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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFECTS OF A SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED INTRODUCTORY POETRY UNIT ON THE COGNITIVE GAINS AND AFFECTIVE RESPONSES OF NINTH GRADE STUDENTS

by

Eugenia Ruth Ball

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
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Approved by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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BALL, EUGENIA RUTH. An Investigation into the Effects of a Specifically Designed Introductory Poetry Unit on the Cognitive Gains and Affective Responses of Ninth Grade Students. (1979)
Directed by: Dr. Lois V. Edinger. Pp. 171.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether a specifically designed unit of poetry study could produce cognitive achievement without damaging affective growth in appreciation of poetry for ninth grade students. In this study, cognitive achievement refers to measurable objective test items and affective growth refers to indications from student responses on a pre- and post-survey instrument. A corollary was to determine whether a teacher who was reluctant to teach poetry could replicate the unit with equal success.

Eight heterogeneously grouped ninth grade classes were randomly selected and assigned for three groups of two classes each to obtain treatment and testing while one group of two classes received no treatment and served as the non-equivalent comparison group. Each treatment group was taught by a different instructor. All three groups, however, were involved in a developmental sequence of poetry which utilized mutual materials. Teaching styles and student-teacher relationships were uncontrolled variables.

Objectives for the cognitive achievement were established by the author based on predetermined expectations of senior high school English teachers for minimal poetry skills to be

acquired by the completion of ninth grade English. Pre- and post-tests consisting of five items on figurative, poetic language and five items on structure were administered. Through analyses of variance, null hypotheses concerning cognitive gain between the treatment groups and the comparison group and differential treatment effect among the three treatment groups were tested at the .01 level of significance. Pre- and post-attitude surveys were administered and subjected to various chi-square analyses to assess treatment effect at the .01 level of significance.

The analyses of variance results indicated a significant cognitive gain for the treatment groups when compared with the non-treatment group but no significant differential treatment effect on cognitive growth among the treatment groups. Chi-square analyses showed no significant treatment effects on the affective responses.

It was concluded from the study that a specifically designed poetry unit can produce significant cognitive growth without adversely affecting the students' attitude toward poetry. It was also concluded that a teacher who is reluctant to teach poetry can replicate the unit of study with equal success. It was a major recommendation that further research be conducted to determine possible teaching methods which would increase relevancy and credibility of poetry for students.

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A note of thanks is given to each teacher who cooperated in supplying information and providing classes for this study; and finally, to my family and friends for their patience and understanding.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SCOPE

Introduction

Poetry occupies a somewhat tenuous position in the curriculum for the junior high school student of English. With the current emphasis on basic skills, competency tests, and teacher accountability coupled with the elimination of the core or block program and a return to departmentalization, teachers feel compelled to teach only the essentials. Unfortunately, for most teachers, poetry is not considered an essential portion of the English curriculum.

Departmentalization provides each student the opportunity for instruction by an English major, but it compresses the time limit for instruction into forty-five minute periods as opposed to the hour and a half span of the former core scheduling. In an eight-period day, an English teacher may have approximately 180 student contacts. With public demand for better student performance in reading and writing skills, teachers, frustrated by the numbers of students in class and limited contact hours, may increasingly eliminate the teaching of poetry from the curriculum.

Teachers who feel that poetry is essential to the curriculum may encounter negative responses from the students if

they attempt to teach it. Most attitude surveys of junior high school students indicate that grammar and poetry are the most disliked areas of the English curriculum. Teachers tend to feel that grammar is vital to writing performance and continue to teach it in spite of student resistance. Poetry rarely has the same dedication to its significance from teachers.

Many English teachers recall their own experiences with college courses geared toward infinite interpretation and analysis of poetry combined with studies in intricate scansions of prosody as unpleasant and difficult. Yet, these same teachers may impose on their students identical experiences for lack of knowledge of alternative teaching techniques. Some teachers readily admit they avoid the teaching of poetry because they do not understand it themselves, do not know how to teach it, and feel uncomfortable with poetry.

To help poetry survive, or to revive poetry in the English curriculum, is a task of at least two dimensions. First, teachers must be provided methods for teaching poetry that will increase student appreciation and produce adult readers and teachers of poetry. Second, teachers must be made aware of the advantages of including poetry in the English curriculum. This study addresses the first dimension.

Statement of the Problem

There is a need for poetry teaching in the junior high school which will enable students to rediscover their youthful enjoyment of poetry and prepare them for more serious encounters with poetry in the senior high school curriculum and in adult life. Methods for teaching poetry which build on the strengths of early experiences with rhythm and verse need to be utilized and modeled for classroom teachers who feel uncomfortable with poetry and are reluctant to teach it. This study is designed to accomplish both goals and evaluate the results.

The central question addressed is whether ninth grade students can undergo a unit of poetry study, acquire specific knowledge of minimal basic terms and concepts, and maintain, or increase, their appreciation of poetry. A corollary of the study is to determine whether an English teacher can observe the techniques presented in the teaching of poetry, imitate them with adaptation to his/her individual style, and obtain the same results.

Justification for the Study

In an age of educational accountability and public cry for competency in student performance, it becomes imperative for English teachers to explore all possibilities for successful and palatable teaching experiences which produce performance

results in the skills of reading and writing. The study of poetry can be utilized to both ends. The brevity of poetry makes it more manageable for low-level students. When read aloud, the rhythm of poetry trains students in the rhythm and cadences of oral communication and improves the patterns of oral reading. The study of rhyming words, alliteration, assonance, and consonance can provide a vehicle for word attack skills in reading. The stanzas in poetry can be used as a transfer for paragraph development skills in prose. Producing original poems can free the imagination and generate ideas that are more difficult to reach through prose. The study of poetry can sharpen the senses and improve the powers of observation. Poetry can be an excellent vehicle for improving reading comprehension skills through a compressed unit of working material.[1] None of these skills can be accomplished easily through poetry, however, if students and teachers have negative feelings toward poetry. It would not make sense to combine students' negative attitudes toward poetry with their frustrations in attempting to improve their reading skills. Unlike the principle in math, in English two negatives do not result in a positive answer. If poetry could become an enjoyable experience, then a new avenue for abundant basic skill study programs could be made available.

[1]June Byers, "Using Poetry to Help Educationally Deprived Children Learn Inductively," Elementary English (March 1965): 275.

To assess the status of the teaching of poetry in the junior high school and determine whether a need exists for teaching teachers how to make poetry more enjoyable for students, a survey instrument was distributed to all junior high English teachers in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School system. Fourteen of the twenty-one junior high schools returned the survey sheets with a total of eighty-eight responses. (See Table 1)

Table 1

Teacher Assessment of Poetry in the Junior High School

N=88 with 14 out of 21 junior high schools reporting

		Yes	No
1.	Do your students seem to enjoy poetry?	59	29
2.	Do you read poetry yourself?	79	8
3.	Do you enjoy poetry?	77	8
4.	Do you feel that you know what "good" poetry is?	64	17
5.	Do you feel that all students should be exposed to the teaching of poetry at some time during the school years?	80	0
	If Yes--at what level or levels-- elementary (11), junior high (6), senior high (8), college (2), all (47).		
6.	Have you ever participated in the Poets-in-the-Schools Program?	21	66
7.	Has the student response to this program been positive?	22	4

8. Name a favorite poet you have studied or enjoyed.[a]

Poet	Responses
John Tobias	1
Robert Frost	18
Longfellow	4
Poe	5
Brownings	3
Yeats	2
Wallace Stevens	1
Burns	1
Langston Hughes	5
Dickinson	3
Randall Jarrell	1
Nikki Giovanni	3
e.e. Cummings	2
Sandburg	7
Shakespeare	1
Wordsworth	1
Kipling	2
Eugene Field	1
John Milton	1
Paul L. Dunbar	1
T.S. Eliot	2
Gerald Manley Hopkins	1
Keats	2
McKuen	1
James Weldon Johnson	1
Gwendolyn Brooks	1
Charleen Swansea	1
John Masefield	1
Whitman	1
William Carlos Williams	1
Ellen Johnston	1
Blake	1
Houseman	1
Dickey	1
Baldwin	1
Byron	2
Shelley	1
Wheatley	1
Total	84

[a]Responses are recorded exactly as written on surveys.

	Yes	No
9. Do you teach poetry to your students?	68	20

Answer the following questions only if the answer to number nine is Yes.

10. Do you teach (a) a unit of poetry, 20 (b) poetry when it appears in the literature book, 7 (c) poetry interspersed throughout the school year, 11 (d) poetry with a combination of (a) and (c), 30.

11. Do you teach poems from the literature book?	62	6
12. Do you teach poems you provide for the class?	57	11
13. Do you teach poetry for enjoyment and appreciation only?	28	40
14. Do you teach the poetic tools or devices? (simile, onomatopoeia, etc.)	50	18
15. Do you teach something about the poet's life?	56	12
16. Do you teach anything about the period in which the poet lived or lives?	42	26
17. Do you teach the various forms of poetry? (Haiku, limerick, sonnet, ballad, etc.)	58	10
18. Do you explain the meaning of the poem to the student? How do you determine the meaning of the poem? (a) By research into the poet's life and times, 12 (b) by what you have been taught about the poem in the past, 18 (c) by your impressions of the poem, 24 (d) by your experiencing of the poem itself, 15 (e) all of these, 23.	61	7
19. Do you require the student to analyze or interpret a poem?	52	16
20. Do you accept any interpretation of a poem the student offers provided he can defend his answers?	66	2

		Yes	No
21.	Do you require students to memorize some poetry?	36	32
22.	Do you require students to write some poetry?	57	11
23.	Do students ever illustrate their or the author's poems?	61	7
24.	Do you teach only those poems which you enjoy?	10	58
25.	Do you teach poems you feel the students should be exposed to as "good" literature?	58	10
26.	Do you ask the students to bring in poems for study?	42	24
27.	Do you teach only modern poetry?	0	68
28.	Do you teach both narrative and lyrical poetry?	67	1
29.	Have you ever taught a grammar lesson with poetry? (Punctuation, sentence structure, etc.)	28	40
30.	Have you ever taught a reading lesson with poetry? (Word attack, vocabulary, rhyming words, etc.)	36	32

31. How much time do you spend on poetry?

Two weeks	11
Three weeks	11
Four weeks	7
Five weeks	0
Six weeks	6
One quarter	3
Throughout year	4
Very little	9
Nc response	17

32.	Do you grade student poems?	29	39

33. How do you grade poetry units?

Tests on terminology	15
Credit for reading and/or writing poems	2
Originality	6
Creativity	9
Interpretation and understanding	5
Content	3
Organization	1
Neatness	4
Quality	3
Effort and ability	3
Spelling, capitalization, punctuation errors	1
Participation	8
Memory work	3
Contract with points	3
Write comments	1
Illustrations	1
Quantity	3
Subjective	1
With checks, check minus or plus	1
Amount completed	3
Good, satisfactory or poor	1
Paper on poets	1

34. In teaching poetry do you use (a) visuals (prints, slides, pictures, etc.) 34 (b) objects 19 (c) recordings 34 (d) filmstrips 18 (e) movies 6 (f) all 17 (g) none 2.

35. Do you consider poetry to be one of the frills of English or a necessity?

Frill	14
Necessity	44
Necessary frill	7
Neither	3

36. Where would you rank poetry in the order of importance and need in the content areas usually covered in an English classroom? (1) grammar, (2) composition, (3) novels, (4) short stories, (5) drama, (6) non-fiction, (7) poetry.

Rank Number	Responses
1	1
2	2
3	8
4	14
5	22
6	6
7	11

One would expect the responses from this school district to be better than average because of the three years of exposure and impact of an active and successful Poetry-in-the-Schools program.

Of the eighty-eight responses, fifty-nine teachers believed their students enjoy poetry and twenty-nine felt the students do not. Sixty-eight teachers teach poetry to their students and twenty do not, yet only five of the twenty-nine respondents who listed negative responses of student attitudes come from the category of teachers who do not teach poetry. Of the sixty-eight teachers who teach poetry, forty-four claim to support poetry as a necessity while twenty-four teachers label poetry a frill or a "necessary" frill. In rank ordering the usual content areas of an English class, only one teacher considered poetry to be first and only eleven of sixty-eight teachers ranked poetry above fourth place. The highest percentage of teachers ranked poetry as fifth place in the English classroom and eleven teachers ranked it last.

The amount of time spent on poetry in a 180-day period also reflects the place poetry occupies in the English classroom.

Of the sixty-eight teachers who teach poetry, seventeen made no response to this item. From fifty-one responses, it is noted that only nine teachers spend more than four weeks on poetry. Most teachers spend two or three weeks on poetry and nine of the fifty-one responded with statements such as "very little" or "not enough."

The teaching emphasis most common in the junior high school is indicated by the large numbers of teachers who require students to analyze poetry (52), memorize poetry (36), and to write poetry (57). The survey indicates that these teachers do not follow Stephen Dunning's "principles" because they do teach only units of poetry, and they do teach poems they do not enjoy.[2]

From the responses to the question on how the teachers grade poetry, it is obvious the teachers either do not know the purpose of teaching poetry or else they are grading on items which do not exemplify the purpose. Only fifteen teachers test for knowledge of poetic terms and only five teachers grade for understanding of the poems. The remainder of the poetry grades is based upon originality, grammar, participation, reports on poets' lives, memorization, neatness, illustrations, organization, and effort.

[2]Stephen Dunning and Alan B. Howes, Literature for Adolescents: Teaching Poems, Stories, Novels, and Plays. (Glenview, Ill.: Scott Foresman and Company, 1975), p. 17.

If the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system is atypical because it has been positively influenced through contact with poets-in-the-schools, it would be safe to assume that other school systems would have equal or greater needs. Although twenty teachers who indicated they do not teach poetry seem to be a relatively small number, approximately 2,000 students would be affected and would receive no poetry experiences at the junior high level. With these results, it appears that there is a definite need to provide teachers direction in poetry study and alternative teaching techniques which will enable them to impart to students significant cognitive enrichment without adverse affective responses toward poetry.

Assumptions

There is no attempt in this study to prove that poetry is beneficial to every student or that poetry study can produce improved reading and writing skills. It is accepted that historically the precedence of the teaching of poetry was established on the merits of the art form. It is assumed that English teachers recognize the merit of poetry and that they desire to and can learn techniques of teaching poetry through observation of those techniques with subsequent periods of dialogue with the instructor.

The following additional assumptions are basic to the design of this study:

1. Appropriate cognitive test items can be designed by utilizing poetry knowledge which senior high English teachers deem desirable for junior high students to have mastered.
2. Testing with an instrument designed to measure specifically designated cognitive concepts rather than a standardized norm-referenced poetry test is more appropriate for this study which focuses on an introductory poetry unit.
3. All questionnaires and tests would be completed honestly and sincerely.
4. The populations of the groups are normally distributed.
5. The variances of the populations of the groups are approximately equal.

Hypotheses and Questions

The basic concern of this study is to determine whether changes in cognitive understanding of poetry can be obtained through an intensive unit of study without an adverse effect on the affective area of appreciation of poetry. A corollary of the study is to determine whether a teacher-observer can replicate the poetry study with equal results. Two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at the .01 level of significance:

1. There is no significant change in cognitive understanding of poetry between the three treatment groups and the non-equivalent comparison group.
2. There is no significant change in cognitive understanding of poetry among the three treatment groups.

A final hypothesis to be obtained through questionnaire responses subjected to chi-square analysis for significance at the .01 level is that there will be no decrease in the number of favorable student responses to the enjoyment or appreciation of poetry.

Limitations

This study is limited to eight classes of ninth-grade students in a junior high school in Charlotte, North Carolina. Six classes in paired groupings were instructed by three different teachers utilizing similar methods. This provided for, but did not control, the variables of individual teacher personalities and student-teacher relationships which would influence the study. Two classes served as the non-equivalent comparison group and were given no instruction in poetry. The study did not deprive these students because they would not have received instruction in poetry whether the study was located there or not. This school was intentionally selected because of the limited amount of instruction in poetry being delivered by the teachers and because of the cooperation and interest among the teachers to learn new approaches in teaching poetry.

The poems selected for study were not pretested for student appeal. Other poems may have produced different results.

Overview of Procedures

A unit of poetry study was designed by the author based on limited research studies and various teaching theories in the area of poetry. Pre- and post-surveys were administered to six ninth grade English classes to determine the degree of dislike or predisposition toward poetry. The data were subjected to chi-square analyses for significance. A test of cognitive understanding of basic poetry terms and concepts recommended by senior high school English teachers for mastery by ninth grade was constructed by the author. This test served as the pre- and post-test which was administered to eight ninth grade English classes. The data were subjected to analyses of variance for significance.

A detailed description of instruments, population, treatment and data collection procedures is presented in Chapter III.

Summary

The continued expression of distaste for poetry by junior high school students and the lack of preparation for senior high and college level studies of poetry prompted the experimentation of establishing a unit of poetry study which would

attempt to overcome both obstacles. The remainder of this study is organized in the following manner:

Chapter II presents a review of previous research and related literature.

Chapter III describes the program of study, data-gathering instruments and methods, and treatment procedures.

Chapter IV is a presentation and analysis of the data.

Chapter V includes a summary, conclusions and implications, and recommendations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH AND LITERATURE

Related Research

There has been very little research done in the area of teaching poetry and the methods which enable that teaching to be effective at the junior high school level. In fact, prior to 1965, virtually no research had been applied directly to the teaching of poetry except where it occurred in broad areas of literary criticism, tastes, or preferences. Of the research that exists on the teaching of poetry, with a few exceptions, most has been of a survey or descriptive nature. One might assume various reasons for this lack of research. The study of poetry lies, primarily, in the affective domain which is more difficult to measure. Very few instruments have been designed which can adequately measure the results of teaching methods. Most instruments in use today are classroom interaction-analysis systems and are not specifically oriented toward the unique characteristics of the teaching of poetry with its particular difficulties.

Another assumption might be that until the mid 1960's with the shift in emphasis to science and math, poetry had occupied a relatively secure position in the English curriculum. In an age of focus on the exact sciences, justification

and defense for the teaching of poetry became more critical. As the public school climate continued to change with teachers having more pressures from clerical duties, an overloaded curriculum, and pupil demands for accountability of subject matter, the position of poetry in the English curriculum became more precarious. Students resisted studying anything they did not like, or which seemed to them impractical for daily life. For these, and perhaps other less obvious reasons, the teaching of poetry has not been the subject of intensive research.

An examination of existing research reveals that the broad topic of teaching poetry began to be explored in more depth during the latter half of the 1960's. These studies appear to focus on:

1. instruments to measure: teaching methods, student comprehension, attitudes and preferences for poetry;
2. attempts to alter literary taste;
3. effects of various preparations for reading poetry;
4. designs for teaching poetry.

Instruments of Measurements

Donald Gallo recognized that all teacher-rating scales which had been developed up to 1968, had not dealt with specific academic areas and specific skills needed to teach the content of those academic areas. Gallo constructed an

instrument specifically designed for rating teachers in the English area. His instrument is the Poetry Methods Rating Scale (PMRS). The PMRS was designed for:

> Assessing teachers' opinions of methods of teaching poetry to tenth grade average ability students and to validate it by determining the relationship between scores on the instrument and teachers' attitudes, personality, performance, and success in the classroom.[1]

Items for the PMRS were written based on research and theory from methods articles in journals and texts. The sixty-two items were sent to experts in various areas of English to be ranked on a scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree."[2] Items which did not have high scores of validity or correlation were omitted from the scale.

Twenty-one teachers, and one class from each teacher, participated in the actual teaching experiment. These teachers were instructed to teach three short poems to their classes sometime during a designated four-week period. The teachers could teach the poems in any order and use any method they chose provided their goal was to increase the students' understanding and appreciation of poetry.[3] The lessons were tape-recorded and evaluated.

[1]Donald R. Gallo, "Toward a More Effective Assessment of Poetry Teaching Methods," Research in the Teaching of English 2 (Fall 1968): 128.

[2]Gallo, p. 129.

[3]Gallo, p. 131.

> Each lesson was examined in terms of the teacher's general organization, introduction, interpretation of meaning, discussion of form, examination of language, and use of related activities.[4]

Students evaluated their teachers on a separate questionnaire.

Gallo's findings produced some interesting side observations. Gallo states:

> . . . it is quite obvious that what teachers know and believe--or at least say they know and believe--about methods of teaching poetry does not always result in related behaviors in their classes . . . therefore, although this study presents evidence to support the contention that teachers' knowledge and beliefs about methods of teaching poetry have a direct bearing on how they teach, there is not a one-to-one relationship by any means. In some instances . . . there seems to be almost no relationship whatever. . . .[5]

Gallo observed that most of the teachers

> lectured most of the time, elicited few student comments, progressed line-by-line through the poems without starting with general impressions and then discussing the elements of the poems which led to those impressions, and made little effort to teach the skills of poetry reading or interpretation,[6]

even though their main goal was to increase student understanding and appreciation of poetry.

[4]Gallo, p. 132.

[5]Gallo, p. 136.

[6]Gallo, p. 135.

Although the validity of the PMRS is tenuous, the PMRS does provide a list of thirty-eight statements about the teaching of poetry which are supported by expert opinion. These items can be used to assist in determining how a successful unit of poetry study should be taught. Gallo's study also confirms the need for demonstration lessons and workshops for classroom teachers of poetry.

Listed below are some of the favorably ranked items from Gallo's study which are incorporated into the poetry unit of this study.

1. The teacher should lead the student from the simple to the complex in a poem--starting with the who, what, when, where and progressing to the symbolic.
2. The teacher should use recordings of poems to help tenth grade students appreciate the sounds of poems.
3. The main interpretation of a poem should be based on the poem itself.
4. Students should be urged to defend their interpretation of poems by quoting passages from the poems.
5. Tenth grade students should first understand the literal meaning of a particular poem.
6. The mechanics of poetry should be studied to see where and how they contribute to the meaning of a particular poem.
7. Important facts of a poet's life and times should be introduced only when they have some relevance to a particular poem being studied.

8. Pleasure should precede analysis of poems.
9. Students should be given the opportunity to participate in choral readings.
10. With complicated poems, more than one interpretation should be allowed.[7]

The numbered items do not correspond to Gallo's listing. These were the items responded to most positively in Gallo's study, listed here in sequential order.

LaVonn Benson constructed a classroom interaction analysis system to describe and evaluate classroom discussion of poems. Benson's category system is divided into seven areas; teacher/pupil talk, pedagogical moves, analysis of solicitation and reaction moves, subject matter, critical abilities, line count, and incorrect utterances. Under the category analysis of solicitation and reaction moves Benson notes:

> The limited evidence on poetry discussion indicates that high frequencies in teacher solicitation correlates with the better discussions, whereas high frequencies in teacher reaction correlate with poorer discussions.[8]

It would seem, therefore, that more student reaction and response would promote a greater possibility of attaining student enjoyment and appreciation.

[7]Gallo, pp. 139-141.

[8]LaVonn Marceil Benson, "Describing and Evaluating Classroom Discussion on Poetry: A Study Using Principles of Literary Criticism," Ph.D. dissertation, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1971, p. 4.

Although Benson's instrument is applicable beginning with grade ten, portions of her instrument might be utilized in follow-up studies to determine levels of understanding acquired in the junior high school grades. This would be another measurement for determining success in the teaching of poetry. Benson's three main levels under critical ability--restatement, explication, and interpretation[9]--indicate that poetry skills do correlate with reading comprehension skills and levels of understanding in one area may support or reinforce the other. Three levels are more manageable for the junior high classroom with the unfamiliarity of most students with poetry and especially with reluctant teachers of poetry.

A more complex scale of thinking operations was treated by Sarah Snider as she applied behavioral objectives to the teaching of poetry at the ninth grade level in an attempt to achieve understanding at all cognitive levels and response on all affective levels of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. Snider established the objectives to be taught and the observable behaviors to demonstrate attainment of the objectives through a Delphi Survey of both students and teachers who would participate in the study. Specific objectives were derived initially from twelve general goals in the teaching of poetry obtained from Knox County and Knoxville

[9]Benson, p. 8.

curriculum guides.[10] The fact that the study began with goals of the local system and did not impose goals should have influenced the outcomes favorably. The fact that both teachers and students were involved in identifying their objectives and behavior to measure attainment of the objectives also should have had a positive influence on the outcomes. Predictably, Snider was able to obtain measurable significance for each level of the cognitive and affective domains through behavioral objectives.

Two items of the Snider study have direct application to studies not involving behavioral objectives. The first item is the Delphi Probe based on the general goals for the teaching of poetry. The top seven of these goals, according to Snider's Probe results, are listed below according to preference. These goals received thirty or more of the total votes from students and teachers in the top category of "very important."

1. To provoke thinking through interpretation of meaning in poetry.
2. To develop an awareness in the student of the world around him.
3. To enable students to derive pleasure from the emotional experience of poetry.

[10]Sarah Cupp Snider, "An Investigation of Cognitive and Affective Learning Outcomes As a Result of the Use of Behavioral Objectives in Teaching Poetry," D.Ed. dissertation, University of Tennessee, 1973, p. 68.

4. To stimulate interest in experiencing poetry.
5. To help the student develop an understanding of self and human nature.
6. To provide a stimulus for imagination.
7. To provide opportunities for reading and hearing poetry read or sung aloud.[11]

The goals which received the most responses in the category of "very unimportant" were "To develop ability to compare poetry as to author, type, theme, style, etc.," and "To encourage memorization of personally selected lines."[12] Frawley supported Snider's Probe result on memorization of poetry at the elementary level when she found that required memory work resulted in undesirable attitudes toward poetry.[13] Such indicators from both students and teachers can provide direction in establishing effective poetry study to attain these goals without the dependence on behavioral objectives. Knowing the purpose for their teaching of poetry can avoid wasted efforts by teachers and students.

[11]Snider, pp. 68, 69.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Honora Margaret Frawley, "Certain Procedures of Studying Poetry in the Fifth Grade," Contributions to Education 539 (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University 1932) cited by Ethel Brooke Bridge in "Using Children's Choices of and Reactions to Poetry as Determinants in Enriching Literary Experience in the Middle Grades," D.Ed. dissertation, Temple University, 1966, p. 28.

The second item which is most relevant is the paragraph which states:

> The purpose of behavioral objectives is to specify what the learning outcomes are to be, not how learning is to occur. Therefore, the activities in a unit based on behavioral objectives are likely to be very similar, or even the same, as those in a unit which is not based on behavioral objectives. This experimental unit was similar to traditional units in that classroom procedures included oral reading, class discussion, playing music, illustrating poetry, and other such activities. It differed from traditional units in that learners received written statements daily containing expected learning outcomes (behavioral objectives) and were told the criteria for determining success in achievement of the outcomes. It differed also in that the learners cooperated in establishing the behavioral objectives for the unit.[14]

If the teachers involved in this study had conducted their classrooms in a similar fashion to the ones involved in Gallo's study, perhaps the behavioral objectives for the affective domain would not have been significant. Because behavioral objectives do not address the techniques of teaching to impart the knowledge to attain the objectives, any measurable results should be questioned as to how those results are obtained. A key factor in Snider's study is that teaching techniques which have been evaluated positively were employed. A study which demonstrated those techniques and evaluated the learning results and student attitudes toward the process of learning should have more relevance for the average classroom and, especially, the reluctant teacher of poetry. The

[14]Snider, p. 75.

preferred goals from Snider's study should be easier for reluctant teachers to embrace because they do not require an exhaustively scholarly encounter with poetry. Perhaps these goals were established by teachers, as well as students, who had exhibited some of the fears and apprehensions found in this study and their preferences were indicative of their "comfortable zones."

Altering Literary Tastes

In 1966 Ethel Bridge did a study of children's choices of and reactions to poetry selections to be used as determinants in providing enriched literary experiences for the middle grades, 4-6. Forty-four teachers and 1,114 fourth, fifth, and sixth graders from New Jersey read two hundred poems selected by the investigator. Pupils rated the poems after hearing each one twice. Teachers rated the poems based on observations of the students' reactions to the poem when it was read. Poems were ranked according to student preference and analyzed by grade and sex. Bridge found a high correlation among the poetry preferences of the three grades and between choices of boys and girls.[15] She also found that:

[15]Ethel Brooke Bridge, "Using Children's Choices of and Reactions to Poetry as Determinants in Enriching Literary Experience in the Middle Grades," D.Ed. dissertation, Temple University, 1966, pp. 58-59.

> children choose poems related to their present interests and firsthand experiences. They like funny poems with strong rhythm and rhyme . . . Qualities which characterized the poems preferred by all the children included humor, dialect, sadness, imagination, good story, and repetition as well as strong rhythm and rhyme, and closeness to the children's own life experiences.[16]

Bridge found that with fourth, fifth, and sixth grade children, teachers could predict poem preferences by observing student reaction. An influence of this result, however, could have been that the teachers' preference affected the student's reaction. If this were true, Bridge's study might support Stephen Dunning's principle that teachers should only teach poems which they enjoy themselves.[17]

In the teachers' subjective evaluation of Bridge's study, it was reported that most students were not impressed with poetry at first, but after the wide exposure a more positive attitude prevailed. It was also interesting to note that each of the two hundred poems appealed to at least one student.[18] To have a successful unit of poetry study, one might conclude that a prerequisite is a wide selection of poems which the teacher enjoys, in order for each student to identify with some of the selections.

[16]Bridge, pp. 42-43.

[17]Dunning, p. 17.

[18]Bridge, p. 66.

A further implication from Bridge's study is that student preferences from these grade levels could be utilized to establish a developmental poetry sequence for the junior high years. It is important that all positive poetry experiences of the past be remembered before more complex poetry is encountered. An additional aid in the sequencing of the poetry study content is found in conclusions drawn by Huus in developing literature tastes at the elementary level. Huus states:

> Improvement of appreciation (the emotional identification with the writing) and the elevation of tastes (the acceptance of a high standard of writing) are accomplished gradually in a series of stages . . . Steps in poetry development are pleasure in rhythm and rhyme, the enjoyment of the humor, emotional reaction to ballads and narrative poems, appreciation of lyrical poetry, and experimentation with new and unconventional forms.[19]

Another study on modifying students' tastes in poetry was done by John Erickson in 1969. The sample population was a group of 751 eighth grade students in the Champaign and Urbana School districts. These students were given twenty sets of three poems written by noted poets, less well-known poets and high school students. The students were asked to determine the best and worst poems in each group. The answers

[19]Helen Huus, "Developing Tastes in Literature in the Elementary Grades," Elementary English (January 1963): 63.

of the students were compared to the answers of sixty-one adults: eighth grade English teachers, college professors of English, and college seniors in English. Erickson found no consensus between the two groups but rather found direct discordance between them. "This means, simply," he states, "that in a very high proportion of cases the students have chosen as least liked those poems the adult groups have selected as most preferred and have selected as best liked those poems which the adults have chosen as least preferred."[20] On the basis of this result, Erickson tried to determine what teaching practices would be effective in modifying student tastes more in the direction of the adult group. He used four experimental methods which would be appropriate "in terms of traditional practices and the demands of the average classroom."[21] Method A was simply reading sets of poems. Method B required that the students read the sets of poems and discuss with their peers the reasons for preferring one poem over another. Method C required the students to write a variety of types of poems from limericks to sonnets. Method D required the students to read a poem and write out answers to questions provided on each poem. Method X was a control group which received no experience with poetry beyond the pre- and

[20]John Edward Erickson, "Modifying Students' Tastes in Poetry," D.Ed. dissertation, Wayne State University, 1969, p. 39

[21]Erickson, p. 50.

post-survey.[22] The experiment took place over a period of six weeks with only one day each week devoted to poetry.

Erickson found in the post-survey that no methodological approach was significant enough to be superior to any other.[23] He did find some slight variations, however, when method was paired with maturity, sex, educational background of parents, and dislike of or predisposition toward poetry. Erickson felt, though unsubstantiated, that for students who dislike poetry, the best approach would be one less traditional in its function such as Method B. However, he said, "such an approach may not help students with positive attitudes and may negatively affect the undecided ones."[24]

Although Erickson found no significant difference in any method he utilized to alter student taste in poetry, he did find some slight correlations and indications for further study through his analysis of the constants within each group. By analyzing the support data, Erickson reached the following conclusions. For the most part, what is considered "good" literature is written by and for adults. Students can not comprehend nor appreciate "good" literature until they have shared more mature, adult experiences.[25] He states, "The

[22]Erickson, pp. 51-53.

[23]Erickson, p. 90.

[24]Erickson, p. 117.

[25]Erickson, p. 139.

experience which affects taste is probably unconsciously acquired and is unaffected by explanations or explications."[26] The differences which persist throughout the secondary school years become less great as time passes, and are probably the result of cultural experiences rather than teaching in schools.[27] Erickson feels that the only way schools can encourage taste for "good" poetry is to reassure students "that the responses they have to the literature which appeals to them are worthy and desirable," and to provide experiences which will support students in their reading efforts long enough for them to mature in their selections of literature.[28]

If one were to accept Erickson's conclusions as truth, the entire English curriculum would be drastically altered and the only purpose literature teachers would serve would be to encourage appreciation of the students' selected reading material. Though this is a worthy purpose for English teachers and should be emphasized more than it is presently, it does not allow for the direction and assistance an English teacher can provide students in obtaining more and varied experiences with literature and their understanding of those experiences. The fallacy of Erickson's argument is the

[26]Erickson, p. 140.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Erickson, pp. 141-142.

elimination of the teacher in the methods employed for his study. In no instance did Erickson allow for student interaction with an adult whose tastes were different. One can not assume, therefore, that teachers are unable to guide and lead students through new experiences to improve their appreciation for poetry which they would not normally understand. Snider's study would indeed repudiate Erickson's conclusions.

Effects of Preparing Students for Poetry Study

In 1970, Smith and Burns devised a test and inventory geared toward assessing the effect of pre-reading activities in understanding and appreciating a ballad. Four treatments were administered to 559 ninth grade students. The treatments were to provide background information on the ballads, provide background information coupled with oral readings, provide background information and vocabulary information, and no pre-reading instruction. The investigators found no significance in providing background information for the interpretation test but definite significance in results where vocabulary information had been given. The investigators also concluded that better interpretation does not coincide with better attitude.[29]

[29]R. J. Smith and T. Burns, "Effects of Different Instructional Practices on Student Enjoyment and Interpretation," Journal of Reading 13 (February 1970): 345-354.

Dilworth describes a strategy for reading poetry which was devised in his school system for students at the secondary level. The concept for the strategy was borrowed from reading readiness activities and experience with the North Carolina poetry-in-the-schools program. The strategy consists of five steps: "selection of the poetry, primary induction, reading for literal meaning, secondary induction, and expanded response."[30] The poetry selections are based on appropriate reading levels and related to the experience of the student. "Imagistic poetry which relies on a spatial circumstance imaginable by the students seems to be the best type," states Dilworth.[31] Key words and phrases from the poem should be listed on the board and then examined for literal definitions, multiple meanings and ambiguities. Difficult allusions and unfamiliar circumstances should be discussed by the teacher. The students should be allowed time for free associations and then attempt to discover a thematic pattern which will relate to the poem.[32]

To read for literal meaning, the students should first read the poem silently, then read it aloud and try to match suitable voice tones with the meaning. The students should

[30]Collett B. Dilworth, "The Reader as Poet: A Strategy for Creative Reading," The English Journal 66 (February 1977): 44-45.

[31]Dilworth, p. 44.

[32]Ibid.

synopsize the basic situation of the poem before attempting critical readings.[33] The students should reconsider and refine initial responses as the teacher asks questions to "elicit key thematic inferences."[34] Eventually the students will begin asking the questions and the teacher should function only as a resource.

The final stage, expanded response, involves two major areas in this program. One area is the writing of original poems where the student may wish to replicate syntax from certain poems. The other area is the composing of meditations. A meditation in this context involves "mulling over a stimulus image" and then composing a response in a format of a one to three sentence description of a personal experience generated by the image, a brief passage exploring implications and meaning from the experience and/or image, and a one or two sentence conclusion which makes a final supportive or contrastive point about the topic.[35]

Two classes of high ability senior English students were used as a treatment and control group for the administering of reading readiness and traditional approaches to the study of poetry. After the study, the classes were asked whether

[33]Dilworth, p. 45.

[34]Ibid.

[35]Ibid.

or not they understood the poem and whether or not they liked the poem. Chi-square analyses of the data revealed significance for both comprehension and attitude with the treatment group.

Dilworth evaluates the utilization of the apparently successful technique as follows:

> One objection to the use of reading readiness techniques might be that when a reader confronts poetry independently, there is no one present to guide a consideration of select words from the poetry before the poem is seen. Since (the teacher's) job is to prepare independent readers, it could be argued that from the beginning a class should proceed with the entire poem just as a solitary reader would encounter it. (The experience with the Fayetteville students), however, has been that the positive attitudes resulting from readiness activities make for better, more eager independent readers of poetry. Furthermore, . . . with the creative approach, sensitive, insightful responses can be elicited by poetry heretofore proven too difficult for any given group of students.[36]

Dilworth's report supports the conclusion, contrary to Erickson's, that students can be led or directed into improved literary tastes. The weakness of the study as to sample size and selectivity of the sample (high ability students) does not, however, permit generalizations to all students.

A constant question for English teachers has been whether to teach poems as independent works of literary art or to teach poems within the framework and background in which they were written. Most English teaching for appreciation theory suggests,

[36]Dilworth, p. 47.

and is supported by Gallo's study, that background or period information be researched or provided only if it is essential to the meaning of a particular poem. Larry Andrews did a study in 1969 of "The Effect of Author Biography upon the Comprehension and Appreciation of Poetry." The purpose of his study was to determine whether the reading of biographical material about an author before the reading of a poem detracted from the comprehension and appreciation of the poem.[37]

Andrews worked with two classes of tenth grade English students of regular or average ability. One class heard and read author biography information on twenty poems, and one class heard and read only the poems. A list of footnotes for each poem was provided to eliminate vocabulary difficulties. The Rigg Poetry Judgement Test was used as a pre-test.[38] The time span for the study was twenty consecutive school days. Each class heard and read one poem daily.[39] After listening and reading the poems, each student took "a three-item multiple-choice test on his comprehension of the poem's central idea;

[37]Larry Kenneth Andrews, "The Effect of Author Biography upon the Comprehension and Appreciation of Poetry," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri at Columbia, 1969, p. 1.

[38]Andrews, p. 36.

[39]Andrews, p. 42.

then he ranked the poem on five, seven-point semantic differential scales."[40]

Andrews found no significant difference between the classes on comprehension scores. He did find, however, that the class receiving the author biography information showed significantly greater appreciation scores. Andrews identified the poems which affected these scores most and observed that "biographical information about the poets from older periods of literature has an increased effect upon poetry appreciation."[41]

Designs for Teaching Poetry

Two studies provide additional information or insights as to the design for a successful poetry unit. Rees and Pederson examined points of view in evaluating poetry. College freshmen listened to audio-tape recordings of selected poems and were required to evaluate the poems using semantic differential scales. The investigators found that a student's evaluative response was closely related to previous experience with poetry and that students who had a broad range of early poetry experience tended to produce more favorable responses in their later experiences with poetry.[42] Rees and Pederson

[40] Ibid.

[41] Andrews, p. 55.

[42] Richard Rees and Darhl Pederson, "A Factorial Determination of Points of View in Poetic Evaluation and Their Relation t Various Determinants," Psychological Reports 16 (February 1965): 38.

identified a factor labelled "male uncooperativeness" which was related to negative evaluations of poetry.[43] This would definitely have implications at the junior high level in the selection of poems geared toward male taste and the methods of teaching poetry which should appeal to males.

Nelms studied the characteristics of poems preferred by a panel of tenth grade students. The poem preferences were determined by a twenty-nine semantic differential ranking scale. The results indicated that students rank most highly the characteristics of narrative interest and appeal of subject matter in their poetry preferences.[44]

A final study reviewed which has implications for the poetry unit designed for this study is one done in 1972 by Elda Maase. Maase developed a model for instruction of poetry which emphasizes attitude development. Although the model was never field tested for effectiveness, the research and effort in its construction would certainly anticipate some degree of success. In order to construct the model, Maase created a forty-six item survey instrument which she administered to the student body of a rural, four-year high

[43]Rees, p. 31.

[44]Ben F. Nelms, "Characteristics of Poetry Associated With Preferences of a Panel of Tenth Grade Students," D.Ed. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1967, p. 141.

school.[45] The Remmers attitude scales were used to evaluate the answers. Computer tabulations were done for the final analyses. Poetry ranked last on the attitude scales when compared with other subjects. Many of the students responding felt that poetry has no value and that it should be dropped from the curriculum or made an elective course for students who wish to take it. Males were more negative toward poetry than females.[46]

The second part of the survey instrument was "An Assessment of Teaching Methods Preferences."[47] The results showed that these students surveyed

> highly favor using visual aids, not being tested or graded on poetry, studying lyrics of popular songs, going on field trips to get ideas for writing, reading humorous poems, choosing areas of study from teacher-lists, and having teachers explain new words and terms in material being studied.[48]

Another list of items preferred by more than one half the survey group contained

> having open-book tests; having tests over new material in order to evaluate how well principles have been learned--but not to be graded,

[45]Elda Apel Maase, "A Model for the Instruction of Poetry Designed for Attitude Development," D.Ed. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1972, p. 70.

[46]Maase, p. 79.

[47]Maase, p. 76.

[48]Maase, p. 80.

> spending class time looking for study material, discussing study material in small groups, choosing areas of study, listening to recordings, and having teachers point out reading difficulties.[49]

At the bottom of the rank order were items which would probably affect students adversely in a poetry unit if attitude is important. The following items were given as least preferred teaching methods:

> to listen to the teacher read or lecture, to study about the lives of famous people when their work is studied, presenting material orally before the class as an individual, doing research reports, and being tested on remembered facts.[50]

With the above information, and relying heavily on Albert Eiss' Evaluation of Instructional Systems, Maase developed a model for poetry instruction with some specific suggestions for the process and techniques section.[51] The evaluation of Maase's model relies on the outcomes of behavioral objectives in the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains as well as a "continuing measurement of general attitude toward poetry" through the use of the Remmers attitude scale or a similar instrument.[52]

[49] Ibid.

[50] Maase, pp. 81-82.

[51] Maase, p. 90.

[52] Ibid.

Some theories and recommendations from the Maase model were employed in this study and will be explained in Chapter III. To test the Maase model would require a full school year and was not practical for this study. Though Maase does recommend a sequence for poetry study, the sequence set forth by Maase is basically a question of amount and degree of saturation with poetry reading and ratings before close-reading can occur. It also depends heavily on poetry being interspersed throughout a school year and on the assumption of incidental learning occurring through continued exposure, frequency and familiarity with poetry. This approach appears to be more suited for the high school level for which it was designed than a junior high level of students. The junior high student seems to require more guidance and a carefully planned initiation experience with poetry before the subtle approaches can provide reinforcement. The sequence included in this study will be discussed in Chapter III and will emphasize a developmental approach from simple to more complex experiences rather than a sequence of contact time and varying degrees of close reading with poetry.

Related Literature

The abundance of suggestions, ideas, and theories for the teaching of poetry confirm the recognition that poetry is generally disliked by students and must be made more enticing

and appealing in its presentation. To avoid repetition, only a few of the more relevant, representative approaches will be reviewed in more depth and detail. The articles and books devoted to the teaching of poetry fall generally into three categories: identifying purposes for teaching poetry and presenting poetry appropriately to achieve these purposes, developing a sequence of poetry experiences, and employing motivational techniques for teaching poetry to reluctant students.

Presentations Compatible with Purposes in Teaching Poetry

In the first category, articles by Borden, Kitzhaber, and McKenzie support the position that poetry should be taught through a descriptive analysis of an individual poem rather than through biographical, historical, or scholarly knowledge. Borden, while addressing the issue of how to construct a fair and appropriate test of poetry-reading ability for the Advanced Placement Examination, decided that the following items should be eliminated: "extraneous biographical, historical, and scholarly paraphernalia; undue attention to life values; and impressionism."[53] With these areas eliminated, he found himself left with the formidable area of formalistic criticism.[54]

[53]Arthur R. Borden, Jr., "On the Reading of Poetry in Relationship to Testing," ERIC Reproduction, ED 022 741, 1967, p. 3.

[54]Ibid.

Unwilling to leave poetry testing to the mercy of analytical dehumanization, Borden felt that attitude, poet's and/or student's, must be included. After exploring various possibilities for test questions and teachers' emphases within a classroom, Borden concludes, "What I am getting at is that even in the clinical austerity of the examination room, students should not have to forget that poetry is delight. Appreciation is not gush, but it is not a cold, mathematical naming of parts either."[55]

McKenzie's basis for an "Approach to Poetry" is the assumption "that the end of poetry . . . is pleasure; and no one should read poetry from any other motive than the desire to be pleased."[56] McKenzie feels that students will be pleased and enjoy poetry more if they are helped to grasp each poem as a meaningful whole. Although a poem has structure and form, the elements within a poem have significance through their relationship to the whole and "the whole is greater and other than the sum of the parts."[57] An additional support for students is to be reassured that the "central questions and problems raised in a poem can have no absolutely 'right'

[55]Borden, p. 6.

[56]K. A. McKenzie, "Approach to Poetry," Opinion 2 (December 1967): 45.

[57]Ibid.

answers."[58] McKenzie urges that biographical and historical approaches be utilized only if they are essential for the comprehension of the poem as a meaningful whole.[59]

According to McKenzie the musical quality of a poem should be emphasized through oral reading. Some appreciation of accentual rhythm is necessary because reading aloud depends on the mechanics of accentual pattern. McKenzie maintains that meaning and music in poetry can not be separated, and states, "the important facts are first that part of the appeal of a poem is a musical one and secondly that the musical appeal is related to the meaning, or is even an integral part of the meaning."[60] Students should not be forced, therefore, to concentrate on the elements of a poem in isolation from its meaning. Musical effects should be studied with relevancy to the meaning.

Kitzhaber rejects the use of the historical approach to poetry for beginning students because it does not convince the reader of relevance and because it does not provide accessibility to poetry. It also suggests a specific historical beginning for poetry.[61] He believes the cultural approach,

[58] Ibid.

[59] McKenzie, p. 46.

[60] McKenzie, p. 47.

[61] Albert R. Kitzhaber, "On Teaching Poetry," ERIC Reproduction, ED 015 907, 1967, p. 2.

related to the historical, is also detrimental because it treats poetry chronologically and focuses attention to a period of time and ideas rather than to the primary experience of a poem.[62] Kitzhaber goes a step further and also rejects the frequently used thematic approach, because it requires that a student have ability "to read poetry with facility and understanding before he can perceive time, death, social satire, nature, or humanism in a poem."[63]

Kitzhaber concludes that the best approach for presenting poetry to a beginner is through descriptive analysis and providing the students opportunities to experiment by writing group poems, haiku and other forms which force them to notice poetic devices. Kitzhaber states, "Children's rhythmical games, chants, and nursery rhymes illustrate (a) basic natural appeal of verse and its mnemonic qualities," and he claims "that once one has come to understand and enjoy a good poem, he finds lesser verse does not satisfy."[64] Kitzhaber's justification for this approach to poetry is twofold: that by studying poetic technique and by close reading the student will "come to understand and then experience" poetry; and that if teachers have faith in the experience

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Kitzhaber, p. 5.

itself, there is no reason to ply the student with definitions and justifications. Writing exercises and questions on the nature of poetry are utilized only to bridge the gap until the "experience" occurs.[65]

In the book Literature for Adolescents, Stephen Dunning definitely opposes teaching poetry through historical background as he states, "Too often we let the study of biography, of philology, of intellectual and cultural mileu or (more often) of versification substitute for the reading of poetry, substitute for experience with poetry."[66] Dunning identifies three reasons why he teaches poetry to young people: it provides an opportunity to teach a complete literary work at one sitting, it produces more results in language usage than isolated word study or dictionary drills because it is linguistically rich, and it provides a base for young people to talk seriously about important realities.[67] Dunning believes that a teacher's aim should be to produce readers of poetry. To accomplish this aim, Dunning establishes nine principles which should be followed.

1. The teacher who is not himself a reader of poetry must not pretend to teach poetry.

[65]Kitzhaber, pp. 6-7.

[66]Stephen Dunning and Alan B. Howes, Literature for Adolescents: Teaching Poems, Stories, Novels and Plays (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1975), p. 19.

[67]Dunning, pp. 13-15.

2. The teacher of poetry must teach only those poems for which he can engender real enthusiasm.
3. The teacher must keep experience with poetry itself at the center of his teaching.
4. The teacher must teach the mechanics of poetry inductively.
5. Teachers must stop overexplaining poems.
6. The poetry unit must not rule out the occasional teaching of poetry.
7. Students must often have the chance to choose what poetry they will read, study, and discuss.
8. Students who are asked to read and study poetry must sometimes be asked to say something poetically.
9. Students must be helped to discover that poetry is written about many things.[68]

According to Dunning, many teachers do not read poetry because in college they were taught that poetry was something dissected and respected rather than read as a meaningful whole and enjoyed. Their close reading abilities were diminished because of required research and endless professional explications.[69] Dunning's principles attempt to eliminate the perpetuation of negative poetry teaching.

[68]Dunning, p. 17.

[69]Ibid.

Perhaps the most difficult principle for teachers to deal with is number four. Dunning explains that by inductive he means "that the reaching of generalizations about poetry comes after repeated experience with examples that lead to those generalizations."[70] If Dunning were going to teach metaphor, for example, he would begin with familiar metaphors from the students' vocabulary before addressing more difficult metaphors. In other words, one should always proceed from the simple to the complex. The terms and techniques should be taught as poetry is read and through poems the teacher has selected to illustrate these elements, never in isolation.[71] Inductive teaching requires the teacher to have focused, answerable, ordered questions to lead students to the desired generalizations. Dunning admits that covering poetry in this manner appears impossible but states "so is every other way impossible."[72] If the choice in teaching poetry is one of several impossible methods, then the best choice is to teach ideally and perhaps the results will be better, if not completely successful. At all costs, the teacher should keep an open mind and remember the aim of teaching poetry. As Dunning says, "Poems are patently susceptible to more than one interpretation. Again, involving students in the

[70]Dunning, p. 23.

[71]Dunning, p. 24.

[72]Dunning, p. 25.

consideration of a poem is far more important than trying to teach a poem's theme exactly as (the teacher) happens to see it."[73]

In her article "Teaching Poetry to Adolescents: Nine Principles Plus One," Nancy Womack supports Dunning's theories but believes one more principle should be included, that of displaying student work.[74] Womack recommends three methods for sharing students' work: publishing a class magazine, creating bulletin boards with illustrated student metaphors or haiku, and creating a slide or tape presentation.[75] The pride in seeing their work displayed produces more positive student responses to poetry according to Womack.[76]

Briggs is another author who feels that biographies, social background and technical details are often over-emphasized to the detriment of poetry enjoyment. Each of these elements should be related to poems for understanding and pleasure. "Probably nothing else," says Briggs, "sets young people against poetry as much as meticulous emphasis on details without appreciation of how each one contributes to

[73]Dunning, p. 27.

[74]Nancy Womack, "Teaching Poetry to Adolescents: Nine Principles Plus One," ERIC Reproduction, ED 128 807, 1975, p. 2.

[75]Ibid.

[76]Womack, p. 7.

the whole effect."[77] Briggs feels that the best way to inculcate a love of poetry within students is through the "contagious passion that inspires a real teacher."[78] One would hope that such a passion would be guided by some of Dunning's principles.

Briggs emphasizes tropes, or figures of speech, as essential to the understanding of poetry. He would have teachers make certain that students can recognize the effects that indirect expression is used to convey. Only when the student is able to identify the bare idea, the bare image, the exact likeness between the idea and the image, and discuss what the image adds to the idea can understanding be complete, according to Briggs.[79] Briggs would obviously be more exacting and more stringent on his readers of poetry than would Dunning.

Development of Sequential Poetry Experiences

Farley views poetry as an experience and presents a sequence for approaching a mature experience with poetry. First the teacher must carefully select a poem which is geared toward the intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic level of development of the class; and then the teacher must prepare the

[77]Thomas H. Briggs, Poetry and its Enjoyment, (New York: Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1957), p. 10.

[78]Ibid.

[79]Briggs, p. 219.

audience. Farley says that necessary information should be given to the audience but fails to specify what that information is. The teacher then reads the poem to the class, it is hoped, in an enjoyable manner. Because Farley believes the experience of poetry is to bring the poem and child together positively, the next step is to have the students read the poem together or to each other. The children should then discuss the poem and the teacher should give assistance in teaching all the technical terms and problems which automatically arise from the discussion. Finding how the music of the poem occurs should be a focus for the teacher through constant references to poetic devices. Memorization should only be encouraged if it is not a drudgery for the students. Writing original poetry, according to Farley, is most worthwhile.[80]

Farley suggests that content should begin with ballads, move to poems with definite rhythm and then to the simple lyric. Mixed poetry, but poetry which keeps a focus on music, words, and shades of emotions, should follow. Short narrative poems should precede longer narratives and longer lyrical poems. The last stage should assume more sophisticated tastes and deal with some of the finer qualities of poetry, even

[80]J. W. Farley, "An Approach to the Teaching and the Examining of Literature in the Junior Secondary School," Opinion 2 (December 1967): 21.

though the emphasis is still on enjoyment. Interestingly, Farley believes that at least one major poet should be studied "by reading at least six to ten of (his) poems and by studying something about the poet and the period in which he wrote."[81] No reason is given for this emphasis which appears contrary to the preceding articles. Farley does reserve this requirement to the later stages of poetry reading but, obviously, feels it to be important for development of maturity with poetry.

A plan for teaching poetry across a three-year span of time rather than a unit approach is presented in Teaching Literature in Grades Seven Through Nine by Jenkinson and Hawley. The plan assumes that teachers should help students enjoy and respond to many poems before they attempt to understand the intricacies of poetry. It also assumes that activities can be arranged according to difficulty, from the simple and concrete to the abstract, and made accessible to nonacademic as well as academically talented students.[82] The plan, outlined by Jenkinson and Hawley, structures poetry encounters for seventh grade students to focus upon sound and story, eighth grade students to focus upon image or picture,

[81]Farley, p. 22.

[82]Edward B. Jenkinson and Jane Stouder Hawley, Teaching Literature in Grades Seven Through Nine (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), p. 9.

and ninth grade students to focus upon metaphor and tone. Like Dunning, the authors list nine guides for teachers.

1. The teacher should read poems not poetry.
2. The teacher should remember that poetry is sound.
3. The teacher should not insert his own personality between the student and the poem.
4. The teacher should pace the assignments carefully.
5. The teacher should assign writing which follows logically from the poems.
6. The teacher should encourage students to make connections between the poems and their own experience.
7. The teacher should minimize the importance of grades during this sequence.
8. The teacher should have students memorize if they want to.
9. The teacher should help students to develop pride in their work.[83]

If the plan has been effective, ninth grade students should be able to face senior high sessions of poetry analysis with more optimism and certainly with greater expectations of success.

An opposite view of poetry experience is held by Reid, Ciardi and Perrine in Poetry: A Closer Look. The authors support the opinion that poetry skills can be acquired developmentally by providing an individualized programmed study.

[83]Jenkinson, pp. 10-12.

They disagree, however, with the contention that poetry should be read extensively for appreciation before intensively for close reading skills. This is evident in their guides to poetry:

1. Learn to read poetry intensively before attempting to read it extensively.
2. Read and reread.
3. Recognize the symbols and respond to both the underlying ideas and their emotional power.
4. Watch the progression (or movement) from the specific to the general.
5. Identify (or involve) yourself with the action and the people; or, in short, identify yourself with the poem.
6. Know the fundamental poetic techniques.[84]

A final principle the authors advocate is to read all poems attentively. Reading attentively involves finding definitions of words necessary for understanding of the poem and being aware that every word, every comma has a purpose.[85] It would be interesting to test a student upon completion of the programmed study to determine whether he had successfully mastered the techniques of close reading. Would he, contrary to research by Smith and Burns, have a positive attitude based on

[84]James M. Reid, John Ciardi, and Lawrence Perrine, Poetry: A Closer Look (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1963), pp. 24-31.

[85]Reid, p. 32.

his ability to understand poetry, or would he be "turned off" to poetry. Reid, Ciardi, and Perrine definitely have established a well-sequenced approach to poetry, but the rigidity would seem to preclude its use for the junior high school or in any instance where the main purpose is to improve the attitude of the student toward the enjoyment of poetry.

Confronting Student Resistance to Poetry

In Presenting Poetry, Thomas Blackburn and Alison Edmonds posit their theories for why poetry fails to be enjoyable to secondary students. Blackburn rests part of the responsibility on the shoulders of the teachers as he views negative teaching occurring in at least four approaches to poetry. The first approach is, of course, complete neglect. This might well be a preferred approach, however, to one which totally destroys the prospect of poetry appealing to children. The second approach is to dislike poetry personally but to teach it from a sense of duty or obligation. The third approach is to teach poetry in isolation from the needs of children and a relationship with daily living. The last approach is to teach only childishly sentimental poetry or to teach good verse inadequately through the imposition of personal, irrelevant interpretations.[86]

[86]Thomas Blackburn, ed., Presenting Poetry: A Handbook for English Teachers (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1966), pp. 1-7.

Blackburn explores some basic causes for children's resistance to poetry. He feels that because poetry explores the subjective world with directness, children who are trying to learn to face their world find poetry more troublesome and difficult to accept. Children tend to ridicule what is unknown and disturbing. Children also have the conception that poetry is sissy and poets are effeminate.[87] Blackburn suggests that for poetry to be presented successfully there must be a marriage of what the teacher likes and intuitively feels that children like. Above all, if students exhibit resistance to poetry, they should not be required to memorize poems.[88]

Edmonds declares that two of the major causes of the child's dislike of poetry are the traditional poetry lessons students have been exposed to and the vast majority of anthologies provided for student study which contain dreary material.[89] Logically, if better selections were presented more favorably, student response would improve. Edmonds suggests poems first be presented aloud with careful avoidance of a "gushy" reading. Well-typed copies of poems should be

[87]Blackburn, pp. 9-12.

[88]Blackburn, p. 23.

[89]Alison Edmonds, "Poetry and the Child in the Secondary School," in Presenting Poetry: A Handbook for English Teachers, ed. Thomas Blackburn (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1966), p. 109.

provided for students to read and record their reactions immediately.[90] If students have musical ability with the guitar or percussion instruments, they should be encouraged to accompany the reading of poetry and aid in the rhythm of speaking the verse. Studying the words of "pop" songs can help students discriminate between "sentimental slush and lyrics that have some personal statement of real vitality."[91] Agreeing with Dunning, Edmonds maintains that teachers should not teach poetry if they are not interested in it. Edmonds concludes, "It is surely better for the child to be taught poetry really well only one year out of five, so that poems are something he remembers with pleasure."[92]

Vernon Scannell points out what he calls two heresies in the teaching of poetry: that poetry emerges from the unconscious and that students should listen to the beautiful sound of words rather than attempt to understand a poem.[93] Scannell suggests a sequence for teaching poetry which proceeds from simple to more complex content. He proposes that a teacher begin with comic poets, introduce more serious

[90]Edmonds, pp. 112-113.

[91]Edmonds, P. 115.

[92]Edmonds, p. 117.

[93]Vernon Scannell, "Art and Fantasy--Some Notes on the Teaching of Poetry in Schools," in Presenting Poetry: A Handbook for English Teachers, ed. Thomas Blackburn (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1966), p. 127.

poetry through ballads and narrative poems, and then emphasize contemporary rather than poetry from the past. Scannell urges that "above all the teacher must believe that the discriminating enjoyment of poetry can be taught; he should even believe something that is arguable--that good taste can be taught."[94]

Kenneth Koch supports Dunning's view that a teacher should be open-minded to student interpretations of poems. Koch believes that a major aim in the teaching of poetry is the "individual student responding to the individual poem in his own way."[95] Koch also agrees with Blackburn's evaluation of negative teaching approaches and student resistance to poetry. He stresses that restricting the selection of poems to be studied to those which are supposed to be on the child's age or grade level deprives the student of experiencing genuinely good poetry. Too often poems are presented which perpetuate the singsong verse of early years and present a trouble-free view of life. This habit of condescension toward children's minds and abilities in regard to poetry promotes the reaction from students that poetry is sissified, silly, and nonessential.[96]

[94]Scannell, p. 132.

[95]Kenneth Koch, Rose, Where Did You Get That Red? Teaching Great Poetry To Children (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 28.

[96]Koch, pp. 12-14.

Koch presents poems of merit to his students and encourages student writing of original poems. He does not believe in testing or grading on poetry and de-emphasizes the mechanical aspects of writing. Koch offers the following themes as suggestions for student writing: lie poems, wish poems, comparison poems, noise poems, dream poems, I used to/but now poems, and poems about being in the rain.[97] The purpose of writing original poems is to give the students a way to experience the main ideas and feelings contained in the poems which are being studied.

Both Nancy Larrick and Myra Cohn Livingston write in support of presenting poetry which is relevant to children and their daily lives. Livingston accuses teachers of paying lip service to the idea that everything in man's experience is subject for a poem as they deny children the right to practice such an idea.[98] Livingston proclaims:

> It is time that we throw out an entire body of poetry that is no longer meaningful to children, either because of its archaic diction or because it, like its age, concentrated on a point of view, an experience which does not relate to our times.[99]

The search for what is real in today's society has produced poems about topics that were once considered unpoetic. Such

[97]Koch, p. 209.

[98]Myra Cohn Livingston, "What the Heart Knows Today," in Somebody Turned on a Tap in These Kids, ed. Nancy Larrick (New York: Delacorte Press, 1971), p. 7.

[99]Livingston, p. 15.

things as traffic lights, escalators, subways, and littered sidewalks have been depicted meaningfully in poetry. Man's inhumanity to man has been vividly described on "crowded streets and in cluttered hallways." Larrick contends,

> It should not surprise us, then, to find that today's children seek the realistic poetry of bolder voices, speaking in a blunt conversational style. They like poems which debunk the phony and unveil hypocrisy.[100]

Students today demand involvement, and for poetry to be appealing and successful it must be involved with a realistic view of today's society.

Involvement is the key word for the remaining literature which focuses on methods to attract the reluctant student of poetry. Numerous articles have been written which present various methods to involve students with poetry. These range from slight variations on traditional lessons to drastic and elaborate deviations from usual teaching practices. At least three authors, Cameron, Plattor, and Armour, recommend making poetry into a visual film experience. Cameron and Plattor stress the creation of a film or slide presentation based on a poem or poems the students have read.[101] Armour lists commercially prepared films which can be effectively

[100]Nancy Larrick, Somebody Turned on a Tap in These Kids (New York: Delacorte Press, 1971), p. 5.

[101]Jack P. Cameron and Emma E. Plattor, "A Photographic Approach to Poetry," The English Journal 62 (January 1973): 60-63.

utilized with poetry lessons. He maintains that poetry and film are related by rhythm, imagery, symbolic language, and figures of speech which have a visual similarity on film.[102]

Richard Lewis decided that poetry could be achieved by working backwards into writing from a visual presentation. He began by showing vivid photographs to his students and having the students list words or phrases the photographs called to mind. The material generated by the photographs became journal entries which were later developed into poems. Lewis perceived the experience as working backwards because his students had been unable to move from verbal to visual images when confronting poetry. The reverse process was more successful for him.[103]

When Maurice Gibbons talks about reversing the process, he means the entire process of teaching poetry. Gibbons strongly demands that poetry be an experience and not a lesson. He tells teachers to forget about identifying metaphors and let the students relive the poets' invention. Don't question the students to the point they are forced to say what the teacher expects them to say. Forget about grades and marking papers. Instead, help the students free their own words and

[102]Robert Armour, "Poetry and Film for the Classroom," The English Journal 66 (January 1977): 88.

[103]Richard W. Lewis, Jr., "Brainstorming Into Poetry Reading," The English Journal 61 (September 1972): 843.

create their own poems. As Gibbons expresses it, "What does it matter if a man gain the curriculum if he loses caring? . . . Look after the caring and the curriculum will look after itself."[104] Help students identify and establish their own value systems for poetry instead of requiring them to aspire to that of the teachers. Gibbons questions what would happen if students had to edit their own anthology of poems for their times. How would the students speak to the teachers through the poems they selected? To experience poetry means having an opportunity to find answers to these questions.

Further suggestions, which appear to be gimmicks to entrap the interest of students before they encounter traditional terminology, are set forth by Kralik, Karnezis, Rennert, Goodrich, and Latocha. Kralik offers a technique for promoting student composition which requires the teacher to provide individual squares of paper for each student. The students put a word on each square. They may swap squares, use their own squares, or use group efforts to scramble the words into poems.[105] Karnezis invented a game to help students understand poetic language. He makes up two renditions of a famous poem. Students are asked to create a third version of the

[104]Maurice Gibbons, "Hello...Hello...This is the Poet speaking...Do You Read Me...?" The English Journal 61 (March 1972): 369.

[105]Milan Kralik, "Poetry: Take A Chance," The English Journal 64 (October 1975): 105.

poem by selecting the appropriate wording from the two variations given by the teacher. The students must be able to defend their word choices. By the time this exercise is completed, students are ready to understand the wording of the original poem.[106] Rennert recommends a poetry adaptation of the Parker Brothers game "Boggle." He also suggests creating poems from newspaper articles and using the cloze procedure for teaching word choice to students. This process is based on a principle similar to the suggestion offered by Karnezis.

Goodrich's contribution is to teach students a thorough concept of "imagery." He feels that no student can understand poetry without the tools or techniques the poet uses.[107] Latocha backs Goodrich's theory but goes a step further. She compares poetry to carpentry and the poet to the carpenter. Both carpenter and poet must be thoroughly knowledgeable of their tools before they begin work. Latocha outlines a prescription for working with, and exploring, each poetic device before a poem is ever introduced to the class. By the time the actual poems are read, students are thrilled to be able

[106]George T. Karnezis, "Real Reading of Poetry," in Activating the Passive Student, Gene Stanford, Chair, and The Committee on Classroom Practices in Teaching English (Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 1978), pp. 99-103.

[107]Howard B. Goodrich, "Reading Poetry is Creative Too," Journal of Reading 10 (April 1967): 437.

to test their skills on the product. It is obvious, says Latocha, that "active participation increases learning."[108]

Two writers have identified misconceptions their students held about poetry and have attempted to overcome them. Ann Vosovic discovered her students had the following misconceptions:

1. All poems have a 'hidden' meaning.
2. All poems deal with a suitable subject (trees, flowers, love).
3. All poems are a spontaneous creation.
4. All poems have a pronounced rhythm that you beat out with your pencil.
5. All poems have an obvious rhyme scheme (rub, dub, tub, etc.).
6. 'All poets are queer.'[109]

To try to destroy these stereotyped objections to poetry, Mrs. Vosovic selected her poems geared toward male interest. She utilized various modern poems dealing with war to counteract most of the predominantly held incorrect opinions about poetry.

[108]Marilou Latocha, "Playing With Tools: A Hands-On Approach to Poetry," in Activating the Passive Student, Gene Stanford, Chair, and the Committee on Classroom Practices in Teaching English (Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 1978), p. 98.

[109]Kenneth L. Donelson, "Shoptalk - A Column of Brief Techniques, Ideas, Gimmicks, and Sundry Thoughts About the Teaching of Poetry," ERIC Reproduction, ED 019 279, 1967, p. 3.

Agnes Stein identified six misconceptions generally held by students and offers suggestions to eliminate each one. To change the feeling that "poetry is a record of man's best and noblest thoughts, far removed from the reality of the present," Stein recommends using modern or rock ballads.[110] To counter the belief that "poetry is a private experience which in some mysterious way is communicated to a select few," Stein tells the teacher to select a few, simple poems and help the students acquire new insights before proceeding to more difficult material.[111] For those students who think that poetry is a magical experience, poems which realistically connect man with his natural environment should be read.[112] If students feel that poetry is not a serious adult activity because it merely plays around with words, Stein presents street poetry, graffiti or concrete poetry. She stresses that the "play" of poetry contributes "an unexpected understanding of the world in which we act for real."[113] For students who complain that poetry is composed according to numbers, Stein suggests using simply structured formal poetry, such as haiku, which is benefited by form. She also recommends

[110]Agnes Stein, "Countering Misconceptions About the Nature of Poetry," The English Journal 64 (October 1975): 53.

[111]Stein, p. 54.

[112]Stein, p. 55.

[113]Stein, p. 56.

that poetic form be presented only as it relates to content and that intricate devices be reserved for the professional poet or critic. Iambic pentameter might be justified to the student because it is basic to the spoken language.[114] To counter the contention that "poetry is an activity for women and for men you might want to call 'sissies,'" Stein relies on protest poetry which contains realistic themes relevant to present society.[115] Stein states that providing successful poetry encounters rests on the proper selection of introductory poems. Above all the selections should exclude "archaic language, convoluted or flowery terms of speech, old-fashioned sentiment, or the complexity of those moderns (Yeats, Pound, Eliot) that bear heavily on allusions to experiences the student has not yet had."[116]

Michael True asserts that the poets-in-the-schools program has done more than anything else to alleviate the misconceptions students have had about poetry. He goes so far as to call it the "Anti-Massacre Movement."[117] True identifies the purpose of the program as conducting writing sessions with classes, holding discussions and workshops with teachers, and

[114]Stein, p. 57.

[115]Stein, p. 58.

[116]Ibid., Parenthetical information is Stein's.

[117]Michael True, "The Poets in the School Anti-Massacre Movement," The English Journal 64 (October 1975): 61.

occasionally doing public readings.[118] One result of the poets-in-the-schools program has been the popularization of the experimental approach to poetry, particularly in the elementary schools, through the publication of books such as those by Kenneth Koch.[119]

In North Carolina, the poets-in-the-schools program has prompted the publication of various student anthologies and two "how to" books by co-editors Charleen Swansea Whisnant and Jo Hassett. Poetry Power: Ideas for Creative Writing and Word Magic: How to Encourage Children to Write and Speak Creatively, published by Red Clay Books and Doubleday respectively, are filled with numerous ideas for eliciting student writing and provide student samples for each category. These ideas run the gamut from animals and comparisons to junk poems and human or moral values.

Two other publications, one from Allyn and Bacon called A Guidebook for Teaching Literature and one by Amsco titled Writing Creatively, contain comprehensive units filled with creative ideas for the classroom teacher of poetry. Teachers, who claim they can't teach poetry because they don't know enough about it or don't have any ideas about how to teach it, should find these publications extremely helpful. For teachers

[118]True, p. 62.

[119]Ibid.

who are reluctant to tackle poetry because of the embarrassment of reading verse aloud, Hopkins offers five suggestions which should ease the teacher's mind.

1. Before reading a poem to the class, read it aloud several times by yourself to get the feel of the words and rhythm.
2. Follow the rhythm of the poem, reading it naturally.
3. Make pauses that please you--pauses that make sense.
4. Speak in a natural voice.
5. After a poem is read, be quiet.[120]

Hopkins also presents simple, form poems to begin students on their way to writing poetry. In his book, Hopkins includes the haiku, senryu, tanka, sijo, cinquain, and diamante. Some of these are not covered in the Allyn and Bacon and Amsco publications and would be useful to teachers who are interested in doing group writings according to specialized forms.

One of the most complete explications of teaching techniques to achieve a "direct living learning" poetry experience is found in a book by Deborah Elkins. Elkins believes that "poetry is the first literary form children adapt as an integral part of the development of their communication process."[121]

[120]Lee Bennett Hopkins, Pass the Poetry, Please! (New York: Citation Press, 1972), pp. 11-12.

[121]Deborah Elkins, Teaching Literature, Designs for Cognitive Development (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1976), p. 189.

Through exposure to much poetry and many types of experiences with poetry, Elkins believes children can reach adolescence and be prepared to understand the "chalk-talk" lessons of secondary teachers if some of these experiences are continued.[122]

Elkins describes in detail six methods which provide the direct contact and total involvement children need with poetry. She labels these areas interpretive reading and choral reading, dramatizing the ballad, poetry and music, illustrating poetry, writing poems, and poetry and dance. Elkins' approaches stress that students become immersed in the rhythm of poetry and be free to act out their responses. She feels that teachers have forgotten that drama and plot exist in poetry as well as rhythm and sound.[123] Elkins would have teachers refrain from doing too much "telling about" a poem or too much teaching with any one poem. She states, "There must be a focus of one or two major points and a systematic buildup toward a broad goal as each succeeding poem is read."[124] As one can observe from the titles of each area Elkins explores, all involve the active participation of the student. The student is constantly placed in a situation

[122]Elkins, p. 234.

[123]Elkins, p. 191.

[124]Elkins, p. 193, 197.

where he must "do" something with poetry. Poetry, thus, becomes more alive and more realistic to the student.

One of the most interesting areas in Elkins' move toward cognitive understanding is that of illustrating poetry. Most teachers consider illustrating poetry to be having students draw a picture to accompany an original poem or a work by a known poet. Elkins' concept is to have students create a montage based upon a poem they select, then share this with the class and have the class determine the poem. Viewing a classmate's interpretation of a poem or seeing three or four different interpretations, in montage form, of one poem can be stimulating for discussion and justification of appropriateness of the selections. As Elkins explains,

> Illustrating poetry stimulates thoughtful examination of and response to the poem itself; it lures students into making close associations between two art forms; it develops a taste for careful attention to detail and offers a base for an appreciation of broader meanings. Comparisons leading to an understanding of elements such as symbolism and metaphor are encouraged. Illustrating poetry builds an awareness of tone, mood, and unity without belaboring these elements through lectures or lengthy discussions.[125]

A sceptic to this approach might still ask what to do with a student who can't picture the poem because he doesn't understand the words to know what the poem says. Illustrating would have to follow some other primary experiences and fit naturally into the development of the child's skills and contact with poetry.

[125]Elkins, p. 217.

Summary

From the research and literature addressing the complexities of poetry instruction, one can discern that there are many conflicting opinions yet to be resolved. Gains have been made in the areas of student preferences to poems and teaching methods, but no conclusions have been established which make any one approach the most effective. Insights have been provided at various grade levels and sequences have been proposed based on this knowledge. Few, if any, of the sequences have been tested. Researchers disagree on the significance of information necessary for comprehension and how that information affects attitude. Researchers disagree on the issue of the ability to improve literary taste in students. Authors are in conflict as to whether a few poems taught intensively or extensive exposure with minimal teaching on each poem produces the best results. Most writers do agree, however, that students must be led, and at times coerced, into poetry enjoyment. It appears evident that more research and achievement is necessary before poetry study will be embraced and accepted by students as vital to the English curriculum.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

To test the premise that ninth grade students who are taught a carefully designed unit of poetry can acquire specific knowledge of minimal basic terms and concepts, and maintain, or increase, their appreciation of poetry, the following procedures were established:

1. Identify appropriate location of study.
2. Survey the sample population.
3. Identify specific knowledge to be tested.
4. Construct and administer a pre- and post-test.
5. Design unit of study.
6. Implement unit of study.
7. Evaluate effect of unit of study.

The first six procedures will be discussed in this chapter, with Chapter IV devoted to analysis of the evaluation process.

Location of Study

Based upon the survey results from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg junior high English teachers noted in Chapter I, a junior high school was selected for this study where very little poetry teaching occurs on a regular basis. The junior high school is an urban, integrated school with an enrollment

of eleven hundred students and a staff of sixty teachers. Since the ninth grade is departmentalized, there are three English teachers. The ninth grade was selected for the target population because only one of the three teachers had ever tried to teach poetry. The ninth grade English teachers, with the approval of the principal, agreed to participate in the study in an effort to learn more about the teaching of poetry.

Two classes from each of two teachers and four classes from one teacher, a total of eight classes, were used as the sample population. Two of the teachers shared the teaching responsibility for one-half of the ninth grade students while the third teacher taught the other half of the ninth grade students. For this reason, four classes were used from her group of students instead of two.

Teacher A, who only had two classes of students, agreed to allow her students to serve as the non-treatment group. Teacher A had never taught poetry and did not plan to teach poetry during the school year. Her students were, therefore, not adversely affected in this study by serving as the non-equivalent comparison group which received no treatment. The investigator promised to return another time to teach her students and to assist the teacher in learning to feel comfortable with poetry.

Teacher B agreed to allow the investigator to teach a poetry unit to two of her classes for a period of three weeks.

Teacher B had never taught poetry and was eager to learn some techniques for future use. Teacher B would not participate in the study by replicating the unit for testing purposes but planned to attempt the unit later in the year.

Teacher C had been teaching social studies for the past seven years and, by her own admission, had forgotten many of her techniques for teaching poetry. She had also been teaching on a lower grade level, and this would be her first experience in teaching poetry to ninth grade students. Teacher C agreed to observe a poet from the poets-in-the-schools program in two of her classes. She would then utilize the poetry sequence of materials established by the investigator to provide subsequent instruction in the poet's classes and independently attempt to replicate the investigator's unit in two of her other classes for testing purposes. All units, therefore, contained a developmental philosophy and sequence, modified only by individual teaching style, and slight differences in content according to the individual's personal preferences for certain poems to be included or excluded. The three treatment groups, containing two classes each, shall be identified according to the instructor of each group for all future references: the investigator, the poet and teacher C, and teacher C.

Student Survey Instrument

A student questionnaire was designed to ascertain the attitude of the student toward poetry, the existence of previous experience with poetry, and to determine possible interest areas for poetry content. Students had only to check a yes or no answer to seven questions, write specific answers to two questions, and state opinions to two open response questions. The questionnaire, with most pre-responses, is given as Table 2. The questionnaire was not administered to the non-treatment group because without treatment there would be no change in attitude, experience, or interest. The pre- and post-questionnaire was only used to measure attitude changes as a result of treatment effect. The non-treatment group was established for comparison in the pre- and post-test instrument measures as verification of test validity.

The student questionnaire was administered to the treatment groups prior to and immediately following the poetry study. Eleven items were included on the pre-survey. Only six of the items were included on the post-survey, the other five being no longer relevant.

Question number one, "Do you like poetry?" was a key item for this study. As previously noted, students had to respond simply "yes" or "no" to this question. Rather than use an instrument designed to measure affective behavior

Table 2

Pre-Survey Student Questionnaire

		Pre-Responses							
		Investigator		Poet		Teacher C		Total	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	Do you like poetry?	32	14	26	23	30	18	88	55
2.	Have you ever had to study poetry?	29	17	27	22	37	11	93	50
3.	Have you ever had to memorize poetry?	28	18	26	23	29	18	83	59
4.	Have you ever had to write poetry?	24	22	32	17	29	19	85	58
5.	Do you think students should study poetry?	21	24	22	25	26	22	69	71

		Investigator	Poet	Teacher C	Total
6.	If you were going to study poetry, what would you want the poems to be about?				
	Sports	29	31	29	89
	Love	41	42	34	117
	War	11	17	14	42
	Teens	28	27	31	86
	Friendship	40	41	38	119
	Adventure	30	29	31	90
	Feelings	38	35	33	106
	Death	11	11	8	30
	Other Ideas - List				
	Animals	1	4	2	7
	People	1	1	3	5
	Life	1	1	0	2
	Nature	2	1	1	4
	Space	0	1	1	2
	Music	0	0	1	1
	Myself	0	0	1	1
	Science	0	0	1	1
	Airplanes	0	1	0	1
	World	0	0	1	1

7. Name a favorite poet. (Included in Chapter IV).

8. Name a favorite poem. (Included in Chapter IV).

9. Why do you not like poetry?

	Investigator	Poet	Teacher C	Total
Poetry is boring	25	27	19	71
Poets are crazy	5	4	9	18
Poetry is silly	6	5	9	20
Poetry doesn't make any sense	10	11	7	28
Teachers make poetry boring	13	20	21	54
Teachers make poetry hard to understand	18	20	16	54
We never study poems that are interesting	14	20	18	52
Other reasons-List				
Poetry is sissy	2	0	0	2
Poetry is not important	8	6	0	14

10. I like poetry or I like to study poetry in school because: (See Appendix A).

11. I don't like to study poetry because: (See Appendix A).

toward poetry, the investigator believes that the task of improving student attitude toward poetry is not accomplished until the student can unequivocally respond, "Yes, I like poetry." The student's acknowledgment of his approval of poetry should be an acceptable, if not the most acceptable, measure of attitude. Chester Insko states,

> A different approach to the relation between attitude and behavior is to concentrate not on behavior change following attitude change but on attitude change following behavior change. This is one type of causal sequence upon which dissonance theory has focused.[1]

If the poetry unit were successful, the behavior change during the study should modify the attitude of the student in a more positive direction. To determine if significant change occurred, chi-square analyses were utilized on the responses for each treatment group and the total responses to this question.

Question number five, "Do you think students should study poetry?" was included to reinforce the findings in question number one. If students were involved in a pleasurable experience with poetry, then the affirmative responses to this item should increase. The investigator is inclined to agree with Robert Burroughs' contention that students have been induced to hate poetry by their teachers and by the way they

[1]Chester A. Insko. Theories of Attitude Change (New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, 1967), p. 348.

have been taught poetry. Burroughs relates the feelings of a senior high school student:

> The reasons that he gave for hating poetry . . . led me to believe that he was being induced to hate it. He mentioned how he hated teachers dissecting a poem through 45 minutes of discussion and then requiring a three-page paper on the carcas. Besides, he had said, there seemed no point to writing, or even discussing, what you might find during the dissection, since the teacher had already determined what you ought to find. He didn't like all the biographical information that teachers inevitably dragged in. It usually didn't seem that important to the poem. Finally, 'If I think trees in the poem symbolize death and the teacher doesn't, why can't she deal with the fact that it means death to me?'[2]

Tallies from data on the pre-survey were compiled to correlate the numbers of students who had previously studied poetry with "like" and "dislike" poetry categories. Divisions of male and female preferences were also established. The results are given in Table 3.

Table 3

Attitudes Toward Poetry Based on Sex and Previous Study

	Like			Dislike			
	Male	Female	Sub Total	Male	Female	Sub Total	To
Studied	23	36	59	21	13	34	9
Not studied	9	20	29	14	7	21	5
Sub total	32	56		35	20		
Total			88			55	14

[2]Robert Burroughs, "On Teaching Poetry," The English Journal 66 (February, 1977), pp. 48-49.

Applying the chi-square formula, an analysis was computed from the totals for "studied" and "non-studied" categories.[3] The results reveal the "like" and "dislike" categories to be independent of previous study of poetry, x^2 (1) = .41. $p > .01$. Although these results are contrary to the theories of Burroughs and this investigator, they are not conclusive. The selection of this school for the experimental treatment was based on the fact that few, if any, of the English staff teach poetry. Where poetry was introduced at the seventh or eighth grade levels, it was merely incidental and was approached only as content related to other areas of study. The only other previous experience with poetry would have had to occur at the elementary level. Thus,it would be logical to hypothesize that these students had no excessively adverse experiences in the study of poetry, typical of the kind referred to by Burroughs.

The responses on the pre-survey to the question, "Do you think students should study poetry?" appear to conflict with the positive results on the favorable responses to poetry from those students who had previously studied it. Fifty-nine students who had studied poetry and liked it as opposed to thirty-four students who had studied poetry and disliked it

[3]Janet T. Spence et al., Elementary Statistics, second edition, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), p. 207, 240. The formula and significance tables for chi-square analyses are based on this source exclusively.

should have produced comparable figures to the above question. Instead, sixty-nine students felt that poetry should be studied and seventy-one students indicated poetry should not be studied. It would appear from these responses that "like" and "dislike" categories do not appropriately correlate with previous studies of poetry. One could conclude, therefore, that an increase of affirmative student responses to this question on the post-survey will support the hypothesis that the poetry unit has been successful in the affective domain of student attitudes toward poetry.

The comparison of raw data in Table 3 numerically supports the generally held belief that females approach poetry more favorably than males, with thirty-two males as opposed to fifty-six females liking poetry and thirty-five males as opposed to twenty females disliking poetry. The chi-square statistic indicates that gender is not a chance factor of predisposition toward poetry in this study, $x^2(1) = 10.11$, $p < .01$. For poetry selection purposes, the investigator relied heavily on this result and on past studies which indicate the need for consideration of content appeal to males as a priority for success with poetry in the classroom.

The statements, "Name a favorite poet" and "Name a favorite poem" were included to determine both association with, interest in, and attitude toward poetry. These statements sought voluntary responses based on student knowledge. If the number of items increased and the content changed drastically on the

post-survey, one could assume that attitudes toward poetry were more positive and, perhaps, student taste had been altered through exposure to and experience with poetry.

Further results of the student questionnaire will be discussed in Chapter IV. Implications ascertained from the assimilated data will also be presented.

Test Design

To determine the specific knowledge of poetry students should acquire before leaving junior high school, the investigator sought the assistance of the English chairpersons from the ten senior high schools in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System. The chairpersons, meeting with the investigator, were asked to list those items of information which they considered essential for rising tenth graders to know about poetry. There was a consensus on the following prerequisites: general ideas about the nature of poetry, general forms of poetry and selective figures of speech which would include alliteration, metaphor, simile, onomatopoeia, and personification. The investigator decided to omit the first category from a test design because of its ambiguity. The last two areas became the focus of testing for cognitive learning.

The investigator designed a simple, objective test consisting of ten items to be used as a pre- and post-test for

all sample groups. The decision to use only ten items was an arbitrary one based on convenience for scoring and the findings from Maase's survey which indicate that students do not like being tested or graded on poetry.[4] It was felt that if students were required to answer only a minimal number of questions which required simple responses, there would be less risk of creating negative attitudes toward poetry. Multiple choice questions were used rather than true/false questions to avoid percentage guessing affecting the scores.

Additional information from the Maase study, that students gave a favorable rating to being tested on new material for the purpose of evaluating mastery of principles, was utilized in constructing the first five test items.[5] These items required students to recognize appropriate figures of speech in material which was not studied during the poetry unit. These questions were designed to test application of knowledge rather than memorization of terms or association of terms with definitions. It was felt that if students scored higher than fifty percent after the poetry unit, the scores would reflect more retention of concepts than temporary rote learning of terms.

The last five test items required students to identify some basic poetic forms. Although these questions were not as

[4]Maase, p. 80.

[5]Ibid.

sophisticated in their design, they were selected for two purposes:

1. To give low-level students an opportunity to achieve on a literal level through memorization;
2. To avoid setting forth complete poems for form identification which might produce negative attitudes toward the poems as test items.

The complete test is included as Table 4.

Table 4

POETRY QUIZ

Place the letter of the best answer in the blank provided.

_____1. "Happiness is a warm puppy" is an example of (A) simile (B) metaphor (C) alliteration (D) onomatopoeia (E) personification.

_____2. "What a tale of terror their turbulency tells" is an example of (A) simile (B) metaphor (C) alliteration (D) onomatopoeia (E) personification.

_____3. "His words went through me like a knife" is an example of (A) simile (B) metaphor (C) alliteration (D) onomatopoeia (E) personification.

_____4. "The moon walks the night in her silver shoes" is an example of (A) simile (B) metaphor (C) alliteration (D) onomatopoeia (E) personification.

_____5. "Buzz-z-z-z-z-z went the angry bee" is an example of (A) simile (B) metaphor (C) alliteration (D) onomatopoeia (E) personification.

_____1. Separating ideas in prose is done by a paragraph; in poetry it is done by a (A) haiku (B) limerick (C) stanza (D) narrative (E) couplet.

_____2. A humorous, five-line poem which usually has a rhyme scheme of AABBA is called a (A) haiku (B) limerick (C) stanza (D) narrative (E) couplet.

_____3. A poem which tells a story is called a (A) haiku (B) limerick (C) stanza (D) narrative (E) couplet.

_____4. A nature poem which contains seventeen syllables arranged in three lines of 5-7-5 is called a (A) haiku (B) limerick (C) stanza (D) narrative (E) couplet.

_____5. Two lines of poetry is called a (A) haiku (B) limerick (C) stanza (D) narrative (E) couplet.

The test was administered to all students in the sample population. Pre-tests and post-tests were matched by student names and all tests were eliminated where absences prevented the students from taking both the pre- and post-tests. The pre-test was administered immediately prior to the poetry study to avoid any interference of the injection of incidental learning from other sources. The post-test was administered immediately following the poetry study. The scores from the control group were used to verify the validity of the test scores and to reject any hypothesis that familiarity with the test would bias the significance of the results. The students were told that they would not receive scores on these tests and that the tests would in no way affect their class grades. The students requested and were given the answers after the post-test for their own satisfaction of knowing how well they scored. The tests were administered as "pop" tests, and the students were given no opportunity for advance study or preparation. The scores, therefore, reflect classroom learning and not last minute "cramming."

Development and Implementation of Unit of Study

To design a unit of study for use with the treatment groups, it was necessary to determine the content to be studied, the organization of the content, and the method of presentation of the content. Each of these decisions had to be applicable to the purpose of increasing cognitive learning without adversely affecting attitudes toward poetry. Although much research gives credence to the theory that attitudes toward poetry improve when students participate in the selection of poems to be studied, it was not feasible in this experiment to solicit student ratings of specific poems prior to the study. The investigator did not have access to a classroom of students as a teacher would have, and could not infringe on the time schedules of the cooperating teachers in this experiment. It was necessary, therefore, for a prepared unit of study to be ready for implementation during the scheduled weeks of the experiment.

The investigator, thus, had the task of deciding which poems to present based on the interest portions of the student survey and previous research findings and theories. After reviewing the selections of poems provided in the ninth grade text in use in that school, the investigator agreed with past studies which purported that anthologies contain much poetry which does not appeal to students. Only four poems from the text were selected, "The Raven," "Casey at the Bat," "John Doe, Jr.," and "Swimmers." The investigator searched through

countless anthologies of poetry to locate poems which might relate to the experiences of ninth-grade students, particularly males. The basis for selection was the findings of Maase, Nelms, Bridge and Rees and Pederson which indicate that students choose poems related to their own experiences and enjoy those which are humorous or narrative. The investigator focused on content rather than form as Norvell recommends:

> An examination of well-liked as well as disliked poems suggests that basically not form but content is the touchstone of popularity. The vast majority of poems deal with themes and ideas which children would reject as decisively if offered to them in prose. Youth demands life in action; age is often content with sentiment in rose leaves, with mood, dreams, reflection, didacticism, and philosophy.[6]

A complete list of poems with post-study ratings from the investigator's treatment group is listed in Table 5. After the unit of study, students were asked to select the poems they had enjoyed. There were forty-nine possible responses. No poem received a unanimous vote. The last three poems had been given to the students to read, but had not been discussed in class because of lack of time. These received the least number of responses, perhaps supporting the theory that poetry should be studied to be enjoyed.

[6]George W. Norvell, The Reading Interests of Young People (Boston: D. C. Heath & Company, 1950), p. 62.

Table 5

Study Unit Poems	Post-inventory indicating "most enjoyed" N=49
Nursery rhymes and tongue twisters	25
Limericks	23
Haiku	10
Diamante	21
Puzzle Poems "A Shout" - Stephen Dobyns "The Boomerang" - William Hart-Smith "The Steam Shovel" - Charles Malam "The Donkey" - G. K. Chesterton "A Narrow Fellow in the Grass" - Emily Dickinson	31
"Pershing at the Front" - Arthur Guiterman	37
"The Ballad of Jesse James" - William Rose Benét	30
"Casey at the Bat" - Ernest Lawrence Thayer	33
"The Kallyope Yell" - Vachel Lindsay	22
"December" - David Henderson	7
"I'm Nobody" - Emily Dickinson	9
"John Doe, Jr." - Bonaro Overstreet	25
"Richard Cory" - Edwin Arlington Robinson	26
"Nikki-Rosa" - Nikki Giovanni	19
"Sea Lullaby" - Elinor Wylie	28
"Little Boy Blue" - Eugene Field	33
"Swimmers" - Louis Untermeyer	31
"The Bustle in a House" - Emily Dickinson	12
"Out, Out" - Robert Frost	29
"Anabel Lee" - Edgar Allen Poe	24
"The Raven" - Edgar Allan Poe	28

"O Captain, My Captain" - Walt Whitman	22
"Fog" - Carl Sandburg	10
"Grass" - Carl Sandburg	12
"Reflections" - Vanessa Howard	8
"The Air is Dirty" - Glen Thompson	13
"House Fear" - Robert Frost	29
"Fifteen" - William Stafford	26
"A Word" - Emily Dickinson	7
"The Secret Sits" - Robert Frost	8
"Fire and Ice" - Robert Frost	16
"It Bids Pretty Fair" - Robert Frost	12
"The Road Not Taken" - Robert Frost	20
"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening " - Robert Frost	17
"Silence" - Edgar Lee Masters	0
"Mother to Son" - Langston Hughes	3
"The Courage That My Mother Had" - Edna St.Vincent Millay	4

From the pre-survey question six, which indicates interest areas for possible poetry study, it is obvious the students felt they would prefer poems about love and friendship. The investigator attempted to find poems to fit this category but was only successful with "Anabel Lee," which did prove to be a fairly well-liked poem. The difficulty with locating poems for these interest areas is that most examples were believed to be too archaic or too sentimental to appeal to the

teen-age male students. A possible alternative would be to use the lyrics from current "hit" songs which appeal to the students. Even though this technique would probably have been good motivation for improving attitudes, the investigator elected not to utilize this option. The difficulties in a transition from popular songs to standard works of poetry might prove to be too complex for the beginning teacher of poetry and would also involve a question of censorship which the investigator chose to avoid.

Several poems were located dealing with other positively ranked interest areas. Despite the fact that the subject of death was ranked lowest among the categories listed on the survey instrument, the investigator decided to include poems of this genre, primarily because they were in such abundance, and secondly, they seemed to be written in a style ninth graders might understand and appreciate. Most of the "death" poems were written about "feelings" toward death and the category, "feelings," had been favorably ranked. Death is also a subject that is within the realm of many teen-agers' experience and must, inevitably, be faced by all individuals.

The poems which were treated as "death" poems were "Sea Lullaby," "Little Boy Blue," "Swimmers," "Out, Out," "O Captain, My Captain," and "The Bustle in a House." Contrary to the interest preference on the pre-survey, one can observe from the post-rankings that all were favorably received

with the exception of the latter. Although "John Doe, Jr.," "Richard Cory," "Anabel Lee," "The Raven," and "Grass" contained a reference to death, these poems were taught to emphasize other themes, such as love or identity.

The organization of the poems to be presented as a unit of study was based on approaches to the theory of Gallo, Huus, Kitzhaber, Farley, Scannell, and Jenkinson and Hawley that students should be led from the simple to the complex in studying poetry. With the exception of Gallo, each of these individuals proposed a design for study based on a sequence of poetry forms and content. Most of these sequences begin with simple patterns of rhyme and proceed to narrative poems and then more complex content and lyrical poems. These sequences appear to have merit in that they tend to provide a program for growth which might be akin to Piaget's theory of cognitive development. Sequencing poems assists the student in moving from concrete to formal operations as Manaster defines these terms.

> In concrete operations the child is concerned with, or focuses on, relations between objects which the child classifies, categorizes, and orders. In formal operations the adolescent or adult has the ability to think about the possible as well as the real. Instead of having to deal with things as they 'are,' with hypotheses about how things are, the formal-operational person may deal with how things 'might be,' with hypotheses about how they might be.[7]

[7]Guy J. Manaster, Adolescent Development and the Life Tasks (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1977), p. 36.

Manaster claims that formal operations begin in adolescence and are attained at various ages and at various levels from adolescence to adulthood. The most obvious characteristic of the formal operations individual is that his thinking no longer must depend on concrete content. Thought becomes more abstract.[8] With adolescents moving from concrete thinking operations to formal, abstract operations at various ages and various ability levels, it seems logical and appropriate to introduce a sequence of poetry for study which begins on a level where all students operate and progresses through complexity as students progress. Such a sequence would enable most students to have an opportunity to acquire some knowledge of poetry and some students to reach the highest level of complexity presented.

The investigator decided to begin this study unit with nursery rhymes and tongue twisters. If students were to improve their knowledge and attitudes toward poetry, the best starting point should be a definite, pleasant memory of an experience with rhyme. On the first day of class, each student was challenged to recite a nursery rhyme with the investigator having the responsibility of being last and reciting a rhyme which no one else had presented. This activity produced an immediate total class involvement in a relaxed, comfortable,

[8]Manaster, p. 36, and 48.

fun-filled atmosphere. It was indeed a humorous experience to witness athletic heroes quoting "Mary Had a Little Lamb." With nursery rhymes and tongue twisters permeating the room in a noisy jumble of sound, students were launched on an encounter with poetry.

The investigator began to introduce the unknown by comparing it with the known. A few terms which would be used during the poetry study were listed on the board and illustrated through the nursery rhymes. For example, the class was asked about the character of "Humpty Dumpty." "What was he?" The response was, of course, an egg. "What did he appear to be?" The response was, a person. "Why or how did he give the feeling of being a person?" "Because he sat and he fell," answered the class. The students were guided into exploring the meaning of personification. Other examples were sought and given, such as the cow jumping over the moon and the dog laughing in "Hey Diddle Diddle." Students became involved with meanings of terms such as "alliteration" with "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers," "simile" with "roses are red, grass is green, you've got a figure like a submarine," and metaphor with "happiness is" sayings.

There seemed to be a natural movement from Mother Goose to limericks. The investigator shared some limericks with the class and the students were asked to complete the last two lines of two selections provided as incomplete limericks. These were

written in class and shared orally. The students were asked to attempt some limericks of their own. The investigator composed a limerick about herself and one about Teacher B. The next day students shared their limericks aloud. These papers were not graded but were collected for extra credit points.

It was possible through the use of limericks, a sonnet example, and haiku to teach that some poems have prescribed forms. Students were not asked to memorize these forms but to experience them, paying attention to the rhythm and cadence of each. The investigator performed briefly by "beating out" the rhythm of some limericks and marking syllables for haiku. With haiku, students were asked to visualize the words and then tell about a time when they had witnessed a similar scene. Mimeographed sheets of haiku were distributed to the students. (All poems in the unit which were not included in a classroom text were mimeographed for each student.)

A discussion on symbols ensued during the study of haiku. Because of the brevity of the form, it is sometimes necessary for the poets to use a word or a few words to represent an entire idea. The investigator asked students first to list colors and animals which they could think of that stood for something else. The students listed the following:

yellow - chicken
white - purity
black - mean
blue - sad
green - envy

chicken - coward
lion - king
ox - strong
lamb - gentle
fox - sly

With these ideas, the students brainstormed to try to find other generally accepted symbols such as apple pie and hot dogs, symbolic of America. Pressure was not applied at this point. It was important only that the idea be formed and remembered through class experience. Each activity related to mechanics of poetry became imprinted as a reference point for later consideration. Because haiku creates such vivid visual images through limited numbers of concise, exact words, color slides were shown to stimulate students' communication. Students were asked to attempt to write one haiku describing a slide. If a student did not feel creative, he was not forced to complete the assignment. Many students wrote more than one haiku and continued to bring in samples of their efforts throughout the remainder of the unit.

After a brief time on haiku, students were introduced to a new form, the diamante. The diamante is a contrast poem using seven lines to form a diamond pattern. A diamante requires the following prescriptive items:

Line 1 - one word, subject noun
Line 2 - two adjectives
Line 3 - three participles (either -ing, -ed, but not a mixture)
Line 4 - four nouns related to the subject
Line 5 - three participles
Line 6 - two adjectives
Line 7 - one noun opposite of the subject[9]

[9]Hopkins, p. 79.

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Because many authors had specified that students write poems of their own, the investigator chose this pattern to produce a group poem as a painless re-enforcement of voluntary, written self-expression. The group poem was written and revised on the blackboard for the entire class to view as its own creation. Each class listed ideas for a subject and then voted to determine which one to use. The class members contributed words for each category. The final selection was always the decision of the students. The first class produced the following diamante based on ideas gleaned from their social studies course.

Titanic
Tremendous, unsinkable
Floating, moving, cruising
Ship, iceberg, crash, water
Tilting, listing, sinking
Weak, sinkable
Disaster

The second class produced the following diamante, without knowledge of the product of the first class.

Love
Pretty, peaceful
Smiling, caring, sharing
Kiss, hug, hit, fight
Yelling, screaming, throwing
Mean, ugly
Hate

When the two poems were read the next day to each class, both preferred the diamante written about the Titanic. Although the second group had decided upon "love" as their topic, they agreed later that it was a more difficult subject to write about and

was not as interesting. The fact that "love" is an abstract idea may have produced some of the frustration. Even though the Titanic was removed from their immediate realm of experience, it did represent a tangible, concrete object about which they had some knowledge and interest. This classroom effort demonstrated to students that poetry can be written about any subject, but that some things, such as love, are more difficult for poets to describe. Both diamantes were read aloud by various individuals to examine the differences in meaning which tonal qualities and reading styles can produce. These observations set the stage for the next phase of the poetry sequence.

To introduce close-reading skills, the investigator found five poems whose subjects were not named except in the title. These were mimeographed without titles and given to the class as puzzle poems. The object was for students to identify the subjects based on evidence within the poems. The students had the option of working individually, with partners, or in groups. Each student who had identified a subject correctly explained the decision to the class and enumerated the clues which were found in the lines. This exercise served two purposes, that of demonstrating the importance of justifying an opinion based on evidence from the poem itself, and of illustrating that individual parts must be considered as a whole to produce the meaning of a poem.

Following puzzle poems, narrative poems were introduced for enjoyment. Recordings of "The Ballad of Jesse James" and "Casey at the Bat," read by Vincent Price, were played for the students. Only two students had ever read or heard "Casey at the Bat" and none were familiar with "The Ballad of Jesse James." The investigator gave vocabulary clarifications before reading the humorous war poem, "Pershing at the Front." Very little historical background was presented about ballads. The purpose of using these poems was to maintain interest and fun with poetry while increasing the length of and exposure to new poems.

A portion of the "The Kallyope Yell" by Vachel Lindsay was utilized to demonstrate onomatopoeia. Students volunteered for parts to imitate the sounds of the owl, the lion, the steam, and the music of the calliope. One student read the poem, pausing for each sound effect at the appropriate moment. After several readings and alternating of parts, the students recognized that the distinctive feature of this poem was the use of specific words to imitate various sounds of a circus. They were then given the word for this figure of speech technique. Onomatopoeia was added to the list of terms which remained on the blackboard throughout the unit as a convenient reference and reminder.

The poems "December," "I'm Nobody," John Doe, Jr.," "Richard Cory," and "Nikki-Rosa" were used as a group for a

discussion on identity and self-concepts. After each poem was read by student volunteers, the investigator led class discussions in drawing analogies between the poems and the interaction of classmates in recognizing and dealing with personal feelings. Students were given opportunities to discuss specific lines. When no ideas were forthcoming and all appeared perplexed, the investigator would offer one possible interpretation. The students were encouraged to challenge the interpretation with other suggestions. In no instance were they allowed to dwell on a poem long enough to become frustrated by lack of knowledge. Assistance was always provided as needed.

Because "Richard Cory" and "John Doe, Jr." ended with a death, the next poems studied were those which focused on death. As previously mentioned, "The Bustle in a House," "Out, Out," "Sea Lullaby," "The Swimmers," and "Little Boy Blue" were selected for this portion of the unit. In all of these poems, the individual who dies is someone young. Students seemed to identify and empathize with these poems more readily. They did not appear to view them as objectively as other selections. Perhaps this accounts for the higher ratings of most of these poems on the post-inventory.

Students were asked to identify the differences in the mood and tone of each poem by examining the attitude toward death expressed in each. After all poems had been discussed,

students were asked to vote on which poem they liked best and state reasons for their decisions. The investigator, with the students, tried to determine whether choices were made based upon the mood and tone of the poem or agreement with attitude toward death expressed in the poem. The students who preferred "Little Boy Blue" reasoned that the poem was sad, sweet, and gentle. Those who preferred "Out, Out" stated that it was brutal, honest, and realistic. Those who favored "Sea Lullaby" said the unique manner in picturing the incident was interesting. Although many students could not articulate the reasons for their preferences, most felt the selection was based upon the appeal of the content of the poem. They had mixed emotions toward death and were not entirely in agreement with any one presentation.

All of these poems have excellent examples of at least one figure of speech which had been discussed. "Sea Lullaby" and "Out, Out" are good illustrations for personification. "The Bustle in a House" contains an extended metaphor, and "Little Boy Blue" is filled with alliteration. These and other devices were pointed out, routinely, through each poem studied when obvious examples emerged. Students were first asked if they recognized any particular tools used by the poet. Those that were not noticed were mentioned, but not belabored, by the investigator.

Following the "death" poems, and supporting that theme, two sixteen millimeter films from McGraw-Hill were shown to the

class. The females responded very well to "Anabel Lee," but the class response to "O Captain, My Captain" was not as favorable. Both films gave a brief historical background of the poet's life which was boring to the students. The Walt Whitman film showed scenes of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King to parallel the emotion toward their assassinations with that of Abraham Lincoln. It was the investigator's error not to realize there was a generation gap with these students; none were old enough during the historical moments depicted in the film to have experienced the emotion the film attempted to recall. The investigator addressed the problem honestly with the students and asked them to imagine how they would have responded if the individuals pictured had been Elvis Presley and other rock stars (the students named them because they are unfamiliar to the investigator) who had died during the year. This discussion dramatically altered the response.

Providing another poem by Poe to compare and contrast with "Anabel Lee" seemed appropriate. Before playing a recording of "The Raven," the investigator had the students discuss the short stories they had read by Poe. Selections typical for ninth grade study include "The Black Cat," "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Cask of Amontillado," "The Pit and the Pendulum," and "Hop Frog." The first three stories contain basically the same plot structure. The class, with the

assistance of the investigator, named the common elements. The next task was to identify the plot structure of "The Raven" and determine how it compared with the short stories. This procedure made what students generally call a "weird" poem accessible, rational, and more realistic. Experiences involving frightening incidents at night, as well as humorous dialogues with parrots and myna birds were shared. Exploring the depths of symbolism in the poem was left to future years and more maturity with literature. The students should at least be receptive and more comfortable with the next encounter.

The poems "Fog," "Grass," "Reflections," "The Air is Dirty," "House Fear" and "Fifteen" were read and discussed as a group, for variety of subject matter and technique. "House Fear" and "Fifteen" were most favorably received in this grouping. Students could understand the other poems, but the subjects were not a part of the students' personal experience. Since only three students had indicated they would be interested in poems about life or the world, perhaps "Reflections" and "The Air is Dirty" should not have been included. The subjects of life and the world, as well as the poems "Fog" and "Grass," are removed from the personal, self-centered world of the adolescent. Rather than concentrating on wide exposure to poetry at this point, slowing the pace and providing students time to experiment with their own descriptions of the world and people around them might have produced better responses and results. A classroom teacher would not have to experience a

similar dilemma. The time span of the poetry unit could be, and should be, adjusted according to the needs of the students and the atmosphere of the class. "House Fear" and "Fifteen" were well received because the students could immediately identify with and relate them to personal experiences of entering an empty house at night, alone, and facing the temptation and consequences of doing something illegal.

As one of the final phases of the unit, students were divided into groups and asked to select a poem for their group to study. The poems were chosen from selections provided by the investigator. Each short poem contained sufficient ambiguity for more than one interpretation to emerge. Students had to decide which interpretation they were going to support and present their ideas to the class. The poems selected for this grouping were "A Word," "The Secret Sits," "Fire and Ice," "It Bids Pretty Fair," "The Road Not Taken," and "Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening." The investigator served as a resource for students as they requested assistance but never imposed any interpretations on the groups.

Each group had members read its selection to the class, present its interpretation of the poem, and ask for class discussion. Usually the class accepted the groups' presentations without disagreement. The exception was Robert Frost's famous "Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening." The group responsible

for this presentation had decided that the traveller was Santa Claus. A lengthy argument followed with the class polarized into two factions, those who supported the Santa Claus theory and those who protested that there was not sufficient evidence present in the poem to support such an interpretation. Each faction listed its arguments, both pro and con, on the blackboard, citing specific lines and phrases from the poem as evidence. Obviously, the evidence against the Santa Claus interpretation outweighed the other.

The investigator allowed the discussion to continue until the students had resolved the issue and then guided them toward considerations of broader themes than the personna of the poem. Ninth graders could relate to this poem only on a limited basis because most had not yet felt the abundance of pressures and commitments an older person experiences. The investigator related to the class her changing feelings toward this poem when she had studied it in junior high school, high school, college, and as an adult teaching it to a class of students. The students decided that some poems are not limited to certain ages and their meanings are modified as they are read at different stages in one's life. Perhaps, they felt, this is a characteristic of "good" poetry.

Immediately following the class, Teacher B approached the investigator and apologized for her students wasting so much class time arguing about Santa Claus. It appeared that she was disgusted with the behavior of her class. The investigator

responded by asking Teacher B the following question, "Three weeks ago would your students have bothered to spend twenty-five minutes discussing a poem?" The dramatic change in the facial expression of Teacher B revealed more enlightenment than her comment of "Oh!" Teachers must permit students to be involved with poetry on whatever level is comfortable to them. The task of the teacher is to lead the students, through patience and understanding, toward higher levels of involvement.

The final assignment for the students was to select one of Scholastic's award-winning photographs, which the investigator provided from the school's media center, and write a poem describing the picture or revealing what the picture meant to the student. These poems were, again, not to be graded and were written on a voluntary basis. Initially, students listed words and phrases which the prints immediately brought to mind. Many of these first impressions were revised into very good poems. Some students, of course, did not progress beyond the activity of engaging their minds to produce prose descriptions.

The final class day of the unit was devoted to the post-survey, an evaluation of the poems studied, and the post-test. Teacher B tested her class on the unit after the investigator left. In a follow-up conversation with teacher B, it was discovered that the class made the highest grades they had made all year with only one failure in the two classes.

Teacher B had prepared the investigator to expect the fourth period class to be apathetic and the fifth period class to be extremely responsive. By the end of three weeks, the fourth period group was more responsive than fifth period. One male student who had been an attendance problem had been present for all class periods except one and had produced some very good poems. The investigator believes that teacher-pupil relationships and classroom interaction and dynamics must be an influence in this experiment as well as the content and presentation techniques in the unit of study.

In the second treatment group of two classes, the poet, Charleen Swansea, spent five days with the students. During this abbreviated time span, she focused on producing written products. Because the student contact time is so limited with the poets-in-the-schools program, the poet must be a dynamic individual to begin eliciting student, written responses immediately. Teachers find this charismatic approach difficult to emulate. Many of the techniques employed, however, can be incorporated into teacher study units of poetry.

The poet bases her approach on the following beliefs:

> With junior high students, creativity is innate and only needs permission; logical thinking is not innate and needs practice. The more I teach, the more I tend to emphasize the latter to the extent that more classroom time is spent in an experience of stacking creative responses, like blocks, to build a structure both stable and intricate. With teachers, creative response is not innate. It has been so long repressed that I must make the other assumption, that creative response has been repressed and, therefore, must be practiced. In senior

> high I must spend more time eliciting creative responses because those students have become almost as self-conscious as the teachers.[10]

If, in fact, these beliefs are true, perhaps the repression of creativity and the self-consciousness of the teacher interfere with the presentation of poetry in the classroom and contribute to the negative response by students.

The first day in the classes, the poet talked about the importance of self-expression and related incidents of her own children trying to ask for money and trying to tell a girlfriend or boyfriend they loved them. This approach established a relaxed atmosphere and was humorous to the students. The poet moved from the reasons for self-expression immediately into actual self-expression by having the students do a group poem. The students offered one line suggestions, which the teacher recorded, on the subject "If I lived at the bottom of the ocean, life would be--." After all ideas were vocalized, the poet had students volunteer to play a waterphone while she read the poem. The waterphone is an instrument which the poet invented. It produces sounds which are appropriate for science-fiction movies and has, in fact, been used by a Hollywood studio. The effect was impressive to the students.

[10]Interview with Charleen Swansea, Coordinator for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Poets-in-the-Schools Program, Charlotte, North Carolina, February 17, 1978.

The second day of class the students began writing individual poems using metaphors and subjects such as, "Love is," "Happiness is," "My Mother is." The poet helped students discover words which would be more descriptive or more exact and urged them to avoid clichés. Each day the poet took the products from the students, typed them in groups according to content, duplicated them, and had selections read aloud on the next day. The poet then used student poems to teach organization or logical presentation of material. The class would read a student's poem and offer suggestions to improve it. The entire class was involved in the process of editing and revising. The poet constantly stressed revision.

On the third day, students were writing poems using "like" or "as." They were never given the terms metaphor and simile. The "like" or "as" poems became list poems which the poet compared to Whitman. Students were taught that using opposites is more sophisticated in poems containing lists. Poems were shared in the same manner as described. The classes became writing workshops.

By the fourth day, the students had learned what was expected in the revision process. The poet had taught them to extend ideas, using all senses. According to the poet, poetry improves when an individual "expands his intelligence." Expanding intelligence involves stretching the imagination to find

more descriptive and exact ways to state an idea. The poet told the students to include all ideas first and then eliminate the illogical. She stressed writing unrhymed poems to avoid being hindered or trapped by a word that will not fit a rhyme scheme.

Students were taught that the way they "stack" and arrange their sentences is style and changing stanzas as they change subjects is organization. Revision involves style and organization as well as avoiding clichés, covering all specifics and then condensing, putting a "bow-tie" or clincher sentence at the end, and enlarging the subject to "catch the eye."

On the fourth day, students were also taught the skill of observation necessary to a poet. The poet related a "fish" story to demonstrate this point and then distributed a raw vegetable to each student. The student's task was to write a poem describing his vegetable. Students were extremely interested in this activity. Many had never before seen an artichoke or a rutabaga. A bell pepper, for example, was described as the jolly green giant's molar.

The last day of class was a performance. The poet took a classical guitarist and a flutist to class. Students read their best poems of the week while the musicians accompanied them. The poet demonstrated that mood and tone can be revealed in both poetry and music. Some poems were read to two

different musical arrangements for students to decide which sounded more appropriate. A few of the students from teacher B's class participated in this event by reading their original poems to the poet's class. It was not possible for all students from every treatment group to be involved in the performance because of class schedules and space.

When the poet left, Teacher C continued the study of poetry with these students. Teacher C had already begun her own unit with the last treatment group. She began with nursery rhymes and followed the same procedure as the investigator. Teacher C included reading parodies of "Casey at the Bat," writing epitaphs with the "death" poems, and examining a few more selections from the ninth grade text. She did not use Scholastic prints in her unit of study.

Teacher C had a comfortable rapport with her students. She was uninhibited and participated in the poetry assignments with her students. All treatment groups, thus, had a relaxed atmosphere which focused on student involvement and the enjoyment of poetry. If an adverse influence because of instructors occurred, it should have been in the investigator's treatment group. Teacher C had the advantage of already knowing her students; the poet had the advantage of being a published poet with a charismatic involvement with students. The investigator was an outsider and not a published poet.

All treatment groups were instructed with a sequence of poems which led from the simple to the more complex. Even the

poet, in stressing writing, used primary experiences before moving to more abstract concepts. The poet's treatment group, of course, had more experience with writing poetry which might have had an effect on post-evaluations. All treatment groups emphasized student-centered classes and variety in presentation and teaching techniques.

In no instance were students required to produce one interpretation for the teacher of the poems studied, to memorize poems, to compare published poems as to author or style, or to be responsible for historical backgrounds of poems or authors. The units avoided all approaches to poetry which researchers have claimed to be detrimental to appreciation of poetry or the affective response to poetry. Deliberate effort was made to incorporate most, if not all, the positive theories and approaches to poetry recorded in Chapter II from the related research and literature. One exception is that the investigator and poet taught mechanics of poetry inductively while teacher C taught the mechanics deductively. Another exception is that both Teachers B and C tested their students on remembered facts from the unit of study, a negative factor in the Maase study. Their testing was accomplished after the post-tests were administered for this study, however, and should have no bearing on the results of this experiment. It is not known what effect, if any, the teachers' testing would have had on this experiment if the

post-tests had been administered last. Because teachers must provide grades for students on report cards, they are, understandably, reluctant to devote three weeks to poetry without producing a grade for the instruction time. Grading poetry will continue unless it is only presented by interspersing it throughout a school year. The investigator believes that if teachers avoid grading original poems produced by the students and assigning poetry notebooks for grades, appropriately designed final tests should have no more adverse effects on poetry than on any other area of content studied in English classes.

The next time the investigator teaches a unit of poetry study, she will include Deborah Elkin's suggestion to have students prepare a montage of a poem and eliminate the Scholastic prints if time is still a factor. The Scholastic prints were effective in producing reactions but not as effective in producing written responses. This process required higher levels of analysis than time permitted. Creating a montage might produce more active involvement. Also, rather than show a number of slides, only one slide at a time would be shown to elicit student response. When the focus is on writing, students seem to have a difficult time selecting a subject. In the early stages, particularly, it would facilitate instruction to eliminate the decision-making process for a subject whenever possible. The subject which is selected for a class should, however, be appealing and agreeable to the majority of students.

Summary

The investigator identified a junior high school where few, if any, teachers taught poetry. Eight ninth grade classes were paired and established as three treatment groups and one non-treatment group. The investigator taught one group for a period of three weeks. A classroom teacher taught another group, using the investigator's sequence of materials. A poet from the poets-in-the-schools program taught the third group with the classroom teacher presenting follow-up instruction. The fourth group received no poetry instruction.

All four groups were given pre- and post-tests to determine cognitive gain. The first five test items were devoted to application of knowledge about poetic devices or figures of speech. The last five items were devoted to identification of poetic form and structure.

The three treatment groups were administered a pre- and post-survey to determine attitudes toward poetry and whether any significant change in attitude would occur which could be attributed to treatment effect. The survey contained questions requiring simple "yes" or "no" responses, specific identifications of poets and poems, and open-ended responses.

To determine the content, sequence of content, and presentation of the content for the poetry unit, the investigator relied upon the results of previous research and theories presented in the related literature. A review of the related

research revealed that the two studies which were most applicable to this study were those by Maase and Snider, presented in Chapter II. Maase developed a poetry model to be used in senior high school. The model requires that poetry be introduced in three stages, first by interspersing poetry throughout a school year, second by involving students in listening, rating, and evaluating sessions with poetry, and third by doing close study of poems that have been rated most favorable by students.[11] The model specifies that behavioral objectives be used and that the objectives emphasize the affective domain responses. The evaluation phase of the model focuses on the outcomes of the behavioral objectives.[12]

Snider's research emphasizes behavioral objectives in teaching poetry to ninth grade students. To achieve the behavioral objectives, Snider stresses exposure to numerous poems and utilizes recordings of poems as well as popular songs. Snider does not use a developmental sequence with the content. Her questions for the first lesson require as much analytical skill as do the questions for the fifteenth lesson. By the fifteenth lesson, however, more information has been provided the students which should enable their answers to reflect more knowledge. Snider also attempts to impart more technical skills than this study involves.

[11]Maase, pp. 110-112.

[12]Maase, p. 90.

The poetry unit designed for this study is based upon a developmental sequence beginning with the students' last, pleasant experience with poetry, which for many students was "Mother Goose" rhymes. The sequence is developmental in both content and skills. It is designed as an introductory unit for junior high school students to prepare for more sophisticated encounters with poetry at the senior high school level. The goal for teaching such a unit is to provide basic poetry concepts for inexperienced poetry readers without adversely affecting their appreciation of poetry.

Selection of poems and methods of presentation were determined primarily from the results of the rating instruments in the studies by Maase and Snider, ideas from review of related literature, and the investigator's experience with poetry. The unit does not utilize behavioral objectives but does focus on identified goals. Ideally the skill items would be taught inductively, but deductive teaching is also appropriate provided the sequence is maintained. The sequence may be summarized as follows:

	Vehicle	Skill
1.	"Mother Goose" rhymes	personification
	Tongue twisters	alliteration
	Autograph verses	simile, metaphor
	Television jingles	simile, metaphor
2.	Limericks	form, rhyme scheme, rhythm
3.	Haiku	form, imagery, symbolism

4.	Diamante	form, group poems
5.	Puzzle poems	close reading techniques
6.	Ballads and humorous narrative poems	form and content
7.	Poem example of onomatopoeia presented by various class readers	onomatopoeia
8.	Short, thematic poems	content and reinforcement of poetic devices
9.	Longer poems	group analysis
10.	Lyrical poems	individual analysis

CHAPTER IV

DATA AND ANALYSIS

Two sets of data were collected for this study. A pre- and post-test instrument was administered to three treatment groups and one non-equivalent comparison group to determine if any significance existed between the treatment groups and the non-treatment group and if significance existed among treatment groups in the area of cognitive learning. Each treatment group and the comparison group consisted of two classes of ninth grade students. A pre- and post-survey was conducted to analyze the affective response toward poetry of the treatment groups.

Data from the pre- and post-test instrument were subjected to analyses of variance to determine the significance of the treatment at the .01 level of significance. Data from the pre- and post-survey were subjected to chi-square analyses for significance of treatment effect at the .01 level of significance.

Results of the Pre- and Post-Test Instrument

The test instrument, administered to all treatment groups and the comparison group, was given in Chapter III as Table 4. Student names on the pre-test were matched with names on the post-test. If students were absent for one of the tests, the remaining scores were eliminated from the analysis. The number of students in each group is not equal to every other group due to individual class sizes and student absences. Individual score for each group on the pre- and post-tests are listed in Appendix

Two null hypotheses were to be statistically tested at the .01 level of significance on the results of the pre- and post-test scores. The first null hypothesis stated that there would be no difference in gain in cognitive learning between the treatment groups and the comparison group. The second null hypothesis stated that there would be no differential treatment effect among the three treatment groups.

There were two comparisons to be made among multiple groups; therefore, a one-way analysis of variance rather than a "t" test was selected to analyze the data for significance. The F-statistic generated by this analysis was then compared to an F- distribution curve to test for the degree of confidence in accepting or rejecting the stated hypotheses at the .01 level of significance.

The basic data for each of the four groups involved are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Mean Gain and Variance for Treatment and Comparison Groups

Group	N	Mean Gain	Variance (s^2)
Investigator	41	40.2	739.0
Poet and Teacher C	41	45.8	571.0
Teacher C	42	39.0	637.2
Comparison/ Non-treatment	47	1.7	31.1

The one-way analysis of variance performed to test the first hypothesis for treatment gain yielded the results shown in Table 7.

Table 7

ANOVA for Treatment Groups and Comparison Group

Error Sum of Squares ESS	Treatment Sum of Squares TSS	Total Sum of Squares SS	F-statistic F
82334.1	55050.9	137385.0	37.22

This F-statistic, when compared to the F-distribution curve, shows an extremely low probability of being a chance variation ($p < .0001$). Thus, with a high degree of confidence, the first null hypothesis of no-treatment effect between the treatment groups and the comparison group can be rejected. The three treatment groups made a highly significant gain in cognitive learning when compared to the non-treatment group.[1]

The data used to test the second null hypothesis are shown in Table 8.

[1]The analysis of variance was computed by a Texas Instrument machine using programs provided in TI Programmable 58/59 Applied Statistics, Using the Power of Your Solid State Software tmModule, Texas Instruments, Inc., 1977, pp. 4-20, 4-21.

Table 8

ANOVA for Differential Treatment Effects

ESS	TSS	SS	F-statistic
80470.2	758.4	81228.7	.57

This F-statistic, when compared to the F-distribution curve, shows a high probability of being a chance variation, ($p > .01$). The second null hypothesis, that of no differential treatment effect among the treatment groups, cannot be rejected.

When comparing treatment groups with the comparison group, there is a high degree of confidence in accepting the existence of a significant treatment effect. The three treatment groups, however, do not differ significantly in the amount of change exhibited by the students.

The rejection of the first null hypothesis, no treatment effect between the treatment groups and the comparison group, indicates that the poetry unit was definitely successful in the area of cognitive learning. Random selection of students and assignment to the eight classes was not possible; therefore, the non-equivalent comparison group can not be termed a control group by scientific experiment standards. Through the school's scheduling process and the assignment of high ability students to academically talented classes, selecting

the remaining ninth grade classes for treatment groups and a comparison group should have reduced the likelihood of intelligence variability affecting the results of this study.

The acceptance of the second null hypothesis, no differential treatment effect among the treatment groups, indicates that the units of poetry study conducted by the investigator, the poet, and teacher C were equally successful in the area of cognitive learning. Although the mean gain of each treatment group varies slightly, the variance is not significant. The variance among these groups could have been due to some difference in intelligence levels of each group or teacher-pupil relationships rather than treatment effect. The fact that the variance is not significant, however, indicates that a poetry unit can be replicated with a high degree of confidence in obtaining success in the area of cognitive learning.

Results of the Pre- Post-Survey

The post-survey consisted of six items. The responses to these items were compared to the responses of the same items on the pre-survey. The results were subjected to chi-square analyses to determine if significant changes in attitudes toward poetry had occurred. The null hypothesis that an intensive unit of poetry study with ninth grade students would have no adverse effect on the affective domain of appreciation of poetry was tested by the pre- post-survey results at the .01

level of significance. The post-survey with the pre- and post-survey results is recorded in Table 9.

Table 9

Pre- and Post-Survey Questionnaire Comparison

Student Questionnaire

1. Do you like poetry?															
Investigator				Poet				Teacher C				Total			
Pre		Post		Pre		Post		Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
32	14	36	14	26	23	28	15	30	18	34	10	88	55	98	39

2. Do you think students should study poetry?															
Investigator				Poet				Teacher C				Total			
Pre		Post		Pre		Post		Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
21	24	25	21	22	25	28	15	26	22	31	12	69	71	84	48

3. Name a favorite poet.*

Poet	Pre	Post
Poe	12	32
Mother Goose	7	0
Shakespeare	2	0
Robert Burns	1	0
Robert Frost	6	33
Longfellow	4	0
Hemingway	1	1
Ogden Nash	1	2
Sandburg	1	2
e. e. Cummings	1	0
Mark Twain	1	0
Rod McKuen	1	1

Poet	Pre	Post
Alexander Poe [sic] **	1	0
Milton	0	1
Eugene Field	0	1
Rupert Brooke	0	1
William Rose Benét	0	1
Emily Dickinson	0	2
Walt Whitman	0	1
Robert Louis Stevenson	0	1
Arthur Guiterman	0	1
Boy Dylan	0	1
Nipsey Russell	0	1
Robert Nathan	0	1
Charleen Swansea	0	18
Total	39	101

4. Name a favorite poem.*

Poem	Pre	Post
The Raven	5	20
How Can I Count the Waves [sic] ***	1	0
Mary Had a Little Lamb	2	0
Jack Be Nimble	1	0
Hey Diddle Diddle	1	0
Casey At the Bat	3	7
Jack and Jill	1	0
Little Willie	1	0
Oh To Be in England	1	0
The Night Before Christmas	1	0
Paul Revere	1	0
The Llama	1	0
Anabel Lee	1	3
Nothing Gold Can Stay	1	1
Trees	1	0
Jonathan Livingston Seagull	1	0
The Tell-Tale Heart	1	0
Adam and Eve	1	0
The Road Not Taken	1	5
The Odyssey	0	1
Bustle in the House	0	1
The Term	0	1
Fire and Ice	0	2

Poem	Pre	Post
John Doe, Jr.	0	1
Pershing at the Front	0	5
Sea Lullaby	0	3
Little Boy Blue - Field	0	8
Grass - Sandburg	0	1
Stopping by Woods	0	2
Out, Out	0	7
The Soldier	0	1
The Ballad of Jesse James	0	2
O Captain, My Captain	0	1
Chums	0	1
My Shadow	0	1
The Gift Outright	0	1
Be Not Afraid	0	1
The Runaway	0	1
The Purist	0	1
Cremation of Sam McGee	0	1
Casey Jones	0	1
Total	26	80

5. I like poetry or I like to study poetry in school because (See Appendix A).

6. I don't like to study poetry because (See Appendix A).

* Answers are recorded exactly as students wrote them.

** The student is referring to Edgar Allan Poe.

*** The student is referring to Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "How do I love thee, Let me count the ways."

Like and Dislike Responses

From the data contained in Table 9, the first chi-square analysis was performed to determine any significant change in the categories of "like" or "dislike" of poetry for the total treatment groups. These figures are given in Table 10.

Table 10

Chi-Square Analysis of Poetry Attitude

Total Treatment Groups

Total Treatment Groups	Like	Dislike	Total
Pre	88	55	143
Post	97	39	136
Total	185	94	279

The result of the application of the chi-square formula is 2.99. It must be concluded, therefore, that there was no significant change based on treatment effect, x^2 (1) = 2.99, $p > .01$.

The investigator wanted all responses on the pre- and post-surveys to be honest reflections of the students' opinions. To remove any possibility of external intimidation or threat to the students, names were not required. Names could, therefore, not be matched on the surveys, as were the pre- post-tests, to eliminate papers from students with an absence on one of the survey days. On the pre-survey there were 143 responses, but

on the post-survey there were only 136 responses, a difference of seven responses due to absences. If these seven responses were added to the negative category of disliking poetry, there would still be an increase of nine students who liked poetry as a result of the study. Although the chi-square statistic does not indicate a significant change due to treatment effect, the change that does occur, based on the raw data, is in a positive rather than negative direction. By the chi-square statistic, the null hypothesis must be accepted, that the poetry unit had no adverse effect on student appreciation of poetry. By comparison of raw data responses, one can determine that the change, although non-significant, is in a positive direction.

The chi-square formula was applied to each treatment group to determine whether any significant change occurred within groups in the categories of "like" or "dislike" poetry at the .01 level of significance. These results are given in Table 11.

As would be expected from the total treatment group scores, the null hypothesis of no adverse treatment effect must be accepted within all groups at $p > .01$. No comparison of raw data can be made on the investigator's scores for predicting direction of change. There is a difference in total responses of four students. These four students could have been distributed in negative and positive categories on the pre-survey in a way possible for no change to occur.

Table 11

Chi-Square Analyses of Poetry Attitude for Individual Treatment Groups

Investigator	Like	Dislike	Total
Pre	32	14	46
Post	35	15	50
Total $x^2=.002$	67	29	96
Poet and Teacher C			
Pre	25	24	49
Post	28	15	43
Total $x^2=1.86$	53	39	92
Teacher C			
Pre	31	17	48
Post	34	9	43
Total $x^2=2.33$	65	26	91

On the individual treatment group for the poet and teacher C, there were six fewer responses on the post-survey. A decrease of nine responses in the negative category and an increase of three responses in the positive category indicate that at least three students converted to a favorable response to poetry

following the unit of poetry study. In the scores for teacher C, if the difference of five responses were added to the negative category, there would still be an increase of three students who liked poetry after the study unit.

Although the chi-square statistic shows that there is no significant variation due to treatment effect, the fact that there were no students in any treatment group who converted to a dislike of poetry response after the study is significant to the investigator. The poetry unit was successful with all groups in increasing cognitive learning without adversely affecting students' appreciation of poetry. In fact, a small number of students converted to a "like" poetry response as a result of the study.

Response to Should Students Study Poetry

Chi-square analyses were performed on the responses to question two from Table 9 in the same manner as question one. These responses and results are given in Table 12.

It would appear that a significant change occurred due to treatment effect when considering the total group scores, x^2 (1)= 5.69, $p < .05$. When viewing individual group scores, however, none are significant at the .05 level and the total treatment group score is not significant at the .01 level of significance, x^2 (1)=5.69, $p > .01$. Significance due to treatment can not be declared independent of chance factors at the .01 significance level, therefore, but the comparison of actual responses is encouraging. Allowing for the possibility of eight negative

Table 12

Chi-Square Analyses of Responses

to the Study of Poetry

Total Treatment Groups	Should Study	Should Not Study	Total
Pre	69	71	140
Post	84	48	132
Total	153	119	272
$x^2=5.69$			
Investigator			
Pre	21	24	45
Post	25	21	46
Total	46	45	91
$x^2=.54$			
Poet and Teacher C			
Pre	22	25	47
Post	28	15	43
Total	50	40	90
$x^2=3.05$			
Teacher C			
Pre	26	22	48
Post	31	12	43
Total	57	34	91
$x^2=3.11$			

responses from the students on the pre-survey not present on the post-survey and four negative responses from students who answered the "like" or "dislike" poetry question but chose not to answer the "should" or "should not study" poetry question, twenty-four more students felt that poetry should be studied after the poetry unit than before. Although significance can not be claimed in this area, the fact that twenty-four students changed their minds and felt that poetry should be studied would tend to support the effectiveness of the poetry study in the area of affective response and the null hypothesis that the unit of study had no adverse effect on the appreciation of poetry. It is interesting to note that on both the pre- and post-surveys the number of students who indicated that they like poetry was greater than the number of those who feel that poetry should be studied. Although the comparison of "like" and "dislike" categories with whether or not students had studied poetry revealed no significance, as indicated in Chapter III, this survey indicates that some students tend to associate the study of poetry with a dislike of poetry.

The individual group results reveal that, even though not significantly, the differences were greater in the poet's and teacher C's groups than in the investigator's. The students with the poet and teacher C showed a slightly higher increase on the affective response of liking poetry and an even higher

increase on the response that poetry should be studied. There is no method in this study to determine the reasons for this difference. If the responses were greater in only the poet's group, the variability might be due to the intensive writing approach employed in that treatment. The chi-square statistic indicates, however, that the change was greater in teacher C's treatment group which was independent of the poet's influence. Again, the variability may be due to intelligence levels within the classes or teacher-pupil rapport.

Poet and Poem Responses

The questions which sought voluntary responses to naming a favorite poet and poem support the success of the poetry study in the affective domain. On the pre-survey only thirty-nine students listed names of favorite poets. Seven of these responses were for "Mother Goose." On the post-survey there were 101 responses. "Mother Goose" was not included in these answers. On the pre-survey there were only twenty-six responses of favorite poems. Some of these included nursery rhymes. On the post-survey, there were eighty responses of favorite poems, none of which were nursery rhymes. One could conclude, from examining the number of responses and the types of responses, that student taste in poetry was considerably improved as an effect of treatment. On the post-survey, Robert Frost received the most responses for favorite

poet with Edgar Allan Poe only one point behind. "The Raven" received the most responses (20) for a favorite poem with six Frost poems receiving a total of eighteen responses. A break down of pre- and post-survey responses to favorite poets and poems by treatment groups is provided in Table 13.

Table 13
Tabulation of Students' Favorite Poets and Poems

Investigator	Poets Pre	Post	
	Poe	6	Poe	20
	Mother Goose	7	Frost	13
	Shakespeare	1	Milton	1
	Robert Burns	1	Eugene Field	1
	Total	15	Rupert Brooke	1
			William Rose Benét	1
			Sandburg	1
			Total	38
Poet and Teacher C				
	Frost	2	Poe	4
	Longfellow	3	Sandburg	1
	Ogden Nash	1	Robert Louis Stevenson	1
	Poe	3	Frost	10
	Shakespeare	1	Hemingway	1
	Sandburg	1	Ogden Nash	2
	e. e. Cummings	1	Arthur Guiterman	1
	Mark Twain	1	Nipsey Russell	1
	Rod McKuen	1	Bob Dylan	1
	Total	14	Robert Nathan	1
			Rod McKuen	1
			Charleen Swansea	10
			Total	34
Teacher C				
	Poe	4	Poe	8
	Frost	4	Frost	10
	Longfellow	1	Dickinson	2
	Hemingway	1	Whitman	1
	Total	10	Swansea	8
			Total	29

Poems

Investigator	Pre	Post	
	The Raven	2	The Raven 14
	How Can I Count the Waves [sic]	1	The Road Not Taken 2 Fire and Ice 1 Pershing at the Front 4
	Mary Had a Little Lamb	1	Sea Lullaby 1 Little Boy Blue 5
	Jack Be Nimble	1	Casey at the Bat 1
	Hey Diddle Diddle	1	Grass 1 Stopping by Woods 1
	Casey at the Bat	2	Out, Out 1 Anabel Lee 2
	Jack and Jill	1	The Soldier 1
	Little Willie	1	The Ballad of Jesse James 2
	Oh to be in England	1	O Captain, My Captain 1
	Total	11	Total 37
Poet and Teacher C			
	The Night Before Christmas	1	My Shadow 1
	Paul Revere	1	The Gift Outright 1 Nothing Gold Can Stay 1
	The Llama	1	Out, Out 2
	The Raven	1	The Road Not Taken 2
	Anabel Lee	1	Stopping by Woods 1 Anabel Lee 1
	Nothing Gold Can Stay	1	Be Not Afriad 1
	Casey at the Bat	1	Fire and Ice 1 The Purist 1
	Mary Had a Little Lamb	1	The Raven 2 Sam McGee 1
	Total	8	Casey at the Bat 4 Casey Jones 1
			Total 20
Teacher C			
	Trees	1	Sea Lullaby 2
	The Raven	2	Little Boy Blue 3 The Term 1
	Jonathan L. Seagull	1	Casey at the Bat 2 The Bustle in a House 1
	The Tell-Tale Heart	1	Out, Out 4
	Adam and Eve	1	The Raven 4
	The Road Not Taken	1	The Road Not Taken 1 The Odyssey 1
	Total	7	Chums 1 The Runaway 1 Pershing at the Front 1
			John Doe, Jr. 1
			Total 23

The investigator's group produced the largest number of responses on both the pre- and post-survey. The poet's group, however, produced a greater variety of responses on the pre-survey of poets and the post-survey of poems. The value of the list is questionable when Nipsey Russell, Rod McKuen, and Hemingway are listed among the poets. The frequency of the name Charleen Swansea appearing on the lists is attributable to her appearance in teacher C's classes and her work with one treatment group. This was a response of affection for the poet as an individual and not as a writer because none of the poet's works were read in the classes.

Using the figure of one hundred and forty possible responses as a compromise figure for the number of students answering the pre- and post-survey instrument, the following table shows percentage increase in responses of the total treatment groups.

Table 14

Pre- and Post-Response Percentages

for Poets and Poems

N=140 possible responses	Poet	Poems
Pre	39=28%	26=19%
Post	101=71%	80=57%
Total increase	43%	38%

There were substantial increases of 43% and 38% in voluntary responses to name favorite poets and poems. The responses to favorite poets almost doubled in value while the responses to favorite poems more than doubled indicating positive treatment effect in the affective domain for poetry.

Open Response Questions

The last two questions on the pre- and post-survey called for student responses in the form of reasons or opinions as to why poetry should or should not be studied. There were one hundred and thirty-four responses to these items on the pre-survey and one hundred and fifteen responses on the post-survey. The reduction in the number of responses may have been due to the fact that students did not feel as strongly opposed to poetry after the unit as they did before the study. If this were true, they may have elected not to respond rather than express a positive reaction which was not definitely confirmed in their feelings toward poetry. From this study, it is not possible to determine the cause of the reduced responses.

The responses to the open-ended questions are recorded in Appendix A. The responses are designated as positive or negative expressions toward poetry. A tally of these responses is given in Table 15. If the difference in total responses were added to the negative response on the post-survey, there would still be a slight increase, four students, of positive responses on the post-survey.

Table 15

Tabulation of Negative and Positive

Open Responses to Poetry

	Pre		Post	
	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive
Investigator	29	18	20	21
Poet and Teacher C	28	17	18	27
Teacher C	23	20	11	19
Total	80	55	49	67

The investigator divided the student responses into general categories from the pre- and post-survey. These categories, with total responses for each, are provided in Table 16.

Table 16

General Categories of Open Responses

Positive Responses	Pre	Post
1. Expresses/creates good feelings.	9	8
2. Interesting	7	7
3. Helps to understand world/life/self.	14	9
4. Fun/change of pace.	7	21
5. Learn to write/understand new language/ expression.	9	12
6. Beautiful	3	0
7. Might use it in future.	3	1
8. Educational	4	9
9. Relaxing/pleasure	3	4
Total	59	71

Negative Responses	Pre	Post
1. Not important/necessary/useless for life/career	20	13
2. Boring	19	12
3. Too difficult to understand	15	6
4. Not interesting	6	6
5. Don't like to study/discuss in class	8	6
6. Sissy/silly	2	1
7. Don't like memory work	4	1
8. Just don't like/stupid	9	3
9. Don't like to write poems	0	1
Total	83	49

The numbers do not match the table of tallies because some responses contained more than one category. The categories were obtained from actual student expressions.

On the pre-survey, most students felt that poetry should be studied because it would help to understand people, life, and the world around them. On the post-survey, most students felt that poetry should be studied because it is a pleasant change of pace in the English curriculum and it is enjoyable. As some students commented: "I don't get a chance to read it anywhere else," "It teaches people who aren't sure or know they don't like poetry to like it or at least not think they hate it," "I like it better than grammar," "It makes school more interesting," "It exercises your mind," "It won't hurt," and "It's fun!"

On the pre-survey, the most negative responses were the following: "Only the people who like the stuff should study it," "It's sick," and "Never heard of the junk. I hate it!" On the post-survey, the most negative comments were: "It is only for idiots," "Some people dislike it and mess it up for the rest of us," and "Boring! It's the pitts."

On both the pre- and post-survey, the most prevalent negative response was that poetry is not necessary and will be of no use in later life. This response was followed closely on both surveys by the feeling that poetry is boring. On the post-survey, the number of negative responses in these two categories was reduced but definitely not eliminated. These two feelings appear to be the greatest barrier to ninth grade students' enjoyment of poetry. Proper selection of poems based on content, creative teaching techniques and involvement of students can aid in eliminating the "boring" response. Eliminating the feeling that poetry is irrelevant may prove to be the most difficult task of teachers and any additional poetry studies. The investigator feels that this area needs further research.

Data Analysis Summary

The data analysis for this study consisted of analysis of variance of pre- and post-test data in the cognitive domain and chi-square analyses of the pre- and post-survey data in the

affective domain. The results of these analyses is summarized briefly in the following statements:

1. Because the calculated F-ratio of 37.22 for treatment effect between the treatment groups and the non-equivalent comparison group is significant at $p \leq .0001$, the null hypothesis that there is no difference in gain in cognitive learning between the treatment groups and the comparison group must be rejected. It can be stated that the treatment groups made significant gain over the comparison group in the area of cognitive learning.
2. Because the calculated F-ratio of .57 for differential treatment effect among the treatment groups is not significant at $p > .01$, the null hypothesis that there would be no differential treatment effect among the three treatment groups can not be rejected and must be accepted. It can be stated that all treatment groups were equally successful in achievement in the area of cognitive learning.
3. Because the chi-square statistics of 2.99 and 5.69 on the affective response survey are not significant at the .01 level, it can be stated that the poetry study unit produced no adverse effect on the affective domain of appreciation of poetry.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was conducted to determine if ninth grade students, with very little knowledge of poetry, could be subjected to a specifically designed, intensive unit of poetry study and make significant gains in the area of cognitive learning without their appreciation of poetry being adversely affected. A corollary was to determine if a classroom teacher, inexperienced in the teaching of poetry, could replicate the unit with equal success.

Pre- and post-test data were compiled and analyzed by analysis of variance at the .01 level of significance to determine the degree of cognitive gain between the treatment groups and the comparison group which received no treatment. The gain for the treatment groups was highly significant, $p < .0001$, and the first null hypothesis of no cognitive gain between the treatment groups and the comparison group was rejected. The test data for the three treatment groups were analyzed to determine whether or not any differential treatment effect gains occurred in the area of cognitive learning. Individual group gains among the three treatment groups were

found to be insignificant, $p > .01$, and the second null hypothesis of no differential treatment effect could not be rejected. Because all three treatment groups made equally substantial gains in the area of cognitive learning, it must be concluded that a specifically designed unit of poetry can be administered and replicated by another teacher with equal success in cognitive gain.

Pre- and post-survey data were compiled and analyzed by the chi-square statistic at the .01 level of significance to determine if student attitudes toward poetry had been significantly affected. Each application of the chi-square statistic was found to be insignificant at the .01 level of confidence. Any change in attitude which occurred must, therefore, be attributed to chance factors and not treatment effect. Because there was no significant treatment effect, it must be concluded that a specifically designed unit of poetry study can be administered and replicated without adverse effect on student attitudes toward poetry.

Conclusions and Implications

The pre-test scores in this study indicate that these ninth grade students had very little knowledge of the most basic concepts of poetry. The post-test and post-survey indicate that significant gains in cognitive learning are possible without students' attitudes toward poetry being adversely

affected. This study demonstrates that poetry units can be designed and replicated by other teachers to provide students the learning opportunities and experience with poetry that are presently deficient in many areas.

Ideally, this study would have more impact if the chi-square statistics on the post-survey data had shown significance to require further analysis which would indicate that student attitudes had been improved as a result of the poetry unit. The only chi-square statistic which was significant at the .01 level occurred on the pre-survey responses which indicated that more females like poetry than males. This result was utilized in designing the content of the poetry unit to appeal to male interests. Because the intent of the investigator was to design a poetry unit to increase cognitive gain without adversely affecting student attitudes toward poetry, the post-survey data were not subjected to chi-square analysis for male and female preferences. Such data were irrelevant to the goal of the study.

Although the chi-square analyses of pre- and post-survey data did not show enough significance to indicate treatment effect, comparisons of the raw data indicated that responses on the post-survey increased in a more positive direction toward appreciation of poetry on every item. As a consequence of the poetry unit, the following results were noted:

1. No students in any treatment group converted to a "dislike" of poetry response.
2. A number of students converted to a "like poetry" response.
3. There was an increase of twenty-four students who responded that poetry should be studied.
4. There was a 43% increase of students who named favorite poets.
5. There was a 38% increase of students who named favorite poems.
6. There was a general increase of positive statements to the open ended questions.
7. There was an increase of fourteen students who responded that poetry is fun.
8. There was a decrease of fourteen students who responded that poetry is boring or unimportant.
9. There was a decrease of eleven students who responded that poetry is too difficult to understand.

Two implications may be drawn from the raw data comparisons. First, both the pre- and post-surveys indicate that more students claim to like poetry than are willing to study poetry. This demonstrates that some students tend to interpret the study of poetry as a reason for disliking poetry. Second, an examination of the poet and poem responses indicates that student tastes can be altered and improved.

Recommendations

Based upon the obvious success in the cognitive gains, the investigator is convinced that a developmental sequence of content and skills for poetry study must be maintained. Changes in the selection of similar content, presentation of the poems, teaching techniques, and methods of student involvement should be subjected to further experimentation and research to determine which approaches produce the optimal results for improvement of attitude.

The investigator recommends that studies be designed to:

1. Refine poetry units to eliminate the study of poetry as a cause for disliking poetry.
2. Refine poetry units to improve student taste in literature.
3. Refine poetry units to improve affective responses without loss of cognitive gains.

A question that remains is how to disseminate the information in this study to teachers who are reluctant to prepare junior high students for further study of poetry and future experience with poetry. Because the logistics of providing actual classroom instructional demonstrations for all teachers who need them are humanly impossible, another method must be devised. The investigator recommends that videotaping of classroom poetry sessions be explored. If videotaped sessions

could approximate actual classroom experiences sufficiently in teacher training workshops, more teachers would have access to gaining confidence in introducing poetry to students.

Another question that remains is how to reduce or eliminate the predominate negative responses to poetry which were revealed in this study, the feelings that poetry is boring and unnecessary. Altering teaching techniques to produce greater student involvement should help to eliminate more of the open responses that indicate poetry is boring to many students. The methods employed in this study were successful to a degree. It may, in fact, be impossible to design a poetry unit which would improve all student attitudes toward poetry, but each effort should be evaluated in an attempt to reach the closest approximation of complete effectiveness.

The negative student responses in this study which indicate that students feel poetry is irrelevant to life tasks should provide the focus and the area of most concern for future studies and further research. In an age when students require justification and purpose for all subjects to be studied, aesthetic values appear to be diminishing, and the aesthetic purpose for learning becomes irrelevant to many students. An alternative justification may be to appeal to the need for power with words which can be provided through poetry as well as other areas of literature, grammar, and vocabulary studies. Knowledge of word utilization can produce the power necessary to the business world and consumers

to avoid seduction by the "con," "scam," and propaganda bombardments that are prevalent in society. The investigator would prefer a rebirth of valuing the aesthetics in life but recognizes that educators must face the reality of minds consumed with only the practicalities and necessities for survival. If the study of poetry can be made vital to students, attitudes toward poetry should improve unquestionably. It is imperative that educators, at least, attempt to revive the aesthetics which are necessary for a total curriculum and a totally educated society.

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Appendix A

Pre- and post-survey responses to the open-ended questions. Responses are recorded as students wrote them without any editing. Responses are labelled with a plus sign for positive attitudes toward poetry and/or the study of poetry and with a minus sign for negative attitudes toward poetry and/or the study of poetry.

Appendix A

Pre-Survey Open Responses

Group = Investigator N=47

- Shouldn't study poetry because it isn't very important to learn, you should learn other things instead.
- It is for sissies.
- I would rather hear it or read it than to take time to learn about it, and try to write it.
- It isn't necessary.
- Most people don't want to be a poet.
- It is a very boring thing to study. Poems weren't written to be studied; they were written to be enjoyed.
- Poetry you got to know who wrote the poem. Remember it. Keep it in your head.
- Because it is not a required course and it usually takes a gifted person to write poems.
- Because I don't need what I can't use.
- It is boring.
- I don't know anything about poetry. Some of it is boring.
- It gets boring. A real long poem makes my head hurt.
- At times it seems O.K. but then it starts to get boring and sometimes silly.
- It is not needed.
- I would get bored. I like to read it sometime, but I wouldn't like to study it.
- You're not really going to need it.
- I just don't like it. It's studpid.
- Poetry is not interesting.

+ It's a good way to show your feelings.

+ I like poetry because it is just a short thing that can be written to express your feelings.

+ I like to make up things that rhyme.

+ It's a change of pace from daily work. I think it's interesting when the poem is on a subject I like and understand.

+ To understand the world today.

+ To learn more about it and sometimes it's fun.

+ Poetry shows feelings, people can learn to be more sensitive by relating the feelings in a poem to life and finding a way to cope with it.

- It is not my idea of having fun. It is too hard to figure out to be of any use.

+ To understand new words and new meanings.

- Some teachers do just the poems they like and some are boring and hard to understand.

- It's not necessary.

+ A poem can tell so many things about someone or something.

- Most of it is boring.

- It is too confusing and most people don't like it.

- Sometimes I get bored with it.

- Sometimes it gets boring if you can't study pets or things that you like to study.

- I don't think it's important.

- Some people just don't have the right mind.

+ It helps me to find out things about myself.

- We never study poems that are interesting.

+ You can tell how they feel about their life and their self.

+ I like how the rhymes go, making a good story, and I would like to make some up myself.

+ It gives you a good feeling to read poetry.

+ It expresses feelings.

+ I don't get a chance to read it anywhere else.

+ It makes children learn and get ideas in their head.

+ It teaches people how to write their feelings on paper and for others to understand them.

- Don't like to have to tell about it in class.

+ To learn about things.

+ = 18, - = 29

Group = Poet and teacher C N = 45

+ If they read it and understand it, they probably would like it.

+ I like poetry because I like to read about different things about nature.

+ Because if we understand it the meaning will come through clearer.

+ To understand poets and their feelings.

+ I think it is something that can be enjoyed more if we understand it better.

+ I think it's fun when the teacher teaches it right

- I don't understand what it means.

- I think that it is hard to understand and if you read it in school, the teacher will probably make you find the inside meaning of the poem.

- It doesn't interest many people.

- I don't understand what good it's going to do later in life if you waste time memorizing powms you're going to forget anyway.

- It's kinda hard to study and remember it if your not that interested.

+ It helps you get an understanding of other people's thoughts about life. Poems are a way of expressing your true feelings.

- Most of the poems I like are by Ogden Nash and are humorous the poems I would have to study would probably be long boring and drawn out.

+ It's good to learn about it and understand it.

- I am not patient and don't like to memorize.

+ It is intersting and has a lot of meaning to it.

- It's interesting to read and listen to, but dissecting and studying it destroys its beauty.

+ I like poetry because I think it's interesting and it's fun. It's something good to study.

- It is boring.

- Some are hard to understand. Some are boring. Some are alright.

- Not everybody likes poetry.

- I don't think poetry is necessary.

+ I like the way poetry lets you put your thoughts down on paper in a melodic sort of way.

- I just don't like poetry but I'm not putting down anybody that does.

- It is not an important part of life.

- I don't think poetry is something to study and draw out. I just enjoy the poem and think about how it relates to me and other people.

+ It's interesting. I like to have it because it's different.

- It's boring. It's not any fun!

- I don't enjoy it and I don't like it. I can't memorize things too well either.

+ It's an interesting subject.

- It will do you no good in future jobs, if you want to go into poetry there should be special classes for it.

- It has no use in everyday living.

+ There is much to learn about poetry. It is a way to use your imagination and express yourself. It is a major part of our language.

- Never heard of the junk. I hate it!

- Sometimes it takes to long and I think it is bording some of it is.

- It will not help you.

+ It is beautiful. So I can show and explain my feelings a little better to my girlfriends.

- I can't get into it.

- I don't like poetry.

+ I like poetry because it is beautiful.

+ Because you can learn things from poetry.

- It is boring.

- It's boring. I don't like it.

- Only the people who like the stuff should study it.

- I can't understand the way it is written.

+ = 17, - = 28

Group = Teacher C N = 43

+ Because we might do it in the future.

- It is not educational. It has too many words in it.

+ You might learn the meaning of life.

+ Maybe one day you might want to be a poetry writer when you get big.

- It takes up too much time studying it in class.

- It is boring very boring

- It is sick

+ It tells about something in a clever way and I like it. You learn about people's thoughts.

+ I like poetry because it shows the emotion and feelings of the author.

+ It is very educational.

+ It's meaningful. It makes you think. Good for your brain.

- Theirs nothing to keep you interested.

- Sometimes the poems aren't easy to understand. You have to study whats in the book not what you want

- It seems sorda hard for me to learn

- I think you have to want to know about poetry instead of being forced in it. Some teachers force poetry on you and give you boring poems to study about.

- It is so boring.

+ I like poems because they are interesting to read and pretty.

- Because I don't like it.

- It's boring

- I don't like poetry!

- Most students aren't interested and most aren't going to base their career on poems! Poetry just doesn't interest me at all

+ It is enjoyable, fun, and it makes you wonder.

+ It is good to learn.

- It's too much work!!!

+ I like poetry because I think its pretty. And it expresses feelings very well.

- It will not help most people in life. I feel we do not need it in the future and music is much more better to listen too.

- I don't like it because I don't think it is necessary in school. It gets old.

- It's hard and to much work but some of its good.

+ It is part of language.

+ You need to know how to write it.

- It's fun when you understand it, but it gets too complicated.

- It's too hard to study and mix with other classwork and homework. Good hobby.

+ It's relaxing. I sit at home when I'm tired and write poems to relax my mind.

- I just like to read it once in a while and I wouldn't want to study it because then I wouldn't like it anymore.

- There's many more things that students need to know about besides poems.

+ Because I like trying to place myself in that person's position and I like trying to picture the things they're trying to say or do.

+ It's fun.

+ It's fun for a change. It gives you a better idea of life.

- Because many people don't like it.

+ Because of the future, It would be good to understand things like that and know what they mean.

- It means things to other people and the teacher explains what it means to her.

+ For comprehention.

+ I like poetry because it's nice and quiet.

+ = 20, - = 23

Post-Survey Open Responses

Group = Investigator N = 41

- It can get boring

+ It is interesting.

- It can be very dull. I don't like serious poetry. I like poetry with a lot of humor and very little work to be done with it.

+ I don't mind studying it but poetry is for pleasure. Some people just don't find any pleasure in poetry.

- It is a waste of time.

+ It gives you a great feeling. It helps you understand to be a poet.

- I can't understand it.

- Some of the poems we study I don't like or they don't seem to have any feeling. I think students should write about something they feel or felt.

+ I can learn to understand and know what the poem is about.

+ It's interesting to see how other people feel about different things.

+ Sometimes it can get to be boring. But it is fun if you know what's going on.

+ I like poetry because it lets you express your feelings in words that tell how you feel.

+ To learn the feelings of others.

+ It teaches people who aren't sure or know they don't like poetry to like it or at least not think they hate it.

+ I like poetry only when I know what it means and its fun to read.

- Boring! It's the pitts.

- I'd rather read it on my own time and write it on my own time than to come to school and take time to learn poems.

- It doesn't help you when you get older.

- Teachers make you learn it in a hurry sometimes.

- At times it gets very, very boring, silly, sometimes crazy.

- Poetry was meant to be enjoyed, not studied.

- It doesn't really help me. I would not like to become a poet.

- Boring!

- Poetry would be good if it were not boring and some teachers do make it boring and hard to understand.

+ People learn things about other things in life.

+ It's a way to show your feelings; it's funny, serious, different things. It's just fun to read poems. They're interesting.

- I like to read poems by myself, not with a whole group of people.

- Doesn't have anything to do with anything.

+ Learn new words.

+ Some of the poems are interesting to me.

+ It is fun to study sometime but not all the time because you would get tired of hearing the poems.

+ Sometimes you have to write poems and people enjoy listening to other poems, some people don't know how to place the words right.

+ Some poems are interesting

+ It won't hurt

+ I like it because it gives me an idea of how to express my feelings in words and my thoughts in words.

- I like it but I don't like to study it because it is boring.

- The teachers always pick the wrong kind of poetry.

+ I don't like all poetry, but some of it is very interesting, and is pretty good, I enjoy some of it.

- It is too hard to learn.

- All the teachers seem to make it hard and if you just read it I think you understand it better.

+ I like reading it every once in awhile.

+ = 21, - = 20

Group = Poet and teacher C N = 45

+ It is a good thing to have students learn it.

+ It gives you a chance to see how other people feel about the world. This is the only way some people can express their feelings.

+ It will help them appreciate other people more.

- I'm just not that interested in poetry and I can't write it too well either.

- It's not necessary.

+ It sometimes seems boring, but it is O.K. when the teacher makes it interesting.

+ Something you need to know.

- I don't like to write poems. I like to read a good poem but that's it.

- It is a waste of time and serves no purpose in life.

- It is only for idiots.

- I don't really know how to study the poems. Some that don't make any sense, there's just no use reading it.

+ I like it better than grammar.

+ It's part of our great language.

- I feel you should not be forced to study it because poetry is your feelings and ideas, not some poetry teacher.

+ They might really enjoy it without knowing it.

- Doesn't help in later life.

+ You learn new things.

+ It tells a lot about the people and the world. Many say they don't like it then find that they do.

- Some people dislike it and mess it up for the rest of us.

+ It's interesting. It makes school more interesting.

- It is not interesting.

+ It is part of English and a great break from grammar.

- Poetry should be a leisure activity, where you can show your emotions, and not be graded for it.

+ Because it is fun. It helps your grammar.

+ I like to hear the rhymes and I like to hear people's feelings. I like short, funny poems.

+ Everyone should experience different things.

+ It makes you more aware of the people, emotions, and things around you.

- You never would need it to get a job.

- I don't feel it is important.

+ It is a good thing to teach.

+ I like to have poems in school because it is fun.

+ I think it is a part of learning. It is a fun thing to learn.

- I don't like it at all.

- I don't really think it's necessary.

+ Poetry is fun if you take part in it.

- It's weird. It's not fun.

+ I like to have poetry in school because we get out of some of the other hard work.

- It's stupid.

- It's boring.

+ It's fun.

+ It's fun

+ It's fun

+ It will help feel like others.

+ People can impress other people with beautiful words and songs.

+ If I got into it, I could understand it. It exercises your mind.

+ = 27, - = 18

Group = Teacher C N = 30

+ It's fun with everybody around.

- When you get a job, why do you need to know it? I just don't like poetry, and it isn't needed.

- I don't understand it. It is boring. Poetry don't make any sense.

+ It taught me a lot of things and terms of peotry I did not know before.

+ Many students can come to like it.

- I love poetry but sometimes all the stuff you have to learn about poetry makes me sick of it.

- Sometimes it is boring and I just don't like to study it.

+ It's a change from adverbs and adjectives, etc., and you get to know and understand it better than before.

+ To find out what it really means. It really is fun.

- They are not interesting.

+ To learn more about poems and terms is fun.

- It is not an educational thing to do.

+ Sometimes poetry can be rewarding. I like poetry. I can express my own feelings.

- It is boring.

- It gets boring and makes me hate it.

+ You learn a lot about things. If you listen to a poem and understand it then you learn something from it.

+ It's fun. It's a change.

+ To get fun out of life.

+ To see if they could make a career of it. Poems express feelings, tell adventure stories.

+ It's very interesting. Because I think it is enjoyable and fun to do, easy to do, and you get much enjoyment out of doing it.

- It is not a real necessity in life.

+ I like to have poetry in school because it is fun.

+ It is a nice thing to learn about people's feelings and things.

+ For better understanding.

+ You learn how others feel, and they put it into words.

+ Read it for enjoyment

+ It's something good for every student

- Unless you're going to be a poet you don't need it.

- It is hard to understand.

+ I like limericks and that is poetry

+ = 19, - = 11

Appendix B

Raw Data for Analyses of Variance

INVESTIGATOR'S GROUP N=41

Pre-scores	Post-scores	Difference
60	100	40
60	70	10
60	80	20
60	80	20
50	80	30
50	100	50
50	30	-20
50	100	50
40	40	0
40	80	40
30	80	50
30	60	30
30	30	0
30	90	60
20	100	80
20	70	50
20	50	30
20	100	80
20	100	80
20	50	30
20	80	60
20	80	60
20	40	20
20	70	50
20	60	40
10	10	0
10	100	90
10	20	10
10	30	20
10	80	70
10	30	20
10	60	50
10	100	90
10	70	60
10	100	90
0	20	20
0	30	30
0	60	60
0	20	20
0	10	10
0	50	50

Pre-scores
Mean = 23.41
Median = 20
Mode = 20
Range = 0-60

Post-scores
Mean = 63.66
Median = 70
Mode = 100
Range = 10-100

POET AND TEACHER C'S GROUP N=41

Pre-scores	Post-scores	Difference
80	100	20
80	100	20
70	100	30
60	90	30
60	100	40
60	100	40
60	100	40
50	90	40
50	90	40
50	80	30
50	100	50
50	100	50
40	100	60
40	100	60
40	100	60
40	100	60
40	100	60
40	80	40
30	100	70
30	100	70
30	100	70
30	100	70
30	90	60
30	100	70
30	100	70
30	100	70
20	90	70
20	100	80
20	60	40
20	10	-10
20	10	-10
10	100	90
10	40	30
10	40	30
10	50	40
10	60	50
0	0	0
0	50	50
0	80	80
0	10	10
0	10	10

Pre-scores
Mean = 32.97
Median = 30
Mode = 30
Range - 0-80

Post-scores
Mean = 78.78
Median = 100
Mode = 100
Range = 0-100

TEACHER C'S GROUP N=42

Pre-scores	Post-scores	Difference
60	50	-10
50	100	50
50	80	30
50	100	50
50	80	30
50	100	50
40	100	60
40	100	60
40	100	60
40	100	60
40	80	40
40	30	-10
40	70	30
40	70	30
40	60	20
40	50	10
40	90	50
30	60	30
30	30	0
30	20	-10
30	70	40
30	100	70
20	70	50
20	60	40
20	70	50
20	40	20
20	90	70
20	40	20
20	80	60
20	30	10
20	100	80
10	70	60
10	80	70
10	40	30
10	90	80
10	80	70
0	30	30
0	20	20
0	50	50
0	10	10
0	60	60
0	40	40

Pre-scores
Mean = 26.9
Median = 30
Mode = 40
Range = 0-60

Post-scores
Mean = 65.95
Median = 70
Mode = 100
Range = 10-100

Non-equivalent COMPARISON GROUP - Teacher A N=47

Pre-scores	Post-scores	Difference
60	80	20
60	70	10
50	60	10
50	60	10
50	50	0
40	50	10
40	50	10
40	50	10
40	50	10
40	40	0
30	40	10
30	40	10
30	30	0
30	30	0
30	30	0
30	30	0
30	30	0
30	30	0
30	30	0
30	30	0
30	20	-10
30	20	-10
20	20	0
20	20	0
20	20	0
20	20	0
20	20	0
20	20	0
20	20	0
20	20	0
20	20	0
20	20	0
20	20	0
20	20	0
20	20	0
10	10	0
10	10	0
10	10	0
10	10	0
10	10	0
10	10	0
10	10	0
10	10	0
10	10	0
10	0	-10
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

Pre-scores	Post-scores
Mean = 24.68	Mean = 26.38
Median = 20	Median = 20
Mode = 25	Mode = 20
Range = 0-60	Range = 0-80