

SUNY COLLEGE AT BROCKPORT

A DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF FIFTH GRADERS RESPONSE
JOURNALS

By

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A Thesis submitted to the
Department of Education and Human Development
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Education

Degree Awarded:

May 2002

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of critical thinking being achieved by students given free choice over response entry type.

A class of fifth-grade students from a rural school district was instructed in the five types of journal entries. The entry types were directly instructed, modeled, and assessed for mastery. After the journal entries were mastered the study began. Once a week the whole class was given DEAR time that could also be used for writing journal entries. Each student was to choose and write one entry per week for ten weeks. Each week the entry types were tabulated and were assessed using rubrics for critical thinking/ sophistication grade.

The data showed that the journal entry type chosen most often for this study was the prediction entry, followed by pointing, memory, information, then telling entries. It was also determined that no entry type produced more sophisticated thinking than the other entry types.

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CHAPTER I

Statement of the Problem

Introduction

Reading has always been a staple in the classroom. Reading and then responding is nothing new. Allowing students the choice of reading material and the use of a response journal are much newer ideas that are still under construction. "Everything a reader does or experiences during a reading contributes to making meaning. Response journals can capture these invisible strategies in writing, a revealing record for teacher and reader alike" (Rosenblatt, 1978). While Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) and Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) programs have been around for many decades, the use of response journals with DEAR or SSR is not as widely used. The pairing of writing and reading is continually proving to be positive for both the student and the teacher.

Reviewing the responses of a student can show the level of critical thinking being achieved, the connections being made, and the experiences being explored. This study used five different response entries to ascertain the level of critical thinking: the pointing, telling, information, memory, and prediction entries. Each of these entries shows a different level of critical thinking being used while responding to literature. This

study tracked which entries were chosen when given the choice, how sophisticated these entries were, and if certain entries promoted a deeper level of critical thinking than others.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was twofold. The first was to study the ways students respond to free-choice reading in a personal response journal. The second was to investigate the level of critical thinking being achieved by students given free choice over response entry type.

Definition of Terms

Reader response journal: a journal used for personal reflections of literature.

Journal entry: For this study a journal entry will constitute one of five entry types as follows:

Pointing entry - tells what the student likes and does not like about the story

Telling entry – brings up questions or wonderings the student has about the story

Information entry – tells what the students has learned that he/she didn't already know

Memory entry- makes connections between the story and the students' life; other books, characters, movies, events in the students' life

Prediction entry- tells what the student predicts will happen in the future of the story

Research Questions

For the purpose of this study the following questions were posed:

Questions 1: In what ways do students respond in a personal response journal?

Question 2: Does a certain entry type produce more sophisticated thinking?

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study relate to the small number of participants. There were twenty participants in this study. Further research should be conducted before applying any of the conclusions drawn by this study. Since the participants were not randomly selected and were all from the same classroom, this study should be replicated with a wide range of grade levels and school districts.

Summary

Responding to literature has long been viewed as an important component of a reading/writing curriculum. Student choice of reading material is a more recent idea, along with the use of response journals.

This study took a closer look at the types of journal entries student choose when responding to self-selected literature and what, if any conclusions can be made about the sophistication of critical thinking produced with the different types of response entries.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of critical thinking being achieved by students given free choice over response entry type. This chapter examined the literature that discussed free choice reading and journals.

Free Choice in Reading

As teachers, motivating students to want to read is one of our most important challenges. The New York State Standards for Learning provide educators with the understanding that English and Language Arts is a top priority for the children of today. The best reading practice is reading. Avid readers improve their reading fluency, acquire new vocabulary, absorb knowledge of the world, and even heighten their intelligence (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998). It is one thing to teach reading skills in class and quite another to promote reading outside of the classroom, also known as independent reading. Farrell (1997) states that "an enthusiasm and love of reading and the use of a rich variety of reading resources are essential ingredients for creating a positive literacy environment in primary

classrooms" (p.8). Many schools use some type of independent reading in their English and Language Arts programs from primary school through high school. One form of independent reading is free independent reading where students choose their reading material. "Providing time for free voluntary reading in schools has a positive impact on reading comprehension, vocabulary development, spelling, written style, oral/aural language and control of grammar" ("Free Voluntary Reading In Schools," 1993).

Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) and Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR) are two such programs for promoting independent reading. These both take place in the classroom where students and teacher read a self-selected book during a time set aside solely for reading. There are no interruptions. Furthermore there are no assignments given on what has been read. Readers may choose anything to read from a novel, to a magazine, to a comic book. "No one is tested on what is being read, but the most effective programs arrange for opportunities for readers to talk about what they read" (Lee-Daniels, 2000, p. 154).

D.E.A.R. is a program which provides for whole class and even whole school reading time. Sometimes scheduled and sometimes

unscheduled reading times are announced for students and teachers. The idea that teachers also read, therefore acting as reading role models plays an important part in the program. Allowing students the chance to observe a teacher involved in his book, even showing emotion, is priceless.

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) is a similar reading program set up with a few more guidelines. Formerly named Unsustained Silent Reading, the Unsustained portion was dropped from the name since USSR was an unpopular acronym at the time. There are six general guidelines set by McCracken (1971) for SSR that are to be adhered to:

1. Each student reads silently for the entire reading session
2. The teacher also reads without interruption
3. Students select a single item for reading, not to be exchanged during the reading session
4. Use a timer so that students don't watch the clock
5. No reports or records are required
6. Start with large classes until the rules are understood and followed.

A wide range of reading material should be offered enabling students to choose something that is comfortable and at his/her reading level. A

concerted effort should be made to make sure that students are not made to feel uncomfortable with the book they have chosen. (Fiaspeter, 1995).

McCracken and McCracken (1978) list the major benefits of SSR, as well as what students will learn from SSR, reminding us that they are long range but worthwhile:

1. Reading books is important
2. Anyone can read
3. Reading is a communication with the author
4. Students are capable of sustained thought
5. We are meant to read books in large sections
6. The teacher believes in the students' comprehension
7. The teacher trusts that the student can decide on his own what is important, and what should be shared.

Will free reading provide the higher level of thinking in students that teachers strive for? Krashen (1993) says in his book, The Power of Reading, that free reading alone will not "produce the highest levels of competence; rather, it provides a foundation so that higher levels of proficiency may be reached". This is where the writing link needs to be introduced.

Journals

With the popularity of the computer these days, the need for writing in the classroom is doubly important. In the past, reading and writing were taught separately but more recently reading and writing have been paired together naturally. They are taught together because of their symbiotic relationship reinforcing, shaping, and enhancing each other. Burns, Roe, and Ross (cited in Adams-Boateng, 2001) found that similar thought processes and skills are required for both reading and writing. These include selecting and organizing, problem solving, analyzing, making comparisons, inferencing, and evaluating. Raphael, Kirschner, and Englert (1998) found through research on writing and reading that students greatly benefit from approaching their reading as writers. Using the journal approach affords students the opportunity to record their ideas and then reflect on them. Bromley (1989) maintains that the connection between reading and writing needs to be made for several reasons:

1. Reading and writing occur simultaneously
2. Language is used for communication through reading and writing
3. Writing and reading reinforce each other.

As students are given the opportunities to explore activities that blend reading and writing, they become literate communities where students are able to deal with and create various texts. Listening and speaking have been found to be interdependent as well as reading and writing. "To comprehend our perceptions and communicate forcefully, then, we would do well to speak in response to what we hear, and write in response to what we read" (Cobine, 1995, p. 3). Since one of our goals as teachers is to promote lifelong literacy, writing and reading need to be paired.

Encouraging students to think more deeply is what teachers strive for. In order to grow as readers, children must learn to use their own knowledge, experiences, and emotions to construct personal meaning and develop a sense of ownership. As teachers we continually try to reinforce the connection between reading and writing as well as strengthen student skills in both areas. "The use of various types of journals enables students to write their way into thoughtful reflection" say Fountas and Pinnell (2001, p. 459). There are many different types of journals being used in classrooms today as well as used in various ways. The reader response journal is just one way of combining both skills. Karolides (1992) states that a readers' understanding of text comes from his/her background, personal experiences, and knowledge each student owns.

Manning and Manning (1996) report that students enjoy writing in journals, where they may write freely without the fear of being corrected. "Journals provide a means for clarifying knowledge and for recording thoughts of a personal nature" (p. 4). By putting an emphasis on correct performance in writing and reading, students are apprehensive to make predictions, or make associations to their own lives. Writing is defined by Kutz and Roskelly (1991) as an active process that writers use not only to present a correct answer but also to extend their use of language to make sense of their world. One role of the literature response journal is to provide a nonthreatening place for various ages to explore their learning, feelings, experiences, and language through the process of writing says Routman (1991). Flitterman-King (as cited in Farris, P.J., Howe, K.H., et al (sic), 1998) describes the response journal as a "source book, a repository for wandering and wonderings, speculations, questioning...a place to explore thoughts, discover reactions, let the mind ramble—in effect, a place to make room for the unexpected" (p. 5). Rosenblatt (as cited in Farris, P.J., Howe, K.H., et al, 1998) observes,

The student needs to retain his spontaneity and yet develop further, to make of every literary experience something on which to build enhanced capacities for his next experience. For he can begin to achieve a sound approach to literature only when he reflects upon his response to it, when he

attempts to understand what in the work and in himself produced that reaction, and when he goes on thoughtfully to modify, reject, or accept it. (1983 p. 88-89)

Peyton (2000) reports many benefits to using literature journals including extended contact time with students, the management of classes of students with varying levels of ability, and continual assessment of student progress and needs. Wollman–Bonilla and Werchaldo (1995) observe that journals “involve students in actively reflecting upon books, tapping the potential of writing to stir thinking” (p. 562). Another role for the response journal is to help the students relate what is happening in the book, be it events or the characters themselves, to their lives thus helping the students make more sense of underlying meaning of the book. When a journal is used during the reading of a text, Fuhler (1994) maintains that it allows a student to record his feelings about a character, to identify with that character, how the character makes him feel, relate the text to his life, and predict the ending of the book. Simpson (1986) reports that students “could write predictions about plot, analyses of characters, insights about theme, or even appraisals of the author’s technique” (p.46). This offers students the opportunity to make connections between their lives and the story and make personal references in their journals. Students need this time with their thoughts

to mull over the meanings and make the connections, make the story come alive, make it relevant. Anson and Beach (cited in Farris & Fuhler, 1996) explain that retrospection will lead to reflection which will lead to projection, allowing students to ask questions about the story such as: What would I have written? How does this relate to my life "invites kids inside a text, where they can engage, analyze, and interpret it, instead of synopsising plot" maintains Atwell (1998, p. 284).

Along with the advantages response journals allow the students, they can offer the teacher insight into the level of meaning about the text constructed by the reader, states Manning (1999). They provide the instructor with a glimpse into the mind of the reader. Bardine (1995) states that literature journals "act as a record of the students' growth as writers and thinkers, and often students learn a great deal about themselves just by looking over their past works".

While reading and writing may invariably still be taught separately in many classrooms teachers cannot afford to miss the benefits of pairing reading and writing in the classroom. Journal writing has been shown to have a positive effect on students' thinking about and engaging with characters while reading a book. Using journals to enhance reading/

writing instruction is a very real option for teachers looking for a new way to improve their students' thought process and involvement in reading.

CHAPTER III

Design of the Study

Purpose

The purpose of this study was twofold. The first was to study the ways students respond to free-choice reading in a personal response journal. The second was to investigate the level of critical thinking being achieved by students given free-choice over response entry type.

Research Questions

The research questions investigated in this study were:

Question 1: In what ways do students respond in a personal response journal?

Questions 2: Does a certain entry type produce more sophisticated thinking?

Methodology

Subjects

The subjects used in this study are from one fifth-grade classroom in a rural school district. The classroom had 20 students and was self-contained with one regular education teacher and a teaching assistant

during the English and Language Arts (ELA) instruction block. The class met daily for English and Language Arts for a total of 85 minutes.

Materials

- self-selected books
- reading response journals that have the entry types glued to the front inside cover
- rubric for evaluating journal responses (see Appendix A)
- chart for listing journal evaluations
- chart for listing journal type choices

Procedures

A class of fifth-grade students from a rural school district was instructed in the five types of journal entries. These were directly instructed, modeled, and assessed for mastery. After the journal entries have been mastered the study will begin. Once a week the whole class was given DEAR time that could also be used for writing journal entries. Each student was to write one entry per week but unlike before when specific entries were assigned, the students had free choice as to which entry type to write. This continued for 10 weeks. Each week the entries

were evaluated using the rubric and the data compiled as to which entry each student had chosen, and the level of sophistication of entries.

Analysis of Data

The data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The researcher kept a tabulation of each type of entry for each student. This determined how students responded in a personal response journal. The researcher also evaluated each entry for a level of sophistication using the rubric found in Appendix A. The teaching assistant also evaluated each entry for a level of sophistication. These two evaluators then conferred and agreed on the level for each entry.

CHAPTER IV

Analysis of Data

Purpose

The purpose of this study was twofold. The first was to study the ways students respond to free-choice reading in a personal response journal. The second was to investigate the level of critical thinking being achieved by students given free choice over response entry type.

Findings and Interpretations

The following research questions were investigated:

1. In what ways do students respond in a personal response journal when given free choice over entry type?
2. Does a certain entry type produce more sophisticated thinking?

In order to establish that students had mastered each of the five entry types, they were directly instructed, modeled, and assessed for mastery of each by the teacher before beginning the study. Once the study began each student made one entry in his personal response journal per each

week for ten weeks. Data were collected weekly as to which type of entry each student chose. The results are summarized in Table 1.

Definition of Terms

Reader response journal: a journal used for personal reflections of literature.

Journal entry: For this study a journal entry will constitute one of five entry types as follows:

Pointing entry - tells what the student likes and does not like about the story

Telling entry – brings up questions or wonderings the student has about the story

Information entry – tells what the students has learned that he/she didn't already know

Memory entry- makes connections between the story and the students' life; other books, characters, movies, events in the students' life

Prediction entry- tells what the student predicts will happen in the future of the story

Table 1

Response Journal Entry Type

Student #	Pointing	Telling	Memory	Prediction	Information
#1	2	3	2	2	1
#2	2	1	0	5	2
#3	3	1	1	4	1
#4	2	2	2	2	2
#5	3	1	4	2	0
#6	2	2	3	2	1
#7	1	4	3	1	1
#8	2	2	1	3	2
#9	2	1	2	2	3
#10	2	2	2	2	2
#11	4	0	2	3	1
#12	2	1	2	3	2
#13	3	1	1	4	1
#14	3	1	2	2	2
#15	1	0	2	6	1
#16	3	2	0	4	1
#17	2	1	2	3	2
#18	4	1	0	3	2
#19	4	1	2	1	2
#20	3	1	2	1	3
Total	50	27	35	55	33

The data collected show that out of 200 total entries, 55 were prediction, 50 were pointing, 35 were memory, 33 were information, and 27 were telling.

The second research question asked if a certain entry type would produce more sophisticated thinking. Each journal entry was given a grade of 4,3,2, or 1. These grades were determined with the help of a rubric for that particular entry type (Appendix A). Each entry was

graded by two teachers and then averaged together for a single grade.

The results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

Sophistication Grades

Student #	Pointing	Telling	Memory	Prediction	Information
#1	2,1	1,1,1	1,1	2,1	1
#2	4,3	4		2,3,3,3,3	2,1
#3	3,2,2	3	3	2,2,2,3	2
#4	3,3	3,3	3,3	3,3	2,3
#5	3,3,3	3	4,3,3,2	4,3	
#6	3,2	4,3	3,3,2	3,2	2
#7	2	3,1,1,1	2,1,3	2	3
#8	3,2	3,3	3	4,3,3	3,2
#9	2,2	3	3,3	2,2	2,2,2
#10	3,2	1,1	1,2	2,2	1,1
#11	3,3,3,3		4,2	3,4,3	3
#12	1,2	4	3,2	3,3,3	2,2
#13	2,3,3	4	2	3,3,3,3	3
#14	3,3,3	3	4,3	4,4	3,3
#15	4		4,3	3,3,3,3,3,3	3
#16	2,3,3	4,4		3,4,3,2	3
#17	2,3	3	3,3	2,3,2	3,3
#18	4,4,3,3	4		3,4,3	3,3
#19	2,2,2,3	2	3,3	1	2,1
#20	4,3,3	3	4,2	4	3,3,2

Once the critical thinking grades were collected they were converted to percentages so that they could be compared. The results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Critical Thinking/Sophistication Grade Percentages

Entry Type	4	3	2	1
Pointing	5/50 = 10%	27/50 = 54%	16/50 = 32%	2/50 = 4%
Telling	7/27 = 25%	12/27 = 43%	1/27 = 4%	8/27 = 28%
Memory	5/35 = 15%	18/35 = 51%	8/35 = 23%	4/35 = 11%
Prediction	8/55 = 15%	31/55 = 56%	14/55 = 25%	2/55 = 4%
Information	0/33 = 0%	16/33 = 49%	12/33 = 36%	5/33 = 15%

The data show that each entry type had the highest percentage points in the critical thinking / sophistication level three. These grades were all within a 13 percentage point spread. When each student's grades were analyzed a trend towards the same sophistication grade was found. Rather than a certain entry type producing more sophisticated thinking, this researcher found that out of 20 subjects, 18 subjects earned the same grade at least 50% of the time with 10 of the 20 subjects earning the same grade at least 70% of the time.

Summary

This researcher determined that the most chosen journal entry type for this study was the prediction entry, followed by the pointing, memory, information, and lastly the telling entry. It was also determined that no entry type produced more sophisticated thinking as shown by the sophistication grades.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Implications

Purpose

The purpose of this study was twofold. The first was to study the ways students respond to free-choice reading in a personal response journal. The second was to investigate the level of critical thinking being achieved by students given free-choice over response entry type.

Conclusions

The results of this study show that when subjects were given free-choice over entry type when responding to reading, they chose the prediction entry type most often. In this type of entry the student predicts what might happen next in the story. The next most popular entry is the pointing entry. In the pointing entry the student tells what he/she likes or does not like about the story. Next is the memory entry in which the student makes connections between the story and his/her life. The information entry comes next, in which the student tells what he/she has learned from reading the story that he/she didn't already know. Finally, the telling entry was chosen least often. In the

telling entry the student brings up questions or wonderings he/she has about the story.

The grades for sophistication showed that no one entry produced a higher level of sophistication, rather the student himself produced a consistent level of sophistication when responding with each entry type. The data shows that the sophistication level three produced the highest percentage of entries for each entry type. This holds consistent with finding that it was the student, not the entry type that produced a certain level of sophistication.

In conclusion, the results of this study seem to indicate that while students may have chosen one entry type over another when given free-choice, the sophistication of their entry types were consistently of the same sophistication level.

Implications for Research

In future research, a larger or multi-aged testing population could be utilized to determine both entry type choice and sophistication level when responding.

Subjects were given a list of the five entry types to keep in the front of their response journals to serve as a reminder of each entry

type as well as ideas for beginning each entry type. After five weeks a new list replaced the earlier one with the entry choices in a new order so that the subjects would not consistently choose the first entry type by default. It is possible that varying the list order weekly might also change the data for entry type choice.

It might also be interesting to give students the option to combine their entry types, possibly adding to the sophistication level of these entries.

Summary

The goal of this study was to determine if students would choose a particular entry type over the others when given free-choice over entry type. The data find that the subjects did in fact choose certain entry types more often than others. This study was also designed to investigate the level of critical thinking each subject achieved through the different personal response journal entry types. The findings showed that it was not the type of entry chosen, rather the subject that produced a particular level of sophistication in the response entry types.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Journal Entry Rubrics

Appendix A

Pointing Journal Entry Rubric

CATEGORY	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Ideas	Ideas were expressed in a clear and organized fashion. It was easy to figure out what the entry was about.	Ideas were expressed in a pretty clear manner, but the organization could have been better.	Ideas were somewhat organized, but were not very clear. It took more than one reading to figure out what the entry was about.	The letter seemed to be a collection of unrelated sentences. It was very difficult to figure out what the entry was about.
Content Accuracy	Thoroughly discusses what he liked, writer did effectively	Tells what he liked, the writer did effectively.	Touches on what he liked, the writer did effectively.	Does not mention what he liked, the writer did effectively
	Thoroughly discusses quote from book or gives specific story part or element he liked.	Gives specific story part or element he liked.	Touches on story part or element he liked.	Does not mention story part or element he liked.
	Gives thoughtful reason(s) for what is liked.	Gives reason for what is liked.	Gives brief to no reason for what is liked.	No reason given for what is liked.

Telling Journal Entry Rubric

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Ideas	Ideas were expressed in a clear and organized fashion. It was easy to figure out what the entry was about.	Ideas were expressed in a pretty clear manner, but the organization could have been better.	Ideas were somewhat organized, but were not very clear. It took more than one reading to figure out what the entry was about.	The entry seemed to be a collection of unrelated sentences. It was very difficult to figure out what the entry was about.
	Thoroughly discusses questions he has about current reading.	Discusses one question he has about current reading.	Quickly mentions question about current reading.	No mention of questions about current reading.

Memory Journal Entry Rubric

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Ideas	Ideas were expressed in a clear and organized fashion. It was easy to figure out what the entry was about.	Ideas were expressed in a pretty clear manner, but the organization could have been better.	Ideas were somewhat organized, but were not very clear. It took more than one reading to figure out what the entry was about.	The entry seemed to be a collection of unrelated sentences. It was very difficult to figure out what the entry was about.
	Thoroughly discusses what the section of story reminds him of. Writes about memory or experience.	Discusses what section reminds him of.	Touches on what section reminds him of.	No mention of what section reminds him of.

Prediction Journal Entry Rubric

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Ideas	Ideas were expressed in a clear and organized fashion. It was easy to figure out what the entry was about.	Ideas were expressed in a pretty clear manner, but the organization could have been better.	Ideas were somewhat organized, but were not very clear. It took more than one reading to figure out what the entry was about.	The entry seemed to be a collection of unrelated sentences. It was very difficult to figure out what the entry was about.
	Gives sensible prediction and why he thinks so.	Gives prediction for what will happen in future.	Gives prediction that is hard to follow or has little to do with story.	Prediction has nothing to do with story or no prediction given.
	Gives good reasons for prediction.	Gives reasons for prediction.	Reasons for prediction are hard to follow.	No reasons given for prediction.

Information Journal Entry Rubric

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Ideas	Ideas were expressed in a clear and organized fashion. It was easy to figure out what the entry was about.	Ideas were expressed in a pretty clear manner, but the organization could have been better.	Ideas were somewhat organized, but were not very clear. It took more than one reading to figure out what the entry was about.	The entry seemed to be a collection of unrelated sentences. It was very difficult to figure out what the entry was about.
	Thoroughly discusses what was learned from book. Was specific.	Discussed information learned.	Touched on new information - was unclear that it was learned.	No mention that any new information was learned.

Appendix B

Reading Response
Journal Entry Packet

Appendix B

Letter to Students Explaining Reading Journals

Dear Readers,

Your reading journal is a place for you to talk this year about books, reading, authors, and writing. You'll be chatting about literature in journal entries to me. All of your "letters" will stay in your journal together, arranged chronologically, as a record of the thinking, learning, and reading you did this year.

In your journal entries, write to me about what you've read. Tell me what you noticed. Tell what you thought and felt and why. Tell what you liked and didn't like, and why. Tell how you read and why. Tell what the books said and meant to you, and ask questions. Write back about your ideas, feelings, experiences, and questions.

You must write at least one letter per week in your reading journal for a passing journal grade. Of course this is just a minimum requirement. You may write a journal entry as often as you wish.

You should keep your journal here at school for use anytime. You may take it home to write in as long as you return it to school the next day. You will be given time every Tuesday to read and/or write in your journal. You may write during or outside of school.

Please date your journal entries in the upper right-hand corner, and number all pages. Please mention the title of the book you are writing about (don't forget to underline titles; From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler), and always capitalized titles. Finally, enter the title and author of each book you finish this year on the yellow "Books Read" sheet by the classroom library. This record will serve as a quick reference.

Your collection of journal entries will provide part of your reading grade. Follow the procedures outlined above, write often and a lot, and correspond about your thoughts on literature with involvement and care, and you'll do well.

I can't wait to read your entries! I can't wait to learn from you, learn with you, and help you learn more.

* Portions of this letter taken from: In the Middle, written by Nancie Atwell.

Name _____

September, 2001

Reading Response Journals

During the first marking period you will be responsible for writing seven (7) journal entries. Each entry should be a full page in length. You may choose the book as long as it has been O.K.'d by me, Mrs. Pratt. This is the book you should be reading each night for 20 minutes. You will be given time during class on Tuesdays for reading and journal entries so you may want to bring it to and from school. These journal entries will be a part of your reading grade. The seven (7) entries are to be as follows:

- _____ 1 Pointing entry
- _____ 1 Telling entry
- _____ 1 Memory entry
- _____ 1 Prediction entry
- _____ 1 Information entry
- _____ 1 Summary of the book
- _____ 1 Story Map

As you write your entries, please check them off on this paper. I will be checking them periodically. Enjoy your reading and have fun!

Mrs. Pratt

Reading Response Journals

During the second marking period you will be responsible for writing seven (7) journal entries. Each entry should be a full page in length. The book is your choice. This is the book you should be reading for 20 minutes each night at home. You will be given time during class on Tuesdays for reading and journal entries so you may want to bring it to and from school. These journal entries will be a part of your reading grade.

You have already learned and practiced the five (5) types of journal entries. This marking period you will have a choice as to which type of entry you will write each week. Please continue to date your entries and label them (type of entry).

Type of entry	Date of entry
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Journal Entries

Memory Entry

Does the reading remind you of anything in your own experience?
Does the reading remind you of something you read in another book?
Write about these experiences or memories. What made you think of them? Be specific, use quotes from your book.

SOME IDEAS FOR STARTING AN ENTRY:

I thought of when...
I know the feeling...
I was reminded of...

Information Entry

Did you learn anything that you did not know before you read this book? What is it? How did the author present, or embed, that information? Be specific, use quotes from your book.

AN IDEA FOR STARTING AN ENTRY

I learned...

Pointing

Tell what you like about the book you are reading, what the writer did that was effective. Be specific, use direct quotes from your book. Be sure to tell your reasons for liking whatever it is you like.

SOME IDEAS FOR STARTING AN ENTRY

I liked the idea...
I was surprised...
I thought the author

Prediction Entry

Predict what you think might happen and why you think so. Be sure to give reasons.

SOME IDEAS FOR STARTING AN ENTRY

I predict...
I'll bet...
Maybe...

Telling Entry (Questioning)

What confuses you? What don't you understand? Why do you think the author did something in a particular way? What would you have done as a writer? Try to answer your own questions.

SOME IDEAS FOR STARTING AN ENTRY

I wonder...

Why did...

I can't really understand...

* This form was taken from Jack Wilde, Writing Across the Curriculum Workshop