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Inservice and Preservice Teacher Attitudes Toward
Creative Writing as a Learning Mechanism

Edwin D. Greenlee

Dissertation submitted to the
College of Human Resources and Education
at West Virginia University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Doctor of Education
in
Curriculum and Instruction

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ABSTRACT

Inservice and Preservice Teacher Attitudes Toward Creative Writing as a Learning Mechanism

Edwin D. Greenlee

Most of us in the teaching profession are aware by now that writing is inextricably interlocked with learning, thinking, and knowing. The more students write, the more knowledge they acquire. As Janet Emig informs us: "Writing serves learning uniquely because writing as process-and-product possesses a cluster of attributes that correspond uniquely to certain powerful learning strategies" (1983, 34). In other words, Emig (1971) believes that when using writing to learn, students can become involved in learning activities. Writing as learning permits students to integrate, connect, reconsider, evaluate, and personally shape their thoughts and ideas. By writing and rewriting, students can discover what they know or what they do not know about a topic (14).

Despite this common knowledge among educators, and given a modest increase in journal writing across secondary education, most solid data on using writing to learn in the classroom suggests a dearth of substantive use of sustained imaginative writing to reinforce learning in the regular classroom. In exploration of reasons for this phenomenon, this research attempts to determine the representative attitudes of in-service and pre-service teachers toward using creative, imaginative writing as a learning mechanism so that their students can fully utilize the unique cognitive connections afforded by writing to learn.

The dissertation looks at the interaction of several factors, including: writing background and attitude toward writing; perception of learning and value of writing as a learning mechanism; perceived writing ability and attitude toward writing as a learning mechanism; taking a theoretical and practical course on creative methodologies and pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching creative writing; and writing apprehension and attitude toward teaching creative writing. By exploring these several interactions, both independently and as a whole, it was found that a preliminary causal network could be identified that became both the focus of the current research as well as the jumping off point for future explorations.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Most of us in the teaching profession are aware by now that writing is inextricably interlocked with learning, thinking, and knowing. The more students write, the more knowledge they acquire. As Janet Emig informs us: “Writing serves learning uniquely because writing as process-and-product possesses a cluster of attributes that correspond uniquely to certain powerful learning strategies” (1983, 34).

Furthermore, the processes and subprocesses of writing are recursive: the very act of writing requires a review of what has been learned and what has already been written (Hillocks, 71).” As we encourage our students through the composing process they discover that writing is not thought recorded after the fact, but thinking itself-- humanity's disciplined, unique way of making meaning” (Murray, 53). Remarkably, this method of discovery is reciprocal. As students explore, record, examine and speculate about meanings in the world around them, they become motivated to write. Most importantly, the writing they do is connective with the learning process in a powerful, individualistic manner. As Joseph Luria points out::

Written speech is bound up with the inhibition of immediate synpractical connections. It assumes a much slower, repeated mediating process of analysis and synthesis, which makes it possible not only to develop the required thought, but even to revert to its earlier stages, thus transforming the sequential chain of connections in a simultaneous, self reviewing structure. Written speech thus represents a new and powerful instrument of thought (118).

Explicating, Luria defines synpraxis as “concrete-active” situations in which language exists fragmentally as part of an ongoing action “outside of which it is incomprehensible” (50). In other words, writing is not only allied with learning, it is uniquely qualified to allow the student to learn at her own pace-- a most remarkable pedagogical tool.

Indeed, writing as learning is particularly remarkable because it simultaneously reinforces each of our methods of dealing with actuality, theorized categorically by Jerome Bruner as the enactive, iconic, and symbolic modes. As Emig explains, “the symbolic transformation of experience through the specific symbol system of verbal language is shaped into an icon (the graphic product) by the enactive hand. If the most efficacious learning occurs when learning is reinforced, then writing through its inherent reinforcing cycle involving hand, eye, and brain marks a uniquely powerful multi-representational mode for learning” (Emig, 1983, 126).

In other words, Emig (1971) believes that when using writing to learn, students can become involved in learning activities. Writing as learning permits students to integrate, connect, reconsider, evaluate, and personally shape their thoughts and ideas. By writing and rewriting, students can discover what they know or what they do not know about a topic(14) . Denny Wolfe and Robert Reising agree, “The more one writes, receives responses to writing, and revises to create better writing, the more one grows in language and thinking maturity. In order to own a piece of knowledge--really own it--one must reconstruct it and make it new. Another way of saying this is, when students read or hear a fact, they must be encouraged and enabled to say so what. The act of writing can help students answer this question” (1).

Perhaps Peter Elbow defines the relationship most succinctly when he states: “Most people agree that we cannot separate writing from thinking. In short, if making meaning and

analyzing how meaning is made constitutes the central process that people in English want to focus on, writing is now an enormously helpful paradigmatic activity” (131).

Despite this common knowledge among educators, and given a modest increase in journal writing across secondary education, most solid data on using writing to learn in the classroom suggests a dearth of substantive use of sustained imaginative writing to reinforce learning in the regular classroom. In exploration of reasons for this phenomenon, this research will attempt to determine the representative attitudes of inservice and preservice teachers toward using creative, imaginative writing as a learning mechanism so that their students can fully utilize the unique cognitive connections afforded by writing to learn.

I will look at the interaction of several factors, including: writing background and attitude toward writing; perception of learning and value of writing as a learning mechanism; perceived writing ability and attitude toward writing as a learning mechanism; taking a theoretical and practical course on creative methodologies and preservice teachers’ attitudes towards teaching creative writing; and writing apprehension and attitude toward teaching creative writing. By exploring these several interactions, both independently and as a whole, it is hoped that a preliminary causal network can be identified that can be both the focus of the current research as well as the jumping off point for future explorations.

Chapter Two: Related Literature

Part One: Connections Between Writing and Learning

Like reading, talking and listening, writing draws on the resources of the human language-learning system. Berthoff (1982) contends that writing, the mental activity that characterizes our species, is the essence of thinking: “The work of the active mind is seeing relationships, finding forms, making meanings. When we write, we are doing in a particular way what we are already doing when we make sense of the world. We are composers by virtue of being human” (p. 12).

Berthoff (1981) believes that writing is a mode of learning, an extension of the natural inclinations in humans to create order and form structures: “Composing is forming; it is a continuum, it goes on all the time; composing is what the mind does by nature; composing is the function of the active mind. Composing is a way we make sense of the world; it's unique as a way of learning” (p. 70).

Writing is also integrative in perhaps the most basic possible sense, the functional. Writing involves the fullest possible functioning of the brain, which entails the active participation in the process of both the left and the right hemispheres. Writing is markedly bispherical, although sometimes it is inaccurately presented as a chiefly left-hemisphere activity, perhaps because the linear written product is somehow regarded as analogue for the process that created it; and the left hemisphere seems to process material linearly (Emig, 126).

The right hemisphere, however, makes at least three, perhaps four, major contributions to the writing process, and therefore, to the creative process generically. First, several researchers, such as Geschwind and Snyder of Harvard and Zaidal of Cal Tech, through markedly different

experiments, have suggested that the right hemisphere is the sphere, even the seat, of emotions. Second, Howard Gardner (1975), in his important study of the brain-damaged, notes that our sense of emotional appropriateness in discourse may reside in the right sphere:

Emotional appropriateness, in sum--being related not only to what is said, but to how it is said and to what is not said, as well--is crucially dependent on right hemisphere intactness (372).

Third, the right hemisphere seems to be the source of intuition, of sudden gestalts, of flashes of images, of abstractions seen as visual or spatial wholes, as the initial metaphors in the creative process. In addition, a unique form of feedback, as well as reinforcement, exists with writing. Information from the process is immediately and visibly available as product already written. The importance for learning this product, in a familiar and available medium for immediate visual re-scanning and review presents is immediate and forceful (Emig, 127).

Jerome Bruner and Lev Vygotsky have written importantly about the connections between learning and writing. In his essay "The Psychobiology of Psychology" (1971), Bruner lists as one of six axioms regarding learning: "We are connective." Further, he posits three important ways we represent and deal with actuality: enactive, "doing"; iconic, "depicting an image"; and symbolic, "restatement in words," or writing (7-8). In *Thought and Language*, Vygotsky notes that writing makes a unique demand in that the writer must engage in "deliberate semantics"- in Vygotsky's phrase, "deliberate structuring of the web of meaning" (100). Such structuring is required because, for Vygotsky, writing centrally represents an expansion of inner speech, that mode whereby we talk to ourselves, which is "maximally compact" and "almost entirely predicative"; written speech is a mode which is "maximally detailed" and which requires

explicitly supplied subjects and topics (100). The medium then of written verbal language requires the establishment of systematic connections and relationships. Clear writing is that writing which “signals without ambiguity the nature of conceptual relationships, whether they be coordinate, subordinate, superordinate, causal, or something other” (Emig 127).

In fact, as Peter Stillman asserts, “Writing is not meant to be a means to measure you against rules and class standards. Its deeper and far more exciting function is to serve as a way to find shapes and names for the world as you have come to know it; to make meaning” (1).

Part Two: The Need for Expressive, Creative, Imaginative Writing

The 1975 research team headed by James Britton assembled 2,000 pieces of writing by British school children between the ages of eleven and eighteen in English, history, geography, science, and religion in 65 schools in order to investigate the relationship between writing and learning. The team applied a grid of function and a sense of audience to the writing samples, classifying the functions of writing as: transactional, poetic, and expressive. Transactional writing is writing to inform, persuade, or instruct; it is the form of most school writing, such as laboratory reports, essays, book reports, and term papers. Transactional writing is about something outside the writer other than being about the writer. Such writing accounted for sixty-three percent of the total sample collected. Poetic writing, the second form, is similar to what many people call creative writing. It functions as “an art form, shaped as an independent verbal construct” (Britton 1970, 90). Poetic writing is primarily concerned with the reader and the impression the writing makes on the reader. Eighteen percent of the total sample collected by the team was poetic writing and there was little evidence of the use of poetic writing outside the English classrooms. The third form, expressive or “close to self” writing is the nearest form to

speech and the means by which new ideas are first formed and explored. Expressive writing is essentially written to oneself as in journals, diaries, or first drafts of papers. It often looks like written down speech and uses first person pronouns, informal style, and colloquial directions. Where transactional writing is concerned with the reader, expressive writing is not. Rather, expressive writing is used to explore subject matter, discover new ideas, make connections, and to get the subject “right with self.” The use of expressive writing helps us to determine what we know or do not know about a subject. Britton found, however, that expressive writing accounted for only five percent of the total sample collected by the team. There was no evidence that it was used outside the English classroom.

In terms of who the writing is for, the researchers described six possible audiences: child to self; child to trusted adult; student to teacher as partner in dialogue; student to teacher as examiner; student to peer group; writer to public audience. The research team believes the expressive form is the process closest to thinking itself, and feels it should be the basis in terms of the child's writing development because “being the form nearest to speech, it is crucial for coming to terms with new ideas” (Britton 1975, 46). In terms of audience, the team felt that pupil to teacher-partner most nearly approximates a genuine learning situation.

In other words, learners need to use writing as a way of ordering and organizing their experiences in order to assimilate new content information. Once the new information is assimilated into the writer's world, the writer can proceed to write for a public audience in either the poetic or transactional modes. Britton contends that the advantage of expressive writing is that it encourages students to take risks and explore ideas (1975, 202).

Emig agrees with Britton that all student writing should begin in the expressive mode and move toward modes for public audiences. She found, however, that the twelfth grade students in her study (1971) wrote only in the extensive mode to convey messages for school purposes. The findings of Applebee's study indicate the same. Most secondary school students write primarily in the extensive or transactional mode for the teacher whose main concern is with the surface correctness of the written product.

One study shows that imaginative writing itself is a very effective way to improve growth in language arts skills. Schumaker (1982) found that sixth graders taught expressive writing three times a week improve linguistically significantly more than students who follow a textbook language arts program. Along the same line, Graves (1973), Florio and Clark (1982), and Calkins (1986) have found that there are certain types of teaching strategies that are most effective for all types of writing, not just imaginative. Those include: the need to create an informal environment with a climate for risk-taking; encouraging students to generate their own topics; setting up real purposes with real audiences; allowing the writer to achieve his or her own purposes by conferring in a non-directive manner; and recognizing and allowing individual and/or unique writing processes.

Indeed, as Freisinger (1982) believes, excessive reliance on the transactional function of language may be responsible for some students' inability to think critically and independently, particularly since all secondary students do not have the ability to reason abstractly (147). Despite this, as we shall see in the next section, upwards of 70% of school writing is transactional, either informative or conative, in nature, and therefore negates the benefits of writing to learn inherent in the expressive, creative, imaginative constructs of written expression.

Part Three: Lack of Expressive, Creative, Imaginative Writing in the Classroom

Teachers have traditionally viewed writing as thought already formulated in the mind. Thus, writing in many classrooms is merely transcribing that thought into words on paper. According to Applebee (1981) and Britton (1975) most classroom writing is transactional and the purpose of that writing is to regurgitate factual information to the teacher. Current research suggests that students should first use expressive writing to get in touch with themselves, then transactional writing as it connects them to others (Britton, 1975; Emig, 1971). Furthermore, students are not merely memory banks for information, and writing is not something they should do after they have learned. Unfortunately, as both Applebee (1981) and Britton (1975) have found, the chief school-sponsored function of writing is transactional.

At this point it is necessary to note that debate about learning in the schools is often based on two broad views of knowledge. One view concentrates on the teacher's role as the initiator of knowledge; teachers transmit or deliver knowledge, a collection of facts and ideas, to the students through lectures and course readings. Students passively receive the information and store it for later use on examinations and term papers. The ability to recall information and ideas is emphasized. Thus, learning means receiving information. Knowing is the condition of having received information, which can be measured by evaluating students' responses to examination questions. As Knoblauch and Brannon (1983) have observed, "Teaching means turning learners into knowers by passing on to them the substance of knowledge" (p. 465). Educator John Mayher (1983) employs the metaphor of the student as an empty vessel ready to be filled from the school's storehouse of knowledge, to extend our understanding of this view.

Another view of learning focuses on knowledge as an activity or process, which the school attempts to induce in each student. Here, knowing implies the making of connections; and both the teachers and students are learners. Teaching involves creating contexts for learning, not for reporting facts. Learning, according to Britton (1970), is the process of an individual mind making meaning from the materials of its experience. This is the essential connection between writing and learning.

One of the primary values of writing is that it requires mental activities which are employed also in learning-- discriminating ideas one from another and relating them to each other. According to Emig (1978), writing which entails the search for connections enables knowledge because it involves an effort to state new knowledge, which is at the heart of learning. As example, the key concept linking subject learning and writing is meaningfulness. Through writing, students in all subject areas are able to make meaning from new information by identifying it, selecting from it, reconstructing it, organizing it, and relating it to what they already know. The conditions for learning content material as identified by McKeller (1957) require the same skills as in writing: identifying new information, reconstructing knowledge in other terms, creating associations with that knowledge, applying the knowledge to other contexts, and subjecting the new knowledge to analysis and comparison (p. 190). When students are required to write, they are learning in an active sense throughout their entire writing process. Thus, the product of writing is no more important than the thought processes which precede it. Fulwiler and Young (1982) agree, "In order to teach writing well, instructors need neither magic nor rules; instead, they need to examine and understand the role played by language in learning" (p. xii).

George Hillocks, Jr., in his meta-analysis of a large body of studies on various approaches to teaching writing, in fact found that a balance between these two approaches is overwhelmingly the most effective. He compared studies on the teacher initiated or “presentational mode,” and the “natural process mode,” with studies on what he terms the “environmental mode,” which appears to place the student and teacher more nearly in balance and found that the latter was four times as effective as the “presentational mode,” three times as effective as the process approach. It should be noted that the teacher initiated mode, which most closely approximates transactional writing, was the least effective as well as the most common.

It is no wonder then that while Applebee in his study (1981) found that the physical act of writing occurs often in secondary school, he also found that not much of the writing being done could be considered writing to learn. Data reported from the study include a national survey of teaching practices and many classroom observations in ninth and eleventh grade content area classrooms (English, math, foreign language, science, social studies, and business education). Applebee and associates observed classrooms in high schools over the course of an academic year to examine the types of writing students were asked to do, teachers' purposes in making these assignments, the interaction of purposes with the writing assignments, and the interaction of purposes with the writing instruction provided. The information collected during the study reveals that students are spending only three percent of class time working on writing of at least paragraph length. Most student writing is limited to recording information to be utilized later on multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, or short answer tests. Students are seldom asked to engage in

expressive writing; teachers do not give students appropriate training in the writing process. The findings are all the more disheartening because the survey included only “good teachers” recommended by building principals as representing good practice.

Freedman and McLeod (1988) used the same survey for 560 teachers selected as most successful by National Writing Project directors and found only a slightly higher percentage of high school teachers (42.2 percent vs. 30 percent) who chose “to share imaginative experiences” as one of their two most important reasons for asking students to write. They also found significantly more elementary teachers (68.8) who chose imaginative experiences than high school educators.

Another study which reports similar results is John I. Goodlad's 1983 book, *A Place Called School*. The work reported the results of a survey of thirty-eight public elementary, junior high and senior high schools which revealed that while students spend ample time on writing in the early years, the tasks mostly involved answering simple questions and filling in the blanks. By junior high school, the frequency of writing had dropped by one third; by high school, nearly one half.

Part Four: Redefining “Creative” Writing

In Part Three of this chapter, I made mention of what Hillocks calls the “natural process mode” or affective domain of writing instruction. This is a student centered approach which relies on imaginative exercises. In Part Two there is reference to expressive and poetic writing as writing for the self and for an audience, respectively. Poetic writing is, of course, that which is most often called creative writing, in all its forms and genres. And yet expressive writing, imaginative in nature, is undeniably creative as well.

Both Britton and Emig associate the expressive as the creative source of the poetic, or for Emig, extensive, prose or text. They also agree that expressive, imaginative, creative writing should be the center of student discourse, perhaps to be grounded with a transactional link such as that envisioned by Hillocks in his “environmental mode”(247).

It is this all-encompassing definition of creative writing-- everything to the left of transactional-- that this research will employ as the theoretical mast of the writing to learn galleon.

As Wendy Bishop postulates, “In order to investigate creativity, researchers must look behind the product and somehow organize the unseen process into a theoretical construct. In a sense the models they create are concrete metaphors that seek to explain creativity . . .”(133). She is adamant that creativity must be defined in behavioral terms, that to facilitate learning and preserve students’ creative opportunities, there must be engagement in the writing process, as opposed to merely asserting the presentational. But, since there are no “operational signposts by which researchers can chart their journey into theory . . . creativity researchers are free to construct their theories in terms unique to their discipline” (134).

Along that line, Erika Lindemann believes that although we still have much to learn about how the brain functions, “current theories agree on one significant point: to create is not beyond the capacity of any normal human being. If creativity is somehow a special ability, it is special for us all. With the possible exception of brain-damaged individuals, we all develop modes of consciousness that have physiological origins in the brain.” Because of this, she asserts, “Our culture has placed greater emphasis on cognitive modes of thought, on logic, reason, and literacy. However affective modes such as imagination and feelings also represent important ways of

thinking. Writers must respect both the affective and cognitive dimensions of thought, developing a feeling for and an intuition about their work as well as a sense of its logic”(88). In other words expressivism and thinking go hand in hand.

A more practical application of this broadening of the spectrum of creative writing is in the realm of revisioning the boundaries of traditional composition and creative writing disciplines.

Ted Lardner, Cleveland State University, espouses that until recently composition and creative writing have moved in parallel, at the margins of college departments of English. But a revitalized recognition of their contingency, leaves educators in a position to “imagine alternative configurations that may prove to be more suited to our needs as writers and teachers and to the needs of our students” (77).

Similarly, George Kalamaras states that creative writing, once cast as implicitly expressive, is expected to enact a pedagogy that conforms to its nature. However, in romanticizing the role of creative expression, the University “simultaneously marginalizes the teaching of creative writing and limits its possibilities . . . Perhaps we could reconstitute the functional-creative dichotomy and place social responsibility at the center . . . And seek to open the creative writing class to even greater possibilities than the writing of poems or stories” (82).

John Mayher sums up the theoretical and pedagogical implications of expressive creative writing as cognitive enforcer when he surmises that “since all writing is creative if it is genuinely committed to discovery and expression of the writer's meanings, the distinction between creative and expository writing is probably a hollow one” (117). There certainly is no consensus regarding the nature of creative writing, but considerable weight suggests that the creative mast envisioned by Emig and Britton, and deployed here, is a sound one.

Part Five: Attitude and Apprehension

Attitude

There are several existing measures of writing teachers' attitudes. Knowledge and Attitude in Written Composition, Test B, (Jacobs and Evans, 1969) elicits attitudes with respect to emphasis on form and emphasis on content. Lin's 1974 survey measures three dimensions of teacher attitudes toward language function. Blake's (1976) Attitude Scale measures attitudes in the areas of writing skill, writing variety, and kinds of writers. Klingler's (1977) essay questionnaire looks at teacher response to mechanical and structural faults in student papers. Zemelman (1977) used an interview protocol to consider context for writing and evaluation. Donlan's (1979) Methodology Inventory solicits response on five stages of writing and three categories of language development and measures several dimensions of composition instruction, though not creative approaches. Schuessler, Gere, and Abbott (1981) used the Composition Opinionnaire (NCTE, 1971) and Writing Apprehension Scale (Daly and Miller, 1975) to statistically analyze teacher attitudes towards composition instruction, but not creative writing; a study which, according to them, "raises more questions than it answers." Specifically, they call for the importance of considering subgroups in examinations of teacher attitudes, just as this current research will attempt to do.

While there is a body of research regarding teachers' attitudes toward writing instruction, there is little if anything concerning teachers' attitudes toward teaching creative writing, and nothing concerning pre-service teacher attitudes towards teaching creative writing in the literature review conducted for this dissertation.

Apprehension

There is a plethora of research on writing apprehension, initiated in the 1970's primarily to ascertain reasons for the dispositional tendency of people to avoid writing and writing related activities. This section will focus on the apprehension studies relevant to attitudes toward writing with an emphasis on creative exercises.

The term writing apprehension was introduced by Daly and Miller (1975) as a term to describe a difference found in individuals which is characterized by a general avoidance of writing situations, perceived by the individual as requiring some writing with the potential for evaluation of the writing.

Writing apprehensive individuals display a disposition to react favorably or unfavorably toward writing situations (Daly, 1978a). The apprehensive state itself is probably restricted only to the act of writing and is primarily focused on the qualities of writing that may be used by others to judge the individual's competence (Daly and Wilson, 1983). While apprehension is a normal behavior rather than a pathology, it varies in the degree to which it causes dysfunction, which can be characterized by emotional distress, a feeling of inadequacy, physical distress, and procrastination (Bloom).

High apprehension may be displayed in the behaviors of people as they record the attitudes which they express about their writing and in the writing that they produce (Faigley, Daly, and Witte). For instance, the extent to which individuals think that their writing is well-organized, meaningful, interesting, and forceful relates to writing apprehension (Daly and Wilson, 1983). It is

also apparent that high apprehensive individuals find writing unrewarding or punishing, whereas low apprehensive individuals find situations that require writing to be rewarding and even look forward to such situations (Daly and Shamo).

Individuals that do not possess the appropriate and necessary writing skills probably will not find much success in writing activities (Daly, 1978b). This lack of success is in turn maintained by writing apprehension because high apprehensives tend to avoid the practice necessary to develop and maintain competencies in writing (Daly and Miller, 1975). Their avoidance of situations requiring writing substantially reduces their opportunities for practice and feedback crucial to the development of good writing skills (Daly, 1978c).

On the other hand, some anxiety may in fact be necessary and beneficial in the writing process, functioning as an energizer (Bloom). Before some people can engage in writing activities, they actually need to reach a certain level of apprehension (Selfe). Despite this, Powell (1984) clearly showed that good students generally have low apprehension while poor students generally have high apprehension. The evidence is fairly clear that individuals with high apprehension toward writing not only write with lower quality but also fail to demonstrate as strong a working knowledge of writing skills as low apprehensive individuals (Daly, 1978a).

Summary

The results of the Applebee, Freedman and McLeod, and Goodlad studies in America concur with the conclusions of Britton's previously mentioned British study: students are seldom asked to engage in expressive writing and teachers respond to student writing by evaluating mechanical mistakes instead of focusing on students' thoughts and ideas.

While none of these studies directly support the theory that writing is a way of making meaning from content material, they do indicate that school writing is used primarily by the students to convey information already learned to the teacher. This limited use of writing in the schools suggests that some teachers may not understand the writing/learning relationships. However, Emig's argument which offers a reason for using expressive, creative, imaginative writing as learning in all disciplines implies that students do have something to say and that expressive, creative writing provides a unique way for them to discover and communicate it. Emig believes that learning and writing are inseparable activities. Expressive, creative writing enables new knowledge because it involves an active effort to state relationships, which is at the heart of learning.

Chapter Three: Procedures

Despite the ever mounting pedagogical and psychological evidence that expressive, creative, imaginative writing is inextricably linked in a positive manner with the learning processes of students, the current body of research suggests that the overwhelming majority of writing done in our schools today is transactional, used to record information and regurgitate previously learned material. Part of the problem, perhaps the greatest part, must inevitably be traced to educators who do not encourage creative writing in the classroom, despite an awareness of the benefits.

Purpose of the Study

Through this study I will attempt to find evidence as to whether preservice and inservice teachers' attitudes toward creative writing impact their potential willingness to use writing to learn in the classroom. I will also try to evaluate whether exposure to creative writing, both in theory and in practice, has any impact on preservice subjects' attitudes.

Research Questions

Although I would hope that the questionnaires and interviews will help clarify and conceptualize strategic issues necessary to develop categorical evaluative procedures, I have limited the research to an inquiry into inservice and preservice teacher attitudes toward creative writing as a learning mechanism, intending by definition to reinforce that concept as representative of writing to learn.

The primary questions I will address, as suggested by the purpose of the study are the following:

- (1) How do preservice and inservice teachers' writing backgrounds affect their attitudes toward creative writing?
- (2) Do preservice teachers and inservice teachers perceive creative writing as a valuable pedagogical tool (as opposed to, as Applebee's 1981 research discovered about "good teachers," an extra-curricular activity)?
- (3) Do preservice and inservice teachers' perceived creative writing abilities affect their attitudes towards teaching creative writing and/or using creative writing as a learning tool in their future classrooms?
- (4) What change, if any, does a theoretical and practical course in creative writing have on preservice teachers' attitudes toward teaching creative writing?
- (5) Does writing apprehension play a role in preservice or inservice teachers' attitudes toward teaching writing?

Definition of Terms

Throughout the literature review of this research I have used the combined term “expressive, creative, imaginative writing” to designate that writing which Emig and Britton consider writing to learn, and which Berthoff called the essence of thinking--all that writing which is not the transactional informative and/or conative writing that constitutes the preponderance of classroom writing assignments.

As I have done in the previous section, I will hereinafter refer to this type of writing as creative writing, considering that the term is far broader than the delimiting connotation traditionally reserved for the composing of literary works. As Wendy Bishop considers, for years we teachers may have been reading a wealth of “imaginative” and “creative” essays even

when we assigned them and evaluated them as non-fiction work (1992). I have used the literature review in Chapter Two of this dissertation to further elaborate upon and justify the use of creative writing as a designation for that writing which promotes learning.

Description of Participants

Preservice participants for this study were selected through willingness to participate and total of data materials collected, from an undergraduate advanced composition class for preservice teachers of English at West Virginia University in Morgantown, West Virginia. The class focused almost exclusively on creative writing theory, methodologies, and practice, intending to encourage writing to learn in the classroom.

While it is presumed that all preservice English teachers will have some background in writing, it has been my experience as a teacher, and the experience of the instructor of the class, that the writing habits, proficiency, and backgrounds of the students will be diverse enough to constitute an excellent population.

The inservice teachers have been selected according to availability and willingness to participate, from the six-county pool of schools which serve as cooperative sponsors of WVU's student teacher program.

Procedures for Collection of Data

Justification for Collection of Data

In considering evaluation design alternatives for this research, I began by examining the relative strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative data.

The validity of quantitative research depends on careful instrument construction, and administration of the instrument in an appropriate, standardized manner according to prescribed procedures. The focus is on the measuring instrument, be they test items, survey questions, or other measurement tools.

In qualitative inquiry the focus is on the researcher as the instrument, with the validity dependent to a large extent upon the skill, competence, and rigor of the person doing fieldwork. While variations in intensity of researcher are bound to happen, Guba and Lincoln insist that any loss in rigor in this naturalistic inquiry “is more than offset by the flexibility, insight, and ability to build on tacit knowledge that is the peculiar province of the human instrument” (1981).

Furthermore, according to Joe Kincheloe (1991), a qualitative design for research in the classroom is based on the belief that humans are “the most valuable of all research instruments . . . humans are sensitive to subtle, hard to categorize dimensions . . . are almost unlimited in their adaptability . . . humans can perceive holistically . . . can synthesize information, generate interpretations, and revise and sophisticate those interpretations at the site the inquiry takes place.”

In sum, the qualitative design permits the researcher to establish a situation conducive to achieving expected data, observe what happens in the field, describe what happens in narrative form, analyze the results according to reflection on what they might mean (rather than counting or comparing to other situations), and then draw the best objective conclusions possible based on a combination of analytical techniques.

In light of this informed perspective, and since I have determined the need for study of the data in depth and on several levels of inquiry rather than in a quantitative mode, I have chosen to initiate a design featuring a combination of qualitative methodologies.

Specifications of Design

My study will be descriptive in nature, with my role that of an informed observer and interviewer. As Wolcott (1990) urges, I will use extensive field notes and fieldwork observations to provide concrete illustrations and examples for the results.

Population

Preservice Teachers: I initiated a purposeful sample of the previously described English composition class for undergraduate preservice teachers. The primary sample was eight students, approximately one third of the population of the entire class which consisted of 25 students. The sample is a purposeful sample and not a representative sample because the purpose of the sample is credibility, not representativeness. The logic and power of probability sampling depends on selecting a truly random and statistically representative sample that will permit confident generalization from the sample to a larger population. Purposeful sampling, on the other hand, takes its strength from the selection of *information rich cases*, for in-depth study. The particular method of choosing the sample for this research was through intensity sampling to insure enough information rich cases to adequately study the results of the data. It is important to note that the sample was taken from those rich in material and not, for the most part, from extreme cases. Some research questions warranted a wider exploration of data, thus a broader sample was utilized. The samples for some questions are further divided according to instruments completed by the individual students.

Inservice Teachers: The eight inservice teachers were chosen from among those willing to participate in the study, but primarily from those who completed all survey instruments and the written interview.

Procedure for Collecting Data

I utilized a variety of data collection techniques to facilitate multiple inquiry approaches in order to promote cross-data validity checks.

- (1) The Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Teachers, with appropriate modifications, was administered to inservice teachers.
- (2) The Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students with appropriate modifications, was administered pre- and post- instruction to preservice teachers.
- (3) An Attitudinal Questionnaire concerning high school writing instruction of my devise adapted from the Composition Opinionaire (NCTE, 1971) was administered pre-instruction to preservice teachers, and at the time of the written interview to inservice teachers.
- (4) A Writing Apprehension Survey of my devise adapted from the Writing Apprehension scale (Daly and Miller, 1981) was administered pre-instruction to the pre-service teachers, and at the time of the written interview to inservice teachers.
- (5) Students were interviewed, using a general interview guide approach, at the beginning of the semester, and again at the end of the semester concerning their attitudes toward creative writing.
- (6) Teachers were interviewed, using a written general interview guide approach concerning their attitudes toward creative writing.

- (7) I kept field notes of my classroom observations throughout the semester in anticipation of providing rich examples of observed phenomena.
- (8) Student writing samples taken from course assignments were used as exemplars of writing attitude, apprehension, and ability.

The abundance of data from these eight collection techniques should provide a wealth of information for analysis, interpretation, and reporting regarding preservice teacher attitudes toward creative writing.

Procedure for Analysis of Data

- (1) The primary evaluation technique was a triangulation analysis of the various data gathering methodologies. This involved comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information derived at different times through the uses of surveys and questionnaires, interviews with the subjects, and subjects' journal entries across a spectrum of categories suggested by the initial research questions, and by revised and sophisticated questions suggested by the data collection and/or observations.
- (2) The primary evaluation was reinforced by pertinent examples documented during researcher observations as well as subject generated classroom writing samples.
- (3) The method of evaluating the surveys was holistic in nature, examined both from predetermined criteria and reasonable modifications suggested by the data collected.
- (4) The method for evaluation of the apprehension questionnaire was holistic and suggested by previous apprehension researchers, most notably, Daly and Miller (1975).
- (5) All written documents and interview transcriptions were subjected to analysis through formal coded markings generated by the previously established research categories.

Reporting of Conclusions

After the data was accumulated and explored, I synthesized the findings, added reflections, and composed a creative, journal style description, evaluation, and interpretation of the research and perceived ramifications for writing to learn in general and creative writing instruction in particular.

Chapter Four

This chapter will delineate the results of the research findings, using the research questions established in Chapter Three of this dissertation.

Question 1. How do preservice and inservice teachers' backgrounds affect their attitudes toward creative writing?

Part One, Preservice Teachers

I'll look at the pre-service teachers first. The results are taken from the oral and written interviews, from journals, from the writing apprehension survey, and from classroom papers. I will look at the individual's background first, followed by their corresponding attitudes toward creative writing prior to the exit interview.

"HN," Background:

***Unfortunately, the writing that I've had to do in the classroom is not usually the kind of writing I like to do. I don't really remember what kind of writing I did in grade school, so obviously it must not have been that much. In the elementary school, we did do a few reports, but that was just basically copying a few paragraphs out of the encyclopedia. I do, however, remember one writing assignment in 9th grade that I was very proud of. My class was having trouble knowing when and where to use commas, so Mrs. S., our teacher, made us write a story using commas in at least seven different ways. I got 100 percent on it!

In high school the only creative writing I remember doing was a story that had to be written in three different viewpoints. I called mine the "Labor of Love Triangle." I was pleased with it. I took Honors Writing my senior year, but even in there, we stuck to the writing book. We did some analysis, but we never had to write anything completely fictional. College hasn't been

any different as far as the kind of writing I've been doing. I basically only had to write about other people's work, and also do a few lab reports.

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: The good writers that you knew in high school or college, did they usually do some creative writing, or not?

Answer: The good writers?

Question: The students that you think are good writers.

Answer: Poems.

Question: They do creative writing too, right?

Answer: Yes, and most of the ones that I'm good friends with that write a lot, most of the stuff that they write are basically poetry.

Question: Is that right?

Answer: Mostly sad and depressing poetry . . .

Question: Sad and depressing?

Answer: Just like gloomy stuff, you know?

Question: You're talking about your friends *now*, right?

Answer: My friends now, and in high school.

Question: Even in high school, sad and gloomy? Well I guess there's some precedent for that, but in my experience most of them did like you did, which was love poems and stuff like that, then maybe moved on to short stories . . . Do you still write creatively?

Answer: Not as much as I did when I was younger. I think it's just because I'm more into studying and I'm assigned more writing now than I was before.

Question: Not necessarily creative?

Answer: Yeah. I write what I have to know. I don't know, I'm trying to get back into it because I've always wanted to do writing.

Question: How about journals, do you keep a journal of any kind?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Is it more creative or functional or a combination of both?

Answer: Functional, I guess.

Question: Functional?

Answer: It's just my thoughts.

Question: Well functional is the sense of telling you for a purpose, like in a class, taking notes.

Answer: Well I guess then it would be creative.

Question: More creative because it comes through your mind?

Answer: Like what I did that day or what I'm going to do.

Question: Yours is sort of like a combination, you think about things, but you also write down exactly what you've done, which is a good memory technique.

Answer: But it doesn't really have anything to do with-- it's more like what I was thinking that was going on, not like feelings.

Question: That's expressive, that's what we call expressive writing, right? And in my mind, expressive leads more to creative than to transactional, although there are some questions about that. Some people think they're even.

Answer: Functional would be like I have a test at 3:30.

Question: Yeah, stuff like that.

Answer: I don't do that. I don't write things down like that. I don't even have a date book. So that's why I forget!

Question: Did the teachers at your high school use creative writing assignments to focus on learning activities in the regular classroom?

Answer: One did. Basically, there was only one teacher, Mrs. S. She always had us do key stuff in a journal. She would start out with a topic and then we could take three tangents and have to write about that. It was kind of neat.

Question: She's the only one you can remember? It was only one teacher out of all of them that made an impact on you as far as a different sort of class that you enjoyed?

Answer: Well yes, in fact I had her for 10th grade and I didn't have to take her 12th grade, but I chose to take an Honors Writing class and give up my regular English class to take her.

Question: And the Honors Writing, was it a creative writing class or just an honors kind of writing that led you towards college.

Answer: More analytical -- we would read something like Pygmalion and stuff like that, and then write about it.

Question: Did you have creative writing in high school?

Answer: No creative writing in high school.

Question: Was it because nobody was qualified to teach you, or just because they didn't have it?

Answer: Our school wasn't very good and I don't think, they probably just didn't have it . . .

Question: There wouldn't be a call for it?

Answer: They didn't have anything but the essentials really-- English, math, science. They didn't have like what all schools have, like photography, we didn't have anything like that.

Question: Nothing like that? The other English teachers, they just did traditional sorts of assignments? Try to think of writing . . .

Answer: Well, my 11th grade English teacher, I guess I don't really remember too much because I didn't care for her.

Question: And there wasn't any kind of writing, creative kinds of assignments, anywhere else in high school?

Answer: I don't think so . . . Actually, in the ninth grade we wrote creatively. I remember one thing I wrote, this is because I was looking through it Monday. I pulled this thing that she used to teach grammar, commas actually, and we had to write this story using commas in different ways. We had to make sure we used the commas in a compound sentence, after a date, whatever.

Question: But she let you make your own paragraph?

Answer: Yes.

Question: That's the kind of assignments I'm talking about!

Answer: Nothing else I can remember, really.

Question: That's okay, that means you had some . . . Did you do research writing? I mean, you had classes that did research papers. When you did your writing for those, did you actually do synthesis, or did you take passages and virtually . . .

Answer: Copy them?

Question: Well OK, for lack of a better word right now, copy and then have transitions, and take two paragraphs from another place, and do that again?

Answer: No . . . I really did write the real way.

Question: No, I'm not saying it's not, because in a lot of high schools, when you do that kind of writing, you were doing okay with it as long as you don't copy it word for word. If you are paraphrasing and then you cite the sources and use transitions, you're okay in that kind of writing. If you copy it word for word, that's plagiarism, obviously, but if you are paraphrasing it and then you add sentences, a lot of teachers consider that to be an essay, or good practice for what you are going to be doing in college. But you actually did more than that, used your own thoughts and things like that?

Answer: Yes . . . I think it's just me though, because I have always had a hard time keeping myself out of research even though I wasn't supposed to. I have always had a hard time not putting my own opinion in.

“HN,” Attitude:

***I write both because I have to and because I love it. Writing helps me vent. Whenever something is really bothering me, I write it down, usually in great detail, and by the time I'm finished I feel much better. I basically stick to writing two types of things, poems and letters. I really enjoy writing poetry. I usually write poems about love and for the most part they have a happy tone. I like poems that read easily.

My favorite things to write, however, aren't poems, but are letters. I have notebooks full of letters I've written to people but have never sent. They are basically everything that I want to tell people for one reason or another.

Creative writing to me means a way of expressing myself. I've always written to get my emotions out. However I've never developed any characters. Usually, I'll write a poem or I'll

write in a diary or a journal. If somebody has upset me, I usually write a letter to that person telling him or her how I feel. I hardly ever send them though.

This semester, however, I've been expressing myself through the protagonist in my story, Julie. She feels like I feel. I think I've made her a little bit more arrogant than I am, but basically, Julie is me.

I always said that I wanted to be a writer. I remember writing stories when I was little, but when I got older and realized that my path was the English path, I, for some reason, stopped writing creatively. I'm glad that we are required to write such a long story instead of a bunch of little ones. This is more challenging and to be honest, I think it's helping me keep my sanity this semester.

For the past five weeks, I've been having some problems in my personal life. One would think that those problems would make assignments harder to work on. However, the more that happens in my life, the more I develop Julie. That's what creative writing is to me, a way of letting myself go, a way to forget everything that is happening in my life, and only focusing on what is going on in the lives of my characters.

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: When you think of the phrase “creative writing,” what comes to your mind?

Answer: Poems, mostly.

Question: Okay?

Answer: Poems. In fact I just went home Monday because I wanted to get some stuff from high school that I thought might help me with this [writing] conference, but it turned out I couldn't. But I found a whole bunch of old stuff that I had written when I was in the 8th or 9th grade and

mostly what I wrote was just poems. Stupid poems when I read them now, because I was in love with this guy. Everything is about him, it's just so cheezy. I mean, I can't believe I felt that way, you know?

Question: You would be surprised how much it goes on in Junior High. I've heard three or four people from these interviews who have said something like that, that they remember it. So, when you think of creative writing, you think of the genre more than your method of writing?

Answer: Yes . . .

Question: When you have classes that have a lot of writing, do you look forward to them?

Answer: Yes I do. I don't like tests, so that's why I like this semester. I can't take tests. I would rather write.

Question: You're a non-test person?

Answer: I would rather write . . . When my roommates hear they are going to have an essay exam they are all nervous, but I'm glad . . .

Question: When you saw the syllabus for this English 108 class, and you saw that 30 page paper, short story, what went through your mind?

Answer: I was excited about it to be honest with you, because I knew I would never do it otherwise unless I had to . . . It's going to be pretty good, something I can be proud of, anyway . . .

*** In addition to these insights, "HN" strongly agreed with 6 positive indicators on the writing apprehension survey, agreed with another, was uncertain of 3, and disagreed with one-- "I like to have my friends read what I have written." The negative indicators showed ambiguity. She disagreed with two, strongly disagreed with two, was uncertain of one, and strongly agreed with three.

“AB,” Background:

I am happy to say that writing was encouraged in my home when I was young. As I progressed through the school system, I was introduced to sentence parts and eventually little paragraphs. When I was in the elementary and junior high school, I loved to write ultra-fiction stories. I liked to create settings and introduce outrageous yet real characters. I must admit that my writing was heavily influenced by the books I was reading like, “Something Queer Is Going On,” and “The Secret Garden.” Using your imagination is healthy and very important for writing. When I was young, pre-high school, I could come up with the zaniest ideas. High school was a whole new scene though. Suddenly writing was serious. Book reports had to be written in your own words and vocabulary was such a drag. We had much more reading to do, too. A lot of our writing was responses to plays and novels. The dreaded “term paper” was a deep blow to my imagination. The words meant nothing. They were just index cards with bibliographic info. The paper was just my research, not my imagination. I did however write poetry in the high school. I also wrote for the newspaper. These activities warmed me back up to English. In college, I loved English and writing too. Everyone would moan and groan but I loved it. I thought the readings and writing topics were great and I liked pure evaluation. My skills, of course, sharpened immensely from these classes. Now, I’m in graduate school and I’m back to a lot of scientific writing. I do research reviews, book reviews, analyses, etc. Creative writing has become a personal responsibility. If I don’t make time to write, I’ll forget how to do it well. I miss some of those English classes where you wrote whatever and just kept revising. It was fun and you have great expectations.

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: Do the good writers that you have known in school usually do some creative writing?

Answer: Definitely.

Question. They do? How about yourself?

Answer: I too, but definitely not as often as I used to. When I was in high school I was involved in underground newspaper groups and stuff, where we did little things, but now it's, like, you really seem to read more.

Question: How about in your experience in -- remember back in high school and college now -- how many teachers have used creative writing assignments to focus learning of course content?

Answer. I remember a lot of creative assignments in high school.

Question: Really?

Answer; Like I mean, what I would consider creative, like putting yourself in the shoes of a character from a play. I remember having to write like someone who was a character.

Question: Something like alternative book report type of things?

Answer: Yes, every now and then there was something interesting.

Question: Was it like all your English teachers, or just one or two?

Answer: Just one.

Question: Just one?

Answer: My favorite.

Question: Okay, your favorite teacher did it, that's what I hear a lot. There are a lot of people that have one they really remember, right?

Answer: Yes, she definitely made me decide to be an English major.

Question: Is that right? Did you have, or did your school have any creative writing course that was called Creative Writing?

Answer: No.

Question: You didn't have any?

Answer: Not in my high school, no.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing-- your journals, letters, etc., to be creative or functional?

Answer: Yes, creative.

Question: Creative?

Answer: Creative, because . . . If you read it, maybe to the reader, like it's very personal. I like to use many imaginative expressions, so like, the grammar, the spelling and all that is just out the window. Punctuation, everything is a mess, but the person who is reading it, it is very animated to them, probably because it's somebody I know well who knows how I speak, so they kind of read it like almost a dialogue. I love writing letters.

Question: So in your context of creative writing, your journals are not just functional like taking notes and stuff like that?

Answer: No, they use a lot of emotion.

***The teacher that most influenced my writing was Mrs. G. She was my Sophomore composition instructor. She wasn't young or "cool" by any means. She was just a wonderful teacher. She always took time out of her own schedule to help students with their writing.

When we were assigned reading response compositions or creative writing assignments, Mrs. G. guided us. I would always go up to her desk and say, "How's this?" She would usually

read my paper, shuffle things on her desk, and yell at the unruly student at the same time. Mrs. G. could do everything.

Mrs. G. knew everything too. I could ask her difficult grammar questions; I could ask her to rephrase quotes; no matter what I threw at her she knew the answer . . .

In all, her efforts were many and meaningful. She created an image of a teacher for me-- she epitomized the role of the educator. I am so happy that she gave her time and knowledge so willingly. She showed me the beauty of composition . . .

“AB,” Attitude:

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Imaginary.

Question: Imaginary?

Answer: First and foremost.

Question: First and foremost is imaginary? Any specific kinds of writing?

Answer: Expository, more like a self expressive type of writing, more than like, scientific or like analytical or something like that.

Question: But it doesn't have to be a specific genre or anything like that?

Answer: Well, kind of I guess, creatively, you always think of poetry.

Question: Poetry, that's the genre you generally think of?

Answer: Right, it just comes to mind because somebody once told me to.

Question: But you have gone a little bit farther than that in your thinking, do you think?

Answer: Yes, I find that I like really creative stuff, like on Netscape, clever things like that. Like, I like symbolism and a lot of that figurative language, things like that. That's creative to me . . .

Question: Are you looking forward to writing the story for English 108?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Were you to start with?

Answer: Probably not. I was a little hesitant, but I kind of still thought it was cool, to tell you the truth. But supplementary writing, that kind of takes away from it. Like, I would like it if all I had to do was just constantly do things for the story but, I mean, of course we have to do other stuff.

Question: When you saw it (the story) on the syllabus, did you think it was going to help you learn how to write, writing a short story like that?

Answer: I thought it was going to teach us how to do characterization, like to put yourself in the, you know, I thought it would teach us how to be in a young kid's mind . . . so that we can learn how to do reader response with them . . .

Question: Was it appropriate for the 108 class you signed up for?

Answer: . . . I thought it was reasonable . . .

***On the first day of this class (English 108), I was amazed at the amount of writing we were looking ahead at. Most of all, I dreaded the short story. "How will I do it?" I thought to myself. Then we were assigned the first six pages.

Naturally, I put it off until I couldn't handle it anymore. I went to the computer labs with my pre-writing notes, and began to copy my written text onto the screen. As I became more comfortable with the keyboard, I started writing extra sentences, expanding the written text. I only had three pages written and when I left there were eight pages on disk.

The most creative part of my writing would definitely be placing myself in the mind and body of a teen. I'm barely out of adolescence, but I've changed so much. I suppose I've learned through experience, much like the experiences my characters encounter.

Meeting teens on that special level is fun yet challenging. It is also a good practice for relating to the minds of my students. I try to keep in mind the hardships and concerns of teens when I plan lessons. The novels I've selected and the writing I assign must be appealing to young adults. Reading has helped me write better in general. Reading adolescent literature has helped me to be more creative in my own short story.

***My personal writing is definitely creative. I say this because my content is "live." I write exactly what I am thinking and I wouldn't consider that functional.

**In addition to these oral and written statements, "AB" agreed with 8 out of 12 positive (non-apprehensive) indicators on the writing apprehension survey, was uncertain of three, and disagreed with only one: "I have no fear of my writing being evaluated." She also either disagreed (5), or strongly disagreed (2) with the majority of the negative indicators on the writing apprehension survey. She was uncertain of one, "I avoid writing."

"JB," Background:

***I write because I'm expected to. My classes have been usually the only place where I write. The one and only time I ever wrote on my own, the work was published. Funny, I don't even have a copy of the poem. I guess writing is something I enjoy but have never utilized to its fullest extent.

The kinds of writing I have done in the past corresponds directly with whatever class I had at the time: English 1-- creative and informative, English 2-- research, English 20-- a journal.

Journals have been fun. One class, the name eludes me, we kept a journal of our dreams and meditations, fairly interesting if you can recall those midnight stories. However, I can't. A T.S. Eliot class I had forced a few larger papers on me and they were hard. We really analyzed a certain work and wrote about it. Again, I did well, received an A for the course, but couldn't recall anything I wrote. I can however recall a class I had in high school. It was a creative writing class, and I did well. My best paper was an information paper on why most humans refer to their personal belongings as "my shit." The details escape me, but I remember it being a work of art!

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: The good writers that you have known in high school, have they done creative writing as well, or what percentage of them, or how would you describe it?

Answer: The good writers I knew through high school I would have to say weren't students, they would be the teachers. I was thrown into a group of English teachers because my mother was the chairperson of the English department, where I met them. So those are my English mentors, I guess, and yes, there was a better part of them that did write and they actually did do some readings among themselves. I never read any of their writings, but it was there if I wanted to.

Question: Did you do any creative writing?

Answer: In high school?

Question: Yes.

Answer: Yes, I did. I actually had a class and it was pretty much a joke. I hate saying it like that because the one lady that ran the class was a very good writer, not just a very good teacher, and she

didn't express herself in the classroom at all and we did no reading. It was strictly writing and it was strictly in class, so it was pretty much a bunch of people that didn't want to do anything in the class. We just sat in the class.

Question: It was an elective?

Answer: Yes. It was purely a waste of time, is what it was.

Question: It wasn't advanced students, it was just everybody who already knew what kind of class it was?

Answer: Well, I guess you had to be at least academic or advanced. There were three categories, general students weren't allowed, or just didn't take it, I don't know, one or the other, they didn't take it. It was mostly academic kids that wanted an easy A . . .

Question: Did any of your other teachers use creative writing types of assignments to reinforce the classroom content?

Answer: Yes, I had a couple that did. I was hand placed in English classes too, so, the handful of the English teachers that were there, I always had the best one for whatever class according to my mother's standard of best ones; so yeah, I did some writing in school and was forced to do some writing that was good for me. It was them being a little more strict with me, or more sure of me being able to do it and do it a little better and try to excel or whatever . . .

Question: Do you do any journals or anything like that just as a habit?

Answer: I did when I was undergrad, yes. I kept three years of journals in undergrad and then just stopped. I graduated and I was lucky to even pick up a newspaper to read. I just quit, never did anything for three years.

Question: Is that right? Why?

Answer: I was too bored. I just . . .

Question: Bored with education?

Answer: Yes, I was just tired, I was rebellious against wanting to learn anything. I stopped for three years. I said I'm not going to even read birthday cards. I just didn't do a thing, I mean the only thing I read was a book here, a book there, that were just about Jimmy Buffett, etc., I read only that much.

Question: What brought you back? Money, I mean, the need to earn it?

Answer: I didn't realize how bad work really is, and trying to make a living, and how bad that really was and how hard it was. I was working 65 to 70 hours a week, actually worked an 80 hour week once.

Question: Doing what?

Answer: Management, retail management, and it paid well but it ate me up and I realized no matter what, school was easier and . . .

Question: Is that the primary reason you went back?

Answer: Yes, school is definitely easier and . . .

Question: In other words, it isn't your first love.

Answer: No.

Question: Even though your mother taught it, it isn't your first love?

Answer: I grew up around that subject, I mean if there's anything I know pretty well that I've seen, it's western Pennsylvania where there are tons of strikes and whatnot, so I have a pretty good feel for the teaching atmosphere and how the teachers are after class and during class, and I know them as people not as teachers.

Question: I did my student teaching at Albert Gallatin and so I've sort of been there as well.

Answer: Rough, that's a rough place to teach.

Question: So, when you did those journals, did you do them creatively or functionally?

Answer: Both. I actually tried my hand at a little poetry for my journals; that's pretty much the only creative writing I did. I used it to remind me of days, and things that I learned or whatever, and I tried to keep up with stuff that way. It helped me to get through undergrad, it really did. I mean I used it a lot as study guides literally, stuff that had happened during the day.

Question: Did any of your teachers give you journal assignments?

Answer: Yes, and I actually was just keeping my journal as if I was on my own and not just as if it was an assignment. I put it right in the same journal, and just to get help when it came time to turn it in or show it or whatever, so it was all the same journal. It was one continuous run like that.

Question: When they gave you the journal assignments, did they ask you to express yourself, or did they give you specific assignments?

Answer: A little of both. I think it was 'always try to express yourself after you read something,' so it was like they were assigning something but they wanted your opinion on what it was, so it was sort of creative . . .

“JB,” Attitude:

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: When you think of creative writing what comes into your mind?

Answer: Specifically, short stories.

Question: Short stories?

Answer: Yes, short stories.

Question: So you think about a genre specific creative writing as opposed to just any kind of generic kind of writing that you might do? . . .

Answer: Writing short stories, poetry or plays-- anything that is an original work from an author...

Question: When you came to this class and you saw the syllabus, and you saw that long short story that you had to write, were you looking forward to it?

Answer: Yes, I have a lot of it done actually, so I've put a pretty big dent in it.

Question: Did you think it was content specific, I mean the course was composition for teachers?

Did you think that was going to do you any good in the class?

Answer: Yes, I said it the other day in class-- lead by example. It's definitely put in my mind preparation for teaching, being a writer and teaching, because I think that part is important. But again, I also see teachers that have been teaching and they are not writers anymore. I guess that they either burn out on it or they don't do it anymore, gave up with it. So who knows, maybe going in with a good attitude, I'll write short stories that are assigned, maybe that's the right direction to take-- have a good attitude.

Question: That may be what I'm trying to figure out, I don't know. Thanks a lot.

Answer: no sweat . . .

***Before I came to this class, I thought of creative writing as short stories, poems or books. It was always for other people, for an audience.

***I write because I'm expected to. My classes have been usually the only place I write. The one and only time I ever wrote on my own, the work was published. Funny, I don't even have a copy of the poem. I guess writing is something I enjoy but have never utilized to its fullest extent.

***In addition to these comments, “JB” was in agreement with 9 of 12 positive indicators on the writing apprehension survey, was uncertain of 2 more, and disagreed with one -- “It is easy for me to write good compositions.” He disagreed with six of 8 negative indicators, and was uncertain of the other two.

“JK,” Background:

***I write in many ways for many reasons and have been doing so for a long period of time. When I began writing, it was simply the accomplishment of scratching the pencil into meaningful symbols. Then the pride my parents and others displayed, due to my new feat, furthered my wanting to write. At such a young age I wrote about fantastic worlds I was dreaming about, and every piece of writing was a creative form entirely conjured upon my own free will. As I went farther through school, the free will was being eaten up by teachers who in their own judgment thought it might be better to write on assigned topics. Although there is a place for assigned writing, there didn't seem to be any place for my own writing ideas in school time. At this time I stopped writing upon my own free will about wonderful worlds, and only wrote what I was told to. I wrote book reports, essays on stories, research reports on Idaho and beer, and a million other papers that I never actually enjoyed doing.

High school came around and it was more of the same, except the books became more difficult to read and the reports had to be longer and typed. Research reports became more in depth and the actual writing took a back seat to the format of the note cards. I guess one day I just had enough of writing on subjects that I didn't care about and started writing poetry. The only poetry I ever studied was British and only the really old Shakespearean type. But my poetry sounded nothing like any of that and some of it never rhymed. I suppose at the time, writing poetry was a

release and a way to recapture something I once had, freedom maybe-- freedom from structure, freedom from grammar and ridicule, and freedom to create.

In college there was a bit of the same, but some English classes gave me that freedom. I also found a way to write about those same forced topics in my own way. During this time I expanded my personal writings into journals, the poems, stories, scenes from life, ideas for books, movies, and any other type of writing.

I write because I need to, because I need to express what I have inside to prove my ideas and thoughts are worthy.

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: Do the good writers you know or have known in school usually do some creative writing too?

Answer: Yes.

Question: How about yourself?

Answer: How about myself? Do I do creative writing? . . . Yes I do.

Question: How long have you done it?

Answer: It started a very little bit my senior year in high school . . . Probably more intensely in the last couple of years, so I'm not sure how long a time.

Question: How many teachers that you have had used creative writing assignments to focus learning in course content, creative type writing assignments? You can be specific or just think of generalities or maybe you haven't any, I don't know. I know you have one because you had me.

Answer: Outside of you and Dr. G.?

Question: In high school did you have any?

Answer: I did some creative writing in some of the English classes in high school but . . .

Question: Was it for other course content or specifically to be just creative writing, like poetry or short stories and stuff like that?

Answer: Probably I would assume that if you had to specify, for just creative writing purposes.

Question: That's fine, you know, sometimes you never have any.

Answer: I can't think of any other.

Question: No teacher sticks out in your mind?

Answer: No.

Question: Did your high school have a creative writing class as such?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Was it for advanced students, just an elective for anybody, or how did they structure it?

Answer: They had it for advanced students and then for one semester your senior year, you could elect, you had to take English, but there were bunches of people that could take it.

Question: Was it mostly for college prep or could a lot of people have it?

Answer: It could have been anyone but most of the people that took it, I would say, were college prep.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing, the journals and letters that you do, to be creative or functional?

Answer: Both, but more creative than functional.

Question: Do you ever do journals on your own just for the heck of it?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you?

Answer: Just thoughts or whatever.

Question: When you were in high school were most of the journal kinds of writing you did in the English classes?

Answer: Just one . . .

Question: You haven't had any other kind of pedagogy courses that suggest that you ought to use different kinds of writing in your classes?

Answer: Mentions of it but nothing else, no follow-up and explanation.

“JK,” Attitude:

***I believe being creative is being yourself. Creativity comes from within and isn't molded by others. Creative writing is writing from within. It's putting yourself on the paper. It's just going with what you believe. Creative writing has no correct form and has no limitations. I believe creative writing is the central part of what we think of as writing. Everything else is documenting or regurgitating, writing to fit the structure others have built. I read somewhere an author say that all a writer has on the inside but is afraid to let out is exactly what literature is waiting for.

Every time a great writer comes along, it is his differences that makes him great. It's the ability to believe that the what you write and how you write has value, that's everything. Creative writing is finding new ways to make the same point. Creative writing is building new structures. Creative writing is freeing your mind. It is the ability to say what you want to say, how you want to say it and know that it's exactly what you intended. Creative writing is expression. Creative writing is a means of understanding oneself and being that individual, that way we know we really are. Creative writing is honest writing.

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Writing for myself, any sort of writing that I want to do, anything that comes to mind that I want to jot down, any form or structure.

Question: As opposed to any other kind of writing, or just personal writing?

Answer: As opposed to writing that I am like forced to do for class that I can't find any other way to get out. Like some papers in class I can find a way to still, through myself, make them creative, and then there's some papers that I can't get through that way, and I just have to do.

Question: So creative writing comes more from your imagination as opposed to specific guidelines that are given to you in the classroom, expository writing and stuff like that? Is that what you mean?

Answer: More so, but I mean in some of the guidelines you can still find ways to make your own creativity and not . . .

Question: Your own writing as opposed to form-like?

Answer: I guess so.

Question: I'm not trying to put words in your mouth, I'm just trying to clarify.

Answer: Got you . . .

Question: When you saw the syllabus for this class, were you looking forward to the short story that you had to write?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Did you think it would be functional as far as the class description, or what you thought you were going to get out of it? Did you think that was the kind of thing that was going to help you learn composition?

Answer: Yes, I thought it would be beneficial for just myself going through that process and taking it to a level where I have a finished product. Usually I start things like that and don't finish them . .

***With regard to the writing apprehension survey, “JK” agreed with six positive indicators, was uncertain of two, disagreed with one-- “I have no fear of my writing being evaluated,” and strongly agreed with “I enjoy writing.” He also disagreed with three negative indicators, was uncertain of two, and strongly disagreed with three more.

“KP,” Background:

***There are many reasons why I write. They range from writing research papers to fulfilling homework requirements to leaving my roommate funny messages. Usually though I write to tap into the feelings that I have stored up inside myself. This really helps me to understand and look at my problems from a different point of view. I guess that's another reason why I write, so that I can understand other people and they can understand me! When I was little my grandmother and I used to write short poems so that we could remember things. That's another reason why I write. When I get older, I want to remember every detail of what I have been through in my life! Writing will help me to accomplish this feat.

The kinds of writing that I do include journal writing, writing e-mail messages, and sometimes I try to write poetry. I have always been interested in recording the events of my life, so journal writing is probably the majority of the writing I do. Other things I write are papers for classes, etc. In many of my classes, we are required to respond to everything that we read. This is

another thing I do a lot of. Poetry, on the other hand, I don't do a lot of. I guess you could say that the reason for this is because I am not inspired a lot.

I don't actually remember writing in any of my grade school classes. When I was in third grade, the teacher was totally gung ho about creative writing. Each student in the class got to write their own short story, edit it, etc., and then they were all entered into a contest. I can't remember what place a ribbon I got, but I do remember it because it was a purple shimmering ribbon. Maybe they gave them to all the students!

In junior high I remember doing a lot of descriptive writing. I had fun doing that. High school was high school, they would give us large writing assignments to try and scare us about college. Whether or not it worked, I don't know. From that day on though, the majority of what was used in classrooms is paper writing and response journals.

***In high school, I had a very enthusiastic, high-energy English teacher by the name of Mrs. B. I could definitely say that she most affected my writing. There isn't really one thing about her that I can point to exactly that changed my writing. There were many things, but most of all I remember her being positive and encouraging. Her attitude towards writing reflected onto us. Because she liked writing, we, through her, also learned to value writing. She would always tell us that every idea is important and that we shouldn't be afraid to write them down.

One thing that we all especially liked about her was the fact that she didn't put that huge emphasis on using correct grammar. I think that this helped us focus more on our writing than worrying about if a comma was in the right place. Overall, we all enjoyed her enthusiasm and energy. She was, and still is, one of those teachers who really loves her job.

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: Do those good writers that you have known in school,

especially high school but even in college, do these good writers usually do creative writing too?

Answer: I don't know. Like most of my experiences with good writers have been just papers they have written, not anything creative, just basic assignments and they do them not just like free writing or anything.

Question: Do you do any creative writing, have you?

Answer: I try to once in awhile, but it is very hard to find time to do writing.

Question: Especially when you're playing volleyball?

Answer: Yes.

Question: I know all about sports taking up time. I did them to.

Answer: I wish I confined a lot more time to writing because there are so many things that I think about that I'd like to get down on paper, but I just don't have time. I wish I did but . . .

Question: Teachers that you have had, did they use creative writing assignments, was anything creative?

Answer: No, not really. Like the only really creative thing that stands out in my mind that I did in grade school or high school was in sixth grade or some grade. Our teacher had us write about our favorite place or something, and that's the only thing I can remember.

Question: Is that right?

Answer: Yes. I know my school system isn't really known for their strong writing.

Question: Where did you go to school?

Answer: I went to H. High School in Illinois.

Question: Illinois?

Answer: Yes, it's really known for good education.

Question: Sixth grade is about when I first experienced creative writing, and a teacher got me organized into it. But you never had a teacher that was really into creative writing?

Answer: Not at all. I never had any teachers that were into that.

Question: Did your school have creative writing courses?

Answer: No, they were just English courses, and if you did creative writing that was what the teacher made you do. We didn't have any creative writing classes.

Question: How about advanced composition or anything like that?

Answer: In high school all we had was English 1, 2, 3, and 4 and that was it, and you didn't even have to take English 4 if you didn't want to because that wasn't even a requirement or whatever.

Question: If you were going to college, did most kids take English 4?

Answer: Yes, a lot of them.

Question: So that was where your college prep was, sort of? Okay, was it mostly literature then?

Answer: We did a lot of literature, and then we'd write a research paper and that was it.

Question: I have heard that several times. Now, do you do personal writing like journals or anything like that?

Answer: Yes, I do journals.

Question: Are those creative or functional in nature?

Answer: They are more like getting my emotions out, you know, away from an event, get everything organized, but sometimes, you know, like in high school, I did a few things creative on my own, like poetry and stuff like that. Usually I'll do it when, like, not just to do it. I'll do it when I really feel like I have a strong idea or something.

Question: You don't sit down and write in your journal every day?

Answer: No, no.

Question: Did you have to do any journal writing in high school?

Answer: Yes, a lot of journal writing, especially like in my freshman year and junior year we did a lot of journal writing and stuff. But my sophomore year, I had the worst teacher ever. All we did in there was come into class and we would do, have you ever heard of three-line stories, like someone writes three lines and you fold it over and somebody writes nine and that's all we did every day, and he was such a pushover it was terrible.

Question: Didn't you consider those creative?

Answer: Yes, now that I think about it those were creative, yes they were.

Question: Was he trying to teach you anything with them?

Answer: No, I mean he would have us do that because he didn't have anything else for us to do. He was terrible. Like we would come into class, okay, and we're going to do this, this, and this and we would be like "let's not work," and he'd be like okay, then do this. "No, that's a lot of work," and then by the time we'd get done complaining, he would be like, just write a paragraph and turn that in. He was the worst teacher that I have had in my life.

Question: He was easily manipulated?

Answer: Very, because he wanted everyone to like him, and he didn't last very long. He was out of there after two years or something.

Question: I would imagine. The journals that you did in high school, were they mostly functional, on-task assignment sorts of things?

Answer: Yes . . .

Question: Do you think you would have learned more by using your own methods as opposed to the traditional research methods?

Answer: Well, usually with research papers it's just like they give you something to write about, you know? I don't know, I guess I'm not really familiar with writing to learn, you know, like how exactly that's done because I've never really been exposed to it at all.

“KP,” Attitude:

***Creative writing has come to mean many different things to me. It has grown into a process that allows me to use a wide variety of skills and tools . . .

Creative writing helps me to learn about myself, the things around me, and also my writing potential. First, I can use creative writing to get my thoughts organized. This helps a lot, because it usually helps me see things more clearly. Secondly, in terms of how creative writing helps me, it has played a huge role in helping me discover my own voice . . . I have even become brave enough to put my voice in some of my transactional papers.

In other terms, creative writing to me means being given the opportunity to create, and invent something that is entirely my own-- characters, images, poems, etc. It isn't always that people are given this opportunity, the creative writing allows for this. Creative writing also means to me that I am being given the chance to learn more vividly. It is not only through my own writing but also others that I can learn not only about different things, but also how to be a better creative writer.

All in all, creative writing means many things to me, all of which I can benefit greatly from.

****(From the Initial Interview):* Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to your mind?

Answer: Like, describing things that lead other people into putting everything in your mind down on paper, you know, in a clear way, so that you build something up for the person that's reading it.

Question: Mirror images. That's personal in fact. Okay, because a lot of people have said just poetry, or short stories, but you get the image of the writing itself as opposed to the genre.

Answer: Yes . . .

Question: When you saw the syllabus for this 108 class and you saw that 25 to 30 page creative writing assignment, were you looking forward to it?

Answer: No, I was, like 'oh no, what am I going to do?' Not really, because I don't know, 25 to 30 pages is a little scary . . .

Question: You knew it was a composition class for teachers. Did you think that kind of assignment would help you with your composition or not?

Answer: I think it can help because, I mean, like right now I'm deciding how am I going to get all these things in there, you know? And that's not things you think about a lot. How am I going to blend all this together and make everything go in order? I think it will help me a lot with my writing and stuff, just being able to think ahead, not where I'm at right now on the page, but think ahead, like how am I going to work this in with what comes later . . .

*** "KP" showed a great deal of uncertainty with the writing apprehension survey, marking 11 of 20 responses as uncertain, including eight of ten positive indicators. She disagreed with the other two, "I have no fear of my writing being evaluated," and "It is easy for me to write good compositions." There were three uncertain negative indicators, she agreed with four more, and strongly disagreed with one, "Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time."

“C,” Background:

***I write to communicate with others, to express my feelings, thoughts, dreams, hopes, and fears. I often do so in a journal I keep by my bedside, letters to good friends, or to my family

Most of the writing I do is admittedly for my classes. I do not feel comfortable, or rather, able to be “creative” in my writings. I want to learn more, and am rather embarrassed to admit that I have not done much creative writing.

While I was getting my undergraduate degree in journalism, the professors wanted/encouraged us to be very clever with leads and segways [sic], but also write very succinctly. Most of the writings I have done have been essays, factual papers. I have also “attempted” to do some poetry and other types of creative prompts, etc., at workshops and conferences.

***I would never have admitted it at the time, however, Fran S. had a profoundly positive effect on my love of writing. In 10th, 11th, and 12 grades she was my speech/forensics coach and teacher. She was tough-- demanded the best work and all of my effort all of the time. Although she wasn't a very friendly person, she taught her students a lot. I credit her with the discipline I have when it comes to writing, looking for the right word, using the correct phrase for what I want to say.

She rarely said positive things to her students, but she did comment positively on our papers a lot. What our reward was, was what she expected for the forensics team-- to compete in weekend tournaments and win. When I was a senior, we went to Glenville State College hoping to remain State Champions for the eighth year in a row. Perhaps it was fear she instilled in us.

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Did the good writers that you knew in high school usually do some creative writing too?

Answer: Yes. I always thought that they've done some, even those that turned into journalism majors . . . The best students always had the best . . .

Question: Creative writing?

Answer: The most creative and the best word usage and the vocabulary choice and all that.

Question: But you didn't do any creative writing, I mean other than tasks that you were assigned?

Answer: I suppose technically I did, I never really sat down to it. I wrote in my diary and journals, always kept a diary and still do. I wrote creatively in my speech classes, we did after dinner speeches, and so we had to do that, and perform that, which was interesting. And I forget what the other kind of speech is called-- original, or oratory-- and that had to be creative.

Question: And these were regular classroom assignments? Was it in speech class?

Answer: Yes, it was in speech class and if you were in this class you were expected to go to the speech tournaments and perform the speeches.

Question: But you wrote on your own a lot?

Answer: Oh yes, you wrote completely on your own.

Question: That's interesting, because they were creative assignments, and a lot of times in speech classes they give you specific tasks and everybody has to write to them . . .

Answer: We got to choose basically what we wanted to write about, and get it okayed . . . But you had to make sure it was something worthwhile to talk about.

Question: That just goes to show what creative kinds of things can do, right?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Did they use creative assignments when you went to Wheeling Park?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Did the teachers use creative assignments in a lot of the classes, or just a couple of teachers, or what?

Answer: I think it was just a couple of teachers mostly. One writing class I had was a base composition that everybody was required to take and I took it my senior year. You had to do a huge research paper before you could graduate, but other than that, basically they were response papers . . . basically, the first level of Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning.

Question: Did they have creative writing courses specifically?

Answer: Nothing I know of . . .

Question: I mean some schools do and some don't, so I like to figure out who teaches them. For instance, someone just told me that they had a creative writing course but that the teacher was probably assigned to it and wasn't a very good teacher of it.

Answer: I don't know, that might be elsewhere.

Question: It was one of their electives?

Answer: Like, yeah, my mom taught one last year, a creative writing class! . . . another creative thing we had was radio. We had a radio station and we were very creative in that, and I got into that my senior year and we all had to produce our own news spots and ad spots, and we could all be DJ's on the air and we all took turns and had our own shifts and everything.

Question: Was that out of an English class?

Answer: No, . . . It had nothing to do with English classes. It was Radio.

Question: How did you get into it?

Answer: It was an elective.

Question: That was it, just Radio?

Answer: Yes.

Question: But you had a teacher that taught it?

Answer: He was an English teacher and he taught the very low students, but it had, as far as I know, no connection to English. The other teachers didn't work with him . . .

Question: But you loved that class?

Answer: I loved it . . .

Question: Do you do journals on your own?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Are they mostly functional, or is there any creativity involved?

Answer: It kind of depends . . . I find myself doing them really more when I am sad, and I always remember what people say, that you should write them down, maybe if you write your feelings down, they will make you understand things more. My mom always said just write them down, and so they are functional in that way, but they are creative in the way that a lot of times, a lot of it would be thought of as kind of neat . . . when I'm gone someday. Like letters to different people, like I have letters to my father, letters to mom, one to my brother, and my friends . . .

Question: Are they creative?

Answer: They are just very expressive, I guess. I don't know, [they are] about something that may be going on at that time.

Question: That's absolutely creative. You know it's not really just functional in that sense, because you're expressing yourself.

Answer: Very expressive.

Question: The early steps of creativity more than, I think, being functional.

Answer: Yes. So those [things], I think they are exciting to do . . .

“C,” Attitude:

***Before I entered this class I didn't think I was much of a writer, especially not a creative writer. I knew I could write a decent research paper. Having majored in journalism in my undergraduate, I even believe I am a good journalist. But the creative writing, I didn't think I could do it . . .

I realize that the letters I write to others and in my journal are creative. In fact, I think it would be interesting to publish my letters someday as many famous authors have done in the past.

****(From the Initial Interview):* Question: When you think of creative writing what do you think of?

Answer: I think of writing classes in high school. In high school mainly we'd always have to do some kind of creative piece or creative fiction and something very exciting, and I think it's kind of scary to a lot of people. I know I was really scared of it.

Question: So you think of the task that you had to go through?

Answer: Yes, the task.

Question: A lot of people think of poetry or short stories and some people think of what you do when you do creative writing, but you think of the task?

Answer: Yes, I think of that . . .

Question: Actually following the task, then the creative writing?

Answer: I'm actually doing it and coming to it, and wondering if mine is going to be original enough or exciting enough and even for this paper I find myself feeling the same feelings I felt when I was in high school wondering about that . . .

Question: When you came into the class and you saw the syllabus, and you saw that 25 page paper on there, what went through your mind?

Answer: Well I actually knew it was going to be a long paper beforehand, because I had talked to you guys a little beforehand, and I'd dreaded it a lot of the summer to tell you the truth. Not really dreaded the class, just thinking how am I going to do this and how is it all going to come together. I was excited when I first talked about what I could write about, and when I started writing, but now I just don't know . . .

Question: You say you dread it?

Answer: I'm apprehensive about it.

Question: You are apprehensive about it, but if you had a little reinforcement?

Answer: It's stressing me out.

Question: Stressing you out? You haven't cried or anything about it?

Answer: I haven't cried about it, no, but I have written in my journal about it . . .

***The results of "C"'s writing apprehension survey showed that she was in agreement with five positive indicators, was uncertain of four, strongly agreed with one-- "I look forward to writing down my ideas," disagreed with one-- "I have no fear of my writing being evaluated," and strongly disagreed with one-- "I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation

and publication,” despite having stated the contrary in her interview. “C” also was uncertain of three negative indicators, disagreed with two, strongly disagreed with two more, and agreed with one, “I don’t think I write as well as most other people.”

“MF,” *Background:*

***Most of the writing that I have done revolves around the classroom. I do not write creatively. I do however, enjoy research writing. I like the idea of having a topic or opinion and focusing on my thoughts.

Up until this time, I have done very little creative writing. I have written many papers on factual topics of my own choosing, but I have never given any thought to writing a short story or any other type of creative writing. The only type of creative writing that I have experienced has been letter writing. That is nearly the only kind that I just focus on being me. At nearly all other times I am just a factual person. In high school I had a college board writing course, but I chose to write solely about the things that were tangible to me . . .

The kinds of writing that I have pursued in the classroom have pertained to some type of research. I was a biology major for two years, and I thoroughly enjoyed the research projects that were required. Lab reports are very fun for me, and I love the data collecting and the library research that is necessary to complete a report.

I did do some creative writing in English 1, but it made me feel inadequate and left out. I guess I forgot about it, because I thought it was the worst writing I had ever completed.

Last year I experienced my first English classes. I completed 22, 23, 24, 25, 150, and 133. Not very much creative writing was involved in these courses. Again, it was all quite factual. Therefore, my writing experience has been extremely limited . . .

***The first teacher to influence my writing at all was a college instructor. This really makes me question the type of high school that I attended. Anyway, her name is Dr. Ann C. and what I found in her was sheer energy to be alive She loves teaching and interaction with students. She is very down-to-earth She likes to pace when she lectures and even appears nervous. This is surprising because she is quite accomplished. I like Ms. C. because she never forces anyone to do anything like most instructors do. I rarely enjoy doing something I am forced to do. She let us do things on our own and offered guidance if we asked. Because of this, I enjoyed her class more than any other. I wrote for myself, but I pushed myself harder because I wanted her to like what I wrote. A complement from her was probably the best thing that could be bestowed upon me. I like her as a person and as a professional. I don't know what it was that made me want to write for her, all I know is that I have never spent so much time or effort on any other writing ever since

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: How many of the teachers that you have had used some kind of creative writing activities to promote learning in the regular classroom? Any?

Answer: A few. A lot of it was journal writing and I don't really remember.

Question: Did they let you be creative in your journals?

Answer: Yes, but I never really saw it as creative writing. It was just me writing down my ideas and that wasn't very creative to me and I never did very well on it.

Question: Why?

Answer: I don't know, because it's just that they are my ideas and I'm really straightforward and there was nothing creative about it, and whenever my high school teacher said something about

creative writing I just froze immediately and especially whenever they say write on anything you want. I would sit there the whole class period and not get one thing done because I need something structured.

Question: That's funny because I think if you are writing in your own journals, your own sort of entries and thinking for yourself, that's sort of creative in itself I think. But you were doing them sort of more as functional types of things?

Answer: Yes, very functional.

Question: Did anybody give you alternative book reports or anything like that, any of the teachers in your school that you can think of?

Answer: We did several book reports but . . .

Question: They were just traditional?

Answer: Yes, straight book reports.

Question: That's the kind of thing I was interested in. Were there any creative classes in your high school?

Answer: My senior year I took a college board writing course and we kind of had like structured topics to write about, and I would write about some of my personal experiences, but again, like I never really see personal experiences as creative writing because it happened and I was just writing about it.

Question: But it certainly is, it's like . . .

Answer: I'm learning that now.

Question: Anything like personal narratives and some creative nonfiction can all be creative type writing, but you didn't consider that creative writing back then, really?

Answer: No.

Question: Did your high school have a specific class where there was a teacher who taught creative writing?

Answer: No.

Question: You haven't had any in college either, is that right?

Answer: No, I've taken survey English courses and a short story course, but it was writing about stories . . .

***In my schooling I was never exposed to very much creative writing. Most of my teachers wanted us to write what they wanted to read . . .

“MF,” Attitude:

***Frankly, the idea of writing creatively scares the hell out of me. I have never tapped into my creative energy and I am unsure as to whether or not I possess any at all . . .

This course is going to provide me with some experience in creative writing. I am nervous and feel more than a little sick over this course already. I hope that I have what it takes to become an excellent educator.

***I am learning that creative writing means many different things. Now that I am in college, creative writing has been the source of much pain, anger, and tears. I still cringe when I think of writing, but sometimes I just feel like doing it. Most often, when I am upset or angry because I feel the crushing weight of the project due in this class, I write my best work. I have been able to look inside myself and see that I have a lot to say. I have stories and insights that I think people would be interested in reading. My story might not be the best, but I will feel proud when it is finally done. Hopefully, I won't quit after this story. I would like to be able to continue

my writing and become better at it. Also I hope that my personal feelings will be a starting point for other stories-- stories that not only come from my experience, but those of others or even ones that I make up. This would be a tremendous step for me . . .

I know of creative writing, but this is my first real experience at doing the creative writing. I'm learning, and I feel that this is an okay experience. I'll get through it and maybe I'll be a better person/writer/teacher because of this.

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: When you think about creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: I get scared.

Question: You get scared?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Why?

Answer: Now we read kind of analytically and do a lot of research papers, but I've never written creatively.

Question: Never at all?

Answer: Not very much, probably two or three papers ever.

Question: So when you think about it, what kind of writing comes to mind specifically?

Answer: Storytelling.

Question: Stories?

Answer: Just stories.

Question: So you think of genres, like short story and poetry and novel and stuff like that?

Answer: Yes . . .

Question: Do you look forward to classes that have a lot of writing?

Answer: Research.

Question: Research writing?

Answer: Essays, I'll do any kind of writing you want, but as soon as you say creative writing I just freeze . . .

Question: When you saw the syllabus for this course and you saw that story, what did you think?

Answer: I freaked out and I'm still freaking out and in fact the second class period, whenever we discussed it and then you said write 5 to 10 pages, I cried as I was walking out of the class. I started to cry and I went back to my dorm room and I cried for about an hour and a half because like all this stuff was happening to me and she said write 5 to 10 pages and I just couldn't handle it and I cried forever and I tried to talk to her in class the following week and she said "write about anything," so I went home and I wrote like three pages of just total crap and I haven't looked at it since. I have not done one bit of creative writing since I left, since I had that, since I did that two weeks ago.

Question: Well hopefully as we start looking at each other's papers and stuff like that, you'll feel more comfortable, right?

Answer: Like I don't understand the concept whatsoever, and I think as soon as I hear fiction, I think, I don't know, Judy Blume, and I start classifying all these things, and I'm not the book writer and that's . . .

Question: You tell stories don't you, to your friends?

Answer: Some of them, not anything I want to talk about in class.

Question: You'll do fine. I think.

***The writing apprehension survey showed that “MF” agreed with 7 positive indicators, was uncertain about one, disagreed with three, and strongly disagreed with one-- “I like to have my friends read what I have written.” She was uncertain about one negative indicator and disagreed with the other seven.

“LS,” Background:

***I write to relieve stress . . . When I am given a writing assignment it always takes me a while to get started. I may start as many as 10 times. Once I begin, it’s as if the words just flow onto the paper. I like to write to gain knowledge about writing itself, and about the subject I am researching.

I do not feel very comfortable when I am given a specific length [assignment]. I feel that it's the quality of the contents rather than the quantity. When I write I want to be very detailed, sometimes too detailed, about concepts, thoughts, and feelings. Once I have written the paper or letter I can always read [it], and decide if it’s really how I feel.

I enjoy writing letters and short notes. I don’t mind writing assignments. I most enjoy evaluations. I can express myself about a given topic or book. It’s my own opinion and I feel that’s when I produce the best quality of writing. Research papers are not my favorite, but if the topic is one of some interest to many, I enjoy the work and writing. I have many friends who have graduated and moved away. I’ve kept in touch by phoning them and by long detailed letters. I believe it’s always easier to give someone drastic or bad news in writing. I rely all on thoughts and emotions in the letters as well as current and future situations that I’m involved in.

My classroom experience in writing has been varied. I can remember in elementary school making up stories and poems. In junior high we got a little more structured. I can only remember

doing book report after book report. High school writing was more free flowing and casual. I remember dreading research papers in high school but now at the university level I don't dread them and I don't look forward to them. I just complete them to the best of my ability.

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: The good writers that you have known, do they tend to do creative writing too, that you are aware of?

Answer: I would assume they do creative writing.

Question: But they don't share with you? A lot of people I have seen know people that write well and they can also tell if they do creative writing, or if it's been shared in class or something like that. So I'm just curious if that's happened? When you think of good writers do you just think that they would do creative writing?

Answer: Not necessarily . . .

Question: Do you do any creative writing?

Answer: No.

Question: None at all?

Answer: None.

Question: How about the teachers you have had, have they used creative kinds of assignments in the regular classroom?

Answer: No, never. I don't think I have had any.

Question: Where did you go to high school?

Answer: MHS.

Question: And you never had any? Did you have Ms. G?

Answer: Nope. I had Mr. W. and I had, what's the man's name, Mr. M.

Question: They never used any creative kinds of assignments?

Answer: Nope.

Question: I thought MHS was pretty good about that. Did they have a creative writing course there?

Answer: I don't even remember.

Question: That's strange. You know, I knew all the courses that were offered, whether I took them or not, when I was in high school. If you didn't know about it they might not even have had one.

Answer: For some reason I don't think that they did.

Question: That's very possible. I mean you have to have somebody who feels qualified to teach it.

Answer: Right.

Question: Do you do a journal on your own?

Answer: No, just the one for class.

Question: When you do letter writing or other kinds of writing, is it mostly functional, or do you do some creative kinds of things with it?

Answer: Functional.

Question: All functional?

Answer: I enjoy writing letters though. I do a lot of e-mail.

Question: But they're sort of relaying information more than anything else?

Answer: Nothing else.

Question: No poems or anything like that as a seventh grader, nothing like that?

Answer: Nope . . .

“LS,” Attitude:

***I believe that creative writing is being able to express thoughts, feelings, and emotions on paper. Creative writing needs to include our own attitudes in addition to the plot/purpose of the writing. I feel that creative writing lets us get out our frustrations.

We are writing for ourselves basically, then we can go back and edit. I strongly believe we need to be able to pick the topic we wish to write about; if it's a given assignment. Creative writing should be incorporated into the school curriculum. Students need time to express themselves. The junior high to high school age group are going through numerous changes. Creative writing could help detect problems and could be used as a warning sign for such factors as drugs and alcohol.

Creative writing should not be frowned upon. We need to encourage everyone to write freely, and express themselves and not worry about offending anyone else . . .

Overall, I feel that creative writing is excellent, and a terrific opportunity for everyone [to communicate] . . .

***I enjoy writing to express my feelings. I can better express myself in writing rather than expressing what I feel in spoken words. I sometimes write for no reason at all, maybe just let someone know that I was thinking about them.

****(From the Initial Interview):* Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Sitting down for myself, or just whatever?

Question: Whatever comes to mind?

Answer: Probably, sitting down and making up a story . . . or not actually making it up, but at least getting your thoughts down with something you are interested in, or something that concerns you, or maybe just completely writing poems.

Question: So you think more of like a genre, like poetry or short story, when you think of creative writing, right?

Answer: Right . . .

Question: When you saw the syllabus for that class, what did you think about it?

Answer: I hated the idea.

Question: Of doing a story?

Answer: I think I hated the page amount.

Question: The page amount more than anything else?

Answer: I love to write.

Question: The creativity didn't bother you?

Answer: No, it was the page amount. I figured, oh my God, How am I going to write 30 pages? . .

.Question: Why?

Answer: I was probably stressed about having to come up with an idea, I was thinking of that, the time, how much time is it going to take? What about punctuation? I get really stressed about punctuation, I guess . . .

*** "LS"'s writing apprehension survey showed that she strongly agreed with the statement "I like to have my friends read what I have written." She also agreed with five other positive indicators, was uncertain of two, disagreed with two, and strongly disagreed with both "I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation and publication" and "I like to write my

ideas down.” The negative indicators revealed that she was uncertain of two, disagreed with two, agreed with two, and strongly agreed with two.

“MC,” Background:

***A majority of my writing has been as a result of an assignment that has been given to me in school. I enjoyed doing most of these assignments because they allow me to express my own style in a way that other assignments do not let me. Writing is not about facts and precise calculations, such as history or biology. It allows me to express myself in the way that I am comfortable with and can feel a sense of pride about what I have created.

The kinds of writing that I do depend on the type of class I am taking. A creative writing paper is very different in writing style compared to a history paper. The creative writing paper is usually something that I must create from beginning to end with few guidelines to it. The content is whatever I want it to be. A history paper does not allow much room for creativity.

During my junior year in high school, I took two writing classes that helped me enormously in developing my own style. They had me write so much that it became second nature. After taking my first writing class in college, I discovered that I have a lot more to learn. There was a whole other world to be discovered in not only my writing, but in the [writing of] others as well.

I have never done much writing on my own outside the classroom because it is not the love of my life. Although I do enjoy doing it, I cannot see myself involving all of my time with it. Hopefully after college, I will spend more time creating my own works for my own enjoyment.

****(From the Initial Interview):* Question: Do the good writers that you have known in school usually do some creative writing?

Answer: I'm not really too sure. I know a lot of people who've done well on their grades in writing class and stuff, and I never asked whether they do any writing on their own or any types of creative writing.

Question: Is that right? I remember when I was in high school I used to be able to tell pretty easily. I mean, everybody that did creative writing you knew about it, they all worked for the paper or stuff like that.

Answer: Right, see we had a smaller high school, and we didn't have much about that.

Question: I see. Have you done any yourself?

Answer: Just on my own?

Question: Yes.

Answer: Maybe once or twice, not too frequently, just . . .

Question: You wouldn't call it your specialty?

Answer: No, no.

Question: How many of your teachers used creative writing assignments to focus learning in content courses?

Answer: Probably the one that stands out would be my junior year in high school English teacher. I took a composition class from him also, and he preferred creative to factual writing, and gave you a lot of leeway as far as what you wanted, how you wanted to tell your story.

Question: Did you enjoy that kind of stuff?

Answer: Yes, he is the teacher that got me into English and teaching.

Question: Is that right? You know, it's amazing how many times that has happened [in my interviews]. That's what happened to me in the sixth grade, and my daughter just really hated all

of her English classes until last year when her teacher let her do creative writing assignments for the final paper, and she just loved it. It's amazing isn't it? Did you have or did your school have creative writing courses specifically?

Answer: We had a composition class but that was more based on structure and five paragraph essays and, you know, more your skills rather than learning.

Question: More than learning the difference between expository writing, and all that stuff?

Answer: That's right . . . But as far as beyond that composition class, [creative writing] was not really in your basic English courses.

Question: Was the composition aimed at college prep kids mostly?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you consider your own personal writing like journals, letters, etc. to be creative or functional mostly, including what you do in school?

Answer: Most of what I do for school was just functional. I kind of get into worrying about the grade more than my writing and stuff . . . I have been trying to change myself . . .

Question: Is that what you used journals for mostly, studying? You don't do one for yourself?

Answer: No, just for exams.

Question: I guess it depends on how much writing you do. There are some that do use journals for themselves, but most of the time I hear your response more . . .

"MC," Attitude:

***Creative writing has always been my favorite form of writing. It has allowed me to use my imagination and create worlds that are my own. Many times, I take things from my childhood dreams and write about them. These could be the adventures I took through the African jungle in

my basement, or the car I race through my house and yard. My imagination as a child was so wild that I almost had an endless supply of stories on my mind. I have a feeling of closure when I write the stories and am fond of remembering the wonderful times I created as a child.

When I entered this class, I was excited to learn that we had the freedom to choose what we were going to write about. Each time I read a chapter and work on the class, I learn more about how to better develop this world I am creating. I constantly revise my story as I try to expand on. This is tedious work and sometimes frustrating, but when I compare my first draft with my most recent copy, I appreciate the work I have put into it . . .

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: I think about using your imagination and completely starting from scratch and writing about anything you want to, a lot is like if you're doing two kinds of history, people can rely on what they read in books, and you kind of take from what other people have told, where creative writing is completely yours and has a little more sense of pride toward it.

Question: So creative writing comes more from within, and it doesn't necessarily have to do with text materials, etc.?

Answer: More like weird experiences . . .

*****In the writing apprehension survey, "MC" agreed with six positive indicators, was uncertain of four, and disagreed with the two involving evaluation. He also disagreed with four negative indicators, was uncertain of one, and strongly disagreed with the other three.**

“KH,” Background:

***I write for various reasons and in various situations. From an early age writing has offered me a sense of release. Whether writing in an academic setting or for personal reflection, I always feel a sense of self achievement. This self achievement would have to be the main reason I write. When I write I feel a confidence nothing else can match . . .

Most of the types of writing that I have encountered while at West Virginia University have been strictly academic. Very few opportunities are presented throughout the English education curriculum for any creativity. Most writing involves reflection or research. What did this story or article have to say, or what was this individuals role in literary history? Just once I would love to write for writing’s sake, not to be graded, but just to express my personal interests and forms. How nice I have often thought it would be to have an instructor work on a piece of writing with me as an equal, a teammate, rather they some kind of dictator influencing and deciding every detail and decision.

****(From the Initial Interview):* Question: Do the good writers that you have known in school usually do some creative writing too?

Answer: The college level or high school level?

Question: Both, but high school level to start with.

Answer: At the high school level, not really. The good writers were mainly not a lot of creative writers, actually. I really started to learn about creative writing when I came to West Virginia University.

Question: Have you done any yourself?

Answer: On my own yes, but never in any high school classes, none was offered where I went to high school.

Question: Is that right?

Answer: Yes, it was mainly literature based writing . . .

Question: But even in high school you did some creative writing on your own?

Answer: On my own, yes.

Question: Just for enjoyment or . . . ?

Answer: Mainly creative writing, focusing on stories my dad would tell, you know, like family stories, my grandfather's stories I guess; we all have these stories you know, the family stories.

Question: You would write them down? That's interesting. Did any of your teachers use creative type assignments or creative writing assignments to focus learning of course content in high school?

Answer: Not at all. I mean, had it not been for an elective, there was no creative writing offered.

Question: I know you have the option in classes I teach, but how about in college, is there any?

Answer: No not really. I mean mainly it's like the research papers. One instance though, I had English 125, I believe, World Literature, and we had the opportunity to do some creative writing in there so, yes, that's really the only class I can think of that I have had the opportunity to write creatively.

Question: Amazing . . . You said your school did not have a creative writing course. How about advanced composition, do they have stuff like that for college prep, or is it all done in the English classes?

Answer: They have advanced crap, but like I said it was mainly . . . Literature aspects, we just really got into Chaucer and Shakespeare, and some poetry, discovered a lot of everything, and mainly all of my effort was put into one big research paper so, no, as far as the creative aspect, none.

Question: One big research paper? Okay. We were discussing literature, did you write about it or did you just . . .?

Answer: Responded to it like in a journal, to some extent you could be creative in your journals, like the way you wrote, like how you decided to respond, but it was really limited creativity.

Question: Well that was the next question. Your personal writing, especially journals in high school for instance, was that mostly functional as opposed to creative where you could . . .?

Answer: They didn't really give you the opportunity to, you know, to express yourself like your, really, I mean, express your opinions in a creative manner. They never really mentioned, like, you can write say, a poem or a short story relating to how you feel. The journals were always like, response type journals.

Question: When you are doing other kinds of personal writing, like letters and stuff, are you more creative or more functional?

Answer: For a long time I was more functional, like I could see the form, because that's all I had in middle school or high school. But recently, especially probably the last two years, I've been more creative, more, you know, friendly, I guess, the friendly aspect. But I sort of pretty much do the formal business type, if you will, letters . . .

“KH,” Attitude:

***I kind of feel like Picasso putting his paint to a canvas. I am always working to create that masterpiece, that one paper that will stand out not only to myself but also to my colleagues. Writing offers me a chance to show the world exactly what my mind and pen are capable of. It allows me to push myself to the limits and offers me a large reward when I am able to hold the finished product in my hand. Writing offers me my greatest form of expression and provides me with the greatest amount of academic confidence.

The main type of writing I enjoy doing is the short story form of literature. When creativity hits, the short story form provides me with the perfect opportunity that my spare time allows. Often throughout the course of a day I will view the perfect situation forming for a short story. Often I will write down its main pieces from different angles that when placed together form the perfect story. Many of my short stories resemble weekly television shows we would like to view. My themes often take a different approach in looking at the various things found throughout literature and pulls on the situations in real life that I can relate to and find interesting.

***When I think of creative writing, I often think of all of the time that was wasted in my English classes throughout high school. Never was I given an opportunity to write in a journal, to write a short story on a personal topic, or to create with a view to personal significance. Writing was no more than research papers, essays, and fill in the blanks.

Much of this oppression ended once I began my junior year at West Virginia University. By taking classes such as modern poetry and reading the works of William Carlos Williams, D.H. Lawrence, and Denise Levertov, I began for the first time to see the power in creative prose. This prose came off the page to greet me as a reader and in return had a powerful influence on how I

view the world. By being held out to read about life's simple pleasures that Williams celebrated in his poetry and short stories, I too begin to see parts of a world I had never realized. This realization led to my own creativity, first in journal form and later in poetry.

As I entered English 108 and discovered the creative writing that would be expected, I then saw this as a continuing opportunity to define myself as not only a writer, but a person. Often in the lines I write in my journal, the image I put into poetry or the friendly stories that find their way into my short stories, I am recording my history. This history is what creative writing truly offers me as a writer. I will always write creatively because for me personally this is my greatest chance for personal discovery . . .

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: When I think of creative writing, it's mainly poems, sometime short stories but mainly poems, modern poetry, just being creative, getting your own ideas down on paper.

Question: So your initial thought of creative writing is genre specific, poetry and short stories?

Answer: Yes . . .

Question: When you looked at the syllabus for this class, you saw that 25 to 30 page story. Were you looking forward to it?

Answer: I was really looking forward to it because it, like in my personal life anyway, it seems like it's so hard to take the time and give that attention to creative writing whether you want to write a short story or whatever, and with the requirement, it's kind of like saying now I have to, now I will

set aside the time to do it. So I'm really looking forward to seeing what I can produce when I actually have the time, and take the time to write a 30 to 35 page story. I'm excited to see what I can turn out.

Question: When you thought of English 108, Composition for Teachers, when you saw the syllabus, did you think that it would help you learn to write and things like that?

Answer: I actually thought it was a unique approach. I really was surprised to see what the writing would entail. I never thought about the creative aspect, I guess, because so often I haven't been allowed to, so to speak, in my other classes. I think it will really help my writing . . .

*** "KH" had the most dynamic responses to the apprehension survey. He strongly agreed with all twelve positive indicators, and strongly disagreed with seven of eight negative indicators, and was in disagreement with the other . . .

"JS," Background:

***Currently, most of my free time has been spent writing. English 294, this summer, could have been called Writing 294. Various other courses that I have taken recently, have had a great deal of writing assigned. I have often had just enough time to complete my work as it comes due. If there were only more hours in the day!

Writing has been a pleasant pastime of mine for many years. My favorite courses in high school were English comp classes, and literature. If possible, I combined the knowledge of the two and created short stories. Last semester, I tried my hand at some poetry. Although not convinced of its quality, my poem entitled "Children, Four" won a class competition in World Literature. Since then, I have written a few other poems that are of a more private nature.

I guess I have been lucky here at WVU. The writing assignments that I have had allowed for innovation and creativity. My honors English 30 class asked for personal connections between my life and the works of Steinbeck, O'Neill and others. Some papers were allowed to take the format of a personal narrative. The instructor, Professor A., did an excellent job of allowing creativity to count equally as content.

My American Literature class also had room for a writer's ideas and not merely expressing regurgitation. Jennett's "The White Heron" could be examined, or a short story could be written using expressive, poetic language to tell a similar experience. My story, "Searching for the King of the Woods," won the Waiteman Barbe creative writing contest when it was entered here at WVU, Spring, 1996. Teachers expect a certain kind of writing from their assignments. Why not challenge the norm?

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: Do the good writers that you have known in school usually do some creative writing too?

Answer: Yes, more or less, pretty much. I know some good writers that do, and also, they seem to do a little bit extra and when they convey their ideas, they don't write them in conventional ways, they just, well, their papers look different.

Question: They learned how to write and therefore they can mix up their writing a lot?

Answer: Exactly.

Question: Where other people can't?

Answer: Exactly.

Question: Have you ever done any creative writing?

Answer: Yes, . . . I had an American Lit survey class and the instructor told us that we had a paper to write, that we had to analyze “The White Heron” and I got to a point where I was tired of writing strictly analysis papers, and I went up to the instructor after class and I asked if I could do a creative writing project and do it totally differently and write a similar type story but with my own experiences as background for it, and he said that that’s extremely hard to do, that he would advise me not to do it, but if I was set in my ways and I wanted to do it that he would allow me to, and I ended up doing that and then he really liked it. He said it was the best . . . college paper he had read . . . He told me to enter it into the English Waiteman Barbe creative writing contest and I entered it into that and won.

Question: Is that right?

Answer: I changed it a little bit . . . He gave me some ideas how I could be stronger here, could be stronger there, and then I entered that and won the writing award.

Question: That’s cool. I won that when I was undergrad too . . . That’s interesting, do you think it might have changed his perspective on using that kind of assignment?

Answer: Yes, he told me specifically after he got my paper that maybe he should have made it an option available to all his students and in the future he would think of those types of assignments because he was just so happy that my work came out so well . . . In another class I had, English 30 Honors, the instructor lets you do a lot of creative writing in there even though it wasn’t a creative writing class . . . Those were basically two of my favorite English classes, though I had some other ones I liked, the ones where I was allowed a little more opportunity to write creatively.

Question: How about in high school, did anybody do that in high school, use creative writing assignments to develop course content?

Answer: You mean in a course that wasn't a creative writing course, to allow me to be creative, to write creatively? No.

Question: Nothing in high school?

Answer: Nothing that I had . . . I heard the school was pretty limited on what they allowed.

Question: Did your school have a creative writing class per se?

Answer: Yes, they had creative writing, they had what they called advanced composition and that supposedly was also creative writing. I mean they had like creative writing and then they had the advance composition which was a higher level, the next level up, college preparatory type class.

Question: The creative writing wasn't necessarily college prep though?

Answer: No, the creative writing class wasn't necessarily college prep. It was just like, it was an elective. You could take it but then the advanced comp class was a college preparatory course also.

Question: How about, do you consider your personal writing, the kind of writing that you do in journals and stuff like that, to be creative or functional for the most part, especially now in college?

Answer: Mostly functional I would say. If I like the idea that we are supposed to write about in the journal, then I try to throw in a little bit of creative ideas, but . . .

Question: But usually they are assignment oriented, right?

Answer: Yes, usually it would be. I mean for the most part, mostly journals were all strictly functional to try and get my ideas down on paper and not necessarily worry about them.

Question: Do you keep a journal on your own anytime?

Answer: I have in the past, but recently, no.

Question: Not a chance, right?

Answer: No, it's too much, I mean no time. I've been so busy with everything I haven't had time to . . .

“JS,” Attitude:

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Writing about what ever subjects you want, how you want to write about it, poetry too, maybe something out of the normal too.

Question: Something out of the normal like?

Answer: Just like expository writing, or writing for most classes is just not creative. Creative writing is, a lot of times, more something that you would do in your own time out of the class.

Question: Good idea, your own time writing as opposed to forced writing . . . Have you been looking forward to writing the story that you're doing for this class, when you saw the syllabus were you anxious to write that story?

Answer: I personally was, yes, and I'm really looking forward to it. I think it's a great idea, and I think it sounds fun, I've got some ideas and I thought, man, this is a great thing, because I would like to someday write a novel and I thought that this can get me introduced to it. When I sat down and did it, had to start it and wrote like six pages, . . . I got to that sixth page and I found out that I hadn't even described what my character looked like, you know?

Question: It's not as easy as it looks, is it?

*** “JS” chose to express his thoughts about creative writing in story form): J.S. was a good writer-- not a great one. He frequently thought about all of the connections of creative writing: good story, character, plot. They were true to a point. The most important thing he

thought was that creative writing was as much about the creative expression of self as it was about the common limitations of the written word.

“Get your thoughts down,” his instructor explained. He knew this story could be no story, no creative story without ideas. As his mind wandered into far off times, he thought of an event in his past. Rebel Without a Cause. Holden Caulfield. His friends had often told him that his life would make a great story. The major question was, “How do I change the abstract ideas that are in my head into a free flowing story that would interest my audience?”

In an instant, it came to him. J.S. would write a story using events from his life. "Character development drives the story" she said, the wisdom burned forever in his mind. Without a believable real character, the story would fail, he thought.

Writing creatively had come easily to him. He had learned long ago that you don't merely say what happened. Events must be described through a creative use of the language. “He broke the beer bottle,” should be transformed to “The broken sounds of glass bent the light. It was as if a kaleidoscope of colors was projected on the wall. The beauty was as music to his senses. Time stopped.”

J.S. had the ideas, it was now a matter of form. Perfection was a must in his eyes. There was however, much to learn. As his studies progressed, he hoped to learn how to write a good story . . .

*** “JS” was also extremely dynamic in his responses to the writing apprehension survey. He agreed with two of the positive indicators, and strongly agreed with the other ten. He disagreed with two of the negative indicators, and strongly disagreed with the other six.

“HP,” Background:

***As backward as it seems, I do not write on my own as often as I did when I was younger. My last few years of high school and my first year of college, I wrote poetry enthusiastically. I have stacks of poems. I’m not saying they were great, but they came from within. I also would write short stories or short, comical essays to fill up my time. Since becoming more directly involved in my major, there has been more writing required of me for my classes leaving less time to write on my own. However, some of the papers I have written for my classes I have enjoyed writing immensely, and consider the work to be more than an assignment.

Throughout my schooling I have been asked to do many different types of writing. Poetry and short essays seem to be the most frequently required works. I have, however, written autobiographical and biographical pieces. These don’t hold my attention long because there is no room to work -- just facts. There have also been many informative reports written. In fifth grade we were required to write two fifty-page state reports (reports about the states). Also, my seventh grade literature class focused mainly along creative writing . . .

***The person who has influenced me the most in my writing was my college English 1 TA, Kim M. My high school English classes tended to focus on literature. Having written very little in high school other than book reports and research papers, I was unaccustomed to creative writing and didn’t know quite how to approach it.

Although conferences with students are a mandatory part of English 1, my conferences tended to go beyond the standard meeting. Our scheduled 15-20 minute conferences often lasted a minimum of 30 minutes. She helped me become comfortable with writing and helped to develop and define my personal writing style . . .

It was easy to confide my writing problems to her because she was more of a peer than a professor. She gave constructive criticisms when needed but was always praising the good parts of our stories rather than completely focusing on the bad. This was very important to me as a novice writer because I wasn't scared to write fearing I would be completely cut down as some of my friends experienced with their TA . . .

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: When you think back on the good writers that you have known in high school and stuff like that, do they usually do some creative writing too?

Answer: Usually. I've read friends' works, even from my friends here that have done papers and stories, and they're more creative than factual autobiography based, which is what my creative writing tends to be. I have to take my own experiences, where they can just let it all out.

Question: Personal narrative is like creative writing to a certain extent, isn't it?

Answer: Right, that's kind of what my paper is. I mean it's not directly from my life but I've had friends that will sometime write off the top of their heads and do excellent, wonderful writing and I don't know how they do it.

Question: I guess that's part of this question: You've never done any kind of creative writing other than when you've been asked to?

Answer: No, not totally fiction-made-up. I have written little poems when I was in junior high you know, sappy things, but . . .

Question: Related to love experiences, no doubt

Answer: Right.

Question: That's the way it usually works . . . How about your teachers in the past? Have any of them used creative writing type of assignments in their regular classroom to promote content knowledge?

Answer: Not really. Most of my English classes in the past focused more on literature than writing and when I was in junior high we all had to enter a creative writing contest and I had an honorable mention one year.

Question: So see, you did some!

Answer: It was stupid stuff.

Question: Who made you enter that contest?

Answer: It was my literature teacher Mrs. G., but then when we had to do it again, it was more of a personal narrative and that was when I got honorable mention.

Question: So you did some creative writing and this teacher encouraged you to do it, but she didn't do it in the classroom, she actually didn't use this kind of assignment?

Answer: No.

Question: They were all outside the classroom?

Answer: Or if not, I just blocked it out.

Question: Blocked it out?

Answer: Mental block.

Question: Did your high school have any creative writing classes?

Answer: Yes, they did, but I was in the honors program so it was more deep literature and papers in reference to the literature that we were reading rather than a creative writing course.

Question: So who took the creative writing classes? . . . I mean you probably knew some of the people that were in there, it was an elective but it wasn't for the AP students?

Answer: There were three different English classes you could take, you could take the Honors English, College Prep English, or the Basic English, which was English 12 which was creative writing mixed with grammar stuff.

Question: Is that right?

Answer: It was mostly like vo-tech students that just needed one more English credit.

Question: Absolutely amazing. So in other words the people on the lower end of the spectrum were the ones who were taking the creative writing?

Answer: Right.

Question: That's very interesting. Do you do journals?

Answer: No.

Question: You have never done any? How about personal writing, like letters and anything that you do personally, do you consider them creative or are they more functional?

Answer: Well, there can be creative aspects to my writing, like when for example in English 1 you have to write a lot of different essays and in a few of them she gave us the topic, but it was very wide and we could like tell a place that has personal significance to us and you could kind of get creative with that. I mean it's still nonfiction, but it doesn't always have to be. My writing is not always functional, I'll throw stuff in just to make them more interesting, so I guess you could say that's creative.

Question: So you do make a little distinction in the tasks, the school writing and things like that, that some of it can be creative, so you are amending your definition of creative writing a little bit?

Answer: Yes, but it's easier taking a fact based thing and making it creative than making a totally made up thing . . .

Question: I guess that's true, but I hope you know that most creative writing is not like that, most writers don't start like that . . .

Answer: You have to take some kind of experiences you've had in order to know anything about it and write about it.

Question: And then expand on it. Some people are just more accurate than others I guess?

Answer: Yes!

“HP,” Attitude:

***Creative Writing. When I hear those two words I cringe. When I found out I had to take a creative writing course, I was ready to change my major. What does creative writing mean to me? Work. Before I began this class I'd very rarely written anything creative. Research papers, book responses, brief essays, no problem. When it comes to creative writing, I stink . . .

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: So tell me, when you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Nothing, I'm not a creative writer. I have a problem with fiction and poetry. I mean literature is my thing, but as far as creative writing goes, I know there's going to be a lot of work involved, but somehow just coming up with an idea off the top of my head about a story doesn't even appeal to me.

Question: But you mentioned that story as automatically what you think of, so you are sort of genre specific with the short stories and maybe poetry and stuff like that as meaning creative writing to you?

Answer: Yes . . .

Question: When you get a syllabus for a course and look at the assignments and you see a course with a lot of writing in it, do you look forward to it?

Answer: I don't look forward to it but I don't usually want to leave the class. When I first came to this one I was wanting to drop it when I saw the 25 to 30 page paper that was due, but we are working on it throughout the class, so it's not as hard as I expected . . .

***After this class began I started seeing creative writing in a different light. It can be based on fact, you don't have to pull the story or poem or whatever completely out of the air, you can use your experiences and feelings and incorporate them into writing.

Creative writing can be anything. It's the silly little song you make up on your way to class, or to help you remember something. Creative writing is the cheesy poem you made for the Valentine you gave your mom when you were little. Anything that flows out of your pen or pencil when you least expect it is creative writing . . .

I have learned not to fear writing, and not to be ashamed of my own writing, after all, you have to start somewhere and the best place to start is at the beginning. By using creative writing, you learn how to express yourself. You can work things out by placing your problems onto your character's shoulders and guiding them through it. They are easier to work out when you look at it in the third person.

Creative writing is an outlet which at 21 I am just now discovering. It can bring you resolution, happiness, and in some cases, sadness, but most of all creative writing brings you the freedom of expressing yourself however you want, whether it be poetry, essay, short story, or a song . . .

***Writing is one of the most invaluable activities you learn how to do. Because of the many different ways to use writing, there are many reasons why I write. The most basic reason is for communication and although it may not be creative, it gives the practice and the background for learning how to express your thoughts and words on paper. Communication is a basic human need and writing is the basis to that.

Another reason I write is to express myself. Whether I plan to allow people to see my work or if I decide to keep it to myself, I write to let my emotions out. Seeing it on paper, in black and white, often clarifies how I feel. It makes things easier to sort out. I also write when it is required, of course, but those writings tend to seem forced and don't flow as well as spontaneous writings do . . .

***The writing apprehension survey showed that “HP” agreed with seven positive indicators, was uncertain of two, and disagreed with three. She also disagreed with four negative indicators, was uncertain of one, and agreed with three .

“LL,” Background:

***I don't remember when I began writing. I know somewhere around second to third grade I started keeping a diary, and also I started writing stories around the fifth or sixth grade. I have since been involved with my school newspaper both as a reporter and editor until I reached the University.

My writings as a college student include in-class journal writings in reaction to stories read, critical analysis papers, research papers, short stories for a creative writing class, and my own personal journal writings.

This past summer I interned for my congressman where I wrote quite frequently. I prepared memos on current and pending legislation, answered letters to constituents, and wrote a speech for the congressman that is in the Congressional Records Extension of Remarks.

I write to clear my head, keep in contact with friends and family, to organize my day, plan my goals. I write in the journal both creatively and to record daily occurrences. I write lists of things to do daily. I use e-mail daily to keep up with my family and friends.

My future plans rely heavily on my writing skills. I plan to pursue a career as a legislative correspondent or legislative assistant on Capitol Hill as well as teaching. I am looking forward to improving my skills in this class . . .

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Did the good writers that you have known in school usually do some creative writing too?

Answer: Yes they did.

Question: How about yourself? I know that you have had a creative writing class last semester.

Answer: Yes, I think that's what helped me to be a good writer even in the research sense where it's strictly the facts, where you kind of play around with words in creative ways and help yourself do your other work.

Question: Did you have any creative writing classes in high school?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Your high school had a specific creative writing class, right? What kind of students were in that class? Was it just purely an elective or was it for college prep or what?

Answer: Mostly honors AP college prep students who were better off in the English/history type of classes instead of the science/math students.

Question: Did they do strictly creative assignments or were there specific assignments and you had to work around them?

Answer: Probably half and half.

Question: Okay, did any of your teachers in high school use creative kinds of assignments to promote learning in the regular course environment?

Answer: Yes, we had English teachers who would let us do any type of presentation from videotaping to writing your own type of poem or whatever, as long as it would describe your topic.

Question: Is that right? What school did you go to?

Answer: T.O.H. School, it's in New Jersey . . .

Question: Did they do it in any other classes besides English?

Answer: I had it in another class, it was a humanities class which was very creative because students were sometimes just given the topic and then you could do whatever you wanted to do with it.

Question: Is that right? That's amazing, and this was mostly college prep that did this right? They never structured anything like that for lower levels, the people who weren't going to college?

Answer: No.

Question: Do you consider your own personal writing to be more creative or more functional? Like do you keep a journal for instance?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Was it creative in nature or is it mostly functional, or a combination?

Answer: Yes, a combination of what I feel that day when I'm writing. I have a journal that would be both half and half or whatever and also other things that I have been writing about.

Question: Did they do journals in high school and what were they, mostly functional according to assignment, or creative in nature?

Answer: Creative in a way that would lead it to what we were studying.

Question: Like literature responses and things like that?

Answer: Yes, like you didn't have to answer a certain way that would be graded necessarily, it could be totally heavy like the viewpoint of the author or something but it was not 100 percent your own.

Question: Was it essentially for a grade, or was it just to have a check mark put on it?

Answer: Yes, just a check, no ABC's .

“LL,” Attitude:

***Creative writing to me is being able to express my thoughts on paper, sometimes for others to read, sometimes not. It is a way to work out problems, and get in touch with my feelings. Sometimes it becomes an opportunity to relive an event or time in my life. Other times it is a place to let my imagination run wild. Always it is an accomplishment . . .

I have learned to think of writing as a process. This has been extremely helpful for my work. Previously when I would be daydreaming about a change to my story, I would ignore it/organize it/etc. Now I see myself concentrating/scribbling on the sides of my class notes etc., the ideas I am coming up with.

I have also started to think of ways to make better transitions by observing how other writers do it, not only through YA novels but in my work I read for other literature classes . . .

****(From the Initial Interview):* Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Being able to address my thoughts and make a sentence complete, and entertain other people.

Question: Okay, so you think of the way you write, the method of writing, rather than specific genres?

Answer: Yes.

Question: When you saw the syllabus for this class and you saw that 25 page paper on there, the creative writing paper, were you looking forward to it?

Answer: Yes.

Question: So it didn't bother you at all to write a 25 page creative story?

Answer: No, I was very happy I got to do it.

Question: As opposed to traditional kinds of essays which you probably would have had to write had I taught this class before?

Answer: Yes, because I actually had this class last spring and I got the syllabus, and I dropped it the first week because it was way too much work and it was not creative whatsoever in any way, so I'm glad I took it this semester.

***The writing apprehension survey showed that "LL" strongly agreed with one positive indicator, agreed with seven, disagreed with one, and was uncertain of three. She was also uncertain of one negative indicator, disagreed with five, and strongly disagreed with two.

“AS,” Background:

***I guess I have been writing for a very long time, relatively. I learned to read early and was very eager to learn to write. Throughout grade school we mostly wrote as a means to another academic end, but in the seventh and eighth grades we started doing some heavy creative writing. In the eighth, we wrote poetry.

In high school, I was lucky to have teachers who thought creative writing was important. I started to get into poetry in high school mainly due to my sophomore English teacher and even my French and German teachers focused heavily on writing and poetry, pushing us even though our knowledge of the languages were limited. In college, too, I have been lucky because of the wonderful teachers I have had . . . A story which I am proud of was written in an English class here. Also, my French classes have given me great opportunities to express myself in writing.

Unfortunately, being a full-time student and working human being doesn't leave much time for outside writing. So, I use my classroom writing time very carefully and thankfully. It is my greatest resource to be in a classroom where the requirements are to write, because in a way I kill two birds with one stone. I get to fulfill my credits as a student, and practice for myself and my writing. When I do get a chance to write out of class, I will write anything, letters and poems mostly, but I even enjoy making up grocery lists. I like to write checks, sentences, sometimes just words I think are really neat, and I have 5000 pens to write with. I am mostly found, though, writing what I call mini-poems or little organized thoughts that may someday turn into something else, some wonderful story. That story which I am proud of, started from one word that created an image in my head . . .

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: The good writers that you've known in school, do they usually do some creative writing too?

Answer: I don't know good writers.

Question: You don't know any good writers?

Answer: I don't, because it's been my experience that people don't like to share what they write, people don't even want to talk to each other. I mean, in my experience . . . I find it very rare to find people that I can have very good intellectual conversations with, and almost totally extinct to find people who will share those writings.

Question: Even in high school? (Affirmative nod). Have you ever done any creative writing?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you? What kind?

Answer: Mostly poems, but I like short, short fiction. I really like that.

Question: Sudden Fiction?

Answer: I really like that, just sort of like vignette types of things, and I really like that because it leaves a lot up to the reader, so it means something really significant and specific to meet, but I think it is so much more open to anybody who might be reading it. And you know a lot of people don't like it, because I had a fiction class that we read some stuff in and it was a lot like the stuff that I write when on my own and don't share it, and a lot of people are like it doesn't do anything for them, but to me, I think it just opens up so many more possibilities, and that's the kind of stuff that we did more on.

Question: This creative writing that you did, was it in your school, in a school class, or did you do it here, or was it just on your own?

Answer: On my own mostly . . . But after I started, I got really excited, like when I started to be able to bring stuff that I had written into school and use it in classes and stuff in high school, but I can distinctly remember when I wrote my very first poem and I still have it.

Question: It was in high school?

Answer: It was the beginning of high school, probably like around my freshman year in high school.

Question: I wouldn't say what possessed you necessarily, but why did you suddenly decide to write a poem?

Answer: I was in bed one night and I was like, it was summer and my window was open and I was just listening to everything that was outside and I was up later than everybody else in my family so I was alone in my room and I always wanted to. I'd always been fascinated with people, with writers, like the writing part or just people who go through the process, and I guess I wanted to find out if I could do that too. I was just curious as to what would come out because I always loved to read and I knew that usually that was something that went together, reading and writing, and so I got kind of an idea, and it was one of those like, I was getting over, you know, being in love with a guy, and he was far away and it was like, and he was from Australia and I was really into that [love]. Like things that were so foreign to me, and this was something that's really foreign to me, became a fascination, I think. I wanted-- it was something that other people did and were good at, and I wanted to jump in and try it.

Question: It just goes with being in love-- poetry and stuff like that?

Answer: But I think mostly it's just, I think I just wanted to see if I could do it.

Question: Did you share it with anybody, or did you keep it all to yourself?

Answer: Um . . .

Question: Did you send it to him?

Answer: No.

Question: No?

Answer: I sent one thing to him but I kept it to myself for a long time and finally I got into a relationship with a guy that lasted a really long time and I shared stuff with him, but he was the only person.

Question: Secret poetry?

Answer: Some, but some of the stuff, like some that I was more sure of, I would like use in classes and stuff, but most things I kept to myself.

Question: Before you came to college did you have creative writing classes?

Answer: We didn't have creative writing classes but my sophomore English was American literature and the teacher was really into creative writing. We wrote poetry, we wrote a lot, but we didn't have creative writing per se, just certain days we would devote to writing and that was probably my first real experience; and we had written essays before, but this was the first time really where she would sit down and we would all have to just sit there and she would say you're just going to write now, and maybe sometimes she would give us something to guide us, like an overall general theme or something, but mostly it would be this is for you and just do it.

Question: And this was just right after you wrote your own poem, a poem of your own?

Answer: Yes, and I think that kind of motivated me more.

Question: You would be surprised how many people say that one teacher got them into writing.

Answer: It was weird too, but I didn't really like her otherwise as a teacher. I baby-sat for her so I liked her as a person, I knew her, but I wished so much that she would spend more time on writing because the rest of her class was so boring because all she would do was extensive backgrounds on the authors, and she would just lecture and then we would get into the story, you know, and it was so awful, and she had this just posed look, she just looked like a bird. I mean, I'll never forget this, she kind of looked like a bird, she was one of the Spanish teachers too, and when she spoke Spanish it was with this real thick accent, and we were doing some of the Explorer essays and stuff, the New World and everything, and this one time, I'll never forget, she stands out there and says something exactly like a bird, and we were just laughing, and she's going on and on about it and we just wanted to get into reading the stuff. We didn't want to sit there and listen to her. I mean, I know sometimes the biographical information is really relevant and important to know, but I can remember sitting there wishing to God we could just do writing every day or actually read the stories and not think of all this crap.

Question: I assumed that sort of influence, or that sort of thing, is why you do your writing?

Answer: Definitely.

Question: Did you do journal writing in high school?

Answer: I did some journal writing for myself like in the eighth grade. I'm much too disorganized, I think, to do journal writing.

Question: A lot of people use it to be organized.

Answer: I should try, I guess, because even when I'm writing for myself, like creatively or whatever, sometimes it will just be like a word or a line, something I just can't, you know, get, it's just there, and I think it's pretty good, or I like it or something, and then I'll leave it, you know? I

can never sit down and write. Like I have such a hard time writing journals for this class, and I have also the 124 class and we have to write journals for that, and then I have another I have to write down too. I have such a hard time because I feel like I'm just repeating myself.

Question: So most of your journals are functional instead of creative?

Answer: Yes, for me creativity is to just get whatever I want out, but it's usually, it's never on the lines. I have a hard time writing on lined paper. Like my notes in class are always over the lines but never in between the lines and stuff.

"AS," *Attitude:*

***I write because to me, it is an extension of myself, my thoughts, my feelings, and my actions. It is as vital to me as breathing, eating, sleeping. It is a part of my life every minute of every day, an even while I sleep, because to me, the thoughts present in my mind are nothing more than dialogues, monologues, poems, and stories that have yet to be written down. Most will never be written down, yet they remain as fodder for other thoughts, possible writings long after they have faded. Lastly, I write, if for no other reason, to remind myself that I can . . .

***Creative writing has always been very personal for me. I had problems sharing it with others, until I came to college and was forced to participate in classes where peer revision workshops and the like were used to great extent. Little by little, I became more comfortable sharing my work with others until finally I realized that I actually needed to have other's input in order to really portray my feelings and ideas effectively. Creative writing, at that point, had moved from being something I did just for myself towards becoming a means of exposing and sharing myself with others-- an audience.

The one thing I have felt is missing from this class is the lack of peer response to our writing, even in its working stages. As hard as it is sometimes, I really feel that everyone benefits from both criticizing and suggesting others' work and having one's own work criticized. I feel that creative writing, in order to be something done for an audience is a process which needs to be shared and discussed by an audience who can identify confusion that might be forming in the writing . . .

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: When you think of creative writing, what comes to mind?

Answer: Short stories, poetry, stuff that you have reactions to, like things that you read or think or anything, any kind of experience you're writing for yourself.

Question: So your very first thought was genre specific, right? You thought of poetry and short stories and stuff like that as creative writing?

Answer: Yes.

Question: When you looked at the syllabus for this English 108 class, which is a composition class, you saw it was a 25 to 30 page creative paper. Were you looking forward to it?

Answer: No.

Question: Why?

Answer: I'm having problems making things long. Like I said, I like to write short things. Then I had a class where we had to write a 15 page book and I just remember how hard it was and how much emotionally it took out of me, you know? And I have a problem, I have like a real problem when I write something that I think is really good, and then somebody, like my teacher, was like, I think you need to do something better here, and I was OH NO, NO, I want to be done with it, and

so then I would take it home and work on it again. And I would bring it back, and then she would be like, I think you should work on this and I was just, OH NO! But then after I did it, she was right and this is really better, after I went back and worked on it some more, but I think just that I wasn't looking forward to doing it was the thing. I'm excited about it now that I started my story, but I think that just knowing how enormously difficult it was going to be and how time-consuming, that I thought-- here we go again!

Question: Well, it will work out. You're doing OK with it now?

Answer: I don't know, I have a problem always trying to make sure my connections are all there in the story, and I'm not leaving huge gaps in time and jumping around, so it's a lot more difficult for me to write long things then short ones.

Question: That's supposed to be some of the stuff were going to work out this semester, revision and all that stuff.

Answer: But I feel like I'm already at the point where I'm ready to have some outside comments.

Question: Are you? Good.

Answer: Suggestions, because at first, you know, I was like (apprehensive) . . .

*** "AS" was fairly decisive on the writing apprehension survey. She was uncertain of only two positive indicators, agreed with four, and strongly agreed with the other six. She disagreed with three negative indicators and strongly disagreed with the other five.

"EO," Background:

***My earliest poems were Dr. Suess-esque stuff, funny stuff. At about age five . . . I would dictate stories and poems to my mom, [they were] definitely influenced by Dr. Suess. This started me writing poems from the beginning. After this no other teacher could compare to this

early influence and I cannot recall any teacher influencing my writing in any way at all like my parents. My mother developed my voice and my father constantly structured my grammar . . . I did some Big Bad Baby poetry . . . It was a way for me to receive praise. It was a simple project, like a drawing for a good artist. I wrote a book for kids in middle school . . . I get a much greater satisfaction out of my ability to communicate when I write . . . A desire to impress, or at least not look bad. In high school it was mostly poetry, and notes to my girlfriends . . . it was a way to pass the time in high school . . . I was always looking for a reaction: vulgarity, humor, sex, politics, religion . . . in the [high school] classroom I did some creative stuff, a poem for one class, an essay in another that everyone liked, a creative “Catcher in the Rye” book report. The rest was basically regurgitation of memorized stuff. I was not asked to think until college . . .

***As my body became guided by the sudden onset of teenage hormonal imbalance, writing took on a whole new meaning. Note writing was a commonplace messenger of love and my life gave me an unfair advantage in this area. I was certainly disadvantaged in the direct approach, but nonverbal communication is basically nonstop in the high school classroom. In all of my teenage loves, creative writing was key in elevating and advancing my relationships. During the process, I came to realize that I am my most important audience. If I was satisfied or entertained with the content, the audience was also. So when this was applied scholastically, it equaled academic success. I generally write to satisfy myself instead of a grading system. So once again writing equaled praise, self-esteem, and personality development.

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: Did the good writers that you knew in high school and/or college do some creative writing too?

Answer: I don't know if they did things on their own creatively, but people who wrote well also excelled in creative writing. They went together.

Question: Have you ever done any?

Answer: Yes. I started early on. My mother encouraged me. She would just basically take dictation, starting off when I was very young.

Question: Take dictation?

Answer: Yes. To encourage me to, like, start out I guess. I was learning about writing or whatever.

Question: What age was this?

Answer: At about five.

Question: So you would say things and she would write them down?

Answer: Yes, mostly like poetry, and word play . . . Little written stories and stuff, she still has some of them. Yes, because I remember the dates on those, it was 1977, so I was five years old.

Question: She wasn't a teacher?

Answer: No.

Question: She just did that? Very unique I think. I can't remember anybody else ever telling me that their mother did that for them. Did you do some on your own after that?

Answer: Yes, that kind of got me going. It was mostly poetry throughout and that kind of changed in the past couple of years to writing songs, but that was more like improvisational songwriting. I have a friend who plays the guitar and I like caught different ideas as he was coming up with things on the guitar. I wrote some down.

Question: Did the teachers at your school, particularly the high school level, use creative kinds of assignments to explore the regular course work content or was it just traditional kinds of models?

Answer: Yes, they would use creative writing.

Question: Where did you go to school?

Answer: In the eastern panhandle.

Question: There were teachers there that gave creative assignments?

Answer: Yes, . . . also, they had a gifted program there that was for the top 30 students. They had gifted social studies and they encouraged us to use creative writing in that. Basically, my experience with that was that they would have some kind of study guide, a picture, or a song, whatever, and then they would, a lot of times that's how we started off class. It would be the stimulus and then we would have journal responses and we could take it where ever we wanted to, and then I remember I didn't take the gifted English classes, but I remember they did a lot of creative stuff. I think that was creative stuff for everybody . . .

Question: They had a specific creative writing class in your school?

Answer: No.

Question: How about college? Have you had any creative writing classes in college?

Answer: Yes, it was in English 114, short story writing.

Question: You enjoyed the class?

Answer: Yes.

Question: When you do personal writing do you think it's more functional or do you do creative kinds of writing too? Do you keep a journal?

Answer: No, I have been trying to write and that was mostly encouraged by this class. You can't just keep saying "I've got to write" all the time if you want to write well. And usually what I write is just, I mean, you have seen some other things I wrote in class, just a jumble. It's just you know,

whatever comes out. If I'm reading one of the novels or something like that, I have little chunks that I can put into the works later on usually, and sometimes it's just a couple of poems, maybe a description of an event . . . or a little piece of dialogue, or something that I remember is funny; but my personal writing is very choppy, I haven't really assimilated it yet.

“EO,” Attitude:

***Creative writing has always been a way for me to extend myself in the world. I was a very shy person for much of my life. I was afraid to speak unless I was very sure of my surroundings. Early on, (near five), my mother began taking dictation of stories and poems that I would create. I would love the praise and attention that people gave to my writing. I could be proud of it, but hide from it when I had to. I was a cute and precocious kid, but so were many others. Creative writing established my identity and individuality. This gave me an outlet that would become very important in my teenage years.

Creative writing has always been a very positive experience for me. The most recent application has been “bibliotherapy.” As I recall certain events or try to put my life experiences in words, I gain insight into why I am what I am. One of the best parts of this is a certain psychic healing process. Many of the things that I felt were too painful or embarrassing to talk about can be worked out in writing . . .

****(From the Initial Interview):* Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to your mind?

Answer: In my high school context?

Question: Just creative writing, what comes to mind?

Answer: Sit down and do pretty much whatever you want.

Question: Write anyway you want to? So it's the writing style. You didn't think of the poetry or short stories, didn't think of genres first, you thought of how you're doing the writing?

Answer: Right .

Question: When you saw the syllabus for this class and saw the 25 page short story on there, what were your thoughts?

Answer: I was a little bit surprised, that was the first time I had ever seen that on any syllabus so I was thinking, wow, at first but . . . I was definitely surprised.

Question: Were you looking forward to it?

Answer: Not!

Question: How about the course title, Composition for English Teachers? Did you think that was an appropriate assignment to help you learn composition, or how to teach composition?

Answer: I think that it's fair, like the premise of the class is to have this experience. Like what we are going to have our kids experience, so I think it's good in that aspect.

***The writing apprehension survey showed that "EO" was uncertain of one positive indicator, agreed with nine, and strongly agreed with one, "I like seeing my thoughts on paper." He also was uncertain of one negative indicator, disagreed with four, and strongly disagreed with three.

"KS," Background:

***Primarily, at this [] in my life, I write to satisfy the requirements of my classes. Some of these writings are creative, but mostly they are thesis-based responses to works of literature, magazine articles, etc. When I was younger and had more time to myself, I wrote almost every day -- poetry mostly, but some short stories. I write to express myself, either my emotions,

feelings, or my opinion. I really do not like essay writing, which is what I've been doing since I started college four years ago. When I was younger, I dreamed of being a famous poetry or fiction writer. However, that dream has since faded due to (1) having no time, (2) how many poets/writers make it out there?, and (3) not feeling like I had what it takes to be a good or successful writer.

The earliest writing experience that I can remember was when I was in the third grade. Every week we received a list of vocabulary words. With this, we were to write a story using the words correctly. It was surely creative. I can remember how I hated to do it. But by the fourth grade, I was writing small poems. I used to take my newly written works to my teacher so that he could read them. At first he did just that, but soon he started to critique them. I hated "constructive criticism" and immediately stopped showing my poems to him.

From the fifth grade through eighth grade all writing was in book report form. There was not much creative writing, basically just spinning out facts. In the ninth grade we wrote a lot of creative works. I don't remember doing anything well. We did poetry, short stories, and rewriting Romeo and Juliet for the present day. [Also] and ninth grade, everyone wrote short stories to submit to a writing contest. I came very close to being published.

In college it was, and is, mostly researched book report papers. My English classes had some creative writing, but even then it was restricted by rules and regulations, not totally free . . .

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Did the good writers that you knew in high school and in college usually dabble in creative writing too?

Answer: . . . In my high school we wrote maybe four main papers a year and they all were like essay based or on a novel we had read, and in college most of the papers I've written are like book report type or essay, none that go "why don't you sit down and write a story," you know?

Question: And the regular classroom when they were discussing course content or something like that, did they give you sort of any kind of alternative creative assignments or anything like that, did you do any of that or was it all just sort of straightforward and out of the text?

Answer: Nothing creative.

Question: Was there a creative writing class in your school, and where was your school by the way?

Answer: It was in Pennsylvania around the Harrisburg area, but no I don't remember a creative writing class.

Question: No elective in creative writing or anything like that?

Answer: No.

Question: When you do personal writing, do you do journals on your own?

Answer: No.

Question: When you do personal writing like letters and notations of any kind, are they mostly functional or are they creative to a degree?

Answer: Mostly functional.

“KS,” Attitude:

***To me, creative writing is a way to express my feelings, my thoughts and my beliefs. It is also a way to work/think through any problem that I might have. When I was in elementary school I loved to write. In high school I considered myself like . . . loved writing down my expressions/reflections on paper. But through my years of college I got so far away from our

writing/expressions that I viewed creative writing as a pain. It was time consuming and I didn't have time to spare. And on top of that it was introspective. I had to sort through everything in my mind that I had just put up there to store, some of that I really never wanted to think about again.

When I found out that we had to write a 30p. short story in this class, I was shocked and almost mad. Where would I find time to do this? What would I write about? It took a lot just to get started, but soon it started pouring out. That's not to say that it's easy . . . I am sorting today through my mind for memory to use in my story and for the first time in years I may be confronting them. It's hard and painful but I am resolving those memories and now I can use them.

I'm still scared, no, more like worried or apprehensive about creative writing, but hey, I haven't done this for five years. I expect it to be hard, but it'll be worth it in the end.

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to your mind?

Answer: I automatically leap to poetry. I don't know why, short stories and stuff are creative too, but I like poetry a lot and I used to write poetry in high school. I don't have time now but I wrote a lot in high school.

Question: So you think of it as genre specific, poetry, as opposed to specific kinds of mental processes right?

Answer: Right.

Question: When you saw the course syllabus for this class and saw that there was a 25 to 30 page creative paper, what went through your mind?

Answer: I thought my God how am I going to do this? I was very negative to the idea to say the least.

Question: Do you think it applied to the course, Composition for Teachers, at all?

Answer: When I came into this course I was thinking of like essay type things or . . .

Question: How to write a persuasive paper rather than a narrative paper?

Answer: Something like that, or even that we might get into shorter writing, maybe a 5p. short story or a couple of problems or even 10 pages of a short story. But 30 pages? I mean to me that just seems so long, so hard to come up with . . .

***This class will be the most creative writing I've done throughout my entire life probably. I'm looking forward to it but at the same time, I'm dreading it . . .

***In the writing apprehension survey, "KS" was all over the scale with the negative indicators. She strongly agreed with one, agreed with one, was uncertain of one, disagreed with three, and strongly disagreed with two. She was also uncertain of six positive indicators, agreed with five others, and strongly agreed with "It is easy for me to write good compositions."

"CS," Background:

***I never had a sound purpose to write. I was simply an imaginative child who always had images rolling around in my head, and in order to take a physical grasp on my imagination, I began to put things down on paper. Throughout grade school I entered local contests for writing and won. By the time I was in sixth grade, I was at an eighth grade reading level. Because of my small local accolades, I became confident in my writing, possibly too confident.

When I hit my years of secondary schooling, I was a typical student in typical classes where I was told what to write about. This is where personal conflict began. I was used to being allowed

to write what I wanted. Usually I wrote short stories with a lot of symbolism. However all of a sudden, I had to write poetry, essays, and I had to follow structure. I still did well although I felt personally limited.

In high school I hooked into the debate scene and started constructing argumentative papers. I was still doing well and was even chosen to be editor of the school paper, still won a few writing contests, but all of a sudden I realized I wasn't the best. I never passed the county levels of writing contests, I didn't always receive as many "good job" or "great paper" as other students. I was a writer learning that I needed to start conforming my writing styles.

English 1 in college was the ringer: theses, outlines, data, and so on -- what ever happened to writing for fun? I sometimes feel my writing has gone in a downward spiral since my heydays of being recognized at my small local schools as "that local girl that can write."

The technicality of writing style serves as a big block in the middle of my pathway to creativity. I am much better at personal expression and creative writing as opposed to the writing processes of today's classrooms. I will admit, I have a lot to learn.

***The effectiveness of my favorite teacher didn't come from what she taught, but how she taught it. It wasn't the English language it was a type of crossword. It wasn't a computer it was a play station. It wasn't reading in front of the class, it was performing an interpretive skit with your friends. It wasn't a lot of things, but it was learning, and it was fun. She presided over all that with authority but encouragement.

Sometimes pounding it into a student's head about what they should write and how they should write it isn't always right. Sometimes snubbing a student and making them feel inferior isn't alright. Establishing a stimulating classroom with lots of creativity and maintaining its

delicate learning balance is the way. My teacher wanted creative student writers who felt good about their writing, and she achieved that in a creative way.

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: Do the good writers that you have known in school usually do some creative writing too?

Answer: Yes, I think everybody in the secondary classroom prefers to be told what they have to write just because they get scared when they think of having to write a paper, because a lot of people unfortunately thought, “but I can’t write, I don’t know anything about writing,” and so I think for people like that, they are glad when teachers give them a topic and make them follow a structure, but then there is definitely the other side of it where people like to be creative and will prefer that over anything else. Once again, going back to the whole self expression and everything, I would say the people that I’ve known through high school and college that had an honest enjoyment in writing like to do it more for themselves than for class assignments where they had to follow specific rules and everything.

Question: Did you ever do any creative writing?

Answer: Yes, I think I’ve done creative writing since I was really little.

Question: Is that right?

Answer: Yes, I’m a firm believer in creative writing, but I don’t know how I’m going to be as a teacher . . .

Question: How about your school, did they have creative writing classes?

Answer: No they did not.

Question: Did they have any advanced composition or anything like that?

Answer: Our school . . . was split up into three levels -- advanced, and then just kind of general classes, and then you had your basic level class which were lower level classes, and when you became a senior, if you wanted to, you could take what they called AP English, which was kind of geared towards college . . .

Question: Did the classes have a lot of writing in them?

Answer: It depended on the teacher. Mine did because I always took advanced courses, and there were a lot of essay questions on tests, there were a lot of papers, there were project papers, different ways of incorporating writing.

Question: Did the teachers use creative writing or give creative kinds of writing assignments to focus learning?

Answer: In college not really. But in high school, a little bit, depending on what the assignment was. For instance, there were times that we would study Shakespeare or something, and we would be given the assignment to come up with your own type of Shakespearean play and I mean it was really tough . . . Stuff like that is the kind of stuff I enjoyed in high school . . . But I had a really tough time with the transition between high school and college as far as writing matters, because when I got to college with English 1 and English 2 it was structure, structure, structure and I actually had a professor one time tell the classroom that there was no creativity allowed.

Question: Is that right?

Answer: Yes, and that just kind of completely threw me off.

Question: This was an English class?

Answer: Yes . . . [the instructor] was a grad student on her way, because she was young . . .

Question: Probably never had any creative writing classes?

Answer: So I kind of took exception with her because . . . I am a person who believes . . . very strongly in allowing a lot of room for expression and imagination because I'm really big on imagination and personal ideas.

Question: So this particular instructor is one who would give you the expository paper and give you specific guidelines, or just to do the five paragraph essay?

Answer: And if I didn't, I mean, she allowed a little bit of room for expression, but it was very limited, and I have real problems with that because I would get papers back and I would have slashes through all this stuff I thought was good, and I had a hard time thinking okay, she's right because she's the teacher . . . I don't see why I'm getting this stuff of mine slashed because this is just personal or whatever the case happened to be.

Question: So her ideas were geared toward a certain audience and maybe she thought you weren't geared toward that same objective. Is that pretty much it?

Answer: Yes, Yes, just a little bit of slashing on the way of thinking and structuring.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing, the journals and maybe letters and things like that, to be more creative or more functional?

Answer: Well actually I don't keep journals very well . . . journals and such to me become more of a task like busy work . . .

Question: Have you been required to write a lot of journals all the way through school which makes you think of them as functional to you, as school generated material?

Answer: Yes . . . I find them very tedious. I mean, I think they are important for a lot of people and I'll probably be the type of teacher that incorporates journals, maybe not all the time, but at some point, because I see their importance, because for a lot of people it's hard to sit down and do

a paper and maybe just focus all at once, and if they have journals they can go back and refer to ideas and stuff . . . But journals to me are just busy work . . . I don't keep a diary or anything like that, but every once in a while, if I get the urge, I will sit down and just gear a paper toward something

. . . I have a pretty good memory, so I've never understood the point of journals. For me at least, writing it out just seems tedious.

“CS,” Attitude:

***The word, creativity, simply means freedom of expression -- at least it does in my opinion. Creativity itself is filled with imagery, style, self expression, and other variables that come out as a complete, transcribed thought.

[In this class] I was pleased and surprised to see such focus on the individual. Throughout school, more often than not, I was told what to write and when to write it. I was lucky though. I had one teacher who left room for some creative energies in our writings; she let us have fun . . .

Since this class has started-- a class allowing creativity and stressing personal, creative factors -- I think I have begun to feel at home again with writing. I'm still having some trouble with development and such, but it's okay -- the creative freedom of expression has been re-established . . .

****(From the Initial Interview):* Question: When you think of creative writing what pops into your head?

Answer: First of all I would have to say imagination, just the ability to freely express any and all ideas. When I think of creative writing, I think of how little of it is used in secondary classrooms today, how it's really limited because . . . you're given a topic you have to write about, you have to

follow certain structures, and that's saying sometimes we've gotten too structured and gotten away from just freely expressing, and . . . I guess just self expression is what I think of as creative, it can be anything imaginative.

Question: So it doesn't have to be genre specific, like poetry?

Answer: No, like you can always put a genre to it, but just run of the mill creativity is what I think of mostly.

Question: Expressing yourself, yes?

Answer: Yes . . .

Question: When you came into the class, were you looking forward to writing that 25 to 30 page short story?

Answer: I was. But 25 to 30 pages kind of puts me off. I think the longest assignment I ever had to write was maybe 12 pages. But this is double that, and actually I was kind of surprised. I actually went up to Dr. Gerlach and made sure . . . You know, I was asking her questions like does it have to be in modern times, can it be historical, and she's like, it can be anything you want, and it just kind of floored me and I was so happy that it was whatever you wanted, whatever you are happy doing. Yes, I'm looking forward to it!

***On the writing apprehension survey, "CS" agreed with 11 of the 12 positive indicators. She was uncertain of the other one. She also disagreed with five negative indicators and strongly disagreed with the other three.

“JR,” Background:

***As with all writers it is sometimes difficult to figure out what I am going to write. As with most beginning writers I wrote about what I knew. The only problem was I only knew about monsters and myths. So what I did was take these monsters and incorporate them into real life events.

When I was younger my writing consisted entirely of fiction. The monsters of my childhood would return and wreak havoc on the teachers and bullies of my life in my stories. I laughed last because in my little reality, my pen was the final word.

However as I grew older, the monsters disappeared and my writing turned to a more reflective style. My writing became an open playground where my thoughts and emotions became a real object down on the paper. This writing style has continued with me until the present.

One of the problems that I encountered in my childhood years that plagued me was the fact that writing was never really encouraged where I went to school. I would write short stories and some poetry but never knowing that my style and writing ability was horrible. It wasn't until college that I have vastly improved my writing style and ability . . .

***Throughout my years of schools, I have had extremely different kinds of teachers and teaching styles. Unfortunately none of them I feel have influenced my writing ability. I feel in anything they have the ill-influenced my writing. It is only through my own personal motivation and actions have I continued any writing.

****(From the Initial Interview):* Question: Do the good writers that you have known in schools usually do some creative kinds of writing too?

Answer: I would say yes I think. I think that to be a good writer you have to experiment with all types of writing, so I would classify creative writing as one of them.

Question: Have you done any creative writing?

Answer: Yes.

Question: What kind?

Answer: Fantasy, science fiction.

Question: Do you really? I used to as well.

Answer: When I was younger that's primarily what I did and now I'm getting older and like I try to do more modern things like mystery, like right now I'm trying to write like a mystery novel, it's a pain. I started that last semester.

Question: That ambitious?

Answer: Yes, the problem with it is the discipline of sitting down and writing it . . . And my biggest trouble is finding that time to write, because I work and then I have school and then studying, so I have to juggle it through that and then finding personal time other than sitting and doing nothing and just relaxing, so just to write is kind of hard.

Question: How many teachers that you have had have used creative writing kinds of assignments to focus learning of the course content?

Answer: I don't know if I can say a specific number. I say a small percentage, I would say ten percent maybe have.

Question: Mostly in the English class?

Answer: Yes, outside of English none have.

Question: But in English can you think of one specifically that you could give me an idea on it?

Answer: I have had creative writing classes in high school. I've talked to some other people and they didn't have creative writing, but the creative writing class that I had was taught by the journalism teacher, so there we really more explored different types of forms of poetry and we have one thing we had to do, to create a children's book and draw the pictures and have a moral and everything. That was kind of interesting.

Question: Who was that class mostly for?

Answer: It was just an elective.

Question: Just an elective, and you had a different range of students in there?

Answer: Right.

Question: Did any of your regular English teachers give you alternative book reports and things like that or just allow you to be creative with your kinds of assignments that you were doing?

Answer: Yes, I was in AP English and for that we did an assignment where we were totally free to do any format we wanted to . . .

Question: That is different. A lot of people that I'm talking to did strictly research papers when they were in high school and so . . .

Answer: It was more as I got to the higher level, that I got to be a little more creative. I remember in junior high there was no freedom.

Question: That's interesting. When you do personal writing like journals, do you keep the journal faithfully?

Answer: I do but I don't like it, just the whole discipline playing, I do, and I don't think the last time I wrote in it was two weeks ago maybe.

Question: Do you usually do creative kinds of things, or is it more functional?

Answer: I use the journal just for personal information such as maybe when I was thinking about what happened to me that day just like little things maybe, that I would maybe forget ten years later, then go back and read it, or else I would jot story ideas and how you come up with it, you know, just like during the middle of the day, if I have a story idea, then when I go back home I would write it down in the journal. So later I could go back and look at it, so I really use it more for things I do, and also adds an outlet for like emotions or feelings or whatever . . .

Question: Isn't that creative to a certain extent?

Answer: Yes.

“JR,” Attitude:

***Ever since I was a young boy I have been a daydreamer. I have always been fascinated by surreal and fantastic worlds. I have always dreamed of being in another time and place doing things much more interesting and adventurous than what I was doing. Because of this, TV, books and movies have always and still do appeal to me. I could get lost in some adventure and leave my own problems and realities behind. However there was one problem that has always bothered me, I was never really a part of the action.

It was great fun for me to think of what I would do if I had “the Force” on my side, or if I had the task of destroying “the one ring,” but I always knew that I was just an observer in that world and never actually a part of it. I knew that there had to be some way of actually getting into my “dream” world. I discovered it in writing.

Writing gave me that key to enter into a never-were life that I wanted to be connected to.

Something that I appreciated even more was that I was that creator or lever of that world. I could actually control who lived or died, if the ending was happy or sad, if the hero rescues the

princess or dies on the way. Writing was even more fun than reading because I was in “my” world, not an observer in someone else’s . . .

***I hate rules. In this modern, anal-retentive world that we live in, rules and laws govern everything. I don’t know if I was born with my hatred of rules and things that confine (all rules confine), but I know that whatever I do I feel confined to obey someone else’s rules. However there is one area in my life that I know I have total and absolute freedom and control over what is going on. It is my writing.

Writing allows me to open doors and possibilities that may be closed through all other methods. The only thing that confines me in my writing is myself. Thus when I want to travel somewhere or have some character do or say something that I would or could never do, I can explore that option openly and freely in my writing. In my writing I am a master and lord over all that I create . . .

Publishing my work has always been a scary and intimidating experience. I have always feared that my work would be rejected and that I would never have anything of importance to contribute. However I realize that all writers at some point in their careers are rejected, and that eventually something will get published. I also know that what I say in my writing may in turn spark a fellow colleague in his or her own writing, thus adding to the larger body of work . . .

***Writing gives me freedom. Writing gives me control. Writing is my outlet where I can express my thoughts and emotions freely . . .

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Creative writing? Maybe the best way to answer this is what it doesn't include. It doesn't include like scientific research. I guess things that deal with basic or journalism reporting. I guess it's like information out there and you just analyze it or recite it or whatever, it's more internal, unlike narratives or poetry. It's like something inside of you and emotional you try to put out on paper . . .

Question: So basically instead of thinking specifically of short stories or poetry, you think of the method you use to do it?

Answer: Right. I see it more as it's what arises inside of you then you're pulling it out, it's not like you were looking at something or researching something and then, you know. I see it more as like, I don't know, I think it's like fantasy, science fiction, all poetry, personal experiences I guess . . .

Question: The course was supposed to be composition writing for teachers. Did you think it was appropriate for that class?

Answer: Well, actually I think I'm pretty clueless with class titles, I don't know what to expect of anything to do with class titles. Like the whole thing of it was I got my little schedule of classes I needed to take to become teacher certified and work toward the masters in education, so I didn't know what it was. I just signed up and I really didn't have any clue and that's pretty much with almost all my classes this semester . . . I'm not mad about it or was not upset by it, shocked, or afraid of it, you know, it's just something I have to do and this is what I really want to do so then I'll go do it.

*** "JR" was all over the scale on the positive indicators of the writing apprehension survey. He strongly agreed with two, agreed with three, was uncertain of four, disagreed with two,

and strongly disagreed with one. The negative indicators showed that he strongly disagreed with three, disagreed with two, and was uncertain of three.

“BS,” Background:

***Writing, for the most part, is not a daily activity of my noting. Usually, I write papers for the purpose of fulfilling my course requirements, which is not a satisfactory response considering that I am a possible high school English teacher. When I do write my thesis papers, I always enjoy myself and go a bit overboard with information and personal views. That is the main area I am interested in . . . , responding on what people say and do.

I question many views of readings mainly because of the schooling I have obtained. The teachers I have had in grammar school, high school, and college have always challenged me to question authority and to not be afraid of speaking my mind. Grammar school writings were mainly about your favorite food, color, TV show, and about your family. Book reports were required but they only included information about each character and the main point of the story. High school was basically the same writings as grammar school but more in depth. Personal journals were important and that is what I enjoyed most.

The classes that have made a major impact on my life have been classes which involve personal thoughts and views. Those classes were mainly English, which is why I wish to someday be an English teacher.

****(From the Initial Interview):* Question: Do the good writers that you know usually dabble in creative writing too?

Answer: The good writers that I know? Mostly, they do write every day and, yes . . .

Question: I guess that carries a wide range according to your definition, that windfall of like personal writing too, that's expressive, right?

Answer: Right.

Question: So you carry the definition pretty much as far as I do, and I usually think of it as anything that is expressive in the context of being creative all the way up to and including the short stories and things like that, right?

Answer: Right.

Question: Have you done any creative writing?

Answer: Not much, most of my things like when I was in high school, I would hand in things like for the newspaper, most of it like came through like comics mostly. I was known for doing stuff like that with my own characters and kind of like a Calvin and Hobbes kind of thing.

Question: You do comic strips?

Answer: Yes, that's mostly where my creativity comes from. As for me sitting down and writing out 50 pages of something, I'm not very good at describing long-term effects. I'm only good at one short comic series, this is what happens to the problem, and this is how it progresses, and this is what they did on that. I'm not very good at continuing, filling up a person . . .

Question: Did any of your teachers use any kind of creative writing assignments to focus learning in the regular classroom?

Answer: Yes, mostly in my junior and senior year of high school. In my three years here, not really. This is like the first class where they had me do something like that.

Question: Did you have a regular creative writing class too?

Answer: No, I didn't.

Question: So all the creative assignments that you have had have been inside the regular English class?

Answer: It was mostly through journals, and we had to keep a journal every day and I think it worked just because it wasn't, like you didn't have to do it, but of course the teacher had to look at it and say if this is good, but if you wrote something that wasn't what the teacher expected he wouldn't grade you or he wouldn't give you an F on it . . .

Question: So it was other than functional, these journals were more toward exploratory ideas to see what you were saying about things?

Answer: Right.

Question: Do you keep a journal now of any kind?

Answer: Well, just for the purpose of this class; on my own, no . . . Not like an everyday thing.

Question: So the journal that you keep now is just functional for the class?

Answer: Right.

Question: No creative kinds of things in journals for creative writing or anything like that outside of classes now?

Answer: Not out of the classroom, no.

“BS,” Attitude:

***Most of the time I am overwhelmed by the way people think what they think about the things around them. When I respond it is critical and sometimes humorous. I must admit though, it is not well structured or systematically stimulating. It is stimulating to most people because I write very laid-back and avoid using technical jargon . . . just layman's terms. Many of my teachers have said that I would be a great cartoonist or political satirist. Recently, I have found

myself writing poetry about the feelings I have about the people around me and how they perceive everyday life. Nature is sometimes revealed in my writings as I wonder what nature would think about some of the actions going on around people . . .

***Creative writing to me is expressed through humorous yet insightful imagery. Before I began this class I read journals by comedians mostly, because what they notice about the environment is almost exactly what I notice. Whenever I write about occurrences, they must strike me as odd or else I won't write about them.

Saturday Night Live does a skit called Deep Thoughts by Jack Handey. In these skits he writes about nature and the strange things that happened in nature. What makes them humorous is that humans don't know what it's like to be an animal. Animals don't speak to us, as far as we know, but we talk to animals. Humans can understand things in our environment, and things not in our immediate environment, yet animals can only make series of noises about things in their environment, not ours. The creativity on wondering what an animal is thinking in human terms is quite humorous because it is something that is strange to us.

Other creative aspects in writing are strange to me, but I feel that they aren't creative. I enjoy poetry that enables me to think and decipher my period. I don't enjoy poetry that doesn't make sense to me because it is about something that I am illiterate to. Perhaps my creativity in writing will increase if I learn more about other areas of writing, which is why I'm taking this class. I have learned not to dismiss others' writing, because my writing might be strange to others.

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to your mind?

Answer: Anything that you enjoy that you don't express out every day, something that comes from inside you and that's different for everyone, period. For me I like to comment on things that just strike me as odd, that I see during the day and I just wonder why he did that or why did she do that or what were they thinking? Those thoughts would be creative for me, but for other people it's different.

Question: So you think it's the kind of writing that you do, as opposed to say poetry and short stories, specific genres, right?

Answer: Yes.

Question: When you saw the syllabus for this class and saw that 30 page creative writing exercise, what were you thinking?

Answer: The first thing I saw was 30 pages; I said wow, okay, then I saw creative writing so I felt a little bit better . . .

Question: But you were a little anxious about a story at first?

Answer: Oh, yes!

Question: You've never written a short story before?

Answer: This is my first one.

***On the writing apprehension survey, "BS" was uncertain of five positive indicators, agreed with five, and strongly agreed with two. He expressed an either/or attitude towards the negative indicators, agreeing with four, and disagreeing with four.

"MT," Background:

***Creative writing has played little part in my education. As a high school student, I enrolled in a creative writing class, but felt completely repressed when forced to write about

teacher-chosen topics. Instead, my teachers always seemed to opt for more academic writing-- research papers, book reports, etc. There have been a few who have strayed from this norm, but most have eagerly complied.

Most often, I am writing informative papers or book reviews for classes. Occasionally, though, I find time to add a line or two to a kind of journal I keep. It's not your normal "Dear Diary" stuff about getting up and brushing your teeth. Instead, I record ideas I have -- sometimes about things I'd like to write about when I get the chance, or topics I'd like to use for a paper, or even lesson plan ideas. If I've learned something or realized something that has really affected me, I will record it as well. Quite often, I think of places I want to go someday or lists of things I want to remember to do soon.

***Mr. S was not your ordinary English teacher. Instead, he was summoned by the title of 'Coach' and spent more time in the boys' locker room than anywhere else. Being his student for two years taught me many things. First, I learned to enjoy English because he encouraged reading and writing. Rarely did he utter the word 'grammar.' I also learned that his casual appearance and knowledge of football did not impair his brain in any way, and that English teachers do not have to be eighty-year-old women with tiny spectacles and shrill voices.

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: Do the good writers that you know usually do some kind of creative writing, or do they mostly do functional type writing?

Answer: A little of both I guess.

Question: How about yourself, do you do any creative writing?

Answer: Not that I've really shared a lot. I mean, I have done some but I don't know, I guess I'm not real comfortable with it.

Question: Eighth grade love poems?

Answer: I don't think I ever even wrote love poems. To be honest with you, I wrote a lot . . .

Before I got to college, I did a lot more creative writing . . .

Question: Did your teachers use creative kinds of assignments in the regular course content, or not?

Answer: I had a few that did. Most of them that I can remember didn't. I mean there were a few, I had a creative writing class in high school by wasn't very impressed with it, she didn't allow for student opinions and things like that very much.

Question: So what kind of assignments did you have in that class?

Answer: She would give you a specific topic and you would write on that specific topic, and certain things like timed writing -- one of those things where you all are writing the whole time, and if you can't think of what to write, you write "I don't know what to write." It's not like the thought process, it's the simple act of moving your hands and that's the goal instead of thinking.

Question: Writing process strategies for pre-writing?

Answer: Yes.

Question: No flexibility in the assignments? I mean did you write on a topic that you could expand on in your own way?

Answer: Not really, because I can remember, and this really appalled me even at that time and I was only in the 10th grade, I can remember a paper that I turned in and it was a creative assignment, it was all from me, it wasn't something that I'd looked up or anything like that, it was all something I generated, and she had like a certain passage bracketed and had out there "word

choice.” Don’t you think that if it was worded in another way that she would have worded it, she would have like it better, whereas I liked my own way . . . I think that’s a personal opinion, and she wasn’t into variety of all.

Question: Was she a regular English teacher? Was the creative writing class an elective that the school created, and was she just the teacher who was assigned to it?

Answer: Exactly, the one that was assigned.

Question: Did she do any writing with you?

Answer: No, never that I remembered. I did have a teacher like that in college. I went to this small school in Elkins for a year and I had a real good professor there that I can remember doing a lot of writing with us.

Question: Have you had any creative classes in college?

Answer: Just one.

Question: But you did have one?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you do any journal writing?

Answer: Some, I don’t do it daily like I would like to, but I do it some.

Question: Is your journal writing more the creative kind or just functional?

Answer: It’s a little of both. I will write down a lot of ideas. I always think that it is a good idea to start something, but I don’t have time to do it. Now I jot down the idea or something, and I do it off things like ideas, just personal ideas, just writing about something that’s kind of bothering me or whatever, and you kind of work it out after writing about it and things.

“MT,”Attitude:

***I write for many reasons. Unfortunately, most often it is because I am required to in classes. This writing is usually informative and about interesting subjects, but it is not the writing I would wish to do.

When the opportunity arises I like to write simply about ideas that have been floating in my head. Sometimes they are fiction, sometimes not. Sometimes I simply write to help organize my thoughts. Recently I had a rather large and important decision to make and the answer simply would not come. Finally, I sat down and wrote everything that I felt. Three pages later, without even realizing what I had done, I reread my material and discovered what I could not find in my mind.

*** From the Initial Interview): Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: I think of being expressive, of putting my thoughts on the page, I guess anything that isn't just boring academic writing.

Question: So you think of the kinds of writing you do rather than specific genres like poetry and short story?

Answer: Yes.

Question: When you came into the class and saw the syllabus for English 108 and saw that story on there, what did you think?

Answer: First I was wondering where I would find time to write 40 pages, and I guess I was kind of excited about it, it's fun, it's not like an activity I'd dread, like writing a research paper. I guess I look forward to it much more than I would a research paper or something like that.

Question: Really?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you think it was appropriate for the composition class?

Answer: Definitely.

Question: So composition to you could just as well be creative writing, or you could do creative writing and other compositions too?

Answer: Yes!

***On the writing apprehension survey, “MT” was uncertain of one positive indicator, agreed with nine, and strongly agreed with the other two. She was also uncertain to one negative indicator, disagreed with six others, and strongly disagreed with “Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time.”

Part Two. Inservice Teachers

This section contains data collected from the inservice teachers. I will delineate individual Interview and Writing Apprehension Survey responses first (Section I), followed by composite responses to relevant Emig-King and Composition Questionnaire questions (Section II).

Section I

“K,” Background:

****(From the Interview):* Question: Who was your favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: Mrs. C., English 11 in high school. She made the class very exciting. The writers seemed to come alive. She is the reason I wanted to become a teacher.

Question: Who was your least favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: The few that passed out grammar worksheets on a daily basis.

Question: What kinds of creative writing do you do?

Answer: Journal writing.

Question: Did you have creative writing courses in high school or college?

Answer: No.

Question: Does your current school have creative writing courses?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Please describe.

Answer: Classes open to all . . . 11th and 12th grade students. It is an elective. I volunteered to teach the class two years ago.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing-- journals, letters, etc., to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional? Why?

Answer: Most of my writing is done to communicate or for some purpose. I usually do not have time to write creatively.

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: Sometimes it feels very abstract and that makes it “different” to teach. I enjoy the “products” that come from these classes . . .

“K,” Attitude:

****(From the Interview):* Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Poetry, journal writing, stories, plays, personal writing . . .

Question: What kind to creative writing do your students to? Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content? Please describe.

Answer: Students do many personal types of writing. They keep a journal. Students write childrens' stories and create their own illustrations. We take a field trip to a local elementary to share the stories with two groups of first graders. Students write their own plays (in groups) and perform for the class . . .

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing? Why or why not?

Answer: Yes. Writing is a great way of learning. I believe that writing should be incorporated into every class in every school.

***On the writing apprehension survey, "AK" agreed with six positive indicators, strongly agreed with 5, and disagreed with "I enjoy writing." She was uncertain of one negative indicator, disagreed with three, strongly disagreed with three, but strongly agreed with "I never seem to be able to clearly write down my ideas."

"P," Background:

****(From the Interview):* Question: Who was your favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: My senior English teacher was my favorite. She made you want to read and write about literature. She motivated her students with stories and readings.

Question: Who was your least favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: My least favorite teacher was my seventh grade English teacher. We spent too many class periods on grammar.

Question: What kinds of creative writing do you do?

Answer: Creative journal writing -- I write freely for five to ten minutes to see what thoughts come to mind. Invents, explorations, I use my imagination.

Question: Did you have creative writing courses in high school or college?

Answer: I did not have a creative writing course. . .

Question: Does your current school have creative writing courses?

Answer: My district has two creative writing courses.

Question: Please describe.

Answer: The first course is offered in the eighth and the second is offered in the ninth. Each course meets for once a semester five days per week. The courses are open to all eighth and ninth grade students. The honor students in ninth grade are scheduled in a class together, the other students are a mixture. The teachers teach only writing classes. The ninth grade course is a combination of prescribed and students generated papers.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional? Why?

Answer: Mostly my writing is transactional . . . Lesson plans, grants, reports. It is part of the job! My journal contains some creative writing, but not a lot.

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing? Do you now? Why or why not?

Answer: When I began teaching writing ten years ago I felt qualified to teach writing from a process approach. I still struggle with creative writing as I don't seem to have enough time. We are working in a computer lab and their skills on the keyboard leave a lot to be desired! TIME becomes my biggest problem.

“P,” Attitude:

****(From the Interview):* Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Creative writing is the process of inventing, the process of making something new and different, something made-up. But, it also has real world experiences and memories of the writer -- fact and fiction blending together. . . .

Question: What kinds of creative writing do your students do? Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content? Please describe.

Answer: Students practice free writing twice a week in their journals. They write from 5 to 10 minutes about anything that comes to mind. After writing time is completed they underline ideas that could be used in a paper. Towards the end of the semester we go back and select journal entries to use in creative problems, stories or plays. I use these assignments to allow the students to imagine, invent and explore their creative spirit.

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: I do look forward to teaching each day. My classes complete a writing assignment almost every day . . . The students are here to learn to write well-developed papers, that is what we are about!

***On the writing apprehension survey, “P” disagreed with one negative indicator and strongly disagreed with the other seven. She also agreed with five positive indicators, strongly agreed with six more, and, interestingly, strongly disagreed with “I have no fear of my writing being evaluated.”

“B,” Background:

*** (From the Interview): Question: Who was your favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: Mrs. E. -- High expectations, mutual respect . . .

Question: Who was your least favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: My English ten teacher -- NO expectations, nothing accomplished . . .

Question: What kinds of creative writing do you do?

Answer: I write poetry and essays.

Question: Did you have creative writing courses in high school or college?

Answer: I had no creative writing courses . . .

Question: Does your current school have creative writing courses?

Answer: No, only creative components of other courses . . .

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional?

Answer: Mostly creative-- with purposeful undertones . . .

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: No.

Question: Do you now?

Answer: Now I do because I've learned to be a participant rather than an expert, and to let my students be themselves -- including as writers . . .

“B,” Attitude:

*** (From the Interview): Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Imaginative writing as opposed to analytical -- writing with space for individuality.

Question: What kinds of creative writing do your students do? Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content? Please describe.

Answer: Several -- I use creativity from quizzes to analysis, asking my students to assume roles of characters, making poetry from literature and from real life, to interest their own voices with literature in creative ways . . .

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: Yes! I enjoy reading what my students write -- as well as what they say . . .

*** “RD” was the most dynamic respondent to the writing apprehension survey. She strongly agreed with all 12 positive indicators, and strongly disagreed with all eight negative indicators.

“N,” *Background:*

*** (From the Interview): Question: Who was your favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: Mrs. J., my favorite English teacher, taught me to write effectively.

Question: Who was your least favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: I liked all my English teachers.

Question: What kinds of creative writing do you do? Did you have creative writing courses in high school or college?

Answer: I did limited creative writing in high school. I did no creative writing in college.

Question: Does your current school have creative writing courses?

Answer: Due to the failure of the levy and cutbacks in personnel, we did not offer creative writing courses.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional?

Answer: As a teacher and single parent, I have limited time; therefore, all writing is primarily functional.

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing? Do you now?

Answer: Becoming a successful regular classroom teacher is a long process. When I began teaching, I was not qualified to teach anything. Professors, methods books, and universities are far removed from the public school classroom and high school students. Teaching is a growing and learning process. It takes much practice and trial and error. I now feel qualified to teach anything . . .

“N,” Attitude:

*** (From the Interview): Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Creative writing allows individual expression . . .

Question: What kinds of creative writing do your students do? Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: I use writing to focus learning in the area of literature. My students do the following creative writing assignments: letters to authors, extensions of literature stories, self evaluations, writing stories in different points of view, and creating new material.

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: The number of students in my classes has an effect on my attitude toward teaching writing. Therefore, I do not always look forward to teaching writing.

***On the writing apprehension survey “NF” did not answer one negative indicator, disagreed with one negative indicator, and strongly disagreed with the other six. She was uncertain of three positive indicators, agreed with eight, and disagreed with “I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation and publication.”

“F,” Background:

****(From the Interview):* Question: Who was your favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: Professor D. at G. State College, my freshman composition and English literature instructor. He led discussions rather than lectured. He was funny and gave me personal attention and encouragement.

Question: Who was your least favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: Mrs. S., my high school 10th grade teacher. We did grammar. I was bored. She acted as though she disliked me. I found grammar mistakes on the chalk board which “pissed her off.”

Question: What kinds of creative writing do you do? Did you have creative writing courses in high school or college?

Answer: My narration and description class in college was a complete disaster. It was arranged because it conflicted with one of my speech classes. Therefore, I missed the instruction and the discussion. I am a terrible speller and an even worse typist, so I found the assignments frustrating. The only reason I passed was because I went into class to lead a discussion on a short story. The discussion went on for the entire class period. (I had not been there for the other discussions). When we left class, one of my friends told me that the other students’ discussions had only been about 10 minutes long. Once again, it was my ability to talk, rather than my ability to write that brought me through.

Question: Does your current school have creative writing courses? Please describe.

Answer: It has a creative writing class. It is an elective. It was “dumped” on the teacher, but now see really enjoys it. The students work individually as well as in groups. Last year they wrote and illustrated children’s books in coordination with an elementary school. They are encouraged to publish . . .

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: No. I was unsure how to “grade” creative writing.

Question: Do you now?

Answer: Now, I don’t worry about the grade as much as I do the creative process. I now grade on the growth I see from the beginning of the project until the end. I attempt to function as an advisor, another set of eyes, rather than as the teacher. Still, I try to deal with grammar/structure concerns as they crop up.

“F,” Attitude:

*** (From the Interview): Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: I think of poetry, short stories and plays. I also consider personal narratives to be creative writing as well as journal writing.

Question: What kind of creative writing do your students do? Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: When I taught English, I used an autobiographical novel called *Listening for the Crack of Dawn*. My students kept a journal of childhood experiences similar to the ones in the novel (First day of school, favorite teacher, personal experiences). From the journal they built their first “childhood experience” paper. Later, I showed them pictures from *Portraits of Appalachia*, a book

of black and white photographs of people living in West Virginia, Kentucky, etc. Then, I asked them to write short stories or essays about one of the pictures. We also read *Where the Lilies Bloom*, a novel set in North Carolina. We continued with personal writing and character sketches of people in our families. The final project was a family history scrap book which contained family stories and an autobiographical sketch. In my Drama I class, last semester, we wrote collaborative plays and acted them out. All of my drama classes are given technical theater projects. One of the options is to write a play. Last semester about 15 students wrote a play. We are currently producing one of the plays that a student wrote last year. She won the play writing contest at the West Virginia thespian contest last year.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional?

Answer: Journals serve many purposes. They allow writers to clarify their own thoughts, to come to new conclusions and to question ideas. Journals provide a way for the teacher and the student to have a very personal kind of communication. Likewise, letters not only provide a way for people to communicate but they also allow the writer the opportunity to take stock of his or her current activities/problems/life . . .

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: Yes. Even though, (or perhaps because), I am not fond of writing, I stress writing in my classes. Even in my drama classes we write. I find that writing allows students time to reflect and helps them create more interesting characters (in plays). Students must take an active role in learning when they write. They cannot be passive observers. That is what leads to learning engagement.

***On the writing apprehension survey, “FK” agreed with eight positive indicators, and disagreed with four. She disagreed with five negative indicators, strongly disagreed with one, but agreed with two.

“R,” Background:

*****(From the Interview):** Question: Who was your favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: My favorite English teacher was my eighth grade teacher, Mr. S. I read *Inherit the Wind*, *Jane Eyre*, *Cyrano de Bergerac* . . .and many other wonderful books that year. I wrote about them as well. He encouraged me to grow at my own pace. We weren’t all working in the same book at the same time.

Question: Who was your least favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: My least favorite English teacher was a lady whose name I will not mention. We studied great literature that she’d beat to death until we were all sick of it. She was much too concerned about detail, and she wasn’t concerned enough about sharing the beauty of the work with us.

Question: Did you have creative writing courses in high school or college?

Answer: I had limited experience with creative writing in high school. Mostly my experience was in eighth grade. I wrote once or twice per week during that year. I might have been required to write once or twice per year after that. I wrote letters often, though, and I also wrote sometimes just for myself. When I attended college, I did take writing courses. I usually did better in my writing courses than I did in my other English courses.

Question: What kind of creative writing do you do?

Answer: I still write some poetry and some short stories just for myself.

Question: Does your current school have creative writing courses?

Answer: For the first time this year at W.P., I have had a ninth grade composition class. I have tried to let students generate some of their own ideas for papers. They really seem to enjoy writing plays and performing them.

Question: How about other schools at which you have taught?

Answer: I do not recall any creative writing courses at any school in which I have taught. The English teachers have incorporated writing into the overloaded English curriculum; therefore, students do not usually get enough writing practice. Most of the assignments have been prescribed by teachers and not student generated.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional?

Answer: Most of my writing is functional. I take care of necessary correspondence, I do lesson plans, I respond to questions. However, I do some creative writing also. Sometimes I write while my students write, and I share my writing with them. Generally, though, I don't have the time that I'd like to have for writing.

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing? Do you now?

Answer: I always felt qualified to teach creative writing, but I haven't always taught it the way the textbooks suggest. I write, and I have always written. There is still much room for improvement in my writing instruction, but I believe that I help my students to be better writers. If I had more time and smaller classes, I believe that I could do a better job.

“R,” Attitude:

****(From the Interview):* Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Any writing that one does that is one's own work and is entirely original is “creative writing.” I tend to think of original fiction and poetry as creative writing.

Question: What kinds of creative writing do your students do?

Answer: My students write poetry, plays, short stories, and journals. Sometimes they are asked to write from personal experiences.

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: Sometimes they are asked to write about something that we are reading. Here are some examples: (1) Students are asked to write an original story that has the same theme as one we've read in class. (2) After reading a tragedy, students are asked to write one of their own. (3) Students sometimes rewrite an “old” story and update the setting. (4) When we read ballads, students then write their own and put them to music if they like.

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: I really enjoy teaching writing. I do look forward to it. I try very hard not to get frustrated when attempting to work with students individually. Of course, the classes are too large, I have too many preparations, and there isn't enough time to help all the students as much as needed. But I try to keep a portfolio for each student so that I can see that they do make progress. Almost every student who tries can progress.

***On the writing apprehension survey, “RJ” strongly disagreed with seven of the eight negative indicators. Surprisingly, she strongly agreed with the other one, “I don't like my

compositions to be evaluated.” She strongly agreed with five positive indicators, agreed with four, disagreed with two, and strongly disagreed with one.

“M,” Background:

*** (From the Interview): Question: Who was your favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: Mrs. B. was my favorite English teacher in high school. She did an excellent job of teaching grammar.

Question: Who was your least favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: Mrs. M. was my least favorite teacher. She was one of those “read pp. 24 -50 and do the exercises” [teachers] . . .

Question: Did you have creative writing courses in high school or college?

Answer: No.

Question: Does your current school have creative writing courses?

Answer: W. Middle School does not have a “creative writing course” as such. Writing assignments are incorporated into their English courses.

Question: What kinds of creative writing do your students do? Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: I generally have students write responses to a piece of literature. In addition, I have them write Halloween stories and Christmas stories. They like to write about holidays . . . The assignments are open-ended which gives a way to [develop] as much creativity as they can muster.

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: Really, I'm not sure that I understand totally the meaning of "creative." Even though I had many English education classes, I'm not sure that anyone gave it an exact definition. Anything that a student writes using his own imagination could be considered creative writing? I don't know . . .

"M," Attitude:

*** (From the Interview): Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: A student expressing a unique idea in a clever or unusual way.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional?

Answer: I don't do journal writing or letters . . . In the past I have done this and have found this kind of writing too repetitious.

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: I have to be honest and say that I am basically a traditional English teacher. Grammar is the main emphasis in my class. The most writing that my students do is a response to a story or poem.

*** On the writing apprehension survey, "MB" strongly agreed with two positive indicators and agreed with a third. She was uncertain of two more, but disagreed with two and strongly disagreed with the other five. The negative indicators also showed a wide range. She strongly disagreed with three, disagreed with one, was uncertain of two, agreed with one, and strongly agreed with one.

“G,” Background:

****(From the Interview)*: Question: Who was your favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: Dr. S. This Professor opened the American novel in such a way that the novel became an integral part of my own learning experience. His style, techniques and knowledge made literature come to life.

Question: Who was your least favorite English teacher and why?

Answer: Dr. G . . . College English Grammar. The teacher’s arrogant attitude, style and demeanor made the class a total waste of time. There was never a connection made or attempt to tie materials to either the college or high school curriculum.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional?

Answer: Most of my writing is transactional because it deals with the demands of the system.

Outside writing is more geared to “sermon” preparation . . . [Other kinds of writing] are seldom written [by me].

Question: Does your current school have creative writing courses?

Answer: Yes. A semester class of ten weeks. The class is an elective open to primarily juniors and seniors. A variety of genres are explored allowing students to expand their knowledge of those various genres. Techniques, models, and personal discovering are all part of the class. The class however is populated predominantly by females. Males shy away from the class . . .

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: No. The University system did not teach creative writing in any form in the curriculum required for graduation . . . Undergraduate and graduate writing at the University did not want or foster creative writing.

“G,” Attitude:

****(From the Interview):* Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Creative writing is allowing students to try various styles and techniques in a multitude of settings to express their ideas as well as possible. Creative writing is any writing in any style that allows the student to expand his or her own writing.

Question: What kinds of creative writing do your students do?

Answer: Students can write beginnings, middle, and the endings for novels. They create new characters, events, etc. that extend the novel that is being read. Essays are assigned or given to allow other techniques, styles or formats to a wide variety of audiences. Picture and dramatic adaptations are used as part of various assignments. Letters, articles, interviews, etc. are used to allow students to express his or her thoughts in a unique or different way . . .

Question: You use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: Yes. Every novel program has a creative response assignment given. Students are given suggestions for responding, but the assignments are always open ended within limits given to the novel chosen. Innovative techniques and styles are greatly encouraged.

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: [Yes] . . . Writing is a skill that all people need. Writing needs to be separated from the curriculum to be a specific class with an overall emphasis on creative writing in a wide variety of content areas. Vocational, academic, and special-ed are other areas which all need writing skills.

*** “GS” showed a great deal of uncertainty on the writing apprehension survey. He was uncertain of six positive indicators and disagreed with the other six. He was also uncertain of four negative indicators, agreed with one, and disagreed with the other three.

Section II

The following is pertinent material regarding inservice teachers’ attitudes toward creative writing taken from the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Teachers, and from the Confidential Composition Questionnaire. The data is both grouped by response, and listed individually (in parentheses) in order to provide better perspective.

From the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Teachers

14. Creative writing is a valuable learning tool for all students.

Almost always: 4 (K., B., R., G.)

Often: 4 (P., N., F., M.)

19. Writing should be a part of most school courses.

Almost always: 7 (K., P., B., N., R., F., G.)

Often: 1 (M.)

20. (Goes to background as well as attitude): On my own I write stories, plays, or poems.

Often: 3 (P., B., R.)

Sometimes: 1 (K.)

Seldom: 1 (G.)

Almost never: 3 (N., F., M.)

22. It is more important that students learn how to write essays than to write stories or poems.

Sometimes: 2 (B., N.)

Seldom: 5 (G., K., B., N., M.)

Almost never: 1 (R.)

27. Writing is a very important way for me to express my feelings.

Almost always: 3 (B., R., M.)

Often: 4 (K., P., N., G.)

Sometimes: 1 (F.)

30. I prefer teaching writing to teaching grammar and usage.

Almost always: 4 (P., B., R., F.)

Often: 1 (K.)

Sometimes: 2 (N., G.)

Seldom: 1 (M.)

31. Creative writing is best taught by trained teachers in designated classes for gifted writing students.

Sometimes: 1 (M.)

Seldom: 4 (K., B., N., G.)

Almost never: 3 (P., R., F.)

33. I keep a journal or diary.

Almost always: 1 (N.)

Often: 2 (K., P.)

Sometimes: 2 (B., R.)

Seldom: 1 (G.)

Almost never: 2 (F., M.)

36. I like what my students write.

Almost always: 3 (K., N., R.)

Often: 4 (P., B., F., G.)

Sometimes: 1 (M.)

37. I use creative writing assignments to help students explore literature and other classroom material.

Almost always: 3 (K., P., N.)

Often: 4 (B., R., F., G.)

Sometimes: 1 (M.)

40. Writing is a very important way for students to express their feelings.

Almost always: 7 (K., P., B., N., R., F., M.)

Often: 1 (G.)

51. I read professional journal articles on writing.

Almost always: 3 (K.,F.,P.)

Often: 3 (G.,N.,B.)

Sometimes: 1 (F.)

Almost never: 1 (M.)

53. Correctness is more important than originality in student writing.

Sometimes: 1 (N.)

Seldom: 5 (P., B., F., M., G.)

Almost never: 2 (K., R.)

From the Confidential Composition Opinionnaire

1= strong disagreement with the statement

3= uncertainty

5= strong agreement

From Section I -- Importance of Standard English

2. High school students should be discouraged from using figurative language because their efforts at metaphor so often produce clichés.

Strong disagreement: 5 (G., F., P., B., R.)

Disagreement: 1 (K.)

Uncertainty: 1 (N.)

Agreement: 1 (M.)

4. Students should be discouraged from using the first person pronoun in their composition.

Strong disagreement: 3 (F., K., B.)

Agreement: 2 (N., R.)

Uncertainty: 3 (M., G., P.)

10. The English course for junior high school should include creative writing opportunities so that students can learn to explore their own thoughts about literature and other classroom coursework.

Strong disagreement: 1 (F.)

Agreement: 1 (N.)

Disagreement: 1 (G.)

Strong disagreement: 5 (M., P., K., B., R.)

From Section II -- Importance of Defining and Evaluating Tasks

8. Creative writing assignments, like essay assignments, need to be reinforced with letter grades.

Strong disagreement: 4 (P., K., B., R.)

Uncertainty: 2 (M., F.)

Agreement: 2 (G., N.)

From Section III -- Importance of Self Expression

4. Composition programs in the elementary grades should be directed primarily at encouraging students to self-expression.

Uncertainty: 1 (M.)

Agreement: 5 (G., F., N., K., R.)

Strong agreement: 2 (P., B.)

5. Writing assignments should be more extensive than the specification of a topic or list of topics.

Uncertainty: 2 (N., B.)

Agreement: 4 (M., G., P., R.)

Strong agreement: 2 (F., K.)

6. Composition programs in the elementary grades should be designed primarily to help students learn to discipline their writing and develop awareness of accepted standards of good prose.

Strong disagreement: 3 (F., P., R.)

Disagreement: 2 (G., K.)

Uncertainty: 2 (N., B.)

Agreement: 1 (M.)

7. Teachers should be more subjective when grading different types of composition, such as narrative and expository.

Strong disagreement: 1 (B.)

Uncertainty: 2 (N., R.)

Agreement: 5 (M., G., F., P., K.)

8. Strict conformity to rules of standard English inhibits growth in writing.

Disagreement: 1 (P.)

Uncertainty: 2 (N., K.)

Agreement: 4 (M., G., F., B.)

Strong agreement: 1 (R.)

9. Students given freedom in composing will discover various types of writing for themselves.

Uncertainty: 1 (N.)

Agreement: 4 (G., F., P., K.)

Strong agreement: 3 (M., B., R.)

From Section IV -- Importance of Linguistic Maturity

4. Students should have freedom in selecting the topics for their compositions.

Disagreement: 2 (M., N.)

Agreement: 3 (G., P., K.)

Strong agreement: 3 (F., B., R.)

5. Differing teaching approaches must be used for teaching factual writing or objectively oriented writing and for teaching subjectively oriented imaginative writing.

Strong disagreement: 2 (N., B.)

Disagreement: 1 (F.)

Uncertainty: 1 (M.)

Agreement: 3 (G., P., K.)

7. Students should explore their thoughts about literature and classroom discussions by writing about them.

Disagreement: 1 (N.)

Agreement: 2 (G., B.)

Strong agreement: 5 (M., F., P., K., R.)

Question 2. Do pre-service and in-service teachers perceive creative writing as a valuable pedagogical tool?

Part One.

Again, I will first look at the pre-service teachers. I will begin by excerpting pertinent data from the eight pre-service teachers who responded to both the initial and exit oral interviews as well as the written interview. This will be followed by composite data from relevant sections of the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students, and from the Confidential Composition Opinionnaire for the twelve pre-service teachers who responded to all surveys, the initial interview, and the written interview.

Section 1: From the Interviews

“JB”

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes.

Question: True or false: research writing is more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new subjects in school?

Answer: I would say false. I think you get a better idea of material just playing around with it, and research is just research, then you go to the library and pull books and whatever you need to do.

Question: Good writers usually do better in school than poor writers, true or false?

Answer: From my experiences true, the people that wrote always seemed to have a better grasp on certain things.

Question: I asked you before if you had any teachers who gave you creative assignments and you said yes. Do you feel like that's the kind of assignment that you would give as a general habit when you begin teaching?

Answer: Yes, I think my students will write . . . I'll try not to force them, but if that's what it comes to, it's good for them, and obviously they don't realize it yet. But if they are going to be in an advanced class or a college prep class they need to do it. That's the only thing that you can really get out of high school, I think, in true preparation for college classes, especially as an English major. The more you write when you're there the way better you are in college.

Question: I agree, absolutely agree. When you have classes that are going to involve a lot of writing, at this level particularly, do you look forward to them?

Answer: Yes I do, especially now in this situation after being out for awhile and coming back, I'm thriving on the books that we've had assigned. I think it's great. Finally I have to do it, and teachers make me do it, at its turning into what I want.

Question: You are a little bit older than most of the students I am interviewing. How about when you came in as a freshman, did you [look forward to writing classes] then, or how about as a sophomore?

Answer: I came in at that age still a journalism major, so I wasn't scared of those classes. However at that point I think I was starting to learn how nit-picking the journalism field was and how I didn't really want to be there so it's probably at that age I was probably starting to get turned off by classes that I didn't learn a lot.

Question: Now that you look back on it, do you think that classes that involve writing teach you better, or that you learn more from them than classes that don't involve writing?

Answer: I had a specific example, I had Dr. J. here at WVU, it was in the English 20 series, it was British literature or whatever and of the whole series you have to take 21, 22, 24, 25, something like that. There are four classes you have to take. Of all four of those, hers was the only one I truly learned anything in, and the only reason was she made us write two journals a week, you had two journal articles on the readings a week, and that class I can remember specifics of the material, and the others are just a blur, so obviously that just proves that writing works.

***(From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes, definitely.

Question: How? Any particular way?

Answer: It gives me new enlightenments. It can give you new angles at it on a certain subject, if you are thinking about it one way and you write about it, it can open up a different angle and you can make a right turn and go differently.

Question: Transactional research style writing is the kind that most teachers in my experience used in the school system. Do you think that kind of writing is more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new material in school?

Answer: Do I think it is more important? No. I don't think it is more important.

Question: Equal importance or less, or how do you explain this?

Answer: I would say equal. Less takes that kind of writing and says that it is not worth anything. It is worth something. I definitely think a balance between the two can be met.

Question: So if you don't get a balance then you probably are not learning the spectrum of values you need to learn?

Answer: Or that you could learn or have the potential to learn.

Question: Do you think good writers have an advantage in say secondary education, in the things that they have learned than those who are not so adept in writing?

Answer: Yes, I definitely think they have an advantage. They generate new ideas, new things and are always thinking about them. If you don't write about it, there are periods when you think about it and there are periods that you don't, but if you are writing about it, it is always around. You physically wrote something down about it and it is there.

Question: Do you think you would use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content in your class?

Answer: Sure.

Question: Because you think it is beneficial?

Answer: Yes. Obviously if you do the writing, you are thinking about it, and that always brings it back full circle. When you do it, it is physically done and you thought about it then, and it is in your mind and it will stay.

Question: Yes, to some degree anyway. Do you think writing classes focus learning more or less than non-writing classes? In your experience?

Answer: Yes, I think they do focus learning more, especially when it is a journal about stories that you are reading or just your insights in general when you read a chapter in a text. In a class that I have had that kept journals along with the readings, you had to write something about your readings. I definitely learned more, so I definitely was more eager to learn.

Question: I am including in the other kinds of classes . . . lecture and then you repeat back in the form of a written test, and so you would conclude that writing classes are more valuable?

Answer: Yes, it sticks better.

Question: Going back to when you were talking about imaginative and creative writing within the course content. I know being a pre-service teacher it is hard to focus on this, but a lot has been said about paper load and how overwhelmed teachers can become in that. Can you see yourself slacking off on using your writing style when you actually get into a classroom and realize you have 130 students to deal with?

Answer: Yes. If you said no, I think you would be kidding yourself. You have got to be honest with yourself, and when you do start having that many papers start flowing in weekly or however you assigned them out, it will definitely cut into your time. I still find time today to do the things I like to do. I come to class and I work all day long and I still have a private life, so if you put your mind to it you can find time to do whatever you need to do. It might require getting up a little earlier or staying up a little later, you just have to set a goal and do it.

Question: So you think it is valuable that you continue to do it [teach writing]?

Answer: Yes.

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Does writing help you learn new subjects? How?

Answer: Yes. It helps me dive into the topic somewhat thoroughly. Just thinking and rethinking and not writing any of it down is a waste of time.

Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new material in school? Why or why not?

Answer: Yes and No. Research style has a function, the actual data is learned. However, creative styles help see new things in the topic in new and different ways.

Question: Do good writers have an advantage in all aspects of secondary education learning over those who aren't as adept at writing? Consider the top 50 students in your graduating class in high school when answering this question.

Answer: Maybe. Good writers seem to have an edge. They seem more knowledgeable or more in touch with certain topics. But I don't think those that do not write can't or won't be at an advantage . . .

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes. Learning styles that are different, writing character sketches or autobiographies about a character in a book is an awesome way to learn.

Question: Do writing classes focus learning more or less than non-writing classes? Why?

Answer: Not necessarily. Usually the content is so different there are reasons for the different styles.

“HN”

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: The best students in your high school, were they good writers for the most part or were they average or what?

Answer: They were all good writers because most to them were in my honors English class with me. We all graduated in the top 20.

Question: Do you think that you'll use the creative kinds of assignments that you had in high school in your classrooms?

Answer: Yes.

Question: You'll do that? Even though it involves a lot of paperwork?

Answer: Yes.

Question: You think so?

Answer: Yes, I think it would be fun to do. My problem, I'm afraid of it as far as having to write creatively and rating it. How do you grade something like that? I mean how do you decide what's good and what's bad?

Question: Are you a junior?

Answer: No, I'm a senior, but I still have an extra semester out there.

Question: You see, you're supposed to have had some exposure before you get out of here on alternative methods of grading, to look at the things like holistic grading and things like that, or you can look at specifics . . . It really is difficult without that concept, to imagine how you do it without putting the standard grade on it. The A, B, C, which I very rarely do. Like portfolio assessment, are you familiar with that?

Answer: Not really.

Question: That's the concept where you put a lot of different assignments into a portfolio for the whole semester and you allow them to revise, and allow the student to prepare the paper for the best. Everybody keeps their own portfolio.

Answer: Okay, we did that actually.

Question: Did you? You got to keep revising your paper and then the final one that you turn in, you got the final grade? You see that's one way you can do it, so you can help them out. You're certainly talented enough to understand the revision process and how you do things, so that would be one way you could help them . . . Do you think you learn more in classes where you write than in classes where, say, you just read the text, or have lectures and take the test?

Answer: Definitely, unless the class where you have those kinds of things is huge. I don't go to those usually and then I'll just like cram for the test and get an A or B and forget it.

Question: I can tell you, in my graduate work I had only one class that even had quizzes in it, everything else was writing, so if you go on to graduate school . . .

Answer: That's how this semester is, that's why I like it so much because it's reading and writing which is great for me. I would rather do that than have to worry about studying for a test. I just hate tests!

Question: Like a lot of people do?

Answer: Like I'm not a stupid person but my SATs [weren't great], and you know, I didn't take the GREs yet, but I won't do well on them just because I get too nervous.

Question: Well, it's a question of learning how to study for them. I mean I hated them too. I really don't like them, and when it comes to writing assignments I do as well or better than people who make better grades than I do on tests just because I know how to put things in writing, so there are probably a lot of people like that. I have a couple of people tell me the opposite, that they like tests better, but they weren't very good writers to start with for the most part.

Answer: Really, I'm surprised English majors say that.

Question: You would be surprised that there are some who have had very little writing in their careers so far.

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: Does writing help you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes.

Question: How do you think it helps?

Answer: Well, like the Process Approach [to writing] . . . I never really understood it until I had to do a paper on it, I would read into it and understand it more, especially because it's something I like.

Question: If you do transactional research style writing, do you think it is more important in a school setting than say imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding the material you are learning?

Answer: I don't think it is any more important to the student than the grade. I think they take it more seriously. When you have got a research paper to do, I think they think it is [important]. I don't know if it helps them learn any more. I think I learned more when I was doing research papers . . . It helps you learn how to use the library and how to collaborate with other sources. I think it does help.

Question: So it helps you learn how to write future papers along those lines, right?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you think good writers have an advantage in secondary education? Think back to your high school now . . .

Answer: Yes.

Question: All the good students were good writers?

Answer: Yes. In fact all the people in our honors class, about 25 of us, were all the top students. We were all good writers.

Question: So that translates the same way. The ones who wrote the best did the best in school?

Answer: Yes.

Question: The imaginative kinds of writing that we discussed, just using imaginative assignments, do you think you'll use those kinds of things in your class?

Answer: Yes, they are fun. Do you think?

Question: Yes. They are absolutely fun, but do they help you learn?

Answer: I think so. You use your mind a little more. Do you know what I mean? Like my elementary school assignment. I had to write it from three different perspectives, the same story, and watch how it changed.

Question: So you enjoyed it and you think you learned something, right? Do you think that writing classes help focus writing and learning more than say traditional classes where you just are given lectures and read the book and then take a test or do you think those kinds of classes where words can be fresh in your mind, where you can read it and then write down responses help you learn more or are they equal? What is your opinion of it?

Answer: Classes where you have to write are better than lectures.

Question: Where you have to write about either what you are thinking or what you are learning, or where you have to go out and do research on it, as opposed to being told the information by the professor of the class, the traditional lecture and recitation?

Answer: Yes, because I don't like lecture classes. I like reading on my own. That's why I started taking these group [oriented] classes.

Question: And you usually do more writing in these kinds of classes, right?

Answer: Yes.

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Does writing help you learn new subjects? How?

Answer: Yes. I do most of my thinking while I am writing out certain things. For instance, if I had to write about the photosynthesis process, I would comprehend it more because I would have to understand it in order to write about it.

Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new material in school? Why or why not?

Answer: I don't know if it is more important, but honestly, I would say that I'd learn more with transactional writing. I use imaginative writing for fun.

Question: Do good writers have an advantage in all aspects of secondary education learning over those who aren't as adept at writing? Consider the top 50 students in your graduating class in high school when answering this question.

Answer: I think good writers are usually the best 50 students. However, I think that the reason they are such good writers is because they work so hard at it . . .

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes. For instance when teaching a novel, I would have them do projects like writing a letter to a character or other projects like having a character write a letter to someone else.

Question: Do writing classes focus learning more or less than non-writing classes? Why?

Answer: I think less because writing creatively is not really learning anything new. However, writing research papers does help me learn more.

“AS”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Sometimes. Like I have roommates who had to write down everything and then they would go and write it down again, and that's how they would memorize stuff.

Question: But you personally haven't done that?

Answer: Sometimes I think it helps me more if I don't have to explain it to somebody else.

Question: Talking helps more?

Answer: Yes, I think, I mean I like to write and stuff, but I think I'm more of an auditory person.

but I do a lot of thinking, so that I write in my head all the time. I mean a lot of it never gets down on paper.

Question: If you're writing in your head that sort of counts as the same thing doesn't it? This one is a true or false question. Research writing is more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new subjects in school.

Answer: False . . . I hate research writing. Did you learn from it? . . . I hated it. Our senior year our teacher picked out books for us and we had to do term papers on them and I felt, I think, an accomplishment for having done it, but all my ideas that I had about the book were the same ones when I finished as when I started, you know, about my thesis and everything, it was just I couldn't put them down.

Question: So if you had to write something you would rather exude your own ideas rather than research it?

Answer: Yes, I think so. Now I have a different view of it, because I know I can use my own ideas and if I can find somebody else who maybe had similar ideas that can help reinforce my paper . . . But somebody else's ideas are just their ideas too. It's so subjective. Like I don't know exactly why I hate researching because I think it's so subjective. I mean I am going to say what I think.

Just because I am a student and not some public person doesn't mean that what I have to say isn't important, but somebody is going to believe it or not just like they're going to believe something that somebody said in a journal or something, too. So I have always had a real problem with research writing. I really don't like it too much . . .

Question: Good writers usually do better in school than poor writers, true or false?

Answer: True.

Question: In your experience?

Answer: Yes, it's nothing else, just bullshit your way through. That's more of my experience than anything else because poor writers are stuck and can't really express themselves.

Question: Do you think the writing translates into whether they know how to deal with school or not, or is it, I mean for instance, if they are good at math and science do you think they are good at writing too, or have you known people that are just good at something like math?

Answer: I think that's more of my experience with people, that they are usually either good at one thing or the other.

Question: I try to remember the kids I went to school with. It seems to me like most of them did a lot of writing in my school, but most of the kids who were very good in school were good writers too.

Answer: Okay, maybe I should differentiate, because I think that people who are good overall in school, know how to write expository stuff in classes to get good grades, but I don't necessarily think they're good at creative writing . . . I don't think that people are necessarily good at creative writing who are good in other things, but I think they can write to get a good grade like in English class.

Question: Do you think that when you start teaching that you will use creative kinds of assignments rather than the stuff like you did, the research and things like that?

Answer: Yes I think so. I think I was. I think it helps the students explore a lot better, and find meaning in things that they are reading or learning about.

Question: Do you think writing classes help you learn better than classes that don't have writing in them, or vice versa?

Answer: I think it depends on the subject.

Question: Well obviously if you're talking about math class and maybe science class, you're not going to get so much. But?

Answer: I'm thinking generally, yes, writing is better.

Question: In most classes where you could or could not write?

Answer: Yes I think it would definitely help.

Question: And yet you went back and said you didn't write all that much when you were learning, I mean when you are mostly thinking about what you are doing?

Answer: Well maybe in classes, I mean like I had an Italian Literature class and we were reading Dante's Inferno . . . And we had to write a paper in which we picked apart and analyzed three chapters out of one of the books, out of each one of the books, and that was so hard, but just writing and having to do it on my own, you know, not with the teacher sitting there, being there, saying this is what all this means, I mean it definitely helped me learn more than if he would have just gone up there and said this, this, and this means this, and this is the symbol of this in the book. And so I think it definitely helped in that case, so I would say yes, in class, writing definitely helps.

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes.

Question: How?

Answer: I think when you write something you learn a lot more than if you just read it, maybe even talk about it. It helps you to process it.

Question: It goes through your brain more than once?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you think transactional research style writing is more important than imaginative or exploratory writing to understand new material in school?

Answer: No.

Question: Are they equally important? How do you compare? Traditionally we do like research papers and things like that. With your experience, wouldn't you say that? Does it have as much benefit as other kinds of writing?

Answer: I think so. I think that it's important that students are able to first write creatively and then write like research papers because I think kids hate research papers. First you have to start with how you feel. You have to get a feeling and you have to go out and get research to support it, or an opinion or whatever. I mean if kids don't even know how they feel, especially in writing, then I think it is important to have that creativity first. I think that's one of the things I am seeing being out in the schools and stuff too. I think teachers are asking their kids to write all these essays using the library, but they are not allowing their kids to really get into touch with their own feelings and imagination first, or even get used to just writing . . . so I think the research writing is important to know how to do, but I think you can't really expect people to know how to do it without other kinds of writing.

Question: Think back to your secondary education. Do you think good writers have an advantage in all aspects of learning over those who aren't as good at writing? Think about the top 50 students in your class.

Answer: Yes. I think that people look at people who write well as being smarter. Being able to express yourself, being able to communicate with somebody, communicate your ideas -- I think that other people like it, kind of see it as a sign of intelligence -- being able to write well.

Question: You are talking more about expressive kinds of writing than transactional then?

Answer: I think both . . . When teachers get the research paper in history, when it is written well, even if the quality of ideas are of the same level in both papers and one is written well and one is written very poorly, or maybe even the average, I think it is automatically going to be [seen by the teacher that] this student [who wrote well] is smarter than the other one even if it is not true. So I think there is a big advantage for students who are able to write well.

Question: It sort of goes back to the last question then? They need to experience creative kinds of ways to do writing, right?

Answer: Yes. Also the writing process. Like one experience I had with a teacher in Grafton who told me that she thinks that the whole demise of the English classroom is whole language and this whole writing process is just a bunch of crap and she just doesn't buy into it, and she is talking about how students just can't write anymore. She was saying she had a whole stack of essays one time that she took to the principal and said "I just can't grade these. How do you expect me to grade these?" and I was thinking do you ever think the reason these kids can't write is because nobody ever taught them how?

Question: Absolutely!

Answer: Some people are born with the natural ability to write. I know I was and I think I have been really scared about teaching, and I'm thinking I'd better pay attention to when I was taught how to write because I didn't have to struggle [with learning]. Maybe I am going to be a horrible teacher because . . . I think it is harder to show somebody how to do something when you are automatically good at it. But I think these kids, nobody ever taught them how to write and they are just expected to get by with whatever little bit of natural language ability they picked up since birth and for some students it might not be that much.

Question: In some cases it may go back to where you were talking earlier, about a teacher's ability to write and whether they can reinforce what is going on?

Answer: I think that first of all you can't expect students to write about things they don't know when they haven't even been asked to write about things they do know. Then I started thinking this is crazy to expect the kids to automatically know how to write just because they have been in English classes for 12 years . . . It is crazy to assume that everybody is going to come out of English class being able to write if they have never been taught how . . .

Question: Are you going to use imaginative and creative kinds of assignments to focus learning of regular course content?

Answer: I can.

Question: I am sure you have seen in the class where teachers with a great paper load get burned out on it at some time because it is overwhelming, especially if you have one hundred twenty students. Can you see yourself cutting back on writing or re-focusing the way you teach because of that, or do you think it is important enough to keep it up?

Answer: I think it is important enough to keep it up and I also think that it is helpful to do packaging type of things where you don't take home everything that the students write, but that everybody is still important. Like in portfolio evaluation where you take a bigger look at things, [the students'] doing a whole bunch of revisions leading up to one final product and include everything [in the portfolio]. Also I think it is important to let the students do a lot of their own writing in groups so even if the teacher doesn't have to take it home and put a grade on it, it is still important in the class and the students still know that this writing is important even if they aren't being graded on every piece of writing they do. I guess that's a way of reducing it . . . I think if you have to drag home papers every night . . .

Question: You will get tired of it, right?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you think when you are in writing classes that you learn more than in traditional lecture and recitation classes, or can you learn just as much in either class?

Answer: I think it is important to vary your classroom because I think any student is going to get burned out if you use one method totally. I feel like in this 293 class that I am taking, if I have to write one more thing in that class I am just going to tear my hair out . . . I don't really go for the whole lecture thing, but if it is something that I am really interested in I can pay attention. If it is something I am not interested in then I just go off in space. I think I learn the best in a discussion type atmosphere and also atmospheres in which the students are forced to kind of be aware of their own learning processes instead of a teacher giving you the information and you writing down and taking a test on it or whatever . . . I think definitely discussing and writing are the two things that I am sure that I will probably use in the classroom. I don't think I will ever lecture, unless it is a new

lecture on some grammar thing that everybody is having a problem with, but I think it is totally useless to have a teacher standing up there and going off lecturing about a short story or a novel or something when there are 30 kids in a room who have already read it and I'm sure have a lot to say about it if they are only given the opportunity.

*****(From the Written Interview):** Question: Does writing help you learn new subjects? How?

Answer: Yes, because it makes me remember concepts better than if I just read or listened to someone talk.

Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new material in school? Why or why not?

Answer: I think imaginative writing is much more important because I think you have to learn how to write creatively and for yourself before you can write for a research purpose.

Question: Do good writers have an advantage in all aspects of secondary education learning over those who aren't as adept at writing? Consider the top 50 students in your graduating class in the high school when answering this question.

Answer: I think so. In my high school, mostly everyone who was "smart" wrote well, even if they weren't extremely naturally talented or interested in writing. I think students who are good writers are just better at expressing themselves in general.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes. I think that I will use creative writing a lot in teaching . . . in order to get the students to practice writing and thinking.

Question: Do writing classes focus learning more or less than non-writing classes? Why?

Answer: I think in general classes which include writing perpetuate more learning experience because the students are more actively involved.

“JK”

*** (From the Initial Interview) Question: Does writing help you learn new subjects?

Answer: Definitely.

Question: True or false: research writing is more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new subjects in school?

Answer: I would say false.

Question: Okay, good writers usually do better in school than poor writers?

Answer: True.

Question: How about in your coursework here. Have you had any classes up until now that give you the idea to use creative kinds of assignments?

Answer: Yes, basically you and Jeanne.

Question: The classes we taught, right? But you haven't had any other kind of pedagogy courses that suggest that you ought to use different kinds of writing in your classes?

Answer: Mentions of it but nothing else, no follow-up and explanation.

Question: Okay, when we talked earlier about teachers who use imaginative assignments and you couldn't think of any alternative assignments, is that something you feel like you're going to use when you get into the classroom, will you use those kinds of assignments? Do you feel comfortable even with the paperwork and all that stuff? Will it be worthwhile?

Answer: Yes, right now, but I'm not out there yet.

Question: Right now you think it's worthwhile?

Answer: I think it's a good idea. Not always, but often.

Question: When you think about classes where there is a lot of writing to you look forward to them?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you think those classes promote learning more or less than classes that you don't have to do so much writing?

Answer: Usually more, but it could depend all what I'm doing. Like I've had a lot of literature classes, and not a lot but a few good professors who I would say utilized writing, but mostly it's just lecture. I think I learn a lot from writing.

Question: It depends on the instructor?

Answer: Then again, I'm taking some classes that I'm attempting a lot of writing and others with lecturing, and I can learn from both at the same time.

Question: I guess without doing both in the same class you wouldn't be able to judge specifically for one individual class?

Answer: True, usually I think writing definitely helps more though.

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you think that writing helps you learn new subjects in school?

Answer: Yes, without a doubt. It lets you think about the subject, think about what is asked and be able to revise the answers to questions when needed.

Question: Do you think that transactional research style writing is more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new material in school?

Answer: No. Research writing is needed, but imaginative writing is what enables us to think for ourselves, draw conclusions and make pertinent connections.

Question: Do good writers have an advantage in all aspects of secondary education learning over those not so adept at writing?

Answer: Yes.

Question: How about those good in math and science?

Answer: It doesn't matter -- there may be a couple who will excel at one subject, but if they are in the top academically all around, you know they will be good writers too. Teachers respect good writers and good writers usually expressed themselves better due to organizational skills.

Question: Do you think you'll use creative assignments to focus student learning in your classes?

Answer: I think so.

Question: Did the writing classes you had focus learning more or less than non-writing classes?

Answer: Probably more . . .

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Does writing help you learn do subjects? How?

Answer: Yes. It gives me time to think about the subject . . . I usually remember when I write.

The language of writing helps to develop my thoughts.

Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new material in school? Why or why not?

Answer: No, it is needed, but imaginative or exploratory writing is what in essence enables people to think for themselves, to draw conclusions and make connections. It is an application of thought. Research is only a regurgitation of other thoughts. One needs to mesh the transactional with the imaginative for a better understanding.

Question: Do good writers have an advantage in all aspects of secondary education learning over those who aren't as adept at writing? Consider the top 50 students in your graduating class in high school when answering this question.

Answer: Yes. Writing is used to express knowledge. One may have the knowledge, but if they can't express their knowledge through writing, they are in trouble.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Definitely, students should be allowed and encouraged to use any form of writing to express their ideas or knowledge.

Question: Do writing classes focus learning more or less than non-writing classes? Why?

Answer: I think more. Other classes think they focus the learning, but the actual focus of teaching in a writing class -- the act of writing -- is centered in learning. It all goes back to application. I can memorize a bunch of facts for a test but it doesn't mean I will remember them in two days.

Writing helps focus material so I not only learn, I apply it mentally, on paper, then read it. I learn it several times.

“AB”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Does writing help you learn new subjects?

Answer: I don't really think you could learn anything without writing. I mean, personally my best way to study no matter what, is through writing, you know what I mean? If I have to study, like a certain concept or even if it's vocabulary or whatever, before I write it, it seems, you know, I learn it better. But definitely, new concepts, you have to write data. For some reason, when you write it just seems more logical. Like even today I'm really not into the computer word processing thing, I

still have to write everything first and then transfer it. I hate just writing on the computer because I feel like it's not the same, it's different on paper.

Question: You don't learn it as well?

Answer: Yes, because I love writing.

Question: Okay, true or false, research writing is more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new subjects in school?

Answer: From a kid's perspective or a teacher's?

Question: How about from your perspective?

Answer: If I was a student I would probably think that the research writing was stupid, but a lot of times for a teacher it's a good way to evaluate.

Question: Do you differentiate within the learning concept of it when learning a new subject, and would you rather research or explore in an expository way to try to understand?

Answer: I would rather write, I would rather do it in an expository manner.

Question: Good writers usually do better in school than poor writers, true or false?

Answer: I don't think you can really tell about that because I think that there are writers that don't bloom until later on. I think there are writers that don't even show anybody their work. I think there are people that have great ideas and never write them down. Like I think that there are so many different types of people and writing; and writing something, like it's very bare, it makes you very naked, you know, to hand your work to somebody or to hand it in to a teacher. Like if somebody you know, if you have a journal and somebody reads it, it's very revealing, it's very personal. It's extremely personal, there's no way that you could write without revealing something about yourself, even if you try to hide it.

Question: So?

Answer: I think it's hard to tell because a lot of people sometimes are afraid.

Question: Just because you don't know if they write or not? It's hard to tell?

Answer: It might be in there.

Question: The good writing?

Answer: It might come out later.

Question: Okay, going back to question 2 -- how many teachers used student creative writing assignments to focus learning of course content? Is this something that you would do when you're teaching, to do that kind of instruction, creative writing assignments?

Answer: It definitely makes the kids more motivated.

Question: Do you look forward to classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: Sometimes in the beginning I'm scared, like in this class, right, I found out that we have to write a short story and I was really scared, then once I started getting into it, I kind of went like, Wow! This is cool! I wish we could do this through all my classes.

Question: But do you feel that those classes promote learning more than the classes that don't do the writing?

Answer: Definitely.

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Without doubt. One of my best ways of studying is just to re-copy nights, just re-writing them . . . at the high school [where I am student teaching] I am just writing the tests now . . . with me thinking of all this stuff I never saw, and then I read it.

Question: How about like in the school when you do transactional research style writing, do you think that's more important or less important or equal with imaginative and exploratory writing?

Answer: All the research writing I think is good but I think we students, we spend too much time regurgitating what other people have researched. We are always in the library looking up things.

And my theory, I think that if you can put a creative twist into it, it is so much easier to read. There is nothing more boring than a scientific journal.

Question: Do you think it is easier to write?

Answer: Research?

Question: For you?

Answer: Not for me, because you have to be so careful who you are quoting. If you are writing something creatively or expressing something imaginatively, it's your words and you don't have to thank anybody. You don't have to use anybody. You just write . . . that is the best way to write, when it comes from yourself.

Question: You don't think there is any of that kind of writing when you are doing research?

Answer: No because I taught the research paper to the seniors. One of the kids wanted to do the KKK and I told him right there that is fine, but keep in mind that you are not going to be saying 'yes let's kill the blacks.' You have to go and look in the books and you are taking what other people wrote. This isn't your opinion. This is research. Don't take a topic that you just want to boggle about, and you want me to know why you think this should be like that, because that is not a research paper. They had trouble realizing that . . . You have to do strictly research. In the AP class they were able to put in their own thoughts, it was a research persuasive essay . . .

Question: Think back to your high school career, and now in your teaching. Do you think that the students who write well, pick like the top 50 students in your class, do you think the ones who write well generally speaking have an advantage over the ones who do not write well as far as learning goes?

Answer: Definitely. If they are not good writers, learning, like everything in life, is harder. When they say I am not going to college and I don't need to know this, I would say someday you are going to have to write a letter to your congressman, you are going to write a letter to your kid's teacher complaining. You don't want to sound like a dingbat. You have to learn how to write, and they are like, it doesn't matter. But it does matter . . . That was my biggest thing with them. They don't have to be Ernest Hemingway . . . When you let them write what they want to write about, they are very effective. But when they have to write about comparing like photosynthesis to whatever, then you know the writing goes down the drain. But if it is making an analogy of their favorite sport to a war or something like that, they love that.

Question: So in your teaching, do you use terms like imaginative and creative?

Answer: Yes, every single time. I did four chapters on compare and contrast analogies. One was process and analysis. One was descriptive. The descriptive was the easiest . . . I said think about your own life and incorporate. I think today, for this generation of kids, the bottom line is meaningfulness. If they don't see any meaning in their life in what you're teaching them, they don't want to know about it and I don't blame them . . . A lot of them do want to learn something they can use . . . There is no way around it.

Question: I am sure you have run into teachers who maybe have once upon a time thought about doing the same kind of assignments but slacked off because of paper load. Your thoughts?

Answer: There are teachers that thought I was nuts. I would assign 1000 word essays to the AP kids and 6-800 words to the Honors 11, and they were all due on Monday because a lot of kids have to type theirs, and I don't want them to feel any less advantage than the others, so I give them the weekend to use the library or borrow their friend's word processor . . . Monday everybody came in and I had on my desk a bunch of papers, and I read every single one front to back. I mean I never stopped on one of them.

Question: You are fresh. Can you see yourself getting burned out?

Answer: Definitely.

Question: How about changing assignments? Do you think that would help, maybe?

Answer: Yes. I see myself as being a teacher only a few years. After about seven years, then I should be home [raising a family]. After I raise all my kids, maybe I could go back. I personally enjoy teaching and I have seen the kids transforming and that was just in eight weeks.

Question: Do you think the writing classes in general help focus learning more than do say traditional kinds of lecture and test classes?

Answer: Absolutely, because these kids are taking the knowledge of everything you lecture to them all week . . . They can identify some of the words, but can they use them? So I say, can you write me a paper, an expanded metaphor? Can you do this for me? They can, and they like having the power to do that. Sometimes they say 'I don't know what I am going to write about.' Then Monday comes and they come in and they are so excited about what they have written.

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Does writing help you learn new subjects? How?

Answer: The best form of studying, for me, is writing.

Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new material in school? Why or why not?

Answer: I like exploratory writing for comprehension. Research is good, but students often overlook the “learning” part of writing because they are hung up on facts.

Question: Do good writers have an advantage in all aspects of secondary education learning over those who aren’t as adept at writing? Consider the top 50 students in your graduating class in high school when answering this question.

Answer: I think so. In general, English/language arts skills build a better vocabulary. With that writing, speaking and listening become superior for those who are good writers.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes. Instead of quizzes and checks, I like to allow students to convey what they have absorbed through creative writing.

Question: Do writing classes focus learning more or less than non-writing classes? Why?

Answer: Writing classes are better for me . . . but I think it varies among others.

“CI”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Definitely yes, even the basic writing if you have to memorize something. I think I’ll still do that, I did it when I was young, and I did it this summer in graduate Ed Psych 340. We had to memorize the different steps and the processes, how the brain functions or something, and just . . . kept him repeating, writing it down, even as simple as that is. I think that’s important. Even taking notes in class, I don’t know if you mean it to be that simple.

Question: Any kind really.

Answer: Any kind of writing I think helps me to learn, anything that I have written down and can see it and read it combined.

Question: So you think research writing is more important than imaginative or exploratory writing in understanding new subjects?

Answer: Not necessarily, I think it's important for understanding I guess. It depends on the subject that you're doing, or that you're exploring or learning about. If you're learning about creative writing, if you are learning about expressing yourself and that's the focus, and different language and maybe things we learned in the C and I classes, I think that's important. But if you are learning, if you are researching-- for example I'm researching a philosophy project and I'm doing a whole synthesis paper and I am doing it on the portfolios and why they are important in the classroom, and I think that warrants more research than creativity.

Question: Are you just researching or are you exploring yourself?

Answer: Just a researching, synthesis.

Question: So that's a higher level of thinking and you are combining them together. I have had people say that a lot of the research papers that they get, they weren't really learning anything in high school particularly because when synthesizing they would take paragraphs from this book and add transition sentences to paragraphs from another book and do it like that. You see the same thing here in college, but when you're doing it at this level, you feel like you are learning.

Answer: You are.

Question: Because you are not actually nearly plagiarizing?

Answer: You can't. But that's what high school kids do, that's how everyone is taught.

Question: The research assignments you did in high school?

Answer: I figure maybe younger than that. I remember copying -- we'd have to turn in a one page paper and we would have to do it on say, a bear -- I remember copying a whole column out of an encyclopedia and turning it in and that was okay. I forget what grade that was but I know it wasn't too high. It couldn't have been high school, but maybe the beginning of middle school, I don't know.

Question: I was just the opposite. In grade school I can remember book reports, making up the whole thing, the book and the report. I used to do that and get away with it constantly.

Answer: You made up the book title?

Question: Yes, lots of fun! I mean, teachers don't admit that they've never seen the book.

Answer: Really?

Question: And they didn't go to library and check it out.

Answer: They should have asked the librarian.

Question: Do you think good writers usually do better in school than poor writers?

Answer: I think good writers and readers do. I think it's important to combine those two.

Question: They go together?

Answer: I don't see how not, I see some good writers and they do [a lot of reading].

Question: When you think back on the top students in your school, were they all good writers or were there some of them who didn't know how to write very well?

Answer: They were all pretty good writers. They were all my friends on the yearbook staff and on the newspaper, and when I think back they were the top students, they were the leaders of our school . . . They were the really smart ones, the writers.

Question: It all goes together eventually?

Answer: It really does, they were not just preppy, you know? The editor of our yearbook in junior high became a cheerleader at Villanova, and another one on our staff became a cheerleader at Syracuse after she graduated from high school. It does, I do believe, all go together. Those people who were good readers and writers also were just very good students in general.

Question: Do you think you will use creative kinds of assignments in regular coursework?

Answer: Definitely, I am convinced that the classes need to be student centered and need to, as much as I hate to say, be entertaining to your students . . . You have got to keep them interested in what they are doing and if it is about them, and so much creative writing is about yourself, at least that's what I'm learning, then you can do so much with it and keep the students interested and active.

Question: When you go to a class that has a lot of writing in it, do you look forward to it?

Answer: Not particularly, no.

Question: Do you think you learn more in classes that have writing than classes that say are just lecturing and reading?

Answer: Definitely I learn a lot more because the classes that I have that are just tests, whether it's in grad or undergraduate, the ones with tests I really couldn't tell you what I learned, but the writing classes, I can. I'm serious, the things I learned this summer, in the [non-writing] classes, are out of my head. I may remember some names and then a line. If you would tell me some psychologist's name I may know that, but I do remember the case studies and the reasons behind

all this. I think when you are writing and when you're researching you are totally learning the concept. What is it that Jeanne always says, I mean when you are writing it what is it that you know you're doing?

Question: You tell me?

Answer: Writing is knowing or writing is doing, when you write you're learning what you do.

Question: Writing is learning, sure!

Answer: I just feel like I've learned so much more, and after I read that paper I feel like I can really talk about it. I have learned a lot.

Question: Isn't it surprising that so many classes still just give you tests? It never ceases to amaze me, but it's the structure of the schools. The structure of the education system really tests you on instant recall, your ability to take a test on crammed material!

Answer: It's wrong.

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes, definitely.

Question: Mostly because of putting the words down on the page, or because it helps you think, or how you think it helps you learn?

Answer: It helps me think, but when I put down the words on the page, I know it, which is just like we are taught in class: they are mine and they are not somebody else's words, even though I may be just paraphrasing or using my copy notes. I know I do that a lot. Like we copy notes from British literature class. I know them much better and I understand the notes better because I put

them in an outline that I want . . . That makes not only my teachers know it's my notes, the same goes with the paper, with the subject that I am researching, and I know so much more about it because I'm structuring it.

Question: Is transactional research writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing?

Answer: I don't think that you can say one thing is more important than another.

Question: Do you think good writers have an advantage in all aspects of secondary education over those who aren't as adept in writing? When you think about this, think about the top 50 students in your graduating class in high school.

Answer: I think so, definitely. Those students in my high school class . . . and maybe not the top 50, but yes those were the ones who have gone to college . . . and have the good high paying jobs right now and have done what they wanted to do; maybe not the top paying jobs, but have stable jobs, and who have gone to reach a higher degree of education.

Question: Do you think you'll use creative writing, and not just creative writing but imaginative writing of any kind, and those kinds of assignments to focus on learning as opposed to just transactional writing?

Answer: I think so, definitely. I think it is an important part when you use it more. For example, this story that I did, I see it was just so educational for me. Taking away all the things I've learned about creative writing, I talked to my psychiatrist, and he said what good therapy it is to write about what you know and to write about those things and what I learned about. I never wrote about that in a journal before and I just think it helps me so much to see things in a different way and it sort of helps you grow and it helps my students grow as people, not just become better writers. That was the best thing I thought about it.

Question: I hope you are right. I think you are. Do you think writing classes help you focus more or less than non-writing classes.

Answer: General writing classes?

Question: Just writing classes. We are talking here about classes where you do write as opposed to classes where you say have lectures and take notes and then have a test. Do you think that you would learn more in a writing class than you would in that class or would you learn more in a good note-taking class where the professor gives you a lot of information and you take a test on it. What do you think?

Answer: I think I learn more when I do the writing. I know I do. It is proven with me. The classes where I've learned, and the information that I remember are from the classes that I have done writing in. Like, those classes where the professor just lectured, like my Ed Psych class, I couldn't tell you what I'd learned in those. In my other classes (the writing classes), they are mine. It is a part of me now. Like my creative writing classes is part of me now and it will become a part of my curriculum, and the same in a reading class I am taking now on construction, it is becoming mine [because I write in it].

Question: Of course, you are saying this before you ever start teaching. Just out of curiosity, and this is something I have heard from teachers in the field, once you get into the fold and have all the paperwork and papers you have to correct, you think it is going to change your perspective any?

Answer: I am sure it will change [my perspective some], and that's probably the thing that I most fear in getting a job: Once I get a job that I will become a cynical person . . . Just worrying about attendance and class pictures and all that nonsense. I think it takes a whole a lot of effort and a whole lot of concentration not to fall back just the way everybody else did.

***(From the Written Interview): Question: Does writing help you learn new subjects? How?

Answer: Yes. It helps to reinforce what I have been learning in the class. I am able to synthesize information and give back in the form of a paper.

Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new material in school? Why or why not?

Answer: I believe that it is important to learn both ways of writing, however, I don't believe it's more important, just equally as important. It's sad that we are not taught creative writing more in high school and college courses.

Question: Do good writers have an advantage in all aspects of secondary education learning over those who aren't as adept at writing? Consider the top 50 students in your graduating class in high school when answering this question.

Answer: Yes. Definitely. I believe this is why I have done well in other difficult courses which incorporate writing. I have been able to succeed in philosophy, history, and other such courses because of my writing ability.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes. It is a good student-centered approach. Doing this can be very beneficial to students of all ages.

Question: Do writing classes focus learning more or less than non-writing classes? Why?

Answer: Yes. I learn much more in classes where I have to write because I am forced to synthesize information.

“EO”

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes, I think it does, I think recently I've gotten to know that writing is helping me understand myself a lot more.

Question: True or false: research writing is more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new subjects in school?

Answer: Research is more important? I would say it's false.

Question: I would guess you would . . . Your research writing was allowed to be more creative in your school, right?

Answer: Yes, and that's based on seeing what other people do . . . A lot of people would just go and, not necessarily plagiarizing, but just restating the facts, change a word here, change it there, just to get it done. Like, here's an assignment, I'll do it, do the facts here, I'll take from here to the paper and turn it in, and that's it, and it goes right out of your brain as soon as you are done.

Question: Some of your classmates told me that's exactly what they did all the way through school. How about this one -- good writers usually do better in school than poor writers?

Answer: I would say definitely.

Question: Do you think when you start teaching you'll use creative kinds of assignments like you had in your high school?

Answer: Yes, I think I would like to use even more. I don't think they necessarily used that much. It's just that is what I remember because it was something different. I mean because he gave us a little bit of freedom, or maybe that's how I gained some recognition, because they recognized my writing, and they allowed us to write a lot.

Question: And that's important right?

Answer: Right . . .

Question: Do you look forward to classes that have a lot of writing in them?

Answer: Depends.

Question: Depends on what kind of writing or what?

Answer: It definitely influenced my getting into the field of English because I thought writing was one of my strengths and that's something I can do well.

Question: In your English, did you specialize in writing or literature or what?

Answer: No, I didn't really specialize with my undergraduate.

Question: Do you think that in the classes that have writing in them that you learn more or less than the classes where you either have a lecturer or read the material and then have tests?

Answer: I think when you write in either writing or discussion classes or a combination of both, it gets me to synthesize what's going on instead of just, you know, the facts, facts, facts, and kind of same thing I said with the [research] papers.

Question: Okay, so if you were teaching in the class you would feel like the students need to write more to understand?

Answer: Yes, and I think it's a lot more accurate way for a teacher to test knowledge.

Question: Do you think you would have any trouble with the paperwork and stuff like that when you do it? I mean I know you don't think about it now, because this is your first year into it, but given the fact that you're going to have 30 kids in a class and if you have 5 maybe 6 classes . . .?

Answer: I guess I always thought of that as part of the whole deal, that that was going to be part of it. I guess I always looked at that as kind of unavoidable, there's going to be a lot of grading to do.

Question: I saw one of the “60 Minutes” where there was an English teacher and she taught in an inner-city school and she said teaching is not a profession it’s a calling and if you do it right you spend 14 hours a day doing it. I guess she’s right isn’t she? It’s true if you think about it.

Answer: Indeed.

***(From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Any particular reason?

Answer: I would say whenever you have to write something, you do it in a different way. I suppose if you are asked to do a process, you have to go through the process and do some pre-writing. I think you will generate new ideas that way. Just as long as you do the process, do some pre-writing and then do some revisions, I think you are definitely getting knowledge throughout . . . making connections, you make revisions within your own mind about the way you look at things and how you think about things.

Question: Do you think transactional research style writing is more important than imaginative or exploratory writing in understanding new material in school?

Answer: I would say no, because the way they are generally used is just as a paraphrase or as a used statement of someone else’s style, and I think too much of that is done anyway. It’s just regurgitation of someone else’s facts or styles or figures.

Question: Exactly. You say by inference that if you were creating in your own mind that may be just as valuable or even more valuable than if someone gives it to you and you put it down and later regurgitate it to them?

Answer: Yes. You get your own kind of personal meaning, some kind of attachment to what is going on. In that chapter that we read for tonight, it said almost all writing that they do in schools is less than one page . . .with no process at all.

Question: The same kind of transactional writing that we have been doing forever?

Answer: Yes, and I think that is a bad way to test knowledge. I think it unfairly tests knowledge but that is the only way you're going to do any writing is in tests. The only time you write you are on the line either getting a grade, or pass or fail this test.

Question: I agree with you. Do you think good writers have an advantage in secondary education in learning over those who aren't as adept at writing? Think about the top fifty students. Were they usually good writers or did it make any difference?

Answer: I would say definitely. You always hear in college somebody say you can bullshit, and I think that it's [true]. I think I experienced that. There was one personal experience where I felt that one professor liked my writing style and that was more important than the actual substance. So yes, I think good writers can get away [with bullshit]. You can say nothing and say it well, instead of saying something poorly.

Question: Do you think you will use imaginative and creative writing assignments, not necessarily creative writing, but those kinds of assignments, to focus to learning in course content?

Answer: Yes, I'd like to.

Question: Do you thinking in general that writing classes focus learning more or less than say traditional lecture and test classes, and why?

Answer: It might just be personal preference, but I would think so. Just because I am not that involved in just [listening to] the lectures, so at least if you are writing, you have to sit there and

think about it. Hopefully you will think about it. Think about this, this and this because that is important to me, something like that.

Question: Do you think creative writing is valuable enough that you'll use it even if the paper load catches up with you? Imagine yourself down the road and give me your insights into it?

Answer: Well as far as the amount of paperwork and the amount of time I may spend grading them, I much prefer to read creative writing than to read recitation of facts for a research paper because pretty much in that side of it, I already have heard it in one form or another over and over again. Especially if it were going to be some factual material. They are going to be saying pretty much the same thing. But if it was a creative assignment I think it would be more apt to relieve the boredom and allow me to see who this person is now, or I can laugh at what they have to say, or I can emphasize [their work]. So I think yes, if there's going to be a lot of paperwork, then yes I would rather do something creative, not just straight facts.

****(From the Written Interview)*: Question: Does writing help you learn new subjects? How?

Answer: Yes. Synthesize the info.

Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new material in school? Why or a why not?

Answer: No, creative writing is the most important! As men we can't have babies, but we can make songs and stories. The creative process is our gift from God, without it you might as well be dead.

Question: Do good writers have an advantage in all aspects of secondary education learning over those who aren't as adept at writing? Consider the top 50 students in your graduating class in high school when answering this question.

Answer: Hell yes. Good writers can be clueless and totally bullshit their way to good grades on tests, essays, etc.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes, every week if possible!

Question: Do writing classes focus learning more less than non-writing classes? Why?

Answer: Yes, they must produce a concrete product. It demands quality thought and participation.

“LS”

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes. I like to write, unlike most people. I love to write, and when I’ve got to do a paper, I’ll get it done a week in advance normally.

Question: So you’re comfortable writing, usually, you just have never done any creative kind of writing?

Answer: I really couldn’t do any.

Question: Do you think research writing is more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new subjects in school?

Answer: No.

Question: Even though you didn’t do much of that [creative] kind?

Answer: Right.

Question: How did you end up with the opinion that it doesn’t? At the college level?

Answer: Probably.

Question: Did you have creative kinds of assignments in college?

Answer: Yes, I can't specifically remember off hand.

Question: But in English classes in college you generally have some of that?

Answer: Right . . .

Question: Do you think good writers usually do better in school than poor writers?

Answer: Overall?

Question: Yes?

Answer: Probably.

Question: But there's some hesitation there. Is it because you don't think it's that significant?

Answer: No . . .

Question: Do you think in the course of the work that you will give in the regular classroom that you'll give creative kinds of assignments, the kind you didn't have? I mean you had them in college obviously.

Answer: Right.

.Question: And you probably think that they help you learn

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you think you will be using them when you teach?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Probably will? How about, remember when you said that you like writing sometimes, do you look forward to classes that have a lot of writing in them?

Answer: No.

Question: You don't? You would rather have the other kinds of class?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Why, is it easier?

Answer: No, it's not that it's easier, it's just I don't look forward to having someone saying you have to write about this, you have to do this, you have to do that.

Question: Your favorite creative assignments, if you could sort of do them, would you like that better or not?

Answer: No, I probably would not because I . . . don't like to be told what to write about yet. I don't like to be given freedom just to write whatever I want, do you understand?

Question: No.

Answer: Like if they gave a list and you can write on any of them would be better than saying research this and write about two objectives or two different things.

Question: Okay, I understand, but that's going back to high school when you had that specific kind of assignment?

Answer: Right.

Question: By creative kinds of assignments I mean specifically what you're talking about, that you explore a topic or read something and then you give some kind of assignment. Like, "Put yourself in the place of the main character, what would you do?" or something like that, as opposed to a traditional book report . . . In my mind it helps learning, I mean it focuses it at least. That's more or less what I had in mind. Do you think writing classes, or writing to learn in those classes, the classes where we use writing, do you think that you learn more in those classes than the ones that have lecture and test, or is it the other way around?

Answer: No, I think you learn more in the writing class.

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Because? Any particular reason? When you do the writing, how does it help you learn?

Answer: Ways of grammar, phonics, you learn narratives, styles of writing, you learn about different subjects like history and math.

Question: What I am after, let me ask maybe another question. Do you think transactional sorts of research writing, like the kinds that we, at least I, did mostly in high school, are more important than imaginative or exploratory writing when you are exploring new subjects? When you are exploring new subjects you say, okay, that kind of ties in with it. How do you think that sort of writing helps you?

Answer: It is usually on experiences. It is easier to write about something that you know.

Question: So related to something that you have done. Experience really helps you with it by expressing yourself, right? Do you think, like going back to the top 50 kids . . . in your class, do you think the good writers had an advantage in all aspects of secondary education learning over those who are not as good writers?

Answer: Yes.

Question: How do you think it help them learn?

Answer: Probably gave them the right answer. (???)

Question: So they had better grades because they wrote better, and with a lot of writing assigned, you couldn't get by with just . . .

Answer: No, but you had to learn to write well . . .

Question: Most of your [writing] was like research papers or something like that?

Answer: I can't remember any creative writing . . .

Question: Let's talk about all the writing including transactional and creative. Do you think classes that have both of those kinds of writing or any form of writing in the learning process are more or less beneficial than say traditional courses which are like lectures?

Answer: More beneficial.

Question: How does writing help you learn in that respect? You have any idea how it does?

Answer: No.

Question: No clue? Do you want me to tell you? It's like when you hear it, you write it down. It has to go through your mind at least two, maybe three times, depending on how many times you write it.

Answer: Oh.

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Does writing help you learn subjects? How?

Answer: Definitely. The only way that I retain information is when I write it.

Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new material in school? Why or why not?

Answer: No. Students need to be able to explore/re-write in their own words what they have heard. Imaginative writing opens the mind. It encourages uniqueness.

Question: Do good writers have an advantage in all aspects of secondary education learning over those who aren't as adept at writing? Consider the top 50 students in your graduating class in high school when answering this question.

Answer: Yes. They need to be able to express their problems and points. They have to be able to get their point across clearly . . .

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes. I don't know how at this moment, but I will use creative writing somehow.

Question: Do writing classes focus learning more or less than non-writing classes? Why?

Answer: Less. That's why the classes are so much fun. (???) They keep the student's attention.

It's also a good idea to do group work.

Section 2: From the Scale and Opinionaire

(Includes responses from the four preservice teachers from Question 4, Section Two)

From the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students

Question 7: I use writing to help me study and learn new subjects.

From the Initial Scale: Almost always (4), Often (3), Sometimes (4), Seldom (1), Almost never (0)

From the Exit Scale: Almost always (4), Often (5), Sometimes (2), Seldom (1), Almost never (0)

Question 12: I use my journal writing to aid my learning process.

From the Initial Scale: Almost always (0), Often (5), Sometimes (4), Seldom (1), Almost never (2)

From the Exit Scale: Almost always (0), Often (5), Sometimes (4), Seldom (3), Almost never (0)

Question 13: A student who writes well gets better grades in many subjects than someone who doesn't.

From the Initial Scale: Almost always (5), Often (4), Sometimes (2), Seldom (0), Almost never (0)

From the Exit Scale: Almost always (4), Often (6), Sometimes (1), Seldom (1), Almost never (0)

Question 28: I use creative writing to help me understand what I'm learning.

From the Initial Scale: Almost always (1), Often (2), Sometimes (3), Seldom (4), Almost never (2)

From the Exit Scale: Almost always (0), Often (3), Sometimes (4), Seldom (4), Almost never (0)

Question 40: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

From the Initial Scale: Almost always (3), Often (6), Sometimes (1), Seldom (1), Almost never (1)

From the Exit Scale: Almost always (4), Often (6), Sometimes (1), Seldom (0), Almost never (1)

From the Confidential Composition Opinionnaire

SECTION 1

Question 5: The English course for junior high school should include a research paper so that students can learn how to use the library and source materials for papers in their own courses.

Strongly disagree (0), Disagree (1), Uncertain (2), Agree (5), Strongly agree (4)

Question 10: The English course for junior high school should include creative writing opportunities so that students can learn to explore their own thoughts about literature and other classroom coursework.

Strongly disagree (0), Disagree (2), Uncertain (0), Agree (0), Strongly agree (10)

SECTION 2

Question 3: The major obligation of instruction in composition is to help students learn and practice the conventions of standard educated English.

Strongly disagree (5), Disagree (2), Uncertain (2), Agree (3), Strongly agree (0)

Question 5: Assignments during the last two years of high school should require primarily expository writing.

Strongly disagree (4), Disagree (0), Uncertain (5), Agree (2), Strongly agree (1)

SECTION 3

Question 4: Composition programs in the elementary grades should be directed primarily at encouraging students to self-expression.

Strongly disagree (0), Disagree (0), Uncertain (0), Agree (7), Strongly agree (5)

Question 6: Composition programs in the elementary grades should be designed primarily to help students learn to discipline their writing and develop awareness of accepted standards of good prose.

Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (5), Uncertain (5), Agree (1), Strongly agree (0)

Question 9: Students given freedom in composing will discover various types of writing for themselves.

Strongly disagree (0), Disagree (0), Uncertain (0), Agree (4), Strongly agree (8)

SECTION 4

Question 1: The experience of composing can and should nurture the student's quest for self-realization and his need to relate constructively to his peers.

Strongly disagree (0), Disagree (0), Uncertain (1), Agree (6), Strongly agree (5)

Question 7: Students should explore their thoughts about literature and classroom discussions by writing about them.

Strongly disagree (0), Disagree (0), Uncertain (2), Agree (2), Strongly agree (8)

Question 2

Part Two. Inservice Teachers

I will begin the in-service teacher part of Question 2 by excerpting pertinent data from the written interviews. This will be followed by composite data from the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Teachers, and from the Confidential Composition Opinionaire.

Section 1: From the Interviews

“K”

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: More. Students seem to retain and understand written exercises more than non-written.

Question: Do you think students benefit more from transactional writing (traditional book reports, research papers, compare and contrast essays, etc.) than from imaginative and/or creative exploratory writing in the secondary classroom?

Answer: They benefit from both. I devote one semester to each type of writing.

Question: Do good writers do better academically than poor writers? Why or why not?

Answer: Yes. Good writers are better at processing information and organizing. The skills that make a good writer usually make a good student . . .

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies? Please explain.

Answer: . . . Writing is a great way of learning. I believe that writing should be incorporated into every class in every school . . .

“P”

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: After writing time is completed [the students] underline ideas that could be used in a paper. Toward the end of the semester we go back and select journal entries to use in creative columns, stories or plays. I use these assignments to allow the students to imagine, invest and explore their creative spirit . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: The majority of my students learn new material more by writing than non-written exercises. When they make mistakes in their writing they can relate to it more than if they are completing other exercises. Students like to compare and share their work with others in the writing lab.

Question: Do you think students benefit more from transactional writing (traditional book reports, research papers, compare and contrast essays, etc.) than from imaginative and/or creative exploratory writing in the secondary classroom? Why or why not?

Answer: The ninth graders need a combination of traditional writing and creative writing. They do not know how to write two and three paragraph papers. They practice writing -- descriptive, narrative, persuasive, etc. I stress these areas because the senior high faculty expect the students to be able to write the traditional papers. We spend about one month on imaginative, creative writing.

Question: Do good writers do better academically than poor writers? Why or why not?

Answer: I believe that “good” writers do much better academically than poor writers. If a student has learned to write using the “process” approach they will be able to organize their thoughts and ideas better. They will be able to think through and organize themselves better in other classes

.“R”

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Please describe.

Answer: . . . I use creativity from quizzes to analysis, asking my students to assume roles of characters, making poetry from literature and from real life, to interact with their own voice with literature in creative ways . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: Yes, reader’s logs and other responses or applications of text make literature alive for my students.

Question: Do you think students benefit more from transactional writing (traditional book reports, research papers, compare and contrast essays, etc.) than from imaginative and/or creative exploratory writing in the secondary classroom? Why or why not?

Answer: No -- I try to combine elements of both -- creative elements add personality to otherwise dull responses to assignments.

Question: Do good writers do better academically than poor writers? Why or why not?

Answer: Writers do better -- sometimes even poor writers who write frequently become good learners, and perhaps eventually real writers . . .

“N”

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Please describe.

Answer: I use writing to focus learning in the area of literature . . . Letters to authors, extension of literature stories, . . .writing stories in different points of view . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn the material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: (Yes). Activities that require a hands-on approach increase learning.

Question: Do you think students benefit more from transactional writing (traditional book reports, research papers, compare and contrast essays, etc.) than from imaginative and/or creative exploratory writing in the secondary classroom? Why or why not?

Answer: As a secondary classroom teacher, I know the value of teaching all types of writing. Students need to learn a variety of styles of writing.

Question: Do good writers do better academically than poor writers? Why or why not?

Answer: Good writers generally do better academically than poor writers. Good writers enjoy school more. Because school consists of much writing these students feel more comfortable in the academic settings . . .

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies?

Answer: All methods of teaching can promote learning. Obviously, more personal involvement increases learning.

“F”

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Please describe.

Answer: When I taught English, I used an autobiographical novel called *Listening for the Crack of Dawn*. My students kept a journal of childhood experiences similar to the ones in the novel (1st day of school, favorite teacher, personal experiences). From the journal they built their first “childhood experience” paper. Later, I showed them pictures from *Portraits of Appalachia*, a book of black and white photographs of people living in West Virginia, Kentucky, etc. Then, I asked them to write short stories or essays about one of the pictures. We also read *Where the Lilies Bloom*, a novel set in North Carolina. We continued with personal writing and character sketches of people in our families. The final project was a family history scrap book which contained family stories and an autobiographical sketch. In my Drama I class, last semester, we wrote collaborative plays and acted them out. All of my drama classes are given technical theater projects. One of the options is to write a play. Last semester about 15 students wrote a play. We are currently producing one of the plays that [a student] wrote last year. She won the playwriting contest at the West Virginia Thespian contest last year . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: There must be a balance of reading, writing and talking. Different students learn in different ways. An effective teacher attempts to use all of the resources. Some of my students need to write. Some see it as a chore and as a result, put so little thought into it that they receive little benefit.

Question: Do you think students benefit more from transactional writing (traditional book reports, research papers, compare and contrast essays, etc.) than from imaginative and/or creative exploratory writing in the secondary classroom? Why or why not?

Answer: No. students benefit from writing when it is important to them. As a result, the writing of a poem can be a more meaningful experience than the writing of an essay if the student is passionate about it. Therefore, teachers should choose the assignments carefully. (Don't bore them to death).

Question: Do good writers do better academically than poor writers? Why or why not?

Answer: Good writers can usually communicate more effectively with the boss, the teacher, the maid, and the senator than poor writers. This gives them an advantage in all of life, not merely in school. Often, good writers are able to "prove" what they know to teachers as well as question about what they may need to know. Good writing opens a path of communication between the teacher and student. Both benefit . . .

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies? Please explain.

Answer: I stress writing in my classes. Even in my drama classes we write. I find that writing allows students time to reflect and helps them create more interesting characters (in plays).

Students must take an active role in learning when they write. They cannot be passive observers.

That is what leads to learning engagement.

"R"

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Please describe.

Answer: Sometimes they are asked to write about something that we are reading. Here are some examples:

1. Students are asked to write an original story that has the same theme as one we've read in class.
2. After reading a tragedy, students are asked to write one of their own.
3. Students sometimes rewrite an "old" story and update the setting.
4. When we read ballads, students write their own and put them to music if they like . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: I think that writing assignments require more individual concentration and internalization than other exercises do. I believe that a student's depth of understanding increases more rapidly when asked to write about a subject.

Question: Do you think students benefit more from transactional writing (traditional book reports, research papers, compare and contrast essays, etc.) than from imaginative and/or creative exploratory writing in the secondary classroom? Why or why not?

Answer: I do not think that students benefit more from transactional writing than from creative writing. I do believe that both are important. I think that creative writing requires more thought (higher level critical thinking skills) than does transactional writing. In order to be a good creative writer, one must be able to apply writing skills, analyze and synthesize information, and to think logically. In most transactional writing, all one needs to do is to follow a prescribed formula.

Question: Do good writers do better academically than poor writers? Why or why not?

Answer: This depends upon what you mean by "good writers." Good transactional writers generally do well academically. People who are good transactional writers and "good" creative

writers generally do well academically. They are usually readers as well as writers, so their vocabulary is usually advanced. They can often understand material presented to them. They can decipher written material with little difficulty. Good writers have the ability to do well academically. They don't always do well. People who are good creative writers are sometimes daydreamers who are bored in school. Often they would rather read books or write stories and amuse themselves rather than listen to a lecture or to do a second or third practice exercise on the same material that they learned three days ago.

“G”

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content? Please describe.

Answer: Every novel program has a creative response assignment given. Students are given suggestions for responding but the assignments are always open-ended within limits given to the novel chosen. Innovative techniques and styles are greatly encouraged.

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: Writing assignments help students learn more new material of their choice rather than the teacher's choice. Writing expands thought processes and the writing process.

Question: Do you think students benefit more from transactional writing (traditional book reports, research papers, compare and contrast essays, etc.) than from imaginative and/or creative exploratory writing in the secondary classroom? Why or why not?

Answer: No. Students need both writing experiences to be better students.

Question: Do good writers do better academically than poor writers? Why or why not?

Answer: Yes. Writers expand the thought process. Process becomes a method of working and thinking. Poorer students lack the level of skills that writers have. Interpersonal and intra-personal skills of writers are better . . . Writers make connections where non-writers do not.

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies? Please explain.

Answer: Writing is a skill that all people need. Writing needs to be separated from the curriculum to be a specific class with an overall emphasis on creative writing to a wide variety of content areas. Vocational, academic, and special-ed are other areas which need writing skills.

“M”

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: I would say it would depend on the type of writing. Expressing their opinions in writing may help lead to self-examination. Research papers will most certainly help to store knowledge. Sometimes, just seeing something on paper is more retaining than the spoken word.

Question: Do you think students benefit more from transactional writing (traditional book reports, research papers, compare and contrast essays, etc.) than from imaginative and/or creative exploratory writing in the secondary classroom? Why or why not?

Answer: This is a difficult question to answer. Even though the traditional writings help them learn about perhaps subjects, topics, etc. and the “outside knowledge,” creative writings help the students learn about the “inside feelings or ideas.” Both serve a purpose.

Question: Do good writers do better academically than poor writers? Why or why not?

Answer: From what I have seen in my own classroom in the past 24 years . . . The students who excel academically do a really good job of carrying an idea through to the end. Also, they do a good job on mechanics. However, I have had the slower students produce really good, sound ideas. In this case I generally have to wade through interpretation . . .

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies? Please explain.

Answer: I have to be honest and say that I am basically a traditional English teacher. Grammar is the main emphasis in my class. The most writing that my students do is a response to a story or poem.

Section 2: From the Scale and Opinionaire

From the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Teachers

Question 9: Students who write well generally do better in high school and college than those who don't.

Almost always (5), Often (3), Sometimes (0), Seldom (0), Almost never (0)

Question 14: Creative writing is a valuable learning tool for all students.

Almost always (4), Often (4), Sometimes (0), Seldom (0), Almost never (0)

Question 22: It is more important that students learn how to write essays than to write stories or poems.

Almost always (0), Often (0), Sometimes (2), Seldom (5), Almost never (1)

Question 24: The research paper is the most important form of writing to teach in high school.

Almost always (0), Often (1), Sometimes (1), Seldom (5), Almost never (1)

Question 37: I use creative writing assignments to help students explore literature and other classroom material.

Almost always (3), Often (4), Sometimes (1), Seldom (0), Almost never (0)

Question 47: Writing is a form of learning.

Almost always (7), Often (1), Sometimes (0), Seldom (0), Almost never (0)

From the Confidential Composition Opinionnaire

SECTION 1

Question 5: The English course for junior high school should include a research paper so that students can learn how to use the library and source materials for papers in their own courses.

Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (1), Uncertain (1), Agree (3), Strongly agree (2)

Question 10: The English course for junior high school should include creative writing opportunities so that students can learn to explore their own thoughts about literature and other classroom coursework.

Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (1), Uncertain (0), Agree (1), Strongly agree (5)

SECTION 2

Question 3: The major obligation of instruction in composition is to help students learn and practice the conventions of standard educated English.

Strongly disagree (3), Disagree (3), Uncertain (0), Agree (2), Strongly agree (0) Question 5:

Assignments during the last two years of high school should require primarily expository writing.

Strongly disagree (3), Disagree (2), Uncertain (2), Agree (0), Strongly agree (1)

SECTION 3

Question 4: Composition programs in the elementary grades should be directed primarily at encouraging students to self-expression.

Strongly disagree (0), Disagree (0), Uncertain (1), Agree (5), Strongly agree (2)

Question 6: Composition programs in the elementary grades should be designed primarily to help students learn to discipline their writing and develop awareness of accepted standards of good prose.

Strongly disagree (3), Disagree (2), Uncertain (2), Agree (1), Strongly agree (0)

Question 9: Students given freedom in composing will discover various types of writing for themselves.

Strongly disagree (0), Disagree (0), Uncertain (1), Agree (4), Strongly agree (3)

SECTION 4

Question 1: The experience of composing can and should nurture the student's quest for self realization and his need to relate constructively to his peers.

Strongly disagree (0), Disagree (1), Uncertain (1), Agree (4), Strongly agree (2)

Question 7: Students should explore their thoughts about literature and classroom discussions by writing about them.

Strongly disagree (0), Disagree (1), Uncertain (0), Agree (2), Strongly agree (5)

Question 3. Do preservice and inservice teachers' perceived creative writing abilities affect their attitudes toward teaching creative writing and/or using creative writing as a learning tool in the classroom?

Part One. Perceived Abilities

Part One of Question 3 will look at the perceived writing abilities of the pre-service and inservice teachers. Section 1 will explore the data for the preservice teachers gleaned from classroom papers, the Initial Interview, and journal entries. Section 2 will look at the inservice teachers, from responses to the written interview.

Section 1: Preservice Teachers

“HN”

Unfortunately, the writing that I’ve had to do in the classroom is not usually the kind of writing I like to do. I don’t really remember what kind of writing I did in grade school, so obviously it must not have been that much. In the elementary school, we did do a few reports, but that was just basically copying a few paragraphs out of the encyclopedia. I do, however, remember one writing assignment in 9th grade that I was very proud of. My class was having trouble knowing when and where to use commas, so Mrs. S., our teacher, made us write a story using commas in at least seven different ways. I got 100 percent on it!

In high school the only creative writing I remember doing was a story that had to be written in three different viewpoints. I called mine the “Labor of Love Triangle.” I was pleased with it. I took Honors Writing my senior year, but even in there, we stuck to the writing book. We did some analysis, but we never had to write anything completely fictional. College hasn’t been any different as far as the kind of writing I’ve been doing. I basically only had to write about other people’s work, and also do a few lab reports.

Question: . . . Do you still write creatively?

Answer: Not as much as I did when I was younger. I think it's just because I'm more into studying and I'm assigned more writing now than I was before.

Question: Not necessarily creative?

Answer: Yeah. I write what I have to know. I don't know, I'm trying to get back into it because I've always wanted to do writing.

Question: How about journals, do you keep a journal of any kind?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Is it more creative or functional or a combination of both?

Answer: Functional, I guess.

Question: Functional?

Answer: It's just my thoughts.

Question: Well functional is the sense of telling you for a purpose, like in a class, taking notes.

Answer: Well I guess then it would be creative.

Question: More creative because it comes through your mind?

Answer: Like what I did that day or what I'm going to do.

Question: Yours is sort of like a combination, you think about things, but you also write down exactly what you've done, which is a good memory technique.

Answer: But it doesn't really have anything to do with — it's more like what I was thinking that was going on, not like feelings.

Question: That's expressive, that's what we call expressive writing, right? And in my mind, expressive leads more to creative than to transactional, although there are some questions about that. Some people think they're even.

Answer: Functional would be like I have a test at 3:30.

Question: Yeah, stuff like that.

Answer: I don't do that. I don't write things down like that. I don't even have a date book. So that's why I forget!

Question: And there wasn't any kind of writing, creative kinds of assignments, anywhere else in high school?

Answer: I don't think so . . . Actually, in the ninth grade we wrote creatively. I remember one thing I wrote, this is because I was looking through it Monday. I pulled this thing she used to teach grammar, commas actually, and we had to write this story using commas in different ways. We had to make sure we used the commas in a compound sentence, after a date, whatever.

Question: But she let you make your own paragraph?

Answer: Yes.

Question: That's the kind of assignments I'm talking about!

Answer: Nothing else I can remember, really.

Question: That's okay, that means you had some.

***I write both because I have to and because I love it. Writing helps me vent. Whenever something is really bothering me, I write it down, usually in great detail, and by the time I'm finished I feel much better. I basically stick to writing two types of things, poems and letters. I really enjoy writing poetry. I usually write poems about love and for the most part they have a happy tone. I like poems that read easily.

My favorite things to write, however, aren't poems, but are letters. I have notebooks full of letters I've written to people but have never sent. They are basically everything that I want to tell people for one reason or another.

***Creative writing to me means a way of expressing myself. I've always written to get my emotions out. However I've never developed any characters. Usually, I'll write a poem or I'll write in a diary or a journal. If somebody has upset me, I usually write a letter to that person telling him or her how I feel. I hardly ever send them though.

This semester, however, I've been expressing myself through the protagonist in my story, Julie. She feels like I feel. I think I've made her a little bit more arrogant than I am, but basically, Julie is me.

I always said that I wanted to be a writer. I remember writing stories when I was little, but when I got older and realized that my path was the English path, I, for some reason, stopped writing creatively. I'm glad that we are required to write such a long story instead of a bunch of little ones. This is more challenging and to be honest, I think it's helping me keep my sanity this semester.

For the past five weeks, I've been having some problems in my personal life. One would think that those problems would make assignments harder to work on. However, the more that happens in my life, the more I develop Julie. That's what creative writing is to me, a way of letting myself go, a way to forget every thing that is happening in my life, and only focusing on what is going on in the living of my characters.

****(From the Initial Interview):* Question: When you think of the phrase "creative writing," what comes to your mind?

Answer: Poems, mostly.

Question: Okay.

Answer: Poems. In fact I just went home Monday because I wanted to get some stuff from high school that I thought might help me with this [writing] conference, but it turned out I couldn't, but I found a whole bunch of old stuff that I had written when I was in the 8th or 9th grade and mostly what I wrote was just poems. Stupid poems when I read them now, because I was in love with this guy. Everything is about him, it's just so cheezy. I mean, I can't believe I felt that way, you know?

Question: When you saw the syllabus for this English 108 class, and you saw that 30 page paper, short story, what went through your mind?

Answer: I was excited about it to be honest with you, because I knew I would never do it otherwise unless I had to . . . It's going to be pretty good, something I can be proud of anyway.

“AB”

***I am happy to say that writing was encouraged in my home when I was young. As I progressed through the school system, I was introduced to sentence parts and eventually little paragraphs. When I was in the elementary and junior high school, I loved to write ultra-fiction stories. I liked to create settings and introduced outrageous yet real characters. I must admit that my writing was heavily influenced by the books I was reading like, “Something Queer Is Going On,” and “The Secret Garden.” Using your imagination is healthy and very important for writing. When I was young, pre-high school, I could come up with the zaniest ideas . . . I did however write poetry in the high school. I also wrote for the newspaper. These activities warmed me back up to English. In college, I loved English and writing too. Everyone would moan and groan but I loved it . . . Now, I'm in graduate school and I'm back to a lot of scientific writing . . . Creative

writing has become a personal responsibility. If I don't make time to write, I'll forget how to do it well. I miss some of those English classes where you wrote whatever and just kept revising. It was fun and you have great expectations.

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: How about yourself? Do you do creative writing?

Answer: I do, but definitely not as often as I used to. When I was in high school I was involved in underground newspaper groups and stuff, where we did little things, but now it's, like, you really seem to read more.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing -- your journals, letters, etc., to be creative or functional?

Answer: Yes, creative.

Question: Creative?

Answer: Creative, because . . . If you read it, maybe to the reader, like it's very personal. I like to use any imaginative expressions, so like, the grammar, the spelling and all that is just out the window. Punctuation, everything is a mess, but the person who is reading it, it is very animated to them, probably because it's somebody I know well who knows how I speak, so they kind of read it like almost a dialogue. I love writing letters.

Question: So in your context of creative writing, your journals are not just functional like taking notes and stuff like that?

Answer: No, they use a lot of emotion . . .

Question: Are you looking forward to writing the story for English 108?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Were you to start with?

Answer: Probably not. I was a little hesitant, but I kind of still thought it was cool, to tell you the truth. But supplementary writing, that kind of takes away from it. Like, I would like it if all I had to do was just constantly doing things for the story but, I mean, of course we have to do other stuff.

(End, from Initial Interview)

***On the first day of this class (English 108), I was amazed at the amount of writing we were looking ahead at. Most of all, I dreaded the short story. “How will I do it?” I thought to myself. Then we were assigned the first six pages.

Naturally, I put it off until I couldn’t handle it anymore. I went to the computer labs with my pre-writing notes, and began to copy my written text onto the screen. As I became more comfortable with the keyboard, I started writing extra sentences, expanding the written text. I only had three pages written and when I left there were eight pages on disk.

The most creative part of my writing would definitely be placing myself in the mind and body of a teen. I’m barely out of adolescence, but I’ve changed so much. I suppose I’ve learned through experience, much like the experiences my characters encounter.

Meeting teens on that special level is fun yet challenging. It is also a good practice for relating to the minds of my students. I try to keep in mind the hardships and concerns of teens when I plan lessons. The novels I’ve selected and the writing I assign must be appealing to young adults. Reading has helped me write better in general. Reading adolescent literature has helped me to be more creative in my own short story.

***My personal writing is definitely creative. I say this because my content is “live.” I write exactly what I am thinking and I wouldn’t consider that functional.

“JB”

***I write because I’m expected to. My classes have been usually the only place where I write. The one and only time I ever wrote on my own, the work was published. Funny, I don’t even have a copy of the poem. I guess writing is something I enjoy but have never utilized to its fullest extent . . .

I can recall a class I had in high school. It was a creative writing class, and I did well. My best paper was an information paper on why most humans refer to their personal belongings as “my shit.” The details escape me, but I remember it being a work of art!

Question: Did you do any creative writing?

Answer: In high school?

Question: Yes.

Answer: Yes, I did. I actually had a class and it was pretty much a joke. I hate saying it like that because the one lady that ran the class was a very good writer, just not a very good teacher, and she didn’t express herself in the classroom at all and we did no reading. It was strictly writing and it was strictly in class, so it was pretty much a bunch of people that didn’t want to do anything in the class. We just sat in the class.

Question: So, when you did . . . journals, did you do them creatively or functionally?

Answer: Both. I actually tried my hand at a little poetry for my journals; that’s pretty much the only creative writing I did. I used it to remind me of days, and things that I learned or whatever, and I tried to keep up with stuff that way. It helped me to get through undergrad, it really did. I mean I used it a lot as study guides literally, stuff that had happened during the day . . .

Question: When you came to this class and you saw the syllabus, and you saw that long short story that you had to write, were you looking forward to it?

Answer: Yes, I have a lot of it done actually, so I've put a pretty big dent in it . . . (End, from Interviews)

***Before I came to this class, I thought of creative writing as short stories, poems or books. It was always for other people, for an audience.

*** I write because I'm expected to. My classes have been usually the only place I write. The one and only time I ever wrote on my own, the work was published. Funny, I don't even have a copy of the poem. I guess writing is something I enjoy but have never utilized to its fullest extent.

“JK”

I write in many ways for many reasons and have been doing so for a long period of time. When I began writing, it was simply the accomplishment of scratching the pencil into meaningful symbols. Then the pride my parents and others displayed, due to my new feat, furthered my wanting to write. At such a young age I wrote about fantastic worlds I was dreaming about, and every piece of writing was a creative form entirely conjured upon my own free will . . .

In college . . . I . . . found a way to write about . . . forced topics in my own way. During this time I expanded my personal writings into journals, the poems, stories, scenes from life, ideas for books, movies, and any other type of writing.

I write because I need to, because I need to express what I have inside to prove my ideas and thoughts are worthy.

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you do creative writing?

Answer: I did some creative writing in some of the English classes in high school but . . .

Question: How long have you done it?

Answer: It started a very little bit my senior year in high school . . . Probably more intensely in the last couple of years, so I'm not sure how long a time.

Question: Was it for other course content or specifically to be just creative writing, like poetry or short stories and stuff like that?

Answer: Probably I would assume that if you had to specify, for just creative writing purposes . . .

Question: Do you consider your personal writing, the journals and letters that you do, to be creative or functional?

Answer: Both, but more creative than functional.

Question: Do you ever do journals on your own just for the heck of it?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you?

Answer: Just thoughts or whatever . . .

***I believe being creative is being yourself. Creativity comes from within and isn't molded by others. Creative writing is writing from within. It's putting yourself on the paper. It's just going with what you believe. Creative writing has no correct form and has no limitations. I believe creative writing is the central part of what we think of as writing. Everything else is documenting or regurgitating, writing to fit the structure others have built. I read somewhere an author say that all a writer has on the inside but is afraid to let out is exactly what literature is waiting for.

Every time a great writer comes along, it is his differences that make him great. It's the ability to believe that what you write and how you write has value, that's everything. Creative writing is finding new ways to make the same point. Creative writing is building new structures. Creative writing is freeing your mind. It is the ability to say what you want to say, how you want to say it and know that it's exactly what you intended. Creative writing is expression. Creative writing is a means of understanding oneself and being that individual, that way we know we really are. Creative writing is honest writing.

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: When you saw the syllabus for this class, were you looking forward to the short story that you had to write?

Answer: Yes . . .

“KP”

There are many reasons why I write. They range from writing research papers to fulfilling homework requirements to leaving my roommate funny messages. Usually though I write to tap into the feelings that I have stored up inside myself. This really helps me to understand and look at my problems from a different point of view. I guess that's another reason why I write, so that I can understand other people and they can understand me! When I was little my grandmother and I used to write short poems so that we could remember things. That's another reason why I write. When I get older, I want to remember every detail of what I have been through in my life! Writing will help me to accomplish this feat.

The kinds of writing that I do include journal writing, writing e-mail messages, and sometimes I try to write poetry. I have always been interested in recording the events of my life, so journal writing is probably the majority of the writing I do. Other things I write are papers for

classes, etc. In many of my classes, we are required to respond to everything that we read. This is another thing I do a lot of. Poetry, on the other hand, I don't do a lot of. I guess you could say that the reason for this is because I am not inspired a lot.

I don't actually remember writing in any of my grade school classes. When I was in third grade, the teacher was totally gung ho about creative writing. Each student in the class got to write their own short story, edit it, etc., and then they were all entered into a contest. I can't remember what place a ribbon I got, but I do remember it because it was a purple shimmering ribbon. Maybe they gave them to all the students!

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: Do you do any creative writing, have you?

Answer: I try to once in awhile, but it is very hard to find time to do writing . . .

Question: Now, do you do personal writing like journals or anything like that?

Answer: Yes, I do journals.

Question: Are those creative or functional in nature?

Answer: They are more like getting my emotions out, you know, away from an event, get everything organized, but sometimes, you know, like in high school, I did a few things creative on my own, like poetry and stuff like that. Usually I'll do it when, like, not just to do it. I'll do it when I really feel like I have a strong idea or something . . . *(End, from Interview)*

***Creative writing has come to mean many different things to me. It has grown into a process that allows me to use a wide variety of skills and tools . . .

Creative writing helps me to learn about myself, the things around me, and also my writing potential. First, I can use creative writing to get my thoughts organized. This helps a lot, because it usually helps me see things more clearly. Secondly, in terms of how creative writing helps me, it

has played a huge role in helping me discover my own voice . . . I have even become brave enough to put my voice in some of my transactional papers.

In other terms, creative writing to me means being given the opportunity to create, and invent something that is entirely my own, characters, images, poems, etc. It isn't always that people are given this opportunity, the creative writing allows for this. Creative writing also means to me that I am being given the chance to learn more vividly. It is not only through my own writing but also others that I can learn not only about different things, but also how to be a better creative writer.

All in all, creative writing means many things to me, all of which I can benefit greatly from.

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: When you saw the syllabus for this 108 class and you saw that 25 to 30 page creative writing assignment, were you looking forward to it?

Answer: No, I was, like 'oh no, what am I going to do?' Not really, because I don't know, 25 to 30 pages is a little scary.

“CI”

***I write to communicate with others, to express my feelings, thoughts, dreams, hopes, and fears. I often do so in a journal I keep by my bedside, letters to good friends, or to my family.

Most of the writing I do is admittedly for my classes. I do not feel comfortable, or rather, able to be “creative” in my writings. I want to learn more, and am rather embarrassed to admit that I have not done much creative writing.

While I was getting my undergraduate degree in journalism, the professors wanted/encouraged us to be very clever with leads and segways [sic], but also write very

succinctly. Most of the writing I have done has been essays, factual papers. I have also “attempted” to do some poetry and other types of creative prompts, etc., at workshops and conferences.

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: But you didn’t do any creative writing, I mean other than tasks that you were assigned?

Answer: I suppose technically I did, I never really sat down to it. I wrote in my diary and journals, always kept a diary and still do. I wrote creatively in my speech classes, we did after dinner speeches, and so we had to do that, and perform that, which was interesting. And I forget what the other kind of speech is called -- original, or oratory -- and that had to be creative . . .

Question: Do you do journals on your own?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Are they mostly functional, or is there any creativity involved?

Answer: It kind of depends . . . I find myself doing them really more when I am sad, and I always remember what people say, that you should write them down, maybe if you write your feelings down, they will make you understand things more. My mom always said just write them down, and so they are functional in that way, but they are creative in the way that a lot of times, a lot of it would be thought of as kind of neat . . . when I’m gone someday. Like letters to different people, like I have letters to my father, letters to Mom, one to my brother, and my friends . . .

Question: Are they creative?

Answer: They are just very expressive, I guess. I don’t know, [they are] about something that may be going on at that time.

Question: That's absolutely creative. You know it's not really just functional in that sense, because you're expressing yourself.

Answer: Very expressive.

Question: The early steps of creativity more than, I think, being functional.

Answer: Yes. So those [things], I think they are exciting to do . . .

***Before I entered this class I didn't think I was much of a writer, especially not a creative writer. I knew I could write a decent research paper. Having majored in journalism in my undergraduate, I even believe I am a good journalist. But the creative writing, I didn't think I could do it . . .

I realize that the letters I write to others and in my journal are creative. In fact, I think it would be interesting to publish my letters someday as many famous authors have done in the past . . .

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: When you came into the class and you saw the syllabus, and you saw that 25 page paper on there, what went through your mind?

Answer: Well I actually knew it was going to be a long paper beforehand, because I had talked to you guys a little beforehand, and I'd dreaded it a lot of the summer to tell you the truth. Not really dreaded the class, just thinking how am I going to do this and how is it all going to come together. I was excited when I first talked about what I could write about, and when I started writing, but now I just don't know . . .

Question: You say you dread it?

Answer: I'm apprehensive about it.

Question: You are apprehensive about it, but if you had a little reinforcement?

Answer: It's stressing me out.

Question: Stressing you out? You haven't cried or anything about it?

Answer: I haven't cried about it, no, but I have written in my journal about it . .

“MF”

***Most of the writing that I have done revolves around the classroom. I do not write creatively. I do however, enjoy research writing. I like the idea of having a topic or opinion and focusing on my thoughts.

Up until this time, I have done very little creative writing. I have written many papers on factual topics of my own choosing, but I have never given any thought to writing a short story or any other type of creative writing. The only type of creative writing that I have experienced has been letter writing. That is nearly the only time that I just focus on being me. At nearly all other times I am just a factual person. In high school I had a college board writing course, but I chose to write solely about the things that were tangible to me.

I did do some creative writing in English 1, but it made me feel inadequate and left out. I guess I forgot about it, because I thought it was the worst writing I had ever completed.

Last year I experienced my first English classes. I completed 22, 23, 24, 25, 150, and 133. Not very much creative writing was involved in these courses. Again, it was all quite factual. Therefore, my writing experience has been extremely limited . . .

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: How many of the teachers that you have had used some kind of creative writing activities to promote learning in the regular classroom, any?

Answer: A few, a lot of it was journal writing and I don't really remember.

Question: Did they let you be creative in your journals?

Answer: Yes, but I never really saw it as creative writing. It was just me writing down my ideas and that wasn't very creative to me and I never did very well on it.

Question: Why?

Answer: I don't know, because it's just that they are my ideas and I'm really straightforward and there was nothing creative about it, and whenever my high school teacher said something about creative writing I just froze immediately and especially whenever they say write on anything you want. I would sit there the whole class period and not get one thing done because I need something structured.

Question: That's funny because I think if you are writing in your own journals, your own sort of entries and thinking for yourself, that's sort of creative in itself I think. But you were doing them sort of more as functional types of things?

Answer: Yes, very functional.

Question: Were there any creative classes in your high school?

Answer: My senior year I took a college board writing course and we kind of had like structured topics to write about, and I would write about some of my personal experiences, but again, like I never really see personal experiences as creative writing because it happened and I was just writing about it.

Question: But it certainly is, it's like . . .

Answer: I'm learning that now.

Question: Anything like personal narratives and some creative nonfiction can all be creative type writing, but you didn't consider that creative writing back then, really?

Answer: No . . . (End, from Interview)

***In my schooling I was never exposed to very much creative writing. Most of my teachers wanted us to write what they wanted to read . . .

***Frankly, the idea of writing creatively scares the hell out of me. I have never tapped into my creative energy and I am unsure as to whether or not I possess any at all . . .

This course is going to provide me with some experience in creative writing. I am nervous and feel more than a little sick over this course already. I hope that I have what it takes to become an excellent educator.

***. . . Now that I am in college, creative writing has been the source of much pain, anger, and tears. I still cringe when I think of writing, but sometimes I just feel like doing it. Most often, when I am upset or angry because I feel the crushing weight of the project due in this class, I write my best work. I have been able to look inside myself and see that I have a lot to say. I have stories and insights that I think people would be interested in reading. My story might not be the best, but I will feel proud when it is finally done. Hopefully, I won't quit after this story. I would like to be able to continue my writing and become better at it. Also I hope that my personal feelings will be a starting point for other stories, stories that not only come from my experience, but those of others or even ones that I make up. This would be a tremendous step for me . . .

I know about creative writing, but this is my first real experience at doing the creative writing. I'm learning, and I feel that this is an okay experience. I'll get through it and maybe I'll be a better person/writer/teacher because of this.

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: When you think about creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: I get scared.

Question: You get scared?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Why?

Answer: Now we read kind of analytically and do a lot of research papers, but I've never written creatively.

Question: Never at all?

Answer: Not very much, probably two or three papers ever . . .

Question: When you saw the syllabus for this course and you saw that story, what did you think?

Answer: I freaked out and I'm still freaking out and in fact the second class period, whenever we discussed it and then you said write 5 to 10 pages, I cried as I was walking out of the class. I started to cry and I went back to my dorm room and I cried for about an hour and a half because like all this stuff was happening to me and she said write 5 to 10 pages and I just couldn't handle it and I cried forever and I tried to talk to her in class the following week and she said "write about anything," so I went home and I wrote like three pages of just total crap and I haven't looked at it since. I have not done one bit of creative writing since I left, since I had that, since I did that two weeks ago.

Question: Well hopefully as we start looking at each other's papers and stuff like that, you'll feel more comfortable, right?

Answer: Like I don't understand the concept whatsoever, and I think as soon as I hear fiction, I think, I don't know, Judy Blume, and I start classifying all these things, and I'm not the book writer and that's . . .

Question: You tell stories don't you, to your friends?

Answer: Some of them, not anything I want to talk about in class.

Question: You'll do fine. I think. (End, from Interview)

“LS”

***. . . I do not feel very comfortable when I am given a specific length (assignment). I feel that it's the quality of the context rather than the quantity. When I write I want to be very detailed, sometimes too detailed, about concepts, thoughts, and feelings. Once I have written the paper or letter I can always read [it], and decide if it's really how I feel.

I enjoy writing letters and short notes. I don't mind writing assignments. I most enjoy evaluations. I can express myself about a given topic or book. It's my own opinion and I feel that's when I produce the best quality of writing. Research papers are not my favorite, but if the topic is one of some interest to me, I enjoy the work and writing. I have many friends who have graduated and moved away. I've kept in touch by phoning them and by long detailed letters. I believe it's always easier to give someone drastic or bad news in writing. I rely a lot on thoughts and emotions in the letters as well as current and future situations that I'm involved in.

My classroom experience in writing has been varied. I can remember in elementary school making up stories and poems. In junior high we got a little more structured. I can only remember doing book report after book report. High school writing was more free flowing and casual. I remember dreading research papers in high school but now at the university level I don't dread them and I don't look forward to them. I just complete them to the best of my ability.

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you do any creative writing?

Answer: No.

Question: None at all?

Answer: None.

Question: How about the teachers you have had, have they used creative kinds of assignments in the regular classroom?

Answer: No, never. I don't think I have had any . . .

Question: What do you do, letter writing or other kinds of writing? Is it mostly functional, or do you do some creative kinds of things with it.

Answer: Functional.

Question: All functional?

Answer: I enjoy writing letters though. I do a lot of e-mail.

Question: But they're sort of relaying information more than anything else?

Answer: Nothing else.

Question: No poems or anything like that as a seventh grader, nothing like that?

Answer: Nope . . .

***I enjoy writing to express my feelings. I can better express myself in writing rather than expressing what I feel in spoken words. I sometimes write for no reason that all, maybe just let someone know that I was thinking about them.

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: When you saw the syllabus for that story, what did you think about it?

Answer: I hated the idea.

Question: Of doing a story?

Answer: I think I hated the page amount.

Question: The page amount more than anything else?

Answer: I love to write.

Question: The creativity didn't bother you?

Answer: No, it was the page amount. I figured, oh my God, How am I going to write 30 pages?

Question: Why?

Answer: I was probably stressed about having to come up with an idea, I was thinking of that, the time, how much time is it going to take? What about punctuation? I get really stressed about punctuation, I guess . . .

“MC”

***A majority of my writing has been as a result of an assignment that has been given to me in school. I enjoyed doing most of these assignments because they allow me to express my own style in a way that other assignments do not let me. Writing is not about facts and precise calculations, such as history or biology. It allows me to express myself in the way that I am comfortable with and can feel a sense of pride about what I have created.

The kinds of writing that I do depend on the type of class I am taking. A creative writing paper is very different in writing style compared to a history paper. The creative writing paper is usually something that I must create from beginning to end with few guidelines to it. The content is whatever I want it to be. A history paper does not allow much room for creativity.

During my junior year in high school, I took two writing classes that helped me enormously in developing my own style. They had me write so much that it became second nature. After taking my first writing class in college, I discovered that I have a lot more to learn. There was a whole other world to be discovered in not only my writing, but in the others as well.

I have never done much writing on my own outside the classroom because it is not the love of my life. Although I do enjoy doing it, I cannot see myself involving all of my time with it. Hopefully after college, I will spend more time creating my own works for my own enjoyment.

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Have you done any [creative writing] yourself?

Answer: Just on my own?

Question: Yes.

Answer: Maybe once or twice, not too frequently, just . . .

Question: You wouldn't call it your specialty?

Answer: No, no . . .

Question: How many of your teachers used creative writing assignments to focus learning in content courses?

Answer: Probably the one that stands out would be my junior year high school English teacher. I took a composition class from him also, and he preferred creative to factual writing, and he gave you a lot of leeway as far as what you wanted, how you wanted to tell your story.

Question: Did you enjoy that kind of stuff?

Answer: Yes, he is the teacher that got me into English and teaching.

Question: Do you consider your own personal writing like journals, letters, etc. to be creative or functional mostly, including what you do in school?

Answer: Most of what I do for school was just functional. I kind of get into worrying about the grade more than my writing and stuff . . . I have been trying to change myself . . .

Question: Is that what you used journals for mostly, studying? You don't do one for yourself?

Answer: No, just for exams . . .

***Creative writing has always been my favorite form of writing. It has allowed me to use my imagination and create worlds that are my own. Many times, I take things from my childhood dreams and write about them. These could be the adventures I took through the African jungle in my basement, or the car race through my house and yard. My imagination as a child was so wild that I almost have an endless supply of stories and my mind. I have a feeling of closure when I write the stories and am fond of remembering the wonderful times I created as a child.

When I entered this class, I was excited to learn that we had the freedom to choose what we were going to write about . . . I constantly revise my story as I try to expand on it. This is tedious work and sometimes frustrating, but when I compare my first draft with my most recent copy, I appreciate the work I have put into it . . .

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: I think about using your [my] imagination and completely starting from scratch and writing about anything you want to, a lot is, like, if you're doing two kinds of history, people can rely on what is in books, and you kind of take from what other people have told, where creative writing is completely yours and has a little more sense of pride toward it.

Question: So creative writing comes more from within, and it doesn't necessarily have to do with text materials, etc.?

Answer: More like weird experiences . . .

“KH”

***I write for various reasons and in various situations. From an early age writing has offered me a sense of release. Whether writing in an academic exercise or for personal reflection, I

always feel a sense of self achievement. This self achievement would have to be the main reason I write. When I write I feel a confidence nothing else can match . . .

*** (From the Initial Interview): . . . Question: Have you done any [creative writing] yourself?

Answer: On my own yes, but never in any high school classes, none was offered where I went to high school.

Question: Is that right?

Answer: Yes, it was mainly literature based writing . . .

Question: But even in high school you did some creative writing on your own?

Answer: On my own, yes.

Question: Just for enjoyment or . . . ?

Answer: Mainly creative writing focusing on stories my granddad would tell, you know, like family stories, my grandfather's stories I guess; we all have those stories you know, the family stories.

Question: You would write them down? That's interesting . . . Your personal writing, especially journals in high school for instance, was that mostly functional as opposed to creative where you could . . . ?

Answer: They didn't really give you the opportunity to, you know, to express yourself like you really, I mean, express your opinions in a creative manner. They never really mentioned, like, you can write say, a poem or a short story relating to how you feel. The journals were always like, response type journals.

Question: When you are doing other kinds of personal writing, like letters and stuff, are you more creative or more functional?

Answer: For a long time I was more functional, like I could see the form, because that's all I had in middle school or high school. But recently, especially probably the last two years, I've been more creative, more, you know, friendly I guess, the friendly aspect. But I sort of pretty much do the formal business type, if you will, letters . . . (End from Interview)

***I kind of feel like Picasso putting his paint to a canvas. I am always working to create that masterpiece, that one paper that will stand out not only to myself but also to my colleagues . . . Writing offers me a chance to show the world exactly what my mind and pen are capable of. It allows me to push myself to the limits and offers me a large reward when I am able to hold the finished product in my hand. Writing offers me my greatest form of expressionism and provides me with the greatest amount of academic confidence.

The main type of writing I enjoy doing is the short story form of literature. When creativity hits, the short story form provides me with the perfect opportunity that my spare time allows. Often throughout the course of a day I will view the perfect situation forming for a short story. Often I will write down bits and pieces from different plans that when placed together form the perfect story. Many of my short stories resemble weekly television shows we would like to view. My themes often take a different approach in looking at the various things found throughout literature and pulls on the situations in real life that I can relate to and find interesting.

***When I think of creative writing, I often think of all of the time that was wasted in my English classes throughout high school. Never was I given an opportunity to write in a journal, to write a short story on a personal topic, or to create . . . Writing was no more than research papers, essays, and fill in the blanks.

Much of this oppression ended once I began my junior year at West Virginia University. By taking classes such as Modern Poetry and reading the works of William Carlos Williams, D.H. Lawrence, and Denise Levertov, I began for the first time to see the power in creative prose. This prose came off the page to greet me as a reader and in return had a powerful influence on how I viewed the world. By being held out to read about life's simple pleasures that Williams celebrated in his poetry and short stories, I too began to see parts of a world I had never realized. This realization led to my own creativity, first in journal form and later in poetry.

As I entered English 108 and discovered the creative writing that would be expected, I saw this as a continuing opportunity to define myself as not only a writer, but a person. Often in the lines I write in my journal the image I put into poetry or the friendly stories that find their way into my short stories, I am recording my history. This history is what creative writing truly offers me as a writer. I will always write creatively because for me personally this is my greatest chance for personal discovery . . .

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: When you looked at the syllabus for this class, and you saw that 25 to 30 page story, were you looking forward to it?

Answer: I was really looking forward to it because it . . . seems like it's so hard to take the time and give that attention to creative writing whether you want to write a short story or whatever, and with the requirement, it's kind of like saying now I have to, now I will set aside the time to do it. So I'm really looking forward to seeing what I can produce when I actually have the time, and take time to write a 30 to 35 page story. I'm excited to see what I can turn out . . .

“JS”

*** . . . Writing has been a pleasant pastime of mine for many years. My favorite courses in high school were English comp classes, and literature. If possible, I combined the knowledge of the two and created short stories. Last semester, I tried my hand at some poetry. Although not convinced of its quality, my poem entitled “Children, Four” won a class competition in World Literature. Since then, I have written a few other poems that are of a more private nature.

I guess I have been lucky here at WVU. The writing assignments that I have had allowed for innovation and creativity. My honors English 30 class asked for personal connections between my life and the works of Steinbeck, O'Neill and others. Some papers were allowed to take the format of a personal narrative. The instructor, Professor A., did an excellent job of allowing creativity to count equally as content.

My American Literature class also had room for a writer's ideas and not merely expressing regurgitation. Jennett's “The White Heron” could be examined, or a short story could be written using expressive, poetic language to tell a similar experience. My story, “Searching for the King of the Woods,” won the Waiteman Barbe creative writing contest when it was entered here at WVU, spring 1996. Teachers expect a certain kind of writing from their assignments. Why not challenge the norm?

*** (From the Initial Interview): . . . Question: Have you ever done any creative writing?

Answer: Yes, . . . I had an American Lit survey class and the instructor told us that we had a paper to write, that we had to analyze “The White Heron” and I got to a point where I was tired of writing that strictly analysis paper, and I went up to the instructor after class and I asked if I could do a creative writing project and do it totally differently and write a similar type story but with my own

experiences as background for it, and he said that that's extremely hard to do, that he would advise me not to do it, but if I was set in my ways and I wanted to do it that he would allow me to, and I ended up doing that and then he really liked it. He said it was the best . . . college paper he had read . . . He told me to enter it into the English Waiteman Barbe creative writing contest and I entered it into that and won.

Question: Is that right?

Answer: I changed it a little bit . . . He gave me some ideas how I could be stronger here, could be stronger there, and then I entered that and won the writing award.

Question: That's cool. I won that when I was undergrad too.

Answer: In another class I had, English 30 honors, the instructor lets you do a lot of creative writing in there even though it wasn't a creative writing class. Those were basically two of my favorite English classes, though I had some other ones I liked, the ones where I was allowed a little more opportunity to write creatively . . .

Question: How about, do you consider your personal writing, the kind of writing that you do in journals and stuff like that, to be creative or functional for the most part, especially now in college?

Answer: Mostly functional I would say. If I like the idea that we are supposed to write about in the journal, then I try to throw in a little bit of creative ideas, but . . .

Question: But usually they are assignment oriented, right?

Answer: Yes, usually it would be. I mean for the most part, mostly journals were all strictly functional to try and get my ideas down on paper and not necessarily worry about them.

Question: Do you keep a journal on your own anytime?

Answer: I have in the past, but recently, no.

Question: Not a chance, right?

Answer: No, it's too much, I mean no time. I've been so busy with everything I haven't had time to . . .

Question: . . .When you saw the syllabus were you anxious to write that story?

Answer: I personally was yes, and I'm really looking forward to it. I think it's a great idea, and I think it sounds fun, I've got some ideas and I thought, man, this is a great thing, because I would like to someday write a novel and I thought that this can get me introduced to it. When I sat down and did it, had to start it and wrote like six pages, . . . I got to that sixth page and I found out that I hadn't even described what my character looked like, you know? . . .(End from Interview)

*** "JS" chose to express his thoughts about creative writing in story form): J.S. was a good writer-- not a great one. He frequently thought about all of the connections of creative writing: good story, character, plot. They were true to a point. The most important thing he thought was that creative writing was as much about the creative expression of self as it was about the common limitations of the written word.

"Get your thoughts down," his instructor explained. He knew this story could be no story, no creative story without ideas. As his mind wandered into far off times, he thought of an event in his past. Rebel Without a Cause. Holden Caulfield. His friends had often told him that his life would make a great story. The major question was, "how do I change the abstract ideas that are in my head into a free flowing story that would interest my audience?"

In an instant, it came to him. J.S. would write a story using events from his life.

"Character development drives the story," she said, the wisdom burned forever in his mind.

Without a believable real character, the story would fail, he thought.

Writing creatively had come easily to him. He had learned long ago that you don't merely say what happened. Events must be described through a creative use of the language. "He broke the beer bottle," should be transformed to "The broken sounds of glass bent the light. It was as if a kaleidoscope of colors was projected on the wall. The beauty was as music to his senses. Time stopped."

J.S. had the ideas, it was now a matter of form. Perfection was a must in his eyes. There was however, much to learn. As his studies progressed, he hoped to learn how to write a good story.

"HP"

***As backward as it seems, I do not write on my own as often as I did when I was younger. My last few years of high school and my first year of college, I wrote poetry enthusiastically. I have stacks of poems. I'm not saying they were great, but they came from within. I also would write short stories or short, comical essays to fill up my time. Since becoming more directly involved in my major, there has been more writing required of me for my classes leaving less time to write on my own. However, some of the papers I have written for my classes I have enjoyed writing immensely and consider the work to be more than an assignment.

Throughout my schooling I have been asked to do many different types of writing. Poetry and short essays seem to be the most frequently required works. I have, however, written autobiographical and biographical pieces. These don't hold my attention long because there is no room to work -- just facts. There have also been many informative reports written. In fifth grade we were required to write two fifty-page state reports (reports about the states). Also, my seventh grade literature class focused mainly along creative writing.

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: When you think back on the good writers that you have known in high school, . . . do they usually do some creative writing too?

Answer: Usually. I've read friends' works, even from my friends here that have done papers and stories, and they're more creative than factual autobiography based, which is what my creative writing tends to be. I have to take my own experiences, where they can just let it all out.

Question: Personal narrative is like creative writing to a certain extent, isn't it?

Answer: Right, that's kind of what my paper is. I mean it's not directly from my life but I've had friends that will sometime write off the top of their heads and do excellent, wonderful writing and I don't know how they do it.

Question: I guess that's part of this question: You've never done any kind of creative writing other than when you've been asked to?

Answer: No, not totally fiction-made-up. I have written little poems when I was in junior high you know, sappy things, but . . .

Question: Related to love experiences, no doubt?

Answer: Right.

Question: That's the way it usually works . . .

Answer: Most of my English classes in the past focused more on literature than writing and when I was in junior high we all had to enter a creative writing contest and I had an honorable mention one year.

Question: So see, you did some!

Answer: It was stupid stuff.

Question: Who made you enter that contest?

Answer: It was my literature teacher Mrs. G., but then when we had to do it again, it was more of a personal narrative and that was when I got honorable mention . . .

Question: How about personal writing, like letters and anything that you do personally, do you consider them creative or are they more functional?

Answer: Well, there can be creative aspects to my writing, like when for example in English 1 you have to write a lot of different essays and in a few of them she gave us the topic, but it was very wide and we could like tell a place that has personal significance to us and you could kind of get creative with that. I mean it's still nonfiction, but it doesn't always have to be. My writing is not always functional, I'll throw stuff in just to make them more interesting, so I guess you could say that's creative.

Question: So you do make a little distinction in the tasks, the school writing and things like that, that some of it can be creative, so you are amending your definition of creative writing a little bit?

Answer: Yes, but it's easier taking a fact based thing and making it creative than making a totally made up thing . . .

Question: I guess that's true, but I hope you know that most creative writing is not like that, most writers don't start like that . . .

Answer: You have to take some kind of experiences you've had in order to know anything about it and write about it.

Question: And then expand on it. Some people are just more accurate than others I guess?

Answer: Yes!

***Creative Writing. When I hear those two words I cringe. When I found out I had to take a creative writing course, I was ready to change my major. What does creative writing mean

to me? Work. Before I began this class I'd very rarely written anything creative. Research papers, book responses, brief essays, no problem. When it comes to creative writing, I stink . . .

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: So tell me, when you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Nothing, I'm not a creative writer. I have a problem with fiction and poetry. I mean literature is my thing, but as far as creative writing goes, I know there's going to be a lot of work involved, but somehow just coming up with an idea off the top of my head about a story doesn't even appeal to me . . .

Question: When you got a syllabus for the course and looked at the assignments and you saw a course with a lot of writing in it, did you look forward to it?

Answer: I don't look forward to it but I don't usually want to leave the class. When I first came to this one I was wanting to drop it when I saw the 25 to 30 page paper that was due, but we are working on it throughout the class, so it's not as hard as I expected . . .

*** After this class began I started seeing creative writing in a different light. It can be based on fact, you don't have to pull the story or poem or whatever completely out of the air, you can use your experiences and feelings and incorporate them into writing.

Creative writing can be anything. It's the silly little song you make up on your way to class, or to help you remember something. Creative writing is the cheesy poem you made for the Valentine you gave your mom when you were little. Anything that flows out of your pen or pencil when you least expect it is creative writing . . .

I have learned not to fear writing, and not to be ashamed of my own writing, after all, you have to start somewhere and the best place to start is at the beginning. By using creative writing,

you learn how to express yourself. You can work things out by placing your problems onto your character's shoulders and guiding them through it. They are easier to work out when you look at it in the third person.

Creative writing is an outlet which at 21 I am just now discovering. It can bring you resolution, happiness, in some cases sadness, but most of all creative writing brings you the freedom of expressing yourself however you want, whether it be poetry, essay, short story, or a song . . .

***Writing is one of the most invaluable activities you learn how to do. Because of the many different ways to use writing, there are many reasons why I write. The most basic reason is for communication and although it may not be creative, it gives the practice and the background for learning how to express your thoughts and words on paper. Communication is a basic human need and writing is the basis to that.

Another reason I write is to express myself. Whether I plan to allow people to see my work or if I decide to keep it to myself, I write to let my emotions out. Seeing it on paper, in black and white, often clarifies how I feel. It makes things easier to sort out. I also write when it is required, of course, but those writings tend to seem forced and don't flow as well as spontaneous writings do . . .

“LL”

***I don't remember when I began writing. I know somewhere around second to third grade I started keeping a diary, and also I started writing stories around the fifth or sixth grade. I have since been involved with my school newspaper both as a reporter and editor until I reached the University.

My writings as a college student include in-class journal writings in reaction to stories read, critical analysis papers, research papers, short stories for a creative writing class, and my own personal journal writings.

This past summer I interned for my congressman where I wrote quite frequently. I prepared memos on current and pending legislation, answered letters to constituents, and wrote a speech for the congressman that is in the Congressional Record's Extension of Remarks.

I write to clear my head, keep in contact with friends and family, to organize my day, plan my goals. I write in the journal both creatively and to record daily occurrences. I write lists of things to do daily. I use e-mail daily to keep up with my family and friends.

My future plans rely heavily on my writing skills. I plan to pursue a career as a legislative correspondent or legislative assistant on Capitol Hill as well as teaching. I am looking forward to improving my skills in this class . . .

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: How about yourself? Do any creative writing? I know that you have had a creative writing class last semester.

Answer: Yes, I think that's what helped me to be a good writer even in the research sense where it's strictly the facts, where you kind of play around with words in creative ways and help yourself do your other work . . .

Question: Do you consider your own personal writing to be more creative or more functional? Like do you keep a journal for instance?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Was it creative in nature or is it mostly functional, or a combination?

Answer: Yes, a combination of what I feel that day when I'm writing. I have a journal that would be both half and half or whatever and also other things that I have been writing about . . .

(End from Interview)

***Creative writing to me is being able to express my thoughts on paper, sometimes for others to read, sometimes not. It is a way to work out problems, and get in touch with my feelings. Sometimes it becomes an opportunity to relive an event or time in my life. Other times it is a place to let my imagination run wild. Always it is an accomplishment . . .

I have learned to think of writing as a process. This has been extremely helpful for my work. Previously when I would be daydreaming about a change to my story, I would ignore it/organize it/etc. Now I see myself concentrating/scribbling on the sides of my class notes etc., the ideas I am coming up with.

I have also started to think of ways to make better transitions by observing how other writers do it, not only through YA novels but in my work I read for other literature classes . . .

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Being able to address my thoughts and make a sentence complete, and entertain other people.

Question: Okay, so you think of the way you write, the method of writing, rather than specific genres?

Answer: Yes.

Question: When you saw the syllabus for this class and you saw that 25 page paper on there, the creative writing paper, were you looking forward to it?

Answer: Yes.

Question: So it didn't bother you at all to write a 25 page creative story?

Answer: No, I was very happy I got to do it.

Question: As opposed to traditional kinds of essays which you probably would have had to write had I taught this class before?

Answer: Yes, because I actually had this class last spring and I got the syllabus, and I dropped it the first week because it was way too much work and it was not creative whatsoever in any way, so I'm glad I took it this semester . . . (End from Interview)

“AS”

***I guess I have been writing for a very long time, relatively. I learned to read early and was very eager to learn to write. Throughout grade school we mostly wrote as a means to another academic end, but in the seventh and eighth grades we started doing some heavy creative writing. In the eighth, we wrote poetry.

In high school, I was lucky to have teachers who thought creative writing was important. I started to get into poetry in high school mainly due to my sophomore English teacher and even my French and German teachers focused heavily on writing and poetry, pushing us even though our knowledge of the languages were limited. In college, too, I have been lucky because of the wonderful teachers I have had . . . A story which I am proud of was written in an English class here. Also, my French classes have given me great opportunities to express myself in writing.

Unfortunately, being a full-time student and working human being doesn't leave much time for outside writing. So, I use my classroom writing time very carefully and thankfully. It is my greatest resource to be in a classroom where the requirements are to write, because in a way I kill

two birds with one stone. I get to fulfill my credits as a student, and practice for myself and my writing. When I do get a chance to write out of class, I will write anything, letters and poems mostly, but I even enjoy making up grocery lists. I like to write checks, sentences, sometimes just words I think are really neat, and I have 5000 pens to write with. I am mostly fond, though, of writing what I call mini-poems or little organized thoughts that may someday turn into something else, some wonderful story. That story which I am proud of, started from one word that created an image in my head . . .

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: . . .Have you ever done any creative writing?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you? What kind?

Answer: Mostly poems, but I like short-short fiction. I really like that.

Question: Sudden Fiction?

Answer: I really like that, just sort of like vignette types of things, and I really like that because it leaves a lot up to the reader, so it means something really significant and specific to me, but I think it is so much more open to anybody who might be reading it. And you know a lot of people don't like it, because I had a fiction class that we read some stuff in and it was a lot like the stuff that I write when on my own and don't share it, and a lot of people are like it doesn't do anything for them, but to me, I think it just opens up so many more possibilities, and that's the kind of stuff that we did more on.

Question: This creative writing that you did, was it in your school, in a school class, or did you do it here, or was it just on your own?

Answer: On my own mostly . . . But after I started, I got really excited, like when I started to be able to bring stuff that I had written into school and use it in classes and stuff in high school, but I can distinctly remember when I wrote my very first poem and I still have it.

Question: It was in high school?

Answer: It was the beginning of high school, probably like around my freshmen year in high school.

Question: I wouldn't say what possessed you, necessarily, but why did you suddenly decide to write a poem?

Answer: I was in bed one night and I was like, it was summer and my window was open and I was just listening to everything that was outside and I was up later than everybody else in my family so I was alone in my room and I always wanted to, I'd always been fascinated with people, with writers, like the writing part or just people who go through the process, and I guess I wanted to find out if I could do that too. I was just curious as to what would come out because I always loved to read and I knew that usually that was something that went together, reading and writing, and so I got kind of an idea, and it was one of those like, I was getting over, you know, being in love with a guy, and he was far away and it was like, and he was from Australia and I was really into that [love]. Like things that were so foreign to me, and this was something that's really foreign to me, became a fascination, I think. I wanted -- it was something that other people did and were good at, and I wanted to jump in and try it.

Question: It just goes with being in love -- poetry and stuff like that?

Answer: But I think mostly it's just, I think I just wanted to see if I could do it.

Question: Did you share it with anybody, or did you keep it all to yourself?

Answer: Um . . .

Question: Did you send it to him?

Answer: No.

Question: No?

Answer: I sent one thing to him but I kept it to myself for a long time and finally I got into a relationship with a guy that lasted a really long time and I shared stuff with him, but he was the only person.

Question: Secret poetry?

Answer: Some, but some of the stuff, like some that I was more sure of, I would like use in classes and stuff, but most things I kept to myself.

Question: Before you came to college did you have creative writing classes?

Answer: We didn't have creative writing classes but my sophomore English was American literature and the teacher was really into creative writing. We wrote poetry, we wrote a lot, but we didn't have creative writing per se, just certain days we would devote to writing and that was probably my first real experience; and we had written essays before, but this was the first time really where she would sit down and we would all have to just sit there and she would say you're just going to write now, and maybe sometimes she would give us something to guide us, like an overall general theme or something, but mostly it would be this is for you and just do it.

Question: And this was just right after you wrote your own poem, a poem of your own?

Answer: Yes, and I think that kind of motivated me more.

Question: Did you do journal writing in high school?

Answer: I did some journal writing for myself like in the eighth grade. I'm much too disorganized, I think, to do journal writing.

Question: A lot of people use it to be organized.

Answer: I should try, I guess, because even when I'm writing for myself, like creatively or whatever, sometimes it will just be like a word or a line, something I just can't, you know, get, it's just there, and I think it's pretty good, or I like it or something, and then I'll leave it, you know? I can never sit down and write. Like I have such a hard time writing journals for this class, and I have also the 124 class and we have to write journals for that, and then I have another I have to write down too. I have such a hard time because I feel like I'm just repeating myself.

Question: so most of your journals are functional instead of creative?

Answer: Yes, for me creativity is to just get whatever I want out, but it's usually, it's never on the lines. I have a hard time writing on lined paper. Like my notes in class are always over the lines but never in between the lines and stuff . . . (End from Interview)

***I write because to me, it is an extension of myself, my thoughts, my feelings, and my actions. It is as vital to me as breathing, eating, sleeping. It is a part of my life every minute of every day, an even while I sleep, because to me, the thoughts present in my mind are nothing more than dialogues, monologues, poems, and stories that have yet to be written down. Most will never be written down, yet they remain as fodder for other thoughts, possible writings long after they have faded. Lastly, I write, if for no other reason, to remind myself that I can . . .

***Creative writing has always been very personal for me. I had problems sharing it with others, until I came to college and was forced to participate in classes where peer revision workshops and the like were used to great extent. Little by little, I became more comfortable

sharing my work with others until finally I realized that I actually needed to have others' input in order to really portray my feelings and ideas effectively. Creative writing, at that point, had moved from being something I did just for myself towards becoming a means of exposing and sharing myself with others -- an audience.

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: . . .When you looked at the syllabus for this English 108 class, which is a composition class, you saw it was a 25 to 30 page creative paper. Were you looking forward to it?

Answer: No.

Question: Why?

Answer: I'm having problems making things long. Like I said, I like to write short things. Then I had a class where we had to write a 15 page book and I just remember how hard it was and how much emotionally it took out of me, you know? And I have a problem, I have like a real problem when I write something that I think is really good, and then somebody, like my teacher, was like, I think you need to do something better here, and I was OH NO, NO, I want to be done with it, and so then I would take it home and work on it again. And I would bring it back, and then she would be like, I think you should work on this and I was just, OH NO! But then after I did it, she was right and this is really better, after I went back and worked on it some more, but I think just that I wasn't looking forward to doing it was the thing. I'm excited about it now that I started my story, but I think that just knowing how enormously difficult it was going to be and how time-consuming, that I thought -- here we go again!

Question: Well, it will work out. You're doing OK with it now?

Answer: I don't know, I have a problem always trying to make sure my connections are all there in the story, and I'm not leaving huge gaps in time and jumping around, so it's a lot more difficult for me to write long things than short ones.

Question: That's supposed to be some of the stuff we're going to work out this semester, revision and all that stuff.

Answer: But I feel like I'm already at the point where I'm ready to have some outside comments.

Question: Are you? Good.

Answer: Suggestions, because at first, you know, I was like [apprehensive].

“EO”

***My earliest poems were Dr. Suess-esque stuff, funny stuff. At about age five . . . I would dictate stories and poems to my mom, [they were] definitely influenced by Dr. Suess. This started me writing poems from the beginning. After this no other teacher could compare to this early influence and I cannot recall any teacher influencing my writing in anyway at all like my parents. My mother developed my voice and my father constantly structured my grammar . . . I did some Big Bad Baby poetry . . . It was a way for me to receive praise. It was a simple project, like a drawing for a good artist. I wrote a book for kids in middle school . . . I get a much greater satisfaction out of my ability to communicate when I write . . . A desire to impress, or at least not look bad. In high school it was mostly poetry, and notes to my girlfriends . . . it was a way to pass the time in high school . . . I was always looking for a reaction: vulgarity, humor, sex, politics, religion . . . in the [high school] classroom I did some creative stuff, a poem for one class, an essay in another that everyone liked, a creative “Catcher in the Rye” book report. The rest was basically regurgitation of memorized stuff. I was not asked to think until college . . .

***As my body became guided by the sudden onset of teenage hormonal imbalance, writing took on a whole new meaning. Note writing was a commonplace messenger of love and my life gave me an unfair advantage in this area. I was certainly disadvantaged in the direct approach, but nonverbal communication is basically nonstop in the high school classroom. In all of my teenage loves, creative writing was key in elevating and advancing my relationships. During the process, I came to realize that I am my most important audience. If I was satisfied or entertained with the content, the audience was also. So when this was applied scholastically, it equaled academic success. I generally write to satisfy myself instead of a grading system. So once again writing equaled praise, self-esteem, and personality development . . .

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: . . .Have you ever done any [creative writing]?

Answer: Yes. I started early on. My mother encouraged me. She would just basically take dictation, starting off when I was very young.

Question: Take dictation?

Answer: Yes . . . To encourage me to, like, start out I guess. I was learning about writing or whatever.

Question: What age was this?

Answer: At about five.

Question: So you would say things and she would write them down?

Answer: Yes, . . . Mostly like poetry, and word play . . . Little written stories and stuff, she still has some of them. Yes, because I remember the dates on those, it was 1977, so I was five years old.

Question: She wasn't a teacher?

Answer: No.

Question: She just did that? Very unique I think. I can't remember anybody else ever telling me that their mother did that for them. Did you do some on your own after that?

Answer: Yes, that kind of got me going. It was mostly poetry throughout and that kind of changed in the past couple of years to writing songs, but that was more like improvisational songwriting. I have a friend who plays the guitar and I like caught different ideas as he was coming up with things on the guitar. I wrote some down.

Question: Did the teachers at your school, particularly the high school level, use creative kinds of assignments to explore the regular course work content or was it just traditional kinds of models?

Answer: Yes, they would use creative writing.

Question: Where did you go to school?

Answer: In the eastern panhandle . . .

Question: There were teachers there that gave creative assignments?

Answer: Yes, . . .also, they had a gifted program there that was for the top 30 students. They had gifted social studies and they encouraged us to use creative writing in that. Basically, my experience with that was that they would have some kind of study guide, a picture, or a song, whatever, and then they would, a lot of times that's how we started off class. It would be the stimulus and then we would have journal responses and we could take it wherever we wanted to, and then I remember I didn't take the gifted English classes, but I remember they did a lot of creative stuff. I think that was creative stuff for everybody . . .

Question: How about college? Have you had any creative writing classes in college?

Answer: Yes, it was in English 114, short story writing . . .

Question: You enjoyed the class?

Answer: Yes.

Question: When you do personal writing do you think it's more functional or do you do creative kinds of writing too? Do you keep a journal?

Answer: No, I have been trying to write and that was mostly encouraged by this class. You can't just keep saying "I've got to write" all the time if you want to write well. And usually what I write is just, I mean, you have seen some other things I wrote in class, just a jumble. It's just you know, whatever comes out. If I'm reading one of the novels or something like that, I have little chunks that I can put into the works later on usually, and sometimes it's just a couple of poems, maybe a description of an event . . . or a little piece of dialogue, or something that I remember is funny; but my personal writing is very choppy, I haven't really assimilated it yet . . .

***Creative writing has always been a way for me to extend myself in the world. I was a very shy person for much of my life. I was afraid to speak unless I was very sure of my surroundings. Early on, [near five], my mother began taking dictation of stories and poems that I would create. I would love the praise and attention that people gave to my writing. I could be proud of it, but hide from it when I had to. I was a cute and precocious kid, but so were many others. Creative writing established my identity and individuality. This gave me an outlet that would become very important in my teenage years . . .

Creative writing has always been a very positive experience for me. The most recent application has been "bibliotherapy." As I recall certain events or try to put my life experiences in

words, I gain insight into why I am what I am. One of the best parts of this is a certain psychic healing process. Many of the things that I felt were too painful or embarrassing to talk about can be worked out in writing . . .

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: . . . When you saw the syllabus for this class and saw the 25 page short story on there, what were your thoughts?

Answer: I was a little bit surprised, that was the first time I had ever seen that on any syllabus so I was thinking, wow, at first but . . . I was definitely surprised.

Question: Were you looking forward to it?

Answer: A lot!

“KS”

***Primarily, at this point in my life, I write to satisfy the requirements of my classes. Some of these writings are creative, but mostly they are thesis based responses to works of literature, magazine articles, etc. when I was younger and had more time to myself, I wrote almost every day -- poetry mostly, but some short stories. I write to express myself, either my emotions, feelings, or my opinion . . . When I was younger, I dreamed of being a famous poetry or fiction writer. However, that dream has since faded due to (1) having no time, (2) how many poets/writers make it out there?, and (3) not feeling like I had what it takes to be a good or successful writer . . .

The earliest writing experience that I can remember was when I was in the third grade. Every week we received a list of vocabulary words. With this, we were to write a story using the words correctly. It was your way to be creative. I can remember how I hated to do it. But by the

fourth grade I was writing small poems. I used to take my newly written works to my teacher so that he could read them. At first he did just that, but soon he started to critique them. I hated “constructive criticism” and immediately stopped showing my poems to him . . .

In the ninth grade we wrote a lot of creative works . . . We did poetry, short stories, and rewriting Romeo and Juliet for the present day. [Also] in ninth grade, everyone wrote short stories to submit to a writing contest. I came very close to being published . . .

Question: When you do personal writing, do you do journals on your own?

Answer: No.

Question: When you do personal writing like letters and notations of any kind, are they mostly functional or are they creative to a degree?

Answer: Mostly functional . . .

***To me, creative writing is a way to express my feelings, my thoughts and my beliefs. It is also a way to work/think through any problem that I might have. When I was in elementary school I loved to write. In high school I considered myself [poetic], I loved writing down my expressions/reflections on paper . . . When I found out that we had to write a 30 page short story in this class, I was shocked and almost mad. Where will I find time to do this? What will I write about? It took a lot just to get started, but soon it started pouring out. That’s not to say that it’s easy . . . I then starting searching through my mind for memories to use in my story and for the first time in years I am actually confronting them. It’s hard and painful but I’m researching those memories and now I can use them.

I’m still scared, no, more like worried or apprehensive, about creative writing, but hey, I haven’t done this for five years. I expect it to be hard, but it’ll be worth it in the end . . .

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: . . . When you saw the course syllabus for this class and saw that there was a 25 to 30 page creative paper, what went through your mind?

Answer: I thought my God how am I going to do this? I was very negative to the idea to say the least.

*** This class will be the most creative writing I've done throughout my entire life probably. I'm looking forward to it but at the same time, I'm dreading it . . .

“CS”

*** I never had a sound purpose to write. I was simply an imaginative child who always had images rolling around in my head, and in order to take a physical grasp on my imagination, I began to put things down on paper. Throughout grade school I entered local contests for writing and won. By the time I was in sixth grade, I was at an eighth grade reading level. Because of my small local accolades, I became confident in my writing, possibly too confident.

When I hit my years of secondary schooling, I was a typical student in typical classes where I was told what to write about. This is where personal conflict began. I was used to being allowed to write what I wanted. Usually I wrote short stories with a lot of symbolism. However all of a sudden, I had to write poetry, essays, and I had to follow structure. I still did well although I felt personally limited.

In high school I hooked into the debate scene and started constructing argumentative papers. I was still doing well and was even chosen to be editor of the school paper, still won a few writing contests, but all of a sudden I realized I wasn't the best. I never passed the county levels of writing contests, I didn't always receive as many “good job” or “great paper” as other students. I was a writer learning that I needed to start conforming my writing styles.

English 1 in college was the ringer: theses, outlines, data, and so on -- whatever happened to writing for fun? I sometimes feel my writing has gone in a downward spiral since my heydays of being recognized to my small local schools as “that local girl that can write.”

The technicality of writing style serves as a big block in the middle of my pathway to creativity. I am much better at personal expression and creative writing as opposed to the writing processes of today’s classrooms. I will admit, I have a lot to learn . . .

****(From the Initial Interview):* Question: . . .Did you ever do any creative writing?

Answer: Yes, I think I’ve done creative writing since I was really little.

Question: Is that right?

Answer: Yes, I’m a firm believer in creative writing, but I don’t know how I’m going to be as a teacher . . .

Question: Do you consider your personal writing, the journals and maybe letters and things like that, to be more creative or more functional?

Answer: Well actually I don’t keep journals very well . . . journals and such to me become more of a task like busy work . . .

***The word *creativity* simply means freedom of expression -- at least it does in my opinion. Creativity itself is filled with imagery, style, self expression, and other variables that come out as a complete, transcribed thought . . .

[In this class] I was pleased and surprised to see such focus on the individual. Throughout school, more often than not, I was told what to write and when to write it. I was lucky though. I had one teacher who left room for some creative energies in our writings; she let us have fun . . .

Since this class has started -- a class allowing creativity and stressing personal, creative factors -- I think I have begun to feel at home again with writing. I'm still having some trouble with development and such, but it's okay -- the creative freedom of expression has been re-established. . .

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: When you came into the class, were you looking forward to writing that 25 to 30 page short story?

Answer: I was. But 25 to 30 pages kind of puts me off. I think the longest assignment I ever had to write was maybe 12 pages. But this is double that, and actually I was kind of surprised . . . Yes, I'm looking forward to it!

“JR”

***As with all writers it is sometimes difficult to figure out what I am going to write. As with most beginning writers I wrote about what I knew. The only problem was I only knew about monsters and myths. So what I did was take these monsters and incorporate them into real life events.

When I was younger my writing consisted entirely of fiction. The monsters of my childhood would return and wreck havoc on the teachers and bullies of my life in my stories. I laughed last because in my little reality, my pen was the final word.

However as I grew older, the monsters disappeared and my writing turned to a more reflective style. My writing became an open playground where my thoughts and emotions became a real object down on the paper. This writing style has continued with me until the present.

One of the problems that I encountered in my childhood years that plagued me was the fact that writing was never really encouraged where I went to school. I would write short stories and

some poetry but never knowing that my style and writing ability was horrible. It wasn't until college that I have vastly improved my writing style and ability . . .

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: . . .Have you done any creative writing?

Answer: Yes.

Question: What kind?

Answer: Fantasy, science fiction.

Question: Do you really? I used to as well.

Answer: When I was younger that's primarily what I did and now I'm getting older and like I try to do more modern things like mystery. Like right now I'm trying to write like a mystery novel and it's a pain. I started that last semester.

Question: That ambitious?

Answer: Yes, the problem with it is the discipline of sitting down and writing it . . . And my biggest trouble is finding the time to write, because I work and then I have school and then studying, so I have to juggle it through that and then finding personal time other than sitting and doing nothing and just relaxing, so just to write is kind of hard . . .

Question: That's interesting. When you do personal writing like journals, do you keep a journal by the way?

Answer: I do but I don't like it . . . the last time I wrote in it was two weeks ago maybe.

Question: Do you usually do creative kinds of things, or is it more functional?

Answer: I use the journal just for personal information such as maybe when I was thinking about what happened to me that day just like little things maybe, that I would maybe forget ten years later, then go back and read it, or else I would jot story ideas and how you come up with it, you

know, just like during the middle of the day, if I have a story idea, then when I go back home I would write it down in the journal. So later I could go back and look at it, so I really use it more for things I do, and also as an outlet for like emotions or feelings or whatever . . .

Question: Isn't that creative to a certain extent?

Answer: Yes.

***Ever since I was a young boy I have been a daydreamer. I have always been fascinated by surreal and fantastic worlds. I have always dreamed of being in another time and place doing things much more interesting and adventurous than what I was doing. Because of this, TV, books and movies have always and still do appeal to me. I could get lost in some adventure and leave my own problems and realities behind. However there was one problem that has always bothered me, I was never really a part of the action.

It was great fun for me to think of what I would do if I had "The Force" on my side, or if I had the task of destroying "The One Ring," but I always knew that I was just an observer in that world and never actually a part of it. I knew that there had to be some way of actually getting into my "dream" world. I discovered it in writing.

Writing gave me that key to enter into another life that I wanted to be connected to. Something that I appreciated even more was that I was the creator of that world. I could actually control who lived or died, if the ending was happy or sad, if the hero rescues the Princess or dies on the way. Writing was even more fun than reading because I was in "my" world, not an observer in someone else's . . .

***I hate rules. In this modern, anal attentive world that we live in, rules and laws govern everything. I don't know if I was born with my hatred of rules and things that confine (all rules

confine), but I know that whatever I do I feel confined to obey someone else's rules. However there is one area in my life that I know I have total and absolute freedom and control over what is going on. It is my writing.

Writing allows me to open doors and possibilities that may be closed through all other methods. The only thing that confines me in my writing is myself. Thus when I want to travel somewhere or have some character do or say something that I would or could never do, I can explore that option openly and freely in my writing. In my writing I am the master and lord over all that I create . . .

Publishing my work has always been a scary and intimidating experience. I have always feared that my work would be rejected and that I would never have anything of importance to contribute. However I realize that all writers at some point in their careers are rejected, and that eventually something will get published. I also know that what I say in my writing may in turn spark a fellow colleague in his or her own writing, thus adding to the larger body of work . . .

***Writing gives me freedom. Writing gives me control. Writing is my outlet where I can express my thoughts and emotions freely . . .

“BS”

***Writing, for the most part, is not a daily activity of my noting. Usually, I write papers for the purpose of fulfilling my course requirements, which is not a satisfactory response considering that I am a possible high school English teacher. When I do write my thesis papers, I always enjoy myself and go a bit overboard with information and personal views. That is the main area I am interested in . . . responding on what people say and do . . . Personal journals were important and that is what I enjoyed most.

Question: Have you done any creative writing?

Answer: Not much, most of my things like when I was in high school, I would hand in things like for the newspaper, most of it like came through like comics mostly. I was known for doing stuff like that with my own characters and kind of like a Calvin and Hobbes kind of thing.

Question: You do comic strips?

Answer: Yes, that's mostly where my creativity comes from. As for me sitting down and writing out 50 pages of something, I'm not very good at describing long-term effects. I'm only good at one short comic series, this is what happens to the problem, and this is how it progresses, and this is what they did on that. I'm not very good at continuing, filling up a person . . .

Question: Do you keep a journal now of any kind?

Answer: Well, just for the purpose of this class, on my own, no . . . Not like an everyday thing.

Question: So the journal that you keep now is just functional for the class.

Answer: Right.

Question: No creative kinds of things in journals for creative writing or anything like that outside of classes now?

Answer: Not out of the classroom, no.

***Creative writing to me is expressed through humorous yet insightful imagery. Before I began this class I read journals by comedians mostly, because what they notice about the environment is almost exactly what I notice. Whenever I write about occurrences, they must strike me as odd or else I won't write about them . . .

Perhaps my creativity in writing will increase if I learn more about other areas of writing, which is why I'm taking this class. I have learned not to dismiss others' writing, because my writing might be strange to others.

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: . . . When you saw the syllabus for this class and saw that 30 page creative writing exercise, what were you thinking?

Answer: The first thing I saw was 30 pages, I said wow, okay, then I saw creative writing so I felt a little bit better . . .

Question: But you were a little anxious about a story at first?

Answer: Oh, yes!

Question: You've never written a short story before?

Answer: This is my first one.

“MT”

*** Creative writing has played little part in my education. As a high school student, I enrolled in a creative writing class, but felt completely repressed when forced to write about teacher chosen topics. Instead, my teachers always seem to opt for more academic writing -- research papers, book reports, etc. There have been a few who have strayed from this norm, but most have eagerly complied . . .

Most often, I am writing informative papers or book reviews for classes. Occasionally, though, I find time to add a line or two to a kind of journal I keep. It's not your normal “Dear Diary” stuff about getting up and brushing your teeth. Instead, I record ideas I have -- sometimes about things I'd like to write about when I get the chance, or topics I'd like to use for a paper, or

even lesson plan ideas. If I've learned something or realized something that is really affecting me, I will record it as well. Quite often, I think of places I want to go someday or lists of things I want to remember to do soon . . .

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: How about yourself, do you do any creative writing?

Answer: Not that I've really shared a lot. I mean, I have done some but I don't know, I guess I'm not real comfortable with it.

Question: Eighth grade love poems?

Answer: I don't think I ever even wrote love poems . . . To be honest with you, I wrote a lot . . .

Before I got to college, I did a lot more creative writing . . .

Question: No flexibility in the assignments? I mean did you write on a topic that you could expand on in your own way?

Answer: Not really, because I can remember -- and this really appalled me, even at that time and I was only in the 10th grade -- I can remember a paper that I turned in and it was a creative assignment, it was all from me, it wasn't something that I'd looked up or anything like that, it was all something I generated, and she had like a certain passage bracketed and had out there "word choice." Don't you think that if it was worded in another way that she would have worded it, she would have liked it better, whereas I liked my own way . . . I think that's a personal opinion, and she wasn't into variety at all . . .

Question: Have you had any creative classes in college?

Answer: Just one.

Question: But you did have one?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you do any journal writing?

Answer: Some, I don't do it daily like I would like to, but I do it some.

Question: Is your journal writing more the creative kind or just functional?

Answer: It's a little of both. I will write down a lot of ideas. I always think that it is a good idea to start something, but I don't have time to do it. Now I jot down the idea or something, and I do it off things like ideas, just personal ideas, just writing about something that's kind of bothering me or whatever, and you kind of work it out after writing about it and things . . .

***I write for many reasons. Unfortunately, most often it is because I am required to in classes. This writing is usually informative and about interesting subjects, but it is not the writing I would wish to do.

When the opportunity arises I like to write simply about ideas that have been floating in my head. Sometimes they are fiction, sometimes not. Sometimes I simply write to help organize my thoughts. Recently I had a rather large and important decision to make and the answer simply would not come. Finally, I sat down and wrote everything that I felt. Three pages later, without even realizing what I had done, I reread my material and discovered what I could not find in my mind . . .

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: . . .When you came into the class and saw the syllabus for English 108 and saw that story on there, what did you think?

Answer: First I was wondering where I would find time to write 40 pages, and I guess I was kind of excited about it, it's fun, it's not like an activity I'd dread, like writing a research paper. I guess I look forward to it much more than I would a research paper or something like that.

Question: Really?

Answer: Yes . . .

Section 2: Inservice Teachers

“K”

*** (From the Interview): Question: What kinds of creative writing do you do?

Answer: Journal writing . . .

Question: Did you have creative writing courses in high school or college?

Answer: No.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing -- journals, letters, etc., to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional? Why?

Answer: Most of my writing is done to communicate or for some purpose. I usually do not have time to write creatively.

“P”

*** (From the Interview): Question: What kinds of creative writing do you do?

Answer: Creative journal writing -- I write freely for five to ten minutes to see what thoughts come to mind. Invents, explorations, I use my imagination.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional? Why?

Answer: Mostly my writing is transactional . . . Lesson plans, grants, reports. It is part of the job!

My journal contains some creative writing, but not a lot.

Question: What kinds of creative writing do your students do? Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content? Please describe.

Answer: Students practice free writing twice a week in their journals. They write from 5 to 10 minutes about anything that comes to mind. After writing time is completed they underline ideas that could be used in a paper. Towards the end of the semester we go back and select journal entries to use in creative problems, stories or plays. I use these assignments to allow the students to imagine, invent and explore their creative spirit.

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: I do look forward to teaching each day. My classes complete a writing assignment almost every day . . . The students are here to learn to write well-developed papers, that is what we are about!

“B”

Question: What kinds of creative writing do you do?

Answer: I write poetry and essays . . .

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional?

Answer: Mostly creative -- with purposeful undertones . . .

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: No.

Question: Do you now?

Answer: Now I do because I've learned to be a participant rather than an expert, and to let my students be themselves -- including as writers . . .

Question: What kinds of creative writing do your students do? Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content? Please describe.

Answer: Several -- I use creativity from quizzes to analysis, asking my students to assume roles of characters, making poetry from literature and from real life, to interest their own voices with literature in creative ways . . .

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: Yes! I enjoy reading what my students write -- as well as what they say . . .

“N”

Question: What kinds of creative writing do you do? Did you have creative writing courses in high school or college?

Answer: I did limited creative writing in high school. I did no creative writing in college . . .

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional?

Answer: As a teacher and single parent, I have limited time; therefore, all writing is primarily functional.

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing? Do you now?

Answer: Becoming a successful regular classroom teacher is a long process. When I began teaching, I was not qualified to teach anything. Professors, methods books, and universities are far removed from the public school classroom and high school students. Teaching is a growing and learning process. It takes much practice and trial and error. I now feel qualified to teach anything . . .

Question: What kinds of creative writing do your students do? Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: I use writing to focus learning in the area of literature. My students do the following creative writing assignments: letters to authors, extensions of literature stories, self evaluations, writing stories in different points of view, and creating new material . . .

Question: do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: The number of students in my classes has an effect on my attitude toward teaching writing. Therefore, I do not always look forward to teaching writing . . .

“F”

Question: What kinds of creative writing do you do? Did you have creative writing courses in high school or college?

Answer: My narration and description class in college was a complete disaster. It was arranged because it conflicted with one of my speech classes. Therefore, I missed the instruction and the discussion. I am a terrible speller and an even worse typist, so I found the assignments frustrating. The only reason I passed was because I went into class to lead a discussion on a short story. The discussion went on for the entire class period. (I had not been there for the other discussions). When we left class, one of my friends told me that the other students' discussions had only been about 10 minutes long. Once again, it was my ability to talk, rather than my ability to write that brought me through . . .

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: No. I was unsure how to “grade” creative writing.

Question: Do you now?

Answer: Now, I don't worry about the grades as much as I do the creative process. I now grade on the growth I see from the beginning of the project until the end. I attempt to function as an adviser,

another set of eyes, rather than as the teacher. Still, I try to deal with grammar/structure concerns as they crop up . . .

Question: What kinds of creative writing do your students do? Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: When I taught English, I used an autobiographical novel called *Listening for the Crack of Dawn*. My students kept a journal of childhood experiences similar to the ones in the novel (first day of school, favorite teacher, personal experiences). From the journal they built their first “childhood experience” paper. Later, I showed them pictures from *Portraits of Appalachia*, a book of black and white photographs of people living in West Virginia, Kentucky, etc. Then, I asked them to write short stories or essays about one of the pictures. We also read *Where the Lilies Bloom*, a novel set in North Carolina. We continued with personal writing and character sketches of people in our families. The final project was a family history scrap book which contained family stories and an autobiographical sketch. In my Drama I class, last semester, we wrote collaborative plays and acted them out. All of my drama classes are given technical theater projects. One of the options is to write a play. Last semester about 15 students wrote a play. We are currently producing one of the plays that a student wrote last year. She won the play writing contest at the West Virginia Thespian Contest last year.

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional?

Answer: Journals serve many purposes. They allow writers to clarify their own thoughts, to come to new conclusions and to question ideas. Journals provide a way for the teacher and the student to have a very personal kind of communication. Likewise, letters not only provide a way for people

to communicate but they also allow the writer the opportunity to take stock of his or her current activities/problems/life . . .

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: Yes. Even though, (or perhaps because), I am not fond of writing, I stress writing in my classes. Even in my drama classes we write. I find that writing allows students time to reflect and helps them create more interesting characters [in plays]. Students must take an active role in learning when they write. They cannot be passive observers. That is what leads to learning engagement . . .

“R”

Question: Did you have creative writing courses in high school or college?

Answer: I had limited experience with creative writing in high school. Mostly my experience was in eighth grade. I wrote once or twice per week during that year. I might have been required to write once or twice per year after that. I wrote letters often, though, and I also wrote sometimes just for myself. When I attended college, I did take writing courses. I usually did better in my writing courses than I did in my other English courses.

Question: What kind of creative writing do you do?

Answer: I still write some poetry and some short stories just for myself . . .

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional?

Answer: Most of my writing is functional. I take care of necessary correspondence, I do lesson plans, I respond to questions. However, I do some creative writing also. Sometimes I write while my students write, and I share my writing with them. Generally, though, I don't have the time that I'd like to have for writing . . .

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing? Do you now?

Answer: I always felt qualified to teach creative writing, but I haven't always taught it the way the textbooks suggest. I write, and I have always written. There is still much room for improvement in my writing instruction, but I believe that I help my students to be better writers. If I had more time and smaller classes, I believe that I could do a better job . . .

Question: What kinds of creative writing do your students do?

Answer: My students write poetry, plays, short stories, and journals. Sometimes they are asked to write from personal experiences.

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: Sometimes they are asked to write about something that we are reading. Here are some examples: 1) Students are asked to write an original story that has the same theme as one we've read in class. 2) After reading a tragedy, students are asked to write one of their own. 3) Students sometimes rewrite an "old" story and update the setting. 4) When we read ballads, students then write their own and put them to music if they like . . .

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: I really enjoy teaching writing. I do look forward to it. I try very hard not to get frustrated when attempting to work with students individually. Of course, the classes are too large, I have too

many preparations, and there isn't enough time to help all the students as much as needed. But I try to keep a portfolio for each student so that I can see that they do make progress. Almost every student who tries can progress . . .

“M”

Question: Did you have creative writing courses in high school or college?

Answer: No.

Question: What kinds of creative writing do your students do? Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: I generally have students write responses to a piece of literature. In addition, I have them write Halloween stories and Christmas stories. They like to write about holidays . . . The assignments are open-ended which gives way to as much creativity as they can muster . . .

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: Really, I'm not sure that I understand totally the meaning of "creative." Even though I had many English education classes, I'm not sure that anyone gave it an exact definition. Anything that a student writes using his own imagination could be considered creative writing? I don't know . . .

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional?

Answer: I don't do journal writing or letters . . . In the past I have done this and have found this kind of writing too repetitious . . .

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: I have to be honest and say that I am basically a traditional English teacher. Grammar is the main emphasis in my class. The most writing that my students do is a response to a story or poem . . .

“G”

Question: Do you consider your personal writing to be mostly creative or mostly transactional or functional?

Answer: Most of my writing is transactional because it deals with the demands of the system. Outside writing is more geared to “sermon” preparation . . . [Other kinds of writing] are seldom written [by me] . . .

Question: When you began teaching, did you feel qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: No. The University system did not teach creative writing in any form in the curriculum required for graduation . . . Undergraduate and graduate writing at the University did not want or foster creative writing . . .

Question: What kinds of creative writing do your students do?

Answer: Students can write beginnings, middle, and the endings for novels. They create new characters, events, etc. that extend the novel that is being read. Essays are assigned or given to allow other techniques, styles or formats to a wide variety of audiences. Picture and dramatic adaptations are used as part of various assignments. Letters, articles, interviews, etc. are used to allow students to express his or her thoughts in a unique or different way . . .

Question: You use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: Yes. Every novel program has a creative response assignment given. Students are given suggestions for responding, but the assignments are always open ended within limits given to the novel chosen. Innovative techniques and styles are greatly encouraged . . .

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: [Yes] . . . Writing is a skill that all people need. Writing needs to be separated from the curriculum to be a specific class with an overall emphasis on creative writing in a wide variety of content areas. Vocational, academic, and special-ed are other areas which all need writing skills

Part Two: Attitudes

Part Two of Question 3 will record the attitudes toward using writing as a learning mechanism of pre-service and inservice teachers. Section 1, Group 1 will divulge the attitudes of the eight pre-service teachers who completed all interview instruments as taken from the Initial and Written and Exit Interviews, classroom papers, and journal entries. Section 1, Group 2 will reveal the attitudes of the four inservice teachers who completed two of the interview instruments, plus all the scale and opinionaire instruments. Section 2 will document inservice teacher attitudes as gathered from the Written Interviews.

Section 1: Preservice Teachers

Group 1

“JB”

*** (From the initial interview): Question: I asked you before if you had any teachers who gave you creative assignments and you said yes. Do you feel like that’s the kind of assignment that you would give as a general habit when you begin teaching?

Answer: Yes, I think my students will write . . . I'll try not to force them, but if that's what it comes to, it's good for them, and obviously they don't realize it yet. But if they are going to be in an advanced class or a college prep class they need to do it. That's the only thing that you can really get out of high school, I think, in true preparation for college classes, especially as an English major. The more you write when you're there the way better you are in college . . .

***(From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you think you would use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content in your class?

Answer: Sure.

Question: Because you think it is beneficial?

Answer: Yes. Obviously if you do the writing, you are thinking about it, and that always brings it back full circle. When you do it, it is physically done and you thought about it then, and it is in your mind and it will stay.

Question: Yes, to some degree anyway . . . Going back to when you were talking about imaginative and creative writing within the course content. I know being a preservice teacher it is hard to focus on this, but a lot has been said about paper load and how overwhelmed teachers can become in that. Can you see yourself slacking off on using your writing style when you actually get into a classroom and realize you have 130 students to deal with?

Answer: Yes. If you said no, I think you would be kidding yourself. You have got to be honest with yourself, and when you do start having that many papers start flowing in weekly or however you assigned them out, it will definitely cut into your time. I still find time today to do the things I like to do. I come to class and I work all day long and I still have a private life, so if you put your

mind to it you can find time to do whatever you need to do. I might require getting up a little earlier or staying up a little later, you just have to set a goal and do it.

Question: So you think it is valuable that you continue to do it [teach writing]?

Answer: Yes . . .

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes. Learning styles that are different, writing character sketches or autobiographies about a character in a book is an awesome way to learn . . .

“HN”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think that you’ll use the creative kinds of assignments that you had in high school in your classrooms?

Answer: Yes.

Question: You’ll do that? Even though it involves a lot of paperwork?

Answer: Yes.

Question: You think so?

Answer: Yes, I think it would be fun to do. My problem, I’m afraid of it as far as having to write creatively and rating it. How do you grade something like that? I mean how do you decide what’s good and what’s bad?

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: The imaginative kinds of writing that we discussed, just using imaginative assignments . . . Do you think you’ll use those kinds of things in your class?

Answer: Yes, they are fun. Do you think?

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes. For instance when teaching a novel, I would have them do projects like writing a letter to a character or other projects like having a character write a letter to someone else.

“AS”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think that when you start teaching that you will use creative kinds of assignments rather than the stuff like you did, the research and things like that?

Answer: Yes I think so. I think I will. I think it helps the students explore a lot better, and find meaning in things that they are reading or learning about . . .

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: Are you going to use imaginative and creative kinds of assignments to focus learning of regular course content?

Answer: I can.

Question: I am sure you have seen in the class where teachers with a great paper load get burned out on it at some time because it is overwhelming, especially if you have one hundred twenty students. Can you see yourself cutting back on writing or re-focusing the way you teach because of that, or do you think it is important enough to keep it up?

Answer: I think it is important enough to keep it up and I also think that it is helpful to do packaging type of things where you don't take home everything that the students write, but that everybody is still important. Like in portfolio evaluation where you take a bigger look at things, [the students] doing a whole bunch of revisions leading up to one final product and include everything [in the portfolio]. Also I think it is important to let the students do a lot of their own

writing in groups so even if the teacher doesn't have to take it home and put a grade on it, it is still important in the class and the students still know that this writing is important even if they aren't being graded on every piece of writing they do. I guess that's a way of reducing it . . . I think if you have to drag home papers every night . . .

Question: You will get tired of it, right?

Answer: Yes.

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes. I think that I will use creative writing a lot in teaching . . . in order to get the students to practice writing and thinking . . .

“JK”

*** (From the Initial Interview) Question: Do you think you'll use creative assignments to focus student learning in your classes?

Answer: I think so.

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Definitely, students should be allowed and encouraged to use any form of writing to express their ideas or knowledge.

“AB”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Okay, going back to question 2 -- how many teachers used student creative writing assignments to focus learning of course content -- is this something

that you would do when you're teaching, to do that kind of instruction, creative writing assignments?

Answer: It definitely makes the kids more motivated.

Question: I am sure you have run into teachers who maybe have once upon a time thought about doing the same kind of assignments but slacked off because of paper load. Your thoughts?

Answer: There are teachers that thought I was nuts. I would assign 1000 word essays to the AP kids and 6-800 words to the Honors 11, and they were all due on Monday because a lot of kids have to type theirs, and I don't want them to feel any less advantage than the others, so I give them the weekend to use the library or borrow their friend's word processor . . . Monday everybody came in and I had on my desk a bunch of papers, and I read every single one front to back. I mean I never stopped on one of them.

Question: You are fresh. Can you see yourself getting burned out?

Answer: Definitely.

Question: How about changing assignments? Do you think that would help, maybe?

Answer: Yes. I see myself as being a teacher only a few years. After about seven years, then I should be home [raising a family]. After I raise all my kids, maybe I could go back. I personally enjoy teaching and I have seen the kids transforming and that was just in eight weeks . . .

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes. Instead of quizzes and checks, I like to allow students to convey what they have absorbed through creative writing . . .

“CP”

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: Do you think you will use creative kinds of assignments in regular coursework?

Answer: Definitely, I have been convinced that the classes need to be student centered and need to, as much as I hate to say, be entertaining to your students . . . You have got to keep them interested in what they are doing and if it is about them, and so much creative writing is about yourself, at least that’s what I’m learning, then you can do so much with it and keep the students interested and active.

****(From the Exit Interview)*: Question: Do you think you’ll use creative writing, and not just creative writing but imaginative writing of any kind, and those kinds of assignments to focus learning as opposed to just transactional writing?

Answer: I think so, definitely. I think it is an important part when you use it more. For example, this story that I did, I see it was just so educational for me. Taking away all the things I’ve learned about creative writing, I talked to my psychiatrist, and he said what good therapy it is to write about what you know and to write about those things and what I learned about. I never wrote about that in a journal before and I just think it helps me so much to see things in a different way and it sort of helps you grow and it helps my students grow as people, not just become better writers. That was the best thing I thought about it . . .

Question: Of course, you are saying this before you ever start teaching. Just out of curiosity, and this is something I have heard from teachers in the field, once you get into the field and have all the paperwork and papers you have to correct, you think it is going to change your perspective any?

Answer: I am sure it will change [my perspective some], and that's probably the thing that I most fear in getting a job: Once I get a job that I will become a cynical person . . . Just worrying about attendance and class pictures and all that nonsense. I think it takes a whole a lot of effort and a whole lot of concentration not to fall back just the way everybody else did . . .

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes. It is a good student-centered approach. Doing this can be very beneficial to students of all ages.

“EO”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think that in the classes that have writing in them that you learn more or less than the classes where you either have a lecturer or read the material and then have tests?

Answer: I think when you write in either writing or discussion classes or a combination of both, it gets me to synthesize what's going on instead of just, you know, the facts, facts, facts, and kind of same thing I said with the [research] papers.

Question: Okay, so if you were teaching in the class you would feel like the students need to write more to understand?

Answer: Yes, and I think it's a lot more accurate way for a teacher to test knowledge.

Question: Do you think you would have any trouble with the paperwork and stuff like that when you do it? I mean I know you don't think about it now, because this is your first year into it, but given the fact that you're going to have 30 kids in a class and if you have 5 maybe 6 classes . . .?

Answer: I guess I always thought of that as part of the whole deal, that that was going to be part of it. I guess I always looked at that as kind of unavoidable, there's going to be a lot of grading to do . . .

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you think you will use imaginative and creative writing assignments, not necessarily creative writing, but those kinds of assignments, to focus to learning in course content?

Answer: Yes, I'd like to.

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes, every week if possible! . . .

“LS”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think in the course of the work that you will give in the regular classroom that you'll give creative kinds of assignments, the kind you didn't have? I mean you had them in college obviously.

Answer: Right.

Question: And you probably think that they help you learn?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you think you will be using them when you teach?

Answer: Yes . . .

***(From the Exit Interview): Question: Let's talk about all the writing including transactional and creative. Do you think classes that have both of those kinds of writing or any form of writing in the learning process are more or less beneficial than say traditional courses which are like lectures?

Answer: More beneficial.

***(From the Written Interview): Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content? Explain!

Answer: Yes. I don't know how at this moment, but I will use creative writing somehow.

Group 2

“KH”

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: I guess you'll be comfortable teaching creative writing? How do you plan to structure classes by using writing and yet maybe take into account that some people don't learn as much through writing? Or have you had pedagogy to suggest such things yet?

Answer: I don't really know. The only thing I can say is I think the more you write the more enjoyment and pleasure you can find in writing. It's like the more you do anything the better you get at it. I think the students are going to see . . . The more they write they're going to see for themselves the next time they write they're going to have something to say . . . I think that's like anything. If you start to keep a journal, it's hard the first few days, keeping a reading journal or whatever, but the more you write, the easier it gets. The next time you pick up a pen and have something that you feel is important to yourself or maybe even important to others, you know to tell your side of the story, your opinion . . .

Question: We talked about teachers using creative writing assignments then you said in high school you didn't have many. How about yourself? Would you consider using those kinds of assignments in the classroom when you start teaching?

Answer: Yes . . . Creative writing for me is the only way to find out about yourself and relate most of the information that you're going to cover in a literature classroom . . . I definitely am at least going to offer my students the opportunity and let them see for themselves if they value that style, because I know there are some out there that will probably be like myself and never have had the opportunity to show their talents, show what they can do on the creative level instead of like the formal level . . .

****(From the Written Interview)*: Question: Do you feel you'll be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: Yes. The classes that I have had such as English 108 have given me the insight to teach creative writing. Allen's book is an excellent source that will find its place in my future classroom. He presents material for building all aspects of the story and this could be used as stepping stones for a range of students.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: Yes, this offers students the opportunity to bring their voices into the classroom. It also brings in the student's imagination, and this can often be used as the hook to get students involved.

***Emig-King Question 40: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Initial response: Seldom

Exit response: Almost Always

“KS”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think you'll be qualified to teach creative writing when you start teaching?

Answer: No.

Question: That's honest. Okay, do you feel like, since you think that the writing assignments help, that you will be more inclined to use creative writing type assignments or creative assignments to help students learn when you start teaching?

Answer: Yes, I want to try to incorporate that sort of thing in my classroom, but I have to work on it . . .

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: No. I've never had an extensive creative writing class. I could teach it, but not well.

How could I, if I haven't done extensive creative writing myself?

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: I'll certainly try! I think students would rather write something imaginative/creative on a subject than write the boring, no voice, intellectual-sounding crap. That's all I ever did in high school and I hated it.

***Emig-King Question 40: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Initial response: Almost Always

Exit response: Often

“JS”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: When you begin teaching do you feel that you'll be qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: Yes.

Question: From your own writing ability, or from the courses you have had? Or what make you feel like you'll be qualified?

Answer: I think it's more from my own ability than the courses I have had, because I haven't had, I mean this is my first actual course that had creative writing . . . in college. I know there are electives out there but I haven't had to take them or I have taken other things . . .

Question: Given you enjoy creative writing so much, would you feel like you would give similar kinds of assignments?

Answer: Absolutely . . .

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: I feel that I have the skills necessary, but if I am unsure of things, I will find a colleague that can help. I might also take courses in grad school that will help in this area.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: I think that students should have the option to be able to pursue this type of writing. They should still be able to write conventional essays also.

***Emig-King Question 40: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Initial response: Often

Exit response: Often

“KP”

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: Do you think you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you start teaching?

Answer: I hope so. I think so, yes . . .

Question: Because of the pedagogy or because you think you are a good enough writer to do it?

Answer: Well, probably because of the pedagogy, because I haven't really been exposed to a lot of creative writing, you know? So that's like one thing, but just being around people who are in touch with the writing process will help, because obviously I didn't have hardly any before, you know? . .

Question: You said that you haven't had any teachers who used a lot of creative assignments to help you learn. Do you think you are going to use those kinds of assignments when you start teaching?

Answer: Like the creative writing things?

Question: Yes, just any kind of creative writing assignments, or creative or different kinds of assignments; do you think you'll help your students learn by doing that?

Answer: Yes, especially now that I've been exposed to it and know a little more about how it's helpful. Like in high school I never had any of that . . .

***(From the Written Interview): Question: Do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: I will feel that I am qualified, but I also know that there is a lot more I need to learn. I think writing the short story for English 108 has helped me become more aware of the processes that are involved with creative writing.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: Yes, because I think that it is important for students to be able to use their imaginations and voice their opinions. They need to be given the opportunity to do these types of things.

Section 2: Inservice Teachers

“K”

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: More. Students seem to retain and understand written exercises more than non-written.

Question: Do you think students benefit more from transactional writing (traditional book reports, research papers, compare and contrast essays, etc.) than from imaginative and/or creative exploratory writing in the secondary classroom?

Answer: They benefit from both. I devote one semester to each type of writing . . .

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies? Please explain.

Answer: . . . Writing is a great way of learning. I believe that writing should be incorporated into every class in every school . . .

“P”

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: After writing time is completed [the students] underline ideas that could be used in a paper. Toward the end of the semester we go back and select journal entries to use in creative columns, stories or plays. I use these assignments to allow the students to imagine, invest and explore their creative spirit.

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: The majority of my students learn new material more by writing than non-written exercises. When they make mistakes in their writing they can relate to it more than if they are completing other exercises. Students like to compare and share their work with others in the writing lab . . .

“B”

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Please describe.

Answer: I use creativity from quizzes to analysis, asking my students to assume roles of characters, making poetry from literature and from real life, to interact with their own voice with literature in creative ways . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: Yes, reader’s logs and other responses or applications of text make literature alive for my students . . .

“N”

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Please describe.

Answer: I use writing to focus learning in the area of literature . . . Letters to authors, extension of literature stories . . . writing stories in different points of view . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn the material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: [Yes]. Activities that require a hands-on approach increase learning . . .

“F”

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Please describe.

Answer: When I taught English, I used an autobiographical novel called *Listening for the Crack of Dawn*. My students kept a journal of childhood experiences similar to the ones in the novel (1st day of school, favorite teacher, personal experiences). From the journal they built their first “childhood experience” paper. Later, I showed them pictures from *Portraits of Appalachia*, a book of black and white photographs of people living in West Virginia, Kentucky, etc. Then, I asked them to write short stories or essays about one of the pictures. We also read *Where the Lilies Bloom*, a novel set in North Carolina. We continued with personal writing and character sketches of people in our families. The final project was a family history scrapbook which contained family stories and an autobiographical sketch. In my Drama I class, last semester, we wrote collaborative plays and acted them out. All of my drama classes are given technical theater projects. One of the options is to write a play. Last semester about 15 students wrote a play. We are currently

producing one of the plays that [a student] wrote last year. She won the playwriting contest at the West Virginia Thespian contest last year . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: There must be a balance of reading, writing and talking. Different students learn in different ways. An effective teacher attempts to use all of the resources. Some of my students *need* to write. Some see it as a chore and as a result, put so little thought into it that they receive little benefit . . .

“R”

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content? Please describe.

Answer: Sometimes they are asked to write about something that we are reading. Here are some examples:

1. Students are asked to write an original story that has the same theme as one we’ve read in class.
2. After reading a tragedy, students are asked to write one of their own.
3. Students sometimes rewrite an “old” story and update the setting.
4. When we read ballads, students write their own and put them to music if they like . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: I think that writing assignments require more individual concentration and internalization than other exercises do. I believe that a student’s depth of understanding increases more rapidly when asked to write about a subject . . .

“G”

Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Please describe.

Answer: Every novel program has a creative response assignment given. Students are given suggestions for responding but the assignments are always open-ended within limits given to the novel chosen. Innovative techniques and styles are greatly encouraged . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: Writing assignments help students learn more new material of their choice rather than the teacher's choice. Writing expands thought processes . . .

“M”

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises? Why?

Answer: I would say it would depend on the type of writing. Expressing their opinions in writing may help lead to self-examination. Research papers will most certainly help to store knowledge. Sometimes, just seeing something on paper is more retaining than the spoken word . . .

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies? Please explain.

Answer: I have to be honest and say that I am basically a traditional English teacher. Grammar is the main emphasis in my class. The most writing that my students do is a response to a story or poem . . .

From the Scale and Opinionaire

From the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Teachers

Question 14: Creative writing is a valuable learning tool for all students.

Answer: Almost always (4), Often (4), Sometimes (0), Seldom (0), Almost never (0)

Question 22: It is more important that students learn how to write essays than to write stories or poems.

Answer: Almost always (0), Often (0), Sometimes (2), Seldom (5), Almost never (1)

Question 37: I use creative writing assignments to help students explore literature and other classroom material.

Answer: Almost always (3), Often (4), Sometimes (1), Seldom (0), Almost never (0)

From the Confidential Composition Opinionaire

SECTION 1

Question 10: The English course for junior high school should include creative writing opportunities so that students can learn to explore their own thoughts about literature and other classroom coursework.

Answer: Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (1), Uncertain (0), Agree (1), Strongly agree (5)

Question 4. What change, if any, does a theoretical and practical course in creative writing have on preservice teachers' attitudes toward teaching creative writing?

For the Question 4 results I will focus in Section One on the eight preservice teachers who completed the initial interview, written interview, and exit interview, plus the initial and exit Emig-King Attitude Scale for Students, specifically, question 40, which reads "Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes." All pertinent data for

each student will be looked at in its entirety. The initial interview and scale results are pre-course. The written interview, exit interview and exit Emig-King Attitude Scale for Students results are post-course.

Question 4, Section Two results will focus on the four preservice teachers who completed all of the above with the exception of the exit interview. The format will remain the same.

Question 4, Section 1

“JK”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: When you begin teaching do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Why? Is it because of your own ability?

Answer: No, it's because it's not really my say, it's student based. Creative writing depends on them, you know? I'm just there to guide them and point things out and I can get that from books and other people.

Question: So it doesn't matter whether you absolutely know it or not, you would be comfortable with it anyway?

Answer: Yes, I mean I understand the process that they go through, but it's not that I'm actually teaching them how to be a creative writer, they are teaching themselves . . .

Question: Okay, when we talked earlier about teachers who use imaginative assignments and you couldn't think of any alternative assignments, is that something you feel like you're going to do when you get into the classroom, use those kinds of assignments? Do you feel comfortable, even with the paperwork and all that stuff, that it will be worthwhile?

Answer: Yes, right now. I'm not out there yet but right now . . .

Question: Right now you think it's worthwhile?

Answer: I think it's a good idea. Not always, but often . . .

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: Yes, I write creatively and I understand the process. The fact that I am a good or bad writer is not the point. The fact that I write and understand the process of creative writing is.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: Definitely, students should be allowed and encouraged to use any form of writing to express their ideas or knowledge . . .

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you feel like you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: Yes, I believe so.

Question: Did the class give you any insights?

Answer: Yes, as far as the process approach and peer editing is concerned. We can avoid lots of paperwork as teachers if we can create an atmosphere of process writing, producing a better paper or story, having other students help with editing. Part of the reluctance I saw as a student teacher was having to take so many papers home all the time. If we only do it once, like in class, that really helps establish a good environment.

Question: So you'll use creative assignments when you begin teaching?

Answer: I'm sure I will . . .

***Emig-King Question 40: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Initial response: Almost Always

Exit response: Almost Always

“LS”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think when you begin teaching that you will be qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: I hope.

Question: You hope? Yet you haven't had any classes?

Answer: Just this one . . . I would think that I would be qualified or able to teach it, or help with all these classes in English.

Question: You mean you will feel comfortable?

Answer: Right.

Question: Do you think in the coursework that you will give in the classroom that you'll be giving creative kinds of assignments, the kind you didn't have? I mean except for college obviously.

Answer: Right.

Question: And you probably think they help you learn?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you think you would be using them when you teach?

Answer: Yes . . .

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: Yes. The experience in this class has helped. I feel more confident as a creative writer.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student's understanding of course content?

Answer: Yes. I don't know how at this moment, but I will use creative writing somehow.

***(From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you think you will be qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: I hope. I think. Yes.

Question: Do you think you need to be good at creative writing in order to teach it?

Answer: I don't think you can say somebody is good at it or bad at it. I think everybody can do creative writing in their own way . . .

Question: Do you think you will use imaginative and creative assignments to teach subjects in course content, like literature and things like that?

Answer: Probably . . .

***Emig-King Question 40: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Initial response: Often

Exit response: Often

"HN"

***(From the Initial Interview): Question: When you begin teaching, do you think you will be qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: Once I do, I don't think I will be. Just like when we learn in class to be objective and everything, but I don't think I do it enough to feel like I should teach it.

Question: That's fair. Most of those who think they will, think of creative writing as a method rather than the genres, writing creatively in the assignments type of things. You don't?

Answer: Well I always thought that somebody was born with it, just like an artist. Either you got it or you don't. I don't think somebody can teach me how. I don't really know if anybody can teach me to write. I just think it's either you are good [at creative writing] or not . . . I mean, you honestly think you can teach it, give people ideas, but I'm saying, to make somebody really good at it, I don't . . . just think you're born with that . . .

Question: Do you think that you'll use the creative kinds of assignments that you had in high school in your classrooms?

Answer: Yes.

Question: You'll do that? Even though it involves a lot of paperwork?

Answer: Oh yes.

Question: You think so?

Answer: Yes, I think it would be fun to do. My problem, I'm afraid of it as far as having them write creatively and then grading it. How do you grade something like that? I mean how do you decide what's good and what's bad? . . .

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: No. I really don't consider myself a good creative writer; therefore, I'll not feel confident in teaching it.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: Yes. For instance when teaching a novel, I would have them do projects like writing a letter to a character or other projects like having a character write the letter to someone else . . .

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you think when you start teaching you'll be qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: No, I don't think so. I think creative writing, I just think it is something that you can do or you can't. I think anybody can write his story, but to do it well you really have to practice. I don't think I'll know how to teach it . . .

Question: So you are still uncomfortable with creative writing, you don't think you can teach it?

You are uncomfortable with your personal writing, correct?

Answer: I think I am good, but I don't think I have had enough instruction on how to teach it. That is why in this class now I am working on teaching writing or whatever. But it doesn't seem to be helping because we have these writing workshops, people look at each other's papers or whatever. Nobody criticizes them, they just go onto the next job, and even if it sucks nobody tells you, so I don't get much in these writing workshops. I don't think they help as far as peer revisions do. It has to be a teacher with the student because I don't think every student is getting help.

Question: You don't? That is very interesting.

Answer: . . . They might be able to pick up on the way it is supposed to be done, but I don't think a supposedly better student is necessarily going to feel comfortable criticizing . . .

Question: So you believe in the traditional sense that the teacher is not only an authority figure and the expert, but also should know how to do it, as opposed to just knowing the methodology behind it.

Answer: Yes.

Question: A teacher in order to teach creative writing needs to be a good creative writer?

Answer: Yes . . .

***Emig-King Question 40: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Initial response: Often

Exit response: Almost Never

“JB”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: When you begin teaching do you feel like you'll be qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: Probably not. But it's not something that you can't learn. I think there's a learning curve you have to understand in the child's mind to judge creativity, depending on the grade, let alone your own [understanding of creative writing]. You know I've developed through school and all through many years of it and I am still doing it. So there is a gap I have to catch up to where I have to go back some way or other to fill that gap . . .

Question: I asked you before have you had any teachers who gave you creative assignments and you said yes. Do you feel like that's the kind of assignment that you would give as a general habit when you begin teaching?

Answer: Yes, I think my students will write . . . I'll try not to force them but if that's what it comes to, it's good for them, and obviously they don't realize it yet. But if they are going to be in an advanced class or college prep class, they need to do it. That's the only thing that you can really get out of high school, I think, in true preparation for college classes, especially as an English major. The more you write when you're there, the way better you are in college . . .

***(From the Written Interview): Question: Do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: No. Yes. Maybe. When I go to teach I'll have a feeling. If I keep up the amount of writing I'm doing now, yes. I will have an understanding of the process.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: Yes. Learning styles that are different, writing character sketches for autobiographies about a character in a book is an awesome way to learn . . .

***(From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you think you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching?

Answer: No. I haven't done enough. Truly, I haven't done enough and I have only been through a formal process once and the only other things I have done, I obviously started to keep a journal again and kept it going years ago, so the more I've practiced the more I do well with the writing in that why, then yes I will be looking into some more writing . . .

Question: So in other words you actually aren't quite comfortable to teach creative writing without being a good creative writer in the process.

Answer: Yes. I don't think you could have it any other way.

Question: Do you think you would use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content in your class?

Answer: Sure.

Question: Because you think it is beneficial?

Answer: Yes. Obviously if you do the writing, you are thinking about it, and that always brings it back home. When you do it, it is physically done and you thought about it then and it is in your mind and it will stay.

***Emig-King Question 40: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Initial response: Often

Exit response: Sometimes

“AS”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: You'll feel comfortable teaching creative writing?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you think that when you start teaching that you'll use creative kinds of assignments rather than the stuff like you did, the research and things like that?

Answer: Yes, I think so. I think I will. I think it helps students explore a lot better, and helps them find meaning in things that they are reading or learning about. But do you consider like, if you have to write about something, like say you read the story and you have to write about it, if you're not given any certain parameters, is that still creative?

Question: In my mind, part of what I'm going to be doing is defining what creative writing is, but I think anytime you're exploring in an imaginative way, not just giving a task to do such as research or describe setting to me, or something like that, it's creative. Don't you?

Answer: Oh, in that case then I think most of my experience has been with that kind of writing in classes, those kind of assignments . . .

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: I feel that it will be a learning process I go through with my students -- one that I am looking forward to very much.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: Yes. I think that for me I will use creative writing a lot in teaching French in order to get the students to practice writing and thinking in French . . .

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: So you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your career?

Answer: Yes, I guess. I mean being able to help the students along with the process, yes. I am having a lot of trouble in a class I'm in and all so part of the problem is the class hasn't focused on creative writing. It's just been like transactional writing. Writing just isn't that . . . I think I will have a lot more difficult time. I think that is easier for somebody who knows how difficult it is to go through the process to help other people than somebody who doesn't; you know, how you always have that math teacher in high school who was just so good in math that they couldn't understand why everybody in the class couldn't get it? But then you have a math teacher who may not be the best person in math, but they know how hard it is to get through that process and that problem so they are able to explain it better. Somebody who can sit down and listen . . . A lot of it too, I think it helps me, because I am somebody who does a lot of internal processes when I am writing, to know that some of my students, especially the ones who might be better writers, do a lot of that too. They are not going to be sitting down writing every step of the way.

Question: Are you going to use imaginative and creative kinds of assignments to focus learning of regular course content?

Answer: I can . . . I think it is important enough, and I also think that it is helpful to do packaging types of things where you don't take home everything that a student writes but that everybody is still important and is included . . . Also I think it is important to let the students do a lot with their own writing in groups or whatever so even if the teacher doesn't have that to take home and put a grade on it, it is still important in the class and the students still know that their writing is important even if they aren't being graded on every piece of writing they do . . .

***Emig-King Question 40: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Initial response: Almost Always

Exit response: Almost Always

“AB”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: When you begin teaching do you feel you'll be qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: Yes . . .

Question: Is it because of the way you write or because of content material specifically that you have learned?

Answer: I think because of content. I mean I think I have been taught from enough teachers, and been in enough classes that don't stress the spelling when you just let the kids think, let them

express themselves, you know? I'll share my writing with them but I just want to encourage, and just either support them and let them let out their feelings creatively, however it comes out, in a poem or letter or whatever.

Question: So even though you haven't had creative writing courses particularly, you still feel qualified because you have done enough creative writing. Is that what you think?

Answer: I think so. I think they just need a leader. I don't think they need specific instructions. I don't think that makes it worse. I think you need to let them go, to branch out . . .

Question: Okay going back to question two -- how many teachers used student creative writing assignments to focus learning of course content -- is this something that you would do when you're teaching, to do that kind of instruction, creative writing assignments?

Answer: It definitely makes the kids more motivated . . .

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you feel you'll be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: I think so.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student understanding of course content?

Answer: Yes. Instead of quizzes and checks, I like to allow students to convey what they have absorbed through creative writing.

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: So you feel you are qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: Yes.

Question: In your teaching, do you use those terms like imaginative and creative?

Answer: Yes, every single time. Like ideas for chapters on compare and contrast analogies. One was process and analysis. One was descriptive. The descriptive was the easiest. I said think about your own life and then incorporate [analogies]. I think that for this generation of kids, the bottom-line is meaningfulness. If they don't see any meaning in their life in what you are teaching they don't want to know about it, and I don't blame them . . . A lot of them don't want to learn something they can't use . . . There is no way around it, and they all agree. We never learned so much.

Question: So you will continue using those kinds of assignments?

Answer: Yes.

Question: I am sure you have run into teachers who maybe have once upon a time thought about doing the same kind of assignments but slacked off because of paper load. Will you?

Answer: There are teachers who thought I would. I would assign 1000 word essays to the AP kids and 600 to 800 words to the honors 11 on Friday and they were all due Monday because a lot of kids have to type theirs and I don't want them to feel any less advantage than the others, so I give them the weekend to use the library or borrow their friend's word processors. These kids have a real disadvantage so it is assigned and they know about it all week and will review the whole chapter and then Friday they go home. Most of them do it Sunday night, but the kids who do not have a typewriter or computer have to go to the library or to a friend's house, so they have the weekend to word process and write their story and Monday everybody comes and I have on my desk a bunch of papers and I read every single one front to back. I mean I never stopped at one of them.

***Emig-King Question 40: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning at all English classes.

Initial response: Sometimes

Exit response: Almost Always

“CI”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you start teaching?

Answer: I think when I start teaching, yes. I think if I was thrown in right now I'd have a difficult time. I think I could do it and I think I could pass it off a lot better than a lot of other teachers could from what I've seen in the classroom, what I have heard; but I think that it's the exposure I'm getting now in my classes that has helping a lot, just learning and having the writing process, you know, beating it into my head. It's good. We need to do that. It's ridiculous that there are teachers that don't know what it is and don't know that it exists . . .

Question: Okay, so you think you'll use creative kinds of assignments in coursework too, not just creative writing, but in the regular coursework?

Answer: Definitely, I've been convinced that the classes need to be student-centered and need to, as much as I like to say, entertain the students. I hate to say that word, but you do, you've got to keep them interested in what they are doing, and if it's about them, (and so much creative writing is about yourself, at least that's what I'm learning), you can do so much with it to keep the students interested and active.

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: Somewhat. I need more experience writing . . . It'll take self-discipline also to read and learn more about the writing process.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: Yes. It is a good student-centered approach. Doing this can be very beneficial to students of all ages.

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you feel that you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: I feel like I will but I think I will be nervous about it but I feel like I will be more qualified than if I didn't have this class. If I didn't it would be so scary.

Question: So the class made it easier to understand that creative writing isn't always as tough as you think it is?

Answer: Exactly. And I looked at the class from being a future teacher -- being there as a future teacher but also as a student having to do this project and thinking I know exactly what my students will be doing today, and I can say "hey guys, I suffered too."

Question: It helps, doesn't it?

Answer: It helps identify with the students.

Question: Do you think you will use creative writing, and not just creative writing but imaginative writing of any kind, and those kinds of assignments to focus student learning as opposed to just transactional writing classes?

Answer: I think so, definitely. I think it is an important part and we should use it more. For example, this story that I did, I see it was just so educational for me, taking away all the things I

learned about creative writing. I talked to my psychiatrist and he said what good therapy it is to write about what you know and to write about these things, and what I'd learned about, I never wrote about that in a journal before, and I just think it helps me so much to see things in a different way and it sort of helps you grow and it helps my students grow as people, not only to help them become better writers. That was the best thing I thought about it . . .

***Emig-King Question 40:

Initial response: Almost Always

Exit response: Often

“EO”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you feel like you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you start teaching?

Answer: Yes, I would like to. I would like to include it in the curriculum though. I don't know if I will necessarily be, when I first am certified, able to teach a specific class that was just creative writing. I'd like to, but I'm not sure as of right now, because I graduated with an English degree, so this is my first exposure right now to any kind of teaching classes . . .

Question: Do you think when you start teaching you'll use creative kinds of assignments like you had in your high school?

Answer: Yes, I think I would like to use even more. I don't think they necessarily used that much it's just that's what I remember because it was something different . . .

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: Yes. I've been doing it for awhile.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: Yes, every week if possible!

*** (From the Exit Interview): Question: Do you think you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin teaching English?

Answer: I think so. I think it has been a lot more involved in my personal life than just the academics side, so if I just have to rely on what I have been exposed to through school, I don't know where I would fall in the creative writing part, but I have been writing poetry since I was a kid and I have written songs and a couple stories.

Question: Okay. You are comfortable with the process of creative writing?

Answer: Yes. I get enjoyment out of it too.

Question: Which is important when you are teaching it because if you don't enjoy it, then your students won't learn it?

Answer: Yes, and I would probably preferred teach creative writing than almost any kind of writing. Not just writing but being an audience for others within the class to give them their own personalities, so that the humor comes through. So that I see the personal side of it . . .

Question: Do you think you will use imaginative and creative writing assignments, not necessarily creative writing but those kinds of assignments, to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: Yes, I would really like to . . .

***Emig-King Question 40: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Initial response: Almost Always

Exit response: Often

Question 4, Section Two

“KH”

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: I guess you'll be comfortable teaching creative writing?

How do you plan to structure classes by using writing and yet maybe take into account that some people don't learn as much through writing? Or have you had pedagogy to suggest such things yet?

Answer: I don't really know. The only thing I can say is I think the more you write the more enjoyment and pleasure you can find in writing. It's like the more you do anything the better you get at it. I think the students are going to see . . . The more they write they're going to see for themselves the next time they write they're going to have something to say . . . I think that's like anything. If you start to keep a journal, it's hard the first few days, keeping a reading journal or whatever, but the more you write, the easier it gets. The next time you pick up a pen and have something that you feel is important to yourself or maybe even important to others, you know to tell your side of the story, your opinion . . .

Question: We talked about teachers using creative writing assignments then you said in high school you didn't have many. How about yourself? Would you consider using those kinds of assignments in the classroom when you start teaching?

Answer: Yes . . . Creative writing for me is the only way to find out about yourself and relate most of the information that you're going to cover in a literature classroom . . . I definitely am at least

going to offer my students the opportunity and let them see for themselves if they value that style, because I know there are some out there that will probably be like myself and never have had the opportunity to show their talents, show what they can do on the creative level instead of like the formal level . . .

*****(From the Written Interview):** Question: Do you feel you'll be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: Yes. The classes that I have had such as English 108 have given me the insight to teach creative writing. Allen's book is an excellent source that will find its place in my future classroom. He presents material for building all aspects of the story and this could be used as stepping stones for a range of students.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: Yes, this offers students the opportunity to bring their voices into the classroom. It also brings in the student's imagination, and this can often be used as the hook to get students involved.

*****Emig-King Question 40:** Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Initial response: Seldom

Exit response: Almost Always

“KS”

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: Do you think you'll be qualified to teach creative writing when you start teaching?

Answer: No.

Question: That's honest. Okay, do you feel like, since you think that the writing assignments help, that you will be more inclined to use creative writing type assignments or creative assignments to help students learn when you start teaching?

Answer: Yes, I want to try to incorporate that sort of thing in my classroom, but I have to work on it . . .

****(From the Written Interview)*: Question: Do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: No. I've never had an extensive creative writing class. I could teach it, but not well. How could I, if I haven't done extensive creative writing myself?

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: I'll certainly try! I think students would rather write something imaginative/creative on a subject than write the boring, no voice, intellectual-sounding crap. That's all I ever did in high school and I hated it.

****Emig-King Question 40*: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Initial response: Almost Always

Exit response: Often

“JS”

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: When you begin teaching do feel that you'll be qualified to teach creative writing?

Answer: Yes.

Question: From your own writing ability, or from the courses you have had? Or what make you feel like you'll be qualified?

Answer: I think it's more from my own ability than the courses I have had, because I haven't had, I mean this is my first actual course that had creative writing . . . in college. I know there are electives out there but I haven't had to take them or I have taken other things . . .

Question: Given you enjoy creative writing so much, would you feel like you would give similar kinds of assignments?

Answer: Absolutely . . .

****(From the Written Interview)*: Question: Do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: I feel that I have the skills necessary, but if I am unsure of things, I will find a colleague that can help. I might also take courses in grad school that will help in this area.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: I think that students should have the option to be able to pursue this type of writing. They should still be able to write conventional essays also.

****Emig-King Question 40*: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Initial response: Often

Exit response: Often

“KP”

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: Do you think you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you start teaching?

Answer: I hope so. I think so, yes . . .

Question: Because of the pedagogy or because you think you are a good enough writer to do it?

Answer: Well, probably because of the pedagogy, because I haven't really been exposed to a lot of creative writing, you know? So that's like one thing, but just being around people who are in touch with the writing process will help, because obviously I didn't have hardly any before, you know? . .

Question: You said that you haven't had any teachers who used a lot of creative assignments to help you learn. Do you think you are going to use those kinds of assignments when you start teaching?

Answer: Like the creative writing things?

Question: Yes, just any kind of creative writing assignments, or creative or different kinds of assignments; do you think you'll help your students learn by doing that?

Answer: Yes, especially now that I've been exposed to it and know a little more about how it's helpful. Like in high school I never had any of that . . .

*****(From the Written Interview):** Question: Do you feel you will be qualified to teach creative writing when you begin your teaching career?

Answer: I will feel that I am qualified, but I also know that there is a lot more I need to learn. I think writing the short story for English 108 has helped me become more aware of the processes that are involved with creative writing.

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: Yes, because I think that it is important for students to be able to use their imaginations and voice their opinions. They need to be given the opportunity to do these types of things.

***Emig-King Question 40: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Initial response: Often

Exit response: Often

Question 5: Does writing apprehension play a role in preservice or inservice teacher attitudes toward teaching writing?

In determining whether writing apprehension plays a role in preservice or inservice teacher attitudes toward teaching writing, I will look at the individual composite results on the writing apprehension survey juxtaposed against the answer to three specific interview questions most indicative of attitude toward teaching writing.

Specifically, the questions most indicative of the attitude toward teaching writing for the preservice teachers are: “Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?”; “Does writing help you learn new subjects?”; and “Do writing classes focus learning more or less than non-writing classes?”

For the inservice teachers the questions most indicative of attitude toward teaching writing are: “Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?”; “Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises?”; and “Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing? Regardless, do you feel these classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies?”

The results from the writing apprehension survey are determined by combining the contrary responses to the 12 positive indicator (non-apprehensive) questions with the concordant responses to the eight negative indicator (apprehensive) questions. Contrary responses to the positive indicators are “Seldom” and “Almost Never.” Concordant responses to the negative indicators are “Almost Always” and “Often.” The higher the number of combined responses, the more apprehensive the individual is. Zero combined responses is non-apprehensive, one or two combined responses is negligible apprehension, three or four combined responses indicates moderate apprehension, five to nine combined responses is apprehensive, 10 or more combined responses is scared to death.

Question 5, Section One will focus on the preservice teachers. The interview questions and responses are taken from the initial interview, the most proximate interview to the administration of the writing apprehension survey.

Question 5, Section Two will focus on the inservice teachers. The interview questions and responses are taken from the written interview.

Question 5, Section One: Preservice Teachers

“LS”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 8

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think in the course of the work that you will give in the regular classroom that you’ll give creative kinds of assignments, the kind you didn’t have? I mean you had them in college obviously?

Answer: Right.

Question: And you probably think that they help you learn?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you think you will be using them when you teach?

Answer: Yes . . .

Question: Do you think writing classes or writing to learn in those classes, the classes where we use writing, do you think that you learn more in those classes than the ones that have lecture and tests or is at the other way around?

Answer: No, I think you learn more in the writing class.

“JK”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 1

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Okay, when we talked earlier about teachers who use imaginative assignments and you couldn't think of any alternative assignments for instance, is that something you feel like you're going to do when you get into the classroom, use those kinds of assignments? Do you feel comfortable even with the paperwork and all that stuff, it will be worthwhile?

Answer: Yes, right now, I'm not out there yet, so for right now . . .

Question: Right now you think it's worthwhile?

Answer: I think it's a good idea. Not always, but often . . .

Question: Do you think writing classes promote learning more or less than classes that you don't have to do so much writing?

Answer: Usually more, and that could depend on what I'm doing. Like in a lot of literature classes and, not a lot but if you, good professors I would say who utilize writing, but mostly it's just lecture. I think I learn a lot from writing . . . I mean it is, you know . . .

Question: It depends on the instructor?

Answer: But then again I'm taking classes that I'm attempting a lot of writing and others with lecturing which I can learn from both at the same time . . . Usually I think writing definitely helps more though.

“AB”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 1

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Okay, going back to question to, how many teachers used student creative writing assignments to focus learning of course content, is this something that you would do when you're teaching, to do that kind of instruction, creative writing assignments?

Answer: It definitely makes the kids more motivated . . .

Question: Does writing help you learn new subjects?

Answer: I don't really think you could learn anything without writing . . .

Question: But do you feel that writing classes promote learning more than the classes that don't do the writing?

Answer: Definitely . . .

“EO”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 0

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think when you start teaching you will use creative kinds of assignments like you had in your high school?

Answer: Yes, I think I would like to use even more. I don't think they necessarily used that much. It's just that's what I remember because it was something different. I mean, because he gave us a

little bit of freedom, or maybe that's how I gained some recognition because they recognized my writing and they allowed us to write a lot.

Question: And that's important, right?

Answer: Right . . .

Question: So you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes, I think it does, I think recently I've really gotten to know that writing is helping me understand myself a lot more . . .

Question: Do you think that in classes that have writing in them, that you learn more or less than the classes where you have lectures or read material and then have tests?

Answer: I think when you write, either writing or discussion classes, or a combination of others, it gets me to synthesize what's going on and instead of, you know, just the facts . . .

Question: Okay, so if you were teaching the class you would feel like the students need to write more to understand?

Answer: Yes, and I think it's a lot more sure way for a teacher to test knowledge.

Question: Do you think you would have any trouble with the paperwork and stuff like that when you do it? I mean I know you don't think about it now, because this is your first year into it, but given the fact that you're going to have 30 kids in a class and you have five maybe six classes?

Answer: I guess I always thought of that as part of the whole deal, that that was going to be part of it. I guess I always looked at that as kind of unavoidable, there's going to be a lot of grading to do . . .

“CP”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 3

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think you'll use creative kinds of assignments in the regular coursework too, not just creative writing, but in the regular classrooms?

Answer: Definitely, I've been convinced that the classes need to be student centered and need to, as much as I hate to say, you have got to almost entertain your students, and I hate to say that word, but you do; you've got to keep them interested in what they are doing and if it's about them, and so much creative writing is about yourself, at least that's what I'm learning, then you can do so much with it in keeping the students interested and active . . .

Question: Do you think writing helps you learn?

Answer: Definitely, yes. I think that even the basic writing, if you have to memorize something, [does] . . .

Question: Do you think you learn more in classes that have writing than classes that say are just lecturing and reading?

Answer: Definitely. I learned a lot more because the classes that I have that are just tests, whether it's in grad or undergraduate, it's the ones with tests, I really couldn't tell you what I learned, but the other things, I'm serious, the things I learned this summer (and that kind of class): they are out of my head. I may remember some names. If you would tell me some psychiatrist's or psychologist's name, I may know that, but I don't remember the case studies and the reasons why behind all of it. I think when you are writing and when you're researching you're totally learning the concept and what is it that Jeanne's always saying, I mean when you are writing? . . . Writing is knowing or writing is building, when you write you are learning what you do.

Question: Writing is learning, sure!

Answer: I don't know, there's something else she says all the time. I will have to think of it, but I just feel like I've learned so much more, and after I read a paper I feel like I can really talk about it. I've learned a lot.

Question: Isn't it surprising that so many classes still just give you tests?

Answer: It's wrong . . .

“AS”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 0

****(From the Initial Interview)* Question: Do you think that when you start teaching that you will use creative kinds of assignments rather than the stuff like you did, the research and things like that?

Answer: Yes, I think so. I think I would. I think it helps the students explore a lot better, and find meaning in things that they are reading or learning about . . . But do you consider like, if you have to write about something, like say you read a story and have to write about it, if you were not given any like certain parameters, is that still creative, right?

Question: In my mind, part of what I'm going to be doing is defining what creative writing is, but I think anytime you're exploring in an imaginative way, not just given a task to do such as research or describe the setting to me, or something like that, it's creative, right?

Answer: Oh, in that case then I think most of my experience has been with that kind of writing in classes, those kinds of assignments.

Question: To explore your thoughts on things and then be given the freedom to express?

Answer: And not to have to stay within, like you said, just a setting or whatever . . .

Question: So writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Sometimes . . .

Question: Do you think writing classes help you learn better than classes that don't have writing in them or vice versa?

Answer: I think it depends on the subject.

Question: Well, obviously if you're talking about math class, and maybe science class, you're not going to do so much?

Answer: But I think in general, yes, writing is better.

Question: I mean like in most classes where you could or could not write, either one.

Answer: Yes, I think it would definitely help . . .

“JB”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 1

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: I asked you before if you had any teachers who gave you creative assignments and you said yes. Do you feel like that's the kind of assignment that you would give as a general habit when you begin teaching?

Answer: Yes, I think my students will write . . . I'll try not to force them, but if that's what it comes to, it's good for them, and obviously they don't realize it yet. But if they are going to be in an advanced class or a college bound class, they need to do it. That's the only thing that you can really get out of high school, I think, in true preparation for college classes, especially as an English major. The more you write when you are there, the way better you are in college . . .

Question: Now that you look back on it, do you think that classes that involve writing teach you better . . . That you learn more from them than classes that don't involve writing?

Answer: I had a specific example. I had Dr. J. here at WVU, it was an English 20 series, it was British literature or whatever, and of the whole series you have to take 21, 22, 24, 25, something like that -- there are 4 classes you have to take. Of all four of those, hers was the only one I truly learned anything, and the only reason was because she made us write two journal [entries] every week, and you had two journal articles on the readings a week, and in that class I can remember specifics of the material, and the others are just a blur. Obviously that just proves that writing works!

“HN”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 5

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think that you'll use the creative kinds of assignments that you had in high school in your classrooms?

Answer: Oh yes.

Question: You'll do that? Even though it involves a lot of paperwork?

Answer: Oh yes.

Question: You think so?

Answer: Yes, I think it would be fun to do. My problem, I'm afraid of it as far as to them having to write creatively [and me] grading it. How do you grade something like that? I mean, how the you decide what's good and what's bad? . . .

Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes, definitely . . .

Question: Do you think you learn more in classes where you write than classes where, say, you just a read the text, or have lectures and take the test?

Answer: Definitely . . . I don't go to them [lecture classes] usually, and then I'll just like cram for the test and get an A or B and forget it.

Question: I can tell you, in my graduate work, I had only one class that even had quizzes in it, everything else was writing, so if you go on to grad school . . .

Answer: That's how this semester is, that's why I like it so much, because it's reading and writing which is great for me. I would rather do that than have to worry about studying for a test. I just hate tests!

“CS”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 0

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: We talked before about teachers using creative assignments in the classroom. Do you think you'll use those kind of assignments in the classroom?

Answer: Yes, most definitely.

Question: So you think they're very worthwhile?

Answer: Yes, I think unfortunately too many times it's just not within the English classroom or the math classroom that just creativity and stimulation in the mind is forgotten on the whole. I mean, I don't know how many classes I have had that I just sat through half asleep just because there's no stimulation there and everybody, I don't care if the students sit there and say that I don't know how to write or I don't know how to be creative, it's just that is wrong, and that's actually, this may change before I become a teacher, but I have always kind of thought that that would be my major focus in teaching -- writing, you know? I think it would honestly bother me if a student came to me saying "Oh I can't write, I've never been able to." I would probably sit them down to make them realize that anybody can write. I think anybody can write, it may take awhile to find your inner

voice or whatever to make you realize that you can, but, you know, creativity and stimulation of the mind through projects and creative writing and everything is of major importance and should be a major focus of any English classroom whether it's in a linguistic classroom, English literature, American literature, Russian literature, I don't care in doesn't matter. Anywhere in an English classroom I think you have to be really creative and really stimulated . . .

Question: Do you think writing helps you learn do subjects?

Answer: Definitely, English as a whole, depending on how it's taught in a classroom, is completely multidisciplinary. I mean English can involve sciences, it can involve math, it can involve any kind of the arts or anything, and I mean I don't know how to give a specific example right now . . .

Question: In other words, when you're using writing, I guess what I am getting at is, does writing help you learn better through writing down or to organize your thoughts and things like that than it would strictly to read it or try to memorize it or something like that?

Answer: I think so. You know, when you read stuff you can only take in so much of it, and this goes back to the whole journal thing. I don't do it so much, but I understand the importance of it because I know for a lot of people, getting it written down in their own handwriting or taking something and putting it into their own words in writing is a lot better, so yes, I think it's of big importance . . .

Question: Do you think writing helps you learn better than the classes that don't have any writing?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Do you think you learn the material better that way?

Answer: Yes . . . I think students learn better when they can take things and put them into their own words. Like if I look at a multiple choice test, the answers are in somebody else's words. I mean I

could sit there and memorize the exact definitions of how the book had it, or how the teacher had it, but unless I understand, I don't know how to put it. Unless I understand it in my own words, it's not going to mean as much to me. So if you can take a textbook definition for some biology term, and put it into your own words, and you are able to write it back and it still has the same meaning, then you understand the whole process of translating . . .

“KH”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 0

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: We talked about teachers using creative writing assignments and you said that in high school you didn't have any. How about yourself? Would you consider using those kinds of assignments in the classroom when you start teaching?

Answer: Yes . . . I mean creative writing for me is the only way to find out about yourself and relate most of the information that you're going to cover in a literature classroom . . . to yourself and find any understanding; so yes, I definitely at least am going to offer my students the opportunity and let them see for themselves if they value that type because I know there are some out there that will probably be like myself and never have the opportunity to show their talents, show what they can do on the creative level instead of like the formal level, you know, that I'd been under . . .

Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes, if I couldn't write, I don't think I can learn. That's how important writing is I think anyway, for my learning style. Writing is everything whether it's writing to teach oneself, writing to show others, whatever . . .

Question: Do you think that writing classes on the average promoted learning more than classes that don't have so much writing or don't feature any writing at all?

Answer: Definitely, because when you write you find out more about yourself and you can find out more about the subject, you can make a correlation or relation between the subject and yourself where a lot times [you couldn't otherwise] . . . I think when you write you learn, and when you don't have the opportunity a lot of times, I don't think the whole extent of learning can even take place to where you can truly incorporate what the subject or material means . . . I think when you can sit there and personally write about it, it makes you look closer at the material and get more attention to it . . .

Question: How do you plan to structure classes by using writing and yet maybe take into account that some people don't learn as much through writing, or have you had pedagogy to suggest such things yet?

Answer: I don't really know. The only thing I can say is I think the more you write the more enjoyment and pleasure you can find in writing. It's like the more you do anything the better you get at it. I think the students are going to see, wake-up, . . . to the benefits of just getting the words on the paper. I think the more they write, they're going to see for themselves the next time they write they're going to have something to say. I mean, I think that's like anything, if you start to keep a journal, it's hard the first few days . . . But the more you write the easier it gets the next time you pick up the pen and have something that you feel is important to yourself or maybe even important to others . . .

“KS”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 2

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you feel like, since you think that the writing assignments help, that you will be more inclined to use creative writing type assignments or creative assignments to help students learn when you start teaching?

Answer: Yes, I want to try to incorporate that sort thing in my classroom, but I have to work on it . . .

Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes, if I have read something and if I'm writing something down, it reinforces, so it helps me . . .

Question: Do you think that writing classes usually help you learn the course content more than say just lecture and test classes or is it the other way around?

Answer: I would say you learn more if you get to write about it or even to talk about it out loud. If the teacher is doing most of the talking, at least in my experience, . . . there is usually not an opportunity for the students to ask their questions, because the teacher has that set schedule and too many questions could occur and if it's more open to discussion and even writing then the kids learn more . . .

“JS”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 0

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Given you enjoy [writing] so much, would you feel like you would give similar kinds of assignments?

Answer: Absolutely . . .

Question: It helps you learn the content?

Answer: Oh yes . . .

Question: Does writing help you learn new subjects?

Answer: I would probably have to say yes . . .

Question: Do you think that writing classes promote learning more than classes that don't do so much writing, or do any writing at all, perhaps just do reading and testing?

Answer: I think so, because it's another way that students can express themselves or get across their ideas. A lot of students might, say, write something on a paper that they wouldn't say out loud in class . . .

“KP”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 7

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: Do you think you're going to use writing assignments when you start teaching?

Answer: Like creative writing things?

Question: Yes, just any kind of creative writing assignments, or creative or different kinds of assignments, do you think you'll help your students learn by doing that?

Answer: Yes, especially now that I've been exposed to it and know more about how it's helpful. Like in high school I never had any of that . . .

Question: Do you think writing helps you learn the subject?

Answer: Yes, I mean when I study, I like don't really copy my notes, but just like write stuff to help me remember a lot. I think it does . . .

Question: Okay, how about when you do the writing in the class or you have classes where there's writing in them. If you have a similar class and you don't have writing in it, which class to you think you learn better in?

Answer: Probably the class where you do writing, because you're always looking for new information to put in that writing . . .

“MC”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 2

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: You knew one teacher who used creative writing and you said that he was very good at it and you enjoyed it. Is that something that you would try to do in your class, to use creative writing?

Answer: Yes, I think it helped me learn to express myself and become a lot more comfortable with writing.

Question: When you start teaching do you think you would use the same kind of strategies in your class?

Answer: Yes, I think so.

Question: So you would feel comfortable in doing it even with the paperwork and everything.

Answer: Yes . . .

Question: Does writing help you learn new subjects, do you think it helps you learn?

Answer: Yes, like if I'm taking notes out of something, when I write it, it usually sticks in my head a little more, better than just reading over the chapter . . .

Question: Do you think writing classes promote learning more than say the non-writing classes where you just read the material and then take the test afterwards?

Answer: I think each person learns differently. Some respond better to writing, other people like more audio, where if they just hear something, you know, in class, they learn better.

Question: So in other words it just depends on their learning style as to how or whether writing helps them out?

Answer: Right, but I think even if it doesn't help them in a well rounded way, just learning how to write can help them. When you get into business or anything or any kind of profession, you know a well-written note to someone or a well-written letter to someone . . . will get you a lot farther.

“MF”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 4

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: Do you think that when you start teaching you will use any of the [creative assignment] strategies in your teaching or do you feel that the way you learned is good enough?

Answer: I would try to expand on [the way I learned], because I don't think I would want any of my students to come away from my course not doing any creative writing, because I think I may have lost out on something along the way, and I feel it's kind of late to try to reteach myself how to do all this, so I think that one of my main goals would probably be to expand on writing in the classroom to see what it is . . .

Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Somewhat, it helps to get your ideas down on paper . . .

Question: Do you think in the classes that involve writing that you learn more than classes that don't involve writing, or are they the same?

Answer: Yes.

Question: You do learn more when you write?

Answer: Yes . . .

“BS”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 4

*****(From the Initial Interview):** Question: In our class we use creative kinds of assignments and you said you have had some in junior and senior high. So do you think that you will use those kinds of assignments in your teaching at the secondary level?

Answer: Definitely . . .

Question: Do you think it's worth it overall to use those assignments regardless of the paperwork?

Answer: Yes . . .

Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects, writing in general, any kind?

Answer: Yes, you remember things more when you write them out yourself, keeping them in your head.

Question: It helps you focus better?

Answer: Yes. That's something I do. I like to see things, I used to like to see visuals and I would learn. If I would just listen to somebody, you know, talking up in front of class, lecturing, I would kind of doze off, or look out the window. But if I see something in front of me I can learn it better . . . I write out my notes and read my textbook and write things out because I see it in front of me . . .

“JR”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 3

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: The kind of assignments we were talking about with the second question, the creative kinds of assignments, do you think those are the kinds of assignments that you would be willing to give?

Answer: Yes . . .

Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: I would say so.

Question: Any reason why? Can you tell how it helps you?

Answer: Probably because with writing you have to know what you're going to say before you put it on paper, especially for me in class. I really don't like in class writings because I am a major pre-writing type person. I just want to sit and think and realize what I'm going to say before writing it down because I don't like to start writing . . . and that's one of the things that I really look at when I get out a piece of paper and we are going to do that. I just freeze up because I'm going "oh no!" But what it does is when you are learning a new subject is you've got to see it and think of what you're going to say and analyze and get through whatever you are going to learn. It's kind of like in writing you've got to analyze what you're going to say before you put it down on paper . . .

Question: Do you think writing classes promote learning more than classes that don't have writing in them?

Answer: I don't know. I think writing, like I said, the writing maybe it forces you a little to think about what you're doing before you actually do it, I don't know if that . . .

Question: I'm sort of thinking back to classes, for instance, where you read the text and have lectures and then you go in and take a test?

Answer: I don't know, again . . . You can say someone's going to learn less from not writing, I don't know if you can say that or not.

“LL”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 1

****(From the Initial Interview)*: Question: So you think that you would use creative kinds of assignments in your own classroom as opposed to just traditional type assignments? . . . You would be willing to use all the creative kinds of writing assignments?

Answer: Yes, it kind of makes me think when I'm in my other classes, especially my other literature classes, how these people, their methods on teaching and stuff are, and how I would do it differently and so on . . .

Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes, it helps me learn, I would say, all the arts types of subjects . . .

Question: Do you think the classes that promote writing in general have more value educationally or that you learn more in them than classes which, for instance, have a lecture and/or reading and then a multiple choice test?

Answer: Most definitely.

Question: You learn more in those kinds of classes?

Answer: Because you're forced to be able to think the whole time as opposed to . . . little answers, and I know for a fact that the classes that I have had here, like the clusters, I forgot the day after probably what I wrote down in the tests, regardless of whether I got an A or an F on it.

“HP”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 5

*** (From the Initial Interview): Question: Do you think that you will be using some of those kinds of creative assignments in your classes?

Answer: Yes, because you just, the ordinary doesn't keep the kids occupied, so being a secondary education teacher and knowing that these kids don't have school on their minds, that they would rather be off doing 10 million different things, you have to come up with some creativity in order to keep them interested and then they will learn. So you can't just diagram a sentence or, you know, say write this about your process . . .

Question: Do you think writing helps you learn new subjects?

Answer: Yes, the more you write the more you have to know about it. If you are going to give any kind of response, if you are going to write you have to look into it and so . . .

Question: So it helps you explore?

Answer: Yes, I think from my own personal experience it helps me to remember a lot more if I write it down than just listen to it . . .

Question: Do you think that in classes which promote writing that you learn better than in classes that don't have a lot of writing where you just read text and then answer questions on a test, or it is it the other way around?

Answer: I think the more writing you do the better you learn . . .

“DB”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 12

*** (From the Written Interview) [DB did not respond to the written interviews]

Question: Will you use imaginative and creative writing assignments to focus student learning of course content?

Answer: I don't know. I use it to teach subject areas. I do think you are learning about a subject if creative writing is involved . . .

Question: Does writing help you learn new subjects?

Answer: Maybe. I write things over and over to learn them. That's basically only memorization. I don't know if it completely is learning . . .

Question: Do writing classes focus learning more or less than non-writing classes?

Answer: Writing classes seem to be less structured. When you are in non-writing classes, grades seem more structured, there are right and wrong answers. Writing classes aren't that way . .

.QUESTION 5, Section Two: Inservice Teachers

“K”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 0

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: Students do many personal types of writing. They keep a journal. Students write children's stories and create their own illustrations. We take a field trip to a local elementary to share the stories with two groups of first graders. Students write their own plays (in groups) and perform for the class . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises?

Answer: More. Students seem to retain and understand written exercises more than non-written.

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies?

Answer: Writing is a great way of learning. I believe that writing should be incorporated into every class in every school . . .

“P”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 2

*****(From the Written Interview):** Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: Students practice free writing twice a week in their journals. They write from 5 to 10 minutes about anything that comes to mind. After writing time is completed, they underline ideas that could be used in a paper. At the end of the semester we go back and select journal entries to use in creative poems, stories or plays. I use these assignments to allow the students to imagine, invest and explore their creative spirit . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises?

Answer: The majority of my students learn new material more by writing than non-written exercises. When they make mistakes in their writing they can relate to it more than if they are completing other exercises. Students like to compare and share their work with others in the writing lab . . .

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies?

Answer: My classes complete a writing assignment almost every day. I lecture about once every two weeks. I keep it short . . . The students are here to learn to write well-developed papers, that is what we are about!!

“B”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 1

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: I use creativity from quizzes to analysis, asking my students to assume characters, making poetry from literature and from real life, to interact with their own voice with literature in creative ways . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises?

Answer: More, reader's logs and other responses or applications of text make literature come alive for my students . . .

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies?

Answer: [Not answered]

“N”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 1

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: I use writing to focus learning in the area of literature. Creative writing assignments: letters to authors, extensions of literature stories, self evaluation, writing stories in different points of view, and creating new material . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises?

Answer: Activities that require a hands-on approach increase learning . . .

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies?

Answer: All methods of teaching can promote learning. Obviously, more personal involvement increases learning . . .

“R”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 5

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: Sometimes they are asked to write about something that we are reading. Here are some examples: (1) Students are asked to write an original story that has the same theme as one we've read

in class. (2) Reading a tragedy, students are asked to write one of their own. (3) Students sometimes rewrite an “old” story and update the setting. (4) When we read ballads, students write their own and put them to music if they like . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises?

Answer: I think that writing assignments require more individual concentration and internalization than other exercises do. I believe that a student’s depth of understanding increases more rapidly when asked to write about a subject . . .

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies?

Answer: [Not answered]

“F”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 5

*** (From the Written Interview): Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: In my Drama I class, last semester, we wrote collaborative plays and acted them out. All of my drama classes are given technical theater projects. One of the options is to write a play. Last semester about 15 students wrote a play . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises?

Answer: There must be a balance of reading, writing and talking. Different students learn in different ways. An effective teacher attempts to tap into all of the resources. Some of my students

need to write. Some see it as a chore and as a result -- put so little thought into it that they receive little benefit . . .

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies?

Answer: I stress writing in my classes. Even in my drama classes we write. I find that writing allows students time to reflect and helps them create more interesting characters [in plays]. Students must take an active role in learning when they write. They cannot be passive observers. That is what leads to learning engagement . . .

“G”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 7

****(From the Written Interview)*: Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: Innovative techniques and styles are greatly encouraged . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises?

Answer: Those assignments help students learn more new material of their choice rather than teacher choice. Writing expands thought processes and the writing process . . .

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies?

Answer: Writing is a skill that all people need. Writing needs to be separated from the curriculum to be a specific class with an emphasis on creative writing in a wide variety of content areas.

Vocational, academic, special-Ed are all areas that need writing skills . . .

“M”

***Combined Apprehensive Responses: 9

****(From the Written Interview)*: Question: Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?

Answer: The students write Halloween stories and stories pertaining to the holidays. The assignments are open-ended which gives way to as much creativity as they can muster . . .

Question: Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises?

Answer: I would say it would depend on the type of writing. Expressing their opinions in writing may help lead to self examination. Research papers would most certainly help to store knowledge. Sometimes, just saying something on paper is more retaining than the spoken word.

Question: Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies?

Answer: I am basically a traditional English teacher. Grammar is the main emphasis in my class. The most writing that my students do is a response to a story or poem . . .

Chapter Five: Analysis, Discussion and Recommendations

In this dissertation I have begun the process of exploring the correlational interaction of several comparative variables in an effort to better evaluate inservice and preservice teacher attitudes toward using creative, imaginative writing as a learning mechanism. Chapter One introduced writing to learn and the research design. Chapter Two reviewed the literature relevant to writing as learning, creative, imaginative writing, teachers' attitudes, and writing apprehension. Chapter Three explained the procedure for the study including the purpose, the research questions to be explored, a description of participants, procedures for data collection, instruments used, procedures for analysis, and procedure for reporting conclusions. Chapter Four documents the significant data for analysis of the study, question by question.

In this current chapter I will review, synthesize and categorize relevant data, question by question, in order to analyze and discuss the findings. I will also discuss the relative success of the research questions, relate the findings to the literature where appropriate, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the design, and make recommendations for future research.

Question 1

Question 1 asks: How do preservice and inservice teachers' backgrounds affect their attitudes toward creative writing? The easiest method of categorization for this question is to classify the backgrounds as: (1) extensive writing background; (2) some or moderate writing background; and (3) little or no writing background.

Criteria for Category 1

In order to classify a preservice or inservice teacher in category 1, there must be clear and concise evidence in the data of multiple exposures to creative writing methodologies in their learning background and/or personal writing habits over the course of several years. An example of the data results that would lead to classification in this category would be those of “AB”:

***I am happy to say that writing was encouraged in my home when I was young . . . When I was in the elementary and junior high school, I loved to write ultra-fiction stories. I liked to create settings and introduce outrageous yet real characters . . . I did . . . write poetry in the high school . . . I remember a lot of creative assignments in high school . . . Like putting yourself in the shoes of a character from a play. I remember having to write like someone who was a character . . .

***Question: Do you consider your personal writing . . . to be creative or functional?

Answer: Creative . . . If you read it . . . it’s very personal. I like to use many imaginative expressions . . . [the journals] use a lot of emotions . . .

“AB” obviously has a strong background in creative expression both in school settings and in her personal experiences.

Criteria for Category 2

To classify a preservice or inservice teacher in category 2, the data results should show that the individual has a modest exposure to creative or imaginative learning methodologies and/or a modest propensity to use creative writing in their own learning or personal experience. An example of the data results that would lead to classification in category 2 would be those of “CF”:

***I write to communicate with others, to express my feelings, thoughts, dreams, hopes, and fears . . . most of the writing I do is admittedly for my classes. I do not feel comfortable, or rather,

able to be “creative” in my writings. I want to learn more, and am rather embarrassed to admit that I have not done much creative writing . . . most of the writings I have done have been essays, factual papers. I have also “attempted” to do some poetry and other types of creative prompts, etc., at workshops and conferences . . .

***Question: You didn’t do any creative writing, I mean other than tasks that you were assigned?

Answer: I suppose technically I did, I never really sat down to it. I wrote in my diary and journals, always kept a diary and still do. I wrote creatively in my speech classes . . .

Question: Did the teachers use creative assignments in a lot of the classes [at your high school], or just a couple of teachers, or what?

Answer: I think it was just a couple of teachers mostly. One writing class I had was a base composition . . . You had to do a huge research paper before you could graduate, but other than that, basically they were response papers, . . . Basically, the first level of Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning.

Question: Are [your journals] mostly functional, or is there any creativity involved?

Answer: It kind of depends . . . They are just very expressive I guess . . .

“CI” was very ambiguous regarding her writing background. She frequently expressed her apprehension towards personal creative writing and yet admits to being very expressive in her personal journals. Her learning background consisted primarily of traditional writing exercises laced with occasional creative efforts in her speech classes in high school. She fits the profile of having a moderate writing background.

Criteria for Category 3

A category 3 inservice or preservice teacher would display very little or no creative writing background either in learning experiences or in their personal writing experience. Sample data results that would lead to classification in category 3 would be those of “MF”.

***Most of the writing that I have done revolves around the classroom. I do not write creatively. I do, however, enjoy research writing . . . Up until this time, I have done very little creative writing . . . The only type of creative writing that I have experienced has been letter writing . . . I did do some creative writing in English 1 [in college], but it made me feel inadequate and left out . . .

***Question: Did [your teachers] let you be creative in your journals?

Answer: Yes, but I never really saw it as creative writing. It was just me writing down my ideas, and that wasn't very creative to me and I never did very well on it . . .

Question: Were there any creative writing classes in your high school?

Answer: I would write about some of my personal experiences, but again, I never really see personal experiences as creative writing because it happened and I was just writing about it . . .

***In my schooling I was never exposed to very much creative writing. Most of my teachers wanted us to write what they wanted to read . . .

It is apparent that “MF” has no creative writing background to speak of, either in her education, or in her personal life. She is an ideal example of a category 3 individual with little or no creative writing background.

Discussion Methodology

In the process of analyzing and discussing the Question 1 results, I will look at each category in its entirety across the spectrum of preservice and inservice teachers. Part One, Section One of each category will delineate the pertinent preservice teacher attitudinal responses followed by a brief analysis in Section Two. Part Two, Section One of each category will look at the inservice teacher attitudes, again followed by analysis in Section Two. A discussion of the relative findings from all three categories will conclude the Question One discourse.

Category 1, Part One: Preservice Teachers

Section One: Attitudes Toward Creative Writing

“AB”

***I find that I like really creative stuff, . . . clever things like . . . symbolism and a lot of that figurative language, things like that. That’s creative to me . . .

***Question: Are you looking forward to writing this story for English 108?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Were you to start with?

Answer: Probably not. I was a little hesitant, but I kind of still thought it was cool, to tell you the truth . . .

***My personal writing is definitely creative. I say this because my content is “live.” I write exactly what I am thinking and I wouldn’t consider that functional . . .

“JK”

***I believe being creative is being yourself. Creativity comes from within and isn’t a molded by others. Creative writing is writing from within. It’s putting yourself on the paper. It’s

just going with what you believe. Creative writing has no correct form and has no limitations. I believe creative writing is the central part of what we think of as writing. Everything else is documenting or regurgitating . . .

Creative writing is finding new ways to make the same point. Creative writing is building new structures . . . freeing your mind . . . Creative writing is expression. Creative writing is a means of understanding oneself and being that individual . . . Creative writing is honest writing.

***Question: Were you looking forward to the short story that you had to write [for this class]?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Did you think that was the kind of thing that was going to help you learn composition?

Answer: Yes, I thought it would be beneficial for just myself going through that process and taking it to a level where I have a finished product. Usually I start things like that and don't finish them . .

“JS”

***Question: Were you anxious to write the story?

Answer: I personally was, yes, and I'm really looking forward to it. I think it's a great idea, and I think it sounds like fun, I've got some ideas and I thought, man, this is a great thing, because I would like to someday write a novel and I thought this can get me introduced to it . . .

***[In story form]: Writing creatively had come easily to him . . . The events must be described through a creative use of the language . . . As his studies progressed, he hoped to learn how to write a good story . . .

“LL”

***Creative writing to me is being able to express my thoughts on paper, sometimes for others to read, sometimes not . . . Sometimes it becomes an opportunity to relive an event or time in my life. Other times it is a place to let my imagination run wild. Always it is an accomplishment . . . I have learned to think of writing as a process. This has been extremely helpful for my work . . .

***Question: When you saw that 25 page [creative writing] paper, were you looking forward to it?

Answer: Yes . . . I was very happy to get to do it . . .

“AS”

***I write because to me, it is an extension of myself, my thoughts, my feelings, and my actions. It is as vital to me as breathing, eating, sleeping. It is part of my life every minute of every day . . . the thoughts present in my mind are nothing more than dialogues, monologues, poems, and stories that have yet to be written down . . . Creative writing has always been very personal for me . . .

***Question: When . . . you saw a 25 to 30 page creative paper [for this class], were you looking forward to it?

Answer: No.

Question: Why?

Answer: I’m having problems making things long. Like I said I like to write short things . . . I had a class where we had to write a 15 page book and I just remember how hard it was and how much emotionally it took out of me, you know? . . . But I think just that I wasn’t looking forward to doing it was the thing. I’m excited about it now that I started my story . . .

“EO”

***Creative writing has always been a way for me to expand myself in the world . . . I would love the praise and attention that people gave to my writing . . . Creative writing established my identity and individuality. It gave me an outlet that would become very important in my teenage years . . . Creative writing has always been a very positive experience for me . . .

***Question: When you saw the 25 page short story [for the class], what were your thoughts?

Answer: I was definitely surprised.

Question: Were you looking forward to it?

Answer: A lot! . . . The premise of the class is to have this experience. Like what we are going to have our kids experience, so I think it's good in that aspect.

“CS”

***The word creativity simply means freedom of expression -- at least it does in my opinion. Creativity itself is filled with imagery, style, self-expression, and other variables that come out as a complete, transcribed thought . . . [in this class] I was pleased and surprised to see such focus on the individual . . . Since this class has started -- a class allowing creativity and stressing personal, creative factors -- I think I have begun to feel at home again with writing . . . When I think of creative writing, I think of how little of it is used in secondary classrooms today, how it's really limited because . . . you're given a topic you have to write about, you have to follow certain structures, and that's saying sometimes we've gotten too structured and gotten away from just freely expressing . . . I guess just self-expression is what I think of as creative, it can be anything imaginative . . .

***Question: Were you looking forward to writing that 25 to 30 page short story?

Answer: I was, but 25 to 30 pages kind of puts me off. I think the longest assignment I ever had to write was maybe 12 pages . . . Actually I was kind of surprised . . . It just kind of floored me and I was so happy that it was whatever you want to do, whatever you are happy doing. Yes, I'm looking forward to it! . . .

“J”

***Ever since I was a young boy I have been a daydreamer . . . I knew that there had to be some way of actually getting into my “dream” world. I discovered it in writing . . . Writing gave me the key to enter into a newer life that I wanted to be connected to . . . Writing was even more fun than reading because I was in “my” world, not an observer in someone else’s . . . there is one area in my life that I know I have total and absolute freedom and control over what is going on. It is my writing . . . Writing allows me to open doors and possibilities that may be closed through all other methods. The only thing that confines me in my writing is myself . . . Writing gives me freedom. Writing gives me control. Writing is my outlet where I can express my thoughts and emotions freely. . .

***Question: Do you think [the coursework] is appropriate for the class?

Answer: . . . I'm not mad about it or upset by it, shocked, or afraid of it, you know, it's just something I have to do and this is what I really want to do, so then I'll go do it . . .

Section Two: Analysis

Eight preservice teachers have writing backgrounds expansive enough to qualify them for inclusion in Category 1, extensive writing background. As individuals and as a whole their attitudes toward creative writing are unequivocal: creative writing was, is, and will be a big part of the

personal and professional lives of each of these future teachers. There is not a single negative comment concerning the use of creative writing as a learning mechanism, as a personal vehicle for expression, or as a valuable medium for insight and reflection.

The only attitudinal contrapositive among any of these students was in regard to the 25 to 30 page short story required for the course. “AB,” “AS,” and “CS” all had mild reservations about some aspect of the assignment. But in each case the reservations were allayed as they progressed through the creative process on their own. This is in contrast to the reinforcement of the value of the assignment, and reassurance by the instructor and/or myself of the individual's ability to create that was necessary in order to alleviate the reservations of many Category 2 and Category 3 preservice teachers.

Category 1 preservice teachers seem to understand completely not only the value of creative writing in their own educational processes, but also the intrinsic value of writing as a process of discovering meaning, form, and self. They know how to use writing to relate ideas, to solve problems, to “establish identity,” to make sense of and share their experiences, to influence others, to “free the mind,” and to transfer knowledge. Category 1 preservice teachers relish creative writing opportunities and take pride in their writing accomplishments.

Part Two: Inservice Teachers

From the data gathered, it does not appear that any of the inservice teachers have writing backgrounds extensive enough to be classified as Category 1 individuals.

Category 2, Part One: Preservice Teachers

Section One: Attitudes Toward Creative Writing

“HN”

***I write both because I have to and because I love it. Writing helps me vent. Whenever something is really bothering me, I write it down, usually in great detail, and by the time I'm finished I feel much better . . . Creative writing to me means a way of expressing myself. I've always written to get my emotions out . . . I basically stick to writing two types of things, poems and letters. I really enjoy writing poetry . . . I always said that I wanted to be a writer. I remember writing stories when I was little, but when I got older and realized that my path was the English path, I, for some reason, stopped writing creatively . . .

***Question: When you saw the syllabus for this English 108 class, and you saw that 30 page paper, short story, what went through your mind?

Answer: I was excited about it to be honest with you, because I knew I would never do it otherwise unless I had to . . . It's going to be pretty good, something I can be proud of, anyway.

“JB”

***Before I came to this class, I thought of creative writing as short stories, poems or books. It was always for other people, for an audience . . . I write because I'm expected to. My classes have usually been the only place I write. The one and only time I ever wrote on my own, the work was published. Funny, I don't even have a copy of the poem. I guess writing is something I enjoy but have never utilized to its fullest extent . . .

***Question: When . . .you saw the syllabus, and you saw that long short story that you had to write, were you looking forward to it?

Answer: Yes . . . I said it the other day in class -- lead by example. It's definitely put in my mind preparation for teaching, being a writer and teaching, because I think that part is important. But again, I also see teachers that have been teaching and they are not writers anymore. I guess that they either burned out on it or they don't do it anymore, gave up with it. So who knows, maybe going in with a good attitude, I'll write short stories that are assigned, maybe that's the right direction to take-
- have a good attitude . . .

“KP”

***Creative writing has come to mean many different things to me. It has grown into a process that allows me to use a wide variety of skills and tools . . . Creative writing helps me to learn about myself, the things around me, and also my writing potential. First, I can use creative writing to get my thoughts organized. This helps a lot, because it usually helps me see things more clearly. Secondly, in terms of how creative writing helps me, it has played a huge role in helping me discover my own voice. I have even become brave enough to put my voice in some of my transactional papers . . . Creative writing means being given the opportunity to create, invent something that is entirely my own, characters, images, poems, etc. . . Creative writing also means that I am being given the chance to learn more vividly . . . All in all, creative writing means many things to me, all of which I can benefit greatly from . . .

***Question: When you saw the syllabus for this 108 class and you saw that 25 to 30 page creative writing assignment, were you looking forward to it?

Answer: No, I was, like “but no, what am I going to do?” Not really, because, I don't know, 25 to 30 pages is a little scary . . . I think it will help me a lot with my writing and stuff, just being able to think ahead . . .

“CP”

***Before I entered this class I didn't think I was much of a writer, especially not a creative writer. I knew I could write a decent research paper. Having majored in journalism in my undergraduate I even believe I am a good journalist. But the creative writing, I didn't think I could do it . . . I realize that the letters I write to others and in my journal are creative. In fact I think it would be interesting to publish my letters someday as many famous authors have done in the past . . . In high school . . . we'd do some kind of creative piece or creative fiction and I was really scared of it . . .

***Question: When you came into the class . . . and you saw that 25 page paper, what went through your mind?

Answer: I actually knew it was going to be a long paper beforehand, because I had talked to you guys a little beforehand, and I'd dreaded it a lot of the summer to tell you the truth. Not really dreaded the class, just thinking, how am I going to do this and how is it all going to come together. I was excited when I first talked about what I could write about, and when I started writing, but now I just don't know . . .

“KH”

***I kind of feel like Picasso putting his paint to a canvas. I am always working to create that masterpiece, that one paper that will stand out not only to myself but also to my colleagues. Writing offers me a chance to show the world exactly what my mind and pen are capable of . . . Writing offers me my greatest form of expressionism and provides me with the greatest amount of academic confidence . . . The main type of writing I enjoy doing is the short story form of literature. When the creativity hits, the short story form provides me with the perfect opportunity that my spare

time allows. When I think of creative writing I often think of all the time that was wasted in my English classes throughout high school . . . Writing was no more than research papers, essays, and fill in the blanks . . . I will always write creatively because for me personally this is my greatest chance for personal discovery . . .

***Question: When you looked at the syllabus for this class, you saw that 25 to 30 page story. Were you looking forward to it?

Answer: I actually thought it was a unique approach. I really was surprised to see what the writing would entail. I never thought about the creative aspect, I guess, because so often I haven't been allowed to, so to speak, in my other classes. I think it will really help my writing . . .

“HP”

***Creative writing. When I hear those two words I cringe. When I found out I had to take a creative writing course, I was ready to change my major. What does creative writing mean to me? Work. Before I began this class I'd very rarely written anything creative . . . When it comes to creative writing, I stink . . . I'm not a creative writer. I have a problem with fiction and poetry . . . As far as creative writing goes, I know there's going to be a lot of work involved, but somehow just coming up with an idea off the top of my head about a story doesn't even appeal to me . . . Creative writing is an outlet which at 21 I am just now discovering. It can bring you resolution, happiness, and in some cases, sadness, but most of all creative writing brings you the freedom of expressing yourself however you want, whether it be poetry, essay, short story, or a song . . .

***Question: When you see a course with a lot of writing in it do you look forward to it?

Answer: I don't look forward to it but I don't usually want to leave the class. When I first came to this class I was wanting to drop it when I saw the 25 to 30 page paper that was due, but we are

working on it throughout the class, so it's not as hard as I expected . . . I started seeing creative writing in a different light . . .

“KS”

***Creative writing is a way to express my feelings, my thoughts and my beliefs . . . When I was in elementary school I loved to write . . . But through my years of college I got so far away from writing/expressions that I viewed creative writing as a pain. It was time consuming and I didn't have time to spare . . . I'm still scared, no, more like worried or apprehensive about creative writing, but hey, I haven't done this for five years. I expect it to be hard, but it'll be worth it in the end . . .

***Question: When you saw the course syllabus for this class and saw that there was a 25 to 30 page creative paper, what went through your mind?

Answer: I thought, my God, how am I going to do this? I was very negative to the idea to say the least . . . This class will be the most creative writing I've done throughout my entire life probably. I'm looking forward to it but at the same time, I'm dreading it . . .

“MT”

***I write for many reasons. Unfortunately, most often it is because I am required to in classes. This writing is usually informative and about interesting subjects, but it is not the writing I would wish to do . . . when the opportunity arises I like to write simply about ideas that have been floating in my head. Sometimes they are fiction, sometimes not. Sometimes I simply write to help organize my thoughts. Recently I had a rather large and important decision to make and the answer simply would not come. Finally, I sat down and wrote everything that I felt. Three pages later, without even realizing what I had done, I re-read my material and discovered what I could not find in my mind . . .

***Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: I think of being expressive, putting my thoughts on the page. I guess anything that isn't just boring academic writing . . .

Question: When you came into the class and saw the syllabus for English 108 and saw that story on there, what did you think?

Answer: First I was wondering where I would find time to write 40 pages, and I guess I was kind of excited about it. It's fun; it's not like an activity I'd dread like writing a research paper. I guess I look forward to it much more than I would a research paper or something like that . . .

“MC”

***Creative writing has always been my favorite form of writing. It has allowed me to use my imagination and create worlds that are my own. Many times, I take things from my childhood dreams and write about them . . . I have a feeling of closure when I write the stories and am fond of remembering the wonderful times I created as a child . . .

***Question: When you saw the story for this class, what came to mind?

Answer: A bit long, otherwise, okay . . . When I entered this class, I was excited to learn that we had the freedom to choose what we were going to write about . . .

Section Two: Analysis

There were nine preservice teachers who exhibited characteristics of the moderate writing background necessary to be classified as Category 2 individuals. But unlike the previous category, Category 2 preservice teachers had no single-mindedness with regard to their attitudes concerning creative writing.

The widest range of attitudinal responses for Category 2 preservice teachers appears to be in the responses to the interview question regarding their initial feelings to the 25 to 30 page short story they would have to write for the class. “HN” was excited about it; “JB” had a good attitude; “MC” was excited to learn he had the freedom to choose what to write about; and “KH” thought it was a unique approach, all positive responses to the question. “MT” was rather ambiguous in her response, wondering where she would find time to be creative, but nevertheless excited about the prospect of writing a story. On the other end of the spectrum are “KP,” who thought it was a little scary, but ultimately worthwhile; “CI,” who dreaded it a lot of the summer before the class; “KS,” who “was very negative to the idea to say the least”; and “HP,” whose initial response was wanting to drop the class altogether.

There is also a range of responses regarding Category 2 preservice teachers’ attitudes toward their own reasons for writing and/or creative writing ability. “HN” writes both because she has to and because she loves it; “KP” values creative writing because it has helped her discover her own voice which she has bravely begun to put in her transactional papers; to “MC” creative writing has always been a favorite form of writing; and “KH” will always write creatively because it provides his greatest chance for personal discovery. These four were uniformly positive in their attitudinal responses.

Less positive, primarily as a result of ambiguity, were “JB,” who writes because he is expected to, but won a prize for a poem; “CI,” who didn't think she was much of a creative writer yet wrote her own speeches in high school; “KS” who loved to be creative in elementary school, yet

grew to regard creative writing as “a pain” by high school; and “MT,” who writes primarily because she is required to for classes, but nevertheless likes to “write simply about ideas that have been floating in my head” and thinks writing a story is fun.

The only Category 2 preservice teacher who uniformly expressed a negative attitude towards creative writing in her personal experience prior to the research and the class was “HP.” She characterized her creative writing ability with the epithelial “I stink” and nearly changed her major when she found out she had to take a creative writing course. Nevertheless, “HP” acknowledged the potential benefits of creative writing for giving one freedom of expression. It should be noted (and will be in the Question 5 discussion) that “HP” during the course of the class was learning not to fear writing or to be ashamed of her own writing.

A distinct pattern develops when looking at the positive and negative responses of the Category 2 preservice teachers with regard to both the interview question and expressed creative writing attitude. No individual had both positive and negative responses to the two general areas of analysis. “HN,” “MC” and “KH” were all generally positive; “JB” had a positive response to the question but was more ambiguous with his general attitude; “MT” was somewhat ambiguous in both areas; “KP,” “CI” and “KS” were all primarily negative with response to the interview question but ambiguous or somewhat positive with their general attitudinal responses; and “HP” was primarily negative with her responses throughout.

It needs to be pointed out that at some vague point approximately halfway into the Category 2 criteria there may very well be a fine dividing line between Category 1 and Category 3 criteria which might enable the researcher to delimit and refine the categories into two distinct entities. This current research could be used then as a starting point for developing guidelines to determine what

would then become Category 1 (positive response) and Category 2 (negative response) criteria in order to explore in greater detail the background characteristics which define each category.

Part Two: Inservice Teachers

***Due to the very limited nature of the interview responses, the modest creative writing background necessary to be categorized as a Category 2 individual will be construed as any mention of creative writing in the background. This will be reinforced and supplemented with the responses to the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale Question 20: On my own I write stories, plays, or poems.

Section One: Attitudes Toward Creative Writing

“K”

***Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: Yes. Writing is a great way of learning. I believe that writing should be incorporated into every class in every school . . .

*** I volunteered to teach the [creative writing] class two years ago . . .

***On the writing apprehension survey, “K” disagreed with the positive indicator “I enjoy writing” and strongly agreed with the negative indicator “I never seemed to be able to clearly write down my ideas.”

“P”

***Creative writing is the process of inventing, the process of making something new and different, something made-up. But, it also has real world experiences and memories of the writer -- fact and fiction blended together . . . Students practice free writing twice a week in their journals. I use these assignments to allow the students to imagine, invent and explore their creative spirit.

***Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: I do look forward to teaching each day. My classes complete a writing assignment almost every day . . . The students are here to learn to write well-developed papers. That is what we are about!

“B”

***Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Imaginative writing as opposed to analytical -- writing with space for individuality . . .

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: Yes! I enjoy a reading what my students wri-- as well as what they say . . .

“R”

***Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Any writing that one does that is one's own work and is entirely original is “creative writing.” I tend to think of original fiction and poetry as creative writing . . .

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: I really enjoy teaching writing. I do look forward to it. I try very hard not to get frustrated when attempting to work with students individually. Of course, the classes are too large, I have too many preparations, and there isn't enough time to help all the students as much as needed. But I try to keep a portfolio for each student so that I can see that they do make progress. Almost every student who tries can progress . . .

Section Two: Analysis

The one constant attitudinal response for comparison and analysis among the Category 2 in-service teachers was to the interview question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing? The answers resonated an unequivocal affirmative. In addition, “K” said that

“writing should be incorporated into every class in every school”; “P” uses creative assignments to help students explore their creative spirits; “B” enjoys reading what her students write; “R” insists that almost every student who tries can show improvement in writing and she allows students to write poetry, plays, short stories, and journals to stimulate the improvement.

As with the Category 2 preservice teachers, not all of the attitudinal indications were positive. For instance, while “K” was essentially positive with regard to her attitude concerning the value of creative writing for her students, she was less enthusiastic on her own behalf, divulging that her personal writing is mostly functional and that she does not enjoy writing. The same could be said for “P” who revealed that her personal writing is mostly transactional, though her journal contains a little creative writing. “R” was a little ambiguous with regard to her personal writing. She stated that most of her personal writing was functional and yet in more than one place reveals that she writes poetry and short stories on her own time.

“B,” on the other hand, showed a uniformly positive attitude throughout her responses. In fact, given the nature of “B”’s responses, juxtaposed against those of the Category 1 preservice teachers, it would be easy to suppose that she in fact had some personal exposure to creative writing prior to high school, perhaps in her favorite teacher Mrs. E.’s class, which would probably change her classification to Category 1. This suppositional anomaly elucidates the need in future research for either an additional question on the written interview concerning creative writing opportunities, either personal or in the classroom, before high school, or, as with the preservice teachers, an oral interview to reinforce and help triangulate written interview responses.

In general, the attitudinal responses of the Category 2 inservice teachers suggest that they uniformly value creative writing and enjoy teaching writing in the classroom, even if they perceive their own writing habits to be more transactional in nature.

Category 3, Part One: Preservice Teachers

Section One: Attitudes Toward Creative Writing

“MF”

***Frankly, the idea of writing creatively scares the hell out of me. I have never tapped into my creative energy and I am unsure as to whether or not I possess any at all . . . This course is going to provide me with some experience in creative writing. I am nervous and feel more than a little sick over this course already . . . Now that I am in college, creative writing has been the source of much pain, anger, and fear. I still cringe when I think of writing, but sometimes I just feel like doing it . . . My story might not be the best, but I will feel proud when it is finally done. Hopefully, I will not quit after this story. I would like to be able to continue my writing and become better at it . . . I know of creative writing, but this is my first real experience at doing the creative writing. I’m learning, and I feel that this is an okay experience . . .

***Question: When you think about creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: I get scared . . . I’ve never written creatively . . .

Question: When you saw the syllabus for this course and you saw that story, what did you think?

Answer: I freaked out and I’m still freaking out and in fact the second class, whenever we discussed it and then you said write 5 to 10 pages, I cried as I was walking out of the class. I started to cry and I went back to my dorm room and I cried for about an hour and a half . . .

“LS”

***Creative writing is being able to express thoughts, feelings, and emotions on paper.

Creative writing needs to include our own attitudes in addition to the plot/purpose of the writing. I feel that creative writing lets us get out our frustrations . . . I strongly believe we need to be able to pick the topic we wish to write about, if it's a given assignment. Creative writing should be incorporated into the school. Students need time to express themselves . . . Overall, I feel that creative writing is excellent, and a terrific opportunity for everyone . . . I enjoy writing to express my feelings. I can better express myself in writing rather than expressing what I feel in spoken words. I sometimes write for no reason at all, maybe just to let someone know that I was thinking about them . . .

***Question: When you saw the syllabus for that story, what did you think about it?

Answer: I hated the idea.

Question: Of doing a story?

Answer: I think I hated the page amount.

Question: The page amount more than anything else?

Answer: I love to write.

Question: The creativity didn't bother you?

Answer: No, it was the page amount. I figured, Oh my God? How am I going to write 30 pages?

“BS”

***Creative writing to me is expressed through humorous yet insightful imagery . . . I write about occurrences, and they must strike me as odd or else I won't write about them . . . Other creative aspects in writing are strange to me, but I feel that they aren't creative . . . Perhaps my

creativity in writing will increase if I learn more about other areas of writing, which is why I'm taking this class . . .

***Question: When you saw the syllabus for this class and you saw that 30 page creative writing exercise, what were you thinking?

Answer: The first thing I saw was 30 pages. I said "Wow, okay." Then I saw creative writing so I felt a little bit better . . .

Question: But you were a little anxious about the story at first?

Answer: Oh, yes!

Question: You've never written a short story before?

Answer: This is my first one . . .

Section Two: Analysis

The most notable aspect about the attitudes of the three Category 3 preservice teachers is in fact their dissimilarities to each other. Creative writing "scares the hell" out of "MF," while "LS" loves to write and feels that creative writing allows her to vent her frustrations, and "BS" associates creative writing with humor, oddity, and strangeness. In his personal writing, "BS" mentions only writing about occurrences. "LS" enjoys writing about her feelings. "MF" cringes when she thinks about creative writing but sometimes just feels like doing it.

The only area where there is any consensus at all is in their initial dismay at having to write a 30 page short story, and even that is ambiguous. "MF" 'freaked out' when she saw the story on the syllabus. "LS" hated the idea of writing the story, while "BS" admitted to being a little anxious. But it turned out that only "MF" was really apprehensive about the creativity, the other two were more concerned about the 30 page length of the assignment.

In fact, despite the dissimilarities, it is quite apparent that all three Category 3 preservice teachers have an aversion to writing in general, probably precipitated by the dearth of writing experiences in their backgrounds and mitigated by other personal characteristics. For instance, in my personal notes regarding the interviews, both “LS” and “BS” have the “fidgety” prominent, accentuated by “non-responsive” for “LS” and “very abrupt” concerning “BS.” Combined with their obvious disdain for lengthy writing assignments, these responses probably indicate some sort of attention difficulty; although they could be, particularly with “LS,” merely the manifestations of laziness.

“MF” was a different personality altogether. She was “very emotional” and made little or no eye contact, suggestive of a high-strung shyness which only compounded her overwhelming feelings of inadequacy concerning writing. (I should add that her reservations were unwarranted. The story “MF” created for the class was very well crafted and revealed an innate talent for creative construction.) The positive light at the end of the tunnel for “MF” may be found in her self-knowledge that she “will feel proud” of her accomplishment, and hopefully “will continue with my writing and become better” at it.

Whatever the compounding reasons, the fact remains that all three Category 3 preservice teachers expressed either negative or ambiguous attitudes towards writing in general, and creative writing in particular.

Part Two: Inservice Teachers

Section One: Attitudes Toward Creative Writing

“N”

***Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: Creative writing allows individual expression . . .

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: The number of students in my classes has an effect on my attitude toward teaching writing.

Therefore, I do not always look forward to teaching writing . . .

***On the writing apprehension survey, “N” disagreed with the positive indicator “I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation and publication.”

“F”

***Question: When you think of creative writing what comes to mind?

Answer: I think of poetry, short stories and plays. I also consider personal narrative to be creative writing as well as journal writing . . .

Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: Yes. Even though, (or perhaps because), I am not fond of writing, I stress writing in my class. Even in my drama classes we write.

***On the writing apprehension survey “F” disagreed with all four positive indicators dealing with fondness for writing, and agreed with the negative indicator “I don't think I write as well as most other people.”

“M”

***I don't do journal writing or letters . . . In the past I have done this and have found this kind of writing too repetitious . . .

***Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: I have to be honest and say that I am basically a traditional English teacher. Grammar is the main emphasis in my class. The most writing that my students do is a response to a story or poem . . .

*** “M” disagreed or strongly disagreed with seven of 12 positive indicators on the writing apprehension survey, including “Writing is a lot of fun,” and agreed or strongly agreed with two negative indicators, including “I avoid writing.”

“G”

***Creative writing is any writing in any style that allows a student to expand his or her own writing.

***Question: Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?

Answer: Writing is a skill that all people need. Writing needs to be separated in the curriculum to be a specific class with an overall emphasis on creative writing in a wide variety of content areas.

***”G” had seven contrary responses on the writing apprehension survey, all dealing with evaluation or publication of his writing.

Section Two: Analysis

Just as with the Category 2 inservice teachers, the interview response to the question “Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing?” is the most attitudinally revealing for the Category 3 inservice teachers. “N” frankly admits that the number of students in her classes

prevents her from looking forward to teaching writing. “F” qualifies her positive response as precipitated by her own dislike of writing. “G” essentially avoids answering the question, but suggests that writing ought to be in a separate class. “M” acknowledges that she almost never uses writing in her classes. The attitudes are ambiguous or negative, usually tempered with a personal explanation for the negativity.

These responses are substantiated by the plethora of contrary responses on the writing apprehension surveys of three of the four Category 3 preservice teachers. “N” had only one contrary response. Couple this with the fact that elsewhere in the interview she mentions a number of creative exercises that she uses in her classroom and it suggests “N”’s primary concern with writing activities is paperload.

In general, Category 3 inservice teachers do little or no creative writing in their personal lives and their attitudes towards its use in the classroom is ambiguous at best.

Discussion

The data from Question 1 provides evidence that there is indeed a connection between preservice and inservice teachers' backgrounds and their attitudes toward creative writing. As suggested by Schuessler, Gere, and Abbott in Chapter 2, Part Five, the creation of subgroups for examining teacher attitudes allows for a clear picture of attitudinal tendencies in relation to the characteristics that define particular background categories. Those individuals in Category 1, with strong writing backgrounds have unambiguously positive attitudes toward creative writing, while those in Category 3, with little or no writing background, have generally negative attitudes.

The attitudinal tendencies of Category 2 individuals, those with moderate writing backgrounds, are ambiguous but fairly consistent in that the more writing in the background of the

individual, the more positive the attitude toward writing. As mentioned in the analysis for Category 2, there may in fact be a fine or discernible dividing line somewhere approximately halfway into the Category 2 criteria which will allow for more in depth analysis of background characteristics. Future researchers may wish to use the current research to establish a composite of Category 2 characteristics to search through in an effort to fine tune background criteria for Category 1 and Category 3 classification.

The immediate contribution to the current research of the Question 1 findings highlighting a clear connection between background and attitude, is to provide an impetus to search for a concrete pattern of variables that will afford a better picture of cause and effect regarding inservice and preservice teacher attitudes toward creative writing.

At this point it would be easy to assess that because the attitudinal responses postdate the background information, the latter is, at least in part, causal of the former. But because individual variables often affect each other in a loop (Weick), it is necessary to explore the relationships of several interconnected variables in order to confirm, refine, or refute this assessment. The next section of Chapter Five will look at the relationship between preservice and inservice teachers' perceptions of learning and the value of writing as a learning mechanism.

Question 2

Question 2 asks: Do preservice and inservice teachers perceive creative writing as a valuable pedagogical tool? Because there were only eight preservice and eight inservice teachers with data requisite for inclusion in the results for this question, the fundamental classifications for this section will be the preservice or inservice status of the individuals. A notation will be made of the individual's Question 1 classification for cross-question reference, analysis, and discussion.

Discussion Methodology

I will look at pertinent interview responses of the preservice and inservice teachers regarding their perceptions of creative writing as a learning mechanism, followed by relevant questions from the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale and from the Confidential Composition Opinionnaire. Part One, Section One will explore preservice teacher perceptions followed in Section Two by a brief analysis. Part Two, Section One will indicate the inservice teacher perceptions again followed by a brief analysis in Section Two.

Part One, Section One: Preservice Teachers

“JB,” Category 2

***Question: Will you use creative kinds of writing assignments when you begin teaching?

Answer: (Initial Interview): I think my students will write . . . I'll try not to force them, but if that's what it comes to, it's good for them, and obviously they don't realize it yet. But if they are going to be in an advanced class or a college prep class they need to do it . . . The more you write when you're there, the way better you are in college . . . (Exit Interview): Yes. Obviously if you do the writing, you are thinking about it, and that always brings that back full circle. When you do it, it is physically done and you thought about it then, and it is in your mind and it will stay . . . (Written Interview): Yes. Learning styles that are different, writing character sketches or autobiographies about a character in a book is an awesome way to learn.

***Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new subjects in school?

Answer: (Initial Interview): I would say false. I think you get a better idea of material just playing around with it, and research is just research, then you go to the library and pull books and whatever

you need to do . . . (Exit Interview): I would say equal. Saying less takes that kind of writing and says that it is not worth anything. It is worth something. I definitely think a balance between the two can be met . . . (Written Interview): Yes and no. Research style has its function, the actual data is learned. However creative styles help see new things in the topic in new and different ways.

“HN,” Category 2

***Question: Will you use creative kinds of writing assignments when you begin teaching?

Answer: (Initial Interview): Yes, I think it would be fun to do. My problem, I’m afraid of it as far as having to write creatively and grade it. How do you grade something like that? I mean how do you decide what’s good and what’s bad? . . . (Exit Interview): Yes, they are fun . . . you use your mind a little more. Do you know what I mean? Like my elementary school assignment. I had to write it from three different perspectives, the same story, and watch how it changed . . . (Written Interview): Yes. For instance when teaching a novel, I would have them do projects like writing a letter to a character or other projects like having a character write a letter to someone else.

***Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new subjects?

Answer: (Initial Interview): I would probably say true . . . (Exit Interview): I don’t think it is any more important to the student than the grade. I think they take it more seriously. When you have a research paper to do, I think they think it is important. I don’t know if it helps them learn any more. I think I learned more when I was doing research papers . . . (Written Interview): I don’t know if it is more important, but honestly, I would say that I’d learn more with transactional writing. I used imaginative writing for fun.

“AS,” Category 1

***Question: Will you use creative kinds of writing assignments when you begin teaching?

Answer: (Initial Interview): Yes I think so. I think I will. I think it helps the students explore a lot better, and find meaning in things that they are reading or learning about . . . (Exit Interview): I can . . . I think it is important enough to keep it up . . . (Written Interview): Yes. I think that I will use creative writing a lot in teaching . . . in order to get the students to practice writing and thinking . . .

***Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new subjects?

Answer: (Initial Interview): False . . . I hate research writing . . . (Exit Interview): No . . . I think that it's important that students are able to first write creatively and then write like research papers, because I think kids hate research papers. First you have to start with how you feel. You have to get a feeling and you have to go out and get research to support it, or an opinion or whatever. I mean if kids don't even know how they feel, especially in writing, then I think it is important to have that creativity first . . . (Written Interview): I think imaginative writing is much more important because I think you have to learn how to write creatively and for yourself before you can write for a research purpose.

“JK,” Category 1

***Question: Will you use creative kinds of writing assignments when you begin teaching?

Answer: (Initial Interview): Yes, right now, but I'm not out there yet . . . I think it's a good idea. Not always, but often . . . (Exit Interview): I think so . . . (Written Interview): Definitely, students should be allowed and encouraged to use any form of writing to express their ideas or knowledge.

***Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new subjects?

Answer: (Initial Interview): I would say false . . . (Exit Interview): No, research writing is needed, but imaginative writing is what enables us to think for ourselves, draw conclusions and make pertinent connections . . . (Written Interview): No, it is needed, but imaginative or exploratory writing is what in essence enables people to think for themselves, to draw conclusions and make connections. It is an application of thought. Research is only a regurgitation of other thoughts. One needs to mesh the transactional with the imaginative for a better understanding.

“AB,” Category 1

***Question: Will you use creative kinds of writing assignments when you begin teaching?

Answer: (Initial Interview): It definitely makes the kids more motivated . . . (Exit Interview): Yes, every single time. I did four chapters on compare and contrast analogies. One was process and analysis. One was the descriptive. The descriptive was the easiest . . . I said think about your own life and incorporate. I think today, for this generation of kids, the bottom line is meaningfulness. If they don't see any meaning in their lives in what you're teaching them, they do not want to know about it . . . (Written Interview): Yes. Instead of quizzes and checks, I like to allow students to convey what they have absorbed through creative writing.

***Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new subjects?

Answer: (Initial Interview): If I was a student I would probably think that the research writing was stupid, but a lot of times for a teacher it's a good way to evaluate . . . I would rather do it in an expository manner . . . (Exit Interview): The research writing I think is good, but I think we

students, we spend too much time regurgitating what other people have researched. We are always in a library looking up things. And my theory, I think that if you can put a creative twist into it, it is so much easier to read. There is nothing more boring than a scientific journal . . . (Written Interview): I like exploratory writing for comprehension. Research is good, but students often overlook the “learning” part of writing because they are hung up on facts.

“CI,” Category 2

***Question: Will you use creative kinds of writing assignments when you begin teaching?

Answer: (Initial Interview): Definitely, I am convinced that the classes need to be student-centered and need to, as much as I hate to say, be entertaining to your students . . . You have got to keep them interested in what they are doing and if it is about them, and so much creative writing is about yourself, at least that’s what I’m learning, then you can do so much with it and keep the students interested and active . . . (Exit Interview): I think so, definitely. I think it is an important part when you use it more . . . (Written Interview): Yes. It is a good student-centered approach. Doing this can be very beneficial to students of all ages.

***Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing in understanding new subjects?

Answer: (Initial Interview): Not necessarily. I think it’s important for understanding, I guess. It depends on the subject that you’re doing, or that you’re exploring or learning about. If you’re learning about creative writing, if you are learning about expressing yourself and that’s the focus, and different languages and maybe things we learned in the C and I classes, I think that’s important. But if you are learning, if you are researching -- for example I’m researching a philosophy project and I’m doing a whole synthesis paper and I am doing it on the portfolios and why they are important

in the classroom, and I think that warrants more research than creativity . . . (Exit Interview): I don't think that you can say one thing is more important than another . . . (Written Interview): I believe it is important to learn both ways of writing. However, I don't believe it's more important, just equally as important. It's sad that we are not taught creative writing more in high school and college courses.

“EO,” Category 1

***Question: Will you use creative kinds of writing assignments when you begin teaching?

Answer: (Initial Interview): Yes, I think I would like to use even more [than I had in high school]

. . . (Exit Interview): Yes, I'd like to . . . (Written Interview): Yes, every week if possible!

***Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new material in school?

Answer: (Initial Interview): Research is more important? I would say it's false. (Exit Interview): I would say no, because the way they are generally used is just as a paraphrase or as a used statement of someone else's style, and I think too much of that is done anyway. It's just regurgitation of someone else's facts or styles or figures . . . (Written Interview): No, creative writing is the most important! As men we can't have babies, but we can make songs and stories. The creative process is our gift from God, without it we might as well be dead.

“LS,” Category 3

***Question: Will you use creative kinds of writing assignments when you begin teaching?

Answer: (Initial Interview): Yes . . . (Exit Interview): Probably . . . (Written Interview): Yes. I don't know how at this point, but I will use creative writing somehow.

***Question: Is transactional, research style writing more important than imaginative or exploratory writing for understanding new material in school?

Answer: (Initial Interview): No . . . (Exit Interview): No. [Creative writing] is usually on experiences. It is easier to write about something that you know . . . (Written Interview): No. Students need to be able to explore and re-write in their own words what they have learned. Imaginative writing opens the mind. It encourages uniqueness.

From the Writing Attitude Scale

For the purposes of the analysis I will excerpt composite data from the eight preservice teachers in this Question 2, Part One to two particularly relevant questions concerning creative writing.

Question 28: I use creative writing to help me understand what I'm learning.

Answers: (Initial scale, Exit scale) Almost always (1, 0); Often (2, 2); Sometimes (2, 3); Seldom (2, 3); Almost never (1, 0).

Question 40: Creative writing can be used to reinforce and promote learning in all English classes.

Answers: Almost always (2, 3); Often (3, 3); Sometimes (1, 1); Seldom (1, 0); Almost never (1, 1).

From the Confidential Composition Opinionnaire

Several questions which specifically mentioned creative writing or creative kinds of writing are useful for comparison to the interview questions. The questions are highlighted in Chapter Four, Question 2, Part One, Section 2. The answers are once again composite for the preservice teachers in this section.

Section 1, Question 10: Disagree (2), Strongly agree (6)

Section 3, Question 4: Agree (5), Strongly agree (3)

Section 3, Question 9: Agree (3), Strongly agree (5)

Section 4, Question 7: Uncertain (2), Agree (2), Strongly agree (4)

Part One, Section Two: Analysis

The data from Question 2 presents strong evidence that the preservice teachers in this study overwhelmingly perceive creative writing to be a valuable learning mechanism, regardless of background classification. The eight subjects included in the results for this section were chosen from the entire population based primarily on completion of all three interview instruments. The individuals' background classifications, four from Category 1, three from Category 2, and one from Category 3, approximate the diversity of the entire population.

The two questions utilized for exploration here were chosen because they specifically mention creative writing or creative writing methodology. It should be pointed out that there was universal agreement among preservice teachers that writing in general aids the learning process, thus the question here was really one of whether they included creative writing or creative methodologies in that assessment.

There was complete agreement among all preservice teachers, across classifications, that creative writing assignments are valuable enough to use in their future classrooms. The only hint of uncertainty was the exit response of "LS": "probably." Given the positive responses from her other two interview answers, and the positively ambiguous (as opposed to 'probably not,' which is negatively ambiguous) nature of the statement, coupled with her previously mentioned 'lazy' disposition, I believe the answer should be considered as an affirmative.

The question remains, then, how do preservice teachers value creative writing assignments in comparison with transactional, research style writing assignments? Once again, there is

overwhelming agreement that creative assignments are equally as or more important than transactional methodologies. Six of the preservice teachers consider creative assignments more important to the learning process in either two or all three responses to the question, with no contrary responses.

The other two preservice teachers, both with Category 2 backgrounds, had various responses. “CI” essentially stated in all three responses that both kinds of writing were of equal importance, depending upon the subject matter. In her initial response she states that research writing is probably more effective for exploring a research subject, while creative methodologies are better for self-expression. This corresponds precisely to her consideration of creative writing as task centered, usually in response to a creative prompt, in the same interview.

Similarly, “HN” considers transactional, research style writing more important, especially in her own learning processes. She also differentiates fundamentally with the nature of the two writing styles: research is for learning, while creative writing is fun. Indeed, her positive responses to the previous question are punctuated twice with the word fun as an adjective to describe why she would use creative writing in her classroom.

The important characteristic here is that both “CI” and “HN” appear to not make a complete distinction between creative writing as imaginative expression and creative writing as a learning mechanism. However, both value its use in the classroom, as evidenced by their strong agreement with question 10, Section 1 of the Confidential Composition Opinionnaire. The responses of the other six preservice teachers, laced with phrases like “helps to see things in new and different ways,” and “enables people to think for themselves,” indicate that the distinction has been made.

In summary, the interview responses of the preservice teachers, reinforced by the primarily positive composite responses to the relevant scale and opinionaire questions, indicates that they do in fact perceive creative writing as a strong pedagogical tool.

Part Two, Section One: Inservice Teachers

The interview responses are taken from the two questions which correspond exactly with the questions explored in Part One of this Question 2, concerning the preservice teachers:

- 1) Do you use creative writing assignments to focus learning of English course content?
- 2) Do you think students benefit more from transactional writing than from imaginative and/or creative exploratory writing in the secondary classroom?

“K,” Category 2

(1) Students do many personal types of writing. They keep a journal. Students write children's stories and create their own illustrations . . . Students write their own plays [in groups] and perform for the class.

(2) They benefit from both. I devote one semester to each type of writing.

“P,” Category 2

(1) After writing time is completed, they underline ideas that could be used in a paper. Toward the end of the semester we go back and select journal entries to use in creative columns, stories or plays. I use these assignments to allow the students to imagine, invest and explore their creative spirit.

(2) The ninth graders need a combination of traditional writing and creative writing. They do not know how to write two and three paragraph papers. They practice writing -- descriptive, narrative, persuasive, etc. I stress these areas because the senior high faculty expect the students to be able to write the traditional papers. We spend about one month on imaginative, creative writing.

“B,” Category 2

(1) I use creativity from quizzes to analysis, asking my students to assume roles of characters, making poetry from literature and from real life, to interact with their own voice with literature in creative ways.

(2) No -- I try to combine elements of both -- creative elements add personality to otherwise dull responses to assignments.

“R,” Category 2

(1) Sometimes they are asked to write about something that we are reading An original story that has the same theme After reading a tragedy, students are asked to write one of their own They rewrite an old story and update the setting They write their own [ballads] . . .

(2) I do not think that students benefit more from transactional writing than from creative writing. I do believe that both are important. I think that creative writing requires more thought (higher level critical thinking skills) than does transactional writing. In order to be a good creative writer, one must be able to apply writing skills, analyze and synthesize information, and to think logically. In most transactional writing, all one needs to do is to follow a prescribed formula.

“N,” Category 3

(1) I use writing to focus learning in the area of literature Letters to authors, extension of literature stories Writing stories in different points of view . . .

(2) As a secondary classroom teacher, I know the value of teaching all types of writing. Students need to learn a variety of styles of writing.

“F,” Category 3

(1) [Yes]. When I taught English . . . (“F” uses many examples from her own teaching).

(2) No. students benefit from writing when it is important to them. As a result, the writing of a poem can be a more meaningful experience than the writing of an essay if the student is passionate about it. Therefore, teachers should choose the assignments carefully. (Don’t bore them to death).

“G,” Category 3

(1) Every novel program has a creative response assignment given . . . Innovative techniques and styles are greatly encouraged.

(2) No. Students need both writing experiences to be better students.

“M,” Category 3

(1) I generally have students write responses to a piece of literature . . . The students write Halloween stories and stories pertaining to the holidays. The assignments are open-ended which gives way to as much creativity as they can muster . . .

(2) This is a difficult question to answer. Even though the traditional writings help to learn about perhaps subjects, topics, etc. and the “outside knowledge”; creative writing helps the students learn about the “inside feelings or ideas.” Both serve a purpose.

From the Writing Attitude Scale

For the purposes of the analysis I will excerpt composite data from the inservice teachers in this Question 2, Part Two to three particularly relevant questions concerning creative writing.

Question 14: Creative writing is a valuable learning tool for all students.

Answers: Almost always (4), Often (4)

Question 22: It is more important that students learn how to write essays than to write stories or poems.

Answers: Sometimes (2), Seldom (5), Almost never (1)

* Question 37: I use creative writing assignments to help students explore literature and other classroom material.

Answers: Almost always (3), Often (4), Sometimes (1)

From the Confidential Composition Opinionaire

Several questions which specifically mentioned creative writing or creative kinds of writing are useful for comparison to the interview questions. The questions are highlighted in Chapter Four, Question 2, Part Two, Section 2. The answers are composite for the inservice teachers in this section.

Section 1, Question 10: Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (1), Agree (1), Strongly agree (5)

Section 3, Question 4: Uncertain (1), Agree (5), Strongly agree (2)

Section 3, Question 9: Uncertain (1), Agree (4), Strongly agree (3)

Section 4, Question 7: Disagree (1), Agree (2), Strongly agree (5)

Part Two, Section Two: Analysis

It is apparent from looking at the data from the inservice teachers that they value creative writing as a learning mechanism. Each teacher, regardless of background classification, documents with examples the use of imaginative writing in his or her classroom. Seven of the eight use the assignments to enhance classroom learning of literature or some other language arts curriculum. “M” maintains that she uses creative writing only in the traditional sense of allowing her students to create stories about the holidays, although she rightly considers responses to literature stories as creative in nature as well.

The inservice teachers were unanimous in their belief that students benefit from both transactional research style writing and imaginative writing and that transactional writing is not more important as a learning tool than creative writing. In fact, the only slight deviations from this dichotomy were “F,” who insists that “the writing of a poem can be a more meaningful experience than the writing of an essay if the student is passionate about it,” and “R,” who believes that creative writing requires higher level critical thinking skills than does transactional writing.

In sum, there is unanimity among the inservice teachers that creative writing is a valuable learning tool. This perception is universally expressed in the interview responses and reinforced dramatically with the scale and opinionaire responses.

Discussion

The results of Question 2 show that both the inservice and preservice teachers in this study, regardless of background classification, universally perceive creative writing as a valuable learning mechanism. This would suggest that there is a co-directional correlation between inservice and preservice teacher perceptions of learning and creative writing methodologies that engenders a favorable disposition towards using creative writing as a learning mechanism.

At first look it would not appear that writing background plays a role in preservice and inservice teacher perceptions of learning. The very first sentence in this dissertation states that most of us in the teaching profession are aware that writing is inextricably interlocked with learning. The literature review in Chapter Two begins with a section on writing and learning in which some of the most respected educators in the country express the unique connection between the two. In the

education profession then, it would seem that the common denominator is knowledge of the benefits of writing on learning, and not necessarily a practical application or expertise in the field when it comes to utilizing creative writing methodologies.

The eight preservice and eight inservice teachers documented in this Question 2 have very different writing backgrounds, and yet they universally acknowledge the importance of creative writing as a learning tool. Perhaps this tacit, learned knowledge should be considered as part of the criteria for background classification if future researchers attempt to modify the categories to enhance attitudinal characteristic study.

It is also not within the scope of this question to explore whether attitude plays a role in perception of creative writing as a learning mechanism. In the next question I will look specifically at attitudes toward teaching creative writing and preservice and inservice teachers' perceived creative writing abilities.

Question 3

Question 3 asks: Do preservice and inservice teachers perceived creative writing abilities affect their attitudes toward teaching creative writing and/or using creative writing as a learning tool in the classroom? Classifications for this question will be established in several ways. The initial classification for preservice teachers will be according to the amount of data collected and instruments completed. Classification will also be made according to positive or negative perceived creative writing ability for both preservice and inservice teachers. Finally, mention will be made of writing background category for cross-question reference and analysis.

Discussion Methodology

Part One will look at preservice teachers. Group 1 are the eight inservice teachers from Question 2 who completed all instruments. Group 2 are the four inservice teachers who completed all instruments but the exit interview. Group 3 individuals were those preservice teachers who completed fewer instruments, yet enough to convey perception of creative writing ability in the results section of Chapter Four, Question 3.

Only Group 1 and Group 2 individuals were presented in the attitudes section of the results from Question 3 due to a lack of triangulating data for Group 3 individuals. However, they will be considered in this chapter for the sake of discussion. Only those individuals who can be cross-referenced with Question 5 will be considered. This classification by group will be reused for Question 4 with regard to Group 1 and Group 2 individuals, for cross question reference. Each individual will also be referred to by his or her background category.

The final designation will be that of perceived creative writing ability. This designation will either be Class 1, a positive perception of creative writing ability or Class 2, a negative perception of creative writing ability. These classifications are established via extensive study of primarily the background data from Question 1, and therefore will not be repeated here. It should be noted that certain interview answers regarding learning background were not explored, while some interview answers, classroom responses, and journal entries not examined in Question 1 were explored here. All differences were color-coded accordingly for the sake of this discussion.

The attitudes toward teaching creative writing and/or using creative writing as a learning mechanism of the eight Group 1 preservice teachers examined in Question 2 of this dissertation were documented in the results for that question and in Question 4 results, as well as in the results for the

current question, and are highlighted in the Question 2 discussion in this chapter. The attitudes of the four Group 2 preservice teachers are examined in the results for the current question and the results from Question 4, in Section 2. Part One of this discussion will cross-reference the classifications established for this question for preservice teachers.

Part Two of this discussion will focus on the inservice teachers and will cross-reference the classifications established for this question. The only classification from Part One not utilized for the inservice teachers will be the group classification, since all inservice teachers responded to all instruments.

An analysis and discussion of both parts will follow Part Two.

Part One: Preservice Teachers

Group 1

“AS”: Category 1; Class 1

“JK”: Category 1; Class 1

“AB”: Category 1; Class 1

“EO”: Category 1; Class 1

“JB”: Category 2; Class 1

“HN”: Category 2; Class 1

“CI”: Category 2; Class 2

“LS”: Category 3; Class 1

Group 2

“JS”: Category 1; Class 1

“KP”: Category 2; Class 1

“KH”: Category 2; Class 1

“KS”: Category 2; Class 1

Group 3

“CS”: Category 1; Class 1

“LL”: Category 1; Class 1

“JR”: Category 1; Class 1

“MC”: Category 2; Class 1

“HP”: Category 2; Class 2

“BS”: Category 3; Class 2

“MF”: Category 3; Class 2

Part Two: Inservice Teachers

“P”: Category 2; Class 1

“B”: Category 2; Class 1

“R”: Category 2; Class 1

“K”: Category 2; Class 2

“N”: Category 3; Class 2

“G”: Category 3; Class 2

“F”: Category 3; Class 2

“M”: Category 3; Class 2

Analysis and Discussion

In order to find correlation between perceived creative writing ability and attitude toward teaching creative writing or using creative writing as a learning mechanism both variables must show signs of

just that: variation. From the data classified above, it is apparent that there is indeed significant differences in perceived creative writing ability among inservice teachers, and to a lesser degree among preservice teachers.

In general, Category 2 inservice teachers have a positive perception of their creative writing abilities, while Category 3 inservice teachers have a negative perception of their creative writing abilities. The exception is “K” who was classified Category 2 primarily because she does journal writing, but also because she teaches creative writing. She does very little creative writing of any other kind, had no creative writing courses in high school or college, and “does not have time” to do much creative writing.

In retrospect it would appear that “K,” with the use of a more extensive interview instrument, may have been found to be a Category 3 individual, just as “B” might possibly be a Category 1 individual, as was suggested by the analysis of the Category 2 inservice teachers from Question One of this chapter.

It should be noted that this researcher intended to use both a written and oral interview instrument for the inservice teacher data collection methodology of this research. After weeks of trying to schedule oral interviews with very little success, the oral interview instrument was abandoned. In light of this, it is highly recommended that the written interview instrument for inservice teachers in future attitudinal research be more expansive, particularly with regard to writing background.

The preservice teachers' perceived creative writing abilities shows less variation, particularly among the 12 preservice teachers with data sufficient to examine their attitudes toward creative writing as a learning mechanism. Only “CI” among this group had a negative perception of her

creative writing ability, and this perception was probably based more on apprehension regarding the impending creative writing assignment for the class rather than a well founded view of her own creative writing ability.

“CI,” as mentioned in her background information, had known and worried about the 30 page short story assignment “all summer” before the class. She also revealed a talent for writing creative speeches in high school. In my annotational comments regarding her initial interview, I noted that “CI” tended to regard creative writing as creative fiction, but when prodded about other imaginative kinds of writing conceded that they too were creative and she was fairly good at them.

In Group 3 the variation in perception of creative writing ability was considerably more pronounced, particularly along background category lines. Without drawing inference, it seems reasonable that future explorations of patterns of perception of creative writing ability should include an equal population among all three background categories. Perhaps separate instruments for determining background category first, followed by perception of ability should be utilized. At any rate it is apparent that background category and perception of creative writing ability are co-directionally correlated.

What is not apparent from these results is whether perception of creative writing ability and attitude toward teaching creative writing as a learning mechanism are correlational. This is primarily the result of the overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward teaching creative writing and/or using creative writing as learning mechanism. It needs to be pointed out that attitude toward teaching creative writing and utilizing creative strategies in the classroom are not one and the same. “M,” for

instance, uses very little creative writing in the classroom, yet acknowledges that it is a valuable methodology: “Expressing their opinions in writing may help lead [the students] to self examination.”

It is apparent, as mentioned in the discussion for Question 2, that regardless of writing background category, preservice and inservice teachers value creative writing as a learning tool. This remains true regardless of perception of creative writing ability. This unanimity of attitude toward creative writing as writing to learn presents a research dilemma.

As example, this research is attempting to discover, among other things, the nature of inservice and preservice teacher attitudes toward creative writing as a learning mechanism. With no clear-cut attitudinal variation, it can still be determined that there is a positive response, perhaps based on some tacit, learned knowledge among educators, to creative writing as learning. But it is nearly impossible to establish with a degree of certainty exact causal relationships for attitudinal variations. It does present opportunities to establish a preliminary network however. The responsibility of future research will be to refine instruments in such a manner as to make attitudinal variation discernible, thus allowing expansion and substantiation of the network.

Question 4

Question 4 asks: What change, if any, does a theoretical and practical course in creative writing have on preservice teachers' attitudes toward teaching creative writing? The results for this question document the attitudinal responses of 12 preservice teachers: Group 1, the eight who completed all three interview instruments plus both writing attitude scales; and Group 2, the four

who completed at least one pre-course and one post-course interview plus both writing attitudes scales. Classification for the purpose of discussion will include reference to the individual's writing background category.

Discussion Methodology

The attitudes towards teaching creative writing of the 12 preservice teachers who completed at least two interview instruments have been thoroughly documented both in Chapter 4 of this dissertation, in the results of Questions 2, 3, and the current question, as well as, for the Group 1 teachers, in the Question 3 discussion from this chapter. In all cases, the Initial Interview was pre-course, while the Written Interview and Exit Interview were post-course. This discussion will center on whether there was a change in preservice teachers' attitudes pre-to post-course, and whether any issues for future research surfaced during analysis.

It should be pointed out that the question as stated does not specifically engender analysis with respect to creative writing as a learning mechanism. Rather it attempts to discover if preservice teachers feel comfortable using creative writing assignments, regardless of learning outcome, in the classroom.

Discussion

In analyzing the data from the preservice teacher responses to the interview questions, it appears that there is little or no change in their attitudes towards teaching creative writing pre- to post-course. This can primarily be attributed to the fact that the attitudes were universally positive to begin with, thus a theoretical and practical course in creative writing would obviously only be able to

impact their attitudes in a negative fashion. Given the design of the course as a reinforcing vehicle for the benefits of creative writing as a learning mechanism, such an impact would be dubious indeed.

There is some slight indication that the course may have negatively impacted the students' preconceived notions that creative writing can be used as a learning tool in all English coursework. Five of the 12 preservice teachers had a less positive response to Question 40 on the writing attitude scale, while only two had a more positive response. Nevertheless, the composite for the question remains nearly identical pre- and post-course, with four individuals asserting that creative writing can be used to promote learning in all English classes almost always, while six individuals maintain that it can be used often. Regardless, all but two answers on each scale were on the positive end of the scale, denoting an overwhelming positive response.

There is also some indication that the course had a positive impact on some preservice teachers attitudes toward creative writing in general, regardless of background category.

For instance, "CS," Category 1, states that "since this class has started -- a class allowing creativity and stressing personal, creative factors -- I think I have begun to feel at home again with writing. I'm still having some trouble with development and such, but it's okay-- the creative freedom of expression has been re-established . . ." Category 2 individual "KP," says "I think writing the short story for English 108 has helped me become more aware of the processes that are involved with creative writing." "LS," a Category 3 preservice teacher agrees: "I feel more confident as a creative writer."

There is evidence as well that the course positively influenced preservice teachers' attitudes toward using creative writing as a learning mechanism, again, regardless of background category.

When asked if the class gave any insights into writing instruction, “K,” Category 1, answered “Yes, as far as the process approach and peer editing is concerned. We can avoid lots of paperwork as teachers if we can create an atmosphere of process writing, producing a better paper or story, having other students help with editing. Part of the reluctance I saw as a student teacher was having to take so many papers home all the time. If we only do it once, like in class, that really helps establish a good environment.” Similarly, “KH,” Category 2, says “The classes that I have had such as English 108 have given me the insight to teach creative writing.” “LS,” Category 3, when asked if she would feel confident teaching creative writing, said “Yes. The experience in this class has helped.”

In summary, there is little or no evidence that a theoretical and practical course in creative writing has any impact on preservice teachers attitudes towards teaching creative writing, primarily because their attitudes are already universally positive. There is evidence however that such a course might positively influence preservice teachers attitudes towards creative writing in general, as well as creative writing as a learning mechanism. These relationships should be explored further by future researchers in order to more precisely understand the nature of creative writing pedagogy on preservice teacher attitudes across the spectrum of writing as learning.

Question 5

Question 5 asks: Does writing apprehension play a role in preservice or inservice teacher attitudes toward teaching writing? The obvious method of classification for this question is to use the categories established in Chapter 4, Question 5 regarding the individual's degree of writing apprehension as established through combined apprehensive responses to the writing apprehension survey.

To facilitate the analysis, the degree of apprehension will be formulated into three levels. Level 1 apprehensives have zero, one or two combined apprehensive responses and exhibit no or negligible apprehension. Level 2 apprehensives have three or four combined apprehensive responses and exhibit moderate apprehension. Level 3 apprehensives have five or more combined apprehensive responses and are apprehensive toward writing. In the course of the analysis, the individual's background category will also be displayed for the purposes of cross-question referencing and discussion.

Discussion Methodology

The preservice and inservice teachers will be examined level by level, focusing on an interview answer which best illustrates the individual's attitude toward teaching writing. Part One, Section One will focus on preservice teacher attitudes, followed in Section Two by a brief analysis. Part Two, Section One will look at the inservice teachers' attitudes, with a brief analysis to follow in Section Two. The individual's designation will be followed by his or her writing background category.

Part One, Section One: Preservice Teachers

Unless otherwise noted, the questions for analysis are (1) Does writing help you learn new subjects?; (2) Do writing classes promote learning more than non-writing classes?; (3) Will you use creative kinds of writing assignments when you begin teaching? The answers will be designated by the appropriate question number.

Level 1 Apprehensives

“JK,” Category 1

(2) Usually I think writing definitely helps more.

“EO,” Category 1

Question: If you were teaching in the class you would feel like the students need to write more to understand?

Answer: Yes, and I think it's a lot more accurate way for a teacher to test knowledge.

“AB,” Category 1

(1) I don't really think you could learn anything without writing.

“AS,” Category 1

(2) I think in general, yes, writing is better.

“CS,” Category 1

Question: So you think creative assignments are very worthwhile?

Answer: I think anybody can write, it may take awhile to find your inner voice or whatever to make you realize that you can, but creativity and stimulation of the mind through projects and creative writing and everything is of major importance and should be a major focus of any English classroom . . .

“JS,” Category 1

(2) I think so, because it's another way that students can express themselves or get across their ideas.

A lot of students might, say, write something on a paper that they wouldn't say out loud in class . . .

“LL,” Category 1

(2) Most definitely . . . because you’re forced to be able to think all the time as opposed to [memorizing] little answers . . .

“JB,” Category 2

(3) Yes, I think my students will write . . . I’ll try not to force them, but if that’s what it comes to, it’s good for them, and obviously they don’t realize it yet.

“KH,” Category 2

(2) I think when you write you learn, and when you don’t have the opportunity, a lot of times, I don’t think the whole extent of learning can even take place . . .

“KS,” Category 2

(2) I would say you learn more if you get to write about it or even to talk about it out loud. If the teacher’s doing most of the talking, at least in my experience, there is usually not an opportunity for the students to ask their questions . . .

“MC,” Category 2

Question: So it just depends on the learning style as to how or whether writing helps them learn?

Answer: Right, but I think even if it doesn’t help them in a well-rounded way, just learning how to write can help them. When you get into business or anything or any kind of profession, you know a well-written note to someone or a well-written letter to someone . . . will get you a lot farther.

Level 2 Apprehensives

“JR,” Category 1

(2) I don’t know. I think writing, like I said, the writing maybe it forces you a little to think about what you’re doing before you actually do it . . .

“CI,” Category 2

(2) Definitely . . . Writing is knowing or writing is building. When you write you are learning what you do.

“MF,” Category 3

(3) I would try to expand on [the non-writing way] I learned, because I don’t think I would want any of my students to come away from my course not doing any creative writing, because I think I may have lost out on something along the way . . .

“BS,” Category 3

(1) Yes, you remember things more when you write them out yourself, keeping them in your head.

Level 3 Apprehensives

“HN,” Category 2

(3) Yes, I think it would be fun to do. My problem, I’m afraid of it as far as them having to write creatively and me grading it. How do you grade something like that? I mean, how do you decide what’s good and what’s bad?

“KP,” Category 2

(3) Yes, especially now that I’ve been exposed to it and know more about how it’s helpful. Like in high school I never had any of that [creative assignments].

“HP,” Category 2

(2) I think the more writing you do the better you learn.

(1) Yes, the more you write the more you have to know about [the topic].

“LS,” Category 3

(2) I think you learn more in the writing class.

“DB,” “DB” did not complete enough of the instruments to be included in the data for the other questions. But she did complete the writing apprehension survey and the written interview at approximately the same time. She warrants inclusion in this discussion primarily for comparison purposes. “DB” had an astounding 12 combined apprehensive responses.

(1) I write things over and over to learn them. That’s basically only memorization. I don’t know if it completely is learning.

(2) Writing classes seem to be less structured. When you are in non-writing classes, grades seem to be more structured, there are right and wrong answers. Writing classes aren’t that way.

Part One, Section Two: Analysis

Question 5 of this research has attempted to ascertain if writing apprehension has a causal relationship with attitudes toward teaching writing as well.

With respect to the preservice teachers, the results of this research are not conclusive. Just as in Question 4, preservice teachers’ attitudes towards teaching writing are essentially positive across the board. There is very little difference in the interview responses between Level 1 apprehensive individuals and Level 3 apprehensive individuals with regard to attitude toward teaching writing. It is probable, just as with Question 2 of this research, that some tacit, learned knowledge of the value of writing as a learning mechanism has superseded apprehension as the primary motivator of preservice teacher attitudes toward teaching writing.

The lone dissenting voice among preservice teachers concerning teaching writing in the classroom belongs to “DB,” whose lack of completed instruments excludes her from inclusion in the analysis due to insufficient corroborating evidence. It is, however, observable evidence, and suggests to this researcher that on the more apprehensive end of the Level 3 classification there may

in fact be extremely apprehensive individuals who do exhibit negative attitudes toward teaching writing. This observation is somewhat confirmed by the results of Part Two of this question.

Part Two, Section One: Inservice Teachers

The questions for analysis are: (1) Do writing assignments help your students learn new material more or less than non-written exercises?; (2) Do you feel writing classes promote learning more or less than traditional read, lecture, and test instruction methodologies?; and (3) Do you look forward to teaching classes that involve a lot of writing? The answers will be designated by the appropriate question number.

Level 1 Apprehensives

“K,” Category 2

(1) Writing is a great way of learning. I believe that writing should be incorporated into every class in every school.

“B,” Category 2

(2) More readers logs and other responses or applications of text make literature come alive for my students.

(4) Yes! I enjoyed reading what my students write-- as well as what they say.

“P,” Category 2

(2) My classes complete a writing assignment almost every day. I lecture about once every two weeks. I keep it short . . . The students are here to learn to write well-developed papers, that is what we are about!

“N,” Category 3

(1) Activities that require a hands-on approach increased learning.

(2) All methods of teaching can promote learning. Obviously, more personal involvement increases learning.

(4) The number of students in my classes has an effect on my attitude toward teaching writing.

Therefore, I do not always look forward to teaching writing.

Level 2 Apprehensives

There were no inservice teachers who were Level 2 apprehensives.

Level 3 Apprehensives

“R,” Category 2

(1) I think that writing assignments require more individual concentration and internalization than other exercises do. I believe that a student’s depth of understanding increases more rapidly when asked to write about a subject.

(4) I really enjoy teaching writing. I do look forward to it.

“F,” Category 3

(1) There must be a balance of reading, writing and talking. Different students learn in different ways. An effective teacher attempts to use all of the resources. Some of my students need to write. Some see it as a chore and as a result -- put so little effort into it that they receive little benefit.

(2) I stress writing in my classes. Even in my drama class we write. I find that writing allows students time to reflect and helps them create more interesting characters. Students must take an active role in learning when they write. They cannot be passive observers. That is what leads to learning engagement.

“G,” Category 3

(1) Writing assignments helps students learn more new material of their choice rather than teacher choice. Writing expands thought processes and the writing process.

“M,” Category 3

(4) I am basically a traditional English teacher. Grammar is the main emphasis in my class. The most writing that my students do is a response to a story or poem.

Part Two, Section Two: Analysis

The inservice teachers present an unusual model of apprehensiveness to writing. They are either low apprehensives or high apprehensives, with no middle ground. With one exception at each level, the apprehensiveness parallels writing background, suggesting a strong correlation between the two.

The exceptions to this pattern are “N,” who, as was pointed out in the analysis for Question 1, appears to be apprehensive of the paperload rather than the writing assignments themselves, and “R,” who is very apprehensive of her personal writing being evaluated. “R,” despite her apprehension, often writes with her students and shares it with them. In my observation, she also fostered the greatest amount of in-class creative writing instruction among all the inservice teachers.

“R” is also the only Level 3 inservice teacher who is unequivocally positive in her attitude toward using writing in the classroom. “F” stresses writing in her classroom, but in her text and in my observations of her methodologies, she is equally comfortable with oral communication as a learning mechanism. “G” also supports the notion of teaching writing in the classroom, but feels that it should perhaps be taught in a specific writing class rather than in the regular English classroom. Both “F” and “G” are slightly ambiguous in their attitudes toward teaching writing.

“M,” on the other hand, frankly admits that she does not use much writing in her curriculum. She is a traditional English teacher, and believes that the study of grammar is the proper curriculum for her middle school classroom. Because she is the highest apprehensive individual among inservice teachers, with nine combined apprehensive responses, there is a possibility that her writing apprehension plays a role in her reluctance to use writing in the classroom.

This possible correlation is enhanced somewhat by the case of “G,” who had seven combined apprehensive responses. He teaches writing because he knows it is valuable but would be just as happy if it were a separate course featuring creative writing. “G” was also non-responsive to the question of whether he enjoyed teaching writing.

The strongest reinforcement for this possible correlation comes from the observation of “DB” made during the preservice teacher analysis for this question. “DB,” like “M,” was the highest apprehensive individual in her level. She was also the only preservice teacher who showed any reluctance to teaching writing. Because there were other preservice teachers with little or no writing backgrounds who had positive attitudes toward teaching writing, it may be that writing apprehension is the primary causal variable in this instance, and with “M,” for attitude toward teaching writing. Future researchers may wish to focus on extreme cases of Level 3 apprehensive preservice and inservice teachers to confirm or refute this supposition.

Discussion

In the literature review for this dissertation, writing apprehension was linked to both attitude toward writing (Faigley, Daly, and Witte) and perception of writing ability (Daly and Wilson). There is also evidence that high apprehensives avoid writing (Daly and Miller) which reduces the

opportunities for writing (Daly, 1978c), establishing a co-relational correlation between apprehension and writing background.

This connection between writing apprehension and writing background is particularly apparent in the results from this question. Of the eleven Level 1 low apprehensive individuals among preservice teachers, seven have Category 1 or extensive writing backgrounds, and the other four have Category 2 or moderate writing backgrounds. All of the Level 3 high apprehensive individuals were either Category 2 or Category 3, little or no writing background, individuals.

Level 2 moderate apprehensive individuals contained individuals from all three background categories. The noticeable characteristic here is that both Category 3 individuals had four combined apprehensive responses, while the Category 1 and Category 2 individuals both had three combined apprehensive responses. This may suggest to future researchers that, as with the background categories, it may be possible to realign the apprehension levels into two distinct levels: Level 1, low apprehensives, and Level 2, higher apprehensives, using four combined apprehensive responses as the jumping off point for higher apprehension.

The data for this question suggests little or no correlation between writing apprehension and preservice teachers' attitudes toward teaching writing, primarily because the attitudes exposed here are almost universally positive toward teaching writing.

The evidence for the inservice teachers suggests a stronger connection between writing apprehension and attitude toward teaching writing. All Level 1 apprehensives have very positive attitudes toward teaching writing while all Level 3 apprehensives have somewhat ambiguous or, in the case of "M," negative, attitudes toward teaching writing.

It is particularly observable that extremely high apprehensive individuals, those with nine combined apprehensive responses and more, in both groups, express the greatest negativity toward teaching writing. To positively correlate this potential connection, future research should replicate this study using a larger population in order to isolate more examples of extreme Level 3 individuals for cross reference.

The Final Analysis

In searching for correlational patterns of variables for development into a preliminary causal network concerning preservice and inservice teachers' attitudes toward creative writing, this research has provided insight into not only these relationships, but several methodological constructs for future research as well.

Foremost among these, the creation of subgroups for examining teacher attitudes, apprehension, and writing background allowed for a clearer picture of attitudinal tendencies in relation to the characteristics that define particular background and apprehension categories. The immediate contribution of this classification system is observable in the Question 1 results, which highlight a clear connection between background and attitude. This provided an impetus to search for a concrete pattern of variables that will afford a better picture of cause and effect regarding inservice and preservice teacher attitudes toward creative writing.

The results of Question 2 show that both the inservice and preservice teachers in this study, regardless of background classification, universally perceive creative writing as a valuable learning mechanism. This would suggest that there is a bi-directional correlation between in-service and preservice teacher perceptions of learning and creative writing methodologies. This is a second piece of the puzzle, which facilitates a favorable teacher disposition towards using creative writing as a

learning mechanism in the classroom. It is also apparent, from Question 3, that background category and perception of creative writing ability are co-directionally correlated, though this relationship was not the original focus of the question.

In constructing a preliminary network for future research, it is important to outline the tangential and literature based connections as well. For instance, as pointed out in the Question 5 discussion, the literature review for this dissertation linked writing apprehension to both attitude toward writing (Faigley, Daly, and Witte) and perception of writing ability (Daly and Wilson). There is also evidence that high apprehensives avoid writing (Daly and Miller) which reduces the opportunities for writing (Daly, 1978c), establishing a co-relational correlation between apprehension and writing background, which was reinforced in this research.

There were several assumed relationships which could not be shown through this research, which need to be included as potentially directional for future research. For instance, it would not appear that writing background plays a role in preservice and inservice teacher perceptions of learning, as discussed in Question 2. Rather it would appear that the common denominator is knowledge of the benefits of writing on learning, and not necessarily a practical application or expertise in the field, when it comes to teacher utilization of creative writing methodologies. Perhaps, then, this tacit, learned knowledge should be operationalized in the interview instrument and considered as part of the criteria for background classification if future researchers attempt to modify the background categories as suggested in the Question 1 discussion.

Several supposed relationships could not be corroborate due to the invariable nature of preservice and inservice teacher attitudes toward writing or creative writing in the classroom. This research could not provide insight into whether perception of creative writing ability and attitude

toward teaching creative writing as a learning mechanism are correlational. This is primarily the result of the overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward teaching creative writing and/or using creative writing as a learning mechanism by the subjects. For the same reason, there is also little or no evidence from this study that a theoretical and practical course in creative writing has any impact on preservice teachers attitudes towards teaching creative writing.

There is evidence, however, that such a course might positively influence preservice teachers' attitudes towards creative writing in general, as well as creative writing as a learning mechanism. These relationships should be included in the preliminary causal model and explored further by future researchers in order to more precisely understand the nature of creative writing instruction methodologies.

There is also evidence that extremely high apprehensive individuals express the greatest negativity toward teaching writing. To positively correlate this potential connection, future research should replicate this study using a larger population in order to isolate more examples of extreme Level 3 individuals for cross reference.

In summation, without clear-cut attitudinal variation, many of the research questions could not be answered through the data collected. It is nearly impossible to establish with a degree of certainty exact causal relationships for attitudinal variations when those variations are not present. It could still be determined that there is a positive response, perhaps based in part on some tacit, learned knowledge among educators, to creative writing as learning, and strong bi-directional correlation between writing background and attitude toward writing, background and apprehension, and perception of learning and creative writing methodologies.

These positive correlations present a preliminary causal network which can be used as the starting point for future explorations. The responsibility of future research will be to refine instruments in such a manner as to make attitudinal variation discernible, thus allowing expansion and substantiation of the preliminary network established here, with the ultimate goal being a clear understanding of teacher attitudes toward creative writing. Armed with that knowledge, we in the education field will be able to design curriculum and utilize methodologies that promote increased implementation of imaginative strategies, thus maximizing the potential for expanding the use of creative writing in the regular English classroom.

It is particularly observable that extremely high apprehensive individuals, those with nine combined apprehensive responses and more, in both groups, express the greatest negativity toward teaching writing. To positively correlate this potential connection, future research should replicate this study using a larger population in order to isolate more examples of extreme Level 3 individuals for cross reference.

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