triangulation of data. The observer comments were recorded in column space forming the left margin of each page of field notes. These comments were written during and after my participant observation sessions in King classrooms. Observer comments aided in problem identification, question development, and understanding patterns in my field notes. After briefly listing ideas in the notes column during observations, I later reread the field notes and wrote more extensive comments that clarified my earlier interpretations, hypothesized about what was happening, and suggested flexible plans for the days to come.

My researcher's journal contained notes and memos written to myself throughout data collection and analysis. The notes were reflective and allowed
me to record my personal feelings and reactions as the research progressed. By remaining aware of my feelings I was better able to control potential researcher bias during the period of this investigation.

Triangulation during the initial analysis or discovery phase was accomplished by extensive iterative review of all the data as they were being collected. Triangulation refers to "testing one source of information against another to strip away alternative explanations" (Fetterman, 1989, p. 89). As initial repeated behaviors emerged from the data, I began noting themes and patterns. Ongoing data triangulation was used to verify whether or not the patterns and themes I discovered were consistent across all data sources.

Categories were derived using the constant comparative method described by Guba and Lincoln (1981). Using this strategy, individual units of information were compared with one another to uncover recurring patterns in the data. The resulting coding categories were shaped by the following principles: (a) categories would reflect the research goals and questions; (b) categories would be derived from a single classification scheme; (c) categories would be exhaustive so that all relevant data would be capable of being placed in a category; (d) categories would be mutually exclusive. No single unit of data would be placed in more than one category; and (e) categories would be independent. Consequently, the assignment of any unit of data into a category would not affect the classification of other data.
The major activity during the second phase of data analysis was coding. Coding is a systematic way of developing and refining interpretations of data. I began coding by listing the themes and concepts identified during the initial phase of data analysis, and assigning a number to each coding category formed by the concepts and themes. These coding categories were used to label field notes, interview records, documents and other data by placing the assigned number corresponding to each category in the margin. Grounded theory began to develop as I expanded some categories and collapsed others.

Through the coding, I discovered nine patterns of teacher behavior that appeared constantly in the data. In preparation for deeper analysis, I employed the file folder technique to manually sort and classify all the data. Manual rather than computer analysis was chosen to maintain what Merriam (1988) describes as the "richness" of the data. Introducing a computer into the process "interjects a different medium and thus a different relationship with one's data. This new relationship is more mechanical and impersonal, perhaps blocking insight that might otherwise emerge" (p. 161).

First, all field notes, interview records, documents, and other data were photocopied. Next, the photocopied pages were cut up and the coded sections placed into file folders labeled by category. I further refined the analysis by constructing a matrix to display the data. The matrix allowed me to verify some themes and discard others. In some cases additional observations and interviews
were necessary to move toward the development theory grounded in the data. Analysis proceeded in a cyclical, iterative manner rather than a sequential one.

The final data analysis phase was used to discount the data. Discounting data refers to the process of assessing the credibility of the data according to the context in which they were collected. The first step in this phase was an examination of the data that did not appear to fit into any coding category. After reviewing some of the data again, I was able to place it into the existing categories of teacher behaviors that I had observed in classrooms. The categories were (a) defining the curriculum, (b) delivering instruction, (c) practicing and reinforcing the learning, (d) responding to individual needs, (e) digressions, and (f) managing student behavior.

Much of the remaining data that fell outside these categories could be organized into themes that related to teacher behaviors that occurred within the school but external to their classrooms. I developed three additional themes in this area: teacher relationships with other teachers, teacher relationships with parents, and teacher relationships with the principal.

Next, I searched for contradictions and negative cases in the data. By using definite triangulation, I was able to compare multiple data sources "to test the quality of the information (and the person sharing it), to understand more completely the part an actor plays in the social drama, and ultimately put the whole situation into perspective" (Fetterman, 1989, p. 89). I continued to dis-
count the data by checking for observer effect on the setting. Observer effect refers to the influence of the researcher's presence on the informants' reactions. Kazdin (1982) offered three explanations why the activities of those being observed might be altered: (a) if participants are apprehensive about being judged, they may respond in socially desirable ways; (b) if participants are aware of being assessed, they may behave in response to the assessment conditions; and (c) participants may regulate their behavior based on feedback obtained from observers.

Member checks were used throughout data analysis. Member checks involved taking the data and interpretations back to the people from whom they had been derived and asking them to assess the plausibility of the results. I also discussed the emerging findings with former King Elementary staff members. Their comments strengthened the internal validity of my data analysis (Merriam, 1988). I further refined my analysis and began to develop substantive theory from the data, employing the methods suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967) to develop tentative hypotheses which I tested against the data.

Summary

Data collection and analysis for this study occurred in a cyclic, iterative manner. Field notes from participant observation in King Elementary classrooms were one source of data. Interview transcripts and documents such as teacher lesson plans were additional sources. I utilized a researcher's journal and observer comments to record personal perspectives, logic, and assumptions as the
study progressed. This helped to limit researcher bias and clarify my interpretations of the data.

A deeper phase of analysis occurred after all the data had been collected. Using the constant comparative method, I compared each unit of data with the next, then developed categories to describe recurring patterns in the data. These categories or themes were further analyzed and refined through coding and sorting. As some themes were expanded and others discarded based on the triangulation of data, grounded theory was developed to respond to the research questions of this study.
CHAPTER IV

NARRATIVE OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to describe the behaviors of effective teachers within an effective school. The sources of data for this study were field notes, informal interviews, structured interviews, surveys, and documents. The data were collected primarily through participant observation at a single school site, Martin Luther King Elementary School. Eleven teachers were observed for this study: two kindergarten, three first grade, three second grade, and three third grade. In addition, information was gathered from parents and support personnel at the school.

Data from all sources were analyzed to develop grounded theory (Glasser & Strauss, 1967). Complete analysis of data occurred in two stages. Initially, data collection and some analysis took place simultaneously. Next, after all data had been collected, they were sorted and coded to further refine the development of themes and concepts. Finally, through triangulation and discounting of data, the following six themes were verified: defining the curriculum, delivering instruction, practicing the learning, responding to individual student needs, digressing from the lesson, and managing student behavior. The remaining data described teacher behavior patterns that occurred outside the classrooms but within the context of the effective school, King Elementary. After conducting further interviews and
document reviews, I verified three additional themes from the data. The external themes that were added after further analysis of the data were: teacher-to-teacher relationships, teacher-to-parent relationships, and teacher-to-principal relationships (see Table 1).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Inside Classrooms</th>
<th>Outside Classrooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defining the Curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher-parent Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivering Instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher-peer Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicing the Lesson</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher-principal Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding to Individual Student Needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digressing from the Lesson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Managing Student Behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first part of this section will present the six internal themes as they occurred across the eleven kindergarten, first, second, and third grade classrooms at King Elementary School. The second part of this section will summarize all nine themes that emerged from the data and describe the categories of behavior that occurred within each theme.
Themes Across Grade Levels

This section presents the data from the six internal themes as they occurred across the four grade levels at King. Repeated patterns of behavior occurred more frequently at some grade levels than others. Examples of the primary categories of behavior within each theme at each grade level are presented using narrative and matrix forms. Data from external themes were collected at the building level rather than the classroom level; consequently, the external themes cannot be effectively presented across grade levels.

Defining the Curriculum

At King, most of the curriculum was determined schoolwide across grade levels. The staff met in collaborative peer groups before the school year started to discuss what their students needed to learn at each grade level. The principal identified standardized test objectives to be taught across a six-month timeframe. This timeframe was designed to ensure that every King teacher taught every tested objective well before the spring standardized test dates.

King teachers followed a schoolwide curriculum that was campus modified to insure maximum student achievement on the standardized tests. Although the global objectives were set schoolwide, the teachers at each grade level determined the subskills and concepts that needed to be taught for student mastery of the schoolwide objectives.
Kindergarten. The primary thrust of kindergarten instruction at King was
the teaching of phonics. Both kindergarten teachers began the school year
Teaching one or two alphabet letters per week. The alphabet letters and their
sounds were the theme for the week’s instruction. For example, during the week
she taught the letter "Z," Teacher A wore a zebra shirt, zebra tennis shoes, zebra
earrings, and a zebra brooch while reading a zebra story.

During the week-long study of the letter "G," students listened to the story of
"The Gingerbread Boy" and role played the main characters. At the end of the
week, both kindergarten teachers staged an hour-long, schoolwide search for the
runaway Gingerbread Boy. They led their students on a hunt that carried them to
the gym, the cafeteria kitchen, upstairs, and finally to the principal’s office, where
the principal announced that the Gingerbread Boy had "just run out the door."
The principal then handed out gingerbread cookies with the letter "G" on them.
The trays of cookies had been hidden in the office earlier by the kindergarten
teachers.

Each new alphabet letter was introduced in a similar manner, using a context
of language, art, music, and literature. In fact, the teachers described their
phonics curriculum as "auditory, visual, and kinesthetic instruction" (field notes,
set 15/1).

Teacher B: When we learn a new letter, the kids trace it, cut it, color it,
sing it, write it, and probably dream about it (field notes, set 32/1).

Numbers were also a prominent part of the curriculum King kindergarten
teachers taught. Students often entered school with the ability to say their
numbers from one to ten; however, the teachers emphasized recognizing the
concept of each of these numbers as well as ordering them.

At least three of the four or five learning centers in each kindergarten
classroom were devoted to practicing academics. Students rotated through these
centers in small groups after whole-group instruction. The most important center
was the "Teacher Center" where the teacher provided small-group direct instruc-
tion to extend the whole-group lesson for the day. The mathematics center was
also used daily. There students worked on number concepts such as number
patterns and one-to-one correspondence using manipulatives. Other centers were
used to practice writing letters and numbers. In addition, there were usually
centers in each kindergarten classroom for homemaking, listening, and art;
however, these centers were not available for student use every day.

First Grade. Reading was a major part of the curriculum in grade one. The
first grade teachers at King relied heavily on basal readers and phonics work-
sheets for reading instruction. They refused to use the district's newly adopted
literature-based readers until almost the end of the first semester. Comments
about the literature-based textbooks were generally negative:

Teacher D: Those books are too hard for my class. Nobody can read them
(field notes, set 99/1).

Teacher F: I want stories my students can read now. The stories in those
books are so difficult that only the top two or three kids in my room can
read them. What's the rest of my class supposed to do? (field notes, set
99/1).

Another teacher explained:
Look at this story from our new basals. It's "Five Little Monkeys"! What kid doesn't already know that rhyme? The slow readers in my class were just singing the words when I called on them to read, without even looking down at the page. That's not going to help them on I.T.B.S. (field notes, set 79/1).

Instead of the literature-based program, King first grade teachers preferred out-of-adoption readers that utilized a controlled vocabulary. These controlled readers were supplemented by worksheets from various phonics workbooks purchased using campus supply monies and teacher personal funds.

Spelling was a major subject in all three first grade classrooms. The teachers usually gave weekly spelling tests based on the phonics rule being emphasized for the week. For example, during a week when one class studied the short "o" sound, the spelling list included the words "hop," "pot," "not," "dog," "mop," "hot," "log," and "top." On other occasions, the first grade weekly spelling test consisted of words from the Dolch basic sight word list and the weekly basal reader story of the week. Students were handed copies of their spelling words on Mondays. The test was given and graded on Fridays. After the first six weeks of school, two of the first grade teachers added a sentence dictation segment to the end of their weekly tests. Students were required to spell two sentences composed of words from the spelling list.

Handwriting instruction was also a major part of the first grade curriculum at King Elementary. Every day for the entire school year, students in one class printed their first and last names seven times on primary ruled paper as handwriting practice. All King first-grade teachers wrote two or three sentences on the board each morning as an opening activity. The students copied the
sentences for handwriting practice. The following is an example of a morning handwriting exercise:

March 13, 1993. Class 1B.
Today is a cold day.
We will work hard. We will do our best (documents, set 259/1).

In two of the first-grade classrooms, students never created their own compositions. Instead, all writing instruction consisted of brief paragraphs copied from the board or overhead projector. The other first grade teacher began her composition instruction late in the year after the April administration of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. During most composition activities, the teachers still emphasized correct letter formation as much as content.

Mathematics instruction at King in first grade began in August, with students learning to write numerals from 1 to 20. Gradually, the students increased their counting skills until they were able to write numerals up to 100 by early November. Basic addition and subtraction facts were taught and tested weekly. Students used manipulatives for adding and subtracting numbers. Most first graders used their fingers to add and subtract when the manipulatives were not available, such as during a classroom test. Students in two of the three first-grade classes were taught to regroup in addition during the spring semester. Teacher D initiated the following conversation after a successful regrouping lesson:

Teacher D: Look at what my class is doing!
Principal: Adding?
Teacher D: They’re doing regrouping. All of them can do it! (Principal looks over shoulders of each student.)
Teacher D: All of them got it right, didn’t they? (Principal nods.)
Teacher D: Class, now you will know how to carry when you get in second grade.

Science and social studies lessons were linked thematically to reading and mathematics lessons in the district's curriculum guide for first grade; however, King first grade teachers did not choose to employ thematic instruction in their classrooms. Although science and social studies were given the appropriate instructional time during the day, the teachers generally followed the curriculum plan outlined in the state-adopted textbooks.

Second Grade. King second-grade teachers relied on their textbooks as curriculum guides much less than the other grade levels did. Frequently, second grade teachers correlated reading, language, mathematics, and social studies lessons under one interdisciplinary theme. These teachers planned together and shared instructional materials. Second grade teachers did not use many commercial worksheets. Instead, they utilized their own teacher-made worksheets and practice materials. One second grade teacher remarked:

Our team is really creative. We don't want to use textbooks every day. Anyway, if you follow the basal, your students will not be ready for I.T.B.S. [Iowa Test of Basic Skills] in the spring (field notes, set 200/1).

Phonics and comprehension instruction appeared to have equal emphasis in the reading curriculum. Students reviewed long and short vowel rules at the beginning of the school year. During the first six weeks, the teachers used the literature-based reading textbooks for a small number of students who were
already proficient readers. The other 80 percent of the class was taught from out-of-adoption textbooks that contained stories written using a controlled vocabulary.

At the second grade level, students were rarely given class time to work on spelling assignments. The teachers integrated spelling into daily lessons by focusing on spelling as an editing skill. Weekly units from the adopted textbook were only used when the words applied to the phonics rule being emphasized during reading instruction.

For language instruction, second grade teachers employed a variety of materials, some commercial and others teacher made. Their language lessons strictly adhered to the schoolwide plan of one major grammar thrust per six weeks. As with the spelling units, language chapters were selected according to their compatibility with the teachers' objectives rather than being used in the sequence of the textbook.

Second grade teachers did not use textbooks at all to teach composition. Student writing was taught for the most part without specific guidelines on audience, mode, or purpose. When asked about writing instruction, a second grade teacher explained:

We don't have time to teach much process writing. It's not tested until fourth grade anyway, so we don't worry about it (field notes, set 202/1).

However, the students did write frequently through journals, research reports, book reviews, and letters. Editing skills were another important component of the language curriculum at second grade. Students were taught to edit for
mistakes in spelling, handwriting, capitalization, punctuation, and usage in their own compositions, as well as in passages in standardized test format.

At King, mathematics for second graders began in August with basic addition and subtraction facts. Students were required to complete a test of 100 basic facts in five minutes or less by the end of the first semester. In addition, teachers at this grade level focused on word problems in mathematics. Often teachers composed original word problems using subjects related to students' personal experiences.

Third Grade. Third grade teachers at King closely followed their textbooks as curriculum guides. They used the basals and blackline masters in sequential order from the first to the last one, rarely omitting a page. Many third grade students were unable to read from their literature-based reading books at the beginning of the year. The teachers supplemented basal textbooks with phonics instruction from various workbooks. Both third grade teachers read aloud daily from children's literature in their classrooms. Vocabulary and comprehension lessons were often taken from these literary selections.

By following the state-adopted language basals, the grade three teachers covered capitalization, punctuation, and usage skills. Students were always asked to complete the independent practice exercises in their textbooks. Process writing was only taught in third grade when the teachers came to the writing lessons in the language book; then the instruction from introduction to final draft usually lasted no more than two days.
Teaching the Lesson

A variety of strategies was used by King teachers to deliver instruction. The behaviors most frequently observed within this theme were lecturing, questioning, using models, and relating to student experiences.

Kindergarten. The teacher behaviors at the kindergarten level under the teaching-the-lesson theme included lecturing, questioning, and using models. The use of concrete models to demonstrate abstract concepts occurred more frequently at this grade level than any other. Models were usually displayed by kindergarten teachers to the whole group during the introduction of a new skill or concept. After the whole-group lesson, the models were often placed in a classroom learning center to be used by students for guided practice on the new skill.

Questioning was a second instructional strategy used frequently by King kindergarten teachers. The following dialogue is a representative example of questioning being used in a kindergarten classroom:

Teacher A: What did we do with the ruler?
Class: Measured.
Teacher A: Have we done that before?
Class: Yes!
Teacher: What do we call it when we do something over and over?
Class: A pattern.
Teacher: A pattern, yes, but we're going to review. That means go over and over something we did before (field notes, set 43/2).

Much of the questioning was directed to the whole class and therefore elicited a choral response from pupils; however, both kindergarten teachers made it a
practice to call on every student to answer at least one individual question during each lesson.

First Grade. For first grade teachers, the primary behaviors used to deliver instruction were lecturing and the use of questions. There was no evidence in first grade classrooms of the student learning centers mandated by the school district. Children sat in desks and listened to instruction delivered by teachers who often sat in chairs while teaching them. The three first grade teachers used the chalkboard and overhead projector to demonstrate skills and concepts. Students did not sit listening to teacher lectures passively, however. Instead, King first grade classrooms were filled with class discussions guided by frequent questioning from the teachers. The example below illustrates questioning being used during a first grade lesson on capitalization:

Teacher C: When should we use a capital letter?
Student 1: On names.
Teacher C: And on what else?
Student 2: The first word of a sentence.
Teacher C: What about in the name "Mrs. Jones," do I just capitalize "Jones"?
Student 3: You capitalize "Mrs." and "Jones"!
Teacher C: What about in the name "Dr. Moore"?
Student 4 (shouting): "Doctor" and "Moore"! (field notes, set 93/7).

King teachers solicited both choral and individual responses during their questioning.

Relating explanations to students' interests and experiences and the use of models were additional behaviors that occurred consistently in first grade classrooms under this theme. For example, during a mathematics explanation of
graphing, one first grade teacher gave her students bags of candy. Students were
directed to make a graph showing the number of different colors of candy in their bags. Another first grade teacher grew a sweet potato plant in her classroom and used the plant to teach students about roots, leaves, and stems.

Teacher D: We have to pay attention to plants all the time. This was our potato plant. What color are its leaves now? [They were yellow.] This is what happens if we don’t water our plant. Have any of you ever had plants turn yellow like this at home? (field notes, set 136/2).

Although there were no independent student activity centers in first grade classrooms, the students worked independently in small homogeneous groups daily. These groups were part of an instructional arrangement where the first grade teachers categorized their students by ability levels for reading. Reading instruction was delivered to students seated at a small table in the back of the classroom. Within these reading groups, the teachers repeated the behavior patterns of questioning, modeling, and relating to students’ experiences.

**Second Grade.** The dominant behavior used by King second grade teachers to deliver their instruction was providing concrete models to demonstrate new concepts. The teachers also employed questioning and relating to students’ experiences as key instructional strategies.

Second grade classrooms contained numerous charts, graphs, posters, projects, dioramas, manipulatives, and other objects used by the teachers to demonstrate new concepts. The quantity of these concrete models was so great that the classrooms could not physically contain all of them. As a result, the
building corridor that housed second grade was filled with models and displays that overflowed out of the classrooms. Instruction using these models often took place in the hallways as well as in the classrooms. For example, second grade teachers set up an estimation table in the hallway using a jar of jelly beans, paper, and pencils. Students were asked to write their estimates and an explanation of why their estimates were reasonable. The written responses were collected in a box and used as part of the classroom instruction on making reasonable estimates.

The following lesson excerpt is a representative example of second grade teachers' use of concrete models to teach their lessons:

Teacher G: Who can tell us how the brain works? (No response from students.)
Teacher G: Remember the hard drive on our computer? The hard drive stores the information we want saved. It works like a brain on the computer.
Student: Our brains store information.
Teacher G: Right, like our computer. Now let's talk about the heart. The heart is like a pump. (Teacher holds up model of the heart.) There are blood vessels that carry blood from the heart through the rest of the body. (Teacher passes out plastic tubing used to hook up aquariums.) This plastic tubing is like the blood vessels in our bodies (field notes, set 172/2).

Concrete models were not incidentally added to the lessons at this grade level; instead, the models were a central part of teaching the lesson. For example, second grade teachers staged mock elections to study the presidential elections. They built a five-foot-tall robot out of empty bottles, cans, and boxes as part of their unit on recycling. Second grade classes even made a quilt to demonstrate how supporting details were interrelated in a story.

The following example illustrated the use of questioning in a lesson built around a concrete model:
Teacher: Today we are going to practice descriptive writing. (She hands out a chocolate chip cookie to each student.) What shape is the cookie?
  Student: Round.
Teacher: How does it feel?
  Student 1: Rough.
Teacher: Is it rough all over?
  Student 2: Smooth on the bottom.
Teacher: Does it have a smell?
  Student 3: It smells delicious.
  Student 4: It smells scrumptious.
Teacher: That's a sixth grade word! Now, bite into the cookie. How does it taste? (Students take bites.)
  Student: Extremely, extremely, extremely good (field notes, set 174/2).

Third Grade. The third grade teachers used all of the teaching behaviors documented under this theme: (a) lecturing, (b) asking questions, (c) relating lesson content to student experiences, and (d) providing concrete models to illustrate new concepts. The behaviors used most consistently in third grade were lecturing, questioning, and relating the lesson to student experiences.

The chalkboard and overhead projector were used as secondary tools to provide models and illustrations of the lesson. Students were most often directed to refer to their textbooks as primary sources for examples of concepts being studied. After reading brief segments from the books, the teachers used questioning to engage students in a discussion.

Teacher: Think about our story with Harriet Tubman. How did the slaves get away?
  Student: On the Underground Railroad trains.
Teacher: Was she on a train really?
  Student: No, she was running.
Teacher: Running how?
  Student: On her feet.
Teacher: Yes! On her feet. That's what I'm trying to get you to see. Harriet Tubman was on her feet but how did the slave owners get around in the story?
Student: On horses.
Teacher: So if you're running on your feet and someone is chasing you on a horse, could you outrun a horse?
Student: No we couldn't (field notes, set 225/2).

Frequently, grade three teachers found it necessary to relate unfamiliar concepts in the textbooks to students' background experience to increase their understanding of the lesson. Again, this was done using a lecture format where the teacher talked and the students responded. The majority of the students appeared to be completely focused throughout the lectures. In addition, the students were encouraged to participate through discussion in these background-building activities. Cooperative learning and student activity centers were seldom used in King third grade classrooms.

Practicing the Learning

The third theme that appeared consistently throughout the data was practicing the learning. Student practice took a major part of every day at King. Homework, classroom assignments, oral reading, and test-taking practice were the repeated categories of practice that occurred.

Kindergarten. In-class practice for King kindergarten students reflected the kindergarten teachers' emphasis on academic development. The students practiced printing their names beginning about the fourth week of school and continuing throughout the year. They also practiced writing numbers from 1 to 20. All
kindergarten practice did not involve paper and pencil activities, however. The students frequently used scissors, glue, and crayons as part of developmentally appropriate tasks. In addition, both kindergarten teachers utilized the computer for practice in their classrooms.

Homework practice was sent home at the end of each day. These assignments usually involved locating or identifying objects that matched letter sounds, counting using one-to-one correspondence, or drawing a picture as part of a reading comprehension activity. One kindergarten teacher remarked:

My parents want real homework for their kids, not a lot of baby junk like worksheets to color (field notes, set 49/3).

Kindergarten students did not complete seatwork at their individual desks. Instead, the practice occurred in the activity centers set up in their classrooms. The teachers labeled one center as the "Teacher Center." Student practice in the "Teacher Center" was guided rather than independent as it was in the other activity centers. One of the kindergarten teachers explained:

I usually have five centers open in my room each day. At least one of them will be for practicing social kinds of skills like sharing and cooperation. The other centers usually focus on practicing writing, phonics, and mathematics (field notes, set 30/3).

Kindergarten teachers also practiced in class all year for the standardized test. The following excerpt is characteristic of kindergarten practice for the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (I.T.B.S.):

Teacher: How do we mark the circles on the I.T.B.S. test?
Student: We stay inside the circles.
Teacher: Right, and we make our marks nice and black. And when I'm reading the question what will you do?
Students: Point to the pictures under the question.
Teacher: Yes, you point to the pictures like this (teacher demonstrates on overhead projector). Now get ready to figure out the answer. There will be three or four pictures for each question on the test, but there will be only one answer in each box (field notes, set 31/3).

**First Grade.** First grade teachers used homework folders to send student independent practice activities home every day. Homework at this level was usually a reading or mathematics worksheet that reinforced concepts that teachers had taught during the day. In the classroom, students practiced writing their names every day for the entire school year. They also practiced writing from 1 to 100 daily during the first semester.

King students practiced oral reading daily in first grade classrooms. Students read aloud in small groups that categorized classes into high, average, and low ability levels. Initially, students read from old basal readers. Gradually, as the students became more proficient readers, they began using the literature-based readers that were currently adopted by the district.

Seatwork assignments were usually done from worksheets or the chalkboard. Most of the worksheets came from commercially published workbooks. Students worked at their seats on as many as five consecutive worksheet assignments while their teachers moved up and down the aisles monitoring the practice. King first grade teachers provided differentiated practice for students at different ability levels.

During the six weeks immediately preceding the standardized test, first grade students began practicing using worksheets that simulated the Iowa Test of Basic
Skills. Students rehearsed academic content as well as test-taking skills such as darkening answer bubbles and staying on the correct number. The situation below is a characteristic example of practice at the first grade level:

Teacher B: Charlie, you remember how we did these together, don't you? Student: Uh huh (nodding).
Teacher B: Well, you do these problems by yourself the same way. Just read the paragraph and then answer the questions. (Student writes something.)
Teacher B: That's good. Now do number two the same way (field notes, set 115/3).

Second Grade. Second grade practice assignments varied widely in both content and format. Students occasionally practiced in cooperative groups in addition to working individually at their desks. When working at their desks, all students were closely monitored by their teachers. The following comment was made at the end of a day:

Teacher H: We were working on main idea today. I think my kids really got it. There were all going back in the passage and highlighting the clues that helped them get the right answer. Even Jeremy can do it now. It takes him a little longer, but he can do it (field notes, set 118/3).

Second grade practice assignments were usually presented on the overhead projector. Worksheets were also prevalent. The worksheets were usually teacher-made except for some of the test-taking practice materials. Practice assignments were differentiated according to the pupils' ability levels. Teachers ability-grouped students within their classrooms for oral reading practice. Students read from old basal readers as well as authentic literature. Most mathematics assignments in second grade included the use of manipulatives and computers.
Second grade teachers were the only ones in the building to use the Scantron scoring machine to score student test-taking practice assignments. Students responded to multiple choice exercises using the Scantron answer sheets. The answer sheets were then processed through the machine. One teacher explained:

We're using the Scantron sheets so the kids can get ready for the test. It's good practice because it helps them understand the concept of a machine scoring their papers instead of the teacher. A machine shows no mercy (field notes, set 198/3).

Third Grade. Third grade students were given lengthy homework assignments for practice each night. Often the homework was above the ability level of some of the slower students. One parent of a learning-disabled pupil complained:

My baby can't do this stuff. She tries every night but she just can't read it. I'm tired of my baby crying every night because she can't do her homework. She needs some help (field notes, set 230/3).

Generally, the students were given homework in reading, spelling, language, mathematics, and social studies each night. After intervention by the principal, the third grade teachers began to differentiate student assignments to meet the needs of the various ability levels in their classrooms.

In-class practice in the third grade consisted mainly of worksheets and textbook exercises. These teachers were the only grade level at King who did not use small groups to practice oral reading and comprehension skills; instead, students read aloud as part of the whole class group. Again, principal intervention was used to change this practice.
Responding to Individual Student Needs

The fourth theme in the data described King teachers’ responses to individual student needs. Generally, these needs could be placed into three categories: student learning difficulties, student health problems, and student home problems.

Kindergarten. At the kindergarten level, teachers used scolding, prompting, and reteaching to help their students who had difficulty understanding the lesson.

The kindergarten teachers discussed their use of scolding:

Teacher B: We don’t worry about hurting their feelings. Sometimes they really do know how to do things, but they are used to pretending they can’t.
Interviewer: Why do they pretend they can’t?
Teacher A: Oh, just for the attention sometimes.
Teacher B: And also because it’s a strategy they use successfully with their parents.
Interviewer: With their parents?
Teacher A: Yeah, the kids pretend they can’t do something and then their parents do it for them.
Teacher B: So sometimes you hear us fussing at kids who get their work wrong because we know they really do know how to do it correctly.
Interviewer: How can you tell when they really don’t understand and when they’re just faking?
Teacher A: You just know your kids. I can tell when they really can’t do something and when they aren’t trying. If they aren’t trying I get right on them (field notes, set 48/4).

Prompting and reteaching were also used to address the needs of kindergarten students having difficulty with the learning. Often students entered kindergarten late in the semester. These students had never been in school before. Their vocabularies were severely limited and they knew nothing about print. The King kindergarten teacher would reteach the alphabet letters that had
been taught during the earlier weeks of school to these students individually until they were caught up with the rest of the class.

Following is an example of teacher prompting to assist students with the learning in a kindergarten classroom at King:

Teacher: "The boy is shooting the marbles." Larry, why is this answer correct?
Larry: Because you said ... (stops, with puzzled expression on his face).
Teacher (nodding her head): Because I said what?
Larry: You said "is shooting."
Teacher: That's right. I said "is shooting." That means ...?
Larry: It's happening now.
Teacher: That's right, Larry, it's happening now. You've really been listening! (field notes, set 65/4).

Kindergarten teachers provided individualized attention to students with personal problems. These teachers frequently remained until 5:00 or 6:00 p.m. with students whose parents had not picked them up after school. There was no school policy that required teachers to take responsibility for students left after school; yet, the kindergarten teachers made it a practice to never leave for the day if a child remained waiting to be picked up from school. On several occasions the kindergarten teachers drove students home themselves after calling the neighbors and relatives listed on the student's emergency card. Also, when kindergarten students became ill in the classroom, their teachers always personally brought them to the clinic. The teachers contacted parents rather than simply sending the child to the office and letting the secretary or school nurse call home.

First Grade. The main behaviors that King first grade teachers exhibited when their students had difficulty with the lesson were scolding, ignoring, and re-
teaching. Students were often scolded loudly and swiftly when they answered questions incorrectly. For example in one classroom the teacher drew a circle on the chalkboard. Next, she divided the circle into thirds. Then she shaded one third of the circle.

Teacher D: How many parts are not shaded on this circle?
Student: One third.
Teacher D (raising her voice): Boy, I said not shaded! One third tells how much is shaded! You'd better start paying attention to me (field notes, set 130/4).

However, when students responded correctly, their teachers gave them praise that was equally loud and swift.

King first grade teachers also frequently chose to ignore the incorrect responses made by students who were having trouble during whole-group instruction. When given a wrong answer, the teachers were likely to ignore the response and call on a second student without prompting the student having difficulty. This pattern of behavior was most prevalent during teacher questioning of the whole group. One first grade teacher remarked:

I don’t have time to reteach my slow students right then in the middle of the lesson when they don’t understand something. I just call on someone else. Then later on when I’m teaching in small groups I go back over whatever it is they didn’t understand (field notes, set 142/4).

The most frequently occurring behavior in grade one within this theme was teacher reteaching for students who did not understand the lesson. All three first grade teachers spent two hours every day working in small groups with students who were having difficulty in reading or mathematics. When the learning problems persisted, the teachers often utilized one-to-one instruction for their
slower students during guided and independent practice activities. In King first grade classrooms the teacher usually called the student having difficulty to sit with her at a small table for individual reteaching of the lesson. This individualized reteaching was carried out using different strategies and different materials from those employed during whole-group instruction. For example, one student was having difficulty with phonics lessons on short vowel sounds. The teacher worked with him individually every day using the computer to reteach the objective.

First grade teachers provided frequent assistance for students who faced personal problems. The first grade teachers were the only ones who used their own money to purchase school uniforms for students in their classrooms who could not afford them. Also the first grade team took care of their students' personal hygiene needs whenever necessary. The teachers washed children's dirty faces, combed their matted hair, and lotioned their rough elbows every day. The following statement is a sample of King first grade teachers' concern for their students' personal needs:

Teacher B: I always have a bottle of hair lotion and a comb for students in my class who need their hair combed. I keep it in my desk drawer. Then when kids come to school with their hair uncombed I take them into the bathroom and I comb it myself (field notes, set 125/4).

On another occasion a first grade teacher brought a student to the principal's office shortly after the opening of school.

Gina has a problem. She came to school crying this morning and said that a man was beating up on her mother. The mother usually walks the girls to school every morning but Gina and her sister came alone today. The man who was beating her mother screamed at the kids to get out of the house, and they ran all the way to school. Gina was so upset that I brought her in
here. I'm going to call the police and report this right now (field notes, set 139/4).

Another first grade student with cancer had to go to the hospital for an all-day medical appointment. The student, Rosalyn, was concerned about missing an entire day of school since she had earned perfect attendance awards up until that day. The appointment was scheduled for 8:15 a.m. It would be impossible for Rosalyn to keep her appointment without missing school. The first grade teacher solved the problem. She met Rosalyn and her mother in the classroom one hour before school started on the day of the appointment. The teacher gave Rosalyn the day's spelling test and allowed her to complete small portions of the day's assignments. Rosalyn left school in time for her appointment with a big smile on her face. She told her mother:

I'm so glad my teacher came to school early for me this morning. Now I won't make an "F" on my work because I have to go to the clinic today. Wasn't my teacher nice to do that, Mama? (field notes, set 140/4).

This kind of concern for the personal needs of their students was typical of first grade teachers.

Second Grade. When second grade students had difficulty with the lesson, their teachers used all of the behaviors described under this theme; however, the following patterns occurred more frequently than the others: praising, prompting, reteaching, and peer tutoring.

King second grade teachers provided immediate reteaching when a student demonstrated poor understanding of a new concept. Usually the second grade
teacher moved beside the desk of the student having difficulty. She quietly provided individual reteaching to clarify the instruction. Rodney, a second grade student, was experiencing difficulty with the comprehension skill of sequencing. His teacher crouched beside his desk during guided practice to offer one-to-one reteaching. The following conversation occurred between Rodney and his teacher. It is characteristic of second grade reteaching under this theme:

Teacher F: If something happens before this event where will it be found in the story? Would it be above the sentence or below it?
Rodney: Below it?
Teacher F: Let's try this. Suppose the thing happens after. Where would you look in the story—above the sentence or under it? (Rodney stares at her but does not answer.)
Teacher F: Rodney, think about in the morning when you brush your teeth. If you were going to write everything that you do before you brush your teeth in the morning would you write those things in front of or following the sentence about teeth brushing?
Rodney: In front of it.
Teacher F: Good. Now back to our story. We want to find out what happened before the lion woke up. Would we look above the sentence when he woke up or after it?
Rodney: We would look above it.
Teacher F: That's right, Rodney. We always read above the event in a story to find things that happened before (field notes, set 152/5).

Peer tutoring was another strategy used by second grade teachers to assist slow learners. In one classroom, the teacher had special "peer tutor" badges. Students who finished their work early could put on the badges and volunteer to help other classmates who were having trouble with the assignment. Another second grade teacher set up a special nook in the hallway outside her classroom. Students were allowed to go to the nook in order to work on difficult assignments together.
Grade two teachers also provided individualized attention to students having physical, emotional, or personal problems. A representative example of this behavior involved a student with his head on his desk during class.

Teacher G: What's wrong, Troy?
Troy: I don't feel well. My grandmother got sick last night and we had to stay up all night at the hospital with her.
Teacher G: Oh I'm sorry, Troy. Can you stay awake and work with us this morning? You may go out and wash your face if you need to so you can wake up a little. If you get too sleepy just let me know (field notes, set 186/4).

Another second grade teacher had a student in her classroom who wore the same thin, urine-smelling dress to school for several consecutive days. The girl lived with an alcoholic grandmother because her mother was incarcerated in the state prison. The teacher brought the child to the office and explained:

Lisa needs a place to clean up every morning. She has no water at home to take a bath. I've taught my students about being kind to each other so no one in the class teases Lisa or laughs because she smells bad. But the odor is getting really strong and Lisa is uncomfortable sitting next to the other children. I'd like to send her down each morning to the clinic with a note. Could we let her wash off using the clinic bathroom sink? And maybe she could wear some of the clothes that were donated to the school last summer. Her own clothes are very dirty, and they have no way to wash anything out at home (field notes, set 187/4).

The King second grade teacher demonstrated no sign of being bothered by the noticeable urine smell of her student. She turned to Lisa and asked:

Lisa, will that be okay? Would you like to come down to the office to clean up every morning?
Lisa: Oh yes. I've been trying to wash up in the sink at home when I can get us a jug and fill it up with water from my auntie's house down the street. But sometimes my auntie don't be at home and I can't get no water.
Teacher: That's okay, Lisa. You can use the school sink and water to clean up whenever you need to (field notes, set 187/4).
This pattern of concern for student problems was characteristic of every King second grade teacher.

**Third Grade.** The primary behaviors used by third grade teachers in response to students having difficulty with the lesson were scolding, ignoring, prompting, and reteaching. Several third grade students who were being tested for special education because of learning disabilities were almost always ignored by their teachers during questioning. When these less capable students were unable to complete their assignments, the teachers often allowed them to sit and do nothing. This pattern of scolding and ignoring students was more widespread at the third grade level than at any other grade level at King.

The following examples are representative responses of third grade teachers to slow learners who gave incorrect answers during a lesson:

Teacher: Jack, what have we been studying this week? I see I can't be absent for one day. When I get back you don't remember anything (field notes, set 221/4).

Teacher: Boy, what did I just say to you? Don't give me that wrong answer again (field notes, set 237/4).

Third grade teachers seldom addressed student personal problems themselves. They generally referred troubled children to the principal, counselor, or other mentors. Most of the third graders had attended King in preceding years as kindergarten, first, and second grade students. Consequently, teachers in grades kindergarten, one, and two often acted as mentors for third grade students who needed individual attention.
Digressing from the Lesson

The theme digressing from the lesson involved King teachers' tendency to interrupt planned instruction to discuss phonics, the standardized test, and life values. These digressions were spontaneous and occurred regularly in all King classrooms.

Kindergarten. Phonics, the standardized test, and life values were the topics most frequently discussed by King kindergarten teachers under the theme of teacher digressions from the lesson. Although the objective of a lesson had nothing to do with phonics, the kindergarten teachers frequently digressed from the explanation of other concepts to talk about the sounds of letters in unfamiliar words. For example, during a social studies lesson on community helpers, a kindergarten teacher inserted a brief comment about letter sounds:

Teacher: Who helps us if we have a fire?
Student: The fireman.
Teacher: That's right, the fireman. Oh, and who can tell me the sound we hear at the beginning of the word "fireman"?
Student: F.
Teacher: Very good! Now who knows the person who brings us our mail? (field notes, set 62/5).

Another teacher commented:

I teach phonics all day long. It's a part of everything I do, whether it's reading time or not.

Teachers at the kindergarten level also routinely provided spontaneous test-taking tips for their students. These test reminders were given in the middle of a lesson. Afterwards, the teachers continued their planned instruction. The
following are representative examples of standardized test digressions made by kindergarten teachers during a science lesson:

Teacher B: Let's say our months.
Class: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December.
Teacher B: Very good. You know, I think you might even have to know the months of the year on the I.T.B.S. test so don't forget them. Now do you know the months in each season? [Teacher B continued her lesson on the seasons of the year without further discussion of the I.T.B.S. test.] (field notes, set 18/5).

A second brief digression that is characteristic of this theme occurred during a kindergarten mathematics lesson:

Teacher A: I'll bet some of you are getting tired [the class is working on mathematics problems]. Can you get tired on the I.T.B.S. test?
Class: No!
Teacher A: We can't get tired because the test is too I-M ...
Class: Important!
Teacher A: That's right, the test is too important. We just can't get tired and quit, can we?
Students: No!

Teacher A returned to the mathematics lesson immediately after the conversation (field notes, set 27/5).

These comments about the I.T.B.S. test occurred in the middle of a punctuation lesson:

Teacher B: There's a dot on the transparency at the end of the sentence. Do you see it?
Class: Yes.
Teacher B: It's nice and round and black. Where else will we see nice round, black dots? Do you remember?
Class: On the test?
Teacher B: On the I.T.B.S test, that's right. You have to bubble in the dots to make them nice and black and round (field notes, set 35/5).
Kindergarten teachers frequently paused during their instruction to comment on life values to their students. For example, while reading *The Gingerbread Man* to her class, one kindergarten teacher told students:

The Gingerbread Man ran everywhere he went, and he got into trouble, didn’t he? That’s why we don’t run in our hallways. A lot of times when people run they get hurt or they get in trouble (field notes, set 13/5).

On another occasion a teacher closed her phonics lesson with the following discussion:

Teacher A: Why do we need to learn our letters?
Class: So we can read.
Teacher A: That’s right. And why is it so important to learn to read?
Student: So we can go to first grade.
Teacher A: So you can go to first grade, yes. But also so you can go to high school and graduate. You can’t go to college and get a job if you don’t learn how to read (field notes, set 42/5).

Both King kindergarten teachers made these spontaneous comments about life values to their students every day along with delivery of the regular curriculum.

**First Grade.** First grade teachers also digressed during instructional time to discuss topics outside the planned objective of their lessons. These digressions usually involved teachings on life values and phonics skills. The following lesson segment is a representative sample of a first grade teacher digressing to discuss life values during her reading lesson:

Teacher E: What is the main idea of this book?
Student: You can do anything you want by painting pictures.
Teacher E: Yes, in the story the boy was able to use his pictures to fulfill his dream. Did you know that you can be anything you want when you grow up? All you have to do is try, try, try and you can do it. There’s no limit to what you can be in life if you keep trying hard to succeed (field notes, set 138/5).
King first grade teachers often digressed to discuss life values such as courtesy, respect, and good manners during their lessons. The following comments were made during some of the first grade digressions: "Mind your parents," "be polite," "sit like ladies," and "always flush when you use the restroom" (field notes, sets 111/5, 140/5, 94/5-99/5). After explaining why the preceding comments were important to follow, the teachers immediately resumed their original topic of instruction.

In addition to adding life values to the lessons, teachers at this grade level routinely added brief phonics digressions. Instruction about letter sounds were spontaneously interspersed through science, social studies, language, and even mathematics lessons.

**Second Grade.** At the second grade level teachers spontaneously discussed phonics, the standardized test, and life values during their regular lessons. When an unfamiliar word occurred during mathematics, science, or social studies instruction, the teachers seldom told students the word outright; instead the teachers initiated a spontaneous review of the applicable phonics skills. The mathematics, science, or social studies lesson in progress was temporarily interrupted by this phonics "teachable moment."

Second grade teachers also routinely digressed from planned instruction to discuss life values with their students. Topics for these digressions on life included citizenship, manners, and goals for the future. A representative example is given below:
Teacher G (to class): That’s why it’s important that we not litter. So the next time you see someone throwing paper on the ground, what are you going to say?
Class: Don’t litter.
Teacher G: Right! Tell them to keep our environment clean. When you see paper on the ground, pick it up (field notes, set 16/15).

For another spontaneous lesson about life, a second grade teacher added the word "flatulent" to her class vocabulary word bank. Later she remarked:

I taught my students the meaning of the word "flatulent" today. Someone in the room had gas and we all kept smelling it. Finally, I just stopped trying to teach place value and started teaching about life. I told the class that when they have gas they need to ask to be excused so they can relieve themselves in the restroom. That’s good manners. That’s what we do when we’re flatulent (field notes, set 123/5).

After her discussion, the teacher put the word "flatulent" on the board and allowed the students to look it up in the dictionary. Then she returned to the lesson in progress on mathematics place value.

There was also consistent digression about the upcoming standardized test at the second grade level. The teachers talked about the format of the test, the importance of the test, and strategies students should remember in order to do well on the test.

Third Grade. In third grade the most frequently occurring topics under the theme of teacher digression were life values and phonics. King third grade teachers regularly commented on these topics while delivering the planned curriculum to their students. Grade three was the final year at King for students before they went on to intermediate school. Most of the life values discussed at this level related to the students’ future. The following examples occurred during
reading and mathematics lessons. They are characteristic of teacher digression at
the third grade level:

Teacher I: Live and learn, and learn, and learn, and learn. You can always
learn some more. That's a good rule to remember for life (field notes, set
249/5).

On another occasion:

Teacher J: This is something you need to know for a lifetime, not just for
fourth grade next year. Let me know now if you don't understand. When
you don't understand something, speak up and say so (field notes, set 226/5).

During a mathematics lesson:

Teacher I: We black people still have a long way to go. There are some
places you walk into and they'll look at you like, "What right do you have to
come in here?" (field notes, set 233/5).

During a reading lesson:

Teacher J: There are some people who have to stand on corners waiting for
a job. They go out and load bricks for twenty dollars a day. What will
twenty dollars do? It might get you two meals. But will it get you some-
where to live? Everything we teach you now is to help you do better in the
future (field notes, set 237/5).

Third grade teachers arranged for their students to take a bus tour to the
Southern Methodist University campus "to show them what a real college looks
like." The teachers also took their classes to tour an affluent white collar neigh-
borhood with homes valued at over one million dollars. One teacher explained:

These trips were made to show students that there's more to life than these
run-down apartments and drug houses they see on the way to school every
day (field notes, set 219/5).

The second topic for teacher digression by King third grade teachers was
phonics. Although much of the students' explicit instruction in phonics had ended
by third grade, the teachers routinely reminded their pupils to use phonics for
decoding unfamiliar words. In every subject, every day when students encoun-
tered words they did not know, teachers stopped teaching and pointed out the
phonics strategies required to figure out the word. Context clues were also
suggested, but only as a companion strategy to the use of phonics.

Managing Student Behavior

The sixth theme that emerged from the data was managing student behavior.
At King Elementary School this theme was characterized by the following
recurring behaviors: praise, scolding, corporal punishment, and use of routine.
The teachers used these behaviors to create and maintain an orderly environment
throughout the school.

Kindergarten. All of the behavior patterns under the theme of managing
student behavior were used by the kindergarten teachers at King. The behaviors
that occurred most frequently at this grade level were praise, scolding, corporal
punishment, and routinization.

Kindergarten routines were important tools for maintaining classroom
discipline and shaping student behavior. Every part of the kindergarten students'
day was managed by routines. Even restroom breaks were not left to chance.
Teachers escorted their entire classes to the restrooms twice a day. Students were
trained to enter the restroom two at a time, one boy and one girl. Teacher A
explained more of the routine:
I tell the kids to count one ... two ... three and stop washing. That's long enough to get their hands clean. Then I train them to pull one ... two times on the paper towel lever. That way the kids don't waste rolls and rolls of paper towels in the restroom. Then to make sure the students don't throw any paper towels on the floor, I have them dry their hands on the way out of the restroom. They toss the used paper towels in the wastebasket right outside the restroom door as they come out. It really speeds things up, too, because students don't stay in the restroom for five minutes washing and drying their hands. One, two, three ... one ... two ... and they're out and the next person in line goes in (field notes, set 20/6).

The use of instructional routines was also widespread inside kindergarten classrooms. Both teachers began every day by reading aloud to their students. A large group lesson was followed by small groups of students working in learning centers. The students were taught to independently select a center for the day using a chart. No words were spoken during the process. The students followed the routine and quickly and quietly began work in their chosen activity.

King kindergarten teachers were praised across the school district for the techniques they used to manage student behavior. The director of early childhood education for the district often sent new and marginal teachers to King kindergarten classrooms to observe their effective routines and student management techniques firsthand. She explained to the principal:

I want to send two new teachers to spend the day in your kindergarten classrooms. They are having problems with classroom management, and you have the best kindergarten teacher in the district to show them what they need to do to get their acts together (field notes, set 3/6).

First Grade. Classroom management at the first grade level primarily involved teacher use of praise, scolding, and corporal punishment. Teacher praise regarding behavior was generally directed to the entire class rather than individual
students. The following examples illustrate first grade teacher use of praise to manage student behavior.

Teacher D, speaking to her class: I like the way 1A lined up for P.E. today. You were super! Nobody talking! (field notes, set 96/6).

Teacher C, speaking to her class: IB, you are really on the ball! Look at how quietly you are working while I'm talking to Mrs. Jones right now (field notes, set 104/6).

Teacher E, speaking to the principal after returning from a field trip: You would have been so proud of first grade if you had gone to the museum with us. They were so well behaved. We didn’t have to say a word to anyone (field notes, set 91/6).

First grade teachers never referred students to the principal's office for misbehavior; instead they handled all disruptive student behavior in their classrooms. Corporal punishment was used regularly by the teachers as a consequence for student discipline problems. Furthermore, the first grade teachers admitted they enjoyed having students in their classes who other teachers described as troublemakers (field notes, set 150/6). The following remarks illustrate a first grade teacher’s willingness to use corporal punishment to manage student behavior:

I finally figured out how to get to Tanika. She runs all over the room whenever I try to whip her. But today I sneaked up on her while she was still in her desk. She didn’t get a chance to run. I tore her legs up (field notes, set 92/6).

The teachers were advised by the principal that their use of corporal punishment was a violation of current district policy and could possibly jeopardize their jobs if parents complained; however, the use of spankings continued undiminished.
Another first grade teacher who had taught at King for 27 years defended her grade level’s use of corporal punishment:

The parents know we’re not going to hurt their kids. I’ve never had one parent that I couldn’t reason with and explain things to ... not in over 25 years. These parents know we have their child’s best interests at heart. If they didn’t believe that, we would have problems. But a parent can tell when you’re trying to help their child get a good education. And they want the very same thing (field notes, set 99/6).

Second Grade. The behavior patterns observed at the second grade level for managing student behavior were scolding, praise, proximity control, and the use of routines. Second grade teachers swiftly delivered praise and reprimands when needed to shape their pupils’ behavior. On one occasion, the physical education teacher reported to the teachers that their second grade students had been loud and unruly passing through the hallway from the gym. The second grade teachers stopped the students at the classroom doors and kept them lined up there while delivering a severe scolding to the entire group. Next the teachers called aside the students identified as the worst offenders by the P.E. teacher and telephoned their parents to report the misbehavior. The phone conversations were made within the hearing of the rest of the class. One second grade teacher turned to her students and gave a final scolding:

I’d better not hear of any one of you acting up in the hallway like that again. Not ever!! (field notes, set 213/6).

Praise was another important part of second grade teacher behavior to many students. For example, John was extremely hyperactive. He frequently hit other
children and otherwise disrupted the learning in his second grade classroom.

John's teacher remarked:

It doesn't help to scold John every time he does something wrong. That just hypes him up more. Sometimes I just give him something else to do and compliment him when he works on it without disturbing everyone else. John really responds to the praise. His mother locks him in his room after school every day to keep him from disturbing her at home. Nobody ever gives him any positive attention. Only negative (field notes, set 215/6).

A third teacher strategy used in second grade to manage student behavior was proximity control. The teachers at this level demonstrated physical mobility in their classrooms. Often when students were off task or disruptive, the teachers continued the lesson but moved nearer to the desk of the misbehaving child. On other occasions such as during practice activities, the offending child was directed to move nearer to the teacher. In both situations, the inappropriate behavior ceased when the student was placed in close proximity with the second grade teacher. The following conversation illustrates teacher use of proximity control to minimize student behavior. The student, Sarah, had been diagnosed as having hyperactive attention deficit disorder.

Teacher F: Sarah started out being very disruptive this morning. She was bothering the other kids and yelling out in class.
Principal: Do you need to send her to the office?
Teacher F: No, she's fine now. I moved her near my desk. She settled down and finished her assignments without any more problems (field notes, set 164/6).

King second grade teachers also relied on their use of classroom routines to help manage student behavior. The teachers sent home a study packet with each
child every Monday. The packet contained the week's instructional objectives and
daily homework assignments. A second grade teacher explained:

I tell my students they aren't babies anymore. They have to be responsible
for their own learning. This study packet routine helps them to become
more independent. They don't have to keep asking me what they're sup-
posed to study. They know what we are doing all the time (field notes, set
165/6).

In addition to objectives and assignments, second grade study packets provided
review questions for end-of-the-week tests that were given every Friday. The
Friday tests were always teacher-made in the format of a standardized test. One
or two open-ended questions were usually added to the Friday test routine.

The tests were graded and sent home with the students on Friday afternoon.
On the following Monday, the routine started all over again. Both parents and
students knew and expected this cycle of events. One second grade teacher
commented:

Bobby's mother called me last night. He didn't bring his study packet home
and she said she knew he was supposed to have it on Mondays. She loves
not having to ask him what's for homework every night. All of my parents
do. They just check the packet and they know everything their child needs
to do for the week (field notes, set 165/6).

Third Grade. The data on third grade teacher behavior for this theme was
not always consistent with the patterns observed at the other grade levels. Unlike
King teachers in kindergarten, first, and second grades, the third grade teachers
used discipline referrals to the principal's office as a frequent technique for
managing disruptive students. Ninety percent of all referrals at King Elementary
for the school year were made by the third grade team. In addition, the third
grade teachers used scolding, corporal punishment, and specialized routines as strategies when their students misbehaved.

The pattern of behavior that occurred most often to manage students in third grade was teacher scolding. The reprimands were often delivered openly and in the presence of other teachers and students. The following comments are representative examples of third grade teachers scolding their students to manage behavior:

Teacher I (interrupting a student who had begun giving a response out of turn): Am I talking to you? (field notes, set 251/6).

Teacher J (to student): Did I say look at anyone else's paper? You need to take care of your own business (field notes, set 211/6).

Teacher J (to student): Don't worry about Stacy. Let's just see what you're going to do when it's your turn up there at the board (field notes, set 234/6).

Instead of reprimands, the teachers occasionally used corporal punishment to manage inappropriate student behavior. One third grade teacher made the following comments:

I spoke to Jerry's mother about his behavior. I ask her if it's all right to paddle him when he acts up in my class. She gave me the okay. Now there are about four others I need permission to spank and I think my class will be all right (field notes, set 238/6).

The corporal punishment was delivered by striking the student in the hand with a ruler. No parent complained about a child being spanked by a King third grade teacher.
Summarization of Internal and External Themes

This section presents a summary of the nine themes that were developed from the data. Both internal and external themes will be described in detail with characteristic examples of the behaviors that were observed.

Defining the Curriculum

The first major theme from the data related to defining the curriculum at King Elementary School. Data collected revealed that the teachers generally addressed the following topics: reading, grammar, spelling, handwriting, mathematics computation, problem solving, science, and social studies. Evidence of these major curricular thrusts were visible throughout the school. Phonics wall charts, sight word lists, word problem bulletin boards, noun walls, independent reading nooks, mathematics and spelling profiles filled vacant walls and spaces inside and outside each classroom.

Every teacher at King stated that reading was the most important subject taught in her classroom. The teachers devoted an average of two hours each day to direct instruction of reading. Phonics strategies were a major component of these daily reading lessons. One teacher explained:

We teach phonics, phonics, phonics. That's why our kids can read when everybody else can't (field notes, set 14/1).

A second teacher remarked:

I'm so mad at my college professors at Stephen F. Austin. All they taught us was whole language. That junk doesn't work. I have a friend who graduated with me and she teaches in Terrell now. She's been using whole language
and none of her kids are reading yet. All of mine are. I told her she’d better start teaching those kids some phonics (field notes, set 14/1).

Besides phonics, King teachers emphasized sight word recognition for all grade levels. Generally the teachers used the graded Dolch Basic Sight Word List to drill their students. First grade teachers also used sight words from their basal reading program. Sight word lists were sent home with each student on the first day of school. Throughout the year, other students who transferred into King were immediately given a list of sight words to take home and memorize.

I give them about five new words a week to learn. Most of them are doing really well with their sight words. Lisa’s mother is really helping her. She didn’t know any words when she came [to first grade], but she knows all of her sight words now (field notes, set 24/1).

King teachers evaluated student progress weekly on the sight words using one-to-one oral testing situations.

Literature was plentiful in all classrooms at King; however, the books were used primarily for leisure reading rather than actual instruction. Reading instruction was usually taught from textbooks. Both current and out-of-adoption basals were utilized including old readers published as many as thirty years ago. There were two exceptions to this practice. Third grade teachers occasionally used class sets of literature to teach comprehension to their advanced reading groups. The other exception was the use of paperback phonics readers to supplement lessons from basal textbooks. One teacher asked the book room clerk:

Can I get some more of those phonics readers? My kids can read from the short vowel ones already. I need the long vowel books now (field notes, set 24/1).
Grammar at King was taught as a completely separate content area. Students learned rules for capitalization, punctuation, and usage through grammar exercises rather than through editing their own compositions. For example, each grade level studied the parts of speech. During the lessons on proper nouns, teachers introduced capitalization rules. During instruction about verbs, students learned usage. Later in the school year, students were expected to write compositions and apply the grammar rules they had learned.

Spelling and handwriting were also taught as discrete subjects at King instead of being integrated into writing instruction. Students in first, second, and third grade were given spelling tests each Friday over preassigned word lists from the spelling book or the reader. During the final twelve weeks of school, some kindergarten students were given spelling tests as well. Legible handwriting and the proper formation of letters were regarded as important skills, though not as important as reading and mathematics. One teacher explained:

I think handwriting is important. We work on it every day. But it’s still not as major as reading and mathematics in my class. They always take precedence (field notes, set 21/1).

The mathematics curriculum at King stressed student memorization of basic computation facts in grades one, two, and three. One teacher noted:

Students can’t get the word problems [on the test] right if they don't know their facts. The child might know how to set up the problem but if he can’t add and subtract the answer will still be wrong, not because he can’t do word problems, but because he can’t add and subtract (field notes, set 37/1).

Students were given weekly tests to assess their ability to complete 100 addition, subtraction, or multiplication facts in five minutes. Twelve weeks into the school
year, 120 out of 145 students in grades one, two, and three were able to complete the 100 addition facts in five minutes or less (documents 87/2, 143/2, and 239/2).

King teachers relied more on basal textbooks for science and social studies instruction than they did for other subject areas. They were also more likely to use an interdisciplinary approach in science and social studies.

We’re making charts and graphs to go with this science lesson on weather. That way the students can use their math skills to solve real-life problems (field notes, set 229/1).

Another teacher admitted:

My science and social studies lessons are just opportunities for more reading instruction. So many of my kids can’t read the book that I just turn the lesson into a reading comprehension class (field notes, set 156/1).

The science and social studies lessons appeared very relaxed, since the teachers allowed more student-initiated conversation during these classes.

**Delivering Instruction**

The second major theme in the data related to the methods used by King teachers to deliver instruction in their classrooms. Their lesson presentations generally included the following recurring teacher behaviors: (a) asking questions, (b) relating lesson content to student experiences, and (c) providing concrete models to illustrate new concepts.

The use of frequent questioning during the explanation of the lesson prevented King classrooms from being dominated by teachers talking to students who sat as passive listeners. The teachers questioned their students before, during, and after delivery of each small segment of instruction. Their questions were
generally rapid and directed to the whole class. The following example is characteristic of King teachers asking questions during the explanation of a lesson:

Teacher: He [the story character] needs to know his what if he moves to a new city?
Student: His way.
Teacher: What's another word that means "way" that starts with a "D"?
Student: Directions.
Teacher: When people are traveling and they need to know the way, what do they use?
Student: Directions.
Teacher: But the directions are written on something ... what is it?
Student: A map.
Teacher: I'm going to use a new word that means "way." The word is "mode." What mode did Mitchell [the story character] use?
Student: He walked.
Teacher: You've got the main idea of the story! (field notes, set 110/2).

Relating the lesson to student experiences was the category of behavior that occurred consistently under the theme of delivering instruction. King teachers spent time during every lesson making connections between the content of the lesson and their students' life experiences. One teacher attempted to help her first grade students understand the concept of a beach for a story they were about to hear.

Teacher: How many of you have ever been to the beach? (No students raise their hands.)
Teacher: Have you been to the lake? (About half the students raise their hands.)
Teacher: Some parts of the lake are sandy like a beach. The sand is usually where the water meets the land on a beach (field notes, set 65/2).

A third recurring behavior under the theme delivering instruction was providing concrete models to aid student understanding. King teachers frequently used chalkboards, overhead projectors, charts, and manipulatives to enhance their
explanations of unfamiliar concepts. For example, during a lesson on comparative adjectives, a teacher wrote the word "biggest" on the chalkboard:

   Teacher: If we are comparing glasses of milk, and I say I have the biggest glass of milk, which one do I mean? (Teacher draws three glasses, each one a different size, on the chalkboard.)
   Class (choral response): The second one! (field notes, set 30/2).

Practicing the Learning

   The third theme that emerged from the data was teacher use of practice to reinforce student learning. King teachers emphasized frequent practice of new learning. Homework, seat work, student recitation, and oral reading were important daily activities in every classroom. In addition, test-taking practice activities were stressed at every grade level. The following conversation illustrates King teachers' concern about homework assignments:

   Teacher (to child): Where is your homework?
   Student: At home.
   Teacher: Why?
   Student: My mother kept it.
   Teacher: Why?
   Student: I don't know.
   Teacher: I don't understand. Did your mother keep your homework so she could do it for you?
   Student: No.
   Teacher: Well did you do it yourself or not?
   Student: Uh huh.
   Teacher: Uh huh?
   Student: Yes, ma'am, I did it myself (field notes, set 248/2).

   Tangible rewards were rarely used as positive reinforcement in King classrooms. Most often, the teachers employed verbal praise to reinforce correct
student responses. On the infrequent occasions when tangible rewards were used, students were usually given stickers, pencils, or erasers.

Practice of the learning was usually differentiated according to the students' ability levels. Less able students were given fewer problems or longer time frames to complete assignments. This differentiation occurred regularly in all content areas and at all grade levels except third.

Responding to Individual Needs

Response to individual student needs was the fourth teacher theme that emerged from the data for this study. There were several recurring situations related to individual student needs that resulted in an individualized response from King teachers. These situations included student learning difficulties, student illnesses, and student home problems. King teachers used scolding, prompting, peer coaching, reteaching, and ignoring as responses to students who had difficulty learning the lesson. For example, this exchange took place in one kindergarten classroom:

Teacher (pointing to model of clock that showed 11:30): What time does this clock show?
Johnny: Six o'clock.
Teacher: Johnny, you are not looking at that short hand. The big hand doesn't tell the hour, the short hand does. You need to think before you open your mouth (field notes, set 76/4).

Scolding was often used when the teachers felt the child was not giving his or her best effort. One teacher stated:

I don't mind being hard on them when I know they can really do it. When you know your kids, you can tell when they're not really trying. Sometimes
my students just say the wrong answer or pretend they don't know how to do a problem to make me leave them alone. I think they do that at home ... pretend they can't do things ... and their parents just go ahead and do it for them. Well, that doesn't work in my class. I make them do it right themselves (field notes, set 51/4).

Usually, the scolding took place in front of the whole group; however, when the slower pupils gave incorrect responses in small remedial group settings, the teacher was much more likely to use positive behaviors such as repeating and prompting.

The following situation in a first-grade classroom illustrates teacher prompting of a slow student at King Elementary:

Teacher: The Three Bears is a story we listened to yesterday. Is there a number in the title of the story, Bobby?
Bobby: (No response).
Teacher: The story of The Three-ee-ee Bears ... is there a number in the name of this story?
Bobby: (No response).
Teacher: Three-ee-ee bears, Bobby ...
Bobby (interrupting her): Yes!
Teacher: Is there a number?
Bobby: Three! (field notes, set 95/4).

When King students experienced personal troubles such as illness or home problems, the teacher response was always positive. Often students were allowed to get a drink of water or place their heads down when they complained of feeling sick. Parents sent students to school with temperatures, viruses, asthma attacks, chicken pox, and a variety of other ailments and injuries. The teachers requested that students be sent to school every day unless the child had a temperature or a contagious disease. The teachers consistently demonstrated concern
Alma, a first-grade student at King, suffered from leukemia. When Alma was hospitalized for chemotherapy, her teacher visited the hospital almost daily for three weeks. The teacher used her 45-minute planning period for these visits and carried books, crayons, and other small gifts to amuse Alma, whose parents rarely visited her in the hospital.

**Digressing from the Lesson**

Throughout their lessons, King teachers regularly provided spontaneous instruction on phonics, grammar, the standardized test, and life in general. These "teachable moments," as one teacher labeled them, were digressions from the lesson topic. The length of the digressions varied from as brief as two minutes to as long as ten minutes in duration. After pausing to deliver her comments, the teacher immediately returned to the original topic and completed her lesson. Often these lesson digressions were completely unrelated to anything in the curriculum or textbooks. King teachers routinely gave these brief sermons that focused on character and life values in the middle of their reading or mathematics lessons. Students were urged to "be good citizens," "always tell the truth," and "never give up without trying" (field notes, sets 151/5, 19/5, and 88/5). The following teachable moment occurred after one class read a story about a lion:

*Student:* If the lion was king of the jungle, why couldn’t he escape?

*Teacher:* Because it was a trap. Anyone can get caught in a trap, you know. It doesn’t matter how big or how important you are, you can still trip
and fall. Even powerful people can be brought down. Don't ever forget that. Even powerful people can be brought down (field notes, set 179/5).

Another frequent topic for the spontaneous discussions was the standardized test. All year long, King teachers gave test-taking tips while they taught their regular lessons. One teacher used reteaching a reading worksheet as an opportunity to give students a tip for the standardized test. Her lesson digression is reported below:

Teacher: There's always going to be a clue, Mary. That's why you have to be very, very careful when you answer questions about your reading. How do we know if the answer is "begin" or "began"? Because it says "wanted." The "ed" is your clue. Is that past tense? There's always a clue, Mary. If you aren't sure, read all the other answer choices before you mark your answer. Maybe you're overlooking your clue. Don't forget that on the test (field notes, set 177/5).

Managing Student Behavior

The sixth major theme that emerged from the data related to teacher management of student behavior. Within this theme, the following techniques were regularly employed by teachers: praise, scolding, proximity, corporal punishment, and daily routines.

Visitors to King frequently commented that student conduct at the school was the best they had ever seen. A teacher from another school observing at King remarked:

This school is so orderly. The students walk down the hallways in lines without screaming and shoving ... and your cafeteria is so quiet. In fact, your kids behave great everywhere ... in the halls ... in the classrooms ... just everywhere. I can't believe it. I wish my school was like this. At the school where I work, the kids behave like wild animals all day long (field notes, set 243/5).
In addition to procedural routines, King teachers developed and implemented repetitive instructional routines for teaching spelling, handwriting, and vocabulary words. They did not need to write lesson plans each week for these subjects. Instead, the routines were written out during the first week of school and stapled into the front of the lesson plan book to be reused all year long. The schedule below is a representative example of a classroom routine:

**Spelling**
- **Monday:** Define words
- **Tuesday:** Use words in sentences
- **Wednesday:** Pretest
- **Thursday:** Write each word five times
- **Friday:** Final spelling test (documents, set 120/5).

The teacher substituted a different word list each week. The routine never changed.

The kindergarten teacher utilized the following routine to teach phonics and letter recognition:

- **Students (chorally):** My letter is "C" (They write a "C" in the air).
- **Students (chorally):** My key word is "carry" (They pantomime unlocking a door with a key).
- **Students (chorally):** The sound "C" makes is "kuh" (They cup one hand behind one ear as if listening for a sound) (field notes, set 8/6).

One kindergarten teacher provided this explanation:

I use the same routine every day to teach my kids their letters and sounds. At first when we’re learning the routine it takes longer for the kids to master the sounds because they are learning the letter and the routine. But once they get to know the routine, it’s a snap to plug in a new letter every week. When I introduce the new letter the kids say "We already know that" because the routine is so familiar. They don’t really know the new letter, but the routine makes learning it easier for them (field notes, set 8/6).
King teachers also used clearly defined routines to structure students’ leisure time during the school day. The entire student body began each morning with a 15-minute period of silent reading. Afterwards, throughout the day, when their assignments were completed, students were allowed to pass to "Reading Cafes" set up in the hallways throughout the building. The "Reading Cafes" were small areas stocked with a variety of reading material for students' free reading time. In the cafes, students read independently, read with buddies, and presented book reports.

Other schoolwide routines included "Word Problem of the Week" and "Cafeteria Reading." The "Word Problem of the Week" routine involved the principal reading a mathematics word problem each week on the morning announcements. Students competed to be first to figure out the correct answer in their classrooms. Winning students explained their solutions on the next week's announcements. "Cafeteria Reading" was a management routine used by King teachers to keep students quiet during school breakfast and lunch periods. After completing their meals, students were allowed to select books to read in the cafeteria instead of going outside to the playground. This program helped to significantly reduce discipline referrals at King for fighting. The number declined from thirteen during the 1992-93 school year to only three for the 1993-94 school year (documents, set 230/6). A King teacher noted:

Our kids don’t fight here. That’s why these parents drive their kids to King from all over town ... they don’t want to have to worry about their kids coming home every day crying because somebody hit them. They know we don’t put up with that kind of mess over here (field notes, set 98/6).
During the first week of school, the teachers spent about 75 percent of each day training their classes to follow detailed daily routines. These routines were evident in every classroom from kindergarten through third grade. The routines covered each regular classroom procedure including opening the school day, passing to lunch, taking restroom breaks, sharpening pencils, and handing in assignments. One King teacher made the following statement about managing student behavior:

If we don't learn anything else we will learn how to behave in my classroom. Learning cannot take place in chaos. It is a waste of time to jump into the curriculum without teaching your class the rules (field notes, set 160/6).

Once rules and routines were introduced, they were enforced swiftly and consistently through teacher use of verbal and physical corrective action. Teachers’ verbal corrective actions ranged from privately reminding a student of rules for appropriate behavior to loudly scolding a child for misbehavior in front of the whole class.

Physical correction also ranged along a continuum of actions from grabbing a child firmly by the arm to administering corporal punishment. Actually, corporal punishment in classrooms had been prohibited in the district where King Elementary was located since 1979; however, King teachers never discontinued using it. In fact, they passed the practice of paddling students on to new teachers who became part of the King staff. Not only did parents in the community permit teacher use of corporal punishment on their children, many actually requested it. One teacher admitted:
Yes, I spank the kids ... some of them ... the ones whose parents I know pretty well. The parents ask me to. Like Betsy's mother ... when I told her how Betsy was acting in my class the other day, the mother told me, "Whip Betsy's fat ass" (field notes, set 57/6).

Teachers' use of corporal punishment ranged from a hand swat on the child's buttocks to the use of rulers and paddles on students' palms, legs, and buttocks.

Although most of the data collected for this study could be categorized as classroom behavior, there were several patterns of teacher behavior that occurred outside classrooms. Three additional themes emerged from continued coding and analysis of the data external to the classroom: teacher-to-parent relationships, teacher-to-teacher relationships, and teacher-to-principal relationships.

Teacher-Parent Interaction

The theme of teacher-parent relationships at King focused on communication through telephone calls, notes, and personal conferences. These teacher-parent interactions generally involved discussion of five topics: student conduct, student attendance, student academic performance, teacher conduct, and student family life. King teachers tended to take charge of the conversation when dealing with parents. The conversation below is a representative example:

Teacher: Karl kicked a boy in class today. This is the second time it's happened this year.
Parent: I don't know why Karl acts like that.
Teacher: Well I know we aren't going to put up with it.
Parent (nodding): I don't want you to. Just whip him if he does it again (field notes, set 25/7).

King teachers did not hesitate to tell parents of at-risk students how to improve their parenting skills. The teachers often reminded parents to do a
better job with their children's attendance, behavior, and academic performance.

When a first-grade student missed a week of school, her teacher contacted the parent and gave the following report:

I talked to Ms. Jones, Sandra's mother, yesterday about her attendance. Sandra has already missed five days this six weeks. She wasn't sick either. I told the mother that Sandra would be a decent student if she just came to school every day. The mother is young and told me she's had some drug problems. She told me she was going to try to do better. After talking to me, Ms. Jones said she could tell I was really like a mother to the kids in my classroom. I told her I'm like a grandmother to Sandra and a mother to her because I'd whip her (the mother) if she didn't start getting Sandra to school every day. And we both started laughing (field notes, set 123/7).

Even in situations where teacher-to-parent communication involved hostile parents, King teachers maintained their calm, confident, and authoritarian manner. The teachers rarely became defensive in any relationships with the parents; instead, they tended to make the parent feel defensive regardless of the circumstances. This behavior is illustrated by the following conversation that occurred after a student told his mother that the teacher slapped him in the face.

Parent: Sammy told me you slapped him at school yesterday. I came up here to see about it. I don't want nobody slapping my kids up here at this school. That just ain't right to be hitting a child in his face anyway.

Teacher: Now wait just a minute, Ms. Cole. I don't slap children. I'm not that kind of teacher. Now I'll swat them on their bottoms ... but that's it. Now you ask Sammy where I hit him. He'll tell you. I hit him on his bottom, not in his face.

Parent (later to principal): I don't believe she [the teacher] hit him in his face. I just hadn't met his teacher before. But I talked to her and I believe Sammy was just lyin' to me. He's got a good teacher ... a real good teacher. (Parent smiles and shakes the teacher's hand before leaving the office) (field note, set 113/1).

Despite the authoritarian manner used to deal with parents, King teachers repeatedly demonstrated willingness to support and assist parents and students...
with family personal problems. For example, when the parent of one student was forced to work two jobs to keep from losing her home, the teacher provided family assistance. There was no one available to pick up the child after school. As a result, the teacher took the student to her own home every evening until the mother got off from the second job at 8:00 p.m. The teacher fed the child, helped her with her homework, and had the little girl ready for bed when the mother arrived at around 8:30 p.m. The teacher kept up this routine for four months until the mother was able to quit the second job.

**Teacher-Teacher Interaction**

The second theme that emerged from the coding and analysis of data on teacher behaviors external to the classroom related to peer interaction among teachers at King. The categories of repeated behaviors under this theme were: (a) sharing instructional ideas and materials, (b) discussing students and parents, (c) support for personal concerns, and (d) asking "what are we supposed to do?"

According to observations and interviews, the most frequent area of interaction among King teachers was the exchange of instructional ideas and materials. These conversations occurred throughout each day and across all grade levels. The teachers frequently dispatched students from their classrooms with messages requesting materials from a co-worker. On other occasions, the teachers themselves stuck their heads in the doorways of their peers' classrooms to share materials and ideas. The following is a representative sample of this behavior that occurred during one of my classroom observation visits at King:
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(Teacher F enters Teacher D's classroom. Sees observer and stops.)
Teacher F: Oops! I just came in to borrow something from her.
Observer: It's okay. Go ahead.
Teacher F: I can come back later.
Observer: No, I don't mind.
Teacher F (to Teacher D): Okay. I just wanted to borrow that transparency you were using this morning.
Teacher D (handing over transparency from table): Here it is (field notes, set 98/7).

Generally, the materials exchanged consisted of student workbooks and work-sheets. The more experienced teachers shared practice materials they had accumulated over the years. The younger teachers usually shared recently published practice workbooks purchased from local teacher stores. Less frequently, the teachers shared children's literature and trade books.

A second category of behavior under the theme of teacher-peer interaction involved conversations among King teachers about students and their parents. These conversations usually related events that teachers felt were unusual or humorous. The following comments were taken from conversations overheard between King teachers:

Teacher C: Tammy is like a little old woman. She gets here late every day. Yesterday the class had gone to P.E. when she got here. Tammy walked in, looked around, and said "Where is they?" (field notes, set 149/8).

On another occasion:

Teacher D: Stephanie was absent again today? Her mother came up and said she was sick. There's nothing wrong with that girl. Her mother just wants to keep babying her (field notes, set 83/8).

After school:
Teacher E: Guess what Danny did today. When I made him turn his desk around because he was talking, he started chewing on his tablet. Look! He's completely eaten up all the corners (she laughs) (field notes, set 192/8).

Supporting one another in personal matters was an additional category of teacher-peer interaction at King Elementary School. This shared support created a kind of familial relationship among teachers where they discussed personal problems and successes without regard for differences in teaching assignments, age, race, or religion.

When Teacher A returned to work after missing three days because of arthritis in her knee, the rest of the teachers checked with her every day for two weeks. "Where's your walking cane?" "Do you want me to walk your class to P.E.?" "Let me put that bulletin board up for you." "You shouldn't be trying to do that" (field notes, set 245/8).

On another occasion, a younger King teacher was having problems with her husband. Their arguments became so intense that she contacted Teacher C for support. Teacher C confided:

Linda and her husband are having problems. She called me crying last night and said he was throwing dishes and knocking over furniture. She wanted to know if she and her son could spend the night over to my house. When Linda got there she just cried and cried and cried. I talked to Johnny [the husband] on the phone after she got to my place. He said "Ms. F, you know I wouldn't hurt Linda. I told him I knew he didn't mean to, but he needed to learn to control his temper (field notes, set 149/8).

Linda stayed with her older co-worker a second night. Then, Teacher C arranged to leave school early in order to meet Linda's husband "to try to talk some sense into him" (field notes, set 149/8). Teacher C later reported:
I had a good, long talk with Johnny yesterday. He wants to keep his family together. I gave both him and Linda some advice about getting along in a marriage. I guess it worked because she went home last night (field notes, set 149/8).

This sense of family could be observed consistently at King. If one teacher was late for work, her students would be escorted by a co-worker into the co-worker's room as a matter of routine until their regular teacher arrived. Often, several teachers simultaneously volunteered to supervise pupils in this way for a late co-worker. Similarly, when a King teacher needed to take care of personal situations such as driving a family member to the airport, going to the doctor, or attending a funeral, her peers readily offered to cover classes until the regular teacher returned.

There never appeared to be reluctance on the part of King teachers when the need arose for any kind of peer support. Teacher H:

We help each other out around here. Everybody does. And the best thing is that you don't have to feel like you owe somebody just because they helped you. We all benefit from it. Next time it might be your turn to need a helping hand (field notes, set 244/8).

The strong sense of community at King was further characterized by a schoolwide lack of distinction between individual classes. Any teacher could and would discipline students from another class when she felt it was necessary.

King teachers frequently joined together for food and fellowship activities. Faculty birthday celebrations and appreciation brunches for various departments of the school occurred regularly. Husbands and children of the teachers often attended Saturday and after-school events at King such as the Christmas Dinner,
annual school carnival, and neighborhood clean-ups. As a result, King teachers were personally acquainted with family members of their peers. They asked questions and expressed interest in one another's family life. Teacher E had three children. Her two-year-old son Johnny and her two daughters were the subject of the following conversation with a co-worker:

Teacher G: Did little Johnny help you clean up again last weekend?
Teacher E: Oh yeah, he loves to help Mommy clean house. He sweeps, he dusts, he even vacuums.
Teacher G: That's so cute. And the girls don't help at all, do they?
Teacher E: Oh no, they run off and bury their heads in a book so they won't have to help (field notes, set 250/8).

A final category of repeated behavior observed within peer relationships of teachers at King Elementary involved discussing the question, "What are we supposed to do?" When new directives or guidelines were introduced by the principal, the teachers almost always talked to each other about how the directive should be carried out.

Interviewer: What do you talk about when you discuss what went on in faculty meeting?
Teacher F: How are we going to do it.
Interviewer: Do what?
Teacher F: Whatever it is we're supposed to do.
Interviewer: Has anyone ever tried to talk you out of doing what you were supposed to do?
Teacher F: Not really. We just kind of talk about our interpretation of the stuff and how we're going to implement it (field notes, set 247/8).

Analyses of teacher lesson plans, grade-level meeting summaries, and staff meeting agendas show a high correlation between new directives issued in King staff meetings and their implementation in the classrooms (documents, set 2/8).
Teacher-Principal Interaction

The final theme that emerged from the data on behaviors external to the classroom described the teacher-principal relationship at King Elementary School. Interactions between teacher and principal were consistently characterized by the following teacher behaviors: (a) bragging about students, (b) asking for professional assistance, and (c) sharing personal concerns.

King teachers bragged about their students to the principal on a daily basis. Most frequently, King teachers brought their students to the office to show off for the principal as a strategy to increase students' self esteem and motivation. One teacher remarked to the principal: "The kids really think it's a big deal when we bring them to the office to show you something. I use it kind of like a reward because they all want to come. So I just pick one or two and it makes them feel real special" (field notes, set 10/9).

Occasionally, the bragging appeared to have a competitive purpose. One teacher would try to show that her students were outperforming a co-worker's class. The following incident occurred on the day after Teacher B was showing off with students in the preceding example.

Teacher C: May we show you something?
Principal: Sure, what is it?
Teacher C (pointing to words on a page in the book): Read this for the principal.
Principal: That's very good, Jane
Teacher C (to principal): I just wanted you to know that the students in my class are reading too (field notes, set 11/9).
King teachers frequently turned to the principal for suggestions on handling difficult classroom situations. The principal's assistance ranged from listening to the teacher's own idea for solving the problem to providing the teacher with an administrative solution. The following conversation is typical of the interaction observed within this theme:

Teacher E: I want to talk to you about Deron.
Principal: What is it? Is he still having problems keeping up with the class?
Teacher E: Yes, he still can't read all of his sight words.
Principal: Is he the only one in your class that low?
Teacher E: No, there are a couple of others who are struggling, but he's the worst.
Principal: What about the rest of the class?
Teacher E: They're all reading except those three (field notes, 199/6).
Principal: Why don't you make those three your low group?
Teacher E: You mean have a group with just three kids?
Principal: Sure, why not? You don't have to divide your class into equal thirds for reading. Move the rest of the low students to the average group. Then work with those three. They'll benefit from the extra attention. And I think I can get you some low level books that they'll be able to read now.
Teacher E: Really? That would be great! They can't read anything from that HBJ book. The literature is too hard. I'd love something easier.
Principal: I'll get them for you after lunch.
Teacher E: Thanks, that should really help (field notes, set 260/6).

In addition to academic problems, King teachers asked the principal for assistance with student attendance and student behavior problems. Another example follows:

Teacher G: I don't think I can take Demond anymore.
Principal: Is he still acting up?
Teacher G: He disturbs the class all day every day. When I try to isolate him in the room, he starts crawling on the floor. We tried to ignore him this morning and he started singing out loud. I just can't take it anymore.
Principal: Don't put up with Demond. The next time he disrupts the class, send him to me.
Teacher G: Then he'll be in the office all the time. You have enough to do.
Principal: Don’t worry about that. Just send him to me. Don’t give him any more chances. I’ll take care of Mr. Demond Taylor.
Teacher: Good. Then maybe I’ll be able to teach the rest of my class for a change (field notes, set 206/6).

A third pattern of teacher-principal interaction at King involved teachers sharing personal concerns with the principal. These conversations about personal situations usually addressed family issues or teacher health problems. The interactions were most often arranged by a note sent to the principal requesting a private conference. The principal kept a small receptacle on the secretary’s desk for these teacher notes. By the end of the day the receptacle was crammed with scraps of paper containing teacher requests for conferences and other assistance. The principal checked the notes throughout the day, often walking to the teacher’s classroom to respond to a request for aid.

A kindergarten teacher came by the principal’s office every Monday to share events from her family weekend. The teacher’s mother-in-law was an alcoholic. The teacher was pregnant and did not want her future child to be handled by the mother-in-law. The principal, who had attended Al-Anon meetings for families of alcoholics, offered advice and books on coping with a family member’s addiction to alcohol.

On another occasion, a teacher and her husband telephoned the principal at home at about 11:00 p.m. on a Sunday night.

Teacher D: I need to leave school on my planning period tomorrow to meet with Michael’s [her son] teacher.
Principal: Okay; how long do you think you’ll be gone?
Teacher D: I don't know. His teacher called me yesterday and they want to put Michael in a special education class because of his behavior. Ron [her husband] and I are going out there. (Pauses.) Just a minute; Ron wants to talk to you.

Ron: Can you go with us, Mrs. S? They're trying to railroad my boy for something he didn't do. I believe it's because he's black because he keeps telling me he didn't do nothing. At least not what they said he did.

Principal: I'll be glad to go if you want me to.

Teacher D: I want you to go because I think that principal and assistant principal out there are prejudiced. Michael's not getting a fair chance (field notes, set 275/6).

The principal subsequently accompanied Teacher D and her spouse to Michael's school in a suburban district. The King principal served as a mediator between Teacher D and Michael's principal, eventually suggesting a compromise behavior plan that both parties agreed to adopt.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to describe the behavior of effective teachers in an effective school. Data were collected using participant observation and interviews. Documents were also collected. Data were analyzed using the constant comparative method. After intensive coding and analysis, nine themes emerged from the data. The themes represented categories of behavior that occurred repeatedly throughout the data. Six of the themes involved teacher behaviors that occurred in the classrooms at King. The six internal themes were: defining the curriculum, teaching the lesson, practicing the learning, responding to individual student needs, digressing from the lesson, and managing student behavior. The remaining data dealt with teacher behavior that occurred outside the context of the classroom. These external behaviors were further analyzed to
develop three additional themes: teacher-parent relationships, teacher-peer relationships, and teacher-principal interactions.
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to describe the behavior of effective teachers in an effective school. This study was conducted at an inner city school in a large north Texas school district. The site, King Elementary, served a population of 250 African American students in grades kindergarten through three. A qualitative research design was selected for this study because a qualitative methodology is most appropriate when the purpose is rich description and explanation of a phenomenon in context (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Overview of the Study

Data were collected from multiple sources including field notes, interview records, documents, and a researcher's journal. Analysis of data was ongoing beginning with the earliest collection of data. Later a second data analysis stage began where I refined the emerging coding categories using the constant comparative method to compare and contrast small units of information (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). The final analysis revealed nine repeated patterns or themes in the data. The first six themes related to teacher behaviors that occurred within the classroom. The final three themes described teacher behaviors that occurred outside the classroom within the effective school context. Grounded theory
(Glasser & Strauss, 1967) was developed using a cyclical iterative process. A brief summary of the themes follows.

Themes

Defining the Curriculum

This theme described the taught curriculum of the school. According to Glatthorn (1987), "the taught curriculum is the delivered curriculum—the curriculum that an observer would see in action as the teacher taught" (p. 12). At King, the primary categories that defined the taught curriculum were reading, grammar, spelling, handwriting, mathematics computation, and problem solving. Across grade levels, reading instruction was the major component of the taught curriculum. All teachers utilized explicit phonics instruction and basal textbooks to teach reading. The use of textbooks was supplemented by widespread availability of trade books and literature in every classroom. Mathematics was the second highest priority in the curriculum at King. Basic facts in addition, subtraction, and multiplication were taught daily until every student could complete 100 facts in five minutes or less. These facts were then used for problem solving instruction.

Delivering Instruction

The primary behavior patterns within this theme were asking questions, relating the lesson to student experiences, and providing models to illustrate new concepts. At King, most of the lesson content was delivered through direct
instruction punctuated by frequent teacher questioning. Teachers demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the students and the community by usually connecting their lessons to student real life experiences and interests. The use of models was most dominant in kindergarten and second grade although it occurred somewhat at every grade level. Examples of concepts where concrete models were employed include place value, measurement, and main idea.

**Practicing the Learning**

This theme described the recurring strategies King teachers employed with their pupils to practice and reinforce the learning. The primary strategies were homework, seat work, oral reading, and student recitations. Homework was given nightly at King in kindergarten through third grade. Home assignments in grade three were especially time consuming for students, according to their parents (documents, set 225/6).

Kindergarten and first grade teachers provided daily handwriting practice with emphasis on correct formation of manuscript letters. Students also practiced reading Dolch Basic Sight Words and computing basic addition, subtraction, and multiplication facts in five minutes. Worksheets and workbooks were used frequently at all grade levels for guided and independent practice in reading and mathematics.
Responding to Individual Needs

This theme described the behaviors King teachers exhibited when their students faced home problems, learning difficulties, or illnesses. Students who had difficulty understanding the lesson were usually scolded, prompted, retaught, or ignored by their teachers. Third grade teachers exhibited scolding and ignoring behaviors more than the other grade levels at King. In situations where students became ill or were troubled by family problems, King teachers consistently demonstrated concern and willingness to help. During the course of this study, all students were assisted with illnesses and family problems either directly by the teacher or indirectly through the teacher’s referral to sources outside the classroom.

Digressing From the Topic

Spontaneous lectures on phonics, grammar, life values, and the standardized test were the recurring behaviors described within this theme. Teachers paused during their planned instruction for up to 15 minutes to talk to the class about these topics. Immediately after the digression, the teacher resumed instruction. These digressions fit Atwell’s (1987) description of mini lessons "that create a communal frame of reference" to which students can be referred later ... when the need for a particular strategy arises (p. 78). Usually the digressions were initiated in response to events that occurred during planned instruction.
Managing Student Behavior

The repeated categories that described techniques used to manage student behavior were praise, proximity, scolding, routines, and corporal punishment. King teachers frequently scolded students who were off task or disruptive in the classroom. The teachers also provided praise for their students when behavior was exemplary. There was no discernible pattern of discrimination in the choice of students who were selected for praise or reprimands. Past incidents of misconduct did not cause a teacher to withhold praise when the same student's behavior improved even slightly. Similarly, no student was exempted from reprimands because of previous positive accomplishments. As a result, students and parents appeared to accept the negative consequences as being fair and even deserved (documents, set 280/6).

All classrooms from kindergarten to third grade operated using highly structured routines. Teachers taught students pencil sharpening routines, water fountain routines, homework routines, restroom routines, and even hand washing routines. These findings are consistent with research conducted by Evertson and Anderson (1979), Brophy (1979), MacDonald (1991) and others who report a correlation between managing student behavior and effective classroom instruction. Brophy (1979) declares "good organization and management is good instruction.... Successful classroom managers spend a great deal of time early in the year conducting semi-formal lessons to familiarize students with rules and
procedures. Classroom organization and management skills are intimately related to instruction skills" (p. 35).

Corporal punishment, though illegal in classrooms according to district policy, was widely used as a strategy for managing student behavior at King. The spankings were administered with the principal's tacit approval, although the teacher handbook specifically stated that corporal punishment in classrooms was against district policy. Approximately 95 percent of King's parents supported and often requested teacher use of corporal punishment for their children (documents, set 250/6).

Teacher-parent Relationships

This theme described teacher behaviors outside the classroom context. King teachers frequently communicated with parents of pupils in their classrooms. During the course of this study, every teacher conducted at least one face-to-face conference with a parent or family member for each student in the class. In addition to scheduled conferences, the teachers and parents regularly discussed student conduct, student attendance, student academic performance, student family life, and teacher conduct. Teachers usually controlled the tone and the content of their conversations with parents by remaining calm and somewhat authoritative during discussions.
Teacher-peer Relationships

The second theme that addressed teacher behaviors external to the classroom context described teacher-to-teacher relationships. Teachers at King interacted professionally and socially across ethnic, age, and religious groups. The recurring patterns with this theme were: (a) sharing instructional ideas and materials, (b) discussing students and parents, (c) supporting peer personal concerns, and (d) asking "what are we supposed to do?" Each of the categories under this theme related to King teachers’ willingness to help one another. They did so without requiring repayment of assistance given.

Teacher-principal Relationships

The final theme in this study described the relationship between King teachers and the principal. Teachers consistently engaged in the following conversations with the principal: (a) bragging about student performance, (b) asking for professional assistance, and (c) sharing personal concerns. Teachers discussed student academic, behavior, and attendance problems with the principal when these problems could not be resolved by routine measures in the classroom. There appeared to be no fear or reluctance on the part of teachers when they needed the principal’s assistance.

King teachers also frequently interacted with the principal regarding their own personal lives. They appeared to feel comfortable sharing family problems and health concerns. The teacher-principal relationship between each King
Addressing the Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to describe the behavior of effective teachers in an effective school. The research was guided by the following questions: In an effective school, (a) what is the curriculum and how is it delivered? (b) How do effective teachers respond to individual student needs? (c) How do effective teachers manage student behavior? and (d) How do effective teachers interact with parents, the principal, and one another? The following section will address the findings for each research question.

What is the curriculum and how is it delivered? At King, teachers modified the scope and sequence of the district-mandated curriculum in order to effectively address student needs that would be measured on the spring standardized tests. Basic skills in reading and mathematics were emphasized at all grade levels, including kindergarten. Teachers devoted more time to the teaching of reading than to any other subjects during the day. Reading was taught using basal readers and an explicit phonics approach. Students were rehearsed over basic sight words daily. Children's literature was used daily, usually for teacher read-aloud and free voluntary reading by students.

Handwriting and spelling were not integrated with reading instruction; instead they were both taught as discrete subjects, especially in kindergarten and
first grade classrooms. Little formal writing instruction took place at King. According to the teachers, this was because writing was not assessed on the standardized tests for grades K-3.

Basal textbooks were used in all subject areas. Teachers primarily utilized the textbooks as source material rather than following them sequentially as their curriculum guides. The exception was at third grade, where teachers used the textbooks in sequential order from the first page to the last one.

Mathematics instruction began with the memorization of basic computation facts. Manipulatives and models were used to help explain new concepts such as place value, geometric shapes, and measurement. Problem solving was a primary mathematics thrust in second and third grades at King.

Teachers usually employed lectures accompanied by questioning to deliver instruction at King. Many questions were asked during instruction to provide ongoing checks of student understanding. These kinds of questions were used to determine reteaching small group instructional needs. A second type of questioning was used after the lesson was completed. These questions were part of the teachers' ongoing assessment strategy. Frequently questioning was part of the teachers' efforts to build schema and background by relating the lesson to student interests and experiences.

Often teachers interrupted themselves during planned delivery of instruction to provide spontaneous mini-lessons on three recurring topics: phonics, the standardized test, and life values. These mini-lessons were unplanned digressions
from the lesson topics that all King teachers made every day. As a result, phonics, the standardized test, and life values were heavily emphasized in the taught curriculum at this school. The emphasis originated from the teachers themselves rather than outside sources such as textbooks, curriculum guides, or central office administrators.

**How do effective teachers respond to individual student needs?** The King teachers used both praise and scolding to respond to students who were having difficulty understanding the learning. The teachers did not appear concerned about injuring a child's self esteem when they believed the child was capable of mastering the objective. As a result, students were often scolded for answering questions incorrectly or not paying attention in class. Few edible rewards such as candy or popcorn were used at the classroom level to reinforce student learning. Verbal praise, however, occurred frequently whenever students demonstrated understanding of a skill or objective.

Often slower students were given some assistance such as teacher prompting and peer coaching to help them recall important ideas from the lesson. In addition, students who had trouble with the learning were usually retaught individually or in small groups. Teachers never ignored student responses in the small group setting although they sometimes ignored incorrect responses during their whole group lessons.

King students brought a variety of personal problems to the classroom. Many had mothers or fathers who were incarcerated in the state penitentiary.
Most had at least one parent addicted to crack cocaine, marijuana, or alcohol. During the course of this study, the P.T.A. president, who had two daughters at King, became addicted to crack, stole almost $1,000 from the P.T.A. account to buy drugs, and was subsequently jailed for cocaine possession. Parents in an intoxicated state frequently arrived for conferences or P.T.A. meetings at the school. Almost every child witnessed at least one shooting. Three students' mothers died during the time this study took place. Many students went to homes at night where there was no food, no water, or no electricity. King teachers often bought books, clothing, food, and school supplies for students in need. The purchases were carried out discreetly, without making the other children aware of the problem. The teachers stressed classroom acceptance for poorer children and dealt severely with any students who teased or ridiculed others because of appearance. As a result, most very low income students had excellent attendance and many friends at the school. These low income children received special attention from the teacher about their basic needs, usually in private conversations before or after class.

How do effective teachers manage student behavior? Every King teacher spent the first day of school going over classroom rules and routines with the students. During the next two weeks, rules and routines were reviewed daily. Classroom routines helped to create and maintain an orderly, highly structured classroom environment. Students hung up their jackets, sharpened pencils, went
to restrooms, and drank from the water fountain according to detailed classroom routines.

Student behavior was exemplary throughout the school. The most frequent consequences for misbehavior included parental contact, scolding, and corporal punishment by the teacher or principal. Parents supported the use of corporal punishment for their children; however, teachers only used it as a last resort after scolding, moving the student, and calling the parent failed to bring about improved behavior.

Rules also governed student leisure time at King Elementary. Student free time before, during, and after school hours usually involved reading routines. The first 15 minutes of the day were set aside for sustained silent reading. Students who finished their assignments early were trained to read a book, either at their desks or in one of the free voluntary reading centers in the hallways outside their classrooms.

How do effective teachers interact with their peers, parents, and the principal? A strong sense of community existed between King teachers. They discussed family problems and supported one another in personal matters. The support was voluntary and universal throughout the building. If one teacher was ill, co-workers covered her class while she went to the doctor. If a teacher was late getting to work, other staff members divided her class and supervised the students until the late teacher arrived. Children and spouses of King teachers
were well known at the school and often attended field trips, luncheons, awards programs, and even the neighborhood clean-up.

Within the school, King teachers did not exhibit a sense of competition with one another regarding student test performance; however, they were very competitive with teachers in other schools across the district. King instructors shared instructional materials and ideas freely across grade levels. They made copies of workbooks they had bought and passed the copies to their peers. They planned lessons together and even occasionally put up bulletin board displays as a team. The sense of community at King allowed teachers to routinely discipline their peers' students when the students misbehaved. Schoolwide, between teachers there appeared to be an attitude of "ours" rather than "mine" or "yours" (field notes, set 179/6).

Parental relationships were characterized by firm assertive behavior on the part of King teachers. Parents were notified when there were problems with student conduct, learning, or attendance. Teachers reported these problems fully and often informed the parent that their child had already been spanked in class. Again, parents were supportive and usually said they would repeat the spanking when the child got home after school. Although only one or two parents volunteered in King classrooms, about 95 percent of them attended parent conferences and P.T.A. meetings regularly.

An additional aspect of King parent relationships involved the personal assistance that the teachers often provided for the students' families. Sometimes
the assistance was simply offering a sympathetic ear to the parent or guardian. At other times, the teachers counseled couples with their marital problems, mediated child custody disputes, and acted as a family chauffeur.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to describe the behavior of effective teachers in the context of an effective school. The study was conducted using a qualitative case study research design. Because of the small sample size, case study research is not regarded as generalizable to other settings; however, case study research does offer opportunities for explanation and the development of grounded theory. On the basis of the findings for the research questions in this study, the following conclusions were derived:

1. Effective teachers emphasize mastery of basic skills in reading and mathematics for every student. Although problem solving and higher order thinking skills are introduced later, successful teachers begin the school year by assessing students' ability to decode and compute basic mathematics facts. Phonics and comprehension skills are taught systematically rather than incidentally, and utilize direct instructional methods. Manipulatives and models are used to introduce mathematics concepts, then set aside as students become more proficient. Often the entire day is spent on reading and mathematics instruction, especially until students master basic skills in these areas. This finding is consistent with the conclusions of Edmonds (1979), who noted that effective schools "get that way partly by making it clear that pupil acquisition of basic school skills
takes precedence over all other school activities. When necessary, school energy and resources can be diverted from other business in furtherance of the fundamental objectives" (p. 22).

2. An explicit direct instruction approach is highly effective for low socioeconomic African American students. Inquiry learning, cooperative learning, and computer-assisted instruction were all used occasionally by King's effective teachers; however, the majority of their lessons were delivered using direct instruction techniques. Levine (1992) characterizes direct instruction as instruction where (a) teachers focus students on a goal or objective, (b) teachers make sure students are aware of why the learning is important, (c) teachers provide explicit instruction through modeling and explanation, (d) application follows the explanation, permitting students to try out their interpretations of what was taught, and (e) the teacher monitors the application phase. These characteristics accurately describe the lecturing, modeling, and questioning behaviors used most frequently by King teachers to deliver instruction.

Direct instruction appears to be especially effective for teaching poor minority children how to read. Many whole language advocates suggest that direct instruction is undesirable (Doake, 1987; Goodman, 1986; Veatch, 1988) and should be replaced with indirect methods. However, the findings of this case study are consistent with arguments by Delpit (1988) and other researchers who suggest that indirect instruction is especially inappropriate for minority students learning to read because it "creates situations in which students ultimately find
themselves held accountable for knowing a set of rules about which no one has ever directly informed them" (p. 287). Delpit argues instead for explicit direct instruction where rules are explicitly taught and students are told why the learning is important. Basal textbooks, worksheets, and other traditional materials that support direct instruction may be the most effective tools for low-income minority classrooms when used in a context of real literacy.

3. Low socio-economic African American students achieve high academic performance in a structured classroom environment. Effective teachers at King consistently enforced rules and routines, thereby reducing off-task and disruptive student behavior to a negligible level. According to Edmonds (1979), effective schools have an "atmosphere that is orderly without being rigid, quiet without being oppressive, and generally conducive to the instructional business at hand" (p. 22). Furthermore, punishment strategies such as scolding and corporal punishment when used sparingly along with generous praise do not appear to destroy students' self-esteem, their motivation, or their ability to learn. This conclusion is consistent with observations by Purkey and Smith (1983) that "clear, reasonable rules fairly and consistently enforced not only can reduce behavior problems that interfere with learning but also can promote feelings of pride and responsibility" (p. 445).

4. Effective teachers routinely make life values and test taking skills part of the regular instruction in their classrooms. They talk to students about loyalty, honesty, dependability, and other values when opportunities occur to bring these
topics into the lesson. Wynne (1980) notes that schools "inescapably have powerful character-formation effects" (p. xxi). In effective schools, effective teachers use teachable moments during the day to teach their students positive character and citizenship traits. In addition, effective teachers begin discussing the importance of performing well on the standardized test on the first day of class and continue throughout the year. They create an attitude of test awareness in their students by consistently pointing out connections between daily instruction and the upcoming standardized test.

5. The culture of an effective school is characterized by the caring interpersonal relationships among students, parents, and staff members. Effective teachers in effective schools demonstrate personal concern for parents, students, and one another. Their concern frequently involves a personal expenditure of effort, time, and money without desire for compensation. The caring climate created by this concern is similar to the relationship between family members or a closely knit community. In fact, effective teachers often assume a parenting role with students who have personal problems such as illness, poor hygiene, or a lack of basic needs; thus parent involvement in these schools tends to focus on the teacher helping the parent rather than the parent volunteering to help the teacher.

It appears that parents' knowledge of the teachers' concern for their children contributes to the parents' trust in the staff and the school itself. This trust permitted King teachers to control most of the interactions between parent and
teacher at the school. Furthermore, the caring interpersonal relationships permit the teacher to view themselves as a family rather than as competitors. When one teacher in an effective school has problems, peers are willing to step forward with both professional and personal support. The need for teachers to function as a closely knit community is suggested by several researchers. Purkey and Smith (1983) state, "There is persuasive evidence that community feeling, the sense of being a recognizable member of a community that is supportive ... contributes to ... increased achievement" (p. 445).

6. There is not a single complete description of effective teaching that fits every effective teacher. Instead, effective teachers are empowered to make their own decisions about what works best for them in their own classrooms. Whitlock (1990) states, "Real empowerment means making good decisions and taking responsibility for them. To make good decisions, you have to know a great deal about the school" (p. 28). Effective teachers pick and choose from a variety of methods and materials to help their students master the learning. They seldom utilize instructional programs from publishers or central office sources exactly as they are designed to be implemented. Instead, effective teachers modify and adapt new programs to fit their own teaching style and the specific needs of their pupils. When they find a technique that works for them, they stick to it, regardless of the age or popularity of the technique. Consequently, classroom effectiveness cannot be prescribed by administrators, textbooks, or curriculum and instruction personnel. Levine notes that "several studies of unusually effective
elementary schools have concluded that teachers in these schools tend to adapt curriculum materials and instructional methods for use in their respective classrooms, as contrasted with mechanical implementation following highly prescribed steps and sequences" (p. 32). Several effective teachers constantly moved around the classroom during their presentation of the lesson. Other equally effective teachers stood or sat in one place the entire time they were teaching. Effective second grade teachers used a lot of literature in their classrooms; however, two first grade teachers who were also effective used practically no literature in their classes, relying almost completely on assorted basal reading textbooks instead. Some of the effective teachers used computer technology daily in their classrooms. Others were effective at the same grade level using computers only once a week. There was no single formula for teacher effectiveness.

Although some similarities exist across all 11 of the effective classrooms, the differences are far too numerous to support a universal description of teacher effectiveness. The only common element appears to be a strong sense of teacher autonomy exhibited by the teachers.

Suggestions for Further Research

This qualitative case study adds to the limited body of research examining the role of the effective teacher in an effective school. Qualitative case studies are not generalizable because of the small sample involved; however, one of the goals of qualitative investigations is the generation of questions that warrant
further research. The conclusions of this study suggest the following areas for additional research.

School Culture

How does the culture of a school evolve? How is it maintained? The link between teachers' sense of community in a school and its effectiveness should be analyzed further. Is there a cause-effect relationship?

Student Behavior

How is student self-esteem developed? How is it damaged? How does negative reinforcement affect students in schools and classrooms that are effective? Is corporal punishment an effective discipline strategy under any circumstances?

Staff Development

Should the training of effective teachers and ineffective teachers differ when new curriculum or instructional techniques are implemented? How can teachers be given ownership of ideas that are implemented top-down? Since effective teachers appear to adapt, modify, or ignore new programs and techniques, researchers must investigate new ways of delivering staff development while maintaining teacher autonomy in the classroom.
Curriculum and Instruction

Are current curriculum and instruction models effective for African American students? Do African American students learn more through a traditional, direct instruction approach? While whole language and other indirect instructional approaches appear to be successful with some student population, there is evidence that other students, particularly low income minority students, benefit from more systematic direct instruction, including phonics. Is there a difference in how low income minority students learn? If there is a difference, how can curriculum and instruction experts address it?

Instructional Leadership

What is the role of the principal in creating a caring culture in the effective school? Is the principal part of the culture or outside of it? What is the role of the principal in creating and fostering teacher autonomy? Effective teachers are empowered to make their own decisions about what works best in their classrooms. How does the principal function as the instructional leader for empowered effective teachers? Does the principal function as their leader?
APPENDIX A

SAMPLE INFORMAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
INFORMAL CONVERSATIONAL INTERVIEW

(EXAMPLE)

1. What were the instructional goals during the lesson I observed?

2. Can you describe the strategies you used during the observation?

3. What are some specific student behaviors you noticed in response to your instructions?

4. How did you respond to those behaviors?

5. Did you feel the lesson was successful?

Each question will be followed with probes when appropriate. The following probes are representative:

1. Can you tell some more?

2. Do you mean ...?

3. Can you give me an example?

4. Why or why not?

5. How did that make you feel?
APPENDIX B
SAMPLE GUIDED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
GUIDED INTERVIEW

(EXAMPLE)

1. How do you communicate with parents?
2. How do parents communicate with you?
3. How are ideas exchanged between teachers at King?
4. What can be done to enhance communication between teachers and parents at our school?
5. What can be done to enhance communication between staff members?

Each question will be followed with probes when appropriate. The following examples are representative of the probes:

1. Can you tell me some more?
2. What does that mean to you?
3. Do you mean ...?
4. Can you give me an example?
5. Why or why not?
6. What do you recommend?
APPENDIX C

PARENT SURVEY
Directions: Using a number 2 pencil, please respond to the following by darkening the oval that best describes your opinion.

1. Did you attend the Fall Parent Conference at your child's school?  
   - Yes  
   - No

2. Are you a member of a parent group? (PTA, SCC, PAC, etc.)  
   - Yes  
   - No

3. Has your child's teacher met with you this year?  
   - Yes  
   - No

4. Have you volunteered at your child's school this year?  
   - Yes  
   - No

5. The teachers care that my child learns.  
   - Agree  
   - Disagree  
   - Not sure

6. I feel welcome in my child's school.  
   - Agree  
   - Disagree  
   - Not sure

7. My child's school is a good place for learning.  
   - Agree  
   - Disagree  
   - Not sure

8. The principal, teachers, and staff care about my child.  
   - Agree  
   - Disagree  
   - Not sure

9. School personnel inform me on how my child is doing.  
   - Agree  
   - Disagree  
   - Not sure

10. Principals and teachers are available for parent conferences.  
    - Agree  
    - Disagree  
    - Not sure

11. The principal communicates to the parents what is happening at the school.  
    - Agree  
    - Disagree  
    - Not sure

12.
13. The school gives me suggestions on ways I can help my child learn.

14. I am...
   - male
   - female

15. My child participates in a Chapter 1 reading/language arts program.
   - yes
   - no
   - not sure

16. My child is enrolled in a magnet, academy, or vanguard program.
   - yes
   - no
   - not sure

17. My child receives instruction in bilingual/ESL or ESL at least part of the day.
   - yes
   - no
   - not sure

18. I have children in grades...
    (You may fill in more than one oval.)
    - PK
    - K
    - 1
    - 2
    - 3
    - 4
    - 5

19. I have children in grades...
    (You may fill in more than one oval.)
    - 6
    - 7
    - 8
    - 9
    - 10
    - 11
    - 12
REFERENCES


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