Children’s cross-cultural literacy experiences in three worlds: Enacting agency

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

__________________________
Beverley Flückiger

__________________________
Date
ABSTRACT

The literacy experiences of a small group of culturally-diverse children were examined in this study. The experiences, too, were diverse – and influential. The children, five girls aged four – five years, attended the same Preschool, in an inner suburb of a large city in Australia. Data were gathered at home, during the last two months of the preschool year and, for three of the children, during writing sessions in the first six months of Year One.

Vygotskian ideas on meaning-making were integrated with other perspectives on development, literacy learning and teaching from a sociocultural, theoretical framework. The purpose was to identify dimensions of children’s literacy experiences and provide insight into ways in which children negotiate culture, literacy, and schooling, challenge current perspectives, contribute to research knowledge and determine how teachers might take account of cultural diversity in classrooms to better support children in literacy learning. A grounded theory method was employed using multiple data collection tools and techniques in both home and school contexts. Data were coded using a process of constant comparison to identify features, characteristics and dimensions of children’s literacy experiences. Independent inter-rater agreement on the coding of features at home, Preschool and school was 98.4%.

Findings included a variety of values, beliefs and perspectives amongst parents and between teachers in relation to literacy learning, roles and relationships, and home-school connections. Children’s literacy experiences at home differed in terms of nature, frequency and resources and experiences in each of the settings were very different. A major finding was that children acted as agents of their own learning: mixing, transferring, trying out, adapting, and experimenting to determine appropriate practices and make decisions including when to exercise choice to enact agency. These assimilation and accommodation adaptations were identified as akin to code-switching, labelled as culture-switching, and identified as areas requiring further research.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Overview

The writing experiences of individual preschoolers, girls from diverse sociocultural backgrounds are investigated in this study during the months before formal schooling begins and then in the first six months of school. The characteristics of experiences are examined, including the skills and knowledge evident about writing, and the nature of the social interactions that accompany experiences.

The focus on writing in practice (Neuman & Roskos, 1997) reveals rich data on the experiences of culturally diverse children and identifies important aspects of context that support writing in the early years. It is hoped that the knowledge gained may assist teachers in finding ways to account for social and cultural diversity in their classroom and provide better continuity between home and school practices. Amongst other aims, it is hoped to provide insight into ways in which children negotiate culture, literacy, and schooling that challenges current perspectives and contributes to research knowledge. An overview of studies of literacy, particularly from a sociocultural perspective, is provided in this introductory chapter that establishes the background of the current study and outlines its purpose and scope.

A review of literature pertinent to the study is presented in Chapter Two. This includes several perspectives on the development of emergent writing and explores the processes involved in composing writing and spelling. It describes how language and literacy have come to be viewed as social and cultural processes and provides a brief description of how educators are attempting to respond to social and cultural diversity in classrooms.
The epistemological and theoretical perspectives that underpin the qualitative research undertaken in this study are outlined in Chapter Three. Also, grounded theory method, used for data collection and analysis, is explained, and includes a description of adaptations to the approach made in this study. In addition, issues of validity and reliability are addressed.

The results are presented in the next two chapters. An overview of children’s literacy experiences is provided in Chapter Four that compares similarities and differences amongst girls, across contexts and over time. Similarities and differences of findings are linked to other studies where appropriate. Case studies of the five children in the study that describe the dimensions of their literacy experiences at home, Preschool and Year One are presented in Chapter Five.

In the final chapter, Chapter Six, main findings that emerged from the data present a picture of children operating successfully in three worlds. An alternate perspective of children as agents of their own learning is outlined for teachers to consider when taking account of social and cultural diversity.

The remainder of Chapter One follows, in which issues emerging from studies of cultural diversity and children’s literacy success are outlined, areas in which further research could contribute to understanding are identified and questions that provoked this study are detailed.

In Australia, literacy is a national priority. Achievement of sustained improvements in the literacy skills of Australian children is seen as critical in overcoming educational disadvantage and preparing them for their futures. However, a significant minority of children in Australian schools continue to face difficulties in acquiring acceptable levels of literacy. A National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy (2005) highlighted the diversity in life experiences of Australian schoolchildren and speculated that effective teaching should take account of ways in which literacy-acquisition builds on family and community in the context of the oral language that children acquire from birth.
Over the last twenty-five years literacy studies have provided a clear picture of many of the processes involved in oral and written language development from a cognitive perspective (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Chomsky, 1971; Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1983; Flower & Hayes, 1980, 1984; Gentry, 1982; Sulzby, 1985; Teale, 1986). In recent times, however, literacy has come to be viewed as social and cultural practice (Cairney & Ruge, 1996) and researchers have attempted to understand how children learn to be literate through active engagement with their social and cultural worlds (Cairney, Ruge, Buchanan, Lowe & Musie, 1995; DeBaryshe, Buell & Binder, 1996; Dyson, 1992; Neuman & Roskos, 1997; Purcell-Gates & Dahl, 1991; Purcell-Gates, 1996; Rogoff & Chavajay, 1995).

Researchers with a sociocultural perspective on literacy have been influenced by the work of various authors such as Bakhtin (1981, 1986), Bruner (1986, 1990), and Vygotsky (1978). (A review of the contributions of these authors is presented in the following section). The sociocultural perspective presents the development of language and literacy as a social process, rather than an individual one (Cairney & Ruge, 1996). Children acquire and use literacy as they attempt to make sense of, and operate within their social and cultural environments (Bissex, 1980; Neuman & Roskos, 1997; Teale & Sulzby, 1986). In other words, as children begin to develop the need or desire to communicate, they begin to develop literacy skill and knowledge. The things that children learn about literacy are governed by the environments in which they operate. They pick up the vocabulary, behaviours, ideals, attitudes and experiences that relate to literacy directly or indirectly, and are implicit in their communications and interactions with others. Therefore, children interacting with others through writing and experimenting with written language are busy making decisions, deliberately or intuitively, about their position in the social world at any one moment (Dyson, 1992; Neuman & Roskos, 1997).
Research studies have documented the ways in which children learn to read and write in their homes (Anderson & Stokes, 1984; Bissex, 1980; Ferreiro, 1986; Purcell-Gates, 1996) and at school (Goodridge, 1995; Steward, 1995). As a body, the studies have made valuable contributions to our understanding of the way children learn. It is recognised that families, communities and cultures vary in the ways they use language, and therefore children’s knowledge and use of written language varies too (Dyson, 1992). Learning about written language is part of everyday life in most homes, communities and cultures. Children use the resources and constraints of the social and physical environment to analyse and construct their understandings about written language and the world (Neuman & Roskos, 1997). This is done through interaction with their peers and more experienced members of society (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989; Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976). Often, however, the knowledge that children bring to school is at odds with instruction and may confuse children and interfere with learning. In school, learning becomes increasingly formal and tends to be removed from the context of socially relevant action (Neuman & Roskos, 1997). Emerging from this research knowledge are several concerns about the impact of social and cultural differences on children’s literacy learning.

First, studies in Australia show that differences are evident between the language and literacy practices of school and community (Cairney, Ruge, Buchanan, Lowe & Munsie, 1995; Freebody, Ludwig & Gunn, 1995; Hill, Comber, Louden, Rivalland & Reid, 1998). This is consistent with other research that shows there are differences between the language and literacy of school and that of homes and communities (Heath, 1982). This mismatch is considered a significant factor in the success of children at school (Heath, 1982; Scribner & Cole, 1981). Heath (1982) found that teacher-student interactions break down when teachers are not aware of their students’ home culture and the ways that language is used in it. Many teachers expect that minority children have developed literacy skills and knowledge similar to the skills and knowledge that
the children of the dominant culture have developed and through similar experiences (Goodridge, 1995). As a result, children attempt to negotiate without help between two linguistic and cultural worlds.

Second, investigations into the literacy learning of children dominant in a language other than English have shown the effectiveness of continued literacy instruction in that language (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Goldenberg, 1993; Moll & Greenberg, 1990; Willig, 1985). In contrast, children who learn to speak English, but not their heritage language, achieve less well than those children on bilingual programs (Evans, 1994). Wells (1986) attempted to explain this variation in literacy achievement of ESL children by arguing that the key predictor of school success is not the prior knowledge of the language of the school but the quality of the interactions between parents and children. Therefore, parents who adopt English, instead of their first language, to communicate with their children may reduce the quality of their interactions (Evans, 1994).

Studies have documented that children from minority families generally do not achieve the same success in literacy learning at school as children from the dominant culture (Ferdman, 1990; Purcell-Gates, 1993). The theory of cultural discontinuity (Jacob & Jordan, 1991) is one attempt to explain this phenomenon. It suggests that cultural mismatches between teachers and children result in difficulties in communication and interaction in the classroom. These mismatches affect the literacy learning of children whose home culture does not reflect that of school. A second explanation may be found in the theory of structural inequality (Au, 1993) that suggests inequalities in the broader social, political and economic spheres and the power relationships between groups explains the lack of educational success of children from minority groups.

Many educators have sought to address the mismatches between the literacies of home and school by developing a greater sense of partnership and collaboration between school and families. Programs have been developed that support the participation of families in their children’s education (Auerbach, 1989;
Cairney & Ruge, 1996; Paratore, Homza, Kroi-Sinclair, Lewis-Barrow, Melzi, Stergis & Haynes, 1995; Purcell-Gates, 1993; 1996). However, some of these programs have been criticised for encouraging parents to do school-like activities in the home, assuming that some parents lack the skills to promote school success in their children, or for failing to recognise that schooling, too, is a cultural practice (Auerbach, 1989).

Another approach to address mismatches has been for educators to attempt to provide authentic situations for reading and writing in the classroom that reflect the practices children enact in day-to-day life. Neuman and Roskos (1997) described this approach to teaching as focusing on thinking in practice rather than thinking as separate from doing. It is consistent with the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky (1978) and Leont’ev (1981) in which context and the child’s activity are inseparable. In everyday life children learn through activity and interaction with others. Adults support children’s literacy acquisition through scaffolding (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976) and they become expert by observing, being coached and practising much like an apprentice (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989; Chapman, 1994; Rogoff, 1990). Skills, strategies and knowledge are learned within their social and functional context (Neuman & Roskos, 1997). Aspects of an apprenticeship model have been used successfully in classroom teaching and learning. Some examples are guided participation in literacy events with older students acting as mentors (Rogoff, 1990), reciprocal teaching (Palincsar & Brown, 1984), and procedural facilitation in writing (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1985). These three teaching/learning methods involve interactions between an expert and a novice in a problem-solving situation and emphasise cognitive and metacognitive processes. Collins, Brown and Newman (1989) have been critical of these methods claiming that they rely on the decontextualising of knowledge, and assume the transferability of the knowledge, skills and strategies involved to new settings. The view presented in this study, and shared by others (Neuman & Roskos, 1997) is that children’s literacy
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Researchers have documented that the cultural and social diversity of families influence what and how children learn, and as a consequence, classroom teachers are being called upon to take account of the social and cultural diversity in their classroom literacy programs. It is difficult, however, for teachers of classes that represent a diverse range to determine the types of literacy experiences that individual children have had and to bridge the gap between home and classroom expectations. How teachers meet the literacy needs of children who are socially, culturally, and linguistically diverse has been dealt with only peripherally (Dyson, 1992; Peter, 1994). McNaughton (1995) has called for models of collaborative educational programs that foster diversity without undermining cultural practices.

Cairney and Ruge (1996) maintained that research into family literacy practices across cultural groups can contribute a great deal to our understanding of the relationship between literacy practices at home and at school and the impact of this relationship on school success. They claimed that a detailed analysis of a range of literate actions and interactions in home and school contexts is needed. Similarly, Purcell-Gates (1996) called for further research to focus on the ways in which school and home learning can build on and complement each other. She stressed the need for longitudinal studies to provide insights into the ways in which culture, literacy and schooling interact. Despite several recent studies of emergent writing (DeBaryshe, Buell & Binder, 1996; Hill, Comber, Louden, Rivalland & Reid, 1998; McNaughton, 1995), the exact nature of young children’s learning experiences about writing in the home, and how these experiences interact with schooling, is still not fully understood (Purcell-Gates, 1996). More research is needed on the social and cultural processes related to emergent writing in the home and the forms and sequences of children’s developing expertise (McNaughton, 1995). In addition, research on
linguistically diverse children just beginning their school experience is under-represented in the literature, despite writing instruction being the focus of much classroom research (Peter, 1994).

Increasingly, children attending Australian schools are a dynamic and diverse mix of linguistic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. Parents' beliefs about when and how children learn school-related skills, their daily interactions with their children and the social rules that guide these interactions combine in intricate ways to create what Luis Moll has termed *funds of knowledge* that are based in culture (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992). However efforts to specify the specific mechanisms or dimensions of culture that carry a role in learning are in their infancy. There is a need to understand how children’s cultural backgrounds affect the skills, knowledge, and expectations that they bring to school.

Despite the diversity in classrooms, many children adapt successfully to school environments and develop literacy knowledge and skills. For many teachers the growing diversity in their classrooms is seen as problematic, and they struggle to ensure that children’s first experiences with school are positive ones. They are reminded constantly that for school experiences to be positive, they need to take account of the cultural diversity within classrooms (Phillips & Crowell, 1994). When a variety of cultures is represented in classes from a wide range of heritage backgrounds, teachers feel ill-equipped to do so. How can they develop an intimate knowledge and understanding of the many and varied cultures represented in order to take account of them? To which aspects of children’s cultural backgrounds that impact on adjustment, motivation and learning of literacy at school should they be attending? When cultural beliefs and practices do not align, should teachers make adjustments to their practices to accommodate parents’ cultural beliefs and practices, or should they be educating parents to see the educative process from the teacher’s knowledge base and cultural perspective? To address these dilemmas, there is need to better
understand how young children’s cultural backgrounds affect the skills, knowledge and expectations they bring to school.

**Aims of the Study**

The first aim of the present study is to describe the emergent writing experiences of a small group of culturally diverse children at home, at Preschool and in Year One to better understand the nature of young children’s literacy experiences at home, and how these experiences interact with schooling, a research outcome encouraged by Purcell-Gates (1996). Second, it is hoped that the study will provide insights into ways in which culture, literacy, and schooling interact, and provide a framework for further examination of social and cultural dimensions of children’s literacy experiences, a need identified by Dyson (1992) and Peter (1994). Third, the study will investigate children’s interactions with others during writing experiences. The roles and relationships that are evident may provide useful information for teachers about the ways individual children learn to be literate through dynamic exchanges, as asserted by Neuman & Roskos (1997). Fourth, it is to provide information about the types of experiences that give children opportunities to demonstrate the skills and knowledge that they acquire, and that encourage active knowledge construction. Further, it is hoped that the study will provide ways in which school and home learning can build on and complement each other, an endeavour considered essential by Goodridge (1995) and McNaughton, (1995).

The following section provides a more detailed review of the literature related to emergent literacy, in particular writing, and the sociocultural perspective and theories that underpin it.
CHAPTER 2

Review of the literature

The term emergent literacy was first used by Clay (1966) and then by Teale and Sulzby (1986) to describe a new perspective for understanding the nature of children’s writing and reading behaviour, the contexts in which these behaviours become evident, and their significance for literacy development (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). It embraced the notion that children are constructors of their own literacy knowledge – a process that begins from birth. Learning occurs informally in holistic reading and writing events, and literacy behaviours progress from unconventional to conventional over time (Yaden, Rowe & MacGillivray, 1999).

Emergent literacy is defined broadly in this study to represent both linguistic and non-linguistic forms of communication and is used in conjunction with the term emergent writing. Emergent writing refers specifically to those aspects of emergent literacy that relate to children’s developing ability to compose text. Implicit in the term emergent writing is an understanding that the processes of reading and writing develop in coordination and that a dynamic relation exists between the two (Bissex, 1980; Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1982; Sulzby, 1985). It incorporates attempts made by children to communicate in visual and/or written forms. These forms may include drawings, symbols, scribbles, dictated oral expression intended for others to write down, discussions about writing, as well as conventional writing forms. Use of both terms in this study was intended to position discussion of emergent writing within the broader context of emergent literacy and to acknowledge the relationship between the two.
**Development of Emergent Writing**

Young children’s emergent writing has been described as emerging from pictorial representations in much the same way as the historical beginnings of written language (Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1982; Frawley, 1987; Steward, 1995). Kenner (2000) presented several theoretical perspectives on how this occurs. The first is based on Piaget’s (1967) theory of development and describes children as going through a predictable sequence of stages of writing development. For example, research conducted by Ferreiro and Teberosky (1983) with Spanish-speaking children aged 4-6 from varying socio-economic backgrounds, found children progressed from making marks to more recognisable letter-like forms, and then alphabetic letters, before understanding that letters are linked to sounds. They suggested that at each stage, children hold a particular hypothesis about how written language works. When a hypothesis is challenged by conflicting evidence, children reorganise their thinking to accommodate new understandings.

Other researchers (Fox & Saracho, 1990) identified similar patterns with children learning to write English in similar conditions. Therefore, it was proposed that children go through fixed stages in a developmental pathway regardless of their linguistic and cultural origin. The studies described above involved individual interviews with children in which researchers asked children to write specific words and phrases. They may not indicate the writing that children produce when instructions or settings vary. Gibson (1989), for example, described a child in everyday literacy activities who used “scribble” in one story, strings of letters in another and conventional writing to record names.

To further explore this area, Sulzby (1986a) studied five-year-old children undertaking a range of writing tasks. She found that children wrote differently under varied conditions. When asked to write everything they could, children wrote lists of words using conventional spelling that included their names and those of their family. Infrequent responses consisted of unconventional forms of
writing like invented spelling, scribble and drawing. When asked to show how
grown-ups write, children produced scribble that was seen as representing the
cursive script that adults use. Even children who had shown awareness of
conventional spelling at other times, produced scribble and letter strings when
asked to write a story. Notably, Sulzby (1986a) observed that the same task
could give rise to different results when performed in different settings. If children
were asked to write a story in a group, and conversation was encouraged, they
often produced longer texts, less conventional writing forms, and drawings. It
could reasonably be suggested then, that writing generated in individual
interviews (Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1983; Fox & Saracho, 1990) constitutes one
social setting and produced a specific result. In other settings (Gibson, 1989;
Sulzby, 1986a) children may produce a range of writing forms.

A second perspective on the relationship between writing and drawing
(Bissex, 1980; Clay, 1975; Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1984; Vygotsky, 1978)
may account for variety in writing forms. Clay (1975) proposed that instead of a
linear progression of writing acquisition, children identify certain principles that
form the basis of written language and refer to these throughout their writing
development. She suggested children recognise that a limited number of signs
are used in a variety of combinations and they mix known letters from, for
example, their name to create words, and use a few known words in different
combinations to produce sentences. Clay’s (1975) theory differs from Piaget’s
(1967) as it is based in semiotics and suggests children see writing as a sign
system in which the visual arrangement of symbols is important.

Clay (1975) drew on the work of Vygotsky (1978) who acknowledged the
variety of graphic forms produced by young children and attributed it to an
understanding of signs. He argued that make-believe play, drawing and writing
are all part of the unified process of writing development and that children’s
development of ideas about writing are dynamic and continuous. He described
children’s use of gesture and symbolic representation as providing the basis for
an understanding of pictorial and then written symbolism. The marks and drawings that children make to stand for objects and actions are described as first-order representations. When children realise that speech, as well as objects, can be drawn, written symbols are used to represent words and described as second-order symbolism (Vygotsky, 1978).

Similarly, Luria (1982) described speech utterances as taking two forms: oral, which includes dialogue, conversation, monologue and narrative, and written speech. It is widely accepted that in literate societies children acquire spoken language before they learn to control the written form (Steward, 1995). Vygotsky (1978) explained that language (and other cultural knowledge) is learned by children through interaction with adults or more knowledgeable peers from an early age. Studies have shown that children begin to learn literacy patterns long before they begin formal schooling (Bruner, 1985; Snow, 1983) and while the literacy learned may be as diverse as children’s cultural and social backgrounds (Heath, 1983; Taylor & Dorsey Gaines, 1988; Teale, 1986), it has been suggested that children acquire literacy, intertwined with oral language from the very beginning (Steward, 1995).

Several authors have identified social and cultural influences in the development of language symbols and described the beginning writer as gradually becoming aware of writing-related customs and conventions in their culture (Clay, 1975; Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1984) In studies of young children in bilingual contexts (Kenner, Kress, Al-Khatib, Kam & Tsai, 2004) and multilingual contexts (Kenner, 2000), it was found that children “pay attention to the multiplicity of graphic forms which they encounter in their environment, including different writing systems” (Kenner, 2000 p.236). This finding is consistent with studies of the relationship between emergent writing and other sign systems such as drawing, construction and drama (Dyson, 1995; Gallas, 1994). It supports a description of emergent literacy as ways in which children
make meaning using a variety of signs and embraces the use of technology to communicate (Kress, 1997).

Together, the two theoretical perspectives may account for how emergent writing develops in young children. From an early age, children pay attention to oral and visual communication. Similar to the way in which they learn oral language, children acquire knowledge about symbols and signs through social and cultural processes. The development from first to second-order representations and then to conventional written language production and understanding is a complex and varied one in which children progress from making marks to letters with developing understanding of sound/symbol association.

It is acknowledged that most young children find written language production more difficult than oral language production. Bourdin and Fayol (1994) explained that young children find written language production more difficult because many of the processes involved are not yet automated. A cognitive overload in working memory may result, with consequences for accuracy and perceptions of difficulty. A closer look at the processes involved in writing, with implications for emergent writers, follows.

**Writing Processes**

The processes involved in skilled writing have been described in one model (Flower & Hayes, 1980, 1984; Hayes & Flower, 1980) as consisting of three components: planning, translating and reviewing. The first involves setting goals, generating appropriate content and organising content. The second, translating, involves turning ideas into actual language on a page. The third, reviewing, involves reconsidering what has been produced so far and making changes, if necessary. Using this model to consider children’s writing, McCutchen (1995) claimed that young children do little explicit planning particularly ahead of writing, lots of translating that involves the mental production
CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Overview

The writing experiences of individual preschoolers, girls from diverse sociocultural backgrounds are investigated in this study during the months before formal schooling begins and then in the first six months of school. The characteristics of experiences are examined, including the skills and knowledge evident about writing, and the nature of the social interactions that accompany experiences.

The focus on writing in practice (Neuman & Roskos, 1997) reveals rich data on the experiences of culturally diverse children and identifies important aspects of context that support writing in the early years. It is hoped that the knowledge gained may assist teachers in finding ways to account for social and cultural diversity in their classroom and provide better continuity between home and school practices. Amongst other aims, it is hoped to provide insight into ways in which children negotiate culture, literacy, and schooling that challenges current perspectives and contributes to research knowledge. An overview of studies of literacy, particularly from a sociocultural perspective, is provided in this introductory chapter that establishes the background of the current study and outlines its purpose and scope.

A review of literature pertinent to the study is presented in Chapter Two. This includes several perspectives on the development of emergent writing and explores the processes involved in composing writing and spelling. It describes how language and literacy have come to be viewed as social and cultural processes and provides a brief description of how educators are attempting to respond to social and cultural diversity in classrooms.
The epistemological and theoretical perspectives that underpin the qualitative research undertaken in this study are outlined in Chapter Three. Also, grounded theory method, used for data collection and analysis, is explained, and includes a description of adaptations to the approach made in this study. In addition, issues of validity and reliability are addressed.

The results are presented in the next two chapters. An overview of children’s literacy experiences is provided in Chapter Four that compares similarities and differences amongst girls, across contexts and over time. Similarities and differences of findings are linked to other studies where appropriate. Case studies of the five children in the study that describe the dimensions of their literacy experiences at home, Preschool and Year One are presented in Chapter Five.

In the final chapter, Chapter Six, main findings that emerged from the data present a picture of children operating successfully in three worlds. An alternate perspective of children as agents of their own learning is outlined for teachers to consider when taking account of social and cultural diversity.

The remainder of Chapter One follows, in which issues emerging from studies of cultural diversity and children’s literacy success are outlined, areas in which further research could contribute to understanding are identified and questions that provoked this study are detailed.

In Australia, literacy is a national priority. Achievement of sustained improvements in the literacy skills of Australian children is seen as critical in overcoming educational disadvantage and preparing them for their futures. However, a significant minority of children in Australian schools continue to face difficulties in acquiring acceptable levels of literacy. A National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy (2005) highlighted the diversity in life experiences of Australian schoolchildren and speculated that effective teaching should take account of ways in which literacy-acquisition builds on family and community in the context of the oral language that children acquire from birth.
Over the last twenty-five years literacy studies have provided a clear picture of many of the processes involved in oral and written language development from a cognitive perspective (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Chomsky, 1971; Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1983; Flower & Hayes, 1980, 1984; Gentry, 1982; Sulzby, 1985; Teale, 1986). In recent times, however, literacy has come to be viewed as social and cultural practice (Cairney & Ruge, 1996) and researchers have attempted to understand how children learn to be literate through active engagement with their social and cultural worlds (Cairney, Ruge, Buchanan, Lowe & Musie, 1995; DeBaryshe, Buell & Binder, 1996; Dyson, 1992; Neuman & Roskos, 1997; Purcell-Gates & Dahl, 1991; Purcell-Gates, 1996; Rogoff & Chavajay, 1995).

Researchers with a sociocultural perspective on literacy have been influenced by the work of various authors such as Bakhtin (1981, 1986), Bruner (1986, 1990), and Vygotsky (1978). (A review of the contributions of these authors is presented in the following section). The sociocultural perspective presents the development of language and literacy as a social process, rather than an individual one (Cairney & Ruge, 1996). Children acquire and use literacy as they attempt to make sense of, and operate within their social and cultural environments (Bissex, 1980; Neuman & Roskos, 1997; Teale & Sulzby, 1986). In other words, as children begin to develop the need or desire to communicate, they begin to develop literacy skill and knowledge. The things that children learn about literacy are governed by the environments in which they operate. They pick up the vocabulary, behaviours, ideals, attitudes and experiences that relate to literacy directly or indirectly, and are implicit in their communications and interactions with others. Therefore, children interacting with others through writing and experimenting with written language are busy making decisions, deliberately or intuitively, about their position in the social world at any one moment (Dyson, 1992; Neuman & Roskos, 1997).
Research studies have documented the ways in which children learn to read and write in their homes (Anderson & Stokes, 1984; Bissex, 1980; Ferreiro, 1986; Purcell-Gates, 1996) and at school (Goodridge, 1995; Steward, 1995). As a body, the studies have made valuable contributions to our understanding of the way children learn. It is recognised that families, communities and cultures vary in the ways they use language, and therefore children’s knowledge and use of written language varies too (Dyson, 1992). Learning about written language is part of everyday life in most homes, communities and cultures. Children use the resources and constraints of the social and physical environment to analyse and construct their understandings about written language and the world (Neuman & Roskos, 1997). This is done through interaction with their peers and more experienced members of society (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989; Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976). Often, however, the knowledge that children bring to school is at odds with instruction and may confuse children and interfere with learning. In school, learning becomes increasingly formal and tends to be removed from the context of socially relevant action (Neuman & Roskos, 1997). Emerging from this research knowledge are several concerns about the impact of social and cultural differences on children’s literacy learning.

First, studies in Australia show that differences are evident between the language and literacy practices of school and community (Cairney, Ruge, Buchanan, Lowe & Munsie, 1995; Freebody, Ludwig & Gunn, 1995; Hill, Comber, Louden, Rivalland & Reid, 1998). This is consistent with other research that shows there are differences between the language and literacy of school and that of homes and communities (Heath, 1982). This mismatch is considered a significant factor in the success of children at school (Heath, 1982; Scribner & Cole, 1981). Heath (1982) found that teacher-student interactions break down when teachers are not aware of their students’ home culture and the ways that language is used in it. Many teachers expect that minority children have developed literacy skills and knowledge similar to the skills and knowledge that
the children of the dominant culture have developed and through similar experiences (Goodridge, 1995). As a result, children attempt to negotiate without help between two linguistic and cultural worlds.

Second, investigations into the literacy learning of children dominant in a language other than English have shown the effectiveness of continued literacy instruction in that language (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Goldenberg, 1993; Moll & Greenberg, 1990; Willig, 1985). In contrast, children who learn to speak English, but not their heritage language, achieve less well than those children on bilingual programs (Evans, 1994). Wells (1986) attempted to explain this variation in literacy achievement of ESL children by arguing that the key predictor of school success is not the prior knowledge of the language of the school but the quality of the interactions between parents and children. Therefore, parents who adopt English, instead of their first language, to communicate with their children may reduce the quality of their interactions (Evans, 1994).

Studies have documented that children from minority families generally do not achieve the same success in literacy learning at school as children from the dominant culture (Ferdman, 1990; Purcell-Gates, 1993). The theory of cultural discontinuity (Jacob & Jordan, 1991) is one attempt to explain this phenomenon. It suggests that cultural mismatches between teachers and children result in difficulties in communication and interaction in the classroom. These mismatches affect the literacy learning of children whose home culture does not reflect that of school. A second explanation may be found in the theory of structural inequality (Au, 1993) that suggests inequalities in the broader social, political and economic spheres and the power relationships between groups explains the lack of educational success of children from minority groups.

Many educators have sought to address the mismatches between the literacies of home and school by developing a greater sense of partnership and collaboration between school and families. Programs have been developed that support the participation of families in their children's education (Auerbach, 1989;
Cairney & Ruge, 1996; Paratore, Homza, Kroi-Sinclair, Lewis-Barrow, Melzi, Stergis & Haynes, 1995; Purcell-Gates, 1993; 1996). However, some of these programs have been criticised for encouraging parents to do school-like activities in the home, assuming that some parents lack the skills to promote school success in their children, or for failing to recognise that schooling, too, is a cultural practice (Auerbach, 1989).

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**Aims of the Study**

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Other researchers (Fox & Saracho, 1990) identified similar patterns with children learning to write English in similar conditions. Therefore, it was proposed that children go through fixed stages in a developmental pathway regardless of their linguistic and cultural origin. The studies described above involved individual interviews with children in which researchers asked children to write specific words and phrases. They may not indicate the writing that children produce when instructions or settings vary. Gibson (1989), for example, described a child in everyday literacy activities who used “scribble” in one story, strings of letters in another and conventional writing to record names.

To further explore this area, Sulzby (1986a) studied five-year-old children undertaking a range of writing tasks. She found that children wrote differently under varied conditions. When asked to write everything they could, children wrote lists of words using conventional spelling that included their names and those of their family. Infrequent responses consisted of unconventional forms of
writing like invented spelling, scribble and drawing. When asked to show how
grown-ups write, children produced scribble that was seen as representing the
cursive script that adults use. Even children who had shown awareness of
conventional spelling at other times, produced scribble and letter strings when
asked to write a story. Notably, Sulzby (1986a) observed that the same task
could give rise to different results when performed in different settings. If children
were asked to write a story in a group, and conversation was encouraged, they
often produced longer texts, less conventional writing forms, and drawings. It
could reasonably be suggested then, that writing generated in individual
interviews (Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1983; Fox & Saracho, 1990) constitutes one
social setting and produced a specific result. In other settings (Gibson, 1989;
Sulzby, 1986a) children may produce a range of writing forms.

A second perspective on the relationship between writing and drawing
(Bissex, 1980; Clay, 1975; Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1984; Vygotsky, 1978)
may account for variety in writing forms. Clay (1975) proposed that instead of a
linear progression of writing acquisition, children identify certain principles that
form the basis of written language and refer to these throughout their writing
development. She suggested children recognise that a limited number of signs
are used in a variety of combinations and they mix known letters from, for
example, their name to create words, and use a few known words in different
combinations to produce sentences. Clay’s (1975) theory differs from Piaget’s
(1967) as it is based in semiotics and suggests children see writing as a sign
system in which the visual arrangement of symbols is important.

Clay (1975) drew on the work of Vygotsky (1978) who acknowledged the
variety of graphic forms produced by young children and attributed it to an
understanding of signs. He argued that make-believe play, drawing and writing
are all part of the unified process of writing development and that children’s
development of ideas about writing are dynamic and continuous. He described
children’s use of gesture and symbolic representation as providing the basis for
an understanding of pictorial and then written symbolism. The marks and
drawings that children make to stand for objects and actions are described as
first-order representations. When children realise that speech, as well as objects,
can be drawn, written symbols are used to represent words and described as
second-order symbolism (Vygotsky, 1978).

Similarly, Luria (1982) described speech utterances as taking two forms:
oral, which includes dialogue, conversation, monologue and narrative, and written
speech. It is widely accepted that in literate societies children acquire spoken
language before they learn to control the written form (Steward, 1995). Vygotsky
(1978) explained that language (and other cultural knowledge) is learned by
children through interaction with adults or more knowledgeable peers from an
early age. Studies have shown that children begin to learn literacy patterns long
before they begin formal schooling (Bruner, 1985; Snow, 1983) and while the
literacy learned may be as diverse as children’s cultural and social backgrounds
(Heath, 1983; Taylor & Dorsey Gaines, 1988; Teale, 1986), it has been
suggested that children acquire literacy, intertwined with oral language from the
very beginning (Steward, 1995).

Several authors have identified social and cultural influences in the
development of language symbols and described the beginning writer as
gradually becoming aware of writing-related customs and conventions in their
culture (Clay, 1975; Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1984) In studies of young
children in bilingual contexts (Kenner, Kress, Al-Khatib, Kam & Tsai, 2004) and
multilingual contexts (Kenner, 2000), it was found that children “pay attention to
the multiplicity of graphic forms which they encounter in their environment,
including different writing systems” (Kenner, 2000 p.236). This finding is
consistent with studies of the relationship between emergent writing and other
sign systems such as drawing, construction and drama (Dyson, 1995; Gallas,
1994). It supports a description of emergent literacy as ways in which children
make meaning using a variety of signs and embraces the use of technology to communicate (Kress, 1997).

Together, the two theoretical perspectives may account for how emergent writing develops in young children. From an early age, children pay attention to oral and visual communication. Similar to the way in which they learn oral language, children acquire knowledge about symbols and signs through social and cultural processes. The development from first to second-order representations and then to conventional written language production and understanding is a complex and varied one in which children progress from making marks to letters with developing understanding of sound/symbol association.

It is acknowledged that most young children find written language production more difficult than oral language production. Bourdin and Fayol (1994) explained that young children find written language production more difficult because many of the processes involved are not yet automated. A cognitive overload in working memory may result, with consequences for accuracy and perceptions of difficulty. A closer look at the processes involved in writing, with implications for emergent writers, follows.

**Writing Processes**

The processes involved in skilled writing have been described in one model (Flower & Hayes, 1980, 1984; Hayes & Flower, 1980) as consisting of three components: planning, translating and reviewing. The first involves setting goals, generating appropriate content and organising content. The second, translating, involves turning ideas into actual language on a page. The third, reviewing, involves reconsidering what has been produced so far and making changes, if necessary. Using this model to consider children’s writing, McCutchen (1995) claimed that young children do little explicit planning particularly ahead of writing, lots of translating that involves the mental production
of a linguistic message and the transcription of that message into written text, but little reviewing in the form of reading, evaluating and changing text.

Das and Parrila (1995) challenged the finding that children rarely engage in planning by suggesting that McCutchen’s view is based on too narrow a conceptualisation. Instead, they presented planning as an integral part of all stages of the writing process. In their view, derived from Leont’ev (1978, 1981) and influenced by Biggs (1988), planning comprises three levels: activity, action and operation. At the activity level, planning relates to the achievement of objectives and life-goals. This may include, for example, a child’s goal of becoming a “good writer”. The second level is action-planning, which is equivalent to problem-solving and is aimed at achieving a particular goal. An example of action-planning may be deciding what to write about, and may involve planning-in-action with continuous revisions of plans while they are being implemented. At the third level of operation, plans are equivalent to strategies and tactics used to solve a problem. Examples of operation-planning could be deciding how to form a letter, identifying sounds in words, or locating words in environmental print. Das and Parrila (1995) acknowledge that for emergent writers, operation-planning probably imposes a high demand on working memory resources and therefore higher planning levels are not prominent. They suggest, with practice, many operation-planning processes become automatised and increase children’s processing capacity.

Scardamalia and Bereiter (1982) presented a somewhat different way to view the writing processes of young children, concentrating on the communicative intention of the processes rather than on their management, purpose and iterative interrelation. They used the term, knowledge-telling, for this. Knowledge-telling describes how children generate text by probing memory with a cue from the topic or from a familiar genre. In this way content is retrieved from memory. Hayes and Flower (1980) similarly made reference to a generating process within the planning component of their model. McCutchen (1995)
maintains, however, that for emergent writers, content generation and text generation appear integrated. Together with Das and Parrila’s (1995) assertion that planning is an integral component, it suggests a more immediate and dynamic inter-relationship between ideation and translation on the part of emergent writers, perhaps due to constraints of working memory, than can be seen in the more linear approach taken by skilled writers outlined by Flower and Hayes (1981).

Similar to descriptions of writing development, spelling has also been described as stage-like development. Gentry (1982) outlined five stages. The first involves use of alphabetic symbols (as opposed to drawing) to represent language. This is referred to as the pre-communicative stage. The symbols used (actual letters or letter-like symbols) bear no resemblance to the sounds of words represented. The second is the semi-phonetic stage when children use letters to represent some, but not all, sounds in words. During this stage, children usually write letters to represent the initial and final consonants within words. The third is the phonetic stage when children represent the complete phonological structures of words in spelling, but often with unconventional orthography. Then children next move to the transitional stage, where they follow more orthographic conventions before reaching the final, correct stage, where they spell correctly.

The development of spelling within stages differs from the developmental theory of Piaget as it is considered tied to literacy experiences, and therefore is not age-related, but unique for each child (Ehri, 1992). This view aligns with Vygotsky’s (1978) theory that inextricably links children’s use and interpretation of signs to experiences in their social and cultural environments.

Dyson (1985) argued that individual differences are to be expected in the writing development of young children generally. She maintained that the nature of an individual child, the nature of a situational context, as well as the complex nature of the writing system itself, all interact in written language growth and that
analysis of individual children’s writing will increase our understanding of how these various aspects are interrelated. Her analysis of young children’s writing (Dyson, 1985) showed that children’s particular orientations within their social world can account for their varied approaches to writing. Further, Dyson (1992), and Neuman and Roskos (1997) maintained that knowledge of the social and cultural backgrounds and experiences of young children will increase our understanding of them as writers. How to gain such knowledge and act on increased understanding in ways that support children’s emergent writing development, however, needs further explication. Therefore, sociocultural perspectives of language and literacy and their theoretical underpinning are examined in more detail in the following section.

Sociocultural Perspectives


Higher Mental Functioning

One of the broad themes that ran through Vygotsky’s work was that an individual’s higher mental functioning has its origins in social activity and is mediated by tools and signs (Wertsch, 1991). Vygotsky considered that humans share elementary behaviours such as perception, memory and attention with animals, but higher forms of human mental functioning, like thinking and decision making, are products of mediated activity (Steward, 1995). Verbal mediation is considered the most widely used decision-making tool (Wertsch, 1991)

Vygotsky (1978) argued that an individual’s higher mental functioning is established through social interaction and that in order to understand the
individual it is necessary to understand the social relations in which the individual exists (Wertsch, 1991).

Any function in the child’s cultural development appears twice, or on two planes. First it appears on the social plane, and then on the psychological plane. First it appears between people as an interpsychological category, and then within the child as an intrapsychological category. (Vygotsky, 1978, p.163)

The process in which the social becomes the psychological is referred to as internalisation. Wood (1988) explained that children’s social interactions and experiences such as talking to, informing, explaining, being talked to, informed and having things explained, structure not only children’s immediate activities but also help to form higher cognitive processes of reasoning and learning. Therefore, children develop socially and cognitively through the influences of their social environment. Higher mental functions that are part of children’s social and cultural heritage are passed on through the regulating actions and speech of others and become independent and self-regulated (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988).

Zone of Proximal Development

The social origins of individuals’ higher mental functioning are evident in Vygotsky’s (1978) concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The zone of proximal development was the term used by Vygotsky to refer to the distance between the developmental level of a child determined through unassisted problem solving and the level of potential development of the child when assisted by someone more skilled (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Wood, 1988). Neo-Vygotskians extended the concept of the ZPD to include performance in domains of competence other than problem solving and explained that there is no single zone for each individual. A ZPD can be created for any domain of skill (Rogoff & Wertsch, 1984; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Rogoff (1982) described cultural zones as well as individual zones because some competencies that children
acquire through social interaction may be culturally specific. For example, children living in a fishing village will have a ZPD related to the skills of fishing.

Tharp and Gallimore (1988) explained that teaching is assisting a child’s performance through the ZPD at points when their performance requires assistance. Progress through the ZPD is presented in four stages. In the first stage others assist performance because of supposed limitations in the child’s understanding of the situation, the task, or the goal to be achieved. The teacher regulates the task requirements to match the child’s abilities, gives directions or models of what to do, and the child imitates. Through dialogue during the performance of the task the child develops an understanding of its purpose and meaning and can then be further assisted through questioning or providing feedback. Assisting performance in this way is described as scaffolding (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976). In the second stage in the ZPD performance is no longer assisted by the other person but is now beginning to be guided and directed by the child. The child self-directs by telling him/herself what to do. In the third stage the self-directed speech and self-guidance required in stage two to complete activities is no longer evident as the execution of the task is automatic. The child has emerged from the ZPD. In stage four, performance of a task that has been automatically executed may no longer be automatic. It can happen that children regress and need to be re-taught the performance before regaining automaticity.

Vygotsky’s (1978) description of the ZPD did not detail the nature of the guidance and collaboration that promotes development. Jerome Bruner (1978, 1990) attempted to identify their features in his studies of the role of language, communication and instruction in a child’s development of knowledge and understanding (Wood, 1988). He believed that humans inherently are social beings and have an urge to share experiences with others, and in so doing develop a sense of self. This sharing includes invented symbolic forms like
playful actions. Parents assist young children to share their symbolic worlds (Bruner, 1990).

**Scaffolding**

Bruner introduced the metaphor of *scaffolding* to explain the nature of the support that an adult provides in assisting a child to perform tasks that the child could not perform alone (Bruner, 1978; Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976). The support provided allows the child to “internalise knowledge and convert it [the scaffold] into a tool for conscious control … [the adult serving as] a vicarious form of consciousness until such time as the learner is able to master his own action through this own consciousness and control” (Bruner, 1986, p.123). He identified several tutoring functions provided by adults. These included recruitment of the child’s interest in the task, keeping the child on task to achieve the objective, pointing out critical features of the task, modelling how to achieve goals and helping to control frustration (Wood & Wood, 1996).

Since Bruner (1976) introduced the notion of scaffolding, it has been discussed and reviewed many times (Beed & Roller, 1991; Hammond, 2001; Horsbaum, Peters & Sylva, 1996; Meyer, 1993; Rogoff, 1986, 1990). It has been argued that the concept focused on single, isolated tasks (Wood & Wood, 1996) and ignored the nature of the relationship between adult and child. Furthermore, it did not make the nature of the communicative mechanisms involved explicit.

In a review of the literature on scaffolding in the ZPD, Rogoff (1986, 1990) outlined the general features of effective collaboration. These were summarised by Horsbaum, Peters and Sylva (1996) as:

1. Tutors provide a ‘bridge’ between the learner’s existing level of skill and the new task.
2. By providing help in the context of the learner’s own activity, the tutor provides a structure to support the learner’s own problem solving.
3. The learner plays an active role in problem solving from the beginning.

4. Responsibility for regulating the activity is gradually passed from tutor to learner.

5. Guided participation in tasks may not be deliberate on the part of adults and older peers; often it occurs naturally when children assist adults in everyday tasks (p.19).

In recent times, the ZPD has come to be viewed as the potential for learning that is created within interactions rather than as a fixed attribute of the learner (Hammond, 2001; Wells, 1999) This view is reflected in several teaching concepts related to scaffolding that have been developed. These include ‘cognitive apprenticeship’ (Collins, Brown & Newman, 1989) ‘guided participation’ (Rogoff, 1990) and ‘reciprocal teaching’ (Brown & Campione, 1990). The features of effective collaboration identified by Rogoff (1986, 1990) are embedded in these concepts, but can also be found in everyday interactions involving children as learners. They explain how culture is transmitted through social encounters from one generation to another (Wood & Wood, 1996).

Sociocultural theory presents thinking and communicating as developing through language-based social interactions with others. It emphasises the role that language plays in mediating actions and is central to teaching and learning processes. Children’s learning and development are inextricably tied to the social, cultural and historical contexts in which they occur. Therefore, social interaction, culturally-based literacy practices and the integration of multiple sign systems influence children’s literacy development.

Social Nature of Literacy

Bakhtin (1981, 1986), a language and social philosopher, was concerned with the nature of children’s shared experiences. He studied how individuals use language to situate themselves in the social world. His studies focused on the
examination of texts and the way that texts are embedded within social relationships. Bakhtin (1981) explained that stories contain within them the threads of other stories, other texts, and that any patterned use of language (including written texts) temporarily “crystallises a network of relations” (Morson, 1986, p. 89) between the author and other people. Those relations include the author’s sense of (a) power and status opposite the other, (b) purposes that have brought them together, (c) topic of their discourse, and (d) history of other conversations.

In responding to the social world at any one moment, the author shapes not only a text, but also a sense of self, of one’s place in a complex social world. There can be no sense of self without a social world within which one figures. Bakhtin (1981) described this as a dialogic relationship between self and the social world and used the term heteroglossia to describe how the complexity of a child’s social world might be reflected in a text. Children’s writing, too, exhibits “addressivity, the (text) quality of turning to someone else” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 99). Others responding to children’s writing continue the interaction.

While Bakhtin focused on how children’s participation using language situates them in the social world, Rogoff (1984, 1990, 1998) examined the contexts in which participation occurs. She identified community practices as instructive in assisting children to acquire cultural knowledge and argued that development occurs on three levels: intrapersonal, interpersonal and contextual with each level interacting and influencing the others.

Rogoff’s theory of development on three levels has caused a shift in thinking about individual children as the constructors of their own knowledge to focus on development and knowledge acquisition as a function of community participation and interaction (Edwards, 2003). Gutierrez and Rogoff (2003) reviewed recent studies of cultural practices that focused on variations in approaches to learning. To their concern, many identified cultural ways that differ from practices of dominant cultures and judged them as deficit, made static.
cross-cultural comparisons, or identified individuals’ approaches to learning as traits of the cultures to which they belong. Rogoff and Angelillo (2002) referred to this view of culture as the box problem in which cultural aspects of individual lives are seen as fixed and teachers make assumptions about children’s knowledge, experiences and practices based on perceived cultural traits. Nevertheless, teachers have been challenged to develop curriculum that matches learning experiences to individual children’s cultural contexts, as well as to the interactional social patterns that characterise learning in their particular cultural contexts (Fleer, 2002). Attempts to develop an understanding of the rich cultural diversity present within classrooms, acknowledge these as resources, and support children’s literacy learning is explored further in the following section.

Cultural Nature of Literacy

Researchers with a sociocultural perspective view language and literacy learning as a social process and argue that members of different cultures vary in their literate practices and their perceptions of literate behaviour. Therefore, culturally-diverse societies have differing concepts of what it means to be literate (Cairney & Ruge, 1996). Gee (1990) described these different concepts as “multiple literacies”. Many researchers have maintained that to understand literacy fully, it is necessary to understand the groups and institutions that shape individuals in their literate practices (Bruner, 1978; Cairney & Ruge, 1996; Gee 1990). Studies that attempt to describe the influences that shape children’s earliest literacy experiences have been described as family literacy studies.

Family Literacy

Family literacy describes the rich literacy practices of homes and communities. Heath (1983) conducted one of the first studies of emergent literacy that took account of the cultural differences and backgrounds of children. She examined the language development of children in two ethnic groups (black
and white) before and after school entrance in the USA. Heath found that literacy took various forms and teachers' knowledge of children's "ways with words" assisted them to bring these ways into their classrooms.

Others have also examined the literacy practices of families from a variety of cultural and economic contexts and have documented a wide range of purposes, audiences and situations for the use of literacy (Chall & Snow, 1982; Heath, 1983; Snow, 1987; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988). The Harvard Families and Literacy Study (Chall & Snow, 1982; Snow, 1987) examined the home literacy practices of successful and unsuccessful low-income elementary school students and found a range of literacy practices and materials in the homes of working-class, minority and ESL students. Similarly, Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines (1988) studied the literacy contexts of low-income families and found that families used literacy for a wide variety of purposes, audiences, and situations. Auerbach (1989) reviewed many family literacy studies and concluded that generally speaking, poor, minority and immigrant families all value and support literacy development. Another review showed that availability of resources and amount of time parents engage with children in literacy-related activities are important factors in children's literacy learning at school (McCarthey, 2000).

Parent engagement has taken a variety of forms. First, the notion that family literacy practices provide a cultural apprenticeship for young children has been investigated. Rogoff (1990) identified three characteristics of family literacy practices that constitute a cultural apprenticeship: guided participation of children in activities, the active role of children, and variation in goals and strategies. Several studies have examined the shared reading experiences of parents and preschool children (Renshaw, 1989; Renshaw & Gardner, 1990; Renshaw & MacCallum, 1991). These studies found features of the reading apprenticeship that were unique in each family, but common features in parent-child reading were also identified. Common features included parents beginning a dialogue with children in turn-taking routines, increasing the complexity of dialogues as
children became more active participants, and enabling children to become more independent in reading practices.

In a recent study, Purcell-Gates (1996) outlined ways in which print was used in the homes of a number of low-income US families and the relationships between the uses of print and the emergent literacy knowledge held by the young children in the homes. She observed children in their homes over a year and found that the families in the study used print for various purposes as they went about their daily activities, confirming previous accounts of practice in low SES homes (Health, 1983; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Teale, 1986). The study found that children learned about the functions of written language only to the degree to which they experienced it in their lives. Purcell-Gates (1996) outlined the importance of creating literacy environments in which learning that children already do on an ongoing basis includes the emergent literacy concepts needed for school success. She stressed the need for further research to focus on ways in which home and school learning can build on and complement each other. Others (Cairney & Ruge, 1996) have called for studies of literacy practices across cultural groups to enhance understandings of the relationships between literacy practices at home and at school and the impact of these relationships on school success.

In one study, Goodridge (1995) investigated the development of emergent writing of young children from three different sociocultural groups in New Zealand. She examined the emergent writing expertise and processes of Maori, Pakeha (Anglo) and Samoan immigrant children at home and at school. Goodridge found that children developed a broad range of written expertise in the context of use in family activities, and families organised special situations for children to learn explicitly about writing and to practise their developing expertise. As children reached school age, parents saw their role as preparing children for school and continuing to be actively involved (Goodridge, 1995).
Other studies, reviewed by Willig (1985), have focused on language minority homes. Evans (1994) argued that considerable research has shown the effectiveness of sustained literacy and content instruction in the languages in which children are dominant and emphasised the need to build on children’s home learning and resources at school (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Goldenberg, 1993; Moll & Greenberg, 1990). Evans (1994) pointed out that little study has been done with children from language minority homes who learn to speak English but not their heritage language, although a study by Dolson (1985) found that English-speaking children from Spanish-speaking homes achieved less well in mainstream classrooms than children with similar backgrounds in bilingual programs.

In an attempt to explain why children who speak English as a second language achieve less success in mainstream classrooms than children in bilingual programs, Wells (1986) maintained that the most important predictor of school success is not children’s prior knowledge of the language of the school, but the substance and the quality of the interactions that do occur between parents and children. Parents who attempt to talk with their children in a language in which they are not themselves proficient may reduce the quality of their interactions. Another explanation for English-speaking children from minority language homes achieving less well in mainstream classrooms than those in bilingual programs may be that teachers do not understand the children’s home culture and the ways that language is used in it (Heath, 1982).

Some studies of family literacy have attempted to map the dimensions of home environments that support children’s literacy development. For example, a study by Baker (1999) identified the following features as supportive of children’s reading development: (a) availability of reading materials and technologies; (b) observation of adults reading; (c) parents reading to children regularly and providing space and opportunity; (d) engagement in conversation and language play; (e) parents valuing reading; and (f) connection of home and school literacy.
In a second example, Hannon (1995) identified opportunities for learning, recognition of the child’s achievements, interaction around literacy activities and a model of literacy as consistent features that emerged from the Sheffield Early Literacy Development Project (Hannon, Weinberger & Nutbrown, 1991), referred to as the ORIM framework. Hannon proposed these features as a conceptual framework to consider supportive home environments. A subsequent study (Hirst, 1998) of 30 Asian families with preschool children found the ORIM framework a useful tool to analyse and discuss family literacy environments. Similar features were identified in a study of family literacy by Leseman and de Jong (1998). They identified literacy opportunity, instruction, cooperation, and socioemotional quality as features that support literacy. Further investigation may determine if these features represent dimensions of home literacy environments that are consistent across cultures. If so, they may provide a framework for schools and teachers to consider and respond to children’s home-literacy experiences.

In a recent study of connections between home environments and preschool children’s language and literacy development, Weigel, Martin and Bennett (2006) gathered data from 85 middle-income parents and their preschool-age children on two occasions, a year apart, using self-report by parents. They found a positive correlation between preschool children’s literacy development and the types and frequency of literacy and language activities engaged in by parents and children. However the frequency of parent-child language and literacy interactions was not significantly associated with children’s language skills or emergent writing development. This suggests that children’s frequent participation in, and observation of literacy and language activities may be more important than frequent interactions with adults during activities. Children’s early language skills, however, were found to be linked with parents’ demographic characteristics.
Studies outlined above detail the characteristics of home environments and literacy practices that impact on children’s early literacy success. In particular, availability of resources, and type and frequency of language and literacy activities appear important. How parents, teachers and schools attempt to use this knowledge to build on success is addressed in the following section.

**Home-School Connections**

The building of effective home-school relationships is seen as important for children to experience success in literacy learning. In a study of connections and disconnections between home and school, Hill, Comber, Louden, Rivalland & Reid (1998) found that success is dependent, not only on the social and cultural resources that children have acquired from home and community, but also on teachers’ abilities to build on these resources.

Several strategies have been employed to develop effective relationships between schools, homes and communities. One was the implementation of family literacy programs in Britain, the USA and Australia (Auerbach, 1989; Cairney, Ruge, Buchanan, Lowe & Munsie, 1995; Jay & Rohl, 2005; Paratore, Homza, Krol-Sinclair, Lewis-Barrow, Melzi, Stergis & Haynes, 1995).

Family literacy programs attempt to support parents’ participation in children’s education or assist parents to do school activities with their children at home. Some set out to adjust family practices to better match the skills and behaviour needed for literacy success at school. Auerbach (1989) criticised such programs because they are based on the assumption that some children’s preparation for school is inadequate and do not acknowledge that schooling is a cultural practice. She argued for a model of family literacy that draws on parental knowledge and experience to inform instruction rather than attempting to transfer school practices into home contexts.

A second strategy to develop effective relationships between home and school focused on matching classroom practices to community practices. One
example is the construction of curriculum that responds to children’s identified interests. Another was Dyson’s (1997) report of community experiences incorporating into classroom writing. Concerns related to these attempts related to whether children would continue to acquire school literacy apace with their peers if home literacy was introduced in classrooms (McNaughton, 2001).

While the value of home-school partnerships is generally accepted, some challenge the assumption that parent involvement and participation in their children’s education is always necessary and beneficial. Edwards and David (1997) argued that children need a voice in parent-teacher relations and cited research (Montandon, 1995) that indicates children have a variety of orientations to both relationships and their expectations of parents, and to their school life and learning. The character, therefore, of the relationship between parents and teachers may need to be negotiated with children.

Further, it is acknowledged that home-school partnerships are complex in nature and quite difficult to realise in today’s society. Keyes (2002) identified several factors that impact on the success of partnerships. These include the degree of match between the culture and values of the parent and teacher, the societal forces at work on family and school, and how teachers and parents view their roles. Delgado-Gaitan (1992) identified that ways to help schools recognise the cultural practices of the home and community and build effective communication are needed if teachers are to have knowledge of, and understand children’s home experiences, and build on and respond sensitively to the resources that are brought to school.

** Culturally Responsive Teaching **

In recent years, teachers have been challenged to recognise and value the language practices, life experiences, and other resources that students from diverse cultural backgrounds bring to the classroom (Boyd & Brock, 2004). In an attempt to assist educators to be culturally responsive, Phuntsog (1998) reviewed
research and produced a framework that identifies critical elements crucial to culturally responsive teaching: Elements included awareness of learning styles and learning needs, referred to as cultural literacy; an ability to analyse one’s attitudes and beliefs and be self-reflective; establishment of a caring, trusting and inclusive classroom; respect for diversity; and the implementation of a transformative curriculum that promotes equity in classrooms by challenging the basic premises and assumptions of school knowledge. How to ensure that all classroom teachers have these attributes, and how these attributes transform classroom practice, is not yet clear. Several studies, however, have attempted to identify teaching approaches that include the knowledge, skills and dispositions that students from diverse cultural backgrounds bring into classrooms.

_Funds of knowledge._

One approach to develop a shared understanding and utilise community resources was examined by Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez (1992). In a study of Mexican-American students, their families and communities, parental knowledge and experience were used to inform instruction. Cultural behaviours and elements in the community were described as _funds of knowledge_ and acknowledged as rich resources. These resources were utilised through parent participation in classrooms. The study indicated that parent participation has the potential to form a bridge between students, teachers, and classroom experiences.

In another study of Mexican-American children, Riojas-Cortez (2001) observed a group of 12 Preschoolers during socio-dramatic play and provided descriptive accounts of how children practised cultural behaviours and used them as resources to enhance their play. The teacher had cultural knowledge of the children that allowed her to identify the shared knowledge members of a community needed to know in order to engage in cultural behaviour and her discussions with the children added to the data collection. Funds of knowledge displayed by children related to language, values and beliefs, household care
and the value of education. Results of the study showed that socio-dramatic play provided opportunities for children to exhibit funds of knowledge that revealed what they knew and were capable of doing.

**Community-oriented classroom practices.**

A second approach that assists teachers to build on and respond to children’s cultural and social resources focuses on learning as participation in a community of practice. Classrooms are recognised as learning communities with their own social and cultural practices (Lave and Wenger 1991; Moll, 1992). A community of practice, according to Wenger (1998), describes participation in common activities and the gradual mastery of a set of skills and knowledge that develops over time and through relationships with other members. It involves the use of a shared repertoire of tools, artefacts, ideas, and information and is a form of situated learning.

Considered alongside Bakhtin’s (1981) dialogic perspective that language and literacy are the means by which people position themselves in their social worlds, the establishment of a classroom community of practice provides a context for different voices to come into contact. The teachers and children each represent cultural ways of knowing and doing, and together form a heteroglossia in which multiple layers of values of knowing and learning are realised (Bakhtin, 1981).

If children’s identity shapes and is shaped by experiences (Cairney, 2002), the establishment of classrooms as communities of practice has the potential to create an environment that embraces values and cultural beliefs, fosters social equality, and empowers its members.

**Dimensions of Writing**

Dyson (1992) used data gathered from an ethnographic project in an urban school to demonstrate the sociocultural dimensions of young children’s
writing and the teacher’s attempts to respond sensitively to children’s sociocultural diversity. The children in the Kindergarten/Year One class had written stories about dogs and shared their stories with their classmates. Dyson described the variation in the kind of oral and written language genres the children used, the kinds of discourse traditions the children drew upon, and the kinds of relationships the authors enacted with others. She emphasised the variety of cultural resources and social intentions that children bring with them to classroom writing sessions and outlined the way that one teacher wove connections amongst children’s writing themes, styles and structures. In the past, children’s composing has often been presented as a process lacking sociocultural dimensions (Flower & Hayes, 1981), but Dyson (1992) suggests that children’s composing has sociocultural dimensions similar to oral language.

From a Bakhtinian perspective, Dyson (1992) argued that children’s writing is not simply made socially sensitive by the response of others but that it is, in itself, a social act, a way of interacting with others and constructing a social place. She described the construction of a social place where the writer and reader are connected in terms of a horizontal relationship. By drawing on their history of past conversations and cultural experiences in their writing, children establish a vertical relationship between inner meanings and outer signs.

Another study, which focused on writing, was conducted by Peter (1994). She studied the participation of three, five-year-old, linguistically-different children during writing activities in a Preschool classroom. She examined strategies that the children used to participate at a writing centre and how they involved others in their activities. Data were collected over a year through observations, field notes, collected artefacts and informal interviews. Peter found that the children used drama, drawing, music or games to begin activities at the writing centre and initiated activities that were of interest to their peers. Often activities were organised by children to require the involvement of others. Using these
strategies, non-native instigators of the activities became part of complex language experiences (Peter, 1994).

**Literacy and Play**

Neuman and Roskos (1997) also conducted a study of the literacy practices of culturally-diverse, preschool children. Most of the three and four-year-old children in the study spoke English as their primary language and had some facility in the heritage language. Neuman and Roskos (1997) observed children’s literacy in practice in three, literacy-related play settings: a post office, a family restaurant and a doctor’s office.

The purpose of the study was to capture the multifaceted knowledge and behaviours that constituted early literacy practices for the thirty children. The researchers argued that if children’s earliest concepts of literacy were closely tied to practices in which they were embedded, one way to examine their development was to study literacy knowledge in practice. The study was conducted over a seven-month period and data were collected through observations, videotape analyses and weekly, informal conversations with teachers. All observations were conducted in a control room to avoid distractions from outside observers.

Analysis of the data revealed key features of literacy in practice across the three settings, the types of knowledge displayed in practice and the relation between the domain-specific knowledge and strategic activity in literacy in practice. The key features included children engaging with others in literacy activity, receiving feedback from others, the use of literacy objects and tools, multiple options for activities, and purposeful situations unrelated to literacy learning. Children’s activities revealed domain-specific declarative and procedural knowledge as well as non-domain-specific strategic knowledge of literacy. Strategic behaviours appeared to be used to refine procedural routines that were not automatic and not too difficult. The children adapted their uses of
literacy to meet the demands of different situations. The study highlighted the context-dependent, situated, and enculturated nature of emergent literacy learning.

In other research Neuman and Roskos (1989) investigated how children display their knowledge of literacy functions in play. They observed fifty preschoolers over two months and made written protocols of each child’s play. When protocols were analysed it was revealed that five functional uses of literacy were evident. These were exploratory (to experiment with print), interactional (to communicate with others or control their behaviour), personal (to express oneself or claim ownership), authenticating (to verify information), and transactional (to construct meaning). Schrader (1989) made similar findings. She collected triangulated data on seven preschoolers’ play using videotape, field notes and interviews and identified five functional uses of literacy: instrumental, interactional, regulatory, personal and informative. Both studies indicated that children display existing knowledge and develop concepts about the use of writing in play contexts.

Evidence of connections between literacy and play prompted studies (Christie & Enz, 1991; Morrow & Rand, 1991; Neuman & Roskos, 1991a; Vukelich, 1991) to investigate the effects of intervention during play. Children’s dramatic play was observed, then theme-related literacy props were added, and play, in the literacy enriched areas, was observed again. All studies involved pre-post-treatment measures of literacy development. The addition of literacy props to dramatic play areas was found to result in significant increases in the amount of literacy activity during play.

In another intervention study, Schrader (1990) examined teacher-child interactions while children engaged in literacy-enriched play. She found teachers used two styles of interaction. The first involved the teacher taking cues from children’s ongoing play and suggesting literacy behaviours to enrich it. This was referred to as extending. In the second, the teacher ignored children’s current
play and redirected them to unrelated literacy activities. This was referred to as *redirecting*. Schrader (1990) identified that extending was much more effective in getting children to incorporate literacy in their play than redirecting. Results of other literacy play intervention studies (Christie & Enz, 1991; Morrow & Rand, 1991) support Schrader’s finding that extending-style interactions with adults have a positive effect on children’s incorporation of literacy into their play. The impact of teachers’ play intervention on children’s literacy development however remains unclear.

**Summary**

One theoretical perspective of recent research has focused on literacy learning as social and cultural practice. Those with this perspective have posited literacy as an integral part of the everyday lives of young children, involving specific relationships, and maintain that children’s literacy concepts develop along with language acquisition and are closely tied to the cultural practices in which they are embedded.

Studies have examined social and cultural practices in families and communities from a variety of cultural and economic contexts, and contributed greatly to our understanding of emergent literacy. However, few have investigated the sociocultural processes related to children’s writing. Some that have examined young children’s writing practices have focused on the development of emergent writing processes and expertise, the participation of linguistically diverse children in writing centres, and the sociocultural dimensions of young children’s writing in classroom writing tasks and during play.

Researchers have identified a need for further studies of literacy practices (especially writing practices) across cultural groups to enhance understandings of the relationships between literacy practices at home and at school, and the impact of these relationships on school success. Further, researchers have argued for a model of family literacy that draws on parental knowledge and
experience to inform instruction rather than attempting to transfer school practices into home contexts. In addition, they identified a need for studies that assist teachers to take account of the sociocultural diversity of children in their classrooms. As children’s literacy concepts are closely tied to the practices in which they are embedded, comparative studies of children’s writing experiences are needed to enhance our understandings of writing practices in the home and at school, as well as amongst children, in order to make informed decisions about how children’s literacy development can be supported.

The study outlined in following chapters examines emergent literacy experiences (in particular writing) of a small group of culturally-diverse children, all girls, from middle-class backgrounds as they progress from Preschool to Year One. A study of boys' literacy experiences and social interactions, or of children differently representative of the cultural diversity may reveal a quite different picture of their literacy experiences and social interactions. The social and cultural dimensions of their experiences are described, the relationship between home and school practices examined, and how children’s identity shapes and is shaped by these experiences considered.

Despite constraints, related to number of participants, methodological perspective, and culturally-specific nature of the study, it is hoped that findings contribute to research knowledge on how social and cultural experiences impact on children’s school success. Further, that it will assist teachers, especially those who face increasing diversity in their classrooms, to determine how they might take account of cultural and social diversity and build on, and respond sensitively, to the resources that children bring to the classroom in order to better support children’s literacy development.
CHAPTER 3

Method

The Study in Context

The writing experiences of a small, culturally-diverse group of children were the focus of this study. Social and cultural contexts in which experiences took place were examined, and similarities and/or differences between experiences at home and Preschool, and for three of the children in Year One the following year identified. How aspects of writing experiences in one context influenced the experiences in another was investigated. In addition, the social interactions that occurred during children’s writing experiences were described. This was done by identifying the roles and relationships that participants established in their interactions and by monitoring the stability of these roles and relationships during the writing experiences, across contexts, and/or over time.

The following research questions were pursued:

1. What are the features of writing experiences of the children at home, at Preschool and in Year One?

2. What similarities and/or differences are evident between experiences, across contexts and amongst children?

3. What roles and relationships are assumed by the participants of writing experiences and how do these roles and relationships change?

In examining these questions, particular attention was given to possible characteristics which might be attributed to culturally specific practices.

The perspective taken in this study is that young children construct writing skill and knowledge by actively participating in literacy experiences and through the social interactions that they have with others. As a result, children bring different cultural resources and social intent to writing tasks. A qualitative
research methodology approach was used to capture the sociocultural nature of experiences in the various settings.

**Qualitative Research Perspectives**

Traditionally, research in early childhood has been dominated by quantitative approaches with roots in developmental and behavioural psychology. In recent times, researchers have acknowledged that qualitative research, such as case studies, can add substance and subtlety to the field's knowledge base, enriching understanding of early learning, settings and children's development. As a result, qualitative methods are more widely used and accepted, and interest in qualitative approaches has grown rapidly (Bryman, 2006).

Qualitative educational researchers seek to uncover the nature of experiences and to understand what lies behind phenomena about which little is yet known (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In early childhood education, qualitative researchers look at children’s experience, attempting to see the world from the child's point of view. For example, they analyse classroom dialogue, and the rules of conversation that shape interactions between adults and children and seek to understand the systems of meaning that prevail in classrooms, playgrounds, and other settings. The value of a qualitative approach was clearly relevant to the present study in which enhanced understandings were sought about the relationships between literacy practices at home, at school, and across cultures, and of the impact these relationships have on school success.

Greckhamer and Koro-Ljungberg (2005) argued that it is important for researchers to be aware of, and lay open, the theoretical and epistemological foundations of their research, which they describe as “a certain understanding of how we know what we know, e.g. through objectivism, constructionism and subjectivism and their variants” (p. 737). It is important because the type of data collected and analysis methods used are influenced by theoretical perspective and epistemology. Crotty (1998) explained: “Justification of our choice and
particular use of methodology and methods is something that reaches into the assumptions about reality that we bring to our work. To ask about these assumptions is to ask about our theoretical perspective" (p.2).

The argument was progressed by Greckhamer and Koro-Ljungberg (2005) when they claimed that the processes of data collection and analysis are interrelated, and serve the epistemological goal of producing particular knowledge. Therefore, researchers should be aware of the theoretical, epistemological and conceptual connections of the methods used.

**Case Studies**

The current study was, in essence, five qualitative case studies. Case study research is used to explore the processes and dynamics of practice and gain an in-depth understanding of a situation and its meaning for those involved. It carries with it a non-generalisable reliance on the specificities of the case/s reported. Qualitative case studies are characterised by the discovery of new relationships, concepts and understandings rather than verification of predetermined hypotheses. As Merriam (1988) described, "The interest is in the process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation" (p. xii). In this study, children were the focus cases, the phenomena explored were the literacy experiences in which they participated and the interactions involved in experiences with others. Case studies often rely on inductive reasoning from data grounded in the context that is the focus of study. This means that an examination of the data allows generalisations, concepts or hypotheses to emerge (Merriam, 1988).

**Grounded Theory**

The mode of qualitative analysis employed to gather and analyse data in this study was the grounded theory method. It is a set of procedures and analytical steps to analyse data grounded in the context of the study and
generate theory. Grounded theory method has been widely accepted and adapted among qualitative researchers since its inception (Glaser 1978; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and despite some critique (Silverman, 1993), is used extensively.

One criticism has been that grounded theory fails to acknowledge implicit theories which guide work at an early stage (Silverman, 1993). This is similar to the claim by Greckhamer and Koro-Ljungberg (2005) that theoretical perspectives and epistemology influence the data collected and analysis methods used by researchers. It suggests that no one is without influence, and the very fact of existence signifies that ways of thinking, seeing and making meaning of the world are exchanged through interaction with the world. To address this criticism, researchers need to be aware of, and acknowledge the personal, theoretical and epistemological stance that underpins their position in the world (Greckhamer & Koro-Ljungberg, 2005).

A second criticism is that grounded theory is about generating theories rather than the testing of hypotheses. Silverman (1993) argued that researchers have sidestepped the issue of validity by producing delimited theories grounded in data. Such a criticism reveals theoretical and epistemological perspectives at odds with those that underpin grounded theory. When epistemological considerations guide the method selection, the uses of the method produce knowledge that is both adequate and legitimate regarding the discourse in which the method operates. Thereby scholars share an argumentation system embedded in a particular discourse and they acknowledge their memberships in particular communities of practitioners (Greckhamer & Koro-Ljungberg, 2005). Hence, the research process becomes more transparent and gains conceptual support from a particular epistemology. In grounded theory method, the establishment of detailed procedures ensures validity.
Charmaz (2000) claimed there are two versions of grounded theory, distinguished on the basis of different epistemological foundations. One is referred to as constructivist and the other objectivist.

**Constructivist grounded theory.**

In constructivist grounded theory, data “are reconstructions of experience; they are not the experience itself. Whether our respondents ply us with data in interview accounts they recast for our consumption or we record ethnographic stories to reflect experience as best as we can recall and narrate, data remain reconstructions” (Charmaz, 2000, p.514). She says further that this approach to grounded theory builds on a symbolic interactionist theoretical perspective with constructivist methods (Charmaz, 2002). Greckhamer & Koro-Ljungberg (2005) disagreed and argued that a true constructivist perspective would take the position that data are co-constructed rather than reconstructed in the social situation of the interview (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) or that data are our own constructions of other people’s constructions (Geertz, 1973).

**Objectivist grounded theory.**

The epistemology that has prevailed in the writings of Glaser (1978), and Strauss and Corbin (1990) is referred to as objectivism. The basic argument holds meaning and reality apart from the operation of any consciousness, individual or subjective processes (Charmaz, 2000; Greckhamer & Koro-Ljungberg (2005). Therefore, meaning and knowledge are discovered through logical analysis. Glaser and Strauss (1967) explain:

We argue in our book for grounding theory in social research itself – for generating it from the data. We have linked this position with a general method of comparative analysis – different from the more specific comparative methods now current – and with various procedures designed to generate grounded theory. Although our emphasis is on generating theory rather than verifying it, we take
special pains not to divorce those two activities, both necessary to the scientific enterprise (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p.viii).

Greckhamer & Koro-Ljungberg (2005) argued that the epistemological position presented by Glaser and Strauss (1967) has elements of both objectivism and subjectivism. The emphasis on theory generation by careful procedures that ensure systematic discoveries of meaning and data viewed as objective and external, reflect an objectivist epistemology. However, the goal of grounded theory, to stay open to actual happenings in data and to let the data speak for themselves (Glaser, 1978), incorporates a constructivist view. Elements of objectivism and subjectivism were evident in the epistemological perspective of the research undertaken in the current study. Of major importance were the social and cultural perspectives of participants and how these were enacted in writing experiences.

Despite difference in epistemological positions, all variants of grounded theory appear to include the following analytical steps (Charmaz, 2002): (a) simultaneous data collection and analysis, (b) pursuit of emergent themes through early data analysis, (c) discovery of basic social processes within the data, (d) inductive construction of abstract categories that explain and synthesise these processes, (e) sampling to refine the categories through comparative processes, (f) integration of categories into a theoretical framework that specifies causes, conditions and consequences of the processes studied.

**Participants and Procedure**

The current study was conducted with a small group of children in an inner-suburb of a large Australian city. Data were collected in their homes, at a State-run Preschool and then in a Year One State School classroom that three of the children attended the following year. It took place during the last three months of the preschool year and during the first six months of the children’s first
year of formal schooling. During the children’s preschool year, visits were made to become familiar with the set-up and routines at Preschool. The Preschool offered a full day program to two groups, each group attending for two and a half days a week. The researcher observed children and identified the range of cultures present in the two groups. On the basis of this preliminary observation and determination of cultural diversity, a proposal for the study was submitted to the University Ethics Committee to gain approval (see Appendix A). Next, consent to conduct the study was sought from the Principal of the school involved, and letters were sent to teachers and families, providing information, and seeking their permission and participation (see Appendix A).

Several criteria were used to choose participants from those who responded to the letter, which formed a process of selection. First, families who were willing to participate and indicated they would be remaining in Australia for the duration of the study were considered. Second, families who spoke their heritage language at home were selected from amongst the group. Finally, variation in cultural background, an important aspect of the study, was the deciding factor. Five children and their families met the criteria and were chosen to participate in the study. The children were all girls. Countries of origin were Korea, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Japan and Australia.

**Data Collection**

The following techniques to gather data were employed:

i) initial interviews with parents and teachers

ii) observation of writing experiences in the home

iii) audio-taping of conversations with parents about writing experiences at home

iv) video-taping of writing experiences in Preschool and Year One classrooms;
v) collection of writing samples associated with writing experiences featured in observations, interviews, and videotaping;

Data were collected in three phases: home writing experiences, Preschool writing experiences, and Year One writing experiences. The first phase of data collection included initial interviews with parents (see Appendix B), observations of writing activities in the home (see Appendix C), the audio-taping of telephone conversations with parents about writing experiences that occurred (see Appendix D), and the collection of writing samples (see Appendix E). An initial interview with parents was used to gather background information, organise the home visits by the researcher to observe writing activities, explain the telephone contact to be made with them regularly, and outline their role in recounting any writing experiences that have occurred in the home as well as saving any writing samples that children produced. Information collected during the interview (see Appendix B) included:

1. Family’s country of origin
2. Length of stay in Australia (to date and planned duration).
3. Family members
4. Language(s) spoken in the home by parents and children.
5. Occupation and education background of parent(s).
6. Literacy practices of family members.
7. The child’s interests.
8. The child’s home activities.

Following the initial interview in October, the researcher visited each home to observe the child in a home context. During these visits, parents encouraged their child to do some writing as they knew this was the researcher’s interest. Field notes were taken during observation. Throughout the duration of the study, the researcher telephoned parents fortnightly to discuss any writing
experiences that had occurred. Parents were encouraged to telephone more frequently if writing experiences occurred that parents wished to share. This part of data collection was conducted from November to mid-December and then from February to June. No data were collected over the summer vacation as three of the five families returned to their heritage countries for a visit during this time.

Observations of writing experiences in the home and the tape-recorded telephone conversations with parents were unstructured. Telephone conversations included researcher’s prompts such as the following:

Tell me about it…. And what happened then? … What did you say? … What did (child’s name) do next?

Observations and tape-recorded telephone conversations were planned to elicit:

1. The experience(s) that occurred related to writing (if any).
2. Where the experiences took place.
3. Who was involved.
4. Who initiated the experience.
5. What happened (process involved).
6. What was said (by whom, to whom).
7. Whether the conversation and /or writing was conducted in English or the family’s heritage language.
8. Whether writing samples (or other products) were collected.

The second phase of data collection related to preschool experiences and involved the initial interview with the teacher, video-taping the writing experiences and social interactions of the children during inside-play (see Appendix F). This occurred during the last two months of the preschool year. The initial interview with the Preschool teacher was used to gather background information about teaching, learning and literacy practices (Appendix B). Information gathered during the interview related to:
1. Structure of Preschool and preschool program
2. Philosophy of teaching
3. Inside-play routine
4. Literacy learning and teaching
5. Readiness for Year One
6. Responding to cultural diversity

During the first few sessions, the researcher was present with the video camera, but information was not included in the data until it appeared to her that children had become desensitised to the presence of the camera and its operator. Each participant was tracked and video-taped once a week. Often participants interacted with one another, and therefore featured frequently in recordings. Samples of writing were recorded on video-tape as children were reluctant to part with the artefacts they had created.

The third phase of data collection, similar to the second, involved an interview with the Year One teacher to gather background information about teaching, learning and literacy practices, the video-taping of writing experiences and social interactions of three of the children in the same class, and samples of writing during the first six months of Year One. The focus of data collection was writing time as it was an activity where children composed texts independently or in collaboration with others.

*Data Analysis*

**Constant comparative process.**

Glaser and Strauss (1967) described data analysis in grounded theory method as a process of constant comparison. The process involves a researcher moving back and forth among the data and gradually advancing from coding to conceptual categories and then to theory development. Strauss and Corbin
(1998) in a development of this approach, referred to the first step in the process as *open coding*. In this step, the researcher names events and actions in the data and constantly compares them with one another to decide which belong together. This process “soon starts to generate theoretical properties of the category” (p.106).

The next step is to group the discrete codes according to conceptual categories that reflect commonalities among codes. Strauss and Corbin (1998) referred to this as *axial coding* reflecting the idea of clustering the open codes around specific axes or points of intersection. It is important to note that the properties identified in axial coding reflect the interpretative lens of the researcher (Harry, Sturges & Klingner, 2005).

The third step involves treating the various code clusters in a selective fashion. This is referred to by Strauss and Corbin (1998) as *selective coding* and involves the researcher deciding how the code clusters relate to each other and what stories they tell (Harry, Sturges & Klingner, 2005). In seeking and explaining the interrelationship between the code clusters, the researcher begins to build a theory. Corbin and Strauss (1998) maintained that an overarching theoretical scheme is identified and theory development becomes a recursive “search for consistency and logic” (p.156) that integrates both complementary and competing strands of logic.

**Adaptations to the approach.**

Greckhamer & Koro-Ljungberg (2005) argued that all uses of grounded theory are partial and limited and that it is more important that processes are transparent and methods employed are consistent with epistemology, theoretical perspective and knowledge production. Whilst the grounded theory approach calls for continuous interplay between data collection and analysis, this was not possible in the present study. In the most part, data analysis followed collection because the main techniques used for data gathering (audio and video-tapes) required transcription. Transcription was viewed as integral to the constant
comparison process of data analysis and involved each tape being played, and
replayed many times to capture actions and interactions during activities. This
time-consuming process did not keep apace with collection of data as children
progressed from Preschool to Year One.

Analysis of the data in this study followed the steps outlined by Strauss
and Corbin (1998), with variations adopted in response to the data. Terms were
varied from those used by Strauss and Corbin (1998) to more clearly describe the
category and theory development emerging from the data and used to explain
the findings within Tables (see Chapter 4).

In the first step of analysis, Strauss and Corbin (1998) described the
names given to events and actions as open codes. In this study, open codes
were referred to as features and the raw data became examples of these
features.

In the second step, Strauss and Corbin (1998) grouped discrete codes
according to conceptual categories that reflect commonalities among codes. In
this study, features were grouped together in a similar way to form categories that
were later referred to as characteristics of the dimensions that emerged.
Categories were compared and contrasted and grouped together to form the
dimensions of writing experiences. Finally, commonalities and differences in the
characteristics and features amongst children and dimensions of experiences
between contexts were examined. A more detailed and explicit account of the
process follows.

The Process of Data Analysis

The process of data analysis in the current study is described in phases
related to the sequence of data collection, but the observational field notes and
the transcripts of the audiotapes, videotapes, and writing samples were analysed
multiple times both separately and in different combinations throughout the
constant-comparison process.
First, the audiotapes of the telephone conversations with parents were transcribed and read repeatedly in conjunction with the observation field notes to identify features of the home writing experiences. Writing samples or products of the home writing experiences were studied in conjunction with the transcripts and field notes in order that the skills and knowledge described by the parents be examined. Background information provided by the parents during the initial interview was also considered when identifying features.

Sometimes examples were representative of several features. For example, when Grace was told by her mother to write down the words in her reader, it was seen as an example of writing transcription and an example of a parent initiating an activity. These features were reviewed by comparing and contrasting to identify commonalities and differences and form clusters of characteristics.

Second, the video-tapes of the children’s preschool writing experiences were analysed in a similar way to the audio-taped conversations. Video-tapes were transcribed and viewed repeatedly and features of experiences identified, using raw data as examples to illustrate the features. Writing samples or products of preschool activities were studied in conjunction with the transcripts. Background information provided by the Preschool teacher during the initial interview was also considered when identifying features. These features were compared, contrasted and grouped together to form categories (later referred to as characteristics). Children’s individual experiences were compared, and then comparisons made amongst children.

Third, the video-tapes of the children’s Year One writing experiences were analysed. Video-tapes were transcribed, viewed repeatedly, and features of the writing experiences described using raw data as examples of these features. Background information provided by the Year One teacher during the initial interview was also considered when identifying features. Writing samples were examined in conjunction with video-tapes. Features were compared and
contrasted to develop conceptual categories. Comparisons were made between conceptual categories of individual children’s Year One experiences, and categories amongst children.

Fourth, with reference to accompanying features and examples, categories were compared and contrasted amongst children and between settings, and further categorised to form the dimensions of writing experiences. These dimensions were: (a) attitudes, values and beliefs, (b) roles and relationships, (c) interactional behaviour, (d) learnerly behaviour, (e) literacy experiences (f) emergent / early literacy (g) resources and (h) home–school connections. Children’s literacy experiences are presented in Chapter 5 as case studies and commonalities and differences in the dimensions of children’s experiences are discussed in Chapter 4.

Throughout the analysis process, concepts and relationships were deduced from the data. The final theory that emerged was derived from the data through the features, characteristics and dimensions of writing experiences. It is presented in Chapter 6.

**Issues of Validity and Reliability**

Two central concepts relate to discussion of rigour in scientific research. These are validity and reliability (Silverman, 1993). Reliability refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions (Hammersley, 1992). To address the issue of reliability in this study, the coding process was explained to a co-rater who replicated the coding process to establish the reliability of the categorisation. The co-rater undertook coding of 10% of transcripts of data from the three settings (home, Preschool and Year One) and established an inter-rater reliability of 98.4%. The coding process was judged to be extremely reliable.
The second, related issue of validity, described by Hammersley (1992) as the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers, was also addressed through the inter-rater reliability of the coding. To further ensure validity in the current study, multiple data collection strategies were used. These were observation, interview, audio-tapes, video-tapes and artefacts. Together with the grounded theory process of constant comparison, a basis for triangulation of data was provided. In addition, technical literature was used, when writing up findings, to supplement validity.

Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggested that technical literature, that is, reports of research studies and theoretical or philosophical papers, can be referenced in appropriate places to give validation of the accuracy of findings or point out how and why a study differs from published literature. Approaches used in the current study are consistent with contemporary qualitative research whose strength lies in the production of valid and reliable data, grounded data analysis and reporting derived from multiple and diverse confirmatory strategies.

**Summary**

Setting the contextual framework for the study was the main purpose of this chapter. The epistemological and theoretical perspectives underpinning the study were outlined and showed how a qualitative methodology and grounded theory method were appropriate for the research focus. The participants and procedure involved were described, detailing the data collection and analysis using the constant comparative method. Adaptations to the grounded theory method were explained and the chapter concluded with an examination of validity and reliability concerns that were addressed to ensure credibility of the outcomes in the study.
CHAPTER 4

Overview of results

This is the first of two chapters in which data are presented. The chapter is an account of commonalities and differences found at home, Preschool and in Year One across five case studies in this research. The chapter is structured around critical headings representing major clusters revealed in the data analyses. They are values, attitudes and beliefs, roles and relationships, interactional behaviour, learnerly behaviour, literacy experiences, emergent literacy, resources, and home-school connections. The chapter is followed by an explication of each of the five case studies.

Home

Family Values, Attitudes and Beliefs

Despite the variety of cultures represented, families had many values, attitudes and beliefs in common. These related to learning and education, maintenance of heritage, and recognition of children’s achievements (see Table 1). In contrast, beliefs, attitudes and values related to literacy learning were varied.

Shared values, attitudes and beliefs included high expectations and aspirations for their children’s school success, recognition of the importance of educational achievement, and a strong emphasis on hard work. These beliefs and values are consistent with those identified by Goldenberg (1987), who suggests that members of different cultural groups may have more shared than different values and are also typical of middle-classes anywhere in the world. In addition, parents in this study considered attendance and enjoyment of school important to achieve well.
Learning.

All parents valued learning and education generally and most believed that hard work and discipline were required for success. One, or both parents in each family having completed, or undertaking tertiary education demonstrated this value. Parents expected that their children would do well at school and attend university in the future. Jeba’s parents, for example, were explicit in their expectations of success as they had invested in their children’s future by coming to Australia, leaving families and the father’s career behind.

It was important to all parents that their children liked school. Enjoyment of school signified to parents a positive disposition to learning that they believed contributed to success. One important factor in children’s enjoyment at school was their ability to make friends with other children. Mothers, in particular, monitored and encouraged children to form friendships with others within their classes and some arranged play dates outside of school hours. Interactions with Australian children during and after school were encouraged as they provided valued opportunities for children to experience the culture. Parents viewed children born in Australia of European heritage as Australian and Australian culture as derived from this heritage despite Australia’s multicultural nature. Country of origin identified children born in Australia with parents of other cultural heritage. For example, Grace was identified as Korean despite being born in Australia.

A second factor that some parents identified as contributing to children liking school related to children’s enjoyment of activities. Kaori’s father approved activities that were presented as a game to promote enjoyment. This view was not shared by all parents. Grace’s mother viewed learning as a serious undertaking requiring focus and discipline and associated fun with leisure activities.

Most parents considered routine and discipline important for learning in order to establish a work ethic. For example, school attendance was a priority for
parents. They became concerned when children were sick and missed days of school. Secondly, most parents considered homework an important aspect of established routines as well as an opportunity for repetition and practice of the learning that had occurred at school. Kaori’s parents hired an Australian tutor when she commenced Year One. They expected tutor’s lessons to be structured and for Kaori to apply herself diligently to set tasks. Most parents extended homework set by the teacher to include writing tasks that were to be completed to standards set by them. Several expressed concern over the course of study that their child was lazy when she did not want to complete additional homework set by parents.

**Literacy learning.**

Parents’ beliefs about literacy learning, especially their views on emergent literacy, were varied. This is consistent with other studies (Cairney & Ruge, 1996, Dyson, 1992; Gee, 1990) that found literate practices and perceptions about literacy vary across cultures. Several parents believed that children learned to read and write at school and children did not acquire literacy skills before then. Partly, this belief can be attributed to a perception by parents that literacy is about reading and writing words and sentences that have been memorised. Therefore, emerging literacy skills that children displayed, for example, squiggly lines on a page (spaghetti writing), or demonstrations of reading-like behaviour when children made up stories to accompany the pictures in a book were not recognised as literate behaviour and consequently were not valued. Parents who believed that literacy is learned at school did not see that they had a role in influencing their child’s acquisition of writing skills at home. These parents did not consciously read and write in front of their children or model associated behaviours.

Ferdman (1990) and Purcell-Gates (1993) argued that parental beliefs about literacy learning not aligned with school expectations result in children often not achieving the same success as others. However, it is acknowledged
that literate practices are an integral part of most people’s lives (Neuman & Roskos, 1997) and all children in the study experienced literacy within family activities.

For many families, literacy was an inherent part of social activity. For example, children were included in the activity of writing letters to family and friends overseas. They drew pictures to be enclosed for Grandma or listened to news from home being read out from letters or e-mails sent to the family. For some, literacy was embedded in cultural activities. Examples included a writing competition in which Jeba participated as part of cultural celebrations of Bangladesh independence, and a book launch at the State Library that Zena attended to meet her favourite author and visit buildings and cityscapes featured in the locally produced book.

Heritage.

Parents who came to Australia from overseas believed that it was important to maintain social and cultural links with their heritage. They joined cultural groups and mixed socially, but not exclusively, within these groups. As well as providing cultural connections for families, these groups provided assistance, support and advice in the absence of relatives to do the same. Through these groups, families learned where to shop for foods from home, how to navigate through red tape and bureaucracy associated with living in a foreign country, and shared customs and news from home.

Parents believed that it was important for their children to speak their heritage language. They maintained their heritage language at home although some children occasionally spoke English to one another. By persisting to interact with their children in their heritage language, the language in which they were proficient, parents maintained the quality of language interactions. It has been suggested that this is a key predictor of school success rather than knowledge of the language of school (Evans, 1994; Wells, 1986).
Furthermore, most parents insisted that children attended Saturday School to do school work in their heritage language. Saturday School was organised within the cultural community to provide lessons that loosely followed the school curriculum at home. If a trained teacher was not available within the community, a volunteer performed the task. Lia’s family was an exception. Her family did not seem concerned about maintenance of heritage culture and traditions and Lia did not attend Saturday School. This may be attributed to the family’s plan to return to Indonesia as soon as the father had completed his studies in urban planning. However, Kaori’s family also planned to return to their heritage country to live permanently. In contrast, they were concerned that their children complete the Japanese school curriculum as well as the Australian one.

All parents saw the value in developing an understanding of cultures other than their own and encouraged their children to participate in Australian cultural practices and customs. Learning the English language was seen as a priority. It was expected that the children would learn to speak English through their interactions at school and participate and understand western culture. Many of the parents were attending English lessons to improve their English and relied on their children to assist them to communicate in English.

**Achievements.**

Parents demonstrated great pride in the learning and achievements of children. They talked proudly with others about children’s successes and kept samples of their work as keepsakes. Not all parents, however, were sure that praising their child for her achievements was a good thing. Grace’s mother refrained from overtly praising Grace’s achievements because she was concerned that Grace would not strive and be diligent.

Despite many shared values, attitudes and beliefs, family practices, perceptions of emergent literacy and understandings of how literacy is learned varied and, as in other studies (Cairney & Ruge, 1996), influenced children’s
experiences and the roles and relationships assumed by family members within them.

Table 1. Family Values Attitudes & Beliefs (Home).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Kaori</th>
<th>Lia</th>
<th>Grace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Learning/education valued</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Expectation of success</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Routine/discipline important</td>
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<td>Repetition and practice aid learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>School attendance important</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Making friends at school important</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Liking school important</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Learning as fun important</td>
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<td>Homework important</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Australian culture important</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Literacy learning</strong></td>
<td>School activity</td>
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<td>Learned before school</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Memorise/recognise words</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Literacy artefacts valued</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Emergent literacy recognised</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Literacy modelled</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Parent role in literacy learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Literacy a social activity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literacy a cultural activity</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Heritage</strong></td>
<td>Maintained social and cultural links</td>
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<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintained heritage language</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Achievements</strong></td>
<td>Pride in achievements</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Praised achievements</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* This child’s family is of European heritage and therefore regarded as Australian

**Roles and Relationships**

The nature of roles and relationships assumed during literacy experiences varied according to parents’ values, attitudes and beliefs towards literacy and learning, and the knowledge and skills demonstrated by children. Some parents saw literacy learning as an opportunity for them to develop a strong work ethic in their children and adopted an active role. Others saw their role in children’s literacy learning as minimal and adopted a more passive role expecting children to learn literacy when they commenced Year One.

**Parents’ roles and relationships.**

Literacy interactions that parents engaged in with their children varied from family to family (see Table 2). Parents who believed literacy is learned at home engaged in frequent, planned interactions with children. In Lia’s family, parents did not take an active role in her learning and as a consequence there
were few interactions based around this aspect of her development. In most families, however, parents were active participants in literacy experiences with children and assumed a variety of roles to support their children in these experiences. Roles varied according to the nature of the task and the child's confidence and ability in undertaking them. Five were facilitator, co-constructor, monitor, director and motivator.

**Facilitator.**

Most parents facilitated children's participation in an experience, especially with homework, once the children were in Year One. This involved arranging the time and place for the activity, ensuring required resources were provided, explaining what had to be done and then prompting as required to ensure children stayed on task. At times, parents modelled tasks for the child or provided assistance. Examples of this occurred frequently in the early stages of Year One when parents read the take home readers to their children before the children attempted to read themselves.

**Co-constructor.**

In contrast to all other parents in the study, Zena’s mother worked with her as an equal partner to complete tasks, collaborating to determine which elements of the task each would complete to achieve the agreed outcome. This occurred when Zena and her mother compiled an address book with her friends' phone numbers and addresses in it. Sometimes the mother read out telephone numbers for Zena to record and other times, when Zena found this task tiring, she read out numbers while her mother recorded them.

**Monitor.**

All parents monitored children’s progress in some way. Some parents took a lot of interest in their children’s literacy learning, observing activities and discussing in detail the progress made. Several mothers were concerned about children’s ability to cope with formal schooling and adjusted their expectations for homework if their children appeared tired. Lia’s parents took little interest in
supervising homework. Instead they relied on reports from school to inform them of her progress.

**Director.**

Parents who took an active role in the literacy learning of their children created literacy opportunities and initiated tasks. For example, Zena's mother took her children on a walk past neighbour’s homes collecting cuttings for her garden. The children were involved in labelling plants and writing names on pots in which they were planted. In activities such as these, parents made choices and decisions about tasks they set. Several instructed children in how to write letters of the alphabet or to write words and sentences in activities they created for their children. Their role involved checking children’s work and making sure it was correct.

**Motivator.**

All parents encouraged children to do their best work and provided feedback. The feedback provided by some parents, however, did not include praise. Grace’s mother was concerned that Grace would not work as hard if she knew how well she was doing. As a consequence, she withheld approval and actively refrained from praising Grace’s efforts. In contrast, Jeba’s parents demonstrated familial pride in her achievements and constantly reinforced expectations and dependence on her future achievements to enhance the family’s socio-economic status.
Table 2. Parents’ Roles (Home).

| Characteristic | Feature                  | Jeba | Zena | Kaori | Lia | Grace |
|               |                         |      |      |       |     |       |
| Facilitator   | Provides assistance     |      |      |       |     |       |
|               | Explains tasks          |      |      |       |     |       |
|               | Prompts                 |      |      |       |     |       |
|               | Organises tasks/resources|      |      |       |     |       |
|               | Models                  |      |      |       |     |       |
| Co-constructor| Negotiates tasks        |      |      |       |     |       |
|               | Participates in activities|    |      |       |     |       |
| Monitor       | Monitors progress       |      |      |       |     |       |
|               | Monitors coping skills  |      |      |       |     |       |
|               | Observes                |      |      |       |     |       |
| Director      | Initiates tasks         |      |      |       |     |       |
|               | Provides instruction    |      |      |       |     |       |
|               | Checks / corrects       |      |      |       |     |       |
|               | Makes choices / decisions for child | | | | | |
|               | Creates learning opportunities |    |      |       |     |       |
| Motivator     | Encourages              |      |      |       |     |       |
|               | Praises                 |      |      |       |     |       |
|               | Provides feedback       |      |      |       |     |       |

Children’s roles and relationships.

The roles and relationships that children adopted in literacy experiences varied according to children’s familiarity with an activity, their relationship with the parent involved and confidence in undertaking the task (see Table 3). Generally, the more familiar a task, the more confidently the child approached it, and the task was executed with increased independence.

Independent worker.

All children showed interest in literacy learning and initiated activities and completed them independently. For example, all read books by themselves and monitored their own reading in some way – by confirming what they had read by looking at the picture, or re-reading the text to make sure it made sense. Often children followed instructions provided by parents in order to execute a task independently. Lia was an exception, as her parents did not take an active role in her literacy learning.

Director.

Some children exercised growing confidence and assurance in tasks by controlling their interactions with others during task engagement and completion. They regulated the amount of support received, telling parents not to assist them, as they knew what to do. At other times, they directed activities issuing directions and instructions to family members to complete tasks that they could not do.
Both instances required a degree of metacognitive awareness. The children monitored their own capabilities and directed others to provide assistance as required.

**Collaborator.**

At some point, most children collaborated with others during activities. However, opportunities to collaborate with family members depended on parents’ perceptions of their role in literacy learning. Grace, for example, had scant opportunity to collaborate or co-construct activities with others as her mother adopted a didactic approach. She set tasks for Grace to complete independently while she prepared dinner. All children actively sought assistance and clarification of tasks when required.

**Approval seeker.**

As tasks and activities were completed or milestones achieved, all children sought out adults to show their work to and to gain approval. Children responded to encouragement and positive feedback. The feedback that Grace received related to tasks and activities being completed accurately but did not include personal praise.

**Task avoider.**

Several children were reluctant to undertake tasks or refused to do activities set by a parent. Zena frequently refused to attempt tasks she considered difficult or that she thought she couldn’t do and required encouragement or assistance to attempt them. In contrast, Jeba willingly completed tasks set by her father but was reluctant to engage in tasks set by her mother when her father was absent.
Table 3. Children’s Roles (Home).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Kaori</th>
<th>Lia</th>
<th>Grace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent worker</td>
<td>Initiates activities</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Completes tasks independently</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follows instructions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self monitors when reading</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Controls interaction</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Directs activities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Issues instructions</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborator</td>
<td>Collaborates with others</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Co-constructs activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Seeks clarification</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Seeks assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approval Seeker</td>
<td>Seeks approval</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Task Avoider</td>
<td>Refuses / reluctant to engage</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sibling roles.

Siblings of children in the study participated in literacy tasks with them from time to time. Parents did not expect brothers or sisters to take on a teaching role and none did so regularly. However, several children had older siblings who assisted them with tasks occasionally or read with them (see Table 4).

Co-constructor.

Older brothers and/or sisters assisted children by participating in activities. This became evident when children commenced Year One and had Pictionary homework to complete. Brothers and sisters assisted by making suggestions for words that started with a particular sound or helped to find pictures in magazines.

Tutor.

Several children had an older sibling who assumed the role of tutor during homework reading. Grace, for example, accepted support from her brother initially, but quickly found opportunities to assist him when he was reading.

Table 4. Sibling Roles (Home).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Kaori</th>
<th>Lia</th>
<th>Grace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-constructor</td>
<td>Assists with tasks</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutor</td>
<td>Reads with child</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Roles and relationships enacted by family members in literacy experiences at home were diverse and influenced by parents’ beliefs about
literacy learning. Common characteristics related to the role of parents in observing children undertake activities, monitoring progress and providing encouragement. Other characteristics in common included children working independently, collaborating with others, seeking approval and receiving assistance with tasks from siblings. Differences related to the involvement and engagement of parents in their child’s literacy experiences, considered important factors in children’s school success (McCarthey, 2000).

The role of scaffolder was not clear in parents’ self-reporting of literacy interactions with children. Scaffolding is the support provided by adults or more skilled others to assist a child to perform tasks that they could not perform alone (Bruner, 1986). Some features of roles and relationships enacted between parents and children, for example, modelling and assisting, are consistent with features of scaffolding. However, modelling and assisting can also be evident in parents’ interactions as a matter of routine, without necessarily supporting children to perform tasks they could not accomplish unaided or creating potential for learning (Hammond, 2001). As scaffolding is considered an integral feature of most parents’ interactions with children (Bruner, 1978; Wood & Wood, 1996), it is quite likely that scaffolding was a characteristic of parents’ roles, although not identified in data analysed in this study.

**Interactional Behaviour**

The behaviour of children during interactions with others is described in this study as interactional behaviour. Children demonstrated interactional behaviour in conversations with parents and participation in activities. It reflected family beliefs, attitudes and values, as well as social conventions of each child’s heritage culture (see Table 5). As Ochs and Schieffelin (1984) pointed out, children acquire cultural expectations and social conventions through interactions which in turn, influence children’s behaviour.
**Conversation.**

The frequency of conversations between parents and children varied. Some children were encouraged by parents to initiate dialogue and participate in conversations during frequent literacy activities. Others had few opportunities for conversations and literacy activities with their parents. McCarthey (2000) reported that the amount of time that parents engage with children in literacy-related activities is an important factor in literacy success at school. In this study the impact of limited interactions with adults appeared to be ameliorated by other factors. These included demonstrated use of literacy in the home and environment and the proactive way in which children like Lia sought literacy experiences.

The characteristics of children’s conversations with parents varied markedly, too. Several children had a lot to say and conversed confidently with parents during activities. At times, they interrupted their parents or engaged in overlapping speech, not listening to what the parents were saying. Others waited until addressed or were encouraged to speak by their parents.

Most children asked their parents questions, sought explanations and demanded responses at times. Some did so more frequently than others. For example, Lia instigated interactions by climbing onto her father’s knee when he was working at his computer and demanded to know letters on the keyboard. Conversations between Zena and her mother were quite different from others. Zena entered conversations as an equal partner. She was provided opportunities to contribute her ideas during discussions, which were valued. At other times, she argued, challenging her mother’s point of view.

As Rogoff, Mistry, Goncu and Mosier (1993) explain, conversational rules, conventions for displaying respect and other patterns of social interaction vary across cultures. For example, in some cultures (like Zena’s) children are treated as conversational by adults; in others, children are observers of conversation (Jeba and Grace), or participants in joint activities where conversation is not
prominent. Observation of parents in dialogue and listening to parents' conversations was an integral part of all children's experiences.

**Participation.**

Similar to other studies (Chall & Snow, 1982; Snow, 1987; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988), children observed their parents carrying out a variety of literate activities. These ranged from writing letters, making shopping lists, and noting important dates on the calendar to completing university assignments on the computer. Taylor (1983) suggests that young children learn the meaning of print by understanding its role in their everyday lives. At other times, all children undertook literate activities alone. Many of these were self-initiated and included looking at books, drawing pictures or copying text. These explorations through play also assist children to learn about print (Taylor, 1983). Some children undertook tasks that had been assigned by a parent. For example, Grace’s mother set tasks, made decisions about the scope and sequence of them and provided instructions, which Grace carried out independently. Most children participated in literacy activities that involved them contributing to a parent activity. For example, Kaori wrote a few words and drew a picture to be included in a letter to her grandmother when asked by her mother.

Zena was the only one who participated in activities with her mother as an equal partner. These activities began as an idea initiated by either participant and then tasks were negotiated. Others followed cultural expectations of respect by obeying instructions. In contrast, Zena’s displays of respect towards her mother fluctuated. She often refused to attempt tasks that she considered difficult or wasn’t interested in, and constantly negotiated how much of an activity she was willing to complete for her mother. Lia’s participation in activities was characterised by the lack of parent involvement. Most of her activities were self-initiated.
Table 5. Interactional Behaviour (Home).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Kaori</th>
<th>Lia</th>
<th>Grace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conversation</td>
<td>Engaged in frequent conversations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Initiated conversations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Talked a lot</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asked questions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Interrupted others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sought explanations / demanded response</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observed/listened to parent conversations</td>
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<td>Conversed as partner with parents / adults</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
<td>Observed parents undertaking activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Undertook activities alone</td>
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<td>Undertook tasks assigned by parent</td>
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<td>Contributed to joint activities</td>
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<td>Participated as equal partner</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Obeyed parent without question</td>
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<td>Challenged parent way of doing things</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reluctant / refused to do as told</td>
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Common features of children’s interactional behaviour included observation of parents talking about and undertaking literate activities, as well as children undertaking literate activities independently. Many features were not common to all families, especially where shared literacy experiences were infrequent. Features not evident in some children’s interactions with parents may be attributed to cultural practices.

**Learnerly Behaviour**

Some of the behaviour demonstrated by children in literacy experiences related specifically to acquisition and display of knowledge is described in this study as *learnerly behaviour*. Learnerly behaviour identified was displayed by all children (see Table 6).

The acquisition of knowledge was characterised by children gathering and organising information, or testing and re-thinking their ideas. The process of children acquiring bits and pieces of literacy knowledge and positioning them within the existing jigsaw of what they already know is described here as knowledge framing. It incorporates the process of reorganising thinking to accommodate new understandings outlined by Piaget (1967). The knowledge of literacy that children revealed in their actions and interactions is described as knowledge displays.
One of the ways that children framed knowledge about literacy was observing and copying others engaged in literate activities. All children observed parents reading and writing although some did so more frequently than others. The types of activities family members engaged in included reading, writing letters, consulting the calendar, writing shopping lists, filling out forms, using the computer and doing homework. Lia and Kaori had less opportunity to observe their parents than other children did.

A second way that children acquired knowledge about literacy was by collaborating with family members in literate activities. This finding is consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) theory that children learn through interaction with adults or more knowledgeable peers from an early age. In addition, children gained literacy knowledge by exploring and experimenting with symbols in their attempts to make or convey meaning in similar ways to those described by Kenner (2000) who maintained that children take account of the multiplicity of graphic forms in their environment. They did this alone, with others during play and when watching television. For example, most of the girls liked to make books, play computer games and play school.

All children displayed knowledge of literacy in a variety of ways within activities. These knowledge displays included demonstrating what they knew and could do, verbally explaining to others what they had done or what it meant, applying knowledge acquired in one activity to another, and making verbal declarations of what they knew. For example, when Kaori played a card game with her brother she kept score of who won the games on a piece of paper. She explained what the scores meant and declared regularly which of them was winning. These knowledge and skills had been acquired by observing her brother keep score when they had played a board game previously. The knowledge display demonstrated literacy understanding, which Perkins (1991)
described as an active process, in purposeful activity during play. Kaori’s literacy knowledge display demonstrated declarative knowledge (the score) and procedural knowledge (the process of keeping score) and was similar to findings in studies made by Neuman and Roskos (1989) of young children in play. They found evidence of domain-specific declaractive and procedural knowledge as well as non-domain specific strategic knowledge of literacy.

Table 6. Learnerly Behaviour (Home).

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<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Kaori</th>
<th>Lia</th>
<th>Grace</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Exploration</td>
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<td>Framing</td>
<td>Experimentation</td>
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<td>Observation</td>
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<td>Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Demonstration</td>
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<td>Displays</td>
<td>Explanation</td>
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<td>Application</td>
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**Literacy Experiences**

The home literacy experiences of the five children in the study varied in nature and frequency. Zena, for example, had frequent literacy experiences and participated in a diverse range of activities across the course of the study. Several children, Grace and Jeba, had frequent and regular experiences but these lacked diversity. Others, like Lia and Kaori, had few experiences when compared with other children in the study. Purcell-Gates (1996) argued that the degree of experience with functions of written language influenced children’s learning about it. In this study, children who had fewer experiences at home sought experiences in other contexts.

The literacy experiences of all children had several common characteristics. First, some activities that children experienced within the home could be described as naturally occurring literacy experiences in which parents and other family members modelled literacy function. In most homes, family members participated in a range of literate activities during daily routines that
their children observed and/or participated in frequently. Typical activities included reading labels on groceries, writing letters, making shopping lists, leaving notes on the fridge, watching television, and reading the newspaper. These activities are similar to those identified in other studies (Heath, 1983; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988).

Second, literacy activities were specifically planned for children that provided experiences in which children interacted and discussed aspects of literacy. Several parents planned literacy lessons with children and enacted the role of teacher. These lessons related to learning letters and words or writing sentences. However, few of these activities related to book reading. Zena was the only child in the study whose parents read stories to her regularly. Lia and Kaori had few planned literacy experiences. Taylor (1983) found that parents’ own childhood literacy experiences influenced the ways in which they interacted with their children.

Third, children explored literacy independently. All children engaged in solitary drawing and colouring activities, experimenting with writing, as well as reading environmental print and looking at picture books.

The children used naturally occurring, planned and independent experiences for a variety of literate functions (see Table 7). First, they used literacy for pleasure. Children listened to stories that parents and siblings read, sang the words to songs and participated in board games for personal enjoyment. Second, they used experiences to explore and experiment with literacy, practising writing and reading by writing symbols. Third, children used experiences to gather or impart information, for example, navigating an interactive website to find out about frogs. Furthermore, most children used experiences to communicate with others, sending invitations, letters, and birthday cards to friends and family. Some literacy experiences were instrumental in achieving a purpose within a larger task. For example, Zena labelled plant cuttings so her mother would know the names of plants they had collected in a
neighbourhood walk. Variety of literacy uses was similar to those identified by Neuman and Roskos (1989) in their study of literacy functions in play and Schrader (1989).

Table 7. Literacy Functions (Home).

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<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Kaori</th>
<th>Lia</th>
<th>Grace</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pleasure</td>
<td>Listens to stories, songs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Engages with variety of modes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sings words to songs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Colours in pictures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Plays cards, board games</td>
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<td>Exploration and</td>
<td>Attempts to read environmental print,</td>
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<td>experimentation</td>
<td>Practices letters, numbers, words</td>
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<td>Displays reading behaviour with books</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Uses computer</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
<td>Expresses oneself</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Writes, cards, letters, invitations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Gain information</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Makes labels, names</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Navigates web site</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Uses address book</td>
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</table>

**Emergent Literacy**

Literacy experiences provided opportunities for children to develop and demonstrate emergent literacy knowledge and skills (see Table 8). Therefore, children who experienced fewer and/or less diverse home literacy experiences had fewer opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills about literacy. Across the course of the study, children displayed increasing knowledge of literacy at home despite variation in the writing that children produced. For example, children used spaghetti writing, strings of letters and conventional writing in similar ways to those described by Gibson (1989) according to purpose and activity. In addition, they used a variety of graphic forms, including signs, symbols, pictures, and words to communicate in written form as described by Clay (1975) and Vygotsky (1978).

**Concepts about print.**

Across the course of the study all children acquired knowledge of basic concepts about print required for reading and writing. This knowledge included information about where to start reading on the page, in which direction to
proceed, the concept of a letter and word, and matching words on a page to verbal utterances. Increased knowledge was demonstrated in writing over time.

**Alphabet/number knowledge.**

At the beginning of the study, all children demonstrated some knowledge of alphabet and number sequence through their literacy experiences. Once children were in their first year of school, Pictionary homework required them to learn names and sounds of letters and find pictures of things that started with a given sound. Several children demonstrated the ability to identify vowels and consonants.

**Word knowledge.**

Children demonstrated an increasing knowledge of words during the study. At first, many activities undertaken at home involved drawing family members and writing their names. Once children started formal schooling, their demonstrated word knowledge in home literacy experiences increased. Some parents instructed children to transcribe take-home readers and learn to recognise and spell words.

**Mechanics of writing.**

All children used pencils and pens for colouring in and writing attempts at home. Zena’s mother constantly corrected Zena’s pencil grip to ensure she held pencils in a tripod grip (thumb and pointer holding the pencil with the third finger resting under the pencil). Several children held the pencil with all three fingers. Parents, apart from Zena’s mother, did not correct their child’s grip.

Before starting Year One, most children’s writing attempts consisted mainly of upper case letters. A mixture of upper and lower case letters were evident once school began and then several children began using capital letters at the beginning of sentences and in titles of stories. Jeba and Zena experimented using cursive writing to write their names and together with Kaori attempted to use punctuation - capital letters, full stops and exclamation marks.
Most of the children had access to a computer at home and used it to play games. This involved using the mouse and clicking on icons on the screen thus demonstrating knowledge of technology-based communication tools (Kress, 1997). Lia did not have ready access to a computer although there was one in the home. However, she climbed on her father’s knee and insisted on finding each letter of the alphabet in sequence and typing it. Several children used the computer to create multi-modal texts. Jeba was the only child who did not have access to a computer at home.

**Symbolic representation.**

Symbolic representation was part of children’s writing experiences. All used drawing to represent objects and actions. When Zena did spaghetti writing, it was seen as representational intent for words rather than objects. This was a shift that Vygotsky (1978) would describe as moving from first-order representations to second-order symbolism. Gradually letters, words and numbers were included in a similar progression described by Ferreiro and Teberosky (1983), accompanied frequently by drawings. Drawing and writing ensured meaning, and as Hubbard (1989) described, the use of two symbol systems complemented each other. Several children demonstrated use of symbols and signs when using computer icons to navigate their way on the computer and recording mathematical calculations (sums).

**Writing.**

Writing demonstrated in activities at home included labelling pictures that children had drawn, writing letters and numbers, and copying words or text. Most children dictated text for parents to write for them, for example when writing a letter to a friend or including a message in Mum’s letter to a relative. All children attempted to write when they had a real purpose for doing so. For example, adding things that they wanted Mum to buy to the shopping list or writing to invite children to their birthday party. Several children attempted to compose stories. These consisted mainly of pictures with some words underneath. Several
children transcribed the text of their take-home reader each night, which was a task set by their mother.

**Reading.**

All children participated in some shared book experiences at home before they commenced Year One. These experiences varied in nature and frequency. For example, Lia had few books in her home and few opportunities to participate in shared book activities. Despite McCarthey’s (2000) claim, lack of resources and time engaged with parents did not impede Lia’s literacy learning. On one occasion Lia demanded that her sister explain what was happening in illustrations of a nursery rhyme book that she was looking at. Once she started school, Lia borrowed books that interested her regularly from the school library even though her father complained that she couldn’t read them.

All children attempted to read print around them at home, using pictures and other clues to assist them. When they started school, all had a take-home reader to read each night. Most parents used this as a shared book experience. Lia, however, often attempted to read by herself as her mother was too busy. The most frequently used strategies to assist with unknown words were the use of picture clues and sounding out letters in words.

**Phonological awareness.**

Early in the study all children demonstrated some awareness of sounds that letters make and could identify initial sounds in words. Several children recognised rhyming words. As they began to read their take-home readers, they began sounding out letters in unknown words with varied success. Zena demonstrated knowledge of consonant blends and digraphs eg *sh*.

Teale (1986) argued that home backgrounds play a significant role in children’s literacy development and factors, including parent interaction and availability of resources, impact on children’s school success. Despite some children experiencing fewer and less-diverse home literacy experiences than
others, all demonstrated emergent literacy knowledge and skills using resources available to them.

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<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
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<th>Lia</th>
<th>Grace</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Use of alphabet book</td>
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<td>Match of initial sounds to words</td>
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<td>Match words to initial letters</td>
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<td>Recognise words</td>
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<td>Upper and lower case</td>
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<td>Attempts cursive</td>
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<td>Controls computer mouse</td>
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<td>Types on computer</td>
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<td>Uses punctuation</td>
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<td>Use icons on computer</td>
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<td>Label pictures</td>
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<td>Transcribe texts</td>
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<td>Write for a purpose</td>
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<td>Compose stories</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Read environmental print</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read text</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share book reading</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use strategies when reading</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Phonological awareness</strong></td>
<td>Identify rhyming words</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Match initial sounds to words</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify digraphs</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Resources

The parents of children in the study provided access to a range of resources for children to participate in literacy activities at home (see Table 9). Resources varied from home to home but the basic requirements of pens and paper were readily available to all children. Decisions made by parents in relation to resources reflected their values and beliefs about literacy learning at home.

Organisation.

Some parents provided their children with a designated workspace to undertake literacy activities. Lia had no designated workspace or resources but she often perched at the end of the kitchen table and wrote on scraps of paper that she found using biros that were left on the kitchen bench. At times, she got into trouble for writing on important notices or for writing on the walls.

Access.

All children had access to books and other print materials. Some accessed materials from a variety of places including the local council and school libraries to supplement the books at home. Lia had a small selection of second hand books at home but borrowed regularly from the school library.

Materials available.

The range of materials available for children to use varied greatly. Grace and Zena had the largest supply of materials to encourage their participation in creative crafts. These activities often had a literacy component. For example stamps, stickers, sequins, feathers and glue were used to create birthday and Christmas cards. Lia had a meagre quantity of materials in comparison, but she also made Christmas cards using recycled pictures. All children had access to television and all except Jeba had a computer at home. Zena watched videos and listened to CDs of music regularly, but other children did not.
Human Resources.

Children’s literacy experiences at home were undertaken independently or had support of family members. Kaori was an exception. Kaori’s parents employed a tutor to assist her with literacy learning in English as soon as she commenced Year One. The tutor’s lessons were an hour in length and took place several times a week. The tutor revised and extended the literacy learning that took place at school.

Table 9. Resources (Home).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Kaori</th>
<th>Lia</th>
<th>Grace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Designated space</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Storage space for resources</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Council library</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School library</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Home library</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials available</td>
<td>Stationery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Craft supplies</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educational Activities</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Games</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Computer hardware/software</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Books, posters, letters</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Books for writing eg diary,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Television, Videos, CDs, tapes</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Human resources</td>
<td>Support from tutor</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support from family members</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The use of resources by children for literacy activities at home varied in many ways. Some children had designated workspaces and storage spaces and others did not. Some had greater access to books and materials than others. The access and availability of resources impacted on the types of literacy experiences undertaken at home. It should be noted, however, that the limitation of resources experienced by Lia in comparison to other children had no apparent correlation to the knowledge and skills demonstrated in emergent literacy experiences at home, suggesting that other factors (for example, literacy function modelled in the home or engagement with literacy in other contexts) may have greater influence.

Home School Connections

Parents did not seek regular conversations with teachers about their children’s progress. Instead, most relied on homework set by teachers, and
children telling them about their day to inform them of what was happening at school (see Table 10). The building of effective home-school relationships is seen as important for children to experience success in literacy learning. In this study, the nature of the relationship for most families did not conform to the accepted parent-teacher partnership advocated by many educators, in which parents participate in classrooms and share social and cultural resources (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992). However, the relationship between home and school, for most, was positive. Most parents accepted school practices unquestioningly, and showed respect for the teacher. Some took a keen interest in what was being taught at school and extended lessons at home.

Most parents considered homework an important aspect of established home routines as well as an opportunity for repetition and practice of the learning that had occurred at school. Lia’s family was an exception. There was no established routine for homework and, if completed, was usually done independently. However, when the school held a Spellathon to raise money, Lia was sponsored by her father and encouraged to practise words. Lia’s father was proud of her achievement.

Several parents extended homework set by the teacher to include additional tasks that they monitored. For example, Grace and Jeba transcribed take-home readers in order to learn words. Show and Tell provided a further connection between home and school. Children were encouraged by the teacher to bring along something meaningful to the child from home to show the class. It provided an opportunity for children to share interests, activities and cultural artefacts.

Home–school connections did not represent a partnership between parents and teachers. Instead connections were shaped by cultural beliefs and social commitments which influenced how roles were viewed (Keyes, 2002). However, many ensured effective home-school connections were maintained through parents’ interest in the activities of school.
Table 10. Home / School Connections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Kaori</th>
<th>Lia</th>
<th>Grace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Homework</td>
<td>Reads home reader</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Homework</td>
<td>Practises letters and sounds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Homework</td>
<td>Practises sight words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Transcribes text of readers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Writes out unknown words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Practices school worksheets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Participates in Spellathon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Takes Show and Tell to school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Studies of family literacy that mapped dimensions of home environments (Baker, 1999; Hannon, 1995) identified a variety of factors that support children’s literacy development. These included availability of reading materials and technologies, observation of adults reading, parents reading to children regularly, provision of space and opportunity, engagement in dialogue, valuing reading, and connection of home and school literacy. All factors were present in some home environments in this study and varied markedly in others. Despite this, all children’s emergent literacy skill and knowledge developed. This suggests that many factors carried influence in emergent literacy development. For example, the extent to which children instigated activities and sought experiences in other contexts may have influenced development.

Preschool

Data collected at Preschool during the last eight weeks of the school year are reported in this section. These were gathered by video-taping children during inside-play experiences and an interview with the Preschool teacher.

During inside-play, children participated in a variety of structured or open-ended activities using resources and materials set out by the aide and teacher. Activities were planned by the Preschool teacher to develop fine motor skills, encourage social interaction and promote independence. Some activities varied each week. Others, like home corner, remained for as long as children’s interest was sustained. The children generally self-chose activities, but at times, were directed to particular activities by the teacher.
The teacher directed children to activities if they needed to practise a particular skill. For example, if a child needed additional practice in cutting with scissors, the teacher directed the child to a cutting activity and provided assistance. On some occasions, children were directed to a particular activity when individual contributions were required. Individual contributions were required for Christmas preparations and for workbooks they were preparing for parents. At other times, children were directed away from an activity in order to manage emerging, or potential conflict, between children.

**Teacher Values, Attitudes and Beliefs**

Values, attitudes and beliefs of the teacher in relation to teaching and learning reflected a philosophy of early childhood consistent with current Preschool practices (see Table 11). She believed physical, social, cognitive and emotional development of children was important and valued play as an appropriate way to stimulate development. Despite cultural diversity, she expected that most children developed literacy skills and knowledge in similar ways and through similar experiences. This view, according to Goodridge (1995), is shared by many teachers and leaves children of minority cultures to negotiate without help between linguistic and cultural worlds. The teacher planned activities that responded to, and extended ideas and experiences emerging from dominant culture and encouraged children to develop and share skills.

**Learning.**

The preschool teacher believed that children learn through play and participation in activities and that her role was to facilitate their learning by planning and structuring activities and providing resources. This view is consistent with the notion that children learn through active engagement (Neuman & Roskos, 1997) but inconsistent with the view of many parents who valued play only as a social activity. The teacher planned activities in which the
whole class participated – shared book readings, music and news times, as well as structured activities for small groups. Small group activities provided opportunities for children to develop social skills and fine motor skills. The transition between structured and unstructured activities provided further opportunities for establishing routines and facilitating learning. For example, the teacher directed children who wore the colour blue to go and wash their hands, or children whose names started with a particular letter to go to lunch.

**Literacy learning.**

Literate practices were embedded in many activities during inside-play. This is consistent with other studies that identified literacy practices in play (Neuman & Roskos, 1997). The teacher, however, did not teach literacy explicitly. She modelled literate practices by reading books to children, displayed signs in the classroom and assisted children to write their names on artefacts they produced in activities. She encouraged children to explore concepts about print by providing resources to promote literate practices. Studies have shown that provision of literacy resources promotes literacy activity during play (Christie & Enz, 1991; Morrow & Rand, 1991; Neuman & Roskos, 1991b). One activity, for example, included an easel and magnetic letters. Children played with the letters and demonstrated their knowledge of the alphabet, letters and words. Resources in home corner included artefacts to stimulate literate practices and promote displays of literacy knowledge through socio-dramatic play. When home corner was set up as a hospital, an appointment book, calendar and eye chart were provided for children to incorporate into their pretend play. Similar to play activities at home, and in studies by Neuman and Roskos (1989, 1997) children displayed declarative and procedural knowledge and strategic behaviour. Features included children engaging with others in literacy activity, receiving feedback from others, the use of literacy objects, multiple options for activities and purposeful situations unrelated to literacy learning.
**Heritage.**

The teacher believed that children living in Australia needed to understand Australian culture. This view is shared by others who believe that knowledge of the dominant culture is necessary for success at school (Dumais, 2002). Therefore, she emphasised Australian social practices and insisted that all children demonstrated these when at Preschool. These social practices included greeting people, looking at people when speaking to them, and waiting to speak without interrupting. She believed that most children of culturally diverse backgrounds spoke their cultural language at home and her role was to ensure that children communicated effectively in English. She encouraged children and their parents to speak English when at Preschool. These practices were inconsistent with findings in recent studies (Hill, Comber, Louden, Rivalland & Reid, 1998) that success is dependent on the teacher’s ability to build on resources that children bring from home and community.

Few changes were made to the teacher’s program and practices to accommodate children of other cultures. She slowed down her speech and repeated instructions when addressing children with limited English and provided pictorial cues for children with no English. Other practices, for example introducing poems and songs with a chorus or repetition, supported the children’s language and literacy development generally and were not instigated to assist culturally diverse children.

**Achievements.**

The teacher monitored children’s development and gathered artefacts to illustrate their achievements to share with parents. She encouraged them to attempt tasks, and provided scaffolded support that ensured success. This was evident when Jeba attempted to read a letter she had written to her mother. On this occasion the teacher assisted by providing beginning sounds of some words and reading parts that Jeba could not identify, and then encouraged practice until
she could read it independently. She encouraged risk-taking, praising children’s
efforts and achievements.

Table 11. Teacher Values, Attitudes and Beliefs (Preschool).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Teacher facilitates learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical, social, cognitive and emotional development important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children learn through play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children learn through structured and unstructured activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social competence aspect of school readiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fine motor control aspect of school readiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning as fun important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy Learning</td>
<td>Literate practices modelled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities for engaging in literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literacy not explicitly taught at Preschool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental print displayed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognising and writing own name encouraged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literacy resources available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage</td>
<td>Knowledge of Australian culture /social practices important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication in English important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children learn and speak heritage language at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cues assist non-English speaking children to engage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievements</td>
<td>Monitor children’s progress and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharing progress and development with parents important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encouragement and support ensure success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fostering risk-taking and independence important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Praising efforts and achievements important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Roles and Relationships

The teacher’s values, attitudes and beliefs affected roles and relationships
that she and children assumed in Preschool. However, roles and relationships
were influenced, too, by children’s out-of-school experiences including their
cultural knowledge, expectations and skills.

Teacher’s roles and relationships.

Roles that the teacher assumed during interactions with children during
inside-play were similar to those that parents adopted in literacy interactions with
children at home (see Table 12). These were roles of facilitator, co-constructor,
monitor, director and motivator. In addition, the teacher, at times, scaffolded
children’s skill development. However, the didactic nature of some parents’ roles
at home in relation to children’s literacy experiences was not evident in the role of
the Preschool teacher, nor was extended dialogic interaction that some children
experienced with parents.
**Facilitator.**

The teacher described her main role as a facilitator of children's learning. This involved setting up activities and provision of resources. She explained to children the tasks involved in activities, modelled how they were to be done, prompted children to attempt them and provided assistance as required to ensure success.

**Scaffolder.**

To ensure the development of requisite skills for independent use of materials and resources, the teacher scaffolded support for children in similar ways to those summarised by Horsbaum, Peters and Sylva (1996). For example, she scaffolded use of scissors, staplers and glue by providing the support required for them to execute the task successfully, and then, as Bruner (1978) outlined, gradually withdrew the support over time as independence increased. Notably, few examples were found of the teacher scaffolding literacy skills. One example was the provision of scaffolded support for name writing. A second example was the scaffolded support that the teacher provided for some children when they initiated attempts to read her their writing. However, the teacher did not create the potential, or capitalise on opportunities to develop children’s thinking and communicating through language-based social interactions (Wood, & Wood, 1996).

**Co-constructors.**

Another role adopted by the teacher was co-constructors. She negotiated tasks with children and participated in some aspects of activities with them. For example, when playing a board game with a child she explained how to play the game, negotiated which role each would play, and discussed choices made as they played.

**Monitor.**

A further role adopted was that of monitor. The teacher observed children participating in activities and interacting socially with adults and children alike, to
assess coping skills and monitor children’s progress and achievements. The information, together with products and artefacts to illustrate development, was shared with parents and used to plan further activities.

**Director.**

At the commencement of inside-play, the teacher assumed the role of director. She initiated tasks and engaged children to participate, structuring tasks to tailor learning opportunities for individual children. This was similar to the role of some parents who planned opportunities for their children at home.

**Motivator.**

In all activities, the teacher assumed the role of motivator. She encouraged children to participate in activities and take risks in the tasks they attempted. She praised their efforts and provided positive feedback in similar ways to parents.

*Table 12. Teacher Role (Preschool).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td>Provides assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explains tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prompts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organises tasks/resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scaffolder</td>
<td>Supports use of materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supports use of literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-constructor</td>
<td>Negotiates tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participates in activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor</td>
<td>Monitors progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monitors coping skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Initiates tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Structures tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creates learning opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivator</td>
<td>Encourages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Praises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Children’s roles and relationships.*

Most roles that children adopted during inside-play were similar to those enacted at home. These were independent worker, director, collaborator and approval seeker (see Table 13). Additional features were observed at Preschool as children enacted these roles in group activities with opportunities for collaboration with peers. The role of task avoider, however, was not evident as
children usually self-selected activities from the array available or initiated their own.

**Independent worker.**

Children were encouraged to be independent when undertaking activities at Preschool. Being independent meant they were able to initiate activities, make choices and complete tasks without assistance. Other features of being independent included observing others to find out what to do and copying them, and following instructions when the teacher explained them. All children did this. In addition, Zena and Grace demonstrated their independence by making self-corrections during activities which indicated metacognitive activity.

**Director.**

The social nature of activities at preschool provided opportunities for children to direct others during play. Some adopted this role readily by controlling interactions and directing activities. When playing school in home corner, Grace assumed the role of teacher by offering advice to others, issuing instructions, controlling resources and correcting others. She used rules to get her own way and maintain control. She did this by enforcing rules when it suited her purpose. For example, she invoked the Preschool rule that a maximum of four children could play in an area to exclude others from an activity. Similarly, she challenged established rules, challenged children and challenged established boundaries. When playing in home corner she drew a line on the blackboard and told others, with success, that above the line was her space and no-one else could draw there. In this way she maintained control of the blackboard use. In contrast, Jeba did not direct others but maintained a collaborative role during activities to ensure inclusion.

**Collaborator.**

The children all collaborated with others during inside-play at Preschool. They participated in activities, took turns, followed rules and negotiated actions in play and cooperative activities. In addition, they shared resources and assisted
others with activities. Notably, Lia displayed all of the observed features of collaborator. On occasion she sought clarification from the teacher’s aide in relation to tasks.

Approval Seeker.

All children wanted to please and sought approval or confirmation of the tasks they undertook and the artefacts they produced. Usually they sought approval from the teacher or teacher’s aide, but at times they appealed to each other for approval. This was usually done by asking, Do you like mine? They responded positively when encouragement was given and distanced themselves from negative responses, or ignored them.

Critic.

After an unsuccessful attempt to participate in an activity with others, Lia assumed the role of critic, describing children’s artefacts as no good or yukky. In addition to her criticism of others’ work, Lia compared others’ work unfavourably with her own and discredited others’ knowledge. None of the other children was as critical of others’ work.

Children adapted roles according to tasks, their level of involvement in them and their relationship with other children undertaking the same activity. For example, Lia tended to flit from activity to activity. She spent a short period of time at each, sometimes joining in successfully and other times with less success. On other occasions Lia played alone exploring an activity briefly and then moving on. In these examples, as in all roles and relationships, children appeared to be coming to terms with behaviour and practices appropriate in Preschool, determining or negotiating the social order, and meeting their own needs and purposes. They used a variety of tactics and strategies to acquire knowledge and skills, determine what was appropriate, and to achieve their purpose.
Table 13. Children’s Roles (Preschool).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Kaori</th>
<th>Lia</th>
<th>Grace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Initiates activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worker</td>
<td>Completes tasks independently</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observes others</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follows instructions</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self corrects</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independent worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Controls interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Directs activities</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offers advice</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Controls resources</td>
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<td>Challenges boundaries</td>
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<td>Corrects others</td>
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<td>Collaborator</td>
<td>Collaborates with others</td>
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<td>Negotiates with others</td>
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<td>Approval</td>
<td>Seeks approval/confirmation</td>
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<td>Compares work</td>
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<td>Discredits others’ knowledge</td>
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**Interactional Behaviour**

Children used a variety of ways to communicate with others and participate socially during activities at Preschool (see Table 14). Bakhtin (1981, 1986) argued that children use language to situate themselves in the social world. In this study, children used conversation and participation that was characterised by actions, the use of body language and symbolic interactions to situate themselves in the world of Preschool.

Children’s conversation varied according to the nature of the activity in which children were involved. Solitary tasks did not elicit conversation but cooperative activities encouraged children to interact as they accessed and shared resources. All children initiated and participated in conversations, asked
questions, sought assistance or approval, and declared what they knew. In home corner, all children used language to participate in dramatic play. For example, when they played hospitals, they discussed the roles they assumed and explained what they were doing to situate and involve others in the game. As a result, children were drawn into complex language experiences similar to participants in Peter’s (1994) study using similar strategies.

Most children gave verbal instructions to others, and negotiated or challenged rules and roles, or rejected offers of assistance from others. Some used language to explain or query the purpose of activities. Lia used verbal communication frequently in attempts to gain acceptance or attention from others. Sometimes the attempts were successful and other times they were not. Unsuccessful communication attempts resulted from negative comments she made about other children’s artefacts comparing them unfavourably to her own. Other attempts to engage children by asking how to complete a task resulted in successful interactions. All children in the study used a variety of ways to interact and communicate with others and supplemented their verbal communications with non-verbal interactions. Some used symbolic interactions to communicate, supportive of Dyson’s (1995) view that children use a variety of signs to communicate.

Inside-play was set up to encourage children to interact and socialise through activities. The teacher limited the number of children permitted in an activity to four in order to foster successful interactions. She believed this was the optimum number of children in a group to interact and socialise successfully. Participation in inside-play activities was characterised by gaining access, turn taking, engaging others in dialogue and/or play, negotiating the rules of play, rejecting or limiting others’ participation, and responding to others.

All children experimented with tactics and strategies to gain access to, participate or direct activities. Some positioned themselves physically within the activity area, staking a territorial claim. Others planned ahead arranging the
composition of their group and discussed the activities they would undertake before inside-play commenced. Lia found gaining access to activities a challenge. Sometimes, she attempted to engage others in conversation as a way of joining a group. On one occasion she tried to participate without first gaining access by joining in a turn-taking activity with others. The group stopped, moved the resources away from her and she was given a long, silent stare until she moved away. On another occasion she gained access by asking if she could join in. Several of the children gained entry to an activity by standing on the edge of an area until someone left and then they moved in citing the number of children permitted as justification.

Actions or gestures were used by all of the children when playing and copying others. If criticised or challenged, they used body language like turning away or removing themselves from the activity to communicate their responses. Other non-verbal interactions evidenced included children ignoring others if they did not agree or like a verbal message, smiling, laughing or using physical presence to achieve a purpose or to challenge spatial boundaries. Some children used more overt methods to achieve their purpose. Several seized the resources in an activity to control it. Jeba shook her fist to threaten another child, Lia hit another on the hand and Kaori slapped a ruler in her own hand to demonstrate her authority in the role of teacher.

Jeba, Zena and Grace used symbolic interactions to communicate with others. These sometimes took the form of written messages. Jeba’s messages were written in cards and letters that she delivered to her friends. Grace, in contrast, used the symbol of a drawn line to delineate to others the spatial boundaries that she wished to enforce when she played school. She drew a chalk line to identify the space that she considered her own and declared that others could not encroach on it.
Table 14. Interactional Behaviour (Preschool).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Kaori</th>
<th>Lia</th>
<th>Grace</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conversation</td>
<td>Initiates conversation</td>
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<td>Participates in conversation</td>
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<td>Provides commentary</td>
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<td>Asks questions</td>
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<td>Names features</td>
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<td>Criticises others</td>
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<td>Asks for assistance</td>
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<td>Negotiates rules, roles, position</td>
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<td>Enforces rules</td>
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<td>Challenges rules, roles, instruction, concepts</td>
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<td>Queries/explains purpose</td>
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<td>Declares knowledge</td>
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<td>Rejects offers</td>
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<td>Seeks permission</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
<td>Disassociates from others</td>
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<td>(non-verbal</td>
<td>Ignores instructions</td>
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<td>and symbolic)</td>
<td>Uses tactics/strategies</td>
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<td>Threatens others</td>
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<td>Challenges spatial boundaries</td>
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<td>Gives cards/letters</td>
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<td>Writes messages</td>
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<td>Enforces spatial boundaries</td>
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**Learnerly Behaviour**

Children gathered information from participation in activities to operate successfully at Preschool and assist them to make sense of the world generally. All children actively gathered information by experimenting and playing with materials, and exploring the possibilities and options available within activities themselves. As they played with other children, they observed actions and interactions and copied them. Sometimes, they collaborated to create new experiences. The process of gathering information to find out about the world or to add to what was already known is described as framing knowledge (see Table 15). It involved the use of strategies and tactics to gain knowledge and to determine successful and appropriate ways to operate at Preschool.
In some activities and interactions, children displayed an aspect of learnerly behaviour that involved a demonstration of what they knew. All children used a variety of ways to display their knowledge. One was to demonstrate knowledge through action. For example, Lia played with the magnetic letters on the magnetic board and made the word *pig*. Through this demonstration, she displayed some of her knowledge of letters and how they go together to make words.

A second way that some children displayed knowledge was to declare what they knew by providing information to another. Some children displayed their knowledge by providing an explanation, for example, telling others how to complete a task or activity. Zena took knowledge of the months of the year and applied it by reciting the months in order to locate her name on the birthday chart in the classroom. It was an example of successful use of a tactic to achieve a purpose but also revealed what she knew.

It is acknowledged that some of the children’s displays of knowledge may have demonstrated learning. This may have occurred when knowledge displays involved the active process of assimilating new information into existing knowledge structures and resulted in a change in children’s understanding. In such instances, knowledge displays represented understanding performances (Perkins, 1991). It is, however, beyond the scope of this data to make that distinction.

<table>
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<th>Table 15. Learnerly Behaviour (Preschool).</th>
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<td><strong>Characteristic</strong></td>
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**Literacy Experiences**

The teacher planned inside-play activities to provide children with experiences to develop the knowledge and skills required to communicate successfully with others and prepare them for formal learning in Year One. Skills and knowledge that she considered important included language and social skills that enabled children to listen, problem-solve, plan and create activities, fine motor skill for writing, independent use of equipment and materials, and emergent literacy knowledge. Activities that she set out to provide these experiences included blocks, collage, painting, sewing, home corner for dramatic play, book corner and magnetic letters.

Literacy related props such as writing materials, books and stationery were included in the set up of many of these activities. For example, the hospital set up in home corner contained a calendar, telephone and address book, diary, eye chart, notebooks and pencils. Studies have shown that children display existing knowledge and develop concepts about the use of writing in play contexts (Neuman & Roskos, 1989; Schrader, 1989) and addition of literacy props increases literacy activity during play. Furthermore, extending-style interactions with adults during play impact positively on children’s incorporation of literacy into their play (Christie & Enz, 1991; Morrow & Rand, 1991; Neuman & Roskos, 1991a; Vukelich, 1991). No intervention by the teacher to extend literacy use during play was evident in this study, consistent with her belief that it was not her role to teach literacy.

Children’s engagement and participation in activities was monitored by the teacher and used to plan further activities that responded to their interests. Interactions between the teacher and children during play related to scaffolded use of equipment, for example operating the stapler, opening a glue bottle, and provision of encouragement and feedback. Apart from scaffolding name writing on artefacts, literacy scaffolding by the teacher was limited to support for children’s attempts to read their own writing on occasions initiated by children.
The children used their play activities for a variety of literate functions (see Table 16). These were similar to the functions for which they used literacy at home and consistent with other studies (Neuman & Roskos, 1989; Schrader, 1989). They used activities to practise and experiment with print. For example, Lia identified letters and constructed words on the magnetic board and all children experimented with print in home corner, writing in the appointment book and referring to the calendar in addition to experimenting with the use of icons on the computer to create a picture. Secondly, several children used literacy to communicate with their friends by making cards and writing letters. For example, Jeba wrote letters to her mother and to her friend Zena. All children wrote their names on artefacts they created to signal ownership. This was a main focus of the teacher’s interactions with children during inside-play. Grace extended this notion when playing school by drawing a line on the blackboard to designate her space and filling it with writing.

Thirdly, the children used literacy during inside-play activities to gain or impart information. For example, Zena used the birthday frieze to find out when her friends had their birthdays. Lastly, some literacy activities were instrumental in achieving a social purpose within an activity. For example, Grace used her literacy knowledge to assign children’s name-cards and thus assume the role of teacher when playing school in home corner. Similarly, Lia attempted unsuccessfully to use her knowledge of letters and words to join a group of children engaged in constructing words using magnetic letters. This use of literacy knowledge to achieve a social purpose or to influence others during inside-play at preschool was not evident at home or in Year One.

Notably, none of the children were observed reading for pleasure in book corner. However children displayed reading behaviour when engaging with books in home corner when playing school. This suggests that children identified reading as school behaviour.
Table 16. Literacy Functions (Preschool).

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<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
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<th>Lia</th>
<th>Grace</th>
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<td>Exploration and</td>
<td>Read environmental print</td>
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<td>Use computer icons</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
<td>Signal ownership, boundaries</td>
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<td>Write, cards, letters, invitations</td>
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<td>Use knowledge to influence /</td>
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<td>Use knowledge for social purpose</td>
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**Emergent Literacy**

Activities and resources that the teacher made available at inside-play provided children with opportunities to engage in literacy experiences and demonstrate emergent literacy knowledge and skills. Most children self-initiated frequent and regular literacy experiences that involved use of materials and resources provided to demonstrate a range of emergent literacy knowledge. These included concepts about print, alphabet and number knowledge, word knowledge, the mechanics of writing, symbolic representation, reading and writing, and phonological awareness (see Table 17).

**Concepts about print.**

Most children demonstrated knowledge of basic concepts about print required for reading and writing. Kaori was an exception. She initiated or engaged in few literacy experiences during inside-play, instead choosing opportunities for socialising through which she practised, and developed her knowledge of English. Others demonstrated development of concepts related to directionality, where to start on the page, that print contains a message, letters and words, one-to-one correspondence between written and spoken words, and spaces between words. Jeba sometimes did not leave spaces between words when she was writing, demonstrating that this concept was not fully developed.
**Alphabet/number knowledge.**

All children demonstrated some knowledge of the alphabet and numbers during activities. This included identifying and naming letters and numbers, sequencing numbers and demonstrating the addition concept. Activities in home corner, for example, using the calendar when playing receptionist in the hospital, or writing sums on the blackboard when playing teacher, provided opportunities for children to demonstrate their alphabet and number knowledge. Lia frequently used the magnetic letters to demonstrate her knowledge of letter names. Kaori and Grace recorded addition sums on the blackboard when playing teacher in home corner.

**Word knowledge.**

The children did not display a great knowledge of words during inside-play at Preschool. This may be attributed to limited activities and resources set out each day by the teacher to foster use of written words and/or print. Certainly the teacher expressed a belief that it was not her role to teach reading and/or writing. Knowledge demonstrated occurred in activities like playing school, completing the weather chart and playing with the magnetic letters. In these activities the children matched initial sounds to words, recognised words, wrote words from memory or spelt out the letters in words. For example, Grace demonstrated her knowledge of names when she distributed name cards to children when playing school.

**Mechanics of writing.**

The teacher insisted that children write their names on all artefacts produced in activities. This provided the children with regular opportunities to hold a pen correctly, develop fine motor control and to practise writing their names. Children were provided with a name card to copy from until they could attempt to write their name from memory. The teacher and aide scaffolded their attempts to write their names by assisting them to hold the pen correctly,
prompting with the name or shape of letters and modelling how letters are formed for them, diminishing support as independence grew.

During activities, all children coloured in pictures, attempted to write numbers, letters and words and practised the motions of writing using scribble writing. When writing a letter to her mother, Jeba attempted her name in cursive writing. Grace knew that names started with capital letters although she often mixed lower and upper case letters when writing. The teacher encouraged all children to take a turn at the computer to draw a picture. The children used the computer mouse to draw shapes, click on icons to fill the shapes with colour and to drag the eraser across the screen to remove what they had drawn.

**Symbolic representation.**

All children used symbols to represent meaning or to communicate. For example, children drew pictures using pens, paint or the computer. Jeba drew a picture to illustrate her writing. Children used a variety of symbols, letters, numbers and known words as described by Clay (1975) to name artefacts, record sums to demonstrate their knowledge of the addition concept, and note appointments, dates and phone numbers when playing doctors and nurses in home corner.

**Reading.**

All children demonstrated some knowledge of reading during indoor activities. The reading activities that they engaged in ranged from using pictures to locate resources, participating in a shared book reading and reading names on name-cards for children. Kaori was the only child in the study who did not attempt to read books, signs or other environmental print.

**Writing.**

Most of the writing that the children demonstrated related to the writing of their names on artefacts they had made. In addition, children used the literacy resources provided in home corner to simulate writing. Notably, children were observed using scribble or spaghetti writing in home corner but used letters and
words in other activities. This was interpreted as pretending to write when pretending to be Doctors and nurses in home corner. As Gibson (1989) and Sulzby (1986b) observed, children varied their writing according to the activity or setting. When home corner was an area set up to play school, the teacher encouraged writing by providing worksheets for children to practise tracing and drawing shapes, numbers and letters. Jeba initiated writing activities by making a card for Zena and writing a letter to her mother. Kaori, Lia and Grace recorded sums on a blackboard.

**Phonological awareness.**

The children did not initiate many opportunities to demonstrate phonological awareness. Most children matched initial sounds to words when using the magnetic letters and the weather chart. Grace demonstrated her knowledge of letters and sounds to attempt to sound out words to identify name cards.

**Table 17. Emergent literacy (Preschool).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Kaori</th>
<th>Lia</th>
<th>Grace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concepts about Print</td>
<td>Directionality established</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Print contains message</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where to start on page</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One-to-one correspondence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concept of letter, word</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spaces between words</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Concepts about Print</td>
<td>Identifies/names letters</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identifies/names numbers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sequences numbers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Addition concept</td>
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<tr>
<td>Word knowledge</td>
<td>Matches initial sounds to words</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finds words that start with a given letter</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognises words</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Writes sight words from memory</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spells words</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanics of writing</td>
<td>Pencil grip</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fine motor control</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Colours in</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Scribble writes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formation of letters, numbers, words</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attempts cursive</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Controls computer mouse</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Uses punctuation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Symbolic representation</td>
<td>Draws pictures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Spaghetti writing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drawing illustrates writing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses icons on computer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Records Mathematical operations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Writes name</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writes for a purpose</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Role plays reading</td>
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<td>Visual literacy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reads print</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reads environmental print</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shares book reading</td>
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</table>
**Resources**

The teacher provided resources for the structured and open-ended activities she planned. These activities were designed to develop fine motor skills, encourage social interaction and promote independence, as well as provide opportunities for exploration, experimentation and creativity.

**Organisation.**

Each day the teacher and aide set out activities and materials for inside-play. There were three or four planned activities set up in areas, each with a table and four chairs. These included, for example, collage, painting, sewing and pattern making. Other activities like home corner, book corner and block corner occupied a designated space. The teacher restricted the number of children participating in each activity to four, as experience suggested this was the optimum number for successful participation in an activity.

Some of the activities varied from week to week and responded to children’s interests or events happening around them. For example, over the course of this study painting activities included blot pictures, glass painting and the use of stencils. Other activities, like the hospital in home corner, remained for as long as children’s interest was sustained. Several activities were constant. These included book corner and the computer. The teacher varied the books and software programs available.

**Access.**

Children generally chose the activities they participated in and used resources set out. At times, they were directed to particular activities by the teacher if she believed they needed to practise a particular skill. For example, if a child needed additional practice in applying paste, the teacher directed the child
to an activity that involved paste and provided assistance. On other occasions, children were directed to a particular activity when individual contributions were required. Individual contributions were required for Christmas preparations and for the workbooks they were preparing for parents. At other times, children were directed away from an activity if considered too crowded, or to avert social conflict.

**Materials available.**

The Preschool had a wide variety of resources that included furniture and equipment as well as expendable items that were consistently replenished. The hospital in home corner, for example, was set up with beds and dolls, stethoscopes, thermometers, blood pressure monitors and other paraphernalia to support children playing doctors and nurses. The collage area consisted of a table and chairs to work at and a trolley bursting with recycled and purchased materials. These included items like wool, paper and envelopes, corks and cardboard, snippets of straw and seedpods, in fact anything small of an interesting shape and texture. A large carton contained recycled boxes and containers and a shelf stored the necessary equipment like scissors, staplers, glue and pens.

Generally, the teacher chose and set out the resources she wanted children to use for an activity. However, if children were instigating their own activities, the teacher and aide responded to children’s expressed needs, assisting them to utilise a resource or to improvise with materials.

Many of the resources available for activities were utilised by children to display their literacy knowledge. For example, children used the calendar and diary provided in home corner when making appointments for patients to see the doctor. The magnetic letters were used by children to make words or set out known letters, demonstrating the concepts they hold about print.
**Human resources.**

The teacher and teacher aide supported children during activities. In addition, a volunteer parent on a roster sometimes stayed to assist. The teacher saw her role, and the role of the teacher aide, as facilitating children’s development to prepare them for more formal learning in Year One. She did this by planning and setting up activities, providing resources, assisting children to complete tasks and providing positive feedback. She encouraged them to extend their repertoire of skills, make decisions and problem-solve during activities in order to become independent.

**Home-School Connections**

The Preschool teacher valued the exchange of information about children with parents. She initiated informal interactions with parents to keep them informed about physical, social, cognitive and emotional development of children and to find out about their interests, health and wellbeing. Informal interactions occurred at the beginning and end of each day when children were brought into the room by parents often with younger siblings in tow. These interactions were supplemented with formal interviews arranged by the teacher several times a year during which she shared artefacts that children had created to illustrate their skill development.

Most parents of children in this study felt welcome in the Preschool and lingered at the start of the day but did not volunteer to stay to assist. Zena’s mother was an exception. She was critical of the Preschool program and its teacher. She felt that activities were too structured and the program did not develop in children an inquiring mind or a joy of learning. She volunteered regularly to better inform herself about the program. During the study, she considered moving Zena to another Preschool but decided not to as Zena liked the teacher and did not want to leave her friends.
Overall, children initiated many literacy experiences at Preschool. Emergent writing and literacy knowledge displayed in these experiences was similar to that displayed at home. Children, who engaged in many experiences at home, continued to do so at Preschool and expected adults to assume similar roles. Literacy interactions between adults and children were initiated by children and adults adopted roles that were set up by children. Notably, Lia who had few resources at home utilised many literacy resources and initiated many literacy experiences at Preschool and Kaori, who had an abundance of literacy resources at home but limited opportunity for social interaction, chose to participate in socio-dramatic play and engage in social interactions that developed her knowledge of and provided opportunities for English practice.

School

The five children in this study were assigned to three different classrooms at the commencement of Year One. Kaori and Lia went into separate classes while Zena, Jeba and Grace were placed together in a class with an experienced Year One teacher. The literacy experiences within this Year One classroom became the focus of study.

Teacher Values, Attitudes and Beliefs

The values, attitudes and beliefs of the Year One teacher described here underpinned the literacy practices observed during writing time in the classroom. They related to learning generally and literacy learning specifically, as well as children’s cultural heritage and achievement (see Table 18). Her values, attitudes and beliefs were very different from those of the Preschool teacher.

Learning

The Year One teacher valued the personal knowledge, skills and experiences of each child and saw herself as facilitating their continued learning. This is consistent with a view expressed by Hill, Comber, Louden, Rivalland &
Reid (1998) that success is dependent on the teacher’s ability to recognise and build on resources that children bring with them to school. The teacher believed that children learn in individual ways and that her teaching should respond to individual and collective needs. She did this in whole class, small group and individualised writing activities. For example, the teacher modelled the process of writing to the whole class at the start of each writing lesson before she encouraged children to write individually or in small groups and then to share their writing with the class. She believed that children learn collaboratively and from others more experienced in similar ways identified by Rogoff (1986, 1990) in effective collaboration. Therefore, she encouraged children to choose others to work with in small groups recognising the potential for learning that is created within these interactions consistent with Hammond (2001) and Wells (1999). The teacher’s belief embraced a sociocultural perspective and recognised that language is central to teaching and learning and plays a role in mediating actions (Vygotsky, 1978).

A variety of roles (see below) were adopted to assist children with their writing and dialogue was an integral part of the process. The teacher used deliberate language, for example, to elicit children’s knowledge and ideas, to make tasks and expectations explicit, and to establish a positive environment. She believed that establishment of an environment where children were willing to experiment, take risks, experience success, develop confidence, and support one another was important. This encouraged the development of confidence and success. The teacher believed success was a great motivator for children. It was important, too, for the teacher to be seen as an active learner and so she modelled and explained her own learning processes whenever she could.

In effect, the classroom teacher established a classroom community (Lave & Wenger, (1991) with evolving cultural and social practices.
Literacy learning.

The teacher valued the learning of literacy highly and saw literacy as a variety of ways to communicate with others. For children to become literate, they needed to see literacy being modelled in a wide variety of situations, perceive it as an integral part of daily life, and value its usefulness. In addition, children needed to be immersed in a print environment. The teacher believed the children in her class experienced this at home, in the community, as well as in her classroom.

The teacher believed that for children to learn literacy, they needed to see themselves as literate people, that is, as readers and writers. She fostered this from the first day of school by encouraging them to experiment by having a go at reading and writing on a daily basis. She referred to the children as authors and readers and writers. She believed daily practice was necessary and encouraged them to draw first, talk about their picture with a friend or with the teacher, and then to write. All attempts at writing were encouraged through sharing with others, positive feedback and celebration.

At the commencement of Year One, the children were encouraged to talk, draw and write about their personal experiences in and out of school. The teacher saw this as a way of ensuring the children had something familiar to write about and provided an opportunity for her to learn about the children, their experiences and interests. In addition, it assisted in developing her relationship with them. This was one way the teacher took account of the cultural diversity in the classroom by developing knowledge of children’s social and cultural experiences. Later in the year, she introduced a range of genre including letters, recipes, reports, narratives and poems.

The children were encouraged to become independent writers. The teacher did this by modelling and explaining the writing process, and using a problem solving approach to develop use of strategies. For example, if a child asked for assistance in writing a word, she would ask them what problem-solving
strategies they had employed. Firstly, children were encouraged to see if the word was in the soap-box of sight words (introduced words that children learned to recognise by sight) that they kept in their desk. Secondly, they were directed to look and locate it elsewhere in the room. Then they were encouraged to sound out the word and record the letters they could hear. Lastly, they could ask a friend.

The teacher believed that parents, teachers and children needed to share their expectations and work together to promote children’s literacy learning. She fostered the connections between home and school by organising regular meetings with parents and setting homework tasks for children that provided practice or revision of tasks the children had completed at school.

**Heritage.**

Each child in the class was viewed as a unique individual. The teacher believed that all children came from culturally diverse backgrounds, and that the cultural differences amongst Australian children were as varied as the differences amongst children from overseas countries.

The teacher valued the knowledge, skills and experiences that all children shared from their heritage cultures. She believed they were a rich resource to be used within the classroom to foster understanding and acceptance of the variety of ways of knowing and thinking. For example, she encouraged children to share their customs, beliefs and ways of doing things and invited parents into the classroom to enrich the program. In this way she fostered the concept of the classroom as a community of learners (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and encouraged a classroom culture that evolved over time as inclusive and caring. The value afforded to cultural heritage and practices evident in the Year One classroom, described by Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez (1992) as funds of knowledge, contrasted with Preschool where only Australian cultural practices were acknowledged.
Achievements.

The establishment of a positive environment was important, the teacher believed, for children to achieve their potential. She provided encouragement and support for children to have a go at writing, to experiment and to take risks without the fear of failure. She believed it was important to praise children’s efforts and their achievements and to share these with their parents so those children continued to strive to do well.

The teacher monitored the children’s literacy progress closely by mapping children on a developmental continuum. This guided her teaching and formed the basis of collaborative goal setting between the teacher and the children. Collaborative goal setting was one way that the teacher encouraged the children to become metacognitive and reflect on the writing process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Teacher facilitates learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher scaffolds learning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children learn in individual ways</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Language / communication important</td>
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<td></td>
<td>High expectations foster learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Supportive / positive environment fosters learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Children learn by doing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Children learn from others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Teachers are learners too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Risk-taking and experimentation important</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Confidence and positive attitude important</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Making tasks / expectations explicit important</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Success is a good motivator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literacy learning</td>
<td>Being literate important</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Literacy is communicating</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Modelling of literacy learning important</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Print environment important</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Having-a-go fosters literacy learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Practice is necessary</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Encouragement / feedback / celebration important</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Getting started writing with pictures / experience</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Identifying as a reader, writer fosters development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Problem solving skills / strategies foster independence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Home/school connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage</td>
<td>Every child culturally diverse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural heritage enriches / resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Acceptance of customs / beliefs / ways of doing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Classroom culture evolves</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Home/school connection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Achievements</td>
<td>Monitor children’s progress and development</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharing progress and development with parents important</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Encouragement and support ensure success</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fostering risk-taking and independence important</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Praising efforts and achievement important</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promote metacognitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Roles and Relationships**

The values, attitudes and beliefs of the Year One teacher influenced her teaching and the roles and relationships she developed with the children. The roles that the children assumed resulted from their accumulated knowledge and skills and their response to the teacher.

**Teacher roles and relationships.**

The roles that the teacher assumed during writing sessions with the children had many features in common with the roles that parents adopted in literacy experiences at home and the roles the Preschool teacher demonstrated in Preschool (see Table 19). However, there were additional features evident in the role of motivator and scaffold.

**Facilitator.**

In writing sessions the teacher’s role of facilitator involved providing assistance to children when they were writing, explaining what was required in activities and providing prompts when children were unsure of what to do. This included helping a child to organise their writing book and pencil, getting them to describe an experience they wanted to write about, and making suggestions. It involved prompting children to draw a picture or to think of what they wanted to write next, and modelling aspects of the writing process. For example, the teacher modelled how to find the next blank page in a child’s book, how to find a letter on an alphabet strip and how to locate words on display in the classroom.

**Co-constructor.**

The Year One teacher’s role of co-constructor was similar to the role that the Preschool teacher assumed. One of the features involved the teacher participating in activities with the children. In writing sessions, for example, the teacher participated in the joint construction of text about shared experiences. Secondly, she negotiated tasks as a way of getting them started, especially early in the year when some children were reluctant writers. She negotiated with Zena that if she attempted to write down some sounds in a word she would add the
rest. As co-constructor, the teacher contributed information to the discussion of ideas as a member of the group and collaborated with them. For example, when Zena talked about the apples that her auntie grew in Tasmania, the teacher told them about other fruit that grow in Tasmania. This occurred frequently when Zena, Jeba and Grace were planning and discussing what they were going to write.

**Monitor.**

The teacher monitored the children’s progress in a variety of ways. She observed and read their writing, listened to individual contributions to writing discussions, noted responses to questions posed and interacted with them during writing time. As part of the monitoring process, the teacher noted the coping skills of individual children and adjusted her expectations, the level of support provided and the challenges offered accordingly. Writing progress was tracked against a *Continuum of Writing Development* used by all Queensland schools to monitor children’s progress.

**Director.**

Another role that the teacher assumed that was integral part of writing lessons was that of director. This role was evident at the beginning and end of writing sessions when she directed children to tasks or told them to stop writing and come to share their writing in a circle on the carpet. During the writing session she re-focused children if they became distracted or needed to complete their picture and begin writing some words to go with it. She initiated and structured writing tasks when she introduced a new style of writing to the class and when they were writing for a specific purpose. At other times, the teacher directed children when she instructed them in aspects of writing.

**Scaffolder.**

The teacher scaffolded children in the writing process in similar ways to those outlined by Rogoff (1986, 1990) as features of effective collaboration. She provided support for children to succeed in their attempts and adjusted the level
of support required as they became more proficient and more independent. Oftentimes the support took the form of verbal cues. For example, the teacher observed Jeba’s drawing and asked: *I wonder what that’s going to be about? What’s the bunny doing?* and later *What happened when the bunny came to the traffic light?* In this way the teacher supported Jeba in planning and rehearsing what she was going to write and provided a structure for later use. The teacher regulated support to ensure increased independence and responsibility for decision-making passed to the child. For example, when she had read Grace’s writing she asked her if she has written a whole sentence and then elicited from Grace how she might do that. In this example the teacher used verbal cues to extend/challenge Grace.

**Motivator.**

A large proportion of the teacher’s time was spent motivating children during the writing sessions. She moved around the groups of children praising their drawings and writing attempts saying things like *I love that picture you’ve drawn today* and *Very good try Jeba.* She encouraged them with *Can I help you get started? Can I help you with what you want to write?*

The teacher constantly validated and affirmed for the children that their writing attempts were worthwhile. When Grace showed the teacher her writing, the teacher said, *Oh well done Grace* and smiled and looked pleased. Then she said, *What does it say? Start from the beginning and read it to me. I can read it myself, but I’d like you to read it to me.* By saying this she was affirming for Grace that her writing was readable.

She showed interest in the children’s experiences by asking them questions to elicit more information and demonstrated approval of their writing efforts. This individual contact and good humour with each child assisted in building rapport. On one occasion she commented on Grace’s drawing, *I love your red dog. Was he out in the sun too long?*
Each writing session ended with a sharing time. This provided an opportunity for the teacher to celebrate publicly individual children’s achievements and to show that she valued their writing. It also provided an opportunity for the teacher to promote writing as a fun activity and to foster a positive attitude towards writing.

The teacher set high expectations for the children, encouraging them to become independent writers. When they asked for help, she often asked them to have a try first. Often she challenged them by asking questions about their writing like: Does that sound right? Do you need to change a word?

Table 19. Teacher Roles (Year One).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td>Provides assistance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Explains tasks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Prompts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Organises tasks/resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Models</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-constructor</td>
<td>Participates in activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Negotiates tasks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Contributes information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitor</td>
<td>Monitors progress</td>
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<td>Monitors coping skills</td>
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<td>Observes</td>
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<td>Checks / corrects</td>
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<td>Clarifies meaning</td>
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<td>Director</td>
<td>Initiates tasks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Structures tasks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Directs children to tasks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Re-focuses children on tasks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Instructs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motivator</td>
<td>Praises</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Encourages</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Validates / affirms</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shows interest</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shows approval</td>
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<td>Challenges</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Celebrates</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Values</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Builds rapport</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotes activities as fun</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fosters positive disposition</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fosters independence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sets high expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scaffolder</td>
<td>Provides / adjusts support</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Makes explicit</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Makes connections</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Adjusts / extends tasks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provides cues</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Children’s roles and relationships.

During writing sessions Grace, Jeba and Zena sat together at a table. Others joined them from time to time, but the three girls chose to write together.
The children adopted the same roles in Year One that they had in Preschool. These were the roles of independent worker, director, collaborator, approval seeker and critic (see Table 20). The features of roles that individual children displayed varied between Preschool and Year One and varied amongst children.

**Independent worker.**

Children showed increased writing independence in Year One across the course of this study. All showed progress in their ability to initiate ideas for writing and complete some writing independently. They observed others sounding out the letters in words, locating words on the walls in the room and writing them. They followed the teachers’ instructions and the directions they gave each other. All children copied words that others had written and at times rejected assistance when it was offered as their independence increased. Jeba and Grace were more self-reliant than Zena in writing time as Jeba had good knowledge of letters and sounds having practised them at home, and Grace had learned some words. Zena, in contrast, was very dependent and constantly appealed to Grace and Jeba to help her. She, like Grace, was easily distracted from writing, but Jeba focused on the task and ignored distractions when it suited her.

**Director.**

As she grew in confidence, Zena more frequently assumed a directing role. She issued instructions, corrected others writing attempts, offered advice, modelled how to write words for others and informed them what to write about. She did not, however, attempt to control interactions the way that Jeba did. Jeba had a position of influence in the group because she was confident in her knowledge of many letters and sounds and she used this knowledge to correct others’ writing attempts and instruct them on how to spell words. Grace deferred to Jeba at first until she realised that Jeba often confused sounds and words. On one occasion she asked Jeba how to spell the word *saw*. When she had written the letters Jeba told her, she looked at it and realised it was incorrect. She
rubbed it out and found the word in a reader. After that occasion, Grace began to challenge Jeba’s advice but still sought it and refused to share her eraser with Jeba unless Jeba helped her to spell a word. On other occasions, Grace hid resources in order to control interactions.

**Collaborator.**

Over time, the three girls collaborated well together during writing time. When planning, they discussed ideas to write about and the process of writing. They shared experiences, read what they had written to one another and co-constructed stories. Assistance was sought and offered. They prompted each other about what came next and asked for clarification if they didn’t understand what one had written.

**Approval seeker.**

All three girls sought approval from one another and from the teacher, responding to the encouragement offered. Grace in particular, sought feedback from the teacher. She often left her desk to show the teacher her work. This is notable, as her mother did not praise Grace’s efforts at home. Her mother believed that Grace would not strive to improve if she thought she did well at school. Zena, in contrast, did not seek approval although she lacked confidence in her writing ability. At first, she was reluctant to write but willingly told her experiences to the teacher. However, over time Zena responded to encouragement from the teacher and attempted to write about her experiences.

**Critic.**

In a friendly and totally guileless way, Zena and Jeba praised each other’s work and criticised it too. Zena, for example, told Jeba her picture wasn’t very colourful and, on a separate occasion, that she had not written a very good sentence. The latter comment referred to Jeba’s handwriting. Grace criticised the other girls but did not praise their efforts. Perhaps this may be attributed to the fact that her mother did not praise her work.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Grace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent worker</strong></td>
<td>Initiates ideas, activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Completes tasks independently</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Observes others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Follows instructions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Self corrects</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Copies others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rejects assistance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ignores distractions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Self-reliant</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Director</strong></td>
<td>Issues instructions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Corrects others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Offers advice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Models process/procedure</td>
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<td>Instructs/informs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Challenges others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Controls resources</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborator</strong></td>
<td>Assists others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Seeks clarification</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Prompts others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Seeks peer assistance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Accepts peer assistance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shares writing / experiences</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Plans with others</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discusses ideas / process</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shares resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Co-constructs story</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Approval seeker</strong></td>
<td>Seeks peer approval</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Seeks teacher approval/confirmation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Critic</strong></td>
<td>Praises others</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Criticises others</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Interactional Behaviour

In the classroom, children communicated with the teacher and each other in English. Consequently, Jeba was withdrawn from the classroom several times a week to receive support from an English as Second Language (ESL) teacher. Grace did not receive this support, as her mother did not wish her to miss class activities and additional support was considered unnecessary.

The teacher believed that collaboration stimulated children to write and facilitated the acquisition of writing skills from others more experienced. Therefore, children were encouraged to work together in small groups and interactions amongst them fostered. Zena, Grace and Jeba chose to sit together at writing time and were joined occasionally by others. They used a variety of ways to communicate and participate in writing activities. Similar to Preschool,
their interactions were comprised by conversation and participation in activities that featured non-verbal language and symbolic interactions. The interactions in Year One during writing sessions, however, provided mutual support for children to engage in the writing process.

All children initiated, engaged others and participated in conversations (see Table 21). The conversations related either to experiences in and out of school that they chose subsequently to write about, or to writing processes that they undertook. For example, Jeba declared at the start of a writing session, *I’m going to write about Easter*, to which Zena responded, *Me too I don’t know yet what I’m going to say I’m going to think about it.* Another child declared *I’m going to draw first.* Grace added *I’m going to write first.* These conversations demonstrated various approaches children took on starting a writing session, cued everyone to begin and revealed children’s awareness of strategic knowledge. They also illustrated planning that Das and Parrila (1995) described as an integral part of all stages of the writing process.

Early in the year, the children shared aloud the sentences they were going to write. The teacher scaffolded these declarations at times. For example, she pointed to a bike in Grace’s picture and asked *Who’s on the bike?* Grace replied, *Dad.* The teacher prompted again, *Could you write about that? What could you say?* Grace responded *My Dad is riding a bike* and proceeded to write her spoken words.

Sometimes, children discussed ideas for writing and co-constructed texts verbally by individually contributing ideas to extend it. For example, Jeba asked Grace what she liked, to which Grace responded *I like to jump on my bed.* A conversation followed, with everyone elaborating on the concept of jumping on the bed to include jumping very high, touching the roof, and discussing bouncy beds and bunk beds. All then returned to their writing. As writing skills and knowledge increased, the girls used conversation as a way of planning at three levels that included activity-planning, action-planning, and operation-planning.
(Das & Parrila, 1995). For example, they discussed objectives, rehearsed their writing, discussed word formation and shared phonological awareness and concepts about print.

All children asked and answered questions, and offered assistance and advice to each other. At the beginning of the year, Zena and Grace relied heavily on Jeba to assist them to spell the words they wanted to write, as Jeba appeared more knowledgeable about letters and sounds. The teacher encouraged them to sound out words for themselves, and their dependence on Jeba’s skills diminished, especially as Grace became aware that Jeba’s spelling was not always correct. Children assisted each other in strategy selection and use. For example, when a child needed to write an unknown word, they were prompted to locate it on a wall chart, in the soap-box of sight words they kept under their desk or to use other problem-solving approaches. As their knowledge and skills increased, all children rejected offers of assistance from others saying I know, don’t tell me and I know that.

Children sought approval from each other and from the teacher frequently. Jeba and Zena praised others’ writing readily but Grace did not. Grace’s restraint in praising others may have stemmed from her mother’s example. The mother believed that praising Grace’s effort would develop a high self-opinion and result in reduced diligence. However, Grace used a variety of tactics to seek approval and positive feedback from the teacher and then responded by applying herself to her writing with enthusiasm and determination.

Grace and Zena were critical of others’ writing. For example, Zena criticised Jeba’s writing telling her, That’s not a very good w and That’s not a very good sentence. On another occasion she told Jeba, You’re not holding your pencil correctly. When Zena herself was criticised, she did not respond verbally but became quiet and withdrawn. During these times she found it difficult to write and spent her time rubbing out and rewriting words. On occasion, Zena queried the tasks children were set. For example, she challenged why it was necessary
to write the date at the top of her writing each day. No one else queried tasks or clarified their purpose. Zena’s queries may be attributed to the encouragement she received at home to critically appraise actions and ideas.

Participation in writing sessions was characterised by interactions with others and independent work. Children employed cooperative and collaborative strategies to plan and rehearse their writing, problem solve when writing words and sentences, gain assistance, share and access resources and to elicit feedback. When attempting to write independently, they continued to copy the behaviour and strategies that were being demonstrated by others around them. The modelled behaviours and strategies served as motivation and encouraged children to persist in their writing attempts. Similarly, children responded to verbal encouragement by persisting with tasks and ignored or rebuffed criticism. All developed strategies over time to disengage from interactions and to write independently. For example, Jeba responded to a request for help from Zena by saying, *Stop asking me. I can’t write for you. Please don’t ask me.* When Zena persisted, Jeba continued, *Actually I sound it out and think about what to write when I have something I don’t know how to write* demonstrating metacognitive awareness and strategic knowledge.

**Table 21. Interactional behaviour (Year One).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic (non-verbal and symbolic)</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Grace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conversation</td>
<td>Initiates / participates in conversation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Seeks / offers advice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Informs / declares information</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Asks / responds to questions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Seeks clarification</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Explains</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Criticises others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Responds to criticism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gives instructions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Seeks approval</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Praises</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Corrects others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Queries purpose of activity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rejects assistance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cooperates / collaborates</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provides assistance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Works independently</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Copies behaviour</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shares / accesses resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Disengages</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Demonstrates for others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Responds to encouragement</td>
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</table>
Learnerly Behaviour

The children gathered information and acquired knowledge about literacy and writing, the classroom culture, and ways of operating from their conversations with the teacher and each other, and from participation in writing activities (see Table 22). All gathered information by experimenting with writing, observing and copying others, and responding to the teacher’s instruction, guidance and support. They explored the possibilities of interactions within the writing session and at times were re-focused on the writing task by the teacher who made her expectations of their behaviour explicit. Several children queried or questioned reasons for doing tasks and sought clarification from the teacher. The process of gathering information and acquiring knowledge is described as framing knowledge in this study. Framing knowledge is considered to illustrate a child’s action learning and is learnerly behaviour.

During writing sessions, children displayed their literacy and writing knowledge, knowledge of the classroom culture and ways of operating. They also showed their knowledge of the world through their conversations and actions and through their writing. For example, Zena had drawn a picture with lots of trees and apples and a sun. When the teacher questioned Zena about her picture she provided information about her trip to Tasmania, the climate and what fruit grows there. After some prompting by the teacher, she started writing. She said aloud the words she wanted to write, and recorded the letters she could hear and the words she knew. Then she sought words from her soap-box or the wall chart or by asking for help. In this activity Zena displayed her knowledge in these areas. First she indicated her knowledge of subject matter by declaring what she knew. She also showed her knowledge of the writing process by applying what she knew. Finally, she demonstrated her knowledge of strategy use to write words she didn’t know. Similar to the situation in Preschool, children revealed declarative and procedural knowledge as well as strategic knowledge (Neuman & Roskos, 1977). In some knowledge displays children demonstrated an
awareness of their own thinking and learning processes. For example, when Jeba explained the process she went through to write a word she didn’t know, she was displaying a metacognitive awareness of the writing process. Other metacognitive displays demonstrated by children included the planning of writing, self-monitoring of their writing development and an evaluation of assistance provided. For example, when children declared the sounds they could identify in a word and the sounds they needed assistance with, they were displaying an awareness of their ability and the level of support required. Some of the children’s knowledge displays and metacognitive displays constituted learning performances. When new information was assimilated into existing knowledge structures and resulted in a change in children’s understanding, learning occurred. However, it is beyond the scope of this data to identify learning performances.

Table 22. Learnerly behaviour (Year One).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Grace</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Framing</td>
<td>Experiments</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Collaborates</td>
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<td>Observes</td>
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<td>Copies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Queries / questions / clarifies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Challenges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge Displays</td>
<td>Demonstrates</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Explains</td>
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<td>Declares</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Applies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Metacognitive Displays</td>
<td>Uses strategies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Plans</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Self-monitors</td>
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<td></td>
<td>evaluates assistance provided</td>
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**Literacy Experiences**

The Year One teacher identified assisting children with their literacy development as her main focus. She recognised that children arrived at school with substantial knowledge and skill and her role was to facilitate further development. Literacy experiences were embedded in most classroom activities and not restricted to scheduled reading and writing lessons. The teacher used opportunities as they arose across the day to engage with literacy, impart
information and make processes explicit. Therefore, data gathered in writing sessions in this study represent only a portion of the literacy experiences in which children engaged in the classroom.

The literacy experiences of all children in the writing sessions had common characteristics. First, the teacher modelled the process of writing for the whole class. During this part of the session, the children were grouped on the carpet in front of a whiteboard. She explained her thinking and her actions when she approached a writing task. For example she described how she came up with ideas, how she planned and rehearsed sentences she wanted to write and how she sounded out words in order to identify the letters she needed to write. Children assisted the teacher to recognise sounds and she used opportunities as they arose to identify word families (for example hill, pill, will), and to develop phonological awareness.

Second, children joined small groups to compose in their writing books. Zena, Grace and Jeba formed a group that was joined by others on occasion. The literacy experiences of this part of the writing session were the focus of this study. They were comprised by three main activities. These were conversations amongst the children, drawing and writing, and interactions with the teacher.

Conversations amongst children were free-ranging and related to experiences both in and out of school. Some shared social and cultural experiences represented funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992) or were used by children to position themselves socially in the world of the classroom (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986). For example, the children discussed a boy in Preschool that they all agreed was naughty. Grace and Jeba referred to the boy as she. Zena pointed out to them that they should have used him and he. Grace and Jeba repeated what they had said using the correct pronouns. All children contributed to these conversations, which focused on their experiences at the beginning of the year and then about the process of writing later in the year.
Children were encouraged to draw a picture and then write about it. For several children writing consisted of captions that labelled features in the picture. Others attempted to write sentences. As children progressed with their writing, sentences replaced captions and extended in length over time to become pages of writing. Some children continued to draw a picture before writing while others chose to write first. The children developed strategies for writing unknown words that included asking a friend, finding it in their soap-box of sight words, locating it on a word wall or in environmental print, sounding out, and applying phonic rules or phonological knowledge.

The teacher used pictures that children had drawn to engage them in conversation, build rapport and elicit information to write about. For example, she commented on Jeba’s picture, *That looks interesting. I wonder what that’s going to be about.* Jeba replied, *a bunny.* The teacher asked her what the bunny was doing and then extended Jeba’s response by commenting *and I wonder what’s going to happen when the bunny comes to the traffic light.* In this way, Jeba was supported in her formulation of ideas to extend her writing beyond an initial sentence.

Interactions with children were used by the teacher to develop word knowledge and sounding out ability, to reinforce use of problem-solving strategies, to develop independence and to provide positive feedback and encouragement. For example, she pointed to an attempt that Grace had made to write the word *jump.* It appeared as *jap.* The teacher said, *Listen to jump* and then repeated it slowly several times. *Can you hear another sound in there? What sound can you hear?* Grace replied, *uh* and the teacher responded, *What letter makes that sound? Show me on the alphabet.* At this point she abandoned the idea of showing Grace that a letter was missing in her writing to focus on the sound that letter *u* makes. This example illustrated how the teacher adjusted to the child’s focus and capitalised on the teachable moment as it arose.
At the end of the writing session, children shared their writing with the class. The teacher supported children’s reading of their writing, encouraged positive responses and feedback from others, and facilitated discussions about writing process and strategy use.

Children’s literacy experiences within the writing session comprised of interactions, conversations, and writing activity, incorporated a variety of functions (see Table 23). Many were similar to the functions identified at Preschool and at home and similar to those identified in children’s play (Neuman & Roskos, 1989). First, children continued to explore and experiment by practising letters and numbers using paper and pencils and the computer, and building words and sentences. All applied the concepts they held about print to the process of writing, and some attempted to punctuate, edit and experiment with the generic structure of texts. All experimented with the writing process, planning and rehearsing verbally.

Second, all children expressed their personal feelings, views, thoughts and ideas both verbally and in writing. With the teacher’s encouragement and support they reflected on writing development and experiences. On one occasion Zena turned the pages of her writing book, commenting to the other children, That was when I went to… and then turned the page and said Oh! That was when… She proceeded to reflect on past experiences as she turned pages.

A third function of literacy experiences was to communicate. All children shared ideas and experiences and provided support and assistance for one another through conversation and interactions. They critiqued each other’s writing and most (except Grace) offered praise and encouragement. They communicated with family and friends through letters and cards and signalled ownership of resources they shared by naming them. At times, however, writing tasks often appeared to have little connection with literacy use outside of school. For example, the activity of drawing a picture and writing about it in a book kept at school did not have the same purpose or connection to real-life that writing a
letter to grandma had. There were times, however, when children and the teacher created purposes for their writing that extended beyond schoolwork. These included sending emails, creating recipes, and making shopping lists for classroom cooking.

All children used writing sessions to provide information and share their knowledge with others both verbally and through their writing. As knowledge of the writing process increased, they used it to correct others. For example, they pointed out when words were spelled incorrectly, or when letters were poorly formed, or where spaces between words forgotten.

Last, all children used knowledge and skill at some time to exert power, or to influence others in the writing group to achieve a social purpose. For example, at the beginning of Year One, the other children were dependant on Jeba for support as she had superior letter / sound knowledge. She encouraged them as it was a means for her to gain acceptance and prominence in the group.

Table 23. Literacy Functions (Year One).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Grace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploration and</td>
<td>Write letters, numbers, words and sentences</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>experimentation</td>
<td>Apply concepts about print</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Write using process</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use computer keyboard, icons</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Punctuate</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Edit writing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Structure letters, lists, recipes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Reflect on writing development</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Express feelings, views, thoughts, ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Describe personal experiences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Signal ownership</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share ideas and experiences</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Critique</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Praise, encourage</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide support, assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Write cards, letters,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Provide information, knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seek information, strategies, assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Use knowledge to influence/ exert power / influence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use knowledge to achieve social purpose</td>
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</table>

**Emergent / Early Literacy**

Across the course of the study, all children displayed many of the characteristics of early literacy in writing sessions. These related to writing
structure, use of words, language conventions, composing process, editing and
description, engaging in the writing task (see Table 24). They signal children’s
development from emergent to more conventional writing.

**Writing structure.**

At the commencement of Year One, children’s writing consisted of a small
range of familiar text forms. These included simple recounts of personal events
or an observation and comment. Writing was usually a simple description that
included little elaboration. Children wrote in a style that represented spoken
language, as it was a record of sentences they had created and rehearsed
verbally within group conversation. Writing was sometimes without punctuation,
although some punctuation emerged over time. Frequently, sentences were
joined using *and* or *then*. Familiar patterns were often repeated in writing. All
girls began to use simple orientation and story development with some narrative
structure and Jeba included dialogue in her writing.

**Word usage.**

All girls used words in their writing that they identified by sight and located
on signs and charts in the classroom or from environmental print. Sight words
that the teacher had introduced were kept for easy reference in a soap-box in
their desk. They referred to these frequently and copied them. In addition they
sounded out words and recorded the sounds they heard. All used words they
had encountered in talk about writing. These were often words that the teacher
had discussed with the class in the modelling of writing session and involved
discussion of the similarities and differences in words, the way words were
formed, and their meanings.

**Language conventions.**

As writing skill and knowledge developed, the children attempted to apply
language conventions although these were not applied consistently. All inserted
full stops at times, with some doing so liberally, not just at the end of a sentence.
Similarly, all sometimes used a capital letter and attempted question marks.
Most writing was in first person, although all attempted to write in third person. Usually, all girls used appropriate subject and verb agreement but Jeba struggled with appropriate noun / pronoun agreement (she to refer to a boy) and consistent tense. She sometimes created a title for her writing that reflected the content, although the other children in the group didn’t.

**Composing process.**

All girls demonstrated similar composing processes. This was to be expected as they worked collaboratively, discussing and supporting each other as they tried to master the writing process. They all drew pictures from experiences, planned and verbally rehearsed what they were going to write, and then recorded it. As they wrote, they repeated words slowly and recorded the letters to correspond with the sounds they made. The writing process involved frequent re-reading of what they had written to maintain word sequence, self-prompt, and ensure meaning. Revisions and corrections were made as they composed.

**Editing.**

Revisions that all children made as they composed included changes to words to clarify meaning, rewriting to correct spelling, proof-reading for meaning and errors, and to add information. At times, additional information clarified meaning but other times supplemented what was written.

**Engagement.**

All girls experienced a sense of achievement through writing. Evidence of this was provided in their conversations with each other and the teacher. For example, Grace told everyone at her table, *I done really great work, today* and then took it to show the teacher. One outcome was the girls’ increased perseverance at writing tasks and preoccupation with getting everything right. Zena struggled to write independently and found writing difficult because of the complexity of the task. She sought assistance regularly from the others. Grace
and Jeba resented Zena’s interruptions at times, ignoring her or telling her that they didn’t want to be interrupted.

Table 24. Early Literacy (Year One).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Jeba</th>
<th>Zena</th>
<th>Grace</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing structure</td>
<td>Writes simple recount of personal events</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Writes observation and comment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Uses simple orientation and story development</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses some narrative structure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Writes complete sentences with or without punctuation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Writes in a style that represents oral language</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Includes some dialogue</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Repeats familiar patterns in writing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joins simple sentences using and or then</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes little elaboration, usually simple description</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses a small range of familiar text forms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Word Usage</td>
<td>Transfers words encountered in talk to writing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Uses known sight words</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Uses environmental print</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Locates introduced words in soap-box and copies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Discusses word formations and meanings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sounds out words</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notices similarities and differences in words</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language conventions</td>
<td>Sometimes uses full stops</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overgeneralises full stops</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sometimes uses a capital letter to start a sentence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses capital letters for names</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Attempts use of question marks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Often writes in the first person</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Attempts writing in both first and third person</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Usually uses appropriate subject/verb agreements</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usually uses appropriate noun/pronoun agreements</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Usually maintains consistent tense</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes writes a title which reflects content</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Composing Process</td>
<td>Draws picture from experience and then writes about it</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rehearses verbally before writing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plans verbally before writing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Says words slowly and records sounds</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Re-reads own writing to maintain word sequence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Re-reads to self prompt</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Re-reads to ensure meaning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Re-reads and revises while composing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Editing</td>
<td>Changes words to clarify meaning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Re-writes words to correct spelling</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begins to proof-read for meaning and errors</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adds information</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>Perseveres to complete tasks</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resents interruption</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is preoccupied with a desire to get everything right</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has difficulty writing because of the complexity of the task</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experiences sense of achievement through writing</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Resources**

Writing experiences in the Year One classroom focused on collaboration so that children could observe, discuss and apply the writing practices of others around them. The role of the teacher and other adults was to facilitate the writing process and respond to children’s individual and collective needs. Resources in the Year One classroom were positioned for access by children to support writing
attempts and encourage independence. They dominated the classroom and represented a wide range of genre.

**Organisation.**

Writing sessions followed the same format each day. The teacher modelled the process of writing for the class with children seated on the carpet in front of a whiteboard. This first part of the writing session became increasingly collaborative over time. Children assisted the teacher with her composition and shared their knowledge, strategy use and experiences with literacy. In the second part of the session, children composed and wrote, usually in their writing book seated at tables, but occasionally on the computer, on charts, envelopes or other materials. In the third part of the session children returned to the carpet to sit in a circle for sharing time, where children volunteered or were encouraged by the teacher to share their writing and respond to others. Further discussion of the writing process, strategies and literacy experiences ensued.

**Access.**

All children participated in writing sessions. Occasionally Jeba attended an ESL class at this time, but most were scheduled at other times of the day. Children composed their own writing seated in small groups usually of their own choice. At times the teacher directed children to groups or encouraged a child to sit alone for a time if they were distracted easily. Usually, children were encouraged to choose their own topic to write about in their own style. As the year progressed, writing extended beyond recount of personal experience to embrace a range of genre and a variety of subjects. For example, some attempted recipes, lists, fairy tales and nursery rhymes.

**Materials available.**

A wide array of resources was available to support children with their writing. They usually wrote in a writing book that had blue lines equally spaced. This was part of a stationery list provided by parents at the commencement of the year and included writing pencils, colouring pencils, erasers, sharpeners, felt-
tipped pens and a soap-box to store their sight words. The entire classroom was a print-rich environment with books (including library books and classroom readers), 3 computers, paper, envelopes, charts, posters, pictures, alphabet strips, sentence makers, magnetic letters, and samples of children’s writing available for enjoyment, engagement and reference.

**Human resources.**

The literacy program in the Year One classroom reflected the values, attitudes and beliefs of the teacher. She encouraged children to collaborate during writing sessions so they could observe, discuss and apply the writing practices of others around them. The role of the teacher and other adults in the room was to facilitate the writing process and respond to children’s individual and collective needs. This was done through modelling writing, conversations and interactions.

**Home-School Connections**

The teacher fostered home-school partnerships. She encouraged parents to visit the classroom to observe children writing and collaborating with others; assist by copying interactions modelled by the teacher, and develop an understanding of how children were supported in the writing process at school. Culturally diverse parents were reluctant participants but the Australian parent fostered a close relationship with the teacher.

To maintain contact, keep parents informed and to discuss children’s progress and development, the teacher sought informal interactions. During these the teacher shared anecdotes about children and their writing behaviour or showed samples of writing to illustrate development. These interactions were supplemented with formal interviews after six months. At the formal interview, the teacher outlined literacy development of children in relation to a *Continuum of Reading and Writing Development* and provided parents with a written report.
The parents of Jeba and Grace brought their children to the classroom at the commencement of the school year but did not linger. As the children grew in independence, they walked to the classroom with siblings or on their own. Zena was an exception. Her mother brought her to the classroom each day and continued to do so across the course of the study. Occasionally Grace and Jeba’s parents visited the classroom for the writing session when the teacher arranged specifically for them to do so. They demonstrated respect for the teacher and interest in their child’s development but did not feel it was their place to be there. As Keyes (2000) identified, successful partnerships rely on how teachers and parents view their roles. Zena’s mother, in contrast, participated in classroom activities frequently.

**Summary**

Findings reported in this study:

- All parents had values, attitudes and beliefs in common which were inconsistent with the Preschool teacher and more aligned with the Year One teacher.

- Perceptions of how literacy is learned varied across families but in no case was it consistent with the practices in Preschool.

- All characteristics of the educative role identified across the five families were represented in the practices of the teachers.

- The literacy conversations and interactions within families varied according to cultural heritage, to which there was greater articulation in Year One than at Preschool.
• All children displayed learnerly behaviour at home, Preschool and school. Metacognition was a dimension of learnerly behaviour noted in Year One.

• Opportunities for literacy experiences were often initiated by children.

• The early literacy demonstrated by the 3 children in Year One followed the emergent literacy evident at home.

• Access and use of resources by all children were more consistent at Preschool and Year One.

• Expectations of a close home-school partnership were not shared by any except the Year One teacher and the Australian parent.
CHAPTER 5

Results of case studies

Data presented in this chapter indicate findings for each of five case studies. This specification is linked with the overview of similarities and differences across the cases presented in Chapter 4 and organised in a similar way using the major clusters revealed in data analyses. The presentation of data follows the sequence in which data were gathered within each of the five families, namely home followed by Preschool. In addition, data for three of the children who were placed in the same Year One class are presented. The chapter concludes with a summary of results.

Jeba

Jeba’s family came as immigrants from Bangladesh to start a new life. They left family and friends to provide a brighter future for their children. The father left his academic position as a scientist. The mother, who completed university studies in Bangladesh, did not pursue a career, choosing to marry and stay home with her two children instead.

Shortly after her arrival in Australia, Jeba commenced Preschool. She was placed in a Year One class initially, but this placement was reconsidered due to her continued poor health and English language constraints. During her year at Preschool, Jeba underwent an operation to remove most of her first teeth, which were decayed and had contributed to poor health. As a result, attendance at Preschool was inconsistent. Her general health improved in Year One allowing her father to return to Bangladesh to work for several months. This left her mother to care for the children in a community in which she struggled to communicate. Jeba and her older sister assisted her with English when shopping, paying bills or filling in required forms.
**Values, Attitudes and Beliefs**

**Home.**

Jeba’s parents valued education and had high expectations for their children. They saw their children’s education as key to the family’s success and expected the two girls to become medical Doctors.

The family had a strong work ethic and believed that success in education was achieved through hard work. Application and regular sustained practice underpinned this work ethic. Consequently, Jeba was directed to practise her letters and numbers in Bangla and English every night. The task involved chanting letters and numbers in sequence and recording them. This way of learning was similar to the way her parents had learned the Koran. When Jeba’s father returned to Bangladesh for several months, her mother took over the role of supervising Jeba’s learning at home. She saw her role was to “push” Jeba and was concerned that Jeba might become lazy.

Jeba’s parents took great pride in her success. The parents spoke about her achievements in glowing terms and kept a photo album filled with certificates, awards and merit stickers received from her teacher, along with samples of her writing and drawing. They celebrated her success and shared her achievements with friends and family overseas. Jeba tried hard with her work and took pride in achieving well.

The maintenance of heritage language and culture to preserve cultural identity was considered very important. Therefore, parents spoke their heritage language at home and encouraged their children to do the same. They joined the local Bangla community and participated in cultural traditions and celebrations. On Saturdays, Jeba attended classes to study the Bangla language and Bangla school curriculum. She competed with older children during these lessons, conducted in her heritage language, but was confident that she would excel.
Preschool.

Many of the values, attitudes and beliefs of the Preschool teacher differed from those of Jeba’s parents. She valued play (rather than practice and repetition) as an appropriate way to promote young children’s development and provided play opportunities in which children could develop and share ideas and skills. As facilitator of learning, she set up activities and provided resources that responded to children’s needs and interests. She acknowledged that children came to Preschool with diversity of cultural knowledge, skills and experiences but promoted Australian culture and social conventions in Preschool. She believed these were necessary for school.

The teacher believed that Preschool was an opportunity to prepare children for school and her program focused on ensuring that they attained prerequisite skills. These included name writing, fine motor control and independence. Preparation for school did not include explicit literacy teaching and knowledge of letters and sounds was not deemed prerequisite.

Similar to Jeba’s parents, the teacher encouraged Jeba to attempt tasks and praised her efforts. When she requested assistance, the teacher or aide completed tasks for her. However, on occasion, attempts at reading were scaffolded by the teacher through the provision of prompts.

Year One.

The Year One teacher saw her role as facilitator of learning. However, facilitation of literacy learning in this classroom involved explicit teaching, modelling and scaffolded support with an emphasis on verbal communication to promote shared understanding. This was different from writing activities at home in which Jeba carried out parental instructions without sustained dialogue. It was also different from the play activities of Preschool.

Jeba was perceived by the teacher as a reader and writer and was encouraged to utilise literacy skills and knowledge acquired outside of school in writing sessions. Unlike Preschool, the Year One teacher encouraged Jeba to
share her cultural knowledge, skills and experiences and valued her contributions as enriching classroom resources. This perspective was one component of a classroom culture fostered by the teacher that was caring, inclusive and encouraged each child to be personally responsible for their own and others’ learning. Each member of the class, including the teacher, was regarded as a learner. The culture was developed by identifying and highlighting characteristics of desired behaviours, explicit modelling of them, providing opportunities for children to practise through role-play, and recognising and rewarding the behaviours as they occurred.

The teacher believed that home and school should work in partnership to support Jeba’s literacy development and shared classroom practices with parents frequently. However, beliefs about literacy learning, based on drill and practice, held by Jeba’s parents did not correspond with classroom practice.

Writing development was monitored by the teacher and discussed with Jeba to encourage her to be reflective about the writing process and her own learning. Fostering an awareness of learning how to learn was not evident at home or at Preschool.

Roles and Relationships

Home.

In Jeba’s family, father was the head of the house and everyone treated him with respect. He made decisions about Jeba’s literacy learning and assumed the roles of facilitator, monitor, director and motivator to support her literacy development at home. He established the evening routine, gave instructions, explained tasks, organised resources and supported her attempts at writing the alphabet and numbers. He did not negotiate tasks or participate with Jeba to complete them. He observed her writing, corrected her attempts and established a standard for her work. He took pride in Jeba’s achievements and encouraged her by providing positive feedback.
Other family members participated in conversations about literacy around Jeba. On one occasion Jeba’s mother and sister entered into a lively debate over the letter H and whether it was pronounced *haitch* or *aitch*. Jeba contributed to this conversation too. No one, however, interrupted or disagreed with Jeba’s father when he spoke.

For the most part, Jeba’s mother and sister were observers of the literacy tasks that she undertook. Jeba’s sister often attempted to prompt her by saying the name of the next letter or number that she was to write. This assistance was often rejected, Jeba telling her that she knew what to do. When her father returned to Bangladesh for several months, her mother took over father’s role. Jeba was not as respectful or as willing for her mother and was reluctant to engage in additional homework. Her mother complained that she thought Jeba was sometimes lazy.

Across the course of this study, Jeba became more independent and more collaborative in the literacy tasks she performed at home. At first, she followed instructions and completed tasks with assistance as required. In Year One, she initiated her own writing practice or homework, sought assistance less often when writing words and frequently rejected offers of assistance. When completing homework set by the teacher, she controlled activities, instructing others to find or draw pictures for her with the initial sound that she was practising. At times, she was collaborative, seeking assistance or clarification with tasks she initiated and allowing her sister to help. Similar to all the children in the study, Jeba sought approval from family members and responded positively to encouragement.

**Preschool.**

The Preschool teacher assumed roles similar to those of Jeba’s father. These included facilitator, monitor, director and motivator. The directing role of the Preschool teacher differed from that of the father, however, as it related to initiating and structuring tasks, and creating learning opportunities, rather than
the father’s didactic approach. On occasion, the teacher assumed the role of co-
constructor and negotiated tasks that Jeba undertook. For example, she
negotiated Jeba’s participation in activities to collect artefacts for the workbook
they were creating for parents. The workbook provided a snapshot of activities
that Jeba undertook across the year. Sometimes, the teacher participated in
activities with Jeba. This occurred when she showed Jeba how to play a card
game like Concentration or a board game. On several occasions, the teacher
adopted the role of scaffolder. For example, she scaffolded Jeba’s attempts to
read a letter she had written to her mother by prompting her with beginning
sounds of words and providing unknown words. This interaction was initiated by
Jeba.

The roles that Jeba adopted in her experiences at Preschool were similar
to the roles she adopted at home. They included the roles of independent
worker, director, collaborator and approval seeker. At Preschool, Jeba
participated in a wide range of activities, both individually and as a member of a
group. Consequently, the features of some of the roles expanded. For example,
as an independent worker, she initiated tasks and completed them independently
and followed instructions as she did at home. However, at Preschool she
observed other children doing activities similar to ones she was undertaking and
copied them.

Jeba spent time as a participant in activities but she did not direct them.
She did not challenge the rules of an activity, roles of others, or attempt to correct
others. When she played school in home corner, Jeba did not move to assume
the role of teacher. She appeared content to play the role of a student, busily
writing and tracing numbers and letters and, on one occasion, played the role of
a naughty student hiding rulers from the teacher.

Many activities during inside-play were structured to encourage children
to play together. Jeba collaborated with others and co-constructed activities
during play. She shared materials and resources willingly and complied with
established rules. For example, when a child asked for a turn at the computer when Jeba was exploring a Paint program, she relinquished her position readily. She sought assistance from the teacher and other children, as required, to undertake tasks and offered assistance to others.

During activities, Jeba often sought approval from the teacher or aide. At times, this was to gain confirmation in relation to her execution of a task. At other times she sought positive feedback and responded to encouragement. She was not critical of other children’s work or ideas nor did she make comparisons between her own work and others’.

**Year One.**

The Year One teacher assumed similar roles to the father and Preschool teacher but aspects of them reflected personal values, beliefs and attitudes. In all roles, conversation was pivotal to ensure shared expectation and understanding. For example, she used conversation with Jeba to facilitate the writing process, co-construct ideas for writing, monitor her progress, direct her in tasks, motivate and scaffold her writing. As scaffolder, the teacher provided and adjusted support in response to the verbal and non-verbal cues that Jeba provided. For example, during an interaction with Jeba she commented, *Some days you spend a lot of time thinking and not writing. If you’re not sure how a word sounds what do we do?* Jeba responded, *Sound it out.* The teacher continued, *We listen to what we can hear. Sometimes we can’t hear all the sounds. Does that matter? We get down what we can hear. Okay?* Jeba responded to the motivation the teacher provided by treating her as a friend and confidant and striving to write well to fulfil the teacher’s belief in her as a good writer.

Jeba assumed the roles of independent worker, director, collaborator and approval seeker as she had done in Preschool. However, additional features were incorporated into these roles. For example, as an independent worker she initiated not only activities but also ideas for writing. She continued to complete
tasks independently, observe others, follow instructions and copy others. However, she began to make corrections to her own work, to reject assistance from others, to ignore distractions and to be more self-reliant.

Her automatic recall of letters and sounds enabled Jeba to provide support to others. Sometimes she did this by directing them in the writing process. For example, she corrected children’s letter/sound identification, provided instruction on how to sound out words and at times, controlled interactions because she presented as an authority in the group. She did not display these features of directing in Preschool activities.

Jeba discussed ideas for writing and planned what to write in collaboration with others. The discussions often led to a sharing of experiences and verbal rehearsal of what she was going to write. On occasion, texts were jointly constructed with input from all in the group. Discussion of the writing process resulted in her accepting assistance and assisting others. For example, Zena and Grace frequently asked Jeba to help them with writing unknown words. She identified the sounds she could hear in words and provided the names of letters that made these sounds. At times, the letters she provided were incorrect as her phonological knowledge was limited to individual letters and their sounds.

As she became more familiar with others in her writing group, she sought approval and confirmation from them as well as from the teacher. When she was criticised by children she responded verbally, rejecting the criticism. This was different from the way she responded to criticism in Preschool, which was characterised by walking away, ignoring or distracting with questions. She critiqued the writing of others, too. She did this by praising their writing attempts or by being critical of them. For example, she criticised Grace for copying text instead of composing from her own ideas.
**Interactional Behaviour**

**Home.**

The maintenance of heritage language and culture to preserve cultural identity was considered very important by Jeba’s parents. They spoke their heritage language at home and were active in the local Bangla community. In addition, the Bangla community provided opportunities for social interaction, the sharing of information, and emotional support for the family. Furthermore, the Bangla community organised the Saturday School that Jeba and her sister attended to study their heritage language and school curriculum thus ensuring that if the family returned to live in Bangladesh the children’s future would not be disadvantaged.

The learning of English was a priority and the parents expected that their children would do so at school. When Jeba commenced formal schooling, she received support in English learning from an English as Second Language (ESL) teacher to supplement the language learning in the classroom.

Jeba’s mother attended classes to improve her English, too. At first, she relied heavily on her husband to assist her with her interactions in English. When he returned to Bangladesh for several months, she relied on her children to assist her with shopping and other day-to-day tasks.

Social conventions of her heritage culture and the environment in which she lived influenced Jeba’s social behaviour. At first, the family did not know anyone in the local community and kept mostly to themselves. Jeba often played alone, or with her sister after school. She looked up to her sister and tried to copy her. At times, however, her sister became exasperated with her and sent her away. On weekends the family socialised with other Bangla families in the wider community and Jeba played with children of similar age. As she made friends at Preschool, Jeba was invited to play at other children’s homes occasionally and observed the behaviours of her friends at home.
A respectful child, Jeba tried hard to please. She listened to her parents’ conversations but did not contradict or interrupt. When completing literacy tasks set by her father, she occasionally asked questions to clarify what she had to do, or sought assistance. At other times she responded to her parents’ questions and inquiries, happily relating her experiences at Preschool and school.

**Preschool.**

Preschool provided Jeba with opportunities to interact socially, learn language and communicate with others. Sometimes she played alone, and other times she interacted through conversations, participation and symbolic interactions.

In one activity Jeba created a picture using a template on which she sponged paint. Other children were doing the same activity but Jeba was so engrossed in what she was doing, she did not appear to be aware of others around her. On other occasions, she listened to the discussions of other children at the table and observed what they were doing in their explorations and experimentation with materials and ideas. Sometimes, Jeba initiated conversation and participated in dialogue. For example, when she played the role of Doctor in the hospital she initiated conversation with the mother of the patient (a child with a doll) to determine her condition and giving instructions. On other occasions, she sought verbal interactions specifically to ask for help or to seek approval from the teacher.

Some of Jeba’s interactions with children were non-verbal forms of communication. Jeba ignored criticism or disassociated herself by moving away. At other times, Jeba played alongside other children interacting through actions rather than words. For example, Jeba used the equipment in the hospital to take the patient’s blood pressure and bandage an arm without communicating verbally. On another occasion when playing school, Jeba struggled to take a ruler off another child to control the activity and shook her fist at her to send a very clear message of power. Sometimes, Jeba communicated with others
through messages. For example, she created cards for her mother and her best friend and wrote messages for them (see Appendix E Fig. 8).

Jeba participated in many activities that provided opportunities for her to explore ways to interact with others. She experimented with ways to gain entry into groups and activities, respond to cues, take turns, engage others in conversation and play, and to cooperate and collaborate with others. She developed ways of interacting with others and assisting them, and ways to respond to criticism. For example, Jeba was decorating the cut-out of a face in the collage area. Lia was sitting at the table doing the same activity. As they worked, they observed what the other was doing and at times copied what the other had done. Lia began to criticise Jeba’s work saying, *That doesn’t look good. Mine’s gooder.* Jeba experimented with three ways to respond to the criticism. At first she ignored her, then moved around the table, disassociating herself from Lia. When Lia persisted, Jeba left the area. A little later, Jeba returned to the activity and Lia continued to look at Jeba’s work saying, *Mine looks gooder. Mine looks gooder.* On this occasion, Jeba shook her head at Lia and asked her about her work, questioning why she had drawn the necklace on the back of the cut-out face as well as the front. Lia responded by placing her hands around her own neck saying, *It’s round and this is the back and you can take it off.* Lia then asked Jeba to show her how she had attached a paddle pop stick to her cut-out face. Jeba assisted Lia to attach a stick to her face too. By attending to Lia and her work, engaging her in conversation, and offering assistance, Jeba successfully turned the interaction into a positive one. The face decorating activity provided a context for the exploration, experimentation and development of social skills.

*Year One.*

During writing sessions Jeba chose to sit at a table with Zena and Grace and was encouraged to interact with them. These interactions provided support for Jeba to engage in the writing process and to improve her English. Initially,
she demonstrated greater letter/sound knowledge than the others and was asked frequently to assist in the sounding out process, especially by Zena. This provided Jeba with a measure of status within the group and gave her confidence to initiate and participate in conversations, respond to questions, offer advice and to declare and explain what she knew. For example, on one occasion she shared a strategy with Zena telling her that when she has something she doesn’t know how to write she sounds it out, and then thinks about what letters she can hear and writes them down.

Jeba often praised others for their writing attempts then corrected them or gave them instructions. Unlike Zena and Grace, Jeba did not criticise others or their writing attempts. When they attempted to assist Jeba, she often rejected their help saying, *I know. I know.* Sometimes, she sought to clarify the teacher’s instructions with them. She did not, however, query the purpose of activities in the manner of Zena.

Other features of Jeba’s interactional behaviour were common to all children as they participated in writing sessions. She copied the behaviour of others and accessed the shared resources. Jeba appeared not to have an eraser, pencil sharpener and some coloured pencils of her own. She worked independently at times, and collaborated in sharing ideas when planning to write. She provided assistance by demonstrating how to write letters or words for others. When criticised, or attempting to concentrate she disengaged from conversations for a time. She did this by refusing to reply and avoiding eye contact.

*Learnerly Behaviour*

*Home.*

Jeba acquired literacy knowledge by observing the practices of her parents and sister. These included watching her father read academic journals and write papers, and her mother write letters to family and friends and complete
her English lessons. In addition, she observed her sister completing homework tasks that involved reading and writing. At times she explored books on her own and incorporated writing in the creations she made using recycled boxes, paper and scrap materials. On other occasions she asked her sister or mother to assist by dictating messages for them to write.

Literacy knowledge was displayed in her drawing, reading and writing attempts. During writing practice each evening Jeba demonstrated her knowledge of symbols by recording known letters and numbers in English and Bangla (see Appendix E Fig. 1, 2, 3). She wrote them in alphabetic order reciting the name of each symbol and sometimes declaring the sound it made.

When she started Year One her father encouraged her to identify words that started with each letter of the alphabet and to attempt to write them (see Appendix E Fig. 4). This complemented the homework tasks set by the teacher that involved searching for pictures that started with a given sound. At times she explained the meaning of words when asked to do so and applied her expanding vocabulary in writing.

**Preschool.**

Jeba used play opportunities inside the classroom to gather literacy information. She did this by exploring and experimenting with materials and resources set out by the teacher, observing and copying children, and collaborating or playing with others. For example, she experimented with the materials and resources provided in the collage area to create artefacts. Sometimes she carefully observed what other children were doing and copied their ideas, or collaborated with them to complete tasks.

Frequently, Jeba demonstrated her literacy knowledge during these activities. When playing Doctors in home corner she referred to the calendar to make appointments and pretended to record them in the appointment book. She instructed patients to “read” the eye chart and attempted to read the numbers on the thermometer when taking a patient’s temperature. In these examples, Jeba
was demonstrating her knowledge of some functions of literacy and demonstrating their purpose.

In a second example, she drew a picture for her friend Zena that depicted the two friends walking on grass with umbrellas over their heads. She drew a house behind them and blue sky and a sun overhead. On the back of the picture, she wrote *From Jeba to Zena*. She made an envelope by folding and cutting paper, and pasted the edges and wrote *To Zena* on the envelope.

During the activity, Jeba’s cutting, writing and drawing displayed some exploration and experimentation with colour and form and demonstrated writing and cutting skills. She worked alone but the activity had a social purpose. The picture she had drawn and her written message were symbolic representations of the friendship between the two girls. In the creation of the message, Jeba demonstrated some concepts about print, including directionality, her knowledge of words, the use of capital letters as well as some knowledge of the structure of a message in a card.

On another occasion, Jeba looked across at Grace’s writing and noticed that she had written the letter *M* upside down so that it appeared as the letter *W*. Jeba asked Grace, *Isn’t the W supposed to be M? M?* Grace looked at what she had written and changed it. On this occasion, Jeba declared knowledge of her friend’s family name and how to spell it.

There were no examples observed of Jeba using explanation to display her literacy knowledge at Preschool. This may be attributed to her limited English vocabulary or that there were no demands or expectations from others for her to do so.

**Year One.**

In writing sessions, Jeba developed literacy knowledge through the modelling that the teacher provided, group interactions and individual conversations with the teacher. She acquired information by observing and copying others, experimenting with writing independently, and in collaboration
within the group. At times she queried or questioned aspects of information when assimilating it with existing knowledge. However, like Grace she did not challenge the information she was provided in the way that Zena did.

Similar to all children, Jeba displayed literacy knowledge by demonstrating and applying it through writing, and explaining and declaring what she knew. These displays revealed knowledge of the writing process, strategy use, subject matter and awareness of her thinking and learning processes. Jeba demonstrated an awareness of her thinking and learning processes when she articulated her strategy use and problem-solving approaches when writing, and monitored her own ability to assist others by declaring *I don’t know that* when she couldn’t help them. Unlike Grace, Jeba did not evaluate the assistance provided by others but accepted it as correct.

**Literacy Experiences**

**Home.**

Literacy experiences for Jeba were characterised by interactions with adults, observations of her parents and sister modelling literacy and explorations of her own. Her interactions with adults were regular and followed a routine. They were planned by her father and involved the whole family – her father, mother, sister Rava, and Jeba. Each evening after dinner, the family gathered in the living room and the father instructed Jeba to take her exercise book and pencils from the cupboard where they were stored, to do her writing practice. Jeba knelt at the coffee table and proceeded to write the alphabet in English and Bangla and the numbers to 100 while she chanted them aloud. Her father monitored her progress and provided assistance and correction as required while her mother and sister observed. This routine was repeated each night. Once she commenced Year One, this activity was supplemented with naming and attempting to write words that started with a letter, drawing pictures that started
with a given letter, reading her take-home-reader to her mother, and transcribing and recognising each word in the reader (see Appendix E Fig. 5, 6).

Apart from the planned letter and word practice that Jeba undertook with her family, she spent a lot of her time looking at books, drawing pictures, colouring in and undertaking craft activities. Most craft activities had a writing component. She liked to make cards for her family and friends and write in them. For example she made a birthday card with her sister that said *Happy Birthday Jeba*. She liked to participate in letter writing to grandparents in Bangladesh too. At first, she dictated to her mother what she wanted to tell her grandparents. Later on, when her father returned to Bangladesh, Jeba wrote messages to him and included them in her mother’s letters.

Jeba’s pictures were mostly drawn from her own experience - drawings of her family, friends and herself. One drawn before she started school (see Appendix E Fig. 7) depicted her vomiting (a frequent problem that concerned her parents). Aspects of the figure in the drawing are quite detailed, despite including no background and drawing herself without arms.

*Preschool.*

Literacy experiences at Preschool differed from those Jeba had at home. She had few interactions with adults or observations of adults modelling literacy use but many opportunities to explore and experiment with literacy through imaginative and investigative play and occasionally through games with rules. Jeba participated in a variety of activities each day and her experiences were diverse and frequently involved observing and interacting with other children.

Jeba engaged in imaginative play mainly in home corner. She incorporated many of the props and resources provided into her play and simulated their literacy use. For example, when playing school, she completed worksheets, practised writing her name and attempted to read books.

During investigative play, Jeba explored environmental print by attempting to read the signs and posters in the room, identified letters and constructed words
using magnetic letters, and created artefacts that incorporated writing and collage. For example, she communicated with others by writing cards and letters. Other experiences involved writing her name on the artefacts she produced and using the computer.

Occasionally, the teacher assisted Jeba to play cards and board-games with a group of children. In these games, Jeba applied her literacy knowledge in attempts to interpret the symbols, read and carry out the instructions, and follow the rules of the game.

There were few interactions with the teacher about literacy. On one occasion, however, Jeba initiated an interaction by showing the teacher a card she had made for her mother (see Appendix E Fig. 8). The teacher listened while Jeba read it to her, praised her writing efforts, read what she had written to the class and prompted her to write *To Mummy* on an envelope.

In summary, Jeba’s experiences involved exploring and experimenting with literacy, communicating with others, gaining information or providing it for others and on occasion to use knowledge to influence others to achieve a social purpose.

**Year One.**

As with all children, Jeba’s literacy experiences in writing sessions were characterised by conversations with other children, interactions with the teacher, and drawing and writing. Her conversations with other children included personal or shared experiences that she subsequently wrote about, discussions about the process of writing, and interactions of a social nature. For example, in one writing session Jeba discussed her pending visit to Zena’s home. All discussed what they could play and then planned and rehearsed what each would write about the visit.

The teacher used Jeba’s drawings and writing to share experiences, scaffold and monitor her writing development, and provide positive feedback. For example, when Jeba wrote about her father’s trip to Canada (see Appendix E Fig.
9), the teacher linked it to her father’s current trip to Bangladesh, discussed how Jeba missed him and moved on to comment on the wonderful sentence starter Jeba had used saying, *When I was little. That’s a good way to start a sentence. It’s different, isn’t it?*

Jeba’s drawings and writing drew mainly on her experiences at home and at school. At first, she spent more time drawing than writing. Her writing consisted of a few words or a sentence to describe the picture, and relied on words that she knew by sight. However, she quickly began to apply her knowledge of letters and sounds in order to sound out words. In addition, she developed an array of strategies to use when she wanted to write an unknown word. These included looking in the soap-box she kept under her desk, locating the word on the charts and word lists around the room, locating it in a book she’d recently read or asking a friend.

A variety of literate functions incorporated in Jeba’s writing were similar to home and Preschool. First, she explored and experimented with aspects of writing by practising, applying print concepts, using a writing process, attempting to edit and punctuate, and using generic structure. For example, Jeba attempted to write lists, recipes and nursery rhymes. Second, writing served a personal function as she expressed her ideas and feelings, described her personal experiences, and reflected on her own development in writing. Third, it served a communicative function by providing opportunities to share ideas and experiences, to praise and encourage others, to provide support and assistance, and to critique the work of others. Jeba communicated ownership of her belongings by writing her name on them, and wrote cards and letters to her friends. Furthermore, writing experiences had an information function. Jeba was able to share information and display her knowledge as well as acquire information, strategies and assistance. Last of all, writing experiences were instrumental in facilitating social acceptance in the group for Jeba as she contributed to discussions and influenced others in the writing process.
Emergent Literacy

Home.

Across the course of the study, Jeba developed many concepts about print. She knew that English was read from the top and progressed left to right, line after line. However, she often wrote letters and numbers in a list down the page in columns (see Appendix E Fig. 2). She was able to make meaning from print and knew that the message remained constant.

Jeba developed a sound knowledge of the alphabet and numbers to 100. She knew the letters of the alphabet in sequence, the names and sounds of letters and could give examples of words that started with a given sound. Her letter and number knowledge was learned by rote and across the course of the study she developed automatic recall by sight or sound. She recognised letters in upper and lower case. This alphabet knowledge assisted with her early writing when she attempted to sound out words.

The letter practice that she did each night also assisted Jeba with handwriting. She persisted in holding the pencil in an unconventional manner but her writing was bold, usually correctly formed and positioned on lines. Before she started school she was experimenting with cursive writing.

Once Jeba started Year One, her literacy experiences at home included homework. Jeba had two tasks set by the teacher to do each night for homework. One of these was to find pictures of things that started with the sound of the letter learned in class, and the second was to practise reading a take-home-reader. Jeba’s parents extended the homework that was set by the teacher to include the transcription of the text in the take-home-readers, and the writing of lists of the sight words that were introduced at school.

Preschool.

Jeba demonstrated a range of emergent literacy knowledge and skills during inside-play activities. These included concepts about print, alphabet and
number knowledge, word knowledge, the mechanics of writing, the use of symbols, reading and writing, and phonological awareness.

The following activity undertaken in the collage area is an example of Jeba’s demonstrated knowledge and skills. Jeba created a card for her mother and wrote a message inside that said, *To Mummy, How are you today? I am fine* (see Appendix E Fig. 8). Jeba made an envelope for the card and found a stamp to paste on the envelope. She took the card and envelope to show the teacher who commenced reading it aloud. When she paused, Jeba assisted her to read the message. The teacher praised Jeba’s efforts and showed another child saying, *Look what Jeba’s written*. She prompted Jeba to write *To Mummy* on the front of the envelope. Jeba took the card home to give to her mother.

During the activity and interaction with the teacher, Jeba demonstrated various concepts about print. She displayed the knowledge that print contains a message, the message remains constant, and that print is written from left to right starting at the top of the page. She demonstrated one-to-one correspondence between written and spoken words when reading and the concept that letters go together to make words. At that time, the knowledge that spaces should be left between words was not fully established.

Jeba demonstrated some knowledge of letters and sounds and some phonological awareness in her attempt to write the sounds she could hear in the words. Some words, eg *Mummy* and *to* she knew, and wrote them from memory. When she wrote, she held the pencil in the accepted grip, and formed some letters correctly. At this stage, Jeba wrote using a mix of upper and lower case letters.

The purpose for Jeba making the card is revealed in the message, which she read to the teacher. Jeba had not been well, at this time, and she knew that her mother worried about her so she assured her that she was fine. Her feelings are revealed in the symbolic hearts illustrating the message.
Year One.

Jeba demonstrated a range of early literacy knowledge and skills during Year One. These related to writing structure, word usage and language conventions, composing process, editing and engagement with writing.

Early writing consisted mainly of drawings and an accompanying sentence. For example, at the start of Year One she drew a picture of her school and wrote, See my school (see Appendix E Fig. 10). Later on, she continued to write about her own experiences but the length of her writing extended. After 4 months at school she wrote, When I was little my Dad went to Canada and when I always sleep I have one picture of Dad or else I cry (see Appendix E Fig. 9). Some of the words that Jeba knew were spelt correctly and for others she recorded the sounds she could hear. For example, Canada was written as Knuda and of was written as ov. After 10 months in Year One, Jeba’s writing examples revealed literacy experiences in a variety of genre. For example she retold the story of Little Red Riding Hood in her own words. It began, Once upon a time a girl had a bright red cape and continued for three pages with many words written correctly and with some punctuation and editing (see Appendix E Fig. 11). By the end of Year One Jeba was incorporating dialogue in her writing.

At first, Jeba’s writing was hindered by her limited English vocabulary. However, her vocabulary developed quickly through the introduction of sight words, conversations with others, and focused discussion of words with the teacher in activities in a variety of contexts. Language conventions were acquired in a similar way. Jeba began to use punctuation, particularly capital letters for names and sentence beginnings, full stops at the end of sentences occasionally and attempting to add a title to her writing that reflected the content. She did not overgeneralise the use of full stops as others did. No evidence was seen of Jeba attempting to write questions or using a question mark.

Some aspects of English language acquisition were difficult for Jeba. She struggled with the use of appropriate noun/pronoun agreements. For example,
she referred to a boy as she. Similarly, she found applying the past tense and maintaining consistent tense problematic.

Jeba applied the composing process readily. She planned and rehearsed verbally before writing, and said words slowly as she recorded the sounds. She found this a simple process when compared to others as she had automatic recall of most letters and sounds at the beginning of the year. However, she had very little knowledge of blends, digraphs and phonic rules. Jeba re-read her own writing constantly to maintain word sequence, self-prompt, ensure meaning and to reframe. This demonstrated her early attempts at proof reading and planning in action. She often made corrections by rubbing out words and re-writing to clarify meaning, correct spelling, and add information.

At first, Jeba willingly assisted others in the group to sound out words and showed them how to write letters. However, as her own writing developed, she came to resent interruptions and encouraged others to be more independent. She persevered to complete writing tasks, and became preoccupied with getting it right. She demonstrated a sense of achievement when she completed her writing and sought feedback from the teacher.

**Resources**

*Home.*

Jeba did not have an abundance of resources to support her literacy learning when compared with other children in the study. There were no magazines apart from academic journals that belonged to her father, and the occasional newspaper. However, she had a ready supply of scrap paper (discarded journal articles from her father), pens, pencils and glue, and supplemented these with discarded household items (empty packets, junk mail) and used them to create artefacts including drawings, posters, signs, houses, furniture, dolls and other toys. Many of these artefacts had a literacy component. For example, she made a birthday poster that said, *Happy Birthday Jeba* that
her sister helped her to write. She supplemented her meagre resources with bits and pieces home from the collage trolley at Preschool. Items used for her alphabet and number practice (exercise book, pencil and eraser) were kept in a cupboard in the living room. She kneeled at a coffee table to do most of these tasks.

Jeba had several books including Snow White written in Bangla and some comics. She supplemented these by borrowing books in English from the Preschool library and later the school library. She watched cartoons on television regularly but did not have access to a computer at home.

Preschool.

At Preschool, Jeba had access to a wide variety of resources, as did all the children. The teacher set out resources for activities, changing some weekly and leaving others until children’s interest waned. Home corner, for example, was set up as a hospital for 6 weeks. The range of activities included painting pictures using templates, decorating faces, collage, experimenting with letters on the magnetic board, using a paint program on the computer, pattern making, sewing, and playing in home corner. Jeba chose some of these activities herself and the teacher directed her to others. She was directed to activities to practise skills, to create an artefact to be included in her Workbook or to participate in whole class activities like the making of props and scenery for the Christmas concert.

Jeba borrowed regularly from the Preschool library and was encouraged by the teacher to do so. She enjoyed the picture books she borrowed and remarked that some of the books (particularly fairytales) she had read in Bangla before she came to Australia.

Year One.

Jeba had all the prerequisite resources bought by her parents according to the list provided. These included scrapbooks, exercise books, coloured pencils and lead pencils for writing, pencil sharpener, eraser and a soap-box in
which she stored sight words on cards. These were words commonly found in readers that had been introduced by the teacher. The writing book was lined with equally-spaced blue lines. The teacher had purposefully rejected the red and blue lined exercise books that most children use to practise handwriting, as she wanted the children to concentrate on composing rather than the positioning of letters.

On her desk was an alphabet strip depicting each letter in lower and upper case with a small picture beside to illustrate a word that began with that letter. For example, beside the letters aA was an apple. Around the room there were lists of words, posters, displays, signs, maps, books and charts – a plethora of print to stimulate literacy interest and development. During writing sessions, Jeba often found words on the walls and copied them. The teacher encouraged children to use the print environment as a resource. At the beginning of the year she said, *That is why we have words up all around the room so you can use them. That’s why they are there.* You are welcome to use them and the ones you can’t find you write them yourself.

*Home-School Connections*

*Home.*

Jeba’s parents did not perceive the relationship between them and teachers as an equal one. They treated Jeba’s Preschool and Year One teachers with respect and accepted their actions and decisions as educational experts unconditionally and in the best interests of their child. Their view of schooling, however, did not coincide with practices in Preschool or Year One and did not change through Jeba’s experiences. Their view of schooling was a formal and didactic one based on diligence, application and rote learning.

Homework formed the main connection between home and school. Jeba had two tasks set by the teacher to do each night. One of these was an activity called Pictionary (picture dictionary). Each day at school the class was
introduced to a letter of the alphabet and learned its accompanying sound. These letters were written in a book called Pictionary, one to a page. For homework, the task was to revise the letter and sound and find (or draw) pictures that had that initial sound. Jeba found this task particularly easy as she knew most of the letters and their sounds. She drew the pictures for her Pictionary as her family did not buy magazines.

The second homework task was to practise reading her take-home-reader. Jeba chose the reader she took home each night from a selection of books that were of a similar level of difficulty. The teacher regularly reviewed the books she was reading. Sometimes she chose to take a favourite book home more than once. Her parents discouraged this as they wanted Jeba to read unfamiliar books that increased in difficulty and wanted her to ask the teacher for more challenging readers. If Jeba referred to the pictures on the page when reading, the mother covered them, as she believed reading was about decoding the words. After practising the reader several times, Jeba was instructed to write down words she didn’t know by sight so that she would remember them. She did not like doing this additional homework.

**Preschool.**

Connections between Jeba’s family and the Preschool were minimal. Each morning, the parents brought Jeba into the classroom and were greeted in English by the Preschool teacher or aide. They stayed for a few minutes to observe until Jeba settled and then departed. They kept the Preschool teacher informed of Jeba’s health and she informed them of Preschool activities through regular newsletters that were placed in the home pockets.

The Preschool teacher had a roster for parents to add their name and volunteer to stay and assist for the day. The roster was explained at a meeting at the beginning of the year. Like many parents, Jeba’s mother did not volunteer and the teacher did not coax her believing that parents, generally, were too busy to stay.
Year One.

Parents did not have regular contact with Jeba’s Year One teacher about her progress at school despite the teacher’s attempts to keep them informed. Communication with the teacher in the morning or afternoon related to Jeba’s health or questions about school routines eg the expectations for Show and Tell. Her parents relied on the workbooks that Jeba was encouraged to bring home regularly from school to inform them of her learning. The teacher arranged formal interviews twice a year to discuss Jeba’s progress and development supported by examples of her schoolwork.

The teacher fostered connections between home and school in writing sessions by encouraging children to talk and write about personal experiences both in and out of school. She participated in conversations with Jeba and developed an easy rapport that sent a clear message of friendship, acceptance and value as a class member. Parents were encouraged to participate in the classroom program and were seen as a valued resource with diverse backgrounds, professions and experiences. Jeba’s parents stayed for the writing session on several occasions when formally invited to do so.
Zena

Zena was the only Australian girl in the study. Her parents were separated. She lived with her mother and younger sister for half the week and then went with her sister to stay with her father for the other half of the week. Her mother had completed a graduate diploma in education and had worked briefly with mentally disabled adolescents. Currently, she was at home but did some part-time work in radio production and announcing. Her partner, who lived with them, was studying design structure (architectural studies). Zena’s father lived an alternate lifestyle. He designed and crafted furniture at home that he occasionally sold.

Values, Attitudes and Beliefs

Home.

In Zena’s family, the mother valued education and held high expectations for her children to be successful at school. She wanted to ensure that Zena was provided with opportunities for learning that she had missed as a child. The father did not place the same importance on education. He believed that children should be left alone to create their own games and did not organise his children’s time or provide resources for them to encourage educational activities. He did not approve of activities planned by the mother that created opportunities for learning.

Zena’s mother believed that learning should contain an element of fun and not be too structured. She wanted her children to enjoy a sense of freedom in their learning and be self-paced learners. She felt this was important for them to gain confidence in their ability. Consequently, she encouraged Zena to choose the tasks she was willing to undertake, negotiate how much she would contribute to the task, and co-construct activities with others. At the same time, Zena’s mother established standards for work practices (eg neatness and correct
letter formation) that she expected her to maintain. She expressed concern about the negative impact on Zena when she checked and corrected her work.

Literacy learning was considered to be very important and the mother planned frequent real life literacy experiences for her children. She believed that these experiences should be purposeful and have meaning for them. For example, she encouraged Zena to write letters to people to say thank you for gifts and to write and enter competitions on radio and television (see Appendix E Fig. 12).

The mother valued good literature and sought books written by particular authors for Zena to read because she liked their use of language, especially descriptive language. She sometimes chose books for her that she considered boys’ books because she wanted Zena to read broadly and not be constrained by the stereotypical nature of books for girls. On one occasion, Zena’s mother took her to the Cultural Centre for the launch of a children’s book by a local author. Afterwards she took her on a tour of the local buildings and landmarks featured in the book.

Zena was encouraged to develop friendships with children of diverse cultural backgrounds. Her mother considered that knowing how others lived, their customs and beliefs, and learning from them, was an important facet of Zena’s education. Therefore, she arranged play dates with Jeba and got to know Jeba’s mother.

**Preschool.**

Zena’s mother shared some of the values and beliefs that the Preschool teacher espoused. She valued a play-based program, and believed it was an appropriate way to foster young children’s development. However, she was not happy with the program on offer. She considered the activities were too structured and limited in scope for Zena, and others, to be creative. Similarly, she believed that socio-drama and role-play were not utilised to scaffold positive social interactions and behaviours. She expressed concern that the focus of the
The teacher’s program was to prepare children for particular aspects of school, for example, learning to write their name and cut with scissors, instead of promoting learning as fun. She wanted to see more diversity in the program by providing additional opportunities for children to engage in real life experiences than were on offer. The teacher had arranged a trip to the hospital prior to setting up home corner, but Zena’s mother believed that more excursions and incursions were important to access resources beyond the classroom.

The Preschool teacher’s view of literacy learning at Preschool differed from the view that Zena’s mother held. Literacy was modelled and resources provided for activities, but it was not taught explicitly at Preschool. This was at odds with the mother’s practice of drawing Zena’s attention to aspects of literacy whenever the opportunity arose during day-to-day activities. For example, when finding activities on the Internet for Zena, she assisted her to read out the web address and pointed out where the address bar was located. Because of her concern about the program, the mother planned to move Zena to another Preschool but reconsidered when Zena expressed a wish to stay, as she liked the teacher and her friends.

The value the teacher placed on Australian social customs and cultural practices at Preschool differed from the attitude of the mother. To embrace the social and cultural diversity of parents and children, Zena’s mother organised a picnic lunch in the Preschool grounds one Saturday and encouraged parents to bring and share cultural dishes. So successful was this event, she produced a recipe book for parents with contributions from each parent. The Preschool teacher attended the picnic and assisted in collection of recipes and distribution of the recipe book.

Zena’s mother shared the Preschool teacher’s beliefs in relation to monitoring and sharing children’s progress and development, encouraging and supporting to promote success and fostering risk-taking and independence.
**Year One.**

The Year One teacher had more values, attitudes and beliefs in common with Zena’s mother than the Preschool teacher. The inclusive nature of the classroom where everyone was respected and diversity of experiences valued and shared was more closely aligned to the mother’s values in relation to cultural diversity. Similarly, the explicit modelling and practising of desired behaviours through role-play to foster a caring classroom were allied to the mother’s beliefs.

The explicit teaching, modelling and scaffolded support of literacy learning was also similar to the approach that Zena experienced at home. However, the way that the teacher accepted and approved of her writing and/or drawing attempts focusing on the process rather than the product was different from her home experiences. Zena’s mother judged her writing attempts in terms of letter formation and neatness, which resulted in Zena being reluctant to write at home.

Both the teacher and mother (unlike other parents in the study) believed that home and school should work in partnership to support Zena’s literacy development. As a result, Zena’s mother had close liaison with the teacher, assisting in the classroom as a volunteer aide. She modelled her literacy interactions with Zena at home on the practices she observed in the classroom and tried to refrain from being critical of Zena’s writing and reading attempts.

**Roles and Relationships**

**Home.**

Zena’s father did not consciously play a role in Zena’s literacy learning and did not plan literacy activities for her. However, she observed him reading at home, and writing withdrawal slips at the bank and assisted him in locating the groceries on the supermarket shelves. Similarly, the partner of Zena’s mother was frequently observed reading or studying at home. He would occasionally play card games, for example UNO, with the girls and encouraged Zena to read to him by telling her that he knew she couldn’t do it. She would oblige to prove
him wrong. This proved useful for Zena’s mother when she could not get Zena to do her homework or other set tasks.

Zena’s mother assumed a variety of roles to assist Zena’s literacy learning. She initiated tasks and created learning opportunities and facilitated the completion of tasks by providing the resources needed. She explained what to do, modelled how to do it and assisted Zena to complete it. She encouraged Zena to discuss how tasks could be undertaken (a problem-solving approach) and to participate as much as she was able. In this way tasks were negotiated within the activity and joint participation encouraged to provide scaffolded support. As tasks were completed, Zena’s mother monitored her participation. She observed how skills were developing and how well she coped with the tasks she undertook. She encouraged Zena, praised her efforts and provided constructive feedback on tasks.

Zena frequently participated in activities with her mother and usually followed her mother’s instructions. Sometimes, however, she refused to undertake tasks, saying that she couldn’t or didn’t want to do them. On these occasions, her mother encouraged her and provided extra support before she was willing to engage in them reluctantly. At other times, Zena initiated tasks and completed them independently, seeking clarification and assistance only as required.

Zena’s parents were both Australian and therefore English was the only language spoken in both homes and the only language that Zena could speak. Zena had friends, however, who spoke English as a second language and when she played with them at Preschool or school she sometimes assisted them to find English words. When she visited her friend Jeba, she heard the family conversing in Bangla.

Preschool.

The roles that Zena adopted at Preschool were independent worker, director, collaborator and approval seeker. As an independent worker, she
initiated tasks, completed them independently and followed instructions as she did at home. She observed other children doing activities similar to the ones she was undertaking and copied them and corrected her own work.

Zena spent some of her time directing others. She offered advice and enforced the established classroom rules. For example, she told a girl that you’re not supposed to do that when she attempted to swap home pockets. Home pockets were designated hold-alls against a wall used for communicating with parents. When Grace attempted to enter home corner to play school, Zena stopped her from joining in saying, No. Only four. (The classroom rule stipulated that only four children could participate in an activity). At other times, Zena challenged the rules. When playing the role of a Doctor she refused to wear the white coat saying that she didn’t have to wear it.

Many of the Zena’s activities at inside-play were undertaken collaboratively and involved her making a contribution to activities and play. For example, she participated with others in a card game called Concentration. It involved remembering where cards were placed (face down) on the table so that pictures on the cards could be matched. Zena memorised the positions of cards, took turns in the game, and followed the rules. In addition, she helped others to find matching pictures. In some activities, Zena negotiated the rules or sought assistance from the teacher to find out what to do.

Zena responded well to encouragement. During activities, she sometimes sought approval from the teacher to gain confirmation that she was undertaking the task correctly or to receive some positive feedback. She did not appear to make comparisons between her own work and others’ nor did she attempt to discredit other children’s knowledge.

Year One.

The role of the Year One teacher in supporting Zena’s writing development differed from that of the Preschool teacher and that of her mother. At the start of Year One, Zena was reluctant to write. She spent her time drawing
instead. Conversations with the teacher about her drawings elicited a rich, verbal recount of her experiences. Although the teacher did not pressure Zena to write, there was an expectation and encouragement for her to do so. The teacher scaffolded Zena’s oral accounts of her experiences and assisted her to verbally plan and rehearse excerpts of her recounts that she encouraged her to attempt to write. The approach that the teacher took to scaffold Zena’s early writing attempts was quite different from the support she provided Jeba, for example, who knew how to sound out words. She responded with sensitivity to the cues that Zena provided in interactions both verbally and non-verbally and reacted accordingly, adjusting her roles as facilitator, co-constructor, monitor, director, motivator and scaffold as required. For example, on one occasion early in the year, the teacher commented, *Zena are we writing today or just drawing?* She pointed to Zena’s drawing and said, *Look at those. What are they?* When Zena replied, *Seagulls* the teacher prompted her to tell her where they were and then asked Zena, *Are you going to write some words today? Can I help you get started? Can I help you with what you want to write? No? Not today? Well if you decide you want to write something you put your hand up and I’ll come and help you.*

In her writing attempts, Zena continued to share her ideas, verbally plan and rehearse in collaboration with other children in her group, and discuss the writing process. She relied on others, especially Jeba, to assist with sounding out and identifying letters to write words. She developed independence in initiating ideas, completing some tasks, observing others, following instructions, copying, self-correcting and she rejected assistance when not required, but she continued to rely on others and seek assistance in the writing process. She was easily distracted from her writing.

As her knowledge of the writing process increased, Zena assumed a directing role. She gave instructions to others and corrected their mistakes, offered advice, modelled the writing process and provided information. However,
she did not attempt to control interactions, challenge others or control resources as Grace did.

Like all children, she sought approval from the teacher and her peers and responded to encouragement. When criticised, she did not respond or reject the criticism as others did, but became quiet and withdrawn. However, she praised and criticised others readily.

**Interactional Behaviour**

**Home.**

Zena had opportunities for more literacy experiences, characterised by conversations and participation with adults, than other children in the study. The interactions shared some similarities with other children but there were notable differences too. For example, all children, including Zena, observed and listened to parents’ conversations, observed them doing literate activities, and undertook activities on their own. Zena completed tasks set by her mother, and sought explanations or demanded responses as most children did. However, she did not obey her mother without question. She challenged her mother’s way of doing things and at times was reluctant and sometimes refused to do as she was asked.

In some activities, she participated as an equal partner. On these occasions, her mother encouraged her to present ideas and discussed their merit with her. For example, when searching for suitable websites for Zena, both contributed and discussed their points of view on the merits of the activities on offer. This was not evident in the behaviour of other children. She initiated and engaged in conversations with her parents, as Lia did, but more frequently. During these conversations she talked a lot, asked questions and interrupted others.
Preschool.

In some activities at Preschool, Zena did not interact with other children at all. In one activity, the teacher had set out a variety of self-inking stamps for the children to create patterns. There were star stamps, tree stamps, stamps with bells and others. Some children selected stamps and created a random pattern on the page. Others alternated the stamps they used to create a repeating pattern eg star, tree, star, tree. Zena ignored what others were doing. She chose a star and stamped it in lines left to right, until the page was covered. As she created the star pattern she counted 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3 over and over, thus creating a verbal pattern through her repetitive counting. When she had completed it, she showed her teacher, seeking approval. At other times Zena interacted with children using verbal and non-verbal communication that included the use of symbols.

In many activities, Zena initiated interactions and participated in conversations with others to ask questions, seek assistance or show her work to the teacher. In home corner she used verbal interactions to challenge, negotiate and enforce rules or to reject offers made by others to play. At other times she interacted to declare what she knew in an activity or explain its purpose.

Some of Zena’s interactions with children were non-verbal forms of communication. When Grace moved into home corner and took over Zena’s role as the teacher, Zena disassociated herself from the activity and leaned against the wall looking upset. She communicated her feelings to Grace clearly through her disengagement and facial expression. At other times, Zena chose to ignore instructions from other children and continue her activity, her lack of response sending a clear message. When Zena played hospitals in home corner with a friend, she played her role interacting physically but not verbally. For example, both children assisted in bandaging the doll’s arm or taking its blood pressure together but they did not communicate verbally what they planned to do. They observed and responded to the actions of the other. On other occasions, Zena
participated in parallel play – carrying out her role unrelated to what the girl was doing beside her.

Zena participated in many activities that provided opportunities for social interaction. She explored how to access groups and activities, respond to cues, take turns, engage others in conversation or play, and to cooperate and collaborate with others. She developed ways of interacting with others, offering assistance and seeking permission to play. In addition, she experimented with rules – following them, challenging them, negotiating rules with others and enforcing them. Sometimes her interactions with others produced successful outcomes and sometimes they didn’t. Experimentation with ways of interacting with other children in a variety of contexts, determining what is successful, and applying what is successful in new contexts are integral to the development of children’s social skills.

When Zena was playing school in home corner, Grace approached the area wanting to join in. Zena didn’t want her in the game and attempted to stop her entry by applying the teacher’s rule that only four children were permitted in an activity. She said to Grace, *You are not even in it. Only four people are allowed.* Grace ignored her and stood at the edge of the activity area playing with the magnetic weather chart. Next Zena attempted to gain additional authority to keep Grace out of the game by negotiating with the child who was playing the role of teacher. Zena said, *After this, can I be teacher?* As teacher, she reiterated to Grace that there could be only four people in the activity, *No. Only four.* Grace continued to ignore her and moved to position herself at the blackboard where the teacher in this activity usually stood. At this point, Zena abandoned her role, leant against the wall watched Grace and looked distressed. Grace assumed the role of the teacher, and provided instructions to the students at the desks. Defeated, Zena left the area. On this occasion, she was not successful in achieving her purpose in the interaction. Notably, she was not observed attempting similar interactions with children in other contexts.
**Year One.**

During writing sessions, Zena sat with Jeba and Grace and interacted with them. Interactions consisted of conversations and displays of non-verbal or symbolic participation. During the course of the writing session, the teacher observed and, at times, participated in the conversations. Zena’s conversations related to personal experiences that she shared while she was drawing. For example, she told them, *I’m remembering when I was in Melbourne I went to the zoo and I went into the butterfly house where all these butterflies were.* When Grace responded, *I went to the zoo as well, I did.* Zena ignored her reply and declared, *Butterflies like to eat beautiful leaves.* Her drawing was filled with plants and butterflies (see Appendix E Fig. 13).

The features of Zena’s conversations were similar to other children. Sometimes she initiated conversations, used conversation to seek or offer advice, and informed others about what she knew, or asked for clarification about things she didn’t know. Frequently she asked others what they were writing about, criticised their efforts, gave instructions, corrected them, or rejected assistance if she didn’t need it. However, Zena did not explain her own actions even when she was criticised. Instead, she became quiet and withdrew, concentrating on her writing. On several occasions, she queried the purpose of an activity, asking the others *Why do we have to do that?*

The non-verbal and symbolic features of Zena’s participation in interactions were the same as others. She was cooperative in manner, providing assistance and sharing resources as well as demonstrating aspects of writing for others. At times, she copied them and responded to their encouragement, and other times she disengaged from conversation to work independently.
Learnerly Behaviour

Home.

Some of Zena’s behaviour in literacy experiences demonstrated how she framed and displayed her literacy knowledge. She framed literacy knowledge by gathering and organising information and testing and re-thinking her ideas about aspects of literacy and displayed her literacy knowledge in her actions and interactions.

Similar to all the children, Zena acquired knowledge by observing and copying the members of her family engaging in literacy. She frequently observed her parents reading and writing. Her mother deliberately read novels where Zena could see her reading for pleasure, and worked from home using the computer to conduct research for her radio program. Zena often sat next to her observing what she did. At other times, she observed her mother reading and writing letters, consulting the calendar and telephone book, reading the newspaper and magazines, making shopping lists, paying bills and filling out forms.

Zena acquired knowledge about literacy through interactions with her mother who planned many literacy activities they undertook together. For example, each night they read bedtime stories together. Other activities included making cards for friends using craft materials, compiling an address book with the telephone numbers of Zena’s friends, writing a letter to a character on a children’s television program, surfing the Internet, doing crosswords and writing letters to her relations to thank them for presents. She frequently explained her own literacy activities to Zena and involved her in them. For example, when she compiled the recipe book for Preschool she read out the recipes and encouraged Zena to help her to choose recipes to be included in the book.

Furthermore, Zena acquired knowledge about literacy through exploration and experimentation often through play. She liked to make up games that she played with her little sister and friends that involved reading and writing. For example, they staged an Olympic Games in the garden and made posters to
advertise it and tickets to sell as well as making paper money for the
transactions.

Zena, similar to all children, displayed her knowledge of literacy in a
variety of ways within activities. She demonstrated what she knew and could do,
explained it to others, applied things she’d learned in one activity to another and
told others about it.

Preschool.

At Preschool Zena gained information, like all children, by exploring and
experimenting with materials during play opportunities, and observing, copying
and collaborating with others. She displayed her knowledge in a variety of ways
too. She demonstrated what she knew in her actions or by making things, and by
telling others about it in conversation. Like several others, she often explained
things in her own words demonstrating her knowledge. However, Zena was the
only one who applied what she knew in new contexts at Preschool. For example,
she applied her knowledge of the days of the week to locate the appropriate day
on the weather chart and used her knowledge of the months of the year by
reciting them to locate the month of her birthday and subsequently her birth date
on the chart in the classroom.

Year One.

Zena gathered information about literacy and writing, and ways of
operating in the classroom by observing, copying others and experimenting. For
example, Zena spent her time in early writing sessions drawing while she listened
to others talk about their writing. She observed what they did and how they
attended the teacher. When the teacher commented to the class, I like the way
some children are writing their names at the top of the page. That’s good. Zena
immediately took out a writing pencil and wrote her name at the top of the page.
She gathered information about problem solving when she needed to write an
unknown word and demonstrated the strategies she acquired during the writing
process. In addition, she constantly asked other children questions as she
attempted to make sense of the process. Zena, unlike others, occasionally challenged established routines and practices as she did at home.

Zena displayed her literacy knowledge in her writing, and conversations with others. For example, the teacher commented, *We only use capital letters when it's the beginning letter in a sentence.* Zena interjected saying, *or in names.* In this instance she was declaring her knowledge of capital letter use. In a second example, Zena was busily writing. First she verbalised what she had planned to write. Then she said each word slowly and recorded the letters she could hear. Jeba interrupted her to make a suggestion. Zena rejected her assistance telling her she was writing about her birthday. Next, she read her writing aloud, *Today Yuko gave me a purse for my …* She placed two fingers on the page to make a space and asked, *How do you write birthday?* No one replied, so she took a card out of her desk, located the word birthday and copied it, saying each letter as she wrote (see Appendix E Fig. 14). She tried to read the writing in the card. She read, *Today I am six.* and put the card back in her desk. She re-read her writing. In this activity Zena displayed her knowledge of writing, in particular her knowledge of words, letters, the sounding out process, and the use of spaces by applying what she knew in her writing. She demonstrated her ability to plan what she was going to write and verbally rehearsed it. In addition, she monitored her own writing by re-reading, and she demonstrated a problem-solving strategy to write words she didn’t know. On this occasion, Zena was aware that she didn’t need assistance. Usually, she was happy to receive help. At no time did Zena appear to evaluate the assistance she received as Grace did constantly.

**Literacy Experiences**

**Home.**

Zena’s time was divided between two parents and her experiences with literacy varied accordingly. Her father did not plan literacy activities for his
children. He was surprised when she could find items on the supermarket shelves as she helped him with the shopping. In contrast, Zena had frequent, diverse literacy experiences when she was with her mother (the place she considered home). Naturally occurring literacy practices included the reading of newspapers and books, communicating through emails and letters, compiling shopping lists and writing assignments. Zena saw these practices modelled as part of daily life and was often involved in them. For example, Zena was encouraged to assist with the weekly grocery shopping. She added items to the shopping list, read the list in the supermarket for her mother, and then identified the flavours of yoghurts, for example, as she put them away in the refrigerator.

Some activities were planned by the mother to provide literacy opportunities within a broader life experience. For example, Zena and her mother went for a walk to collect cuttings from neighbourhood gardens. With her mother’s help, she labelled the plants and then planted the cuttings in pots and copied the names onto the pots. Similarly, activities were planned to interact and discuss aspects of literacy. For example, each night before bed, the mother read to Zena and her sister. Some of the books chosen were picture books and others were longer stories that were read over several nights. The ritual included summaries of what had happened in the story so far, discussions of what might happen next and descriptions of the characters that the mother elicited from the children. The girls chose some of the books, and the mother selected others from regular library visits. On occasions, the children listened to recordings of stories on cassettes, radio, CDs in their beds or watched fairy tales and other movies on video. The mother carefully selected what she described as good literature for her children.

Zena was provided with opportunities and materials to explore literacy independently. She kept her stationery and craft materials in the living room and engaged in colouring in, drawing, making cards and letters, as well as reading regularly.
A variety of literate functions were incorporated in Zena’s literacy experiences. She used literacy for pleasure when listening to stories and songs, using the computer colouring in pictures and playing games. She explored and experimented with literacy when attempting to read environmental print, practising letters, numbers and words, reading books, and using the computer. Letters and cards were used to communicate and for expression. Books, pictures, posters, television and the computer were used to gain information. She used literacy as an instrument to achieve purposes like making labels to identify things. Zena, unlike others, used literacy as an instrument to find websites by typing in web addresses and using her address book to locate telephone numbers to telephone friends.

**Preschool.**

Literacy experiences at Preschool for Zena differed from those at home. At Preschool, she had few interactions with adults or observations of adults modelling literacy use. Literacy was not explicitly taught but she was encouraged to practise writing her name. She participated in a range of activities during inside-play that included literacy resources and provided opportunities for her to explore and experiment. Activities included reading environmental print in the classroom, playing hospitals, doing puzzles, playing board-games, painting pictures using templates, decorating faces, creating and decorating with collage, experimenting with letters on the magnetic board, using the computer, cutting paper strips, pattern making, sewing, and playing school.

Zena engaged in imaginative play mainly in home corner. She incorporated many of the props and resources provided into her play and simulated their literacy use. For example, she referred to the calendar when making appointments for patients and scribbled in the appointment book. When making a telephone call she said the numbers she was pressing and had a discussion with another child about knowing her telephone number. She did not demonstrate, however, that she knew her number.
During investigative play, Zena explored the environmental print in the room. On one occasion, she engaged in conversation with a child about birthdays as they attempted to read the birthday frieze. She recalled her birthday, recited the months of year while moving along the frieze until she had located the designated month and then found the date of her birthday. In a subsequent activity, she found her name on the home pockets (used to leave messages and provide information for parents). She read her name aloud and then the names of her friends. When her friend pointed to a pocket and said, *That's mine.* Zena replied, *No. You don’t have the name Kirk.* In other activities, Zena identified the day of the week on the magnetic calendar, wrote her name on the artefacts she produced and used the computer.

Occasionally, the teacher assisted Zena to play board-games with a group of children. She applied her literacy knowledge in attempts to interpret symbols, read and carry out the instructions, and follow the rules of the game. The game involved children taking turns to move a train around the board singing in unison, *Engine, engine number nine, Going down the Preschool line. If the train goes off the track, will I get my money back?* Children collected coloured cubes and were encouraged to count the number of cubes they amassed.

There were few interactions with the teacher about literacy. On one occasion, however, Zena showed the teacher a pattern she had made by stamping stars on a card (see Appendix F Fig. 51). She had written the words *Zena Bell* (not her real name) at the top of the card. Zena pointed to the words and asked the teacher, *What does that say?* The teacher read it out and Zena nodded and laughed. When the teacher asked her if she could read it, Zena pointed to the words and read them too. The teacher praised her effort and walked away.

Zena’s Preschool literacy experiences involved exploring and experimenting with print, communicating about literacy with others, gaining
information or providing it for others, using literacy to influence others and to achieve a social purpose

**Year One.**

Like for all other children, Zena’s literacy experiences in the writing session, were characterised by conversations with other children, interactions with the teacher, and drawing and writing. Zena's conversations with other children included personal or shared experiences that she subsequently wrote about, discussions about the process of writing in which she frequently appealed to others for assistance, and interactions of a social nature. For example, in one writing session all were discussing what to write when Zena showed them her wobbly tooth. Children shared their wobbly tooth stories and then Zena wrote about it (see Appendix E Fig.15).

The teacher used conversations about Zena’s drawings to share experiences, build rapport and provide encouragement for Zena to attempt to write. She monitored her writing development, scaffolded her attempts and provided positive feedback. For example, when Zena read what she had written the teacher said, *I really like what you've drawn today and I'm pleased to see so many words. Well done! You've had fun today, haven't you.*

Zena, like Jeba, drew mainly on her experiences at home and at school for her drawings and writing. At first, she spent more time drawing, and talking about her experiences, than writing. Her writing consisted of a few words or a sentence to describe the picture, and relied on words that she knew by sight. For example, she frequently wrote repetitive sentences about her picture, *I can see the tree. I can see the flowers* (see Appendix E Fig. 16). She relied heavily on others to assist her by telling her the letters in words. Gradually she began to sound out words herself and became more self-reliant. Strategies used to write unknown words included looking in the soap-box she kept under her desk, locating the word on the charts and word lists around the room, locating it in a book she’d recently read or asking a friend.
The literate functions incorporated in Zena’s writing were similar to those of Jeba and Grace and similar to those evident at home and Preschool. First, she explored and experimented with aspects of writing by practising, applying print concepts, using a writing process, attempting to edit and punctuate, and using generic structure. For example, Zena attempted to write recounts, lists, recipes and fairy tales. Second, writing served a personal function as she expressed her ideas and feelings, described her personal experiences, and reflected on her own development in writing. Third, it served a communicative function by providing opportunities to share ideas and experiences, praise and encourage others, provide support and assistance, and critique the work of others. Zena communicated ownership of her belongings by writing her name on them, and wrote cards and letters to her friends. Furthermore, writing experiences had an information function. Zena was able to share information and display her knowledge as well as acquire information, strategies and assistance. Last of all, writing experiences were instrumental in facilitating friendships and building confidence as she contributed to discussions.

**Emergent Literacy**

**Home.**

At the beginning of the study, Zena wrote letters of the alphabet and words she knew using only capital letters. She usually wrote left to right but didn’t always start at the top of the page (see Appendix E Fig. 17). She knew the sequence of the alphabet and was able to write most of the letters by singing the alphabet song and some numbers by counting to 10.

After commencing Year One, the word knowledge that she displayed in home experiences increased. She identified the initial sounds of words, including digraphs, and began building word families eg *sun, bun* and *gun*. She recognised rhyming words and played rhyming games as well as writing words
from memory (See Appendix E Fig. 18). She displayed her letter and word knowledge by helping her mother to find the answers to simple crossword clues.

Zena struggled with the formation of some letters and numbers. She frequently reversed letters and numbers (see Appendix E Fig. 12). Her mother pointed out her errors and constantly corrected her letter formation and encouraged her to practise them. Zena became very reluctant to write and refused to attempt the letter a for a time.

Zena used symbolic representations in her literacy activities. She continued to draw pictures at home but not as frequently as before. At times she reverted to spaghetti writing (squiggly lines for words) strings of letters and numbers or attempted bubble writing and cursive writing. Other times, she labelled pictures, transcribed texts, composed text and successfully recorded addition sums in vertical and horizontal format. She used the computer mouse to point and click and to navigate her way around websites and she read and gained meaning from some of the icons on the screen.

Every night Zena’s mother read her stories at bedtime. At first, Zena listened to the stories, identified features in the pictures and sometimes asked her mother questions about what was happening in the story. As time went by, Zena began to identify words she knew in the stories and retell the story to her mother and her sister. Zena’s mother began to choose longer books with fewer pictures. Zena sustained interest in these chapter books. She summarised the story in her own words and predicted what would happen next, before they started on the next chapter. Later, she discussed the accuracy of her predictions with her mother.

Over time Zena became more independent in her reading. She was able to gain meaning using visual clues eg icons on the computer, calendars and posters. Zena read her take-home-reader to her mother. She used some strategies when she came to words she didn’t know eg looking at the picture, re-reading the sentence and sounding out letters in words.
Across the course of the study, Zena displayed a great deal of emergent literacy knowledge and skill in varied home literacy experiences. Many of her experiences were meaningful to her, purposeful and connected to broader life experiences, e.g. writing thank-you notes for gifts she had received or using an address book she had compiled to telephone her friends.

**Preschool.**

Zena demonstrated some emergent literacy knowledge and skills during inside-play activities. These included concepts about print, alphabet and number knowledge, word knowledge, mechanics of writing, use of symbols, reading and writing, and phonological awareness.

During an activity she had initiated with a friend, Zena attempted to read the birthday frieze and the home pockets that were features of the environmental print on the wall. First, she read the months of the year on the birthday frieze, stopping when she found the month of May. Then she scanned the cut-outs of figures grouped under that month until she located the one with her name on it. Last she read the date (2\textsuperscript{nd}) beside her name and declared: *My birthday’s the second of May.* The two girls then moved on to the home pockets (pockets in rows on the wall for the teacher to put in messages for home). First Zena identified her name on a pocket. Next they tried to identify the names of their friends. When the names on two of the pockets started with the letter *K*, they discussed the names of the children in the class whose names started with *K* and then identified which was which using their knowledge of other letters in the names.

During the activity and interaction with her friend, Zena demonstrated various concepts about print. She displayed the knowledge that print contains a message, that messages remains constant, and that print is written from left to right. She demonstrated one-to-one correspondence between written and spoken words when reading, and the concept that letters go together to make
words. In other activities she demonstrated awareness that there are spaces between words.

Zena demonstrated some knowledge of letters and sounds and some phonological awareness in her attempt to read the months of the year and to sound out and spell the names on the pockets. Some names she knew by sight. When she wrote her name on samples of work, she held the pencil in the accepted grip, and formed some letters correctly. Zena usually wrote using a mix of upper and lower case letters.

In some activities Zena used symbols to convey meaning. She created a pattern using a star shape that she stamped onto a sheet of paper (see Appendix F Fig. 51). She communicated the pattern by counting 1, 2, 3 over and over as she stamped the stars left to right across the page, line after line. At the top of the sheet she had recorded her name and then added the word Bell. Her name was not Zena Bell but she read it to the teacher and pretended that it was. She thought it was very funny. Many activities that Zena did, like this one, were designed by the teacher to develop fine motor control. They included cutting, pasting and painting activities in addition to writing her name in order to identify her work.

**Year One.**

Across the year, Zena demonstrated a range of early literacy knowledge and skills despite her initial reluctance to engage in the writing process independently. They related to writing structure, word usage, language conventions, the composing process, editing and engaging with writing.

At first, her writing attempts were drawings accompanied by a verbal recount of her experiences. For example, she drew a picture of an apple tree and described her visit to her aunt who had the apple tree in her garden in Tasmania (see Appendix E Fig. 19). Later she added words drawn mainly from the sight words that had been introduced. For example, she drew a picture with red butterflies and flowers and wrote, *I see red* (see Appendix E Fig. 20). As her
skills and confidence grew, she began to recount her experiences in writing. After 4 months she wrote, *Today we went to the Preschool and we made butterflies and we had lots of fun*. Most of the letters were formed correctly and words were spelt correctly. Sentences were joined using *and* (see Appendix E Fig. 21). After 10 months in Year One, Zena was using a small range of familiar text forms that included lists, letters, reports and narratives. For example, *Dear Meg, I’m coming to your birthday. What sort of cake is it going to be? I’m looking forward to go to your party. From Zena.* Many words were written correctly with the use of some punctuation including capital letters, a full stop, a question mark, and apostrophes (see Appendix E Fig. 22). Unlike Jeba, Zena had not yet incorporated dialogue into her writing.

Zena used the sight words she knew in her writing, or located them in her soap-box, in environmental print, and sounded out words she didn't know. She discussed word formations and meanings with others, noticing similarities and differences in words. For example, she applied similar word endings for rhyming words (*boy, toy*). She applied some language conventions but not consistently, and generally used appropriate tense and subject-verb agreement. She did not use titles.

In the composing process, Zena drew pictures from experience and then wrote about them. She planned and rehearsed verbally before writing. When sounding out, she said words slowly to identify sounds. Re-reading her writing was a strategy she employed to maintain word sequence, prompt her, ensure meaning, and to revise. She demonstrated early attempts at editing, changing words to clarify meaning, correcting spelling and adding information when needed.

At first, Zena was preoccupied with wanting to get everything right and had difficulty writing because of the complexity of the task. As a result, she maintained conversations with others and was easily distracted to avoid the
writing task. However as she experienced a sense of achievement through writing she persevered to complete tasks.

**Resources**

**Home.**

Zena had a large and varied supply of stationery and craft resources that she shared with her sister. Her mother encouraged relatives to provide resources as gifts for the girls when they celebrated birthdays or Christmas.

Writing implements (pens, colouring pencils, felt pens, lead pencils) were kept in plastic containers. The containers were moved around the house depending on where the girls were playing. Activities were usually completed in the living room in front of the television set, at the dining room table or in the girls’ bedrooms. Tidying up was not an established routine at the end of each activity, and therefore resources were frequently lost or pens dried out because caps were not replaced.

Additional resources supplied for Zena included workbooks purchased at the local newsagent that introduced phonics, board-games eg Junior Scrabble, note cards and envelopes for writing letters, CDs and videos of songs and stories, and a computer that Zena used with her mother’s help to find websites that provided information, or puzzles and games that she could play.

Zena frequently borrowed books to read from the school library and her mother chose books for her from the City Council Library. Other resources were utilised for specific activities eg an address book recorded the addresses and phone numbers of her friends. When she started to compose stories on the computer, her mother gave her a folder in which to keep her stories.

**Preschool.**

Zena had access to a wide variety of resources, as did all the children at Preschool and selected the activities she engaged in. During the course of the study she participated in painting pictures using templates, decorating faces,
collage, playing board-games, experimenting with letters on the magnetic board, using a paint program on the computer, pattern making, sewing and playing in home corner. Sometimes the teacher directed her to activities to practise skills, to create an artefact to be included in her Workbook or to participate in whole class activities like the making of props and scenery for the Christmas concert.

Similar to Jeba, Zena borrowed regularly from the Preschool library and was encouraged by the teacher to do so. These supplemented the books her mother borrowed for her from the City Council Library and the books she owned at home.

**Year One.**

Like all children, Zena had access to the resources bought by her parents according to the list provided by the teacher and to resources available in the classroom. She accessed these resources as required and used them when writing. For example, she used the alphabet strip on her desk to identify letters and sounds, sought sight words in her soap-box and copied them when needed and used the classroom resources to assist her with the writing process. These included, word lists, displays, charts, books, nursery rhymes. Zena was quite ingenious at using available resources. On one occasion, she copied the name of the school from the pocket on a child’s school uniform.

**Home-School Connections**

**Home.**

Zena’s mother sought opportunities to discuss with her class teacher how Zena was progressing in Year One. She often spoke to the teacher before and after school when she brought Zena to the classroom. At these times, Zena was reluctant for her mother to leave and became tearful at the time of departure. On the days when Zena stayed overnight with her father, he put her on a cross-river ferry to go to school. Her mother collected her at the other side and delivered her to school. Sometimes she was late for school on these days and her homework
was seldom done. This upset her mother, who planned for Zena to complete the week’s homework (Pictionary) on the days she was with her, and then read her take-home-reader each day when she collected her from the ferry before she came to school.

The Pictionary was a task that all of the children in the study completed each night. It involved learning a letter and the sound it made and finding pictures of things that started with that sound. Zena’s mother collected pictures for Zena that she could sort to find the one that matched the sound of the day. Sometimes Zena and her mother looked for pictures on the World Wide Web using the computer and printed them out and pasted them in her Pictionary. On other occasions, Zena’s mother encouraged her to draw pictures. Zena was reluctant to draw pictures for her Pictionary because both mother and daughter experienced conflict over the standard of the pictures that she drew.

**Preschool.**

Zena’s mother took a close interest in the Preschool program. She volunteered for the roster to assist in the classroom regularly and stayed in the room most mornings to be informed about the experiences that Zena was having. She was critical of the program as she considered that the activities were too structured and limited in scope. Her concern was that the focus of the program was in preparing children for particular aspects of school instead of developing the children’s positive disposition to learning. She attempted to address these concerns in discussions she initiated with the Preschool teacher and offered her assistance in organising excursions and outings. Zena engaged in many excursions and fun activities outside Preschool that her mother arranged.

**Year One.**

Regular contact was maintained between Zena’s mother and the teacher. The teacher had little contact, however, with Zena’s father. The mother often stayed when she brought Zena to the classroom. At first, she stayed because Zena was tearful and anxious, but she found it informative to see how the
classroom operated, the links between the class activities and the set homework, and how the teacher scaffolded reading and writing with the children. Consequently, she volunteered regularly to assist in the classroom. Mother and teacher discussed Zena’s progress and development regularly in an informal way and shared information that was considered pertinent. For example, mother shared her concerns about homework not being completed when Zena stayed with her father and how she tried to get the week’s homework done while Zena was with her. Similarly, she explained why Zena was sometimes late at school because of the ferry trip across the river from her father. The teacher appreciated this information and took it into account in her interactions and expectations with Zena. Formal interviews were arranged, as with all parents, and report cards sent home.
Kaori

Kaori’s family consisted of mother, father, an older brother Yosuke and Kaori. Her father worked as an official in the Japanese consulate. The family planned to stay in Australia for his three-year term of service and then return to Japan to live permanently. The father had completed tertiary education studying business. The mother had undertaken secretarial work before she married. During their time in Australia, they lived in a large home with a tennis court and a swimming pool on acreage in the suburbs.

Kaori arrived in Australia shortly before she commenced Preschool. She spoke no English at the time and was reluctant to attempt communicating in English. However, she listened and observed the teacher, aide and other children. It was in home corner, where she adopted the role of Doctor or Nurse, Teacher or student that she participated in interactions and conversations practising and trying out the English that she was acquiring.

Values, Attitudes and Beliefs

Home.

Kaori’s parents valued education and expected both children to have successful careers in later life. The children attended Saturday school each week to access the Japanese school curriculum. It was important to the parents that the children did not slip behind in their Japanese curriculum learning. It was less important for the parents that the children learn the Australian school curriculum; however it was expected that they learn English while they were in Australia and learn about the Australian culture. When Kaori started Year One, the parents hired an English tutor to assist her with learning English and with her homework.

Kaori was not expected to learn literacy before she started formal schooling and the parents did not perceive that they had a role in Kaori’s literacy learning. It was expected that Kaori would learn to be literate when she was
taught at school. When Kaori showed her parents her drawings and early attempts at writing, they did not value them and so did not keep them.

The parents valued the social opportunities that school afforded. It was important to Kaori’s mother that Kaori made friends at school and visited other children to play and that she participated in their typical social interactions such as attending birthday parties. The parents described the Christmas concert at the end of the Preschool year as Kaori’s graduation. It was filmed and proudly shared with friends and family. Kaori’s father wrote a thank-you letter to the Preschool teacher, thanking her for her teaching efforts. He believed it was an important Australian custom to express feelings through a letter.

It was important to Kaori’s parents that she liked school and was happy to attend. Her parents believed that there were two features of school enjoyment. First, if she had friends at school she would be happy to attend. Second, if learning were presented through games and play then she would enjoy the experience and be happy to attend.

_Preschool._

Unlike others, some of the values, attitudes and beliefs of the parents aligned with those of the Preschool teacher. She valued play and socialisation with others, as did the parents. The teacher valued play as a way to promote young children’s development by sharing ideas and skills, and set up activities that responded to children’s observed needs and interests. Kaori used the opportunities provided, especially home corner, to observe the behaviours of other children, copy their ways of operating and practise the skills demonstrated. The parents valued play and socialisation as a way of making friends, acquiring knowledge about Australian social and cultural practices and developing a positive disposition towards school. Similarly, the Preschool teacher believed that it was important for children to learn to speak English and employ Australian social and cultural practices in readiness for school.
The Preschool teacher modelled literacy and provided literacy resources but did not believe her role was to teach literacy explicitly before children commenced formal schooling. The parents believed that Kaori would learn to be literate at school too. They provided her with literacy resources at home but did not deliberately model literacy practices.

**Roles and Relationships**

**Home.**

In Kaori’s family, the father worked long hours and attended functions late at night as part of his consular duties. When at home in the evenings, he continued to work in his study and the children were instructed not to disturb him. He did not contribute to Kaori’s literacy development at home and did not see that he had a role to do so.

Kaori’s mother liked to socialise with women in the Japanese community in Brisbane. She made friends with other Japanese women and spent her days shopping and chatting. After school she would often take the children to friends’ homes to play and return home in the early evening. She did not consider that she had a role to play in Kaori’s literacy learning. She believed that literacy was learned at school.

When Kaori started school, a tutor was hired to assist Kaori once or twice a week with her homework. On other nights, Kaori’s mother assisted Kaori. They began to do this when the teacher’s expectations were explained to her and Kaori asked for help. The mother helped Kaori to find or draw pictures that started with a particular sound to complete the Pictionary homework and listened to her read her take-home-reader. She directed Kaori to do her homework and encouraged her to complete tasks.

**Preschool.**

Some of the roles that Kaori adopted in her experiences at Preschool were similar to those she adopted at home. They included the roles of
independent worker, collaborator and approval seeker. At Preschool, unlike home, Kaori had opportunities to participate in activities as a member of a group of children. In this new situation, she assumed the role of Director, issuing instructions, directing activities and controlling interactions, as well as enforcing rules, challenging them and challenging others. She adopted this role most frequently in home corner. Perhaps because all of the children played roles in home corner and were pretending, it was seen as a safe environment for Kaori to try out new roles and to practise her English. On one occasion, Kaori entered home corner to play school with several other children. She immediately demanded, *Who is the teacher?* Grace responded *Me.* However, when Grace looked at Kaori’s face she changed her mind. *I mean you,* she said. Kaori picked up the basket of name-cards and turned to Grace and said, *Which one? Is this your name?* She proceeded to show Grace the name-cards one by one so that Grace could identify her name. Lia entered the area and asked Kaori, *Can I play?* Kaori responded with a nod saying in an authoritative voice, *I’m teacher.* She then told Lia what to do. In interactions like these, Kaori readily communicated and interacted with others as she was role-playing. In other activities, Kaori was much more reserved in her interactions.

At Preschool Kaori frequently observed other children doing activities similar to the ones she was undertaking and copied them. This enabled her to complete activities independently and compensate for any verbal instructions that she might have missed because of language constraints.

Many of the activities at inside-play were structured to encourage children to play together. Kaori collaborated with others and co-constructed the activities in play. She willingly shared materials and resources and accepted assistance from others. When she was unsure how to use some of the features of the Paint program on the computer, she willingly took advice from a boy who was waiting for a turn and responded to the teacher who explained the features to her. When several children wanted to play the role of teacher in home corner, Kaori
attempted to resolve the situation by making the decision, announcing who would be the teacher in an authoritative manner. When this did not resolve the issue, she attempted to negotiate the roles and reach consensus by suggesting that one child could play the role of teacher aide.

During activities, Kaori often sought approval from the teacher or aide. At times, this was to gain confirmation in relation to her execution of a task or to receive some positive feedback. Kaori responded well to encouragement. She did not make comparisons between her own work and others’ nor did she attempt to discredit other children’s knowledge.

**Interactional Behaviour**

**Home.**

Kaori did not have frequent opportunities to interact with others in literacy experiences at home. Her bedroom was located at the back of the house, quite a distance from the main living area and resources were kept in her room. She was not permitted to engage in activities in the living area and consequently interactions resulted from her bringing things that she had made to show her mother in the kitchen. Her father worked in his study most evenings when he was home and the parents were not entertaining guests. Kaori watched television and Japanese cartoon videos with her brother in a playroom they shared next to her bedroom and sometimes played card games and board-games together. They frequently ate their dinner together in front of the television. Bedtime stories read by parents were not a regular feature of their routine.

Kaori’s parents spoke only the heritage language, Japanese, with their children. It was important to them that the children maintained their language and learning in Japanese so that they would not lag behind other children in school when they returned to Japan. Literacy conversations were scant and involved Kaori listening to her parents. They adopted the comforts of an
Australian lifestyle (large house, pool, tennis court) but the food, customs, and
language remained essentially Japanese.

The parents encouraged Kaori to learn English and saw this as an asset
that they would take back to Japan with them and assist them in the future.
When Kaori commenced Year One, she received support in English learning from
an ESL Teacher to supplement the language learned in the classroom. This
support was additional to the tutor that the parents hired to teach Kaori English
and help her with her homework.

Preschool.

Kaori communicated in English sparingly during most group activities with
the exception of home corner. In some of the activities that she undertook, Kaori
did not interact with others at all. For example when working with other children
in the collage area pasting objects on a strip of card to make patterns, she
observed what they did and at times copied them, but she did not communicate
verbally. However, in home corner, Kaori often initiated interactions with others
during role-play both verbally and non-verbally. On occasions, she used her
voice for good effect. When playing the role of teacher, she issued instructions
loudly and with a clipped, authoritative voice accompanied by a stern look. On
another occasion in home corner, Kaori slapped the ruler in her hand several
times when issuing instructions to show authority.

When this data was being gathered, Kaori spent the majority of her inside-
play participating in role-play in home corner. She used role-play to explore ways
to interact with others. She experimented with ways to gain entry into groups and
activities, respond to cues, take turns, engage others in conversation and play,
and to cooperate and collaborate with others.

In one experience in home corner, Kaori demonstrated how she used the
established rules for her own purpose. The teacher’s rule was that only four
children could be in an activity area at one time. Kaori approached home corner
with Grace and stood at the edge of it. There were already four girls playing in
the area. Kaori pointed and counted 1 2 3 4 5 She did not include herself in the count. She turned to Grace, pointed and said loudly, Grace out! When Grace protested, she turned to the next girl, Hannah out! She then turned to the other girls to make the decision, So Hannah or Sarah or Grace? The girls replied Not Sarah so Kaori said Well, Grace! To which the other girls in the area chorused Yes in agreement. Kaori turned to Grace and said, You have to go. Out! Out! You have to go out. She wagged her finger at Grace as she spoke. Kaori quickly moved to the blackboard and stood next to the teacher who began reading a book to her and told Kaori to read it after her. She had successfully used tactics to gain acceptance into home corner and remained there even though there were now five children in the area.

At other activities, for example, pattern-making or making blot pictures, Kaori did not interact but spent her time observing and listening to the other children. When she was attempting to use the Paint program on the computer to draw shapes and fill them with colour she accepted assistance from another child and from the teacher. When the boy asked for a turn, Kaori first responded in a minute and continued what she was doing. Later on, however, she responded to his demands for a turn giving him her place at the computer.

Learnerly Behaviour

Home.

Kaori gained knowledge about literacy by observing others, participating in activities with others, and by experimenting independently. Although she had few opportunities, she observed her parents reading and writing when they made shopping lists, read letters, school newsletters, the television guide, newspapers and magazines. She observed her brother doing his homework and collaborated with him when they played together. In addition, her mother assisted her to write letters to her grandmother in Japan. Kaori explored and experimented with print
on her own. She liked to draw, especially cartoon characters, make books, and play computer and board-games.

She displayed her knowledge of literacy in the activities she undertook. Her knowledge displays included demonstrating what she knew, explaining to others, applying knowledge acquired in one activity to another, and declaring what she knew. For example, when Kaori played a card game with her brother she recorded scores, added them up and made regular announcements of who was winning. She knew how to do this as she had watched her brother doing it previously.

**Preschool.**

Kaori’s experiences in the activity areas provided opportunities for her to display her knowledge and opportunities for learning. The experiences were characterised by Kaori exploring and experimenting with materials and resources, observing and copying other children, collaborating with others to complete activities, and experimenting with, and exploring social interactions through play. These behaviours sometimes underpinned displays of knowledge. For example, when Kaori was playing the role of a Doctor in home corner, she selected a stethoscope from the instrument tray and listened to the doll’s chest. Through this action and similar actions she displayed the knowledge she had of the use of medical instruments and a Doctor’s behaviour in examining patients. In the example given, Kaori used demonstration for her knowledge display. On other occasions she declared what she knew. In home corner, playing school, Kaori responded to the question posed by the child playing the role of the teacher. On the blackboard she had written: $1+10=0$.

She asked Kaori, **Now what’s one plus ten equal? What’s one plus ten?** Kaori responded, **I know. Eleven.** On this occasion, she declared what she knew.

As well as providing opportunities for displays of knowledge, Kaori’s experiences at inside-play provided opportunities for learning. However, no
evidence of learning was apparent in Kaori’s experiences. This is not to say that learning did not occur, but evidence of learning depends on some performance on Kaori’s part that indicated change or a shift in her way of seeing, experiencing, understanding or conceptualising something in the world or making sense of others’ understanding of it. Learning performances often involve the learner explaining in their own words, making analogies or generalising as a way of demonstrating the shift in their thinking. Kaori’s limited use of English possibly contributed to the lack of evidence of learning taking place. However, Kaori did not demonstrate understanding by applying knowledge in a new context either.

**Literacy Experiences**

**Home.**

Kaori’s home had few literacy experiences when compared with some others in the study. Therefore she did not experience the diversity of experiences that, for example, Zena had. She observed her parents engaging in literate activities during daily routines. These included writing letters, reading magazines, watching television and making shopping lists. Occasionally she observed her father reading the television guide. Kaori’s literacy experiences at home mainly were self-initiated and undertaken independently. She coloured pictures and made drawings, experimented with writing and attempted to read comics and books (see Appendix E Fig. 23).

Experiences in which she interacted and discussed aspects of literacy were limited until she started Year One. She interacted with her brother when they played games that had a literacy component, for example games with cards that involved writing and keeping score. She showed her drawings and attempts at writing to her mother but these were not valued. However, when she commenced school her parents employed a tutor to assist her with English and homework. This resulted from the Year One teacher explaining to the mother that she was expected to assist Kaori with her homework. The tutoring sessions
involved participation in conversation, and practising the names and sounds of letters, words and the take home-reader. Kaori’s mother assisted her in the evenings that the tutor was not present. On other occasions, she helped Kaori reply to invitations and to write cards for her friends.

Kaori’s home literacy experiences served a variety of literate functions. One of these was for personal enjoyment. Kaori enjoyed reading books and drawing pictures and cartoon characters. A second function was to explore and experiment with print, which Kaori did in both English and Japanese. She used literacy to communicate with her grandmother in letters and to reply to invitations from friends. A further function was to gain information through the use of the television guide, for example, and then some experiences were instrumental in achieving other purposes. For example, keeping score in card games to determine the winner of the game.

**Preschool.**

Literacy experiences at Preschool differed for Kaori from those at home. She still had few interactions with adults or observations of adults modelling literacy use but increased opportunity to explore and experiment with literacy through play. Kaori spent much of her time engaging in imaginative play in home corner playing hospitals or school. She practised English and incorporated many of the props and resources provided into her play and simulated their literacy use. For example, she showed name-cards to children so they could identify their names. When playing school Kaori liked to be the teacher. She wrote a string of numbers on the blackboard with a circle at the end. She inserted a 4 in the circle and added a tick ✓ at the end. In this example, she attempted to demonstrate how to write a sum (Appendix F Fig. 63). On another occasion, she handed a child a clock and declared: *I’m teacher. You have to do 1 o’clock. 1 o’clock of 5. That’s the number.*

Kaori participated in a small range of other activities. These included making blot pictures, making patterns using collage materials, using the Paint
program on the computer, constructing things in the collage area, decorating bird shapes and sewing.

There were few interactions with the teacher about literacy. On one occasion, the teacher assisted Kaori to use a Paint program on the computer. She gave verbal instructions and then placed her hand over Kaori’s on the mouse to guide her attempts to click on icons. She praised her efforts saying, *Very good Kaori.*

**Emergent Literacy**

**Home.**

At the commencement of the study, Kaori had developed some concepts about print in English. She wrote from left to right but did not start on the left hand side of the page consistently. She knew some letters of the alphabet and could write them in upper case. She could write her own name using upper case letters and numbers to ten with some reversals (see Appendix E Fig. 24).

She spent her time drawing pictures of things that were familiar to her. Many included her family, a cat, houses, trees, the sun and flowers. The people and animals in her pictures always had happy smiles. Other drawings depicted cartoon characters that she had seen on television.

Kaori began labelling her pictures using Japanese characters and English words (see Appendix E Fig. 25). She wrote *For Dad* on one picture and gave it to her father but he did not keep it. She began writing captions under her cartoons and making birthday cards and Christmas cards and writing *Best Wishes from Kaori* on them. On one occasion she wrote some words to her grandmother to be enclosed in her mother’s letter.

Across the course of the study, Kaori developed many concepts about print. She knew that print started at the top and was read from left to right, line after line. She distinguished between letters, words and numbers and she was able to make meaning from print.
Kaori learned the letters of the alphabet and numbers to 100. She could identify the names and sounds of letters and could give examples of words that start with a given sound. She learned to recognise some words visually and could sound out some words. Kaori had good fine motor control and was able to form most letters correctly.

Once Kaori started Year One, her parents hired an English tutor to assist her with English and her homework. The tutor came once a week to work with Kaori and showed her mother how she could assist with the take-home-reader and the Pictionary homework. The homework was usually completed although a regular homework time was not established.

Kaori had access to a computer at home but she did not use it frequently. When she did use the computer it was to play games during which she demonstrated good hand-eye coordination and mouse control. She was able to make meaning from the icons and symbols on the screen. Kaori used numeric symbols in other games. When she played card games with her brother she liked to keep score and use numbers to keep a record of how many games they each won e.g. 9/10. On other occasions Kaori liked to make up number stories and used sums to record mathematical operations (see Appendix E Fig. 26).

**Preschool.**

Kaori demonstrated some emergent literacy knowledge and skills during inside-play activities. The knowledge and skills demonstrated included concepts about print, alphabet and number knowledge, word knowledge, the mechanics of writing, the use of symbols, and reading and writing.

The teacher structured activities to facilitate emergent literacy displays by children. She provided resources and materials to encourage literacy experiences and directed children to write their names on the products and artefacts that they created. When it was time to take these things home, Kaori was able to recognise them readily. Identification, therefore, provided a purpose for her writing and an opportunity for her to practise holding a pencil. It drew on
her developing knowledge of letters and the direction of English print. Her knowledge of the starting place and direction of print was not yet fully established.

During an activity in the collage area, Kaori wrote her name on the construction she had made (see Appendix F Fig. 48). She held the pen in her right hand using the accepted grip. She started in the middle of the box and wrote right-to-left. She knew the letters in her name but interchanged the place of two of the letters. She used a mixture of upper and lower case letters. When she had written the first two letters, she made a return sweep to the middle of the box and wrote the remaining letters, also right-to-left. Kaori demonstrated, on this occasion, that her concept of orientation and direction when writing in English were not yet established. On other occasions she oriented her writing correctly.

At home, the environmental print and many of the books that she read were in Japanese, which has a different orientation of print. This may have contributed to the orientation and direction of her writing not being fully established in English.

Kaori demonstrated further literacy knowledge and skills in home corner playing school. The teacher had provided name-cards for each of the children. Kaori recognised her own name from amongst the pile and held up the cards one-by-one for others to recognise their name, too. Kaori did not assist others to identify their names or the initial letter and sound of their names.

On a second occasion in home corner, Kaori displayed knowledge of counting, numbers, the concept of addition and the symbolic representation of numbers (see Appendix F Fig. 63). On one occasion she counted five children in the activity area but did not include herself in the count. This may have been deliberate as she was trying to insinuate herself into the group at the time and a maximum of four children were permitted. In response to a written sum ($1+10=O$) and the accompanying question, *Now what’s one plus ten equal? What’s one plus ten?* she said, *I know. Eleven.* She attempted to use symbolic
representation to write number equations on the blackboard (see Appendix F Fig. 64).

Kaori demonstrated additional knowledge of the use of symbols on the computer. She used the icons on the Paint toolbar to draw, colour and erase the shapes she had drawn.

On a third occasion, Kaori participated in the shared reading of a book with another girl. The girl had memorised some of the story, which she read to Kaori, and then Kaori repeated it. When the shared reading had concluded, Kaori took the book and sat on a chair reading it by herself. She held the book appropriately, started at the front, turning the pages one at a time and read aloud making up the story from the pictures. Kaori demonstrated that she had established many of the concepts about print related to book-reading.

Resources

**Home.**

Kaori had a lot of reading, writing and other resources provided by her mother. They included books and comics in Japanese and English, notepads, paper, stationery and craft items. She had a variety of pens, pencils, crayons, paints, coloured pencils, stamps, stickers, erasers and pencil sharpeners, all packaged and presented with designer labels for children. The resources were kept in Kaori’s bedroom. She had her own desk, office chair, bookcase and study light. She did not like to spend time in her bedroom, however, as it was far away from other members of the family. Instead, Kaori would perch on a stool in the kitchen with a notebook and pen while her mother was preparing the evening meal.

**Preschool.**

Kaori had access to a wide variety of resources in a range of activities, as did all the children at Preschool. However, as she chose to spend a lot of her time in imaginative play in home corner, she did not use all of the resources on
offer. Sometimes the teacher directed her to activities to practise skills, to create an artefact to be included in her Workbook or to participate in whole class activities like the making of props and scenery for the Christmas concert.

Apart from home corner, Kaori participated in making blot paintings, creating and constructing in the collage area, sewing, and using the computer. She chose not to use the magnetic letters, weather chart or calendar or engage in many of the Christmas activities. Similar to the others, Kaori was encouraged to borrow from the Preschool library but did not return her library book regularly.

**Home-School Connections**

**Home.**

Kaori’s mother had regular contact with the class teachers. When Kaori was in Preschool she was interested in seeing what Kaori was doing in class and needed to be reassured that Kaori was participating in activities and making friends. When Kaori started Year One, the mother continued regular contact with the teacher and often came into the classroom to see Kaori’s workbooks and work samples in the room. The teacher explained the homework (take-home-reader and Pictionary) that Kaori was to do each night and how the mother could assist Kaori to complete it. The teacher encouraged parent involvement in the child’s homework and Kaori’s mother began to assist Kaori with it.

**Preschool.**

Kaori’s mother had limited English and found this constrained her attempts to communicate with the teacher at Preschool. She observed Kaori participating in activities when she brought her to Preschool in the morning and encouraged her to play with other girls. She did not participate in the Parent evenings that the teacher arranged. The Preschool teacher kept Kaori’s parents informed about the Preschool activities through regular newsletters that were placed in her home pocket.
Lia

Lia’s family had come to Australia while her father undertook a degree in urban planning and intended to return to Indonesia when it was finished. Her mother had an education degree but was not a teacher. They lived in a two bedroom flat close to the university with their five children. Lia was the third child. The children ranged in age from newborn to 8 years of age. Her mother worked part-time in the same childcare centre where she placed her baby.

Values, Attitudes and Beliefs

Home.

The parents valued education and expected that their children would do well at school and would attend university as they had done. They wanted a good education for their children, but did not perceive that they had a role in contributing to it, assisting their children or preparing them for school. They believed that children were taught all they needed to know at Preschool and school.

The family was close-knit and maintained close connections with family in Indonesia. They did not go out very often and did not socialise with the Indonesian community. However, they observed religious rituals, for example Ramadan, spoke the heritage language with their children, and the mother wore Muslim dress on occasion. Otherwise, they were not particularly concerned with maintaining heritage culture and traditions as other families were. Lia and the other children in her family did not attend Saturday school to do schoolwork in Indonesian.

Lia’s mother believed that when children started formal schooling, they learned to read by recognising words in a text. First children learned words by memorising them and as more words were known the more they could read. She believed that children learned to write by putting known words together in sentences. Colouring-in activities, drawing, scribble writing and pretending to
read picture books were not valued as precursors to reading and writing. Lia’s parents did not deliberately read or write in front of the children.

Like all parents, it was important that their children enjoyed school, made friends and were happy. They did not monitor the friendships their children made as other parents did but were pleased for their children to participate in Australian cultural activities.

Family life was not ordered with few routines and expectations. Similarly, parents did not identify routine and discipline, or repetition and practice as important for their children’s learning.

**Preschool.**

The values, attitudes and beliefs of the Preschool teacher were different from those of the parents. Lia was provided with opportunities to explore and engage with literacy resources within activities that she did not have the opportunity to engage with at home. She saw literacy modelled by the teacher and other children, although not taught explicitly. Conversations with other children promoted her English language acquisition, and she had opportunities to explore social interactions and make friends. The value the teacher’s placed on children displaying Australian social customs and cultural practices was expected by the parents.

Lia was brought to Preschool each day by her parents. They did not stay, however, or volunteer on the roster to assist. They respected the teacher’s professional judgement and trusted her to monitor Lia’s development and to provide appropriate experiences.

**Roles and Relationships**

**Home.**

The mother was not regularly involved in Lia’s literacy experiences at home. She was busy caring for the younger children, preparing meals for the family, and for some of the time during the study, worked at a childcare centre.
The mother’s interactions with Lia included finding pens and scrap paper when asked for them and very occasionally listening while Lia read the home-reader. She provided the children with a box of second-hand books to read. These included nursery rhymes, songs, alphabet books and fairy tales.

Lia’s father spent much of his time in the bedroom typing at the computer and the children knew they were not supposed to disturb him. Lia occasionally interrupted when he was working at the computer. She would ask him for paper and show him her drawings. He took an interest in the drawings that Lia produced, asking her to explain them and assisted her to label her pictures. When she climbed onto his lap and demanded to be shown how to use the computer, he complied. Lia’s father encouraged her to learn words for the Spellathon and demonstrated pride in her ability to read.

Lia’s older sister, Nadia, read books with Lia occasionally and assisted her with letters and words when asked to do so. She did not assist Lia with her homework or participate in craft activities with her.

Most of Lia’s home literacy experiences were self-initiated and she was the only participant. She showed an interest in learning to read and write but was not taught literacy by her parents who did not see it as their role to do so.

**Preschool.**

For Lia, inside-play provided opportunities to explore and develop roles through engagement in activities that she did not have access to or did not experience at home. The structure in the Preschool activities and the availability of resources facilitated her development as an independent worker, director, collaborator and approval seeker as she participated in a variety of experiences.

Many of the features of the roles she adopted were exploratory or experimental to make friends, gain acceptance amongst her peers or approval from the teacher. For example, Lia worked alongside Jeba in the collage area to decorate a cut-out of a face. First, she directed the activity issuing instructions to Jeba, *Do the ears. Do earrings.* She observed Jeba following her instructions.
and then copied what she had done. Second, Lia sought approval turning to another girl saying, *This is a necklace. Is it good?* At the same time, she turned to Jeba and discredited her work saying, *That just doesn’t look good. Mine’s gooder. I think mine’s gooder.* Jeba left the area. Another girl joined the activity. Lia explained to her what to do, and again issued instructions, *Do it like this with mine. You have to do it like me. Like me. You have to copy me. Copy me.* As the girl proceeded with her task, Lia commented, *That’s yukky. That’s yukky.*

Notably, the cut-out face that Lia had chosen was a pale skin colour. The other children who undertook the activity attempted to match the face they had chosen to their own skin colour but Lia did not. She held hers up to her face and pointed at the girl’s cut-out and said, *Yours isn’t white. Mine’s white.* It could be inferred that Lia had privileged the cut-out face with the white skin colour.

In some experiences, Lia experimented with ways to collaborate with others. At the puzzle table, she observed two children doing a puzzle together. She observed them and joined in their laughter. One of the children put her hand into a container to choose a piece of puzzle. Lia put her hand into the container too. The girl moved the container away and looked at Lia. Lia removed her hand and adopted the role of critic, commenting that they weren’t using the right pieces before moving away.

In a more successful collaborative experience, Lia co-jointly painted a tree on a two-sided glass panel with a partner. Lia stood on one side of the framed glass panel while her partner stood on the other side. They had to work together to complete the activity, providing assistance, sharing resources and taking turns to complete the task.

At times, Lia worked independently. On these occasions, she initiated the activity and either followed instructions, observed or copied others. If she didn’t know what to do, she frequently sought assistance or confirmation from other children, the teacher or the aide.
Interactional Behaviour

Home.

The parents spoke their heritage language at home and conversed in English at work and university. Their children spoke a mixture of English and Indonesian with their parents and one another. Most of their time at home was spent playing inside or playing outside with other children in their street.

Lia engaged in frequent conversations with her parents and siblings. She initiated many of these conversations, talking a lot about anything that caught her interest and often interrupting others when speaking. At times, she was unaware that no one was listening or paying attention to her. She asked questions, demanded responses and sought explanations for things she wanted to know. At quieter times, she observed and listened to her parents’ conversations. However, she was not included as a conversational partner with her parents.

Despite having older siblings, Lia did not participate in literacy activities with them. The two school-age children played together outside and Lia played with the younger one or watched over the baby. There did not appear to be established routines for the children and organisation was difficult as all children, except the baby, shared one bedroom. The mother’s time was spent in cooking and caring for the children when she wasn’t working, and father spent his time at the university studying or working at a table in the parent’s bedroom. Therefore, there were no planned interactions but Lia undertook activities alone. These included drawing on scraps of paper and looking at books. Sometimes she observed her parents doing literate activities. For example, she watched her father composing at the computer and her mother reading letters. Lia, and her brothers and sisters usually did what their parents asked of them, but on occasion they just ignored instructions without challenging or openly refusing to do so as Zena sometimes did.
**Preschool.**

Lia participated in a wide range of activities at Preschool that provided experiences to develop social skills. They included structured, small group activities that required taking turns, sharing resources, assisting others and being a member of a group, as well as unstructured activities in which children used the resources provided to work independently or to co-construct activities. Unstructured activities, like home corner, provided an environment for Lia to explore rules and interact with others. She explored rules by attempting to challenge or negotiate them during play, challenge the roles each participant played and her own position in the activity. Sometimes, these encounters were playful and at other times manipulative. For example, when playing with the magnetic weather chart, Lia was criticised by others in the group for not placing the magnetic counters on the chart correctly. She responded by seizing all the counters and refusing to share. Then she held out two counters to one member of the group saying, *You’re supposed to be my friend.* This child capitulated, accepted the two counters and declared, *Okay, do whatever you want.* Lia went on to successfully negotiate with other members of the group. In this example, and in many others, she appeared to be exploring and testing her own skill and the responses of others in various social situations. On many occasions, she enforced rules to her own advantage but did not query or explain the purpose of activities to others.

Her interactions were dominated by conversation. Similar to home, Lia initiated and participated in conversations. She provided commentary for what was happening, asked questions, gave others instructions, criticised their efforts, compared her work, and on occasions asked for assistance.

During inside play, Lia tended to flit from activity to activity sampling what each had to offer. She struggled at first to gain access to groups and tried a variety of strategies to gain acceptance. For example, she tried standing at the edge of an activity area and insinuating herself into the activity. On one
occasion, she tried to join several children completing a jigsaw puzzle. The puzzle required children to choose pieces of clothing to dress a doll. At first, Lia looked over the children’s shoulders and smiled and laughed with them. Then she attempted to put her hand into the container to choose a puzzle piece. One child moved the container towards herself, away from Lia, watching her until Lia removed her hand. Lia pointed to a piece in the container and said loudly, *No! That goes with that. No hat. No hat.* She paused to assess the reaction of others and then turned and moved to another activity. On this occasion, she disassociated from the others rather than be turned away from the activity.

Over time, Lia developed a variety of successful strategies to gain access to activities and to interact successfully with others. One was to ask questions or ask for help from others. For example, when playing school she assumed a seat and asked the child who was playing the teacher, *Is this where you write your name?* By recognising the child in the teaching role and asking a question she had ensconced herself successfully in the game.

*Learnerly Behaviour*

*Home.*

Lia gained knowledge about literacy by observing others, participating in activities, and by experimenting independently. Although Lia had less frequent opportunities to observe her parents than other children, she did observe her parents reading and writing when her father was composing at the computer and her mother wrote notes or read letters. She observed her siblings doing their homework. Lia explored and experimented with print on her own. She liked to draw pictures, usually of her family, watch television and read books.

She displayed her knowledge of literacy in the activities she undertook. For example, she demonstrated reading behaviour when she recited nursery rhymes from a book, having identified the rhyme from the associated picture. She wrote letters and numbers in alphabet sequence and named the ones she
knew using paper and a pen that she had found on the kitchen bench. On another occasion she applied this knowledge in a computer activity that she initiated. She searched for the letters on the computer keyboard to enable her to type the alphabet in order from A-Z and numbers 1-10.

**Preschool.**

Lia spent her time exploring and experimenting with materials and resources, observing and copying other children, collaborating to complete activities, and experimenting with, and exploring social interactions through play during activities. These behaviours were the ways in which Lia acquired knowledge about the environment in which she operated and precipitated learning.

Lia frequently initiated experiences to explore and experiment with letters and words. For example, she explored the container of plastic letters choosing O and X to put side by side on the magnetic board. She chose the letter Z and placed it in front of the OX to make ZOX. It appeared by the way that she had placed the letters that she attempted to construct a word, but she did not sound out the letters or say the word. A little later, Lia placed a j in front of the other letters. She looked at what she had constructed and removed all of the letters except for the O. She replaced the X (OX) and appeared to search for a letter in the container. She appeared not to find the letter she wanted, and then placed a second O on the board, removing the X. Then she removed the second O and replaced it with a stick (not a letter) and added the number 8. She looked at what she had placed on the board, swept all of the symbols back into the container and walked away.

On a second occasion, Lia placed the letter C on the left hand side of the magnetic board and added an O and a symbol (£). She placed the letters left-to-right and then put them back in the container and walked away. A few moments later, she returned and placed the letters COM on the left hand side of the board. She removed them and placed an upper case H and a lower case h on the
board. She turned the h upside down, looked at it for several seconds and then turned it around again. She matched more upper and lower case letters before walking away.

In these two experiences, Lia explored letters, numbers and symbols, made strings of letters and attempted to make words. She demonstrated that she held some concepts about print – letters were placed in a line from left to right. She experimented with putting letters together to make a word.

On other occasions, Lia collaborated with friends to acquire the information she required to participate in activities. In one example, Lia asked a more knowledgeable friend to help her find her name amongst the name-cards in home corner. In a second example, she co-constructed an activity to complete the magnetic calendar weather chart for the day. The task involved placing counters on the corresponding day, month, year and weather. Lia matched her friend’s recitation of the days of the week and the months of the year with the written words on the chart, together with her knowledge of the day and month to locate them.

**Literacy Experiences**

**Home.**

Lia’s literacy experiences at home were irregular and mostly self-initiated. She spent time playing outside with her older brother and sister after school or playing inside with the baby and watching television. She looked at picture books that were kept in a cardboard box in a corner of the living room, and sometimes discussed the words and pictures with her older sister Nadia. Lia often drew pictures of her family on scrap paper, and asked her father to help her name them. At times she observed her father typing at the computer but he usually kept the door shut to the bedroom where he worked so that he had some quiet, or he worked at the university.
Preschool.

At inside-play, Lia moved from activity to activity spending a short time in each area. Sometimes her experiences in an area lasted a few moments and then she moved on, later returning to repeat the activity. She was exploring her environment and what it had to offer in her own way. The activities she undertook included experimenting with letters on the magnetic board, doing jigsaw puzzles, making constructions in the collage area, playing in home corner, creating pictures using a variety of medium, accessing the computer and sewing.

Emergent Literacy

Home.

Before she started Year One, Lia often drew familiar environments on scraps of paper that featured all her family members and added clouds, flowers, hearts and diamonds. She labelled the things in her picture, writing the names of her siblings herself and asked her father for assistance when she needed it (see Appendix E Fig. 28). When she drew her family, they had stick figures, no necks, dots for eyes and big smiles. She added buttons and hair but little other detail.

Sometimes Lia wrote strings of numbers and letters and attempted to sequence them (see Appendix E Fig. 29). At this stage, she had not fully established the direction of print or the starting place on a page. A favourite book that she liked to read was an Alphabet book and she would recite the letters and name the associated picture saying A for apple, B for bear. When she didn’t know a letter she would ask her sister. Just prior to starting Year One, Lia became interested in using her father’s computer. One day she climbed onto his lap and demanded to use the keyboard. She attempted to type the letters of the alphabet in sequence on the keyboard and to count and type numbers in order. On another occasion she used the Paint program on the computer, manipulating the mouse to colour in some shapes. At Christmas time. Lia used scrap
materials to make a Christmas card for her mother and wrote her name in the card.

When Lia started Year One she began writing her name at home on any surface she could find. Her parents complained that she was writing her name on books, paper and walls. Once they were concerned that she had written the word “hell” on the wall. She started bringing home a library book each day from school and practised her reader by herself. She began copying letters and words from books, writing words she had learned at school from memory and copying text from environmental print. She wrote the months of the year from the calendar. She consistently wrote from left to write and left spaces between words. Words had a variety of upper and lower case letters and numbers were sometimes reversed.

**Preschool.**

During inside-play activities, Lia demonstrated some emergent literacy knowledge and skills. These included concepts about print, alphabet and number knowledge, word knowledge, the mechanics of writing, the use of symbols, reading and writing, and phonological awareness.

Lia wrote her name on all of the things she made. She did not use the accepted pencil grip and wrote her name using a mixture of upper and lower case letters. These features of her name writing did not change. Initially, she wrote from right-to-left (see Appendix F Fig. 57) and then later wrote left-to-right (see Appendix F Fig. 40) consistently indicating that directionality had become established.

Home corner provided Lia opportunities to experiment with reading and writing. She engaged in play using the literacy resources provided – referring to the calendar, and reading the appointment book. Notably, Lia did not use scribble or spaghetti writing in these activities, nor did she initiate opportunities for book reading.
Lia experimented with making words on the magnetic board. She placed the letters ZOX in a line starting on the left and later placed a string of symbols in a line, not discerning between sticks, letters and numbers. On another occasion, she placed the letter h on the board, turned it around as if to see which way was the right way up. Next she matched upper and lower case letters and placed them in a line displaying knowledge of letters in both cases.

On one occasion in home corner, Lia was looking for her name amongst a pile of name-cards. Lia did not recognise it at first because it was written in full while she was known by, and wrote the diminutive. She asked Grace for help to find it and then spelt out the letters in her name. Lia identified many of the names on the name-cards as Grace held them up and handed one card to her friend David saying, *D for David*. In this experience, Lia demonstrated that she could recognise a variety of names by sight and that she used the initial letter to cue her to words.

On a second occasion, Lia turned to the children at the table and declared, *I know what one plus one, a real one is, you know.* She wrote on the blackboard beginning in the top left hand corner and said, *There, one plus one equals. I know what one plus one is.* *Two ones – eleven.*

In this experience it is not clear if Lia knows what one plus one is, or if she is trying to trick or humour her friends. She had watched Grace on previous occasions record sums on the blackboard and may have tried to copy her.

Lia demonstrated knowledge of the use of symbols on the computer. She used the icons on the Paint toolbar to draw, colour and erase the shapes she had drawn.

**Resources**

**Home.**

Resources for literacy activities were limited in Lia’s home compared with the other children in the study. There was, however, a steady supply of scrap
and recycled paper to use and usually a biro could be found for drawing and writing. Lia used the resources that were available and improvised. She borrowed regularly from the Preschool and school library and attempted to read and write the print that was visible in her home. This included calendars on the wall, brochures that she found in the mailbox and cans and packets in the kitchen cupboards. She often brought her pencil case home from school so that she could use her coloured pencils and glue at home. Although she did not have ready access to the computer at home, she was able to access it occasionally. There was a cardboard box of books in the corner of the living room that the mother had bought from a charity for the children to read. They included picture books, nursery rhymes and an alphabet book. Lia attempted to read these books independently and sometimes engaged her older sister to read them to her.

*Preschool.*

Lia had access to the same resources and activities as all other children in the study and, similarly, chose the activities and resources with which she engaged. However, her engagement differed from other children. She roamed the room observing all the activities and resources on offer and what children were doing with them. She spent a short period in most activities during the time available for inside play rather than settling on one activity for extended periods as most children did. It appeared that she wanted to experience and participate in everything at once and not miss anything. However, she struggled at times to gain entry into activities. When this happened, she appeared content to observe others before moving on.

Lia borrowed from the Preschool library and was encouraged by the teacher to do so. However, she frequently forgot to return books and could not borrow again until the previous book was returned. Her mother did not remind her and so Lia did not borrow regularly.
Home-School Connections

Home.

Lia’s parents believed that the teachers at Preschool and in Year One would prepare her for school and take care of her learning. They did not perceive that they had a role as a partner in this, or a need to inform or involve themselves in the process. Similar to many of the parents in this study, they believed that teachers were the experts and did not seek regular contact with the teachers.

At school, Lia did not complete her homework regularly and her parents did not take responsibility for it being done. Sometimes her mother read the take-home-reader with Lia but this was irregular. Lia completed the Pictionary homework occasionally by drawing pictures herself with a biro but did not colour them in or take care with them. Sometimes the Pictionary book and/or reader were not returned to school the next day. The teacher sent messages home with the older sister asking the mother to ensure that Lia completed and returned her homework consistently. However, the parents indicated that it was Lia’s responsibility to organise herself for school.

Lia’s parents drew on Lia’s success in the Spellathon and a bookmark that she had been awarded by the teacher as visible signs of Lia’s success at school. They were concerned when the first progress report was received that indicated that Lia might not have been progressing as well as they had previously thought. The mother attended a parent/teacher meeting and afterwards described Lia as lazy.

Preschool.

Connections between Lia’s family and the Preschool were minimal. Lia was brought to Preschool each day and was collected in the afternoons but her parents did not stay. Sometimes the teacher showed the parents the things that Lia had been doing. The parents did not volunteer on the roster to stay and assist and did not attend Parent nights that the teacher had arranged. The
newsletter to keep parents informed of activities in the Preschool was not read regularly by the parents.
Grace

Grace’s family migrated to Australia from South Korea before she was born. Her father was studying at university to become a minister of religion in the Presbyterian Church. Her mother supported the family by working in an Asian restaurant. There were three children in the family - Grace who was 5 on commencement of this study, Paul aged 7 and Sam aged 9 years. They lived in a three-bedroom house provided by the Church that was close to the university.

Values, Attitudes and Beliefs

*Home.*

Grace’s family believed that a good education was the key to their children’s future. Her parents had a strong work ethic and believed that a disciplined approach, an established routine, and repetition and practice were important for learning. Each afternoon, Grace’s mother ensured the three children spent an hour in their bedrooms doing homework and study and then practised the musical instruments they were learning to play. She reminded them when it was study time or music practice time and the children responded respectfully and obediently. Grace began learning the violin in Year One.

Regular attendance at school was considered a component of a disciplined approach to learning and therefore Grace seldom missed a day. It was important that she was happy at school and her parents encouraged her to make friends and participate in Australian cultural activities. However, Grace’s parents did not consider learning as a fun activity and did not encourage Grace to perceive it as so.

The mother assumed responsibility for her children’s literacy learning at home. She believed that children learn at home and at school and that children start learning literacy long before they start attending school. Grace was taught that reading and writing involved recognising letters and words and her mother recognised and valued her attempts. Grace’s mother read and explained the
instructions for the phonic workbooks that Grace completed at home. Literacy was valued by the parents and was an integral part of social and cultural activities. For example, Grace observed her parents reading hymnbooks when singing in Church, and the Bible.

The family had a computer that was situated in the living room. The exposure that Grace and her siblings had to the computer was supervised closely. The mother believed that her children should learn the skills and develop the knowledge required to use a computer. However, she limited its use and monitored the games they played. She expressed concern about the length of time that some children spent in front of the computer and the addictive and violent nature of some children’s computer games.

It was important to Grace’s parents that social and cultural links with their Korean heritage were maintained. Each week, the three children attended Saturday school to study the Korean school curriculum and practise their heritage language. During classes, Grace, along with the other children, did not listen attentively to the teacher, but spent their time interacting and socialising. The other children were fashionably dressed in the latest clothes and accessories. They showed off their designer labels and the latest toys and gadgets on the market. Similarly, the parents of the children attending Saturday school were very smartly dressed and drove luxury cars. Grace’s family were an exception. Her mother seemed oblivious to the consumerism displayed by the other families but Grace and her brothers observed and commented excitedly about all they had seen.

Sunday was a day of worship and socialising for the family. The children went to Sunday school and then attended church with their parents. During Sunday school, Grace participated in singing, clapping the rhythm as she recited prayers, listened to Bible stories and completed activities. On one occasion, the children were taught behaviour rules for Sunday school. The story of Jesus going to the temple and being unhappy with what he saw happening was related.
Grace was assisted to make signs that display the words *Yes* and *No*. As the teacher told the story, Grace raised appropriate signs in response to the behaviour of characters in the story. On another occasion, she coloured pictures that illustrated a parable, cut them out, sequenced them and then retold the story using the picture cues.

Grace’s parents were proud of her learning but were reluctant to praise her efforts or recognise her success. They believed that if Grace knew that she was doing well at school, or thought she was clever; she would not strive or apply herself diligently to her studies.

**Preschool.**

Some of the values, attitudes and beliefs of the parents were similar to those of the Preschool teacher. They saw Preschool as an opportunity for Grace to make friends, prepare for formal learning in Year One, and to acquire Australian social and cultural practices as the teacher did.

There were many differences between the teacher’s and the parents’ views, too. Grace’s parents did not value play as a context for learning. They viewed learning as a serious undertaking that required instruction from adults. They believed a teacher’s role was directive and involved instruction. In contrast, the teacher believed that children learn from one another through play. She perceived her role as a facilitator of learning, and focused on modelling literacy, planning activities and the provision of resources. Grace’s parents did not share the teacher’s views on the importance of praising children’s efforts and achievements. The teacher believed that praise provided encouragement and motivation for children to strive harder, while the parents believed it had the opposite effect.

**Year One.**

Many of the Year One teacher’s values, attitudes and beliefs in relation to literacy learning differed from those of Grace’s parents. The teacher believed that reading and writing involved the application of graphophonics, syntactic and
semantic knowledge. She made the process explicit through modelling and explanation, scaffolded reading and writing attempts, and encouraged Grace to be independent. The mother, in contrast, viewed reading and writing as the application of letter knowledge and phonic rules. She organised literacy tasks and instructed Grace in what to do. She did, however, expect Grace to become increasingly independent.

The Year One teacher believed a positive learning environment was important to foster children’s learning. She encouraged Grace to attempt tasks without assistance, praised her efforts and encouraged her to reflect on her own development. The parents’ view of learning literacy incorporated compliance to rules, following instructions and practice and repetition.

**Roles and Relationships**

**Home.**

Grace’s father did not actively participate in Grace’s literacy learning at home. He was studying at the university, had commitments to a local Church and its parish and often came home late after Grace had gone to bed. He was a serious man who, when present, disciplined his children with a word or a glance. He modelled study and learning as serious pursuits that did not include fun. His children treated him with respect.

Grace’s mother played a dominant role in Grace’s literacy learning at home. She ensured that Grace had a designated study time within an established routine that was sustained over time in order to develop a strong work ethic. This was seen as the key to success in learning and education. There was an expectation that Grace would become increasingly independent in her study and need less assistance. Grace’s mother set tasks for Grace to do, provided the resources, gave instructions and explanations, monitored Grace’s progress and application to the task, and provided feedback.
When Grace brought homework from school, her older brothers sometimes assisted her to read the take-home-reader or help her in finding pictures that started with a given sound. They did not do this regularly and Grace did not accept their assistance graciously as she liked to be independent. Grace preferred to be the one giving assistance. She attempted to read her older brother’s reader and help him with his homework.

Grace was a willing participant in literacy activities at home. She accepted her mother’s instructions and worked diligently. She liked to be independent but would seek assistance from her mother, as she needed it. On occasion she would stop her mother’s explanation and say, *I know what to do now.*

**Preschool.**

The roles that Grace adopted during inside-play were similar to the roles that she enacted at home. They were independent worker, director, collaborator and approval seeker. However, the roles were characterised by an increased number of features due to the opportunities for participating in more diverse experiences and increased opportunity for interactions with other children.

In Grace’s home experiences, her mother initiated the activities, made decisions about their scope and sequence and provided instructions. In contrast, Grace initiated many of her experiences in the activity areas that the teacher had set up and chose what she would do. She completed some of the structured tasks independently by following the teacher’s verbal instructions and observing and copying others. When Grace wrote one of the letters in her name upside down, she corrected it when the error was pointed out to her.

Grace’s interactions with other children took several forms. First, there were interactions in which she directed the other children in the activity and shaped their experiences. These occurred mainly in home corner and were characterised by Grace giving instructions and directing activities. On several occasions, she enforced the established classroom rule. This occurred if she
was in home corner and other children wanted to enter the area. She pointed out to them that they couldn’t join in because the rule said only four children could be in the area. On other occasions, however, when she wanted to gain entry to the area, she challenged or ignored the rule.

Second, there were interactions in which Grace collaborated with other children. Her collaborative experiences occurred in home corner and in other activity areas. She worked with a group of children to co-construct the activity and shared the resources. For example, when playing hospitals in home corner, Grace and two other girls took turns at playing the roles of Doctor, Nurse and Patient. On other occasions, Grace assisted other children to find their name-cards in amongst the others or to complete tasks in the collage area. When playing a card game, *Concentration*, Grace followed the rules of the game, taking turns and assisting others to locate the hidden pictures. She sought assistance from the teacher when needed.

Grace sought approval from the teacher or aide for the products or artefacts she produced and responded to the encouragement she received. She showed the teacher her writing and shared with her the things she knew.

**Year One.**

The teacher assumed all of the literacy roles of Grace’s mother with additional features noted in some. For example, as a motivator, the mother encouraged Grace and provided her with feedback. The teacher in the same role, praised Grace’s efforts, celebrated her success, valued her contributions and set high expectations. She fostered independence and a positive disposition, promoted activities as fun, and showed interest and approval to build rapport. In addition, she validated Grace’s decision-making and strategy use, and challenged her thinking.

Similar to the Preschool teacher, the Year One teacher adopted the additional role of scaffolder. In this role, the Year One teacher provided support and adjusted it as Grace became increasingly independent, made processes and
strategies explicit and provided cues to assist her to make connections to prior experiences and knowledge. In addition, she adjusted tasks or extended them to ensure Grace was challenged.

**Interactional Behaviour**

**Home.**

Grace’s parents spoke their heritage language at home. The children spoke a mixture of Australian English and Korean with one another. They often listened to their parents speak to them in Korean and then responded in English. The children all spoke Australian English with their friends without noticeable accent. The family mixed regularly with other Koreans through the Korean Presbyterian Church in which Grace’s father ministered. At Korean Saturday school, the children and their mother had broader contact with the Korean community. Parents waited for their children while classes were conducted, and used the time to catch up on news and share information from home.

In most of Grace’s literacy experiences at home, she interacted with her mother. She initiated conversations, especially to ask questions, seek explanations or to clarify what she had to do. She did not talk incessantly, or interrupt when her mother was speaking. At times, she prompted her mother to stop explaining what to do in activities, and just read the written instructions. In these examples, Grace assessed the level of support she required. Notably, in many instances she indicated that she knew what to do and getting her mother to read instructions was a form of verification for her. Occasionally, she observed her parents in conversation but did not participate in these as a conversational partner.

Sometimes, Grace observed her parents undertaking literate tasks. These occurred at home and at church. However, most of her literacy interactions related to the activities that her mother planned for her during set homework time. In these activities, Grace listened to her mother’s instructions,
undertook the assigned tasks obediently and completed them independently. She did not challenge her mother, or refuse to do as she was directed, but accepted her tasks cheerfully. There were no opportunities for joint activities or collaboration on tasks with her mother as she usually prepared the evening meal while Grace was working.

Preschool.

Grace’s interactions were mostly task focused. She initiated and participated in conversations during small group activities that related to the activities in which she was involved. She asked where to find and how to use equipment, responded to others’ questions, explained how to do things to others and showed her work to the teacher for approval. At times, she declared her knowledge spontaneously even when there was no audience. She often wanted to know why she was doing an activity if she had been directed to it, as if a purpose made it a worthwhile thing to do. On one occasion she asked the teacher if the stitching (sewing) she was doing was for the workbook for her mother.

During activities Grace did not provide a commentary of what she was doing or name things as some children did. She often became absorbed in what she was doing, and did not compare her own work with others, discredit what others were doing, or criticise them as Lia tended to do.

At times, Grace used non-verbal forms of communication. She ignored or disassociated herself when criticised or challenged or used her physical presence to achieve her purpose. For example, when told that she couldn’t play school in home corner, she quietly stayed, positioning herself in the area near the blackboard where the teacher stood. When a child asked her what to do, Grace immediately assumed the role of teacher. On another occasion in home corner, when she wanted to take over the role of teacher, Grace drew a line on the blackboard and told the teacher that she couldn’t write past the line, effectively
gaining herself half of the blackboard on which to write. After a few moments, she asserted herself as the teacher and took over the whole blackboard space.

Grace participated in a range of activities each day that provided opportunities for her to practise and acquire social skills. The teacher structured activities that provided experiences in taking turns, sharing resources, assisting others and being a member of a small group. The formal games, for example Concentration, provided opportunities for Grace to follow established rules. She was familiar with participating in games with rules as she frequently played board-games at home with her brothers.

Home corner provided a less structured environment for Grace to explore rules and interact with others. She discovered that rules could be used to achieve a purpose. For example, when other children tried to join her game, she could invoke the only four allowed in the area rule to turn them away and prolong her own time in the area. Grace discovered too, that if she ignored or challenged the rule when she wanted to join the area, someone else might be forced to leave. At first, when Grace was challenged, she became upset and walked away. However, in subsequent interactions, she ignored the challenges and instead challenged others successfully.

On several occasions, Grace became the teacher in home corner. In that role, Grace took a didactic approach. She displayed similar characteristics to the role her mother assumed at home. She provided the tasks, explained what to do and ensured the students stayed on task. Her demonstration of teacher-like behaviour did not appear to be influenced by the Preschool teacher's behaviour.

**Year One.**

When Grace commenced formal schooling, she did not receive support in English from an English Second Language Teacher, as it was considered she did not need support at this time and her mother was reluctant for her to be withdrawn from classroom lessons.
In writing sessions, Grace sometimes initiated conversations that related to her personal experiences or prompted the group to think about what they were going to write. During conversations she sought advice about her writing and provided support for others by asking or responding to their questions and providing assistance. She did not seek clarification or query tasks that the teacher outlined because she usually knew what to do, and rejected assistance when it wasn’t needed. Instead, she explained tasks, gave instructions and corrected others. At times, she was critical of others’ writing but when she was criticised, she responded by justifying her efforts. Like all children, she sought approval from others.

Grace’s participation in writing sessions was characterised by the same features as all others in the study. She cooperated with others, collaborated on tasks, provided assistance by demonstrating her knowledge and shared resources. At times she copied others’ behaviour and worked independently, disengaging from others to get tasks completed. She responded well to encouragement.

**Learnerly Behaviour**

**Home.**

Grace acquired knowledge about literacy in the same way that all children did. She observed the practices of other family members. For example, she observed her brother reading his take-home-reader each night and often attempted to read it by copying him, and experimenting with the beginning sounds of words. When she needed assistance, she collaborated with him to identify words. During these collaborations she often declared or demonstrated her knowledge, applied her phonological knowledge and explained the phonic rules. Grace displayed her knowledge in similar ways to all children in the study.
**Preschool.**

During activities, Grace spent her time exploring and experimenting with materials and resources, observing and copying other children, collaborating with them to complete activities, and experimenting with, and exploring social interactions. These behaviours were the processes by which Grace acquired knowledge about the environment in which she operated and sometimes precipitated learning.

Grace frequently demonstrated the things she knew by recording them in writing. On one occasion she recorded a computer command that she used on her computer at home (see Appendix F Fig. 52). She showed it to the teacher who asked Grace what it was. Grace read it to her and said, *I do that on the computer.* The teacher asked her what it meant and if it meant something special. Grace explained that she typed that command if she wanted to play games on the computer. She wrote another command that she knew (see Appendix F Fig. 53) and then recorded her telephone number (see Appendix F Fig. 54). She read the numbers aloud and then declared, *That's my telephone number.* In these examples, Grace displayed her knowledge in several ways. She demonstrated it in writing, explained what the symbols meant and declared the knowledge she had of her phone number.

On another occasion, Grace experimented with magnetic letters. First, she randomly placed letters on the board and then selected three letters that she placed together left-to-right to spell *peg.* On this occasion, Grace’s action demonstrated her knowledge of letters and words. Alternately, she may have applied her knowledge of letters and sounds to construct the word *peg* without previous knowledge of it. If the latter is correct, Grace has provided a performance of learning. However, it is beyond the scope of these data to be precise about such linkages.
**Year One.**

Grace developed literacy knowledge through the writing process that the teacher modelled, and from interactions with the group and the teacher. She acquired information by observing and copying others, and by experimenting with writing independently, and in collaboration with the group. Unlike Zena and Jeba, Grace did not query or question tasks, or attempt to clarify instructions. She appeared to know what to do. Similar to all children, Grace displayed literacy knowledge by demonstrating and applying it through her writing, and explaining and declaring what she knew. Similar to those of others, these displays revealed knowledge of the writing process, strategy use, subject matter and awareness of her thinking and learning processes. Unlike Jeba and Zena, Grace evaluated the assistance provided by others, often rejecting their advice to rely on her own phonological knowledge to write words.

**Literacy Experiences**

**Home.**

Grace’s literacy experiences at home were characterised by interactions with her mother, some observations of her mothers modelling literacy and explorations of her own. Interactions with her mother followed a routine and were usually planned and initiated by her mother. Each afternoon at a designated time, the children were told to do their homework. The two older boys went to their bedrooms to complete their homework and Grace sat at her own desk in a corner of the living room where she did phonic activities, handwriting, and number activities in books purchased by her mother. Phonic activities included writing words to match pictures and identifying words that rhyme from picture clues. Handwriting activities required Grace to trace over letters and practise writing them on lines. Number activities involved tracing over a number, counting and colouring objects, and counting in sequence to join dots that formed a
picture. Some literacy activities involved reading and writing in Korean to complete homework set by the teacher at Saturday School.

During homework sessions, Grace’s mother explained tasks and then moved across the room to a kitchen bench to prepare the evening meal. From the bench she monitored Grace’s concentration and application and redirected her to the task if she became distracted. She checked Grace’s work from time to time, ensuring corrections were made and neatness maintained. This routine continued when Grace commenced Year One. She completed homework set by the teacher in addition to the tasks set by her mother. After some time in Year One, Grace’s desk was moved into her bedroom. This marked a withdrawal of some direction and supervision of her study by her mother and an expectation that Grace be more independent, seeking assistance only as required.

Grace observed her brothers reading or her mother checking their homework. She watched her mother write letters, note commitments on the calendar when planning for the week ahead, and complete tuckshop orders for the children’s lunches. Sometimes, she played games on the computer with her brothers. These occasions were carefully monitored by the mother and restricted in duration. On Sundays, she attended Sunday school. During solitary play, Grace often drew pictures, made little books or cards for her friends (see Appendix E Fig. 30, 31). She wrote words by copying, sounding out, or asking her mother how to write them.

**Preschool.**

Literacy experiences at Preschool were different from those Grace had at home. She had no set tasks to complete and few interactions with adults about literacy. However, she had opportunities to explore and experiment with print in activities each day. Her experiences were diverse and frequently involved observing and interacting with other children.

Grace engaged in imaginative play mainly in home corner. She incorporated many of the props and resources provided into her play and
simulated their literacy use by scribble writing. However, when playing school, she matched name-cards with children and practised writing names and numbers on the blackboard.

During investigative play, Grace explored environmental print by attempting to read the calendar and weather chart, constructed words using magnetic letters, and created artefacts that incorporated writing and collage. Other experiences involved writing her name on the artefacts she produced and using the computer. Occasionally, she played board and card games with other children. During these activities, she used her literacy knowledge to read instructions and assist others to follow the established rules.

Grace initiated interactions with the teacher about literacy. She excitedly showed the teacher her attempts at writing her brother’s name and requested assistance (see Appendix F Fig. 60). The teacher scaffolded her attempts by sounding out the letters in her brother’s name slowly for her to record them.

Year One.

Literacy experiences for Grace in the writing session, like all the children, were characterised by conversations with other children, interactions with the teacher, and drawing and writing. Grace’s conversations with other children included personal or shared experiences that she subsequently wrote about, discussions about the process of writing, and interactions of a social nature.

The teacher used Grace’s drawings and writing to share experiences, scaffold and monitor her writing development, and provide positive feedback. For example, Grace read her writing, At the holidays I went to the museum (see Appendix E Fig. 32). The teacher prompted, What did you do there? Grace responded that she ran around and got dizzy. The teacher suggested she could write that, draw the museum and then added, Are you sure you didn’t see something there? When I go to the museum I see lots of things. Later, Grace again read her writing to the teacher. She had written, At the holidays I went to the museum. I ran around the museum with Joseph. I was dizzy. The teacher
listened and commented, *I bet the museum staff were dizzy too. That’s a great effort Grace.*

Grace’s drawings and writing drew mainly on her experiences at home and at school. At first, she spent more time drawing than writing. Her writing consisted of a few words or a sentence to describe the picture, and she relied on Jeba to assist her to spell the words that she didn’t know. Over time, she realised that Jeba’s assistance was not reliable and became more self-reliant. She developed an array of strategies to use when she wanted to write an unknown word. These included looking in the soap-box she kept under her desk, locating the word on the charts and word lists around the room, locating it in a book she’d recently read or asking a friend. On one occasion she showed Zena the word *theatre* on her library book. She noted the word started with *the* and explained, *It’s not the theatre because it doesn’t have a space. It just says THEATRE!*

A variety of literacy functions were incorporated in Grace’s writing sessions that were similar to home and Preschool. She explored and experimented with aspects of writing by practising, applying print concepts, using a writing process, attempting to edit and punctuate, and using generic structure. For example, Grace attempted to write lists, recipes, nursery rhymes and fairytales (see Appendix E Fig. 32). Sometimes she used the keyboard and icons on the classroom computer to compose writing. She expressed her ideas and feelings, described her personal experiences, and reflected on her own development in writing. Writing served a communicative function by providing opportunities to share ideas and experiences, provide support and assistance, and critique the work of others. She did not, however, praise and encourage others’ writing attempts. Grace communicated ownership of her belongings by writing her name on them, and wrote cards and letters to her friends. Furthermore, writing experiences had an information function. Grace was able to share information and display her knowledge as well as acquire information,
strategies and assistance. Last of all, writing sessions provided opportunities for Grace to build friendships, work cooperatively and influence others. For example, Grace’s ability to maintain focus on her work when she chose to and ignore distractions, encouraged Zena and Jeba to return to their writing tasks.

**Emergent Literacy**

**Home.**

Apart from the planned activities that the mother set for Grace each day from workbooks she had purchased to introduce early phonic and mathematical concepts, Grace liked to create pictures by drawing, colouring-in and adding collage. She wrote messages or cards and letters for her friends or made little books that she filled with pictures and words.

Grace’s pictures often featured things familiar to her – houses, flowers, the sun, cats, birds and family members. She featured in most of the pictures wearing a big smile. Sometimes she was a princess wearing a crown in her pictures (Grace liked Fairytales). She added her name and labels to many of her pictures, written in English and Korean (see Appendix E Fig. 34).

Before she started Year One, Grace had developed many concepts about print. She demonstrated these concepts in her writing. She knew where to start on the page, wrote from left to right, line after line and sometimes left spaces between words. She had developed some alphabet and number knowledge. This included distinguishing between letters, words and numbers, sequencing and recording letters of the alphabet, and writing the numbers to 20, although some numbers were reversed.

Once Grace started formal schooling in Year One, she continued to do activities set by her mother and to draw and write independently, in addition to doing the homework she was set by her class teacher. She demonstrated her phonological awareness and knowledge of words by identifying sounds in words, recognising words by sight, building word families eg *at, cat, pat,* and finding
words that rhyme. Grace practised reading each night and often transcribed the text. She incorporated the words she knew in her writing and used approximated spelling, that is, she recorded the sounds she could hear in unknown words eg *Bethany* was written as *Betherny* (see Appendix E Fig. 31).

Grace’s fine motor control improved over the course of the study. This was evident in her colouring in, drawings and her formation of letters as well as in her control of the mouse when playing computer games. She began to use punctuation, liberally applying full stops at the end of words instead of at the end of sentences.

**Preschool.**

During inside activities, Grace demonstrated a range of emergent literacy knowledge and skills. These included concepts about print, alphabet and number knowledge, word knowledge, the mechanics of writing, the use of symbols, reading and writing, and phonological awareness.

Grace wrote her name on all of the things she made. She held the pencil correctly and wrote her given and family names from left to right. At first, she did not leave a space between the two words but later writing attempts indicated that this had become established. The first letter of each name was capitalised and the rest of the letters were lower case.

Home corner provided Grace with opportunities to display her knowledge about reading and writing. She engaged in play using the literacy resources provided – referring to the calendar, taking notes and reading the appointment book. Notably, Grace used scribble or spaghetti writing in the hospital activities, but in others she used her letter, word and number knowledge to make and identify words, write messages and record sums.

The teacher set up a school in home corner during the last few weeks of the Preschool year. Grace initiated experiences in the school area that applied her knowledge of words, letters and sounds. On one occasion, she picked up the pile of name-cards and sorted through them selecting the names of the children...
who sat at the desks and giving their name-card to them. She matched them all correctly and then mischievously passed another child’s name-card with the same initial letter to her friend, giggling as she did so. When her friend told her that it wasn’t her name-card and produced her own, Grace sounded out the letters on the card correctly and declared that wasn’t her friend’s name (Her friend used a diminutive and not her full given name).

On a second occasion, Grace wrote symbols that resembled number equations on the board and pretended to read them and mark them with a tick (see Appendix F Fig. 59, 60, 61). She went on to write her name and then wrote her brother’s name. She appeared very excited by her achievement in writing her brother’s name and called out to the teacher, *I can write Paul Kim. I can write Paul Kim*. When the teacher came to look at her writing, Grace said, *I don't know how to write my other brother’s name*. The teacher prompted Grace saying, *Do you know what it starts with?* Grace immediately responded, *Yes* and wrote *S* on the blackboard. The teacher spelt out the rest of the letters in the name for her and Grace recorded them (see Appendix F Fig. 60).

**Year One.**

Grace demonstrated a range of early literacy knowledge and skills during Year One. These related to writing structure, word usage and language conventions, composing process, editing and engagement with writing.

At first, Grace’s writing consisted of drawings and an accompanying sentence. She drew a picture and wrote simple sentences joining them with *and*. For example, *This is a tree and this is a sun* (see Appendix E Fig. 35). She did not persist in repeating familiar patterns in writing or attempt to include dialogue. She continued to write about personal experiences and the length of her writing extended. After four months, she wrote, *Today I am going to music school and I am going to have fun and I will get a sticker* (see Appendix E Fig. 36). Some of the words that Grace used were spelt correctly as they were known words, or she located them in her soap-box, in a reader, or on word lists in the classroom. To
write unknown words, she recorded the sounds she could hear or asked others for assistance. For example, she wrote *music* as *myouzec*. She noticed similarities and differences in words and discussed the formation of words with the teacher. After ten months in Year One, Grace’s writing examples revealed literacy experiences in a variety of genre. For example, she retold fairy tales, wrote letters, made lists of things, and wrote descriptive reports on Australian animals that she had researched (see Appendix E Fig. 37). Some writing attempts spanned several days and were three pages in length with many words written correctly and with some punctuation and editing. By the end of Year One Grace was attempting to use full stops and question marks at the end of sentences, a capital letter for names and to start a sentence. Sometimes punctuation marks were overused. She wrote in both first and third person, using appropriate subject/verb agreement, noun/pronoun agreement and consistent tense. She did not, however, attempt to use titles for her writing.

Grace’s confidence in applying the composing process developed slowly. At first, she appeared to lack confidence in her own ability and relied heavily on Jeba to assist her. However, she responded to the teacher’s encouragement and sought regular interactions and feedback from her. She began to plan and rehearse verbally before writing, and said words slowly as she recorded the sounds. Increasingly, she relied on her knowledge of blends, digraphs and phonic rules. She re-read her own writing constantly to maintain word sequence, self-prompt, ensure meaning and to revise. This demonstrated her early attempts at proof reading. She often made corrections by rubbing out words and re-writing to clarify meaning, correct spelling, and add information.

As she became more self-reliant and independent in her writing, Grace ignored the conversations around her to concentrate on her own writing. On one occasion she told Jeba to be quiet as she was *sturbing her*. She persevered to complete writing tasks, and liked to spell words correctly. She demonstrated
pride in her writing and responded enthusiastically to positive feedback from the teacher.

**Resources**

**Home.**

Grace had her own desk and chair that she used for homework. At the beginning of the study it was located in a corner of the living room close to the kitchen so that her mother could supervise Grace as the evening meal was prepared. Once she started school and became more independent in her study, her desk was moved into her bedroom. She was provided with a lot of resources compared with some of the children in the study. She had a variety of pens, pencils, felt-tip pens, glitter pens, crayons and paints along with notebooks, paper, cards, coloured cardboard, erasers and the like. While the family did not appear influenced by consumerism in other facets of their life, any resources that stimulated and motivated the children’s interest in literate activities were provided. These included storybooks, reference books, globes, and microscopes, sketching tools, puzzles and board-games.

**Preschool.**

At Preschool, Grace accessed the same resources as all children. Resources were set out in areas by the teacher and included items that Grace used for literate purposes within activities. For example, in the collage area she accessed pencils, pens, envelopes, paper, and recycled Christmas cards. In home corner, she used the appointment book, calendar, eye chart, thermometer and blood pressure equipment when playing Doctors. All of these items incorporated role-play of reading and writing. Grace selected many of the activities she wished to undertake, and the teacher directed her to others. She was directed to activities to practise skills, to create an artefact to be included in her Workbook or to participate in whole class activities like the making of props and scenery for the Christmas concert.
Grace borrowed from the Preschool library and was encouraged by the teacher to do so. She enjoyed the books she borrowed and initiated borrowing sessions regularly.

**Year One.**

Grace had the prerequisite resources for Year One bought by her mother. These included scrapbooks, exercise books, coloured pencils, and lead pencils for writing, pencil sharpener, eraser and a soap-box in which she stored introduced sight words on cards. She used the alphabet strip located on her desk to assist her when writing letters, and referred to word lists, posters, displays, signs, maps, books and charts to identify words when writing. The teacher encouraged Grace to use the print environment as a resource.

**Home-School Connections**

**Home.**

Grace’s parents regarded her Preschool and Year One teachers with respect and accepted their actions and decisions as educational experts and in her best interests. Their beliefs about learning did not align with those of the Preschool teacher or the Year One teacher but they were happy for Grace to have diversity of experience. They viewed learning as work that required diligence, application and practice and did not praise Grace, as that would encourage slothfulness. They did not perceive a connection between learning literacy and leisure.

Homework formed the main connection between home and Year One. Grace completed two tasks set by the teacher each night. These were Pictionary (picture dictionary) and reading practice using a take-home-reader that Grace chose from a selection of readers of a similar level of difficulty. The teacher regularly reviewed the books she was reading. Sometimes she chose to take a favourite book home more than once. Grace’s mother, similar to Jeba’s, covered the pictures to ensure that Grace was not getting clues about the text from the
pictures. After practising the reader several times, Grace transcribed the text to practise the words and learn how to write them.

**Preschool.**

Grace’s mother brought Grace to Preschool each day and collected her in the afternoons. Sometimes the teacher shared with her the things that Grace had been doing. She did not volunteer for the parent roster and did not attend Parent nights that the teacher had arranged. The newsletter informed Grace’s mother of the activities of the Preschool. The Preschool teacher had a roster for parents to add their name and volunteer to stay and assist for the day. The roster was explained to parents at a meeting at the beginning of the year. Like many parents, Grace’s mother was unable to volunteer, as she had to get to work.

**Year One.**

Grace’s mother relied on the homework that was brought home each day and occasional conversations with the class teacher at the end of the school day to keep her informed of Grace’s progress at school. She was reassured that Grace was learning to read and write and was pleased with how well she was doing, but she did not share this with Grace.

Each night Grace had set homework in the form of a take-home-reader to read and a Pictionary activity. She read the take-home-reader to her mother and transcribed the text. Grace’s mother was concerned when Grace looked at the picture to assist her reading as she considered this wasn’t really reading. Any words that Grace didn’t know she was instructed to write out and learn. Mother monitored the Pictionary activity and insisted that Grace present her work neatly. When the set homework was completed Grace completed additional literacy and numeracy activities set by the mother.
Summary

Of the five case studies reported:

- Each child experienced diversity of values, attitudes and beliefs across the contexts of home, Preschool and school.

- All participated in a variety of literate practices that responded to different perceptions of how literacy is learned.

- The characteristics of roles that each child enacted across contexts was similar but variety in features were noted, especially in Year One.

- Children’s conversation and interactions reflected the culture of the context.

- All children's learnerly behaviour was similar and included metacognitive displays in Year One.

- Children’s literacy experiences varied, but had similar literate functions.

- Each child demonstrated emergent literacy knowledge and skills at home and Preschool, and early literacy at the commencement of Year One.

- Availability of resources at home did not limit children’s literacy experiences.

- Culturally diverse parents were less involved at school than the Australian parent.
Together with the similarities and differences reported in the previous chapter, the view given of each child is one of active participation in learning and leads to the discussion in the following chapter.
CHAPTER 6

Discussion

In this chapter, findings related to children's literacy experiences at home, at Preschool and in their Year One classroom are examined. A perspective of children operating successfully in three very different worlds emerged. In each world, children acquired resources through active engagement and participation in activities. These resources included knowledge, skills, and dispositions developed from culture and socialisation beyond the home to include the experiences of Preschool and Year One. Bourdieu's (1990) notion of habitus was seen as insufficient to explain the active decision-making undertaken by these children.

The study investigated literacy experiences of a small number of culturally-diverse children in the same Preschool and Year One classrooms. Some researchers have applied a wide lens approach to studying cultural difference in education and focused on identifying characteristics of cultures and variations between them. A need for further studies of children's writing experiences to enhance understandings of cultural writing practices in the home and at school was identified in Chapter One. This study set out to apply a narrow lens to examine the features of individual children's literacy experiences and the environments in which they occurred, to describe the dimensions of experiences and add to research knowledge about how teachers can better support children's literacy learning. A large amount of data was collected through interviews, audio and video recordings. Analyses of the data revealed a picture of children as agents of their own learning, making decisions in relation to acquisition and utilisation of resources and exercising choice to enact agency.
Children and Their Environments

Case studies reported in the previous two chapters showed children with varying cultural backgrounds encountered very different literacy experiences at home, Preschool and in Year One. This is consistent with other studies that showed differences between the languages and literacies of homes and school (Cairney, Ruge, Buchanan, Lowe & Munsie, 1995; Freebody, Ludwig & Gunn, 1995). Some studies of minority groups whose practices differed from practices of dominant groups have focused on the influence that systems in the environment exert on individuals and emphasised the role that social class and education play in transmitting dominant culture (Dumais, 2002; Gregory, Williams, Baker & Street, 2004). These studies embrace Bourdieu’s (1973) theory of social reproduction and cultural capital. Parents and teachers are seen as active agents. Parents pass down the values, attitudes and beliefs of the heritage culture and teachers transmit dominant culture. To promote children’s opportunities for success, teachers are encouraged to respond to cultural and social patterns, build connections between home and school and redefine curriculum to embrace different home literacy and linguistic practices (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003). In a recent study of middle-class Chinese immigrant families, Li (2006) argued that parents, too, can be active agents in supporting children’s educational experiences, and together with teachers, can build pedagogy of cultural reciprocity for their children. From both viewpoints, children are perceived as dependent recipients of culture. The findings of this study, however, presented a picture of five children who were quite active as participants within the contexts of home, Preschool and their Year One classroom. Therefore, additional perspectives were sought to further explain the relationship between children and their environments.

Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecology of human development theory provided another perspective. It presented children as embedded within and shaped by conditions and events in the environment. It situated children as active
participants in face-to-face interactions in their immediate settings like home and classrooms, recognised interconnections between settings in which children actively participate, identified the school setting that exerts indirect influence in the form of rules and policies, as well as broader cultural and societal influences identified by Bourdieu (1973). This theory situated children within an environment, identified the influences of environment on development but still treated the individual and environment as separate entities. Studies from this perspective embed cultural influences within individuals but do not account for the active decision-making of children or changes that occur within individuals, context, systems or broader societal or cultural change. It, too, was seen as insufficient to explain the inter-relationship between children and their environments identified in this study.

More recently, Bronfenbrenner (1995) recognised the interactions that individuals have with persons, objects and symbols in the environment that become progressively more complex and identified them as reciprocal interactions. In this bioecological model, he acknowledges children influence their own development through choices and acts but falls short of recognising the ability of children to shape their environments.

An alternate perspective takes account of children’s interactive relationship with their environment and their role in shaping it. Rogoff (2003) described human development in terms of changing participation in sociocultural activities of communities that also change. However, it is the active nature of children as agents of their own learning, participating, shaping and being shaped in many environments that best describes the interpretative mode of this study. In this view, home, Preschool and the Year One classroom represent different worlds, each with its own societal and cultural environment. Children acquired and utilised resources as they participated in literacy experiences that involved interactions with people, objects and symbols in each world in which they were situated. The nature of their participation meant they were not passive recipients
shaped by influences in each world, but made decisions in relation to resources they acquired and utilised, and exerted choice in enacting agency. In turn, these actions contributed to a shaping of environments.

The Home World

It is generally accepted that culture plays an intricate role in shaping children’s earliest learning opportunities and experiences. Children learn culturally-appropriate ways of using language and literacy through family activities (McCarthey, 2000). In this study, home literacy experiences were embedded within the social fabric of family life and incorporated cultural values, attitudes and beliefs that were maintained to ensure understanding and preservation of family ties and cultural heritage.

Cultural values, attitudes and beliefs in the home that shaped children’s experiences related to how literacy is learned, parents’ roles in assisting children to acquire literacy, conversations and interactions, resources available, connections between home and school, and learning generally. Parents’ views on literacy learning varied. Most parents believed that learning to be literate was a serious task that involved teaching children letters and words and required children to concentrate and memorise them, and then apply them in reading and writing processes. However the view of Zena’s mother, from the dominant culture, aligned with Taylor’s (1983) study of middle-class homes of children. This study suggested that young children first learn the meaning of print by being surrounded by it in their immediate environment, exploring print when playing and understanding its role in their everyday lives. The families in Taylor’s study used literacy to gain information for their daily lives, to preserve social relationships, to maintain their careers and for leisure purposes. Families in this study used literacy for similar purposes but only Zena’s mother recognised the importance of modelling literacy use for her children.
Literacy experiences for some children were planned by parents who engaged with them in activities. The nature and frequency of planned activities and parent participation varied. For example, two out of five children’s literacy activities were highly directed by parents and didactic in nature. Others did not plan literacy activities for their children or engage with them in activities, as they did not believe they had a role in teaching their children to be literate. Instead, they believed their children would learn literacy at school. Similar to Taylor’s (1983) findings, memories of their own literacy experiences affected the ways in which parents interacted with their children.

The nature and frequency of literacy conversations and interactions conformed to social conventions inherent in family practices. In some families, parents initiated and mediated conversations with their children and conversations followed established patterns and rules of respect and authority. For example, children observed and listened to parents’ conversations but did not participate as a conversational partner unless invited. When they did participate, their role was not an equal one. Others initiated conversations with parents but opportunities to do so were limited due to physical arrangements. For example, in Kaori’s home, children were not permitted in the study where parents interacted with literacy and oral language. Lia spent most of her time outside playing with siblings due to limited space inside, and therefore few opportunities arose for conversations with parents. In contrast, Zena initiated frequent conversations with her parents and often directed conversations or dominated interactions and interrupted frequently.

Materials available to children for literacy activities at home varied markedly. Some were provided with a plethora of resources while others had few. However, the provision of materials did not appear to impact on the engagement of children in literacy experiences. Children provided with few materials constructed opportunities for literacy and utilised environmental
resources in creative ways, demonstrating agency of their own literacy learning and their ability to shape their environment.

Culturally-diverse parents were reluctant to involve themselves at school in the way that the Australian parent did. The reasons for this lack of involvement are varied. Parents lacked knowledge of the way that Australian schools operate, some were reluctant to attempt to communicate in a language in which they did not feel proficient, and held a belief based on experience in their heritage countries that parents do not involve themselves in the business of school. Lack of involvement did not necessarily mean lack of interest. Some culturally-diverse families in the study entrusted children's education to teachers and accepted their pedagogical practices without question. Others continued to teach their children at home and monitored school work through the homework and workbooks that they encouraged children to bring home regularly. Thus, the connection between home and school was maintained but not in the form of a partnership advocated by Australian schools.

Despite differences outlined above, families had some values, attitudes and beliefs in common. This finding is consistent with the view of Goldenberg (1987) who speculated that members of different cultural groups may have more shared than differing values. Shared values included recognition of the importance of education, aspirations for children to achieve highly and be happy at school and the importance of hard work. Laosa (1980) suggested that social class and educational backgrounds of parents are dimensions of culture that carry more influence than others in relation to children's early learning opportunities. The shared values of the families in this study are typical of educated, middle classes and are recognised as values that have a positive influence on children's adaptation to school (Goldenberg, 1987). Apart from the value attributed to learning and education, and the expectation that their children would be successful, the openness of parents to acknowledge others' ways of doing things fostered in children a willingness to learn from others.
Parents’ values, attitudes and beliefs, their daily interactions with children, and the social conventions that controlled these interactions contributed to what Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (1992) described as *funds of knowledge*. Children’s *funds of knowledge* included cultural and literate knowledge and skills acquired partly by being immersed in the home world, and partly through their participation in family practices and activities.

Similarly, practices in which children and their families engaged within the home reflected and promoted for them a system of definitions of themselves and their worlds (Bourdieu, 1990). It predisposed them to views and behaviours that Bourdieu (1990) described as predispositions and aspirations shaped in formative years by home culture. He referred to these views and behaviours as *habitus* and explained them as a durable but transposable system of socially acquired dispositions that allow an individual to size up a social situation and act or respond appropriately. Bourdieu (1990) explained that children’s definitions of themselves and their world is internalised and becomes intuitive or second nature.

It is acknowledged that the cultural and social world of each family shaped children’s experiences and the subsequent literacy knowledge and skills, cultural knowledge and skills, views and dispositions that they acquired. However, children were identified in this study as being active participants in their home world. Their actions and interactions with people, objects and symbols contributed to the shaping of their own experiences and to the shaping of their home environment. Rogoff (2003) described the relationship between an individual with culture as one of mutual constitution, which suggests dynamic interactions rather than causal influence and promotes a view of culture as undergoing continual change rather than being static.

The dynamic nature of children’s actions and interactions that contributed to shaping their experiences and home world was evident in roles they adopted and their interactive and learnerly behaviour. For example, the paucity of literacy
materials in Lia’s home did not limit her inventiveness to engage in literacy experiences. She utilised a variety of surfaces to engage in writing which included scraps of paper, and much to her parents’ dismay, the walls of the apartment. Similarly, she created activities for herself using print displayed at home on packets and tins, calendars and advertising that came in the junk mail, and demanded answers to her literacy-related questions by climbing on her father’s knee and interrupting his study. All children displayed a range of actions and behaviours that demonstrated values and interests of their own, and an ability to make decisions and act on their own behalf.

The decisions that children made and actions they took shaped their own experiences but also shaped their home world. For example, parents depended on their children’s knowledge of Australian culture to assist them. For example, in the absence of her father, Jeba became a translator for her mother when shopping, a negotiator in business transactions, and a mediator explaining the nuances and differences in practices between cultures. Jeba interacted with a range of adults in the community and adopted roles not expected of Australian children. Some children became, in effect, cultural brokers or go-betweens, advocating for their family and negotiating between various cultures on a regular basis. These experiences provided children with opportunities for conversational practice and to adopt roles outside of the constraints of social conventions of their culture.

The literacy knowledge and skills, cultural practices and dispositions that children acquired and used to operate in their home environment constituted resources in this study. These resources were acquired through dynamic interactions with their home environment that shaped both their literacy experiences and cultural environment. In the following section, children’s acquisitions of resources in the Preschool environment are examined.
The World of Preschool

Some research has been premised on the assumption that children are adversely affected when school is not like home and attributed the lack of school success experienced by many ethnically-diverse students to their preference for forms of interaction, language and thought that conflict with those needed for school success. Similarly, children’s dispositions to participate in classroom activities are affected by the degree of compatibility between home and school cultures (Phillips & Crowell, 1994). This study presents an alternate perspective. It shows children actively acquiring the practices required to operate successfully in the world of Preschool. It does not present children as possessing a static repertoire of practices that involve rigid preferences for ways of interacting, using language and thinking derived exclusively from home. Instead, the roles that children adopted, and their interactive and learnerly behaviour were seen as being formed through experiences at Preschool.

Preschool was very different from children’s home worlds. Culturally appropriate ways of operating that differed from Australian culture were not valued. The teacher believed an understanding of Australian culture was necessary for success at school. Therefore, she valued Australian conventions and practices exclusively at Preschool. Social conventions and cultural practices not deemed Australian were not acceptable. This view reflected Bourdieu’s (1973) theory of social reproduction and cultural capital that suggests the culture of the dominant class is valued and rewarded in educational systems. An active agent of the system, the Preschool teacher shaped the world of Preschool to reflect dominant culture and system values and rewarded those who acted in accordance.

Most parents accepted the teacher’s view because it was important to them that their children learn about Australian culture. They recognised the value of acquiring the dominant culture and encouraged children to make friends, interact socially and learn Australian social conventions. They perceived this as
a way of assisting their children to assimilate and develop a sense of belonging, make friends and be happy. The Australian mother of Zena was less accepting of the Preschool teacher’s values and attitudes. She wanted her daughter to benefit, too, from learning other cultural ways of doing things but this was not supported in the Preschool classroom.

Culturally-diverse families valued the dominant culture while preserving their own and encouraged children to utilise appropriate practices in each context. In this way children acquired the cultural capital perceived as requisite for educational success at Preschool and the practices and beliefs of their heritage culture at home. A second benefit was that parents developed knowledge of Australian culture through the experiences of their children that shaped their home world.

Access and use of materials by all children were more consistent at Preschool than at home. The Preschool classroom was a print-rich environment that included literacy-related props amongst the resources set out by the teacher for children to incorporate in play activities. Some children used the literacy resources during play to display existing knowledge of reading and writing. This is consistent with studies (Christie & Enz, 1991; Neuman & Roskos, 1991a) that found when literacy materials are made available in play areas, children will often incorporate these materials into their play activities. However, adult involvement, in which a teacher responds to children’s cues, and suggests or models how literacy props can be used in connection with play, appears to further promote children’s literacy behaviour (Christie, 1992).

The Preschool teacher believed that children developed literacy knowledge in the early years by engaging with literacy resources in play. Her role was to observe children and gather information about the literacy knowledge they displayed to plan further activities and ready them for reading and writing by developing fine and gross motor control and hand-eye coordination. She viewed literacy teaching as the role of the Year One teacher and therefore did not
engage in play activities to model, extend or redirect children’s literacy behaviours. However, when children initiated interactions, for example bringing writing they had done to show the teacher, she scaffolded their reading attempts.

Children were encouraged to interact socially with one another at Preschool but opportunities for engaging in extended conversations and interacting as conversational partners with adults, as some did at home, were limited. Instead, children observed, initiated and participated in conversations and interactions with one another during play. Parents did not value play as an educative process in the way that the teacher did. Most parents viewed play as a social activity unrelated to the literacy learning of their children but valued for the development of social skills and friendships with peers.

The Australian parent sought strong involvement and communication with the teacher. She was concerned about the “narrowness” of Preschool experiences provided for children. She attempted to address her concerns in discussions with the teacher and participation in the program through the Parent Roster. She encouraged the teacher to extend the learning experiences beyond the classroom and assisted in organising excursions. She fostered an exchange of cultures by arranging a Preschool family lunch in which traditional dishes were shared and a recipe book compiled for distribution amongst families. This active way of addressing her concerns was not typical of parents in the study.

Many of the Preschool teacher’s values, attitudes and beliefs differed from parents’, especially about how children learn to be literate, the educative role of teachers in the literacy process and accepted language practices and social conventions. Despite this, children acquired resources requisite for successful participation at Preschool. The acquisition of appropriate resources was seen as a process that children went through provoked by a search for effective behaviour and involved the use of a variety of strategies and tactics to achieve objectives.

In coming to terms with appropriate Preschool practices and using them effectively to achieve objectives, children employed a variety of strategies. They
mixed ways of doing things at home with Preschool ways of doing things. For example, role-play in home corner was a blend of culturally-appropriate practices and Preschool ways of doing things. At times, children transferred home expectations to Preschool. For example, Jeba and Grace expected that writing would be a priority at Preschool as it was at home and continued to incorporate writing into their activities and show an adult what they had done.

At other times, children tried out behaviours and adjusted or discarded them in response to the reactions of others. For example, at first many of Lia’s attempts to interact with others were unsuccessful, particularly when she criticised others, seized resources, or insinuated herself in an activity. However, she adjusted her tactics until she found that asking to join a group, seeking advice or choosing an activity quickly brought success. In a second example, Jeba used a variety of tactics to stop Lia criticising the cut-out face she had decorated and taunting her by saying, *mine’s gooder.* At first, she ignored comments, shook her head, moved away, and finally left the activity area. Later, she effectively diverted criticism by engaging Lia in discussion about decorative techniques.

On other occasions, children experimented with known Preschool practices and adopted tactics that led to the achievement of their objectives. For example, several children applied the Preschool rule that only four children could participate in an activity to limit or reject participants. Similarly, children invoked the rule to gain admission and resist being excluded from an activity.

The roles that children adopted, their interactive and learnerly behaviour contributed to the shaping of experiences and the Preschool environment in similar ways that actions and interactions shaped experiences and the environment at home. The examples outlined above demonstrated the active way that children engaged in acquiring knowledge and skills about literate and cultural practices valued at Preschool. The dynamic nature of their actions and interactions in mixing, transferring, trying out and adapting practices from others
contributed to the shaping of the Preschool environment. For example, children’s initiative in engaging the teacher to respond to their writing attempts resulted in her scaffolding their reading attempts. The active nature of children to make decisions and apply appropriate behaviours to suit the environment in which they find themselves, and to shape the environment through these actions, is examined further in the following section.

The World of the Year One Classroom

In the Year One classroom, the teacher regarded diversity as an asset rather than a liability. The differences between home and school practices were viewed as alternate beliefs and ways of practice. The experiences that each child brought to the class were recognised as unique and opportunities for them to be shared and discussed were provided. These opportunities for listening, responding and valuing the experiences, thoughts and ideas of others created a learning community where children actively learned from or assisted others. The value placed on others’ ways of doing things meant that the culture of the Year One classroom was aligned more closely with the values, attitudes of beliefs of families than the Preschool classroom.

In the learning community, consideration and interest in cultural ways of doing things and cultural knowledge and skills contributed to classroom funds of knowledge (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994) that were valued as a rich resource and shaped the classroom environment. Children established themselves as competent, community members and demonstrated independent decision-making. Over time, all children developed confidence about their skills and abilities, demonstrated a willingness to share their knowledge and ideas, and developed robust self-esteem and responsibility, especially in relation to writing.

The teacher attempted to build on the rich diversity of resources the children brought to school and appreciate the complex cultural and social history revealed through their pictures and stories (Dyson, 1993). These stories
provided an insight into the lives of the children and the things that were important to them. Through conversations around children’s pictures and text, the teacher demonstrated interest, acceptance and valuing of their experiences and their writing attempts in dialogic rather than dichotomous ways, and supported children’s identification and manipulation of the dynamic relationships among worlds (Dyson (1993).

Children’s engagement in writing was a regular routine. It involved the teacher modelling aspects of writing, children drawing and writing about their own experiences in small groups and then sharing their writing with the class. Writing was focused mainly on sharing personal experiences in a journal. Its purpose was to engage and practise the writing process and share it with others. Children lacked opportunities for using literacy to fulfil the variety of functions for which it had been used at home or that had been incorporated into play at Preschool. For example, children had few opportunities to use writing to communicate for a purpose constructed in dynamic interactions with others, whether play or real life.

The teacher interacted with children during writing sessions scaffolding their writing attempts and creating potential for learning in the ZPD (Bruner, 1978; Wells, 1999). She encouraged and facilitated opportunities for dialogue amongst children when writing, as she valued the learning that children gleaned from one another. She encouraged them to articulate their home and out-of-school experiences. This was done through personal conversations with children, encouraging children to draw and then talk about their experiences, fostering conversations amongst children in small groups, and whole group sharing where children discussed or shared their writing about personal experiences. Children actively learned from, or assisted others as acknowledged experts. Therefore, the roles that children enacted in Year One had additional features to those enacted at home and at Preschool.

Dialogue, in which children engaged before and as they wrote, assisted them to plan and review their writing. Planning was as an integral part of all
stages of the writing process and involved the achievement of goals, solving writing problems and the use of strategies and tactics to solve problems (Das & Parrila, 1995). McCutchen (1995) claimed that young children do little planning and virtually no reviewing. However, children in this study verbally planned and rehearsed what they were going to write in discussions with others and prompted by the picture they had drawn. Once they had decided on what they were going to write, which took the form of knowledge-telling described by Scardamalia and Bereiter (1993), they seldom revised their writing but they did extend it. Sometimes, they extended their writing due to further conversation with others that prompted additional ideas. Increasingly over time, they planned and wrote first, before drawing the picture as illustration. They reviewed their writing by re-reading continually. The reviewing of writing served to cue them into where they were up to in transferring verbal text to written form and was seen as a tactic to assist working memory. As they reviewed, matching spoken word to written word, children made changes or corrections that served as early editing.

The teacher played a pivotal role in establishing what was valued in writing sessions. She publicly recognised Jeba’s knowledge of the relation between letters and sounds, and Grace’s use of strategies and classroom resources to determine how to write unknown words. Similarly, she praised Zena’s ability to draw and talk about the picture as a precursor to writing. This public display of what was valued served several purposes. It made values explicit, provided positive feedback to children for their writing attempts and gave value to their efforts, made elements of the writing process explicit, and focused children on the task of writing.

The knowledge and skills some children brought to the writing group gained them status. For example, Jeba’s knowledge of individual letters and sounds and the automaticity of recall that she had developed prior to school gave her status in the writing group. Others sought her assistance to help them to write words. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) refer to this status as the knowledge
and the qualifications by which an individual gains entry to a particular setting as cultural capital. The value awarded to knowledge that Jeba had in relation to writing tasks through children’s deference to her knowledge and actively seeking her assistance gave her confidence when writing. The teacher established what was valued, but it was children’s decisions that conferred status to Jeba’s knowledge. They measured established values against Jeba’s demonstrated knowledge and took action to use it to achieve their own objectives.

A second example of children making decisions and taking action to achieve objectives involved the use of strategies and tactics, similar to the way they did in Preschool. During writing sessions, Zena employed a variety of tactics with varying success to ensure she met teacher expectations that writing was added to her drawing. Tactics included copying from others, asking others to spell words, engaging teacher support, attempting to sound out words, and seeking words in her soap-box or in displays in the room. Tactics used at home and in Preschool were tried, revised and adapted to ensure she met her objective. Similarly, Grace employed a variety of tactics to gain the teacher’s attention. These included getting up from her desk, calling out to the teacher, waving her hand in the air and taking completed work to show the teacher. In each of these tactical attempts, Grace was acquiring knowledge of accepted and/or successful practices. These tactics were part of a strategy to determine how to receive the desired feedback and approval from the teacher that framed Grace’s view of a teacher’s role developed from experiences at home and at Preschool. Children engaged in a process of mixing, transferring, revising and adapting tactics and strategies used at home and at Preschool but additional tactics and strategies were also developed.

The teacher’s personal comments, positive encouragement and clear expectations in response to the personal interactions and approval that Grace sought, provided her with the confidence and self-reliance to use the writing knowledge and skills that she had developed prior to Year One. In addition, she
began to share her knowledge with others, and challenge their contributions. Grace established herself within the group, too. She developed rapport by making silly and sometimes funny remarks and encouraged members of the group to agree and laugh with her. As the entertainer, she could be relied on to make the writing task fun and provide distraction. Through these relationships developed with others in the group, Grace developed social capital (Bourdieu, 1984) and gained access and earned success in writing sessions.

Children’s interactive and learnerly behaviour contributed to the shaping of experiences and the classroom community in similar ways that actions and interactions shaped experiences and the environment at home and Preschool with one exception. Children’s metacognitive awareness of their own thinking and learning processes displayed in Year One, but not noted at Preschool and at home, demonstrated the empowered way that children engaged in acquiring knowledge and skills about literate and cultural practices valued at school. Furthermore, children’s ability to draw on knowledge, develop strategies and use tactics to make decisions that led to the application of behaviours appropriate to the environment in which they found themselves, contributed to the shaping of those environments.

**Children Enacting Agency**

In this study children acquired cultural and literate knowledge and skill, and an internalised view of themselves and the world from experiences in three very different cultural environments. The knowledge, skills and dispositions combined to create *funds of knowledge*, that were viewed metaphorically as a kitbag of resources that they utilised when operating in, and making sense of the world. The array of resources in the kitbag was constantly changing in size, shape, form and nature over time without limit. For example, the children demonstrated emergent literacy knowledge and skills at home and Preschool, and early literacy at the commencement of Year One that followed the emergent
literacy evident at home. They became literate by developing a schema from experiences, recollect and focus. The schema was constantly updated as resources were accumulated within contexts, across contexts and over time through a process of assimilation and accommodation (Piaget, 1971). In similar ways, the array of cultural knowledge and skills, and dispositional resources in the kitbag were expanded. The cultural diversity of environments meant the kitbag became a rich and increasing array of resources that assisted children in negotiating encounters in all environments.

Children acquired resources, not as passive recipients, but as active participants. Their active participation was seen as conscious intent to determine and acquire the resources required for successful participation in the environment in which they were situated. It involved the use of strategies and tactics to achieve objectives that drew on their accumulated knowledge of a need to do so and how to respond – a conceptual kitbag of sorts, and expanded it. Further, it positioned children as self-determining characters with their own interests and objectives that make up their own minds and take action. Through dynamic interaction with others and their environment, they shaped their own experiences and contributed to the shaping of the environments.

Bourdieu (1990) emphasised the creative, active and inventive capacity of children to operate within the social constraints of their formative environment (home) and acknowledged that children put their own stamp on *habitus* as they contemplate choices and improvise on established practices. He explained that children’s definition of themselves and their world is internalised and becomes intuitive or second nature. However, this notion of *habitus* is insufficient in two ways in explaining the agency, decision-making and problem solving enacted by children in this study.

First, Bourdieu (1990) regarded children’s formative environment as the environment of home. In today’s society, children’s formative experiences are not limited to home. Children interact socially, and spend extended periods of
time in many cultural environments that influence their formative development. These may include childcare, kindergarten, activity clubs, church and school. The perspective taken in this study is that children’s dispositional development is derived from culture and socialisation beyond home and encompasses experiences in other environments. As a result, the system of dispositions that children developed was not constrained by home environments. Instead a rich system of dispositional resources was accrued in the three environments that framed this study.

Second, Bourdieu’s (1990) description of children as creative, active and inventive individuals operating within social constraints is insufficient to describe dispositional power and content, and its accumulative potential across contexts and time. The recognition of contextual change provoked in children a search for effective behaviour, which is the power of the kitbag. Children developed power by recognising that a new context may need a new set of checking devices, sharpening their ability to read and respond to contextual cues, and using strategies and tactics to identify accepted practices and achieve objectives. These decision-making processes appeared conscious and deliberate at first as children tried to identify appropriate practices by mixing, transferring, revising and adapting practices and strategies from one context to another. Then as appropriate and effective practices were identified, these became automatised over time. Eventually, as Bourdieu explained, children’s definition of themselves and their world is internalised and becomes intuitive or second nature.

The description of children’s definition of themselves and their world becoming internalised and intuitive is derived from Vygotsky’s (1978) theory of higher mental functioning. The social becomes psychological through a process of internalisation and leads to inner speech. When children became evaluative by developing strategies, using tactics to apply the strategy and framing knowledge, they commenced the automatisation process outlined by Tharp and Gallimore (1988). Examples are evident in experiences of children in the three
environments. It is recent research, however, from a social-cognitive perspective (Bargh & Ferguson, 2000; Wegner & Bargh, 1998), that demonstrates higher mental functions of social interaction, evaluation, and judgment become automatic after repeated performance, that provides a clearer explanation. Automaticity allows a familiar and comfortable interaction with environments as experience provides knowledge of what can be expected or what is likely to happen. As a result, proper assumptions of a situation can be made, making the world a reasonably predictable place.

The notion of children as agents of their own learning, shaping experiences and their environment corresponds with a recent transdisciplinary perspective by authors who have focused on children's agency and voice (Etheredge, 2004; Meacham, 2004). Pufall and Unsworth (2004) described children as more self-determining actors than we generally think. They suggested that children measure issues against their own interests and values, make up their own minds, and take action as a function of their own wills when adults permit.

The discussion above outlined how children shaped their experiences and how their habitus was constantly evolving in response to the accumulating power of the resources in their conceptual kitbag. Children's changing participation in sociocultural activities within the three worlds described in this study, also contributed to shaping the cultural and social contexts within the environments. It is accepted that environments change in terms of culture, climate and philosophy in response to the social construction and engagement of individuals within the environment (Smith, 2003). Children, as agents, contribute to the change. Their contribution is affected by the degree of participation afforded them by adults and their own choices to enact agency. In the Year One classroom, where a community of practice (Wenger, 1999) was established, children's contribution to the shaping of the environment was large because they were encouraged to be agentive and exercise voice.
Conclusion

Some cultural studies of literacy learning have shown that children from minority groups whose cultural practices differ from practices of dominant groups are less adequately equipped for literacy learning and generally do not achieve the same success at school as those from dominant cultures. The mismatch between home and school practices impacts on children’s success when they attempt to negotiate without assistance between different linguistic and cultural worlds (Heath, 1982; Scribner & Cole, 1981). As a result, schools have attempted to make school more like home, teach parents to do school activities at home and engage parents as partners in children’s education.

While, it is acknowledged that adaptation to school can be affected by the culturally-determined experiences to which they have been exposed at home (McCarthey, 2000), the success of the children in this study challenges a deficit view that homes of all children from diverse backgrounds are limiting environments that place little value on education (Auerbach, 1989; McCarthey, 2000; Valdez, 1996; Valencia, 1997). It also challenges the view that ways of operating that differ from school culture inhibit children’s success in literacy. Instead it is suggested that some values, attitudes and beliefs that are representative of middle classes are more important than commonality of practices in setting individuals up for literacy success. These include valuing education and literacy generally, expectations of success and an openness to learn from others. In addition, involving parents in classroom activities seemed less important in this study than parents’ interest in children’s school activities.

This study set out to examine the features of individual children’s literacy experiences as they engaged with school for the first time and identified three very different social and cultural worlds. Large amounts of data were gathered from interviews, audio and videotaping of five children’s literacy experiences. The features of experiences were examined and grouped in categories which formed the dimensions of literacy experiences. Some dimensions, in particular
the roles and relationships that they adopted, their interactional and learnerly 
behaviour portrayed children as active participants who shaped experiences and 
environments in three worlds. Their participation was attributed, in part only, to 
the influence of values, attitudes and beliefs of adults in their worlds. In addition, 
children were seen to have agency and voice (Pufall & Unsworth, 2004), viewed 
in this study as inherent qualities. They exercised power and choice in their 
acquisition and utilisation of resources and made decisions to enact agency.

Following the National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy (2005) in which a significant minority of children in Australian schools continues to face 
difficulties in acquiring acceptable levels of literacy, these findings may provide direction for educators in determining how effective literacy teaching takes 
account of, and builds on family and community literacies. In particular, the three 
worlds’ framework has direct implications for teachers in response to the question 
posed in Chapter One: How is it possible to take account of the cultural diversity 
in classrooms when a wide range of heritage backgrounds is represented?

Teachers who use the framework may find it a useful instrument. By “learning to ask and getting out of the way” (Pufall & Unsworth, 2004, p.8), teachers would encourage children to have their voices heard and to enact their agency. The Year One teacher in this study has already begun this process; the Preschool teacher had not.

The findings of this study described what literacy learning was like for 
some culturally-diverse children. They provide a rich description of literacy 
experiences in individual cases and identify similarities and differences across 
experiences and between worlds within the constraints associated with the 
gender, cultural backgrounds and school settings represented. There may be parallels in situations described in this thesis to those perceived by readers. The interpretation of these situations provides a perspective that may strike a chord in others looking for patterns that explain their own experiences as well as events in their worlds. By using a narrow lens the thick description of individuals’
experiences can provide opportunities for transference to new situations and contexts. It may challenge views of cultural learning styles as static, culturally-different practices as deficit, children as passive, and adults as the only active agents transmitting culture.

Dimensions of social and cultural environments that contributed to the rich array of conceptual resources that children utilised at home and school were identified in this study. Further research of individuals across contexts would contribute to better understanding of how agency and voice are enacted in various social and cultural environments and how classrooms, teachers and schools can support children to be agents of their own learning.

In attempting to make known their strong desire to belong, and readiness to participate appropriately in activities, children exhibited assimilation and accommodation adaptations that were akin to code-switching, a feature of cross-linguistic interaction (Duran, 1994). These adaptations are worthy of more detailed research to determine the nature of their reality and whether they reflect a broader construct of cross-culture interaction that might be referred to as culture-switching. It is a term constructed to represent the mixing, transferring, trying out, adapting, and experimenting that children in this study undertook to determine appropriate practices, and one I have coined to lead further research.
REFERENCES


practice. Forty-third Yearbook National Reading Conference (pp. 172-179).
Chicago IL: The National Reading Conference.


APPENDIX A

Application to conduct research, information letters, and consent forms

- Application to conduct research
- Information Letters For Parents
- Parent Consent Form
- Guidelines For Participant Parents
- Teacher Information Letter
- Teacher Consent Form
# Application to Conduct Research

**Application to conduct research in State Schools and Other Organisational Units**

**Department of Education, Queensland**

**Supporting information may be attached but the information presented on the form should stand alone in conveying the salient features of the research proposal. See amendments will not suffice.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref. No.</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>1. Name of principal researcher</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RONALD FRIENDER</td>
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<table>
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<th>2. Title of research</th>
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<tr>
<td>A study of the early writing experiences of culturally diverse children</td>
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<th>3. Purpose of the research activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>To fulfill requirements for Ph.D.</td>
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<th>4. Research aim</th>
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<tr>
<td>To examine the similarities and differences in the writing experiences that Asian Preschool children have at home and at school in the first year of school.</td>
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<th>5. Summary of field activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Four (4) children of varying cultural backgrounds would be chosen in preschool, videotaped for 30 min. for use during in-class activities. Taping would continue during writing in Year 1. Duration of study from 1st October 1987 to 31st August 1988. Children would be observed at school.</td>
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<th>6. Schools and/or organisational units to be approached</th>
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<tr>
<td>Toowoomba State School</td>
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**Conditions of Approval**

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<th>Conditions applicable to all research:</th>
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<tr>
<td>All data to be treated as confidential; anonymity of participants to be preserved.</td>
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<tr>
<td>An expository summary of the research findings to be provided to the participating schools and approval authority.</td>
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<th>Conditions that may apply:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Parental permission to be obtained for participating students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Permission to be obtained from participating teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Audiotapes and videotapes to be used only for the purposes of the research.</td>
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</table>

**Additional conditions:**

This research application is approved/not approved.

**Signed:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Designation:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[Signature]</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address:</th>
<th>Telephone:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1916 North Avenue</td>
<td>8870-5520</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Fax: | |
|------| |
| 8879-0852 |

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Approval allows the principal researcher outlined above to approach schools and other organisational units within the Department of Education, Queensland, to seek their cooperation in participation in the approved research. However, although approval may be granted by the department, there is no obligation for participation in the study.

A copy of this signed approval should be provided as evidence of approval to the respective school principals and others whose cooperation is requested.
7. Overall timeline for the research and months for each data collection, e.g. term, month, stage.

Mid October - Mid December: Interview parents, observations in the home. Videotaping in preschool (1 hour per child per week)

January - June: Videotaping (2) children for 1/2 hour per child in Yr 1 classroom

8. Summary of the research approach, design, methodology and strategies employed to ensure validity and reliability. (Attach data collection instruments.)

The study is a qualitative case study. A variety of data gathering techniques will be used: participant observation of writing experiences in the home, videotaping of writing experiences in preschool and in Yr 1, collection of writing samples along with the writing experiences, interviews with parents. The analysis of the data will be mostly descriptive. Observational notes, transcripts of video and audio tapes and writing samples will be analyzed separately in combination to generate categories of information and data according to categories developed.

9. Signature of principal researcher

Signature: [Signature] Date: 15/9/97

10. Statement of verification and support. To be signed by supervisor, Head of University Department, Director of Research Agency, Employing Authority or Tertiary Institution as applicable.

I verify the details of the research proposal and provide assurance that I am fully aware and supportive of the purpose and content, and that ethical considerations have been adequately addressed.

Name (print): [Name]

Designation: [Designation]

Dept/Organisation: [Department/Institution]

Telephone: [Telephone Number] Fax: [Fax Number]

Signature: [Signature] Date: 15/9/97
Dear (Name of primary caregiver)

I am studying at the University of Queensland under the supervision of Professor John Elkins. I am conducting research on the writing experiences of young children at home and at school, and the study is towards my Ph.D. thesis. I think the study of writing is important and I am inviting you to participate in this research project.

I would like to find out about the writing experiences X (name of child) is having now, and the writing experiences he/she will have when he/she goes to school. This research will help us to understand how best to teach children when they go to school.

The research would involve a brief meeting with me at the beginning of the project. I would ask you about the language that you speak at home, the reading and writing that is done by family members, and the things that X likes to do. I would ask you to collect drawings, scribbling or writing that X does. Next, I would visit your home and observe X writing. If you speak a heritage language with X at home, I would try to bring with me an assistant who also speaks this language. Then this assistant or I would telephone you once a week and ask you about any writing experiences that X has had during the week and get you to tell us about them. These telephone calls would be recorded and continue for eight (8) weeks from mid-October until the end of the school year and then from the beginning of Year 1 until June.

A research assistant or I would be videotaping X for approximately half an hour once a week in the preschool to record any writing experiences. I would keep videotaping X at school, for six (6) months after he/she goes to school.

This study has been cleared by one of the human ethics committees of the University of Queensland in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's guidelines. You are of course, free to discuss your participation in this study with project staff (Prof. John Elkins on contact number 3365 6485 or Bev. Flückiger 3870 7997). If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Assistant Ethics Officer or Ethics Officer on 3365 4583 or 3365 3924.

I have approached the Principal of Ironside School and he has agreed to the school's participation, as have the teachers.
The confidentiality of your child taking part will be respected. All information will be kept under secure conditions. Your child’s identity or involvement in the project will not be revealed in any way. In addition, you have the right to withdraw this consent at any time without it affecting your relationship with the University of Queensland or with me.

I hope that you will agree for your child to take part in the study and have attached a consent form to this letter. If you have questions about the project I am very willing to discuss and explain any part of the research with you further (phone 3870 7997).

Could you please complete the attached form and return it to the preschool teacher as soon as possible and I will collect it.

Yours faithfully,

Beverley Flückiger
Ph.D. student
Dear (Name of primary caregiver)

I am studying at the University of Queensland under the supervision of Professor John Elkins. I am conducting research on the writing experiences of young children at home and at school, and the study is towards my Ph.D. thesis. This research will help us to understand how best to teach children when they go to school.

A research assistant or I would be videotaping children in the preschool and in Year 1 classrooms to record writing experiences. While your child is not the focus of the study, it is possible that he/she may be videotaped interacting with the focus children. Therefore, I am writing to ask your permission for your child to participate in the study. I have approached the Principal of Ironside School and he has agreed to the school’s participation, as have the teachers.

The confidentiality of your child taking part will be respected. All information will be kept under secure conditions. Your child's identity or involvement in the project will not be revealed in any way. In addition, you have the right to withdraw this consent at any time without it affecting your relationship with the University of Queensland or with me.

This study has been cleared by one of the human ethics committees of the University of Queensland in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council’s guidelines. You are of course, free to discuss your participation in this study with project staff (Prof. John Elkins on contact number 3365 6485 or Bev. Flückiger 3870 7997). If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Assistant Ethics Officer or Ethics Officer on 3365 4583 or 3365 3924.

I hope that you will agree for your child to take part in the study and have attached a consent form to this letter. Could you please complete the attached form and return it to your child’s teacher as soon as possible and I will collect it.

Yours faithfully,

Beverley Flückiger
Ph.D. student
CONSENT FORM

Dear Bev,
I am willing/not willing (please cross out what does not apply) for my child to take part in your research project on writing experiences. I understand that my child’s confidentiality will be respected and I can withdraw this consent at any time.

Signed: ...........................................

Name: .................................................. of parent/guardian

Name .................................................. of child

Date: ..................................................
Guidelines For Participant Parents

WRITING EXPERIENCES AT HOME

Guidelines for parents

We are interested to find out about X’s writing. This means that we are interested to know about any attempts that X makes to write or to talk about writing. By “writing” we mean any attempts that X makes to express herself (drawings, symbols, scribbles, numbers, letters, words, and sentences) as well as any discussions that she has with others about writing. X may write or talk about writing by herself, with you, with other family members, or with friends. X may write and/or talk about writing when playing, and at other times. X may write on paper, chalkboards, sand, cards, tables etc. using pencils, crayons, paint, playdough, sticks, chalk, magnetic letters or many other things.

Some ways you can help us

You can help us to find out about children’s home writing experiences by:

1) letting us observe X writing at home
2) taking notice when X is writing and/or talking about writing at home
3) collecting samples of X’s writing

1. LETTING US OBSERVE X WRITING AT HOME
We would like you to tell us when X is likely to be writing at home so that we can arrange to observe X writing by herself or with another person.

2. TAKING NOTICE OF X WRITING AND/OR TALKING ABOUT WRITING
We would like you to take note when X is writing and/or talking about writing so that when we telephone you each week you can tell us about it. We would like you to notice how and where the writing or discussion about writing started, who was involved, what happened, what was said by X and others. You may wish to write down what happened to help you remember. We will also give you a phone number so that you can telephone us to tell us about it.

3. COLLECTING SAMPLES
Please collect samples of X’s writing and keep it for us (if possible). If there is more than one sample produced during writing, number them in the order that they were produced. Please put the date on each sample.

All of these will help us find out what children learn about writing at home. I would like to thank you for assisting us with this study.

Beverley Flückiger
Teacher Information Letter

(Date)
(Name of Teacher)
(Name of School).

Dear (Name of Teacher),

I am studying at the University of Queensland under the supervision of Professor John Elkins. I am conducting research on the emergent writing experiences of culturally diverse children at home and at school. I will be looking at the features of children’s writing experiences and the roles and relationships that are enacted within these experiences. The Principal of (name of school) has given his permission for this study to be carried out and I am seeking your cooperation to allow me to videotape the children in your classroom.

I would like to examine the similarities and differences in the writing experiences that individual preschoolers from diverse sociocultural backgrounds have at home, at preschool and in the first six (6) months at school. This research will help us understand how to account for the sociocultural diversity of children when they go to school.

The research will involve four (4) children and their families for eight weeks at the end of this year while they are in preschool and six months next year after they start school. A research assistant (or I) will be contacting the parents each week to discuss home writing experiences, observing writing experiences in the home, and videotaping each child for half an hour each week at preschool/school. In addition, the study will involve collecting any samples of drawing, scribbling or writing that children do during the videotaped sessions.

All the information I collect will be treated as confidential: names will not be used in reports of the research. At the completion of the research I will supply results of the study and talk with you about what I have found, if you so wish.

This study has been cleared by one of the human ethics committees of the University of Queensland in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council’s guidelines. You are, of course, free to discuss your participation in this study with project staff (Prof. John Elkins on contact number xxxx xxxx or Bev. Flückiger xxxx xxxx). If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Assistant Ethics Officer or Ethics Officer on 3365 4583 or 3365 3924.

Thank you for your cooperation,
Yours faithfully,
Beverley Flückiger (Ph.D. Student)
Dear Bev,
I am willing/not willing (please cross out what does not apply) to take part in your research project on writing experiences. I understand that my confidentiality will be respected and I can withdraw this consent at any time.

Signed: .................................
Name: .................................
Date: .................................
APPENDIX B
Initial interviews with parents and teachers

- Parent Interview Jeba
- Parent Interview Zena
- Parent Interview Kaori
- Parent Interview Lia
- Parent Interview Grace
- Teacher Interview Preschool
- Teacher Interview Year One
Parent Interview Jeba

Child’s name: Jeba

1. Country of origin: Bangla Desh

2. Length of stay in Australia
   When did you arrive in Australia? Dec 96
   When do you plan to return home? Staying

3. Language(s) spoken in the home by parents and children.
   Bangla — sometimes English
   more in English by chn.

4. Occupation of the parent(s): looking for job — Uni lecturer, Poultry Science

5. The literacy practices of family members.
   Mother: Eng course — homework — ass. in English
   Father: Environment / newspaper / letters

6. The child’s interests: drawing / play /

7. The child’s home activities.
   write Eng, Bangla word count — 100 / drawing / Alph / word
   (Bangla) / preschool / she writes to grandma

Mother wears Muslim dress.
# Ali — father
# Naho — mother

6.00 pm Monday 7.00 pm Monday
Parent Interview Zena

Parent Interview

Child’s name: Zena

1. Country of origin Australia

2. Length of stay in Australia
   When did you arrive in Australia? 
   When do you plan to return home? 

3. Language(s) spoken in the home by parents and children.
   English

4. Occupation of the parent(s).
   At home:
   * David (Partner) architect
   * Roger 
   volunteer work - radio production / announcing
   * Groo cup Ed Primary

5. The literacy practices of family members.
   - Reading newspaper / stories to kids / books.
   - Shopping / hat / email / assignments (computer) / lists to remember

6. The child’s interests.
   Gymnastics / Keyboard - music -

7. The child’s home activities.
   - Zena - write name 
   - Magnetic letters
   - Several learnt Mum Dad Cat Dog
   - Letters to people - Mum transcribes
   - Likes to receive letter to Agro
   - Used to watch on 7
   - Now watches Cartoon Corner

287
**Parent Interview Kaori**

**Child’s name:** Kaori

1. **Country of origin:** Japan

2. **Length of stay in Australia**
   - When did you arrive in Australia? April 1996.
   - When do you plan to return home? 1999?

3. **Language(s) spoken in the home by parents and children.**
   - Japanese - English - Mix
   - Our parents speak Japanese to us.
   - Children speak a mix of Japanese and English to one another.

4. **Occupation of the parent(s).**
   - Housewife
   - Office work - Secretary
   - Consulate - Lawyer

5. **The literacy practices of family members.**
   - TV guide, newspaper. Father brings work home - paperwork done in study.

6. **The child’s interests.**
   - Play - Doll, Barbie, Painting
   - Origami, Tape, Glue, Books

7. **The child’s home activities.**
   - TV, piano lessons, craft activities, games - Nintendo, Uno,

   - Next year Japanese School
   - Wed Thurs Fri - Childcare
Parent Interview Lia

Child's name: Lia

1. Country of origin: Indonesia

2. Length of stay in Australia
   When did you arrive in Australia? Dec 1995
   When do you plan to return home? Dec 1998

3. Language(s) spoken in the home by parents and children.
   Indonesian
   Mixed lang. (Eng/Ind.)

4. Occupation of the parent(s).

5. The literacy practices of family members.
   Shopping list (Nadia), Computer studies.
   Email Indonesian letter.

6. The child's interests.
   Drawing, colouring, plays toys, "Doing homework"

7. The child's home activities.
   Homework, Watch TV,
   Dinnner, go to study room - reading, Nadia reads to
   drawing, Lia
   Nadia - a violin
   Summer - a Swimming

Wed 30th Oct 3.30 pm
Parent Interview Grace

Child’s name: Grace

1. Country of origin: Korea

2. Length of stay in Australia
   When did you arrive in Australia? 1988 (Grace born here)
   When do you plan to return home? 

3. Language(s) spoken in the home by parents and children.
   Par.: Korean, Eng. (Parents: Eng., Korean)
   Chr. speak: Eng. (Parents: Eng., Korean)

4. Occupation of the parent(s):
   1) Mo. Bus. (Korean Restaurant)
   2) Preo Min. (completing this year)

5. The literacy practices of family members.
   * Paul’s homework: - writing, etc. (writes & him)
     Sees Mum help Chr: - Father: studying

6. The child’s interests.
   playing on the computer, making (craft) things, playing with brothers

7. The child’s home activities.
   writing in a practice book.
   * Korean alphabet (almost all)
     letters -> words.
     * Achie in English (Preschool things)

   * Korean/Language School
     9:30 - 12:30
   * Sunday: Ann St. 12:00

* Korean alphabet
Teacher Interview Preschool
October

1) Structure of Day
   - 2 x 2 1/2 Days (2 groups)
   - Morning - take home - "show and tell" encouraging
   - Half days  What's your name for today?
   - Teacher supports children's oral language.
   - Any questions? - skill for cult diverse children

   - Indoor Act.
     - Some free choice / some structured.
     - Structured - scissors.
     - pencil control.
     - Independent - gluing.
     - Fine motor - hole puncher/shaper.
     - Free choice - crayons.
     - blocks.
     - Home corner - library (quiet place).
       - look at books.
     - Home corner - school, post office.
     - Changes - hospital, supermarket, library, art gallery.
Everything based on ideas and experience. Discuss in 
S. Newsham's ideas. Otherwise

1. Try to stimulate ideas or
plant seeds of ideas.

Plan 1-2 weeks ahead only.

Have skills they have learned for success in Year 1.

2) Philosophy
- come from their interest/ideas
- structured teaching and play
  units -> str. -> unstructured
- large groups and small groups
- free choice of activities
- Teacher's role to monitor development,
  plan appropriate activities to foster
  further development. Children choose
  or directed to activities.
3) Inside Play

Structured

Music & Group Time (structured)
- songs / rhymes (no words are in book / pictures are not big enough for whole class to see)

Computer - music with char tracking words

Activity:
Small groups:
1 to 1, using pictures

4) Literacy - not formal teaching in Preschool
- New time - listening / read / sing
- explain act. respond. motor skills positional
- Dismantle to go off to act - colour
- Free play - size, position, shape
- Structured play - sounds, books, teacher using words
- cause / wish / repeat
  size / add
School is Fun Place

1. Pre-writing act.  + talking skills
fine motor
writing names
language

2. Express needs
3. sort out difficult
4. self-sufficient
5. main writing (not 3rd)
6. creative main ideas
7. solving own problems
8. planning own activities

DIVERSITY

Families - social act. "Int Lunch Day"
- info booklet - (volunteer with friend)
  - to help parents
  - to show others
- don't change things too much
- picture/visual to reinforce
- slow down speech
- music activity, with choruses/piano response
Most parents speak & heritage lang. in home. Need involving e.g. to speak in Eng. so this develops too. Need English & customs for school.

| Parents' night | come & see what
| Open Day | Ptdk is doing & what
| Morning Tour | we value - sit-in & close, interacting

Guest speakers - psych / Pr / DP /
(he good run /)
from culturally different parents

Felt that parents believe their role shape at school - encourage but too busy. Social barriers, do need on manners in English (not often used by host parents).
Teacher Interview Year One
March

Year 1 Teacher

1. Structure of Writing Time.
   - Begin with model writing on the whiteboard.
   - Encourage children to sound out words and help me write them.
   - Verbalise process to demonstrate strategies.
   - Find words around room, use ABC book & word bank.

   * Read a lot to the children and talk a lot about writing & the way the author used words etc., encourage oral language, read favourite books over & over.

   - Children write each day for about 30 minutes → share in circle time. All share → chuck to see if all can read back own writing.
- The talking really helps - support each other - share what they know.

- Zena is anxious, wants it to be correct, wouldn't write at all at first. Then when she had enough words, computer helped - realise they can sound it out.

- Grace always writes - had the idea of copying at first. But glad accepted that all words didn't have to be spelled correctly, leaving sounds in words.

- Jema had sounds but pronunciation of words holding her back. When she read it you could hear she wrote the way she spoke - structure as well.

2. Philosophy

Believe all can come with some knowledge of writing. All different. Need to share & listen to each other.
(2) Philosophy (cont'd)
- It's about changing believing they can do it and having a go. Risk taking.
  - Safe, supportive. No right and wrong.
- Drawing helps, esp. at first. Later they can write first & then draw.
  - But drawing & telling their story first is the way to go.
- Try to encourage them to see themselves as writers. Talk about them as 'authors' & illustrators.
- Don't try to be the expert but a learner - too. They know things I don't.
- Children learn by doing - not by me telling them. I try to see where they are at & what they need to know.
  - Assist them in a problem-solving way.

(3) Literacy Teaching
- Concepts about Print - directionality etc.
- Phonics, important - letters, sounds.
  - Introduce blends, 'rules' etc. in a 'magic' way.
3. Literacy Teaching:
- Words - word box, environmental print in classroom - posters, charts etc.
- Sentences - use sentence strips, sentence maker, flash cards.
- Don't worry about genre yet, that will come through writing for a purpose.
- Get children writing first - drawing + writing about personal experiences helps me to get to know them/understand where they are coming from.

5. Diversity
- Every child unique, learn individual pathways - we must churn.
- ESL support - learn English structure.
- Learn from one another.
- Helps chum if parents + teacher talk regularly - share about child.
- Try to show all chum have special skills + knowledge to share - not all good at everything. Encourage parents into classroom - set different expectations if yes - Recognise, try to acknowledge.
APPENDIX C

Observations of writing experiences in the home

- Jeba
- Zena
- Kaori
- Lia
- Grace
Observation of Writing Experience
27th November
Home Visit Jeba
27.10.97.

Overall impressions:
- Parents place emphasis on learning literacy
- See their role as making sure Jeba practises alphabet in Bangla and English by writing it out.
- Proud of Jeba and Rava’s achievements in learning.
- Rava’s certificates from school (Merit award for overall class work and Art award) proudly displayed in photo album with photo of artwork.

Parents talk about girls becoming doctors
Planned to stay in Australia
Observation of Jeba writing

Setting: living room
Participants: Jeba sitting on floor at coffee table in centre of living room
Father sitting at dining room table (approx 1 metre from Jeba)
Mother sitting on sofa
Sister Rava on floor next to Jeba
R sitting on a chair opposite Jeba

Language spoken: A mixture of Bangla and English spoken by Jeba’s father, mother and Jeba. Jeba and Rava spoke only in English.

The activity: Father initiated writing activity by instructing Jeba to do some writing for R (He spoke in a mixture of Bangla and English). Jeba replied in English asking what she should write and what she should write on. Father told her to write the Bangla alphabet and English alphabet and to use notepaper not an exercise book as Mrs F wanted to take the writing home.

Jeba went to cupboard in living room and took a notebook from amongst a pile of exercise books that she uses to write in, found a pencil and remarked that it was a 2B pencil and that meant it was hers. (2B pencils are required for school use).

Father said the letters one at a time in Bangla and Jeba wrote. Father stopped prompting with names of letters and Jeba continued unaided.

Sister Rava began prompting. Jeba made a gesture to sister to stop. Continues writing silently.

Jeba instructs Rava to get her Birthday poster to show Mrs. F. (It was Jeba’s birthday the day before.) Rava gets the poster that she and Jeba had made and Jeba shows me. She reads the words on the poster “Happy Birthday Jeba” (English) and tells that she drew the pictures (hearts and flowers) and Rava had done the writing.

Jeba continued to write and said to Rava “Don’t tell me”.

When the page is completed Java looks to father and asks in Bangla what to do, if she should go on to the next page. Father instructed to turn page and write in English now.

Jeba writes the alphabet saying each letter out loud as she writes. Upper case.
Mother and Jeba discuss whether to say H as “haitch” or “aitch”. (Jeba has said “Haitch”). Mother asks R which is correct.

Jeba completes upper case letters and writes lower case saying each letter as she writes it.

Jeba asks father “should I write the numbers?” Proceeds to copy the date from the previous page. 
Jeba asks in English “Shall I write all the numbers to 100?” 
Father replies “no to 10 will do”

Jeba writes numbers saying numbers as she writes. 
Asks father if she should write numbers in Bangla too. Father says “no not this time”.

Looks at father and says “Finished”

Goes to tear pages from notebook. Father gets up to assist. 
Jeba says “Don’t I can do it” 
Mother says in English to father “Leave her to do it herself” 
Father returns to chair. 
Jeba completes tearing and gives to R (see sample) 
Jeba goes to another room and returns with arms full of drawings, collage, and craft activities done at preschool and at home to show proudly. (She keeps everything that she does at preschool and at home). Looks for best samples to give R. (See samples)

**Roles:**
- **Father** - initiated activity, assisted by naming letters to get Jeba started, instructed Jeba what to do next, controlled what was written
- **Jeba** - accepted assistance from father, sought advice from father, rejected assistance from sister, directed sister to fetch chart
- **Rava** - attempted to assist
- **Mother** - passive observer (for the main part) (see discussion of H), encouraged independence from Jeba (told father to let her tear page
- **R** - interested observer/ praised writing and drawing/ responded to question about “IT”

**Note:**
- pencil grip incorrect (third finger up on pencil).
- Jeba has her own space in the living room cupboard to store her exercise books for writing and her own pencils.
- Jeba has just started attending Bangla school at Indooroopilly High School on Sundays from 10 o’clock to 12 o’clock.
Zena

Observation of Writing Experience
3rd November

Overall Impressions:
- Mother aware of the importance of providing opportunities for Zena to see her reading and writing.
- Mother appears to capitalize on literacy opportunities that arise in their daily experiences.
- Mother appears to negotiate her role in writing with Zena (allows Zena to dictate the amount of assistance provided by Mum)

Observation of Zena Writing

Setting: dining room/lounge

Participants: Zena sitting at dining room table.
Mother coming and going from dining room (at first)
then sitting to the left of Zena at the table.
Eva (sister 3 years old) “writing” in her own book to Zena’s right.
R sitting opposite Zena.

Language: English

The Activity:

Mother initiated activity by suggesting that Zena could come and show R what she can write when she had finished eating her chocolate. Mother placed a container of pencils, pens, colouring pencils and a block of coloured notepaper on the table for Zena. Then she put Eva’s notebook on the table and suggested that Eva could show R her writing too.

Children came and sat at the table. Mother left the room. Zena began to write. She wrote MUM and CAT. R asked if she could write anything else. Zena said she could write Dad and wrote DoD. Wrote down the letters she could remember, then some numbers that she knew.

During this writing mum came in and out of the room but was never out of earshot. She did not instruct or hover but suggested that when she had finished the letters, Zena could write a letter with her. Zena had received a parcel that day from her uncle. Zena said she liked to write letters because people wrote back to her and sometimes sent her parcels. Mother went and got a copy of a letter that Zena had written to Agro (puppet on TV show). (This letter had been mentioned during the telephone conversation with R the week before). Zena had told her mother what to write and the mother had written it. Zena indicated that she was waiting for a reply but that she had not been able to watch the show on TV every morning to see if Agro had mentioned it. Mother passed R the copy of the letter. Zena began to cry as the letter was special and she wanted to keep it. See below for a copy of the copy of the letter.
Zena continued to write. She indicated that she knew all the letters but couldn’t remember them all. R then named letters and Zina wrote them down as R said them. She did not know Q. All letters were upper case except for i. Zena began halfway down the page and wrote left to write until she got to M and then wrote N to the left of M and then started a new line and continued to V. The rest of the letters were written above A from left to right. N, J and Z were written backwards. (See sample 1)

Mum sat at the table and suggested that Zena could write a letter with her now. Ze didn’t want to, so Mum found some pictures that Zena had drawn especially for he friends and wrote “To (name of friend) from” on the pictures and Zena wrote her name. One of the pictures was of the Banksia men and Mum showed Zena how banksia stilts with the letters of her name (Banks).

Mum said she was unaware how Zena had learned the alphabet: suggested Sesame Street or maybe her father had shown her. Zena said yes her dad did get her to write letters when she stayed with him sometimes.

Roles:

Mother - initiated writing activity, suggested that Zena write to Uncle, negotiated Zena in joint writing on drawings for friends.

Zena - wrote unaided, did not seek help, responded to R by writing letters as said, refused to co-write letter but negotiated with mother so that mum wrote the message on her drawings and then added her name, mostly ignored her sister.

Eva - sister chattered in a loud voice demanding attention from every participant interrupting every conversation. Produced her own writing (not letters R was told food) (see samples) shared pencils and pens with Zena.

R - observed writing, inquired what else Zena could write, named letters to be written, inquired about letter writing, asked Zena to write letters for samples. Discussed other writing experiences with mother.

Notes:

Zena lives with her Dad half the week. She trained teacher – taught one year teaching literacy to disabled teenagers. Zena watches Sesame Street and The Book Place on TV.

Dear Agro,

How are you? I live in Iona Terrace in Brisbane. I am 5 years old. I always watch your show. I used to watch Cheez TV but now I watch you.

From Zena Banks.
Kaori

Observation of Writing Experience
29th October

Overall impressions:
- Parents value education
- Did not have any expectations of Kaori before she started school
- Do not see they have a role in assisting Kaori to learn literacy

Observation of Kaori writing
Setting: Kaori’s bedroom (far away from the main living area of the house)

Participants: Kaori, Researcher, Mother
    Mother escorted Researcher to Kaori’s bedroom, watched for a moment
    and then left the room.

Language Spoken:
- Parents speak Japanese to the children and to each other.
- The two children speak a mixture of Japanese and English to each other

The Activity:
Kaori had a desk and chair in her room. Above the desk was a bookshelf with 20-30
Japanese books. She appeared to have no books in English. She had pens, pencils
and felt pens, notepads and paper.

Writing letters: Kaori began writing the letters of the alphabet (upper case) with some
omissions. When she stopped, Researcher said the names of the letters, Kaori
wrote them. She did not know C, D, G, H, L. She could not proceed past P;

Writing Numbers: Kaori wrote numbers 2, 7, 8, 9, 10: The number 9 looked like P

Name writing: Kaori wrote her name in capitals.

Drawing: She drew a picture of a house with a door, windows, stairs showing, a
chimney, flowers, smiling sun and cloud, herself standing outside the house smiling.

Roles:
Father: none
Mother: none
Yosuke: none
Kaori: waited for researcher to prompt and then responded
Lia

Observation of Writing Experience
5th November

Overall Impressions:
• Mother values education / literacy
• Expects children to learn literacy at school
• Too busy to spend time reading / writing with children

Observation of Lia Writing

Setting: Kitchen table (mother preparing afternoon tea)
Participants: Lia, mother, researcher
Language spoken: English

The Activity:
Lia said she had lots of books. Second-hand books were in a cardboard box in the
living room for the 3 children to share. Lia showed me her favourite book: a book of
nursery rhymes. Recited Humpty Dumpty, Grand Old Duke, Sally go Round (really
Ring-a-ring-a-roses) and Baa baa black sheep. Lia told me she learned at home and
at Preschool.

I initiated activity by suggesting that Lia could do some writing for me. Mother went
to look for scrap paper and then came back to the kitchen and found a pen on top of
the fridge (out of the reach of children). Lia showed me a colouring-in book and a
singing book. She drew a picture of a house and flowers and, with encouragement
wrote her name: Lia, some numbers -1 1 0 2 3 (reversed) and some letters – B A
E F L P O U M X S. She wrote left to right, but did not start consistently on the left
hand side of the page, instead starting in the middle of the page.

Mother said she had completed her Bachelor of Education in Indonesia but had not
taught. She said children learn to read by first learning to recognize words and then
memorizing sentences.

Roles:
Mother: Located resources
Researcher: Initiated activity, encouraged and responded
Lia, reluctant at first, followed instructions, drew picture and wrote letters, numbers.
**Grace**

Observation of Writing Experience

*5th November*

**Overall Impressions:**
- Parents value learning (Father is completing studies at UQ as a Presbyterian Minister)
- Mother working in a restaurant to support family
- Emphasis on discipline,
- Emphasis on daily routine for homework
- Grace follows, Mother checks work
- See importance of maintaining heritage language (family hope to return to Korea)
- Mother reluctant to praise (humble? Religious outlook?)
- Grace spends more time on “homework” than the older boys

**Setting:** Living room and kitchen
- Grace has her own desk in a corner of the living room. It has an assortment of pencils, felt pens, books (some workbooks on phonics, number and handwriting purchased from the newsagent). In another corner of the lounge room are a globe, books, videos and board games.

**Participants:** Mum, Grace and Paul (Yr 1).
- Samuel (Yr 3) is in his bedroom doing his homework.
- Mum is preparing vegetables for dinner in the kitchen.
- Paul is writing his tuckshop order on a paper bag for lunch the next day.
- Grace is at her desk.
- Mum supervising — reads instructions in English and explains in Korean.
- Grace tells Mum to get on with the instructions (Mum explains that Grace always thinks she knows what to do).

**Language Spoken:**
- Father speaks Korean in the home
- Mother speaks English and Korean to the children
- Children speak more English to each other

**The Activity:**
Mum gives instructions — Grace completes — Mum checks

1. Grace does some activities from books purchased from newsagent — handwriting, spatial concepts, reading, letters, drawings, colouring.
2. Grace asks mum how to spell key,
3. Mum calls out letters from the kitchen — Grace writes

**Korean Homework:**
- Picture and sentence about a house
- Grace practises reading and writing words
- Completes exercise using words from previous pages — she writes the words
- Matches pictures and words

**Note:**
- Korean alphabet — 14 letters, 10 vowels — phonics script (not like in English) — Left to Right
APPENDIX D

Transcripts of audiotapes

CONVERSATIONS WITH PARENTS ABOUT WRITING EXPERIENCES AT HOME

Jeba
Zena
Kaori
Lia
Grace
Jeba

12th November

R = Researcher
P = Parent (mother)

... Has J been doing any writing at home?
P   Today?
R   Yes or this week
P   Yes. This week she has been doing some writing but not today.
R   Not today
P   Today she want to drawing and now mmm she can draw some mm something.
R   What did she draw?
P   Oh uhhh mmm Thursday she was going to mmm visit aahh Wesley Hospital
R   Oh yes
P   with Jenny and the um preschool uh other children and she uuhhh saw here old people swimming there.
R   I see
P   and she draw this picture
R   She drew a picture of the children swimming
P   Not children aahh old people
R   Old people. Oh I see.
P   Old people swim in Wesley Hospital swimming pool and she draw this picture
R   And have you kept it for me?
P   ((laughing)) okay
R   I'd like to see it
P   ((laughing)) yes
R   N ((parent's name)) earlier in the week has she been doing some writing?
P   Yes
R   Tell me what she's been writing
P   She writing ay be ce de
R   alphabet
P   Yes alphabet
R   [any words?]
P   [English and Bengali alphabet. No she
R   just the alphabet
P   the alphabet and she can write just dog
R   yes
P   uhhh hen. One uh one word. One alphabet for one word
R   So she writes A and then she writes a word that starts with A?
P   yes yes.
R   Mmmm can you keep that for me too?
P   ((Laughs)) yes yes
R   When she does that work
P   Mmm
R   did you tell her to do it?
P   Aah first I said. Now I just said J you write alphabet and one word and she write.
R   And she does it
P   Yes. She can write.
And does she ask you what word will start with this letter? Or can she think of this by herself?

Yes. Sometimes she ask me. Sometimes she can write aaahhh by herself.

Has she done any more writing to her grandmother in Bangla?

No, because I telephone in Bangladesh every fortnight.

I see.

And uhh she talk with my mum and uhh on the telephone.

You do. Does she watch programs on television?

Yes. Yes.

What does she like to watch?

Children program in morning.

Like Sesame Street?

Sesame Street. Yes Sesame Street and ((speaks to J in Bangla and J responds in Bangla)) Jenny or Jenna or Gina. Something like that.

Gina. It's a program on TV?

((laughing)) Yes.

I see and in the afternoon does she watch something too?

Yes. Something. aaah afternoon. Children program.

Does she watch cartoons?

Sorry?

Does she watch cartoons?

Cartoons yes cartoons. Uhhh sometimes she go to outside uhhh to play other children here. Near my house. Other neighbour's children.

Oh yes. I saw there were some children living around her that go to school. What sort of games do they like to play?

Um. They play umm they make cubby house sometime.

Yes. That's fun.

And sometime they draw something and just (like (laughs)) not real and other play just like children play.

Does she have some dolls?

Dolls? Yes.

Does she like to play with them?

Yes. Doll and uhh yes. You want to see all you come to my house and um one room uhh big play

yes? a play room

is a play room.

Oh that's lucky

((laughs)) Not good. Not good. uhh ((P and R laugh))

Okay. Thank you very much for talking to me N

Okay. Thank you.

19th November

R = Researcher

P = Parent (Mrs T)

... How has J been?

She is good.

She is good?
Yeah

What has she been doing this week?

Aahh. J is practising in the evening time she's for some time for writing some words and some Bangla Deshi alphabet like this. And also she writes some words uh with different alphabets. Uh one or two words with different alphabets.

When she's writing words can you give me some idea of what words she is writing.

((calls child)) J. ((to R)) Just a minute please. ((speaks to J in heritage language))

((in English)) I can speak to her.

((to R)) J like to speak with you

Okay.

Hello

Hello J. How are you?

Fine thanks.

Tell me. When you've been writing this week and you've been writing some words in English

Ohh I've been writing like ( ) one two in Bangla. one two. Like in my language (goina)

What does that mean?

like ay. like one

Like letters?

Yeah

Like the letters

Yeah. (mixing them) and making something.

And what have you been making when you mix the letters?

Like eye. Like that.

Yes. ( ) So you've been mixing the letters up.

Yes.

Have you been putting the letters together to make words?

Yes.

So what do the words say that you've been writing?

Like huh huh. That one.

Mmmm. And have you been writing in English as well?

Yeah

And what words have you been writing in English?

Like A to apple and B to book.

For each letter you write a word that starts with that letter. ( ) What did you write for C?

Um. Cat. D is dog. E is egg. F is fan. G is good.

Aitch

H is hen. I is ice.

Jay.

J is jam.

Good. (2.0) What did you write for kay?

King

Ell?

Ell is lion like that.

Lion and em?

((laughs)) sometimes I write mum

So you write different ones

Yes.

And en?

for en? (2.0)

Can't remember? What about oh?

O is orange like that.
R Pe
J T is table
R That's tee. Oh. pea. cue. What did you write for cue? (2.0) Forgotten?
J uh huh
R What do you write for R?
J Sometimes I write my big sister's name it starts with R
R Uuhh. ess?
J S is sun
R And tee is table
J Yeah
R And you?
J U is umbwella
R And vee?
J Vee is (3.0) What is it?
R double you?
J W for (branch) like that
R and eks?
J X is for (3.). X is
R X is a hard one
J yeah
R I can't think of anything that starts with eks. Can you?
J No
R Eks. why
J Y is (our) and zee is zebra.
R So you've been very busy writing all those words.
J Yeah.
R And have you been doing any reading at home?
J what?
R Have you been reading any books at home?
J Um. No. I can just read two books
R What are the names of those books
J Like. one is. That is easy because I can tell you. ((in a sing song voice)) I like writing. I like playing. I like singing. Like that.
R I see. So it starts with I like on every page.
J Yeah
R And what's the other book that you can read?
J like. What are people called like you have to do that and you call her name.
R Say that again
R Oh right. So it's got the names of people
J Yeah.
R Oh good. J are you going to go to Bangla school on Saturday or Sunday?
J Yeah
R So J I might speak to Daddy again now to find out when you are going so I might come along too.
J Okay.

25th November

R = Researcher
P = Participant (Mrs T)

R Hello J how are you?
J Fine
Are you enjoying Grade 1?
Yes.
Tell me have you been doing some writing at school?
Yes.
You have. Every day?
Aaah yes.
And what about at home? Have you been doing some writing at home?
Yes.
Tell me what you've been doing.
Um like. The first day I was in the school I learned red and today we are doing a pictionary.
Ah yes a pictionary I see. And have you been writing at home?
Oh yes.
Tell me about what you write at home.
Ahhh Bangladeshi things.
Uuhh. The alphabet again?
Yes.
And what about in English?
Umm. Ay bee cee.
Yes. Are you starting to write some stories at home in English?
Yeah.
Tell me have you written any yet?
Ahh no.
Are you going to write some?
Yes.
So you've been writing what in English.
I see red and can.
Uuhh. So you've been writing some words and sentences. Have you kept them for me?
Yes.
You haven't lost them have you?
No.
Good and have you got mummy to write the date on them so that I know which day you did them?
Yes
Oh good. Is mummy there?
Oh yes. Here.
I've just been asking J about what she has been writing at home and she said she's keeping it for me.
She's been doing a little bit of writing in English
Yes yes.
And she said she would keep it for me.
Yes. She can keep it for you. Umm in the school or?
At home. What she has been doing at home I would like you to keep for me. She said she has been writing I can see red and things like this.
It is her homework. She doing some homework this week she learn ay bee cee de and uh with some pictures and some word this week from school.
That's part of the pictionary is it?
Pictionary yes. Part of the pictionary.
And she has been doing some writing with that as well has she?
Yes.
And anything else that she writes.
Next time I give some paper you. Like this Bengali and English words and uh some counting word.
R  Just keep it and put her name and the date on it. That's wonderful. And
is she enjoying school?'
P  Yes but um in morning time she doing same things. Same thing like last
year. Vomiting and tension but she enjoy. In preschool she does not do
this type of vomiting or tension.
R  Ohhh. I wonder what the problem is with school?
P  I don't know. She want have school dress and she start vomiting,
R  Goodness me. I think first time she mmm feel tension feel tension and
now she wear dress and she same thing. I think mebe mmm
R  Do you think in time it will stop?
P  Yes. oh yes. I think now she can speak and she have some friend and it
is no problem for her
R  But she still has this stress this feeling of tension.
P  Yes.
R  But you are still going to English classes aren't you because your English
is getting incredibly good.
P  Oh thank you.((laughs))Yes I going to English class still. This is my
second semester.
R  I can hear the difference. And how is your husband.
P  Good. Now he is going to Sydney for a seminar. Five days. Tomorrow
she he will be back.
R  Oh good. And has J started going again to Bangladeshi school on
Saturdays?
P  Yes.

1st December

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mr T)

…

R  how has J been this week?
P  Oh she's fine.
R  What's she been doing?
P  Oh just the same.
R  The same?
P  Yes she is just practising the same things.
R  She will know it all soon.
P  Yes yes.
R  And has she been doing any drawing.
P  Drawing? Yes yes. She has kept all the drawings and anything she has
written she has kept for you.
R  Okay that's good. Well I'll have to come around before the end of the
year and collect them.

…

3rd December

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mr T)

R  I am inquiring about J's and her writing this week.
P  J is writing mmm ((J talks in background and father addresses her in
English)) How is your writing? ((J responds but inaudible)) oh 1 2 3 4 5
like that.
R She is writing numbers.
P Yes she is numbering she is writing this. ((J speaks in English to her father)) She is writing in Bengali.
R Oh good. I can hear in the background. Has she been doing any Christmas drawing?
P She wants to talk with you.
R Oh fine. I'd love to talk with her.
J Hello
R Hello J. How are you?
J Fine.
R What have you been doing this week?
J Like a b c d and lots of Bangladeshi words.
R Have you been doing some English words too?
J No. no.
R And you've been writing some numbers too?
J I've been writing numbers in Bangladeshi like (     ).
R Uuhh. And when you do this writing do mummy and daddy ask you to do it or do you ask to do it?
J I ask to do it.
R And have you been doing any drawings this week?
J Just one.
R And what did you draw your picture about?
J Red Riding Hood
R Do you know the story of Red Riding Hood?
J Yeah.
R And where did you hear that?
J I hear that in Bangladesh.
R Really? Have you got that book?
J No but (. ) Yeah we have.
R You have got that book. Have you got very many books?
J Snow White.
R You've got Snow White. Is that one in English or in bangladeshi?
J Bangla but I understand the English.
R J have you got lots of books?
J umm yeah.
R How many?
J uhh I don't know.
R One day will you count how many books you've got?
J In Bangladesh or here?
R Here. J do you have any books that are written in English?
J Umm no.
R Just in Bangladeshi.
J No. There's English a lot of but. There's one just comics.
R Comics
J Yeah. Bangla comics.
R Do you go to the library here? With mummy?
J Umm sometimes but in preschool sometimes I go to the library.
R And can you take those books home?
J umm yes.
R And how long can you keep them?
J You have to write (. ) there's one book big book and you have to write who's taking that book like I'm taking that book because you have to write J. And which day I will give. Like that.
R And do you write your name?
J um no.
R Who does the writing for you?
J Who pick up me when school is finished.
R J. Have you got any writing that you are keeping for me?
J Yeah. In my drawer.

R Can you send the drawing and writing to school with R ((big sister)) to give to me?
J yeah.

10th December

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mr T)

R What has J been doing?
P Not today. She did something yesterday. And earlier she did something.
R Would she like to tell me about it?
P Okay you want to talk to J?
J Hello
R Hello J it's Mrs F. How are you?
J Fine.
R J did you do some writing yesterday?
J Yes
R And what did you do? ((speaks to father in Bangla))
J Bangla alphabet
R And did you do any of your Bangla homework ((homework from Bangla school))
J No
R Are you going to?
J Yes
R And have you been doing any writing in English?
J yes
R What have you been doing?
J A for two words. B for two words. Like that.
R Have you been doing any drawings or Christmas cards or anything like that?
J No.
R Has J been collecting any drawings or writing for me?
P yes.
R Could you send it along to school with R ((sister)) tomorrow?
P okay

5th March

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R I'm just ringing up to ask you about J. How is she going?
P She's okay but she doesn't take any food.
R Still
P That's big problem. Like last time she every morning vomiting again.
R Oh dear.
P Mmm
R When she comes home from school does she vomit?
P No no only morning time yeah.
Dear oh dear. that's a problem. Has she been doing any writing at home?

Yes. She doing some writing.

Okay. Is she doing the writing only when you ask her to? Or is she doing some at other times.

No. Just I ask and she doing some something and mmm every night she mmm working ahh homework.

What does she have to do for homework?

Alphabet ay be cee dee one day one alphabet and umm some word with this alphabet.

Does she have to look for pictures?

Yes sometimes she draw some pictures and mmm sometimes she cutting with the mmm she cutting with newspaper mmm.

Okay and apart from her homework does she do any other writing?

Some time she writing um Bangla alphabet and Bangla word and sometime she lazy she ((laughs)) uhh I write reading her book. Everyday he bring one book.

And she's reading that to you.

Yes.

Tell me is she still going to Bangladesh school. Yes she going but last week my husband went back to Bangladesh.

Oh did he?

Yes last Saturday and Sunday I did not give her this school. Next time I want to give.

So next time she'll go.

Yes.

So how long is ((name of husband)) away?

For four months.

That's hard for you. All by yourself.

Yes. Sometimes I feel not good.

Yes. I guess sometimes it's probably a bit scary.

Yes and I don't know where I give the electricity bill or what I can do.

If ever you want to telephone me and have a talk about things. If I can help you let me know.

Thank you

Things like paying bills or anything. Okay?

Okay. Thank you.

So. I will ring you again in two weeks time.

Okay.

And if I hear from you before then that's good. Now do you have my telephone number?

okay just a tick. I think I have. Yes I have got your telephone number ((reads out number))

Yes that's it and anytime if I can help in any way.

Yes thank you.

Say hello to J for me.

You want to speak to her? Now?

yes I can speak to her.

Just a moment. ((calls J in Bangla))

Hello?

Hello J. It's Mrs F here. How are you?

Fine

How are you going at school?

Good.

What are you doing? Are you doing some writing at school?

Yes.

Tell me what are you writing?
R Every day do you do some writing?
J Yes.
R What did you write today?
J um. You. why oh you. And she give us a puzzle of you and we had to glue it on paper.
R Did you use your writing book today?
J No
R Okay J well I will talk to you again next time.

13th March

R = Researcher
P = Parent (mother)

R When does A ((husband)) get back?
P May last week I hope or June first week.
R Oh that's still quite a way
P Yes just gone nineteen days
R And J is missing him she said
P Yes yes she always missing her dad. Today mmm I got a letter from A. A write note letter to J R and uh
R That's good. Did J tell you was she doing some writing on the computer today at school?
P Yes she told me. What things she write?
R Did she tell you that? She wrote about a bird she had in Bangladesh that flew away.
P Oh. Not Bangladesh. Here.
R Oh it was here that it flew away. Oh I see. Has she been doing any writing at home?
P Yes. Aahh this afternoon she came back from school and she um write about this story. Just two or three words I um told her I spell her and then all words she write she can write.
R Yes she's coming along very well isn't she
P ((laughs sounding pleased)) yes
R So that was this afternoon after school and it wasn't homework she just wanted to write.
P Homework aahh alphabet and with the alphabet some word.
R In English?
P In English
R Uuhh
P Homework this. Sometime aahh write some Bengali word Bengali alphabet.
R Yes and like this afternoon when she came home and did some writing. Has she done this on other days too or just today?
P No no no just today.
R Oh just today
P Today she is very exciting because she can do some computer work. Mum mum I can do this and she is very exciting.
R Well I must tell Mrs B. ((teacher)) She was very helpful too of the little partner she had. She worked with Z and she was helping Z to find the letters and how to spell the words.
P ((laughs)) yes she told me.
R She told you that too. So now that she has been reading a letter from her dad has she written a letter to her father?
P  To her dad yes. Maybe she can I think.
R  Don't forget to keep any writing she does at home so I can see.
...

2nd April

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R  How is J going
P  Yes. She is good today she will borrow some her mm school book and
work and he reading she reading this book.
R  Is that a library book?
P  Not library book. um some ay bee cee book and some other word and
something.
R  I see.
P  She want to show me all these things.
R  So are they books from the classroom?
P  Yes yes from the classroom.
R  Are they books that she has been working in? or published books from
the teacher?
P  No no working books.
R  Like exercise books
P  Yes exercise books
R  So she's showing you what she's been doing.
P  Yes
R  And is she doing any writing at home as well?
P  In the last two weeks yes she did.
R  Tell me what she did. Can you remember?
P  Last week last Sunday was in Bangla school one competition a flag
R  Oh yes
P  Children draw this flag and J too umm. Eighteenth of April we have our
function at the Indooroopilly Uniting Church and when um government um
when this uh member our Bangladeshi community member they want to
give some prize. I don't know J win or not. ((laughs))
R  Is there only one prize or lots of prizes?
P  Maybe three prize first second third. For Bangla school no two just only
two class. One class is R's ((J's big sister)) group and one class is J's
group and R's group is handwriting competition. Bengali handwriting.
And maybe each group is three prize first second third.
R  And she is competing with children who are a little bit older than she is.
That makes it a little bit difficult doesn't it?
P  ((laughs)) yes
R  And J has been writing on the computer at school. Did she tell you?
P  Yes and she bring it for me and I keep it.
R  Now tell me has she written to her father.
P  She can't writing a letter she just tell me and I write for him her.
R  And what sort of things does she like to tell him?
P  Sorry?
R  Does she tell him about school? What does she tell you to write?
P  Yes about school. Last time she write a letter for my mum and she write
everything about school and teacher and about you and uh her friends
mmm and some friends she forgot their name and she talked to me and I
write.
R  Good. And have you kept some writing for me?
P  Yes yes.
R  Oh good.
P  J would like to speak to you.
...
R  J. Tell me what you like to write about.
J  My friends and my um bird.
R  Yes. And have you been getting mummy to write letters for you to
    grandma and to daddy?
J  Yes
R  And what else have you been doing?
J  Playing most of the time.
R  And what do you like to play? Have you got some dolls?
J  Yes
R  What else? What else do you play with?
J  Dolls and like this.
...

30th April

R = Researcher  
P = Parent (Mother)

R  Hello J. It's Mrs F here. How are you?
P  Fine
R  Have you been doing any writing?
P  Yes
R  What have you been doing?
J  Writing and playing.
R  And what have you been writing? Have you been writing in English?
J  Yes
R  And what have you been writing?
J  Mmm ay be cee and Bangla as well. And I have the book. Those books.
R  What books?
J  The books that we take bring from our school.
R  The reading books
J  Yes I write that too.
R  You are writing the books. Ooh that must take you a long time does it?
J  Yeah.
R  And does mummy ask you to do that or do you do it all by yourself?
J  All by myself
R  And why are you doing it J?
J  Oh I just want to do it. I just like writing.
R  Have you been writing to your friends?
J  No
R  Have you been writing at school?
J  Yes
R  And what have you been writing in the classroom?
J  Like. We learn a word and we in a sheet we get a sheet and its writing the
    word and there's a missing word and um we have a missing word and the
    missing word is the one that we're learning today and stuff like that.
R  And you put it in. That's good isn't it? Is mummy home?
J  Yes I'll get her.
...
R  I have been talking to J and she said she has been doing some more
    alphabet writing at home.
P  Yes. She writing something. But now she become very lazy before the
    some before some before. She is become lazy and she no want to do.
And um I can't (feet) with children to push to write something. And now sometimes I feel tired I do lots of things and I feel tired. I can't push them.

R So she's not very keen to write without you telling her too?
P No. Sometimes I tell R((big sister)) then she can go to work. Sit on the table. But sometimes she just watching tee vee and playing and making dress with paper.

R Do you think it is very important for her to practise at home as well?
P Uhhh because if I go back to my country mmm (2.0)

R You think she needs to keep up the bangladeshi?
P Yes she need to um to in Bangladesh the education is very hard. The little children hmm the little children learn in class (.) grade 3 4 grade 2. They learn about English (.) Bengali (.) and religion and um history. Little little all these things.

R Yes I understand. And so you think she must work at home too.
P Yes but I can't now.

R You will get better again.
P Ah no I am if okay not too much pain I do lots of things I feel lazy I lay down sometime and watch tee vee. Because when my husband come back he can help me and then I can push them.

R When does he come back? In June?
P He tell me now he want to come back in July. Sorry August.

14th May

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R And how is J?
P J suffered for a cold. Suffered not last week. Before last week and now is better. In school.

R And so how has she been going with her schoolwork?
P Ahh J?
R yes J
P Yes it's okay
R Has she been doing some writing at home.
P Not this two or three days she don't (.) no (.) write anything.
R So she hasn't been practising anything
P no
R Well if she hasn't been well I can understand that.
P Before she write something she wrote something I took for you.
R Oh good. You still have it?
P Yes I still have it.
R If J is going to school tomorrow can you give it to her to give to the teacher and the teacher will give it to me.
P Okay.

4th June

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R How is J?
J is now sitting on the table and uh not on the sorry on the chair and she writing something. Not homework school work book. She brought some school word book and um she follow it.

And did you ask her to do it or did she decide to do it herself?

Ah I (.2.0)

You told her to do it.

Yes.

Is she happy to do it?

Yes she is happy.

She's not saying No I don't want to do it?

((laughs)) no:oo

So what is she writing? Is she thinking of something in her head and then writing it or has she got something to copy?

Copy. She copy.

And has she done very much writing over the last few weeks?

Ah not really because mmm little not very much really because I feel very tired ((laughs))

So she writes only if you sit with her and encourage her is she?

Yes sometimes she sit herself and sometime ah not want because she want to play now.

Play outside with her friends?

Yes in the daytime but night time inside with her toys and sometimes she watching tv. But when I sit with her and she writing.

And you are teaching the children Bangladeshi at home now are you? Is that right?

Yes. That right because I can't go to Bangladeshi school. I have no car and I can't go now. And I stop to go to Bangladeshi school. My friend say she pick up me and take me but every week I feel not good.

You are not happy about that?

No. I think when my husband A comes back we will maybe buy a car and life will be easy.

Mmm so when are you working with J. Is it on the weekends that you are doing bangladeshi school work with J?

Not weekend. Sometimes after school I sit with her and she write some English school work and sometimes Bangladeshi.

And what is she writing in Bangladeshi now. Is she writing letters or is she making some words and sentences?

Now she can um what I can say. Because English work is bee ay ba and Bangladeshi word is be and different sign ah. And this sign she know this sign now. All these sign and she can add with the letter and make some little word like mum (.), dad (.), grandma (.),
Zena

12th November

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

…..

P I had to do it so I was awake all that night and all the next day and I wasn't I wasn't much of a mother.
R I can understand
P I've been getting trying to get back to normal ever since
R Yes
P Um it really takes it out of you if you can't sleep during that day if you miss out on sleep over night.
R I understand that

…..

P It's really made me re-assess whether I ever want another child.

…..

R So what's Z been up to this week? Have you been aware of her doing any writing?
P Um. Yeah she has been actually. I've jotted a few things down. Firstly she um she asked me to read out what was on a poster on her wall which was a Barbie poster. Um another thing she's done on Monday night and on Tuesday night was um. She got out her address book that lives underneath the phone and this is where our address books are. And she pulled it out and it's got teddy bears on it and um she's got her friends and family are in it and um she wanted to put some of her friends from preschool into this book. And so I went I read. And the preschool gives us a list of all the names of the kids and the parents names and their phone numbers. And so I read out all the names and um she and um I wrote them into her book like with her instructions
R She told you what to do
P Yes. She told me what to do and then I um read. We took turns. I read out the number and then she wrote that number into the book.
R Right
P And that was an interesting activity. I had to um. Because the number had to be right in the book I had to correct it when she left out a number and I was just kind of going oh I'll just get a number in there um. Yeah that's great! We've got the numbers all right now. And I was trying to gloss over what I was doing and
R How did she react to that?
P She was fine. I had to encourage her to keep going because she was running out of space. I had to show her that I had done one that was not neat and had moved over to the side a bit.
R And she was concerned about getting it looking right?
P Well I think this is what usually happens with her and writing. She starts off and it doesn't look like it's supposed to in her eyes
R uhuh
P and then she gets disenchanted at that point. Umm. So. yeah. She finished the number and then we went (.) we did it the other way round where she read out the number and I wrote it (.) one number at a time. Yeah and I was. And that was a very. That was fascinating because she had to be really concentrate on what number she was looking at in a phone number out of eight digits which one she was up to. She had to be
looking at the one behind that she'd already said and the one in front and all that stuff. And so she did what I'd have done which was just read them like 1 (.) 3 (.) 3 (.) 7 (.) like that and I wrote them into the book.

R When that activity first evolved was it her initiative (.) she was the one who took it out?

P It was completely her initiative

R Okay

P which is often the case with things like her address book they emerge like every couple of months or weeks or yeah she knows where it's kept. Yeah that was completely her and in fact we couldn't finish it because it was getting too close to bedtime and um I promised her that we would finish that activity the next night and she was on to it. She had the book out and the paper and she just grabbed me and said we've got to keep doing this now.

R And so you continued the following night?

P We kept going the following evening and we had to remember um what names um we had got from the night before and I had to read out the names again. And I also read out all the names of all the kids and we had to work out who wasn't there anymore.

R Uhuh

P So there was a lot of focus on this piece of paper and we had one more name to write in.

R And have you done that

P Yes. We've done that as well. We're finished that. There's one person left who I think has moved house so it's up to me now to find out what her phone number is so we can put that in the book.

R Has she used the phone numbers in her address book?

P No and that's unfortunate but we have an old style phone and um she would have trouble using it but I suppose we could work on it but it's not as easy as the push button ones. It's an old dial one but it's even heavier that the just old dial ones. It's an old fifties style one. Yes unfortunately. But one thing we did was go through the address book. She went through all the letters of the alphabet and when we put in um William's name she went through the address book and found W

R So she was using her knowledge of the alphabet. That sounds fabulous.

P Yes. Yes. She's a curious a curious little girl who's working it out and she's happy to learn the ways um like I can remember as a teacher teaching um oh things like using the phone book and how many kids don't just okay the name begins with H and just go to H and like and use the letters the shortcuts that are the logical shortcuts. A lot of people don't seem to use those and she's developing that. And I'm guilty of that. And she's developing skill of knowing how to get to where she wants to go. Decoding. I think. We also bought some different yoghurt and went through the different yoghurt names again because they are all vanilla and. Vanilla and apple. Vanilla and banana.

R And you initiated that one?

P Yes I initiated that one.

R And she was trying to identify the yoghurts again.

P Yes she was helping me put the shopping away and um so we decided to take the yoghurts out of their packets and um so we went through the names and yeah that was initiated by me. Umm that's about it really.

R Sounds like you had a busy week despite being tired.

P Yes. From her Dad's house she brought this. He took her to the gallery for a book. A book launch. I think it was a book launch. A children's book launch that was on on Sunday at the gallery and um when I went to pick the kids up on Sunday night we took this book brought this book home and it was about a family of mice who they were looking for a piano player
in the gallery in the pictures at the queensland gallery. It's an absolutely marvellous story and um

R Is it a locally made book?
P Yeah. Apparently she has made three of these books and I don't know which is the first but there's already been one done of the national gallery of Victoria. Yeah but it's a wonderful book and the children have been to the gallery a number of times and I don't know they've got the picture. I never remember the names of them but the one with the jacaranda tree in it. A stunning picture that's in the gallery and that's featured on the front of this book.

R So she's been reading that?
P Yeah she's been going through that and she took it to preschool to show everybody and that was a bit of a thing that we talked about was this book and because it's got this most beautiful jacaranda in it and how that's such a queensland thing and me coming from Victoria and her being familiar with Melbourne and that yeah.

P Oh the other things is that a letter arrived today from Agro.
R Oh you got a reply
P Yes and the thing is Z doesn't know this and she won't know until she comes here on Saturday. I'm very excited about it.
R Well tell me all about it when I ring next week.
P I will I will so she's got this letter addressed to Z ((her name)) and this is exactly what she wants so. Oh I know another thing. I've got it written in front of me. She wanted me to read out a kindy notice to her so I read out the whole thing um. I even read out that there were going to be presents for the mums and dads that the kids had made I'm sure I wasn't supposed to read that out. I stopped at the part where um um children will be given a book for Christmas and I managed to because I was reading it straight I hadn't read it first but anyway I stopped reading that part.
R Did she pick up on it?
P No she didn't pick up on that I had to kind of be very careful about that and move to the bottom part of the page and run through the Wednesday dahdah and J's non-contact day and there's a magician coming and all that stuff. And she brought that notice home. And that's pretty much it. She's been doing some activities out of a book that they got given by the ambulance a bit like that other one she had.
R From the hospital visit?
P Yeah that's right and Z goes um she knows where the pens and pencils are and she goes and brings them in and she just sits down and does that as well and she puts the pens and pencils away so that's quite. I'm glad to know that she's empowered enough to want to know where things are and if she wants to do writing then she can. I think that's it.
R Thanks very much A. I appreciate all the thought that's gone into that.
P It was just so thrilling what she was doing and it's kinda nice to be able to share this stuff.

19th November

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R Last time I was talking to you you'd just got a letter from Agro.
P Yeah that's right.
R But Z hadn't seen it yet.
P Yes. That's right and um she saw it and she's miffed that she hasn't won something.

R oh

P So I've had to read it out to her and explain to her that it's just an acknowledgment of her um drawing and letter

R That's a shame

P Yeah. It is a bit of a shame. But I guess that's the cruel hard facts about competitions.

R yes

P Sound a lot better than they are. So all we've really done with that is for her to read. For me to read that out to her.

R uhh

P She's not done much writing that I can think of in the last week.

R Sometimes that's what happens. You just have a busy week and there's not much going on.

P yeah. Or other things are going on in her life.

R yes. What sorts of things has she done in the week?

P She's been playing with the girl across the road. We've got some uh CDs I bought a CD for them with songs on it and they listen to that a lot.

R uhh

P It's just got those classical sorts of songs on it like I Can Sing a Rainbow, Morningtown Ride, and it's not a classic but, Never Smile at a Crocodile. It's actually one of the nicest selections of kid's music that we actually don't mind listening to it. So they've been listening to that and dancing to it. And also learn the words and sing them.

R Good

P Yeah. So but oh I know. The reason they haven't been doing much it's just come to me. A friend of a friend came to stay for a conference. She's from Canberra and she brought with her some stuff that she'd brought from Lincraft. You know pompoms and pipe cleaners and all that stuff.

R A craft kit.

P Yeah a craft kit and so we were making things every night after preschool. And there were cardstoo. Cards and glitter. And they've made cards but they haven't written in them yet.

R Were they Christmas type cards or just cards to share with friends?

P I think they're more cards to share with friends. Well the kids think they're going to be Christmas cards but they've stuck these really big fat pompoms on them so I didn't feel like I wanted to break the news that I didn't know how I was going to deal with that.

R I don't think at that age it really matters.

P But the pompoms are very 3D so you couldn't put them in an envelope in the post but maybe they won't have to be they could give them to somebody. So we've got cards. But I suppose

R Well if they get around to writing in them and giving them to someone let me know.

P yeah. okay I will. But that was really it. They were consumed by um. They were given 2 kits and one with things in it to make animals. I actually ended up making all these animals for them. Well they were kinda helping me but I think they were a bit young for it. And the cards. And I got them a video of Jack and the Beanstalk and its more of a story than a cartoon. You slowly move over the pictures and there's a narrator. And that's about it. And they went to a kid's birthday party on the weekend.

R So I'll ring you again next weeke
25th November

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

... A couple of things. Although I didn't have them on the weekend. I read her out an invitation she's got to a party. Umm a birthday party that she's got on the weekend. And um I read to them regularly every night. But I told you that didn't I.

R That doesn't matter. Tell me again.

P Because I was thinking of that. Even though I didn't have much to say I read to them every night.

R Do they have favourite books?

P Yeah. yeah. And actually Z is onto books that are quite long they are quite epic for her and we read her a couple of pages every night.

R [Give me an example

P [The Muddle-headed Wombat. The Muddle-headed Wombat. I actually have a say in this because I tend to choose authors that I know. I have found that authors who are good write good adult books write good children's books.

R And do you think Ruth Park is one of those?

P yeah and I mean I just find that with the Muddle-headed Wombat we are introduced to a much um her use of language and her description she doesn't hold back on description um it's lovely. Some of it. The way she describes the Australian bush that I grew up in. I just find just so wonderful so well done. Also we are reading pinnochio to her at the moment. The proper one. The big fat book

R Yes.

P And I'm finding that a challenge because Pinnochio is not the character that Walt Disney has turned him into. And all the characters. Gepetto's not the same kind of character either. He's got a got a um he's quite cynical. Every second line is is funny. He's um um I was amazed at the kind of things that were said. And we've got up to the part where he's just been in gaol.

R When you read to the girls each night, is that something they look forward to and take the book and actually initiate the reading or

P Yes yes in fact sometimes if television like the Simpsons is on from seven til eight I tried to say well look there won't be any stories and I hated doing that but I just couldn't do it. Because um it just wouldn't. It just wouldn't work. They insist on choosing a book each and we try to have a book each and we often have a book like Pinnochio going as well.

R So they would have the Simpsons and not the book?

P Yes well see I tried this. And I didn't really like doing it. But I was much more concerned that Z went to bed on a Sunday night. Now if they do watch the Simpsons which is not a regular thing if I can avoid it we always have the reading. I couldn't not have the reading. I've just accepted that they'll go to bed a bit later because I don't not like to read to them.

R And has Z been doing any writing or drawing?

P Um no. Well they've been at their Dad's and then yesterday and today Z went over the road to her friend's place and swam in their pool. Tess who's in one of the Grade one classes. And she went over there to swim. Yesterday I read Pinnochio to Z in the middle of the day which I try to do with a book if we're choosing a book. Um that's like that. I often try to pick it up at other times and also because Eva is not interested I try to pick it up when it's just Z and me. Um I also chose another book a Maurice Lurie book and I haven't read any of Maurice Lurie but I know that he's a
kind of well known author I read one of his stories and the same thing. Wonderful description. The story was really a world that you enter.

R And what was the name of that?

P Um uh something like The Moon is Following Me. It's wonderful. It's got a train on the front and I knew that the kids would hate the look of it. Because I got these books from the library.

R So you didn't think the cover would be appealing?

P No. It's designed to be a boy's book. The main character is a boy. But the kids have told me that they have started noticing the moon and when you're driving along how the moon follows you and this book mentions this in it. So I decided to persist with it and it worked. They liked it they really loved it. Once we got past the front cover which has a train and a boy a train and a moon on it we were fine. Umm what else has she done. Oh I know, there's something that happened last week too. I took the kids for a walk um to get cuttings because I like to strike cuttings and um so I took a label and a pen and we cut and everything that we cut both kids had a bag and scissors and everything that we cut I labelled with the name of the plant (.) the colour of the flower and their name. That was just an example of me writing in front of them.

R So they were part of the experience though

P Yeah and they insisted that their name was on and they wanted to see that their name was on and when they were at their Dad's I potted them all and I put labels on the pots and with their names on them and they both know which pots are theirs with their names.

R Oh that's great A!

P yeah well I guess it's just a matter of passing on what you love. …

R Do you sometimes let her open some letters?

P Yes I always let her open the letters.

R And who goes out to the letterbox to get the mail?

P She and E fight over that. And I actually let E do it more than Z because E feels really miffed that Z goes off to preschool and she feels put out so there's a few things around here that are a bit special and that's a special thing for E.

R And are they interested in the contents or just the opening?

P Um it's more the opening. They often want to know what it is. What it is more than reading it. … A little while ago Z used the computer. It was one of those sites. Z grabbed me and got me to look up a site that was on Agro. I've told her they've got this computer guy who comes on and talks about sites for kids.

R That was on the TV was it?

P Yeah she called me and I came out and wrote down the address and that night (.) that day after school um we got onto the net and she put in some of the letters and um we went to this page um this site that had reading for kids. And it was very simple. Basically it was like a very um young child's cartoon style. There was like a picture and one or two words and most of the story was in the pictures and you just scrolled down and she had a look at that and also it was one of those sites that um that um as you moved from one part of the site to another you um as part of the. If a square is divided into triangles a different triangle gets marked off and you click on one triangle and you get into and you get a surprise so there's kind of added surprise for kids because they don't know what part of the site they're going to.

R Yes
P um. So she had a play around with that. I usually start of with the ABC because I find that's a good filter.

... The other thing that she's seen me doing is I'm writing this recipe book for the preschool. And I've been really busy doing it and they have been like they know like I'm in the computer room typing away and they come in and have a look every now and then.

...

3rd December

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R What has she been up to?
P Um. Golly golly golly. Oh I know I remember thinking I must remember to tell you about this. I had to read her the cookbook. Yes she wanted to know all the recipes in it.

R Did she recognise her favourites?
P No not really. I just had to read her the names of the recipes and the names of the people who had put them in and she was familiar with the mothers of kids.

R Oh that was the one you were compiling.
P Because I finished it. I had them all sitting around the house a pile of about twenty of them. So I did that. umm what else have we do? Oh golly I can't think. I've been reading more of that um Pinnochio. She and I have really been going for that. It's a marathon. We often sit down and read a bit more of that. It's something that she and I do together.

R Mmm

P She gets annoyed too because if E's ((little sister)) ready for bed I stop reading that one and find a book for both of them.

R Has she done any crafty things or Christmassy things?
P Yes. They've decorated the tree. Umm that was that's been fun because neither David or I have touched it. Its all got heaps of um tinsel just all lumped on it.

R That's the joy of Christmas with little ones.
P Yeah there's all these Christmas decorations that are strewn all over the floor that I've left there for two days. They've done a fair bit of colouring in. The book for Zena's school and the one that I made for E. They've both been doing that together.

R Right

P Umm Z said to me today oh mum I can spell cat cee ay tee.

R And she used the word spell?
P yes

R Did she write it or

P She spelt it out loud. umm she tells me regularly that J ((friend at preschool and also in study)) can do running writing. She must tell me that once a week.

R Isn't it interesting that they want to do running writing before they've learned to print.
P Yes like I can remember wanting to use a pen when I was only allowed to use a pencil. Although she's not competitive about this it's just an observation about J who was actually here yesterday.

...

P So J spent the day here.
R And what did the two girls get up to?
P Well Z was at preschool for the morning but J didn't go to preschool because her mother was organising to go to hospital and I took her there and I just took J home with me and E and she and E were doing colouring in type stuff and um I think they were doing writing. Oh where did I see writing? Over here or over (.) I think J was writing (.) writing Z ((name)). I'll look for it. I'm sure it's written around here somewhere.

P I had the three of them this afternoon and the three of them didn't play so well together. I know another thing I did do I played um David's aunt sent them Wind in the Willows, two videos and also a board game. And I have to read out all the words to them because they have to learn (.) they are going to have to learn the (. ) which ones are miss a go and move on two spaces.

R And they are going to have to learn those to play the game independently.
P Yes yes.
R And was J there when you were doing that?
P Yes she was. And that's about it.
R Well I'll ring you again next week.

10th December

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

P D ((Partner)) and I are getting married on the 27th of December. This month.

R Tell me what Z's been up to this week
P We have written a letter to D's auntie June um who sent us (.) I might have told you (.) who sent us two videos and a game.
R Yes
P And um so I transcribed a letter uhh a card and Z made a picture and I got E ((Z's younger sister)) to make a picture as well and we wrapped it all up and sent it today. So that was um something. I had to um like force the issue but Z spent time making her card and stuff.
R So that was instigated by you
P Yeah but she was happy to do it they were both happy to do something. So um what else um (1.0) Oh there's a card here that she's written Z and she wrote tee ay cee and a backward cee and um wanted to know what it was and I just looked at it and I thought she'd written Pat because Pat is my brother and I was talking to him on the phone and um but no she told me it was cat and I said oh I think that's around the wrong way. So I was going I don't know what this is and finally she said it's cat and she showed me the letters so she's written cat backwards and made other kind of word like attempts. I can show you the card actually. I think it's quite interesting and um she's made like running writing kind of lettering.
R Would that be seeing your writing?
P Yeah but I don't have a proper running writing. It's a print that's running but it's more print and some letters are not joined. So I'll keep that for you.

R Oh that's great. So mostly writing the thank you card and doing cards and things this week for Z

I've got a folder to put the things in.

330
P Yeah oh she looked up her friends name in her address book because D left a message to say her friend had rung. I tried to get her to read out the numbers but she wouldn't she kept thinking that Grace was Georgia and so she thought there was a 5 in. Remember I told you I 'd put a 5 in?

R Yes

P Well that was the number that was concerning her so she didn't read out the number. So um but that's cos our phone is really difficult to dial so that's why otherwise she would have been doing it already I reckon. Um yeah so she kind of located the G and found the name and I dialled. Um what else? I think there was one other thing but um I just can't remember. We're still reading Pinnochio.

R I was wondering how that was going

P Seven pages to go. It's the hugest book um and it's really good and Pinnochio goes on all these adventures and um and he's evil and there's an evil fox and cat they keep on playing tricks on Pinnochio and Pinnochio's so naïve and so it's good.

R And she's stuck with it

P Yeah she often looks like she's not interested but she always likes me to keep going and every now and then we chat about what's happening 'n what we think of Pinnochio as well and what we think of what he's done but not that much um yeah a little bit so um we've got to try and finish it before Christmas. It's a library book.

R So you'll be going away to Melbourne for Christmas

P Yes Monday

…

P Oh that's another thing we've got Christmas cards and she's wanted to have them read out.

R And you're keeping all those? Putting them up somewhere?

P yes we've been putting them up on the sideboard thing which is her their height.

R So she can get them down and look at them if she wants to.

P Yep. Yep and the other thing is her workbook. She keeps like she really enjoys flicking through it and um she likes to say what they are and there's the name is written at the bottom. Jenny has written the name what kind of thing like blob painting at the easel and stuff like that.

R So this workbook is a collection of the things she's done at preschool?

P Yes and some photos and Jenny has written the names of what they've done. So there are words in there and she likes to go through and say them and that's blob painting and that's dah dah dah.

R Have all the children got one of those?

P Yeah yeah they have and they were given as a present to the parents.

R I see

P And then the kids had made a card. It was really good so Z's friend came over and she showed her the book and they flicked through what she'd done and she's taken it to her dad's.

…

And she's going to show her grandparents. That is it I think.

5th February

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

…

R I'm wondering what Z has been doing since she started school (.) at home.

P Well she's been doing her homework basically.
R  Is that the pictionary?
P  Yes that's the pictionary and um.
R  Tell me what she's got to do in that.
P  You have to she brings home her book and it's got a letter in it and um she's to get pictures with just a minute ((talks to husband)) so she has a letter and she cuts out pictures of things that begin with that letter and then they are to write down the word and the first time. For the ays she didn't want to do it. She wanted me to do it and then for the bees she did it.
R  Oh good. Are they the only two she's done?
P  Yes. I wrote down the cees and she's been writing the cee words today.
R  Now when she comes home with that homeword to do do you have to remind her to take it out to do it? Or does she take it out?
P  I remind her.
R  You remind her and where is she doing it? Whereabouts in the house? In her bedroom? Or at the kitchen table?
P  At the kitchen table.
R  And you are more or less supervising that?
P  Yeah kind of. Something interesting happened today. E ((little sister)) wanted to watch the Wiggles on telly so that was on and I got out Z's book and I said oh okay you've got the pictures here and you've got words to write from the time she's been at her Dad's house and she hasn't written the words down or she hasn't and um I wrote the words down on a piece of paper and she said I don't want to do it. I don't want to do it. And I said just go on just do it and then it's done and she said I don't want to do it. I don't want to do it. And I just went on with something else and her book was just left sitting there with the words and she just came back and did it.
R  So it's not a matter that she can't do it is it?
P  Ummm
R  Is it a matter of her not wanting to do it.
P  It's a mixture. I think it's fuelled by the can't thing. She for example she will write the word but not the letter ay. I have to write the letter ay down for her. So she has this. She has always had this bit of a perfectionist thing attitude and
R  Do you think it is because she can't do a letter ay properly the way she is happy with it?
P  Yes. That's right. But she's got a paper the paper where I wrote the words down I'll keep it for you. She's just written (.) I showed how to do an ay the easiest way I thought which was to tell her just to write a cee and then just keep going up and down for the stem.
R  Mmm that's right yes
P  And so she's got a whole page of them but she still wouldn't do it. So I've done the ay umm in the words but she's got this whole page of ays.
R  Where she's been practising.
P  Yeah. So it's interesting. I'm interested because I haven't really had to push her but I have kind of set it up.
R  You've instigated it.
P  Yeah but she did like she went off and got her pencils this special set of pencils she was given for Christmas. And um (1.0) They're fighting. Umm yeah I set her up with it and so in her own time she kind of came to it. So I don't think it's that she doesn't want to do it. I think that when she's confident with her writing she'll be happy to do it.
R  Yes so it's a matter of confidence.
P  Yeah.
R  Okay so has she done anything else in the way of drawings or writings at home or is the homework taking enough time.
P No not that I can think of. She is quite tired after school so I haven't really pushed it and there hasn't been any reason to do it. I have kept a couple of things that she has written over the holidays. For you. I've got about three things.

R Yes. Oh good. Could I ask you to put in an envelope and put my name on the front and ask Z to give it to her teacher and she'll give it to me.

P The children are with me for the last half of the week. They are with their father the first half of the week. We've swapped over.

19th February

R Yes. Oh good. Could I ask you to put in an envelope and put my name on the front and ask Z to give it to her teacher and she'll give it to me.

P The children are with me for the last half of the week. They are with their father the first half of the week. We've swapped over.

R I got a lovely packet of information from Z today

P Ahhh okay. Ummm

R There's one here called dear Hayley (...) that says (...) it looks like your writing (...) happy birthday

P Yes yes

R And then she's written goggles glass girls kiss dear

P Yep okay now thank you for that. That was last Monday. It was Hayley ((girl's family name)) birthday and Z made the card and I wrote the words out for her but she wouldn't write them in the card so I wrote them and she wrote Z umm and on that same piece of paper I got her to do her Pictionary thing. Now I didn't realise but I've been making her write the words and ((name of teacher)) said not really to do that. But what I was doing was writing the words after we had found the pictures and um she's been copying them into her Pictionary and practising. Anything you see on there is her practising. And then she did an interesting thing. She wrote she said I know how to write is and she wrote is. And I said well if you can write is then you can write other words like kiss and I stuck a kay on one end and an ess on the other so that's how come that's come about.

R I see. And there are some gees?

P The gees yes the gees are because um she she wanted to practise basically that's just practising gees.

R Yes. I can see that there are one or two that aren't starting in the right place or are back to front.

P Yes. We do that all the time. We practise those um. Well whenever we do the Pictionary we end up having a piece of paper and that's why I've started to add I've added them because she practises on the paper first. And I didn't realise that I shouldn't have been getting her to write because ((teacher's name)) isn't getting them to write for a very good reason. And that is because she probably understands that kids like Z don't want to write until they feel confident enough.

R I see

P So um I kind of (...) I was really pushing for her to write these words down and um then I found out she didn't have to.

R Now every day at school the children are being given their little writing book and they are having some time to draw and write in their book. So that's just a free time when she models something and then they go off and attempt some writing.

P Right
I'm aware of that. Now there's another picture here of two very happy little girls with J ((name)) written on it.

Oh that was from ages ago. If that hasn't got a date on it you can date that about October last year. That was um I think I may have told you that I was unhappy with ((name of preschool teacher)) as a teacher last year. You hadn't mentioned it no.

Right well I was considering pulling Z out (.) and um I mentioned it to Z after great thought I had decided to and I mentioned it to her because I wanted to know what she thought and she the first thing she did was go and draw a picture and write J on it and I rethought what I was doing after that.

Do you want to sort of tell me why you were unhappy?

Oh well if you want to know.

It would be useful for me if you don't mind.

Oh yes that's fine. I don't think J even likes her job I don't think she particularly relates to children. Um whenever (.) I started to do roster there quite a lot because I wasn't happy with. There was no sense of freedom and fun and life is to be walking around with a smile on your face.

and I think that her um her reasoning which was that she was getting the kids ready for school which I could relate to I could understand that but I didn't think that that needed to be for the whole year. I think that that's fair enough if she wants to adopt a school type program at near the end of the year. But she was all the way from the start of the year she was talking about how she was preparing them for school and I thought that she created a structure that was so um overwhelming that it was no fun and it um I think it exempted her from just relaxing and having fun with the kids.

But (.) Z really liked her and that was something that I really had to respect. And I and I put put put Z there because of the fact that I knew the liaising between the preschool and the school was very good and that J ((DP)) comes down there and Z knew teachers already and from. And I am so pleased with that aspect of it. I'm very pleased Z's had a breeze going in. It's been a breeze for her. And I'm sure I'm absolutely convinced it's because of the excursions to the school and the fact that J ((DP)) knows her and other teachers know her and I that

Yes and she's come and waved to me when she's seen me out in the playground and had a little talk.

Yes I and that's a confidence that I just wouldn't have expected of her.

When I've seen her she's been walking around and looking very confident in the playground.

Yeah I think J ((DP)) is marvellous. I think that I mean I do think that it's got a lot to do with J that idea.

Now I've got another sheet of paper in front of me and it's dated the fourteenth of the second and it's got Zena cat dog red zoo book mum I see and this looks like words she has been learning at school. Is this correct?

Yes. The I see and the red she has learnt at school. She was showing me how she knew them.

And it looks like she has drawn red flowers. Well flowers that aren't coloured in that could be the red.

Can you tell me the date again.

Fourteenth so that's last Saturday.

Actually that was. We went to J's house for dinner.

Yes and the two girls sat down and wrote heaps of words.
R Did they. Well I hope J's kept some for me. I actually tried to ring them before I rang you and noone was home. I think they may have been doing late night shopping.

P Well I know that N ((J's mother)) has been collecting pieces of paper and dating them so and she showed me and asked me if this was the right thing to do and I said fine.

R Thanks A. That's great. And I've got another lovely piece here that's dated the 11th of the second ninety-eight and it's got lots of letters ays and bees and cees and it's got cactus camera crab in it might be your writing and it's got dunnart or dunn art or however you say that animal ((laughs))

P Yes I don't know how to say it either ((laughs)) that was when she was doing cees and dees

R Yes

P um I wrote those words out and she she that was when I she told me um she was scared of ays. She laughed as she said it but she's got a real thing about ays she. And in fact she gets J to write her ays for her at school and I said I got cross with her about that.

R oh I see.

P And I said don't do that. You do your own work

R Uhuh

P That's all I didn't get angry I just said that much because I can't believe that she's getting somebody to do her work. I mean it's not really her work and actually I'm maybe you can help me. I wondered whether I should worry about it or whether she'll work it out and then she'll just be happy to do it. But we did some ays tonight on a piece of paper.

R And was that your instigation?

P Umm no no my instigation no. Like we got out her reader and um

R Yes

P Oh a thrilling thing is that I can actually tell that she is reading the word see in the readers and also I can tell she is reading a. Like now I can see the point of the readers. The repet repet repetition is in the words like see and a and I and so she is picking that up. Umm she was showing this reader and she was reading it to me at the same time. And at the end of it there were two words. They were ring ring. That's because this monster has eaten a telephone. And she said those words but they are not the same they are different and I said no they are the same. Because the gee is written much bigger on one of them. And she said and there's an igh. And I said oh that's an exclamation mark. And so I I I I put it in a sentence which was a really silly one and I said imagine if you poked your bottom at me I would say Z! and I would put an exclamation mark. And I wrote this down on a piece of paper and then I punctuated like I did all the correct punctuation for her to see the exclamation mark and after that she got hold of the piece of paper and started writing ays. So that's why we've got more ays today. Yeah yeah. She is prepared to. Actually she started writing Z and she gets to the ay and she usually does a capital and I said no no do a small one. Do a small one. And she said oh oh and she started doing ays.

R Of course. Is she having any trouble with the letter cee?

P No

R because the letter ay is part of the letter cee. She just has to keep it going straight up and down again. They both have the flat top.

P She does gees okay and I have said to her that a gee is just an ay with a tail. Umm but for some reason with the tail she sees with. I've told her too that I know what her problem is. She starts she starts. If you were to put a line directly down the middle of a letter she starts on that line instead of over to the right.
Uhuh. So the flat top is what she's missing.
Yes yes. and I've pointed that out to her.

And I've got a wonderful card here that I'm amazed I was given with pompoms on it
I sneaked that in
and glitter.
Well that was done months and months ago over the holidays.
It's got the twelfth month ninety-seven. And she's written her name there with a capital A and she's written cat starting right to left instead of left to right and it's got a capital A in the middle of it too.
Yes I thought you might like to see that. That came about because a friend gave them a present with lots of different things and I remember you ringing me and I said no they haven't been doing any writing they've been making things. And anyway cards were also in this present.
I remember that
Well yes I. Z made that all by herself without me instigating. And it sat up here on the bench for about a month and then I just put it aside because I thought you might be interested.
Yes that's an individual piece of work that she has created independently.
Yes and she's really into doing double lines on her letters
Yes I can see that almost the colouring in type
Yes and the other thing she does and I'm finding this really interesting is that she does an eye with a dot on the top that is a circle
Instead of a dot
Now I have never told her to do that and I don't think her father does it either and I don't even want to ask her about it because it might draw attention to it perhaps
yes because I know the teacher may tell her not to do it because I think it's kind of quirky. Like you know as you grow older you develop your own (.) you add your own flourish to the way you write and I figured a teacher may tell her not to do it but I decided not to draw attention to it. But I thought it was quite interesting.

Yes and I've just remembered some other things.
Yes good.
She was given an alphabet book ages ago with a butterfly on it and she's reading that avidly and she keeps asking me to read me words. And the other thing she's doing is when we read books she keeps going through and pointing to the words she knows like see and is and that's and I'm noticing now that her confidence in all this it's like it's making sense and they are really keen to lie in bed and um and um go through this book. And the other thing is I've started reading Charlotte's Web to them and they just love it.
Does she. I've read it to Grade 3 children but I've never read it to Grade 1 children before.
I don't know whether I'm jumping the gun but I just mean I really I suppose all I can do is pass on a love of literature that I really value and and I'm reading it very slowly as well and I've asked her to tell me if there's words in this that she wants to know what they mean to ask me. And she's started doing that in other books. She asked me what the word amuse meant which is a good word. She can use that. So I don't know if I'm jumping the gun or not.
I think your child's response is the answer.
And she sat there and wanted me to read more. I read two chapters and she wanted me to read more. Yeah so I'm really enjoying all this stuff happening.
R: Yea it's a very quick development time.
P: Yes it is. Two weeks ago she was bringing those readers home and she was not wanting to read them and saying I can't read them and I was forcing her. I was sitting her down and saying come on now let's have a look at them and I was just reading them and just pointing to the words and then putting them away so we were not making a deal about it but now she gets it out so.
R: So she's the initiator
P: Yes. That's right and I mean I have kind of stuck with it in those first weeks and they definitely learn (.) they pick up what they're trying what is happening. I mean I think she could probably well I don't know if she could articulate but she must be aware that she is learning to read. The other thing I did tonight. We've got this book called the book of laughter. It's a book that. The School for Laughter and it's a book that she was given at her preschool two years ago and she always says oh I wish I went to that school because it's all about this boy who's lost his laugh and he has to find it again. And at the end of the story I asked her to tell me what the story. What was the story like what was it about and she told me like really in she paraphrased it the way that I wanted her to and I haven't known her to be able to do that before. She usually just kind of goes oh I don't know or I ohhh I don't want to do that or look at that mum. She distracts me. But this time she actually after we finished the book she said it's about a boy who lives and goes to a school and I prompted her a few times and um and she finished it off. I think that was good because I felt I was lacking in that area when I was at school. Not often sort of to see the big picture. Like if you have a book what is this book about. I think I was able to miss that kind of thing.
R: She sounds like she's coming along just nicely
P: Well I'm sure they all are.
R: Well we hope they are. But of course they all learn at different rates. Different times through the year.
P: Yes it's a bit like growing physically isn't it. They just have spurts and then they flatten. I know that from playing the guitar. I have spurts and then I don't just learn anything for a while.

7th March

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R: How is she getting on?
P: Really well. Since I last spoke to you
R: Mmmm
P: I think I probably (.) I may have alluded rather than actually said (.) that um I did I told you there was a moment when with the reading she wasn't actually into the readers because she couldn't read them.
R: Yes
P: But now she fully understands what she's doing and that the repetitious words are what she's learning and the other words you sort of glean from the picture. And so now she loves to read them and she loves to go through them and then read them herself. I see I see a um a similarity in her um striving for perfection like me which is which is um when she makes a mistake half way through the book she wants to stop and start again and I know how hindering this is. How silly really it is but she's like that and she does that she'll just stop reading so she's. But I think it's hard at this age to enforce the idea. I mean you're trying to teach the child
to read but you're also trying to teach the child in other contexts that reading is a valuable and useful thing to do but unfortunately the reader can't do that in my opinion. The reader only teaches you how to read so she'll stop midway and start again. Because she's not gleaning information.

R  uhuh
P  Because if she was gleaning information she wouldn't need to do that.
R  So what you're saying to me is that when she realises that she's not comprehending (.) she wants to stop and go back.
P  Yes
R  Which is a very good strategy.
P  Yeah right
P  Which means she's using skills to monitor herself.
R  What about her writing? Is she doing any at home? Last time you said she's reluctant to write some letters in her Pictionary or when she's doing something with writing because she thinks she can't write those letters properly.
P  Yep
R  How is she going in that area?
P  Well the ay was the particular one and she was doing an upper case ay So now she is confidently doing ays. Lower case ays.
R  So what is she writing at home?
P  Umm. She hasn't actually written a lot.
R  Uuhh.
P  We're doing the Pictionary. She's not doing anything at her Dad's to my knowledge so.
R  Did you say she's not.
P  No. So when she comes here I say we'll do all the catchups. We spend as soon as she gets here we have about four letters to catch up on which we're doing but I'm doing the writing. Because when I found out from Mrs B that it's not necessary for the children to write them. Since then I have been doing it. No to be honest no I haven't seen her doing any writing. There hasn't been a birthday party or there hasn't been anything concrete for me to enforce kind of writing.
R  Now when she's doing her Pictionary. How many times a week do you think she. I mean she's doing about four letters a week would that be on average about what it is? One a night?
P  Monday Tuesday Wednesday she gets.
R  So three a week. Approximately.
P  Yes. So she's at her Dad's for the weekend and we haven't got around to it like tonight. When I went over to N's (J's mother) house tonight. So Friday she hasn't done it. So it's on my mind that she won't do it. It might be able to do some with her tomorrow morning. Umm she won't do it. If she doesn't do it then it would be Friday. It would be Monday. And yeah it's only two. Not four. I'm exaggerating.
R  When she gets back from her Dad's does she come to you and say I've got this homework to do or do you have a look through her book and say hey come on we'd better do this.
P  Yeah I do that and in fact what I've tried to do is not make a big deal about it so she can think to herself I'm at my Dad's and so if it doesn't get done it doesn't get done and I can do it with Mum. Because I don't I have tried to say to him that it is important that he does this with her but he's not doing it. And I go to mediation with him and our relationship is very strained and I figure that if is Z's exposed to my work ethic and D's ((new husband)) work ethic then it is an exposure and all I can and also because I pick her up at the ferry on Monday and Wednesday morning and I read her reader with her.
R So she's not doing that with her dad either?
P No. But I think I always have a book too. I turn up at the ferry with a book so they drive up and I'm reading a book. So you read books when you're waiting for things.

R Uhh

R So what time do you pick her up at the ferry?
P I go down there I catch an eight about a ten past eight ferry. I go across and her Dad brings her to that ferry and at twenty past we catch it across and we're usually at school at about ten to nine. Five to nine. So we usually get there just when the kids are starting to sit down. And I've explained this to ((name of teacher)) so she knows why we are. We're never actually really late but we're just right on.

R Yes. The bell goes at a quarter to but school officially starts at nine o'clock.
P And we never make the quarter to. And if the ferry is a little bit late we're a little bit. They're all sitting down. But like I've said I've explained all this to ((name of teacher)). She's fine. I think she just appreciated knowing.

R Yes. So that's Monday, Tuesday Wednesday and then Thursday Friday she's with you.
P Yes and then we always read the reader usually when we get home. And like tonight she read her reader to D at the dinner table and he really nicely turned it around and said as a joke What you? You read me a story? And she said yes and she got her reader and she read it to him and he helped her but the emphasis was very much on she read him a story.

R That's lovely

R So is she starting to actually sound out the words she doesn't know? Or to recognise the ones she's been introduced?
P Yes. I'm seeing a definite decoding of those words. And she's looking at the picture. There was one we got the other day where the character was looking in the mirror and the mirror was showing a different kind of face. And she looked at the face and then at the word.

R So they don't support the text as well as they could.
P No. And that was letting her down.

R So she's using the picture cues

P Yeah so that became obvious. It's always obvious. But with that one I saw the delay because the picture wasn't quite as clear as some of the other. The other. The pictures that depict animals they just look at them and know straight away. This is an elephant. This is a dah dah dah da. This is a (.). This one was a little bit more difficult. You could see that she was then forced down to the word and her attentiveness was coming through.

R So she wasn't quite as confident.
P No. That's right you see that with her. As soon as there's a little bit of doubt. She's like me. I see this in me this confidence just suddenly plummets. Whereas history would suggest that I would probably get it
right but I don't have the confidence. I hope she's not going to be like that.

R Yes.

P The other thing I'm trying to do is I'm noticing when she speaks that she's not speaking out tees in words like she's not saying plenty she's saying plenny. So I've started to say that word is plenty. It's got a tee in it. If you don't say that tee you won't know it's there.

R Yes that's right.

P I mean I've been brought up knowing to say that and I know that lots of people don't know that and they've been brought up just to say plenny or that.

R Dropping endings

P yes dropping endings and dropping tees out of words and so I'm trying to make her see in a fairly unpressured way that that is an important thing. So that the way you say words you pronounce letters. And obviously it's not all letters but it does help. I mean I've never had a problem with spelling so I guess I'm a bit aware of the strategies that make spelling easier. But as I said there's not been a great deal of writing.

R Not to worry. In fact I'm finding that across all of them. This week especially. In fact everybody has said they're not doing much. They're coming home tired and doing the Pictionary and that's about it.

P Yes and I'm even drawing the pictures in the Pictionary. I am finding with the Pictionary that that is very much a social thing and we'll be sitting in the car and suddenly it might be me but it often might be Z will say. Like for example we have because we've had experiences with letters that are hard to find words for. In fact last week we resorted to the computer. The CD Rom full of pictures and got all these kay words on the computer. Pictures of koalas and kangaroos and kiwi fruit. And when we come to another letter like pee we have already cut out our pees.

R So you're planning ahead.

P Yes yes and I've explained to her that with ((ex-husband's name)) and everything it's a lot easier. We know what's coming. And at first I said to Z let's go ahead and stick them in and she said oh no you can't do that. She's very much of a rule follower.

R So tell me what letter are they up to?

P oh. And oh is really hard. And orange is already in there. So we have to think of oh words.

R Well you'll have to find an ostrich or an olive.

P Oh thank you. Well I can draw these things.

R Okay I'll let you go.

P The other thing is we're reading Charlotte's Web. We're reading a chapter a night. The go off to their Dad's and when they get back I've been saying what are we up to? Let's remember what we're up to before we read on and Z is telling me

R So she's doing it verbally like a verbal recount or retell.

P Yes. And I am amazed. I really am amazed.

R So that's after several days away she is recalling.

P Yes yes. She recalled that it was Wilbur who had gotten out and she recalled that it was Mrs Zuckerman who had seen him. And that was all she recalled and I filled it in for her. And the other thing is that she's saying and we all know that Charlotte is a character and we're all very excited because we're about to find her. And the other thing is that she's getting to call them characters.

R Would she have got that from school?

P I can't believe it. I can't believe that I would have known the meaning of that word until I got to secondary school probably. So the understanding of a text. I can't believe what kids are knowing now. When I went through
Teachers Training and taught it was new to me the idea of a text having a specific purpose and being called a procedural text or a recount or you know. And this was new to me but it made perfect sense so to be seeing it and listening to a five year old say the word character is I mean it just makes you realise what kids are capable of if they are given that respect.

13th March

R = Researcher
P = Parent (mother)

R I saw Z today in the classroom. She came and wrote a story on the computer. Did she tell you about it?
P Well no but ((teacher)) told me and she said she would photocopy it and give me a copy tomorrow.
R She only wanted to do one sentence but she talked and said heaps before she wrote it which was really good. ((Teacher)) was really pleased. She wrote about her grandma getting a new puppy.
P Ohh. She's so pleased about that.
R She was sitting next to J at the computer and J was to be the computer tutor. And it worked rather well because if Z couldn't find the key then J was good then she was pointing to it but not doing it for her.
P Oh that's great.
R And she was talking about something she does at home on the computer but she hasn't done it for a while.
P Colouring in
R Yes that's right colouring in.
P There's a net page that I get for the kids and they pick a picture and then it's really just a computer coordination skill really
R Using the mouse?
P Yes and they just click on different crayons to choose the colours.
R That's a bit like a couple of the programs they've got at school. There's one called Red Rhino and the librarian picked it up and that's exactly the same. It's got a story they listen to first and then they colour the pictures. Now tell me what's she been doing at home?
P Well one thing that sticks in my mind was um at the end of last week she noticed in the South West News we were on the page of the crossword and I told her what a crossword was and she had seen someone at her Dad's house I think doing one and um I told her about it and then I said I'll show you let's have a go. And I got it and in the South West News they have two sets of clues one for um learners or young people or something. I'm not sure what it's called. And the other for other people. It's not advanced it's kind of easy and average I suppose. So I read the clues and I told her things like um one was a keyboard instrument that ends in oh. And so she would say piano. And um she did the whole thing. Except for about two questions she did the whole thing.
R And you were writing the words in for her?
P I was writing the words in for her yes. So she got to see the process and she was so excited about it and um so I did what because I used to do a lot of crosswords. I used to do cryptics and I haven't done them for years so I was marking off the num the clue as I did it. This was not a cryptic. And and so she could see what clues hadn't been done. And she could see the number and she was saying what about number eight. So um yeah that was really interesting.
R That was a great thing to do with her.
P Yeah well I mean she saw it. I would never think of something like that. And then I went on to tell her that when I was in primary school when I was in Grade six I used to make crosswords for the other kids because I always a fast finisher and that was my kind of activity to do when I was finished something. Invent crosswords.

R There are even crossword making programs that you can get to put on your computer. One is called Crossword Wizard.

P At this stage we haven’t got any software that’s educational because I have found so much on the net um and I haven’t ventured into it yet.

R What else has she done on the net?

P On the net? nothing. Just the colouring. I have set her up with stories before and I’ve also gone into things like there’s a a website that is all about frogs and we’ve had a look at that and there was another one I can’t remember.

R I don’t suppose you remember the address of the one about frogs?

P Yes I’ve got that bookmarked.

R Have you?

P I can give you um

R The frog one and the colouring one would be really useful to me ... 

P The other one that I did too. I did one quite recently with her was um the Clifton Hill Primary school has a site on the net and I got that and we had a look at it but gosh for the life of me I can’t remember what’s on it.

R It’s home page was it?

P Basically she wasn’t ready for it because she couldn’t read anything yet. So she’s at that kind of funny stage where they really need direction to get into the site. Which is fine. But there was this other site this kid’s site with pictures that you clicked on and it all went around in circles so you couldn’t get off and on to an um a tangent to a site you’d never seen before. There was no way out. I mean I told her to click on the four sections. A house it was. A picture of a house and I guess the idea was a bit of a memory thing. The top right might go to a story. Bottom right might go to a picture. Bottom left would go to somewhere else. Top left would go somewhere else. And they would all have this picture in the corner so there was a link up between all of them. And the idea was a bit like one of those finger folded piece of papers where you have a colour and there’s something underneath it. A bit like that. So top right is always going to be a story. A bit of a memory thing.

R That’s an interesting site too.

P Well whatever sites I find if I think they are of value I’ll let you know. And we’ve been doing our Pictionary.

R You must be nearly finished are you? What are you up too?

P Tee

R How is she going? Does she remember them?

P Yes and when we wait for the ferry not only do we read the book but we often go through the Pictionary and um I realised what an interesting thing it can be because I got off the computer. I also use. When we’re stuck I go to the computer for animals and um I get because we’ve got Corel draw and so I can get this clip art and I can get pictures of animals any size and so I get pictures of animals in the size that’s appropriate and I print them out. So we have a combination of pictures cut out of magazines, drawn pictures, and these clip art things. And I chose sloth because I like sloths. They’re kind of interesting and because they kind of hang around the place is kind of nice. And she’d never heard of a sloth and I told her about it and then tonight we were reading a story and there’s a sloth in it. So there’s this double kind of banger thing for learning about a sloth. So
she said I know I'm not supposed to Mum but I really want to write this word in my Pictionary. So she wrote it.

R How lovely now she's begging you to write. That's a change a round isn't it.

P Yeah yeah. And the other thing is today she was over at Tessa's place who lives across the road and is in Grade two.

R Uuhh

P And I didn't see what they are writing but they were downstairs writing and when they came up Tess said Oh we haven't quite finished writing and I said Oh have you been writing? And she said yes we've just started. So um I don't know what they were doing.

R You didn't get to see the finished product?

P No but Tess came over here about a week ago and they had set up a sort of Olympic Games kind of thing the three of them E ((little sister)) included. And Tess had written freestyle (.) breaststroke (.) and another word that neither D or I could decipher and she had written those words phonetically and we were astounded at how good it was. For freestyle she had left the eee off and in breaststroke she had left the ay out and the ee off the end but I think that was (.)

R That was pretty good wasn't it

P Yeah so that was Z being exposed to that kind of writing. And Z actually brought that writing out and said what are these words? So I explained to her. I told her the words and then I said but there's an eee that should be there. I don't know if that is really necessary the words are so long. I wouldn't say anything to Tess but I was wondering if it was worth it telling Z it didn't have an eee on it.

R Mmm so she's had a busy week.

P I can't really think of anything else. Oh we're still getting on with Charlotte's Web and Charlotte's Web is quite word specific with some pig and terrific we're up to now

R Oh yes

P And you know she goes through the spelling of the words and I show the kids the pictures and the words are in the web so

R Yes

P Wilbur often says What does that mean? And that's about it. I'm trying to get around to go to J's house and do some tutoring with R ((J's sister)). Because her father is away and he usually helps her with her homework um they want someone to look at it. N ((R's mother)) said that she was concerned that she couldn't read the homework properly. 

P And I did go to the library last week and we've got a whole collection of new books. And they really get into ceeedes with songs and words on them talking and stuff too. That's more the picture isn't it. I realise now how important the stories at bedtime are because the readers are not scintillating stories because it's very hard to write scintillating stories doing what it's supposed to be doing which is word recognition and that picture that picture association so the combination of a reader and a good story every day is vital isn't it because then the full understanding of reading comes through and the love of reading is reinforced.
2\textsuperscript{nd} April

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R What have you been up to?
P We've finished Charlotte's Web.
R You've finished it. Oh good.
P I was surprised the kids didn't get. Even though they definitely followed
the story they didn't get so distraught as I did when I first read it. So I
don't know death doesn't seem to faze them but yeah we finished that and
Z told me very proudly that she remembers the start.
R Good. good.
P And Z had a go at another crossword but I didn't continue it because I
can't remember the word but I knew there was one word that she wasn't
going to get. Whereas the one that we did before she just was getting
most of them. Must have been a fraction easier. So I kind of steered her
away from it. Cause I didn't feel like trying to explain it. I can't remember
the word but it was big enough for me to think that it was not worth
continuing which was probably a bit slack. And she's written her name a
few times on things because we now keep the pencils and things in the
sitting room and they know to get them out and they do writing and
colouring in on the floor.
R Has she been doing any Easter things?
P Not at home no no. Um there's not really. Not really any writing um I
can't think of anything out of the ordinary except for our usual kind of
going through the reader and everything every day before school when I
wait for the ferry and when she's at home we go through it at night. I
remember actually you know those sight words that they were doing for
their spelling?
R The spellathon?
P Yeah well I was going through them with her the other day and she told
me that Mrs R ((DP)) tested her and she got them all right or may be there
was one that she had to go to back to or something and I said That's just
fantastic. You know that's because we looked at them every day. So just
to get I just wanted her to kind of get an understanding of the value of
doing a little bit each day.
R She must have been very pleased with her result if she came home and
told you about it.
P Yeah I think so. Umm she kind of said it in passing that Mrs R had
listened to the sight words.
R And has she been using any of those words when she's been writing in
the living room?
P No. But she always points them out in books. She was doing a lot with
the reader tonight. The reader was one sun two shoes three trees and
she commenting on how they sounded and looked the same. She might
have been kind of unconsciously articulating. Um and I think that's about
it really.

P I think she's loving school. And I can tell by the way she points to words
in a book that we're reading that she's um really bringing home what she's
learning. But nothing else really.

... Oh I know one thing. We were over at J's house. We went over there for
dinner on Wednesday night and they made both J and Z made little bags
and wrote their names on them.
R Bags as in shoulder bags?
No as in little paper bags and they put a few stars in them that J had given them and then they both wrote their names.

14th May

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R Was that Z I was speaking to?
P Yes
R How is Z?
P Good. She's doing lots of reading and writing.

R Was that Z I was speaking to?
P Yes
R How is Z?
P Good. She's doing lots of reading and writing.

P She often she says thing oh we've got a book a prereading book and today we were doing sh sounds and she said I said ship in class for sh.
R So she's contributing
P Want to know what she's been doing?
R yes please

P She's done a bit of writing. She wrote both she and E wrote a letter to my brother who sent them both dresses for their birthdays and um Z's letter she basically wrote it and she asked me how to spell words and I spelled them out.
R And she wrote them down?
P Yes and she wrote them yeah
R So she's got over the problem of not wanting to write some of the letters that she felt she couldn't write properly?
P Yeah absolutely it was the ay. She started off being scared off ays. But now she's fine. The only thing I had to explain to her was punctuation in that letter and the layout of the letter. How you write dear Tom and then a comma and go to the next line and that sort of thing. But she compiled the whole letter. Um I'll ask him to keep the letter for you if you like.
R That would be great
P And she addressed it as well. I ruled lines and she addressed it. Umm she also wrote. What was in the letter? Thank you for the dress. Thank you for the bangles. Umm yeah it was interesting because I didn't correct her in the way she actually wrote it.
R So she was sounding out the words like thank?
P No she would say how do you spell bangle? and I would say be ay en gee el ee.
R Oh I see.
P And she would write them and I would say letter write letter write like that.
R So when was the letter written?
P About ten days ago.
R And when she wrote the letter did you say Come on Z you'd better write a thank you letter because your uncle sent you the dress? Did you instigate it?
P Yes I did. And my mother had given her little cards and envelopes for writing letters.
R What a good gift. So she got to christen them.
P Yes and she gave E one so E could do it too and E got to write in her own way and draw a picture. Uhh another thing that springs to mind is that she we went out and she wrote a note again at my instigation and we left it on the door for the girl who lives across the road. And I told her what to
write which was Tess we have gone to somewhere and we will be back at one thirty and Tess took that note. Oh and another thing is that I gave her junior Scrabble and we’ve played that a lot.

R Well that’s a really good way to get them looking at words.

P Yes well she wants to play Scrabble sometimes and it’s just well I think some adults have trouble with it. And we also have tried Rainbow Scrabble. It’s Junior Scrabble on one side and on the other side it’s Rainbow Scrabble. It’s a lot similar a lot more like the normal Scrabble game but the scoring is much simpler. Much easier. And she spotted using her letters um in that game you don’t hide letters so I could help her. She could see words like no she would see the letters and I was getting her to move them around and look for words. She came up with words like no and she spotted the cue and the you and the and she wanted to make queen. um yeah. I mainly came up with the words. And In made sure that the words I came up with were three and four letter words. So it was more of a what do you say? More of a role playing exercise because I said do it like this and played it so that next time. Yeah and she had worked out the scoring which I thought was quite clever so um I thought she can only pick one or two things at a time.

R Well she’s done quite well hasn’t she

P Yes and what else? We still get the reading book that we go through and we still do the usual reading.

R The prereading book is that something you’ve bought from a newsagent?

P Yes

R And has it got little activities for her to do in it?

P Yeah

R And is it mostly phonics?

P Yes it’s all phonics and so they have to work out the letter or the sound that is made. She hasn’t done any middle of the words but there are some. She’s only done the front of the words.

R And is that what we call cvc words like three letter words or four letter words?

P No that’s not the focus. There are words like Indian.

R So it’s just focusing on the initial sound?

P It’s very much that and they choose symbols and representations that are very well known. So you get something like Indian it’s a bit stereotyped. It’s a bit outdated. What else? (3.0) I gave her a lined exercise book with wire down the side and with Barbie on the front. And she just started writing in that like a journal. So she started writing Today I got lots of presents for my birthday.

…

P And we also have um she’s started to do something now. We have we’ve just moved all our pens and pencils into a big tupperware container and they go into a cupboard in the sitting room and so there’s paper and so that’s something they can get at any time and then put it away. They don’t ask me where it is. They just go and get it out.

R When they want it

P Yeah and that’s been that’s been a significant improvement because before they would bring it from the bedroom and they really you know they’re all social creatures.

R They want to do it where there’s company.

P Yeah yeah

R And A how much of the time when when um Z’s actually writing that you find it’s something that’s self initiated on her part and how much of the writing you see at home do you instigate?
I'd say (.) ((child speaks in background)) Excuse me for a moment. ((talks to child))

Yeah sure

Um oh look this is very rough but I'd say forty percent. If I think about the um writing lately it's um. I mean that book she just started writing in that.

And when she was writing did she look to you for assistance?

No no

So not like when she was writing the letter. This was just all her own work was it?=

Yes yes. And she's written lost instead of lots and she's not picked it up and nobody's picked it up.

So it's just hers. So when you said it's forty percent is that forty percent from you and sixty percent from her? or the other way round?

I think it's the other way round

So sixty percent from you. That's an improvement isn't it from the past?

Yeah it is. Greatly.

I've been trying to think back to when we started. She was almost a reluctant writer.

Yeah. It was an effort. A big effort for her. Now as she's becoming much more confident. She does things like lies in bed and um um does an ay with her finger in the air.

Reminding herself how to do it.

With the ay yeah because it was a bit of an issue. Yeah I think about forty percent is fair.

Mmm and what about the use of the computer at home? Does she get any opportunity to compose on the computer?

No. I haven't I haven't um.

Haven't encouraged that?

No I haven't actually. I used to encourage their using the internet more as a computer just a general computer skill thing.

And she was going to sites like the (1.0) oh what did you tell me Z was going to.

It's a it's a colouring in site

Oh that's right.

But we we have a connection with Griffith Uni and it's impossible to get on so that's really stopped now.

And that's a real shame because I did used to compose email with the kids around.

Yes

And I had done a little bit with Z where I was transcribing for her. But that's all stopped. And then our computer in the last week has had a virus and we haven't been able to get into it at all. But that's just been fixed. Yeah I can't think of anything. Birthday is always

A good opportunity isn't it

I know I know another thing. We forgot to invite Tess to our birthday so again with my instigation she wrote Tess an invitation and I wrote it for her on a piece of paper and she copied it. I guess I'm introducing her to more formal things the invitation and the thank you letters and stuff. Yeah I think that's about all. We still do a lot of reading books and talking about them and stuff. I thought that the exercise they had to do with Mrs B to bring their favourite book and talk about it was just wonderful.

What did she take?

She took a book from her Dad's. It is an Alison Lester book that I actually gave her a couple of years ago.

It's not the beach one is it?

It's the grandma one. Do you know it?
R  No.  ...
P  And another week she took another book also from her Dad's. A fairy book.
R  Have you been reading another epic saga to the children? You were reading Charlotte's Web at one stage.
P  Yeah we finished that. Ahh I started reading Alice in Wonderland but I stopped that. It's just not a child's book.
R  Uuhh. Not yet anyway. They're a bit young.
P  That's right. Maybe fourteen fifteen year olds. It's not. I mean. it's just so. The poetry is just so old. Just word plays. So I stopped and I haven't started again. Um I had we had someone over for dinner last night (...) the other night whose boy Gabriel is in Z's class and um we lent them Charlotte's Web. So I kind of tried to make it this introduce Z to the idea that you share reading experiences like that. And I'm going to ask them if we can borrow their C S Lewis books because I think. They've read them and um Gabriel loved them and I think if Z and Eva can enjoy Charlotte's Web I think they'll be okay with the C S Lewis books.
...
4th June

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R  You've been reading them a story I hear.
P  Yes I've been reading The Magician's Nephew.
R  One of the Narnia Tales
P  They seem to show interest and make comments which which makes me feel that they are following it.
R  It's really quite sophisticated for little ones isn't it
P  Yes think it's probably a bit too much. Every now and then they use a word like um. I can't remember I've never seen this word before but it is a word for a carriage a horse and carriage um yes and
R  It's not a phaeton?
P  No. and I can't even think what it is. But I've used this word a couple of times and every time I get to this word I kept thinking I should just use coach. But then Z made a comment about what someone was wearing in a picture and she said or the the um and about this boy and she knew he was the coach driver and she used the word coach and I was astounded because she had picked up on this word and obviously translated it like we do.
R  Yes yes she's used the word coach to replace it.
P  Now Z has been writing a lot. I've been keeping stuff things like if we're writing a shopping list she will want to add some words and she will ask how they are spelt. And she wrote a story on the computer.
R  At home or at school?
P  And she did a lovely drawing to go with it.
R  What did she use to do the drawing? Did she use Paint ((software program)) or did she draw it when you'd printed it out?
P  We printed it out and she um and she did it with pencil. And she took that and showed M R ((teacher)) that she'd written. It was quite interesting. She'd written that she'd had a wonderful day playing with her friend Tess and that she was going to watch her favourite TV program you know that dare one. Who dare's wins.
R  Oh yes
And she finished it but Who Dares Wins wasn't on. It's gone off. But it was kind of funny that she wrote that. And also I've given her this folder to keep stuff because I have a folder with all my stuff in it and um with a bit of writing with stuff that I write. So we organised a folder for her and she can use the hole punch and put stuff in there.

And has she put stuff in it?

no not yet but the story that I just told you about will go in there.

And she did a funny thing and this isn't literacy stuff but she got out her preschool folder. I think it was around the time when they went on an excursion to the preschool and she was reading the words. You know how it's got painting and collage and J ((preschool teacher)) has written the technique and she got all the pictures off the wall and she stuck them in the book. So she's going through this organising stage. She's like organising her life I suppose. And that's why I gave her the folder as well. If she wants to compartmentalise her life life she'll give her something to go on with.

So what else has she been up to?

Oh I can't think. Oh yes she does things like looks at jars of things and food boxes and picks out words that she knows. She also does things like she was looking at the butter and she said What does de ee ve oh en de ay el ee spell? So she's constantly onto it.

Yes. And did she work it out or did you tell her?

She spelled it out and I told her it was Devondale. By the way with the computer story that started off when Tess came over and it was her idea to go and do something on the computer and then when Tess went home Z went on to do her kind of thing.
12th November

R = Researcher
P1 = Mother
P2 = Father
K = Child (participant)

R Can I talk to you about K?
P1 Ah yes? Just a moment ((speaks in Japanese to K))
K Hello
R Hello is that you K?
K Yes
R How are you?
K Good
R That’s good. Have you been doing some writing at home?
K What?
R Have you been doing some writing at home?
K No
R Have you been drawing some pictures? (4.0)
K Yeah. ((heavy breathing)) I finished um (2.0) I finished (1.0) a little bit
R A little bit
K Yeah
R Okay darling can I speak to mummy now? ((K talks in Japanese))
P2 Hello

R Mr S has K been doing any writing or drawing this week?
P2 Writing. Yes a couple of pictures
R Can you tell me what they were about?
P2 Ahhh I think about like a doll and (travestigh india cartoon) and also about the landscape, flowers and birds and suns and sometimes she wrote down the character. Japanese and English.
R Can you keep that picture for me?
P2 Oh it’s all right
R Is it possible for you to put it away so I can have it?
P2 Uhuh
R Has K been doing any other writing this week
P2 Just a moment ((speaks to daughter in Japanese)) sorry?
R Has she been doing any other writing this week. (3.0) Like writing any letters or shopping lists?
P2 No letters. No shopping lists.
R Has she been talking about writing with you or with your wife?
P2 Sometimes
R What sort of things does she talk about?
P2 Like the uhh. She wants to look and show her picture by me or by wife and after she finishes to write pictures or letters always asks to us about please Dad look. Look to this. This is something or something. Or something like that.
R And she tells you what it is?
P2 Yes ahh sometimes if the like the aah captions or main character or she’s a Barbie. She’s a song or a bird or a cloud. etcetera.
R uhuh. Mr S do you have a computer at home?
P2 Ahhh no I haven’t. Just in my office.
So K doesn't play on a computer at home
Yes
what? At home?
yes (3.0)
And she likes to watch television?
Ah yes
What sort of programs does she watch?
Every kind of these program
Children's programs?
Ah yes but not so many children program in the evening. And also in morning during breakfast we just put on TV. Also I just expect aah to hear the news but ahhh so it's uh I mean about ahh. Also she likes to watching the TV as a cartoon or children's program but not only the kid's program or like a ( ) documentary or healthing.
And she watches this too?
Sixty Minutes or Police Action Camera etcetera ((laughs))
When there's writing on these programs does she ever ask you what does this say Daddy?
No no no. No asking just watching the programs as choosed by us.

19th November

Mrs S I'm ringing up to ask you about K's [ writing
[Yes. Her writing? This week?
Yes
This week. aaah. This week she wrote a Japanese letter to her grandmother.
(oh did she)
Yes. because um summer holiday. my um. shes grandparents will come here.
To visit you?
Yes
And what did K say in the letter?
Please come to my house. and for umm uhh. Just a moment
((leaves telephone and puts K on the phone))
Hello
Hello K. It's Mrs F here. How are you?
Good.
K. You wrote a letter to your grandmother?
Uuhh.
in Japan?
Yes
Was that your idea or mummy's idea?
What?
Who suggested to write to grandma. Was it your idea?
Uuhh
Did you want to write to grandma?
mmmm ah ((affirmative))
And what did you say to her?
K: um. I don't know.
R: You don't know what you said.
K: Do you want to speak.
R: Are you there K? ((K and Mrs S speak together)))
K: K. What did you say to grandma?
R: um. Please come to my house.
K: Anything else?
K: yes.
R: What else did you say?
K: No more.
R: And who did the writing? Did you do the writing or did mum do the writing?
K: um Me.
R: You did the writing. In English or in Japanese?
K: Japanese.
R: And who wrote on the envelope?
K: um ((speaks to mother in Japanese. Mother takes phone))
P: Sorry. I understand. ((K giggles in background))
R: I asked K who wrote on the envelope.
P: Ah yes.
R: Did you write on the envelope or did K?
P: Sorry. What means envelope?
R: Envelope. You know when you write a letter.
P: Yes.
R: you put the paper inside an envelope.
P: Ah okay.
R: Did you put the envelope [Oh yes but uh now ( ) not yet sent the letter]
R: Oh I see. you haven't sent it yet.
P: Yes. ah so. um last week ( ) we moved here.
R: Yes.
P: before um she wrote a lot of letter and picture.
P: uh huh.
R: but now uhhh she didn't uhhh a little bit uhhh picture because ahhh yet uhhh she is a little bit uhhh scary yet uhhh because uhhh a new house uhhh she can't uhhh stay her room uhhh only yet uhhh a little bit (loter) picture.
P: I understand.
P: Yeah? (sounds relieved)
R: Yes. good.
P: ye- es?
R: okay. Mrs S I'll ring you. I'll telephone next week again.
P: uh yes. yes. so uhhh this week uhh she had aahhh uhhh congratulation aahhh.
R: yes?
P: uhhh so. finishing school ceremony. What do you say?
R: A finishing school ceremony?
P: Yes. graduation.
R: yes.
P: Uhhh have her preschool uhhh (private care)
R: Oh yes.
P: Yes? uhhh it is a party. at night.
R: oh right.
P: This Monday.
R: On Monday night.
P: Yes. uhhh she was very exciting and so ( ) umm so she can sing English song and a little bit umm song and dance.
R  yes
P  ummm but English
R  Oh good
P  Yes
R  [uh huh
P  [very exciting
R  So she was very excited
P  yes
R  Is this next Monday?
P  No no. Last Monday.
R  Last Monday.
P  Yes. ummm I had a video tape.
R  Yes.
P  ummm If you want to look aahhh I can lend you.
R  That would be lovely. Yes. Yes. I would love to.
P  Yes
R  Mrs S do you think that some time I could come and watch K writing at
your home?
P  Yes? Can you come to my house?
R  Yes.
P  Oh yes it okay.
R  It's okay?
P  Yes.
R  When would be a good day for you?
P  Ah so. Ooh when do you good?
R  Would Saturday be any good?
P  Aah Saturday
R  Yes
P  Saturday is good because uuhh my son goes to Japanese school every
Saturday.
R  uh huh
P  uuhhh K have uuhhh free time at morning
R  In the morning?
P  Yes
R  So what time?
P  Aaahhh maybe ummm from ten.
R  10 o'clock?
P  yes
R  Okay. just a moment I'll get a pencil to write down where you live. So if I
come to see you at 10 o'clock on Saturday.
P  Yes but ummm this Saturday a little bit busy so next Saturday
R  Next Saturday will be fine
P  Yes?
R  Now whereabouts do you live?
P  I live in umm _______. A little bit far umm is that all right?
R  That's all right. I am very happy that you will let me come.
P  yes. My address is ___________.
R  ((repeats address)) And so not this Saturday but next Saturday. That
will be lovely. Thank you very much.
P  It's welcome
R  I look forward to it.
P  Okay.
R  Thank you and I can see the video?
P  Oh yes please.
R  Good. Thank you Mrs S. Good night
P  See you
R  [bye
R = Researcher
P = Parent (Father)

R
I am just ringing up to ask you about K. Can you tell me what she has been doing this last week?

P
Last week. Just a moment please. ((talks to K in Japanese) Ahh also last week, last Wednesday and last Saturday her day care centre have a Christmas Party.

R
Oh right.

P
Yes and she was singing and she was dancing and she looked quite happy.

R
Oh good.

P
And also about the it is a kind of the (.) show time learning the children and also parents hmmm.

R
Yes

P
We had a great time.

R
So you went along too?

P
Yeah yeah.

R
What childcare does she go to?

P
Indooroopilly childcare centre

R
And does it finish for the year now or does it continue?

P
No it continue but maybe by the middle of next month (.) the middle of December it must be the final day attending to the childcare centre.

R
Has K done in drawing or writing at home?

P
Yes. Now she is drawing and giving me like For Dad in writing.

R
oh good.

P
And also I think the her picture is quite easy to find that because everything is smile. ( ) smile. Cloud smile. And also she smile.

R
Happy pictures.

P
Yes that's right.

R
And did she write the words for Dad?

P
Yes in Japanese.

R
In Japanese

P
Also last weekend she joined (.) one of her childcare friends (.) her name Amy (.)her brother's birthday and also she invited by her (.) friend on Saturday she stay at her friend house three hours and joining the brother's birthday party. At the time she wrote down like a celebration letter for her friend's brother also English.

R
In English. Oh. What did she write?

P
In the umm Happy birthday and best wishes from K.

R
And did somebody show her how to write that?

P
Ooohhh yeah at the time, K's friend's brother just opened the present (.) wrapped and take over the wrapped (.) just read the birthday card hmm.

R

P
And I'm going to keep all her pictures.

R
Oh good.

P
Also about K's pictures. Usually she drawed the picture on the memo paper.

R
You've kept them for me.

P
Yes. Okay.

...
10th December

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Father)

R I'm ringing up for the last time this year. How is K? Has she been doing any drawing this week?

P Just moment please (speaks to K in Japanese)
She draw a couple pictures and the um a couple of Christmas cards.

R Did she do the writing in the Christmas cards?

P Yes yes and also she sending to the her preschool teacher and her preschool friends and her day care teacher.

R And did she make the cards or write the cards?

P Buy the cards.

R And she did the writing inside herself?

P Yeah that's right.

R Good and the pictures she was drawing?

P She drawing Christmas pictures

R Yes

P Like Christmas trees or Santa Claus or something and um a big present. But she is not quite sure what is going to be inside the box. And also I am not quite sure.

R Mmm good good. Mr S I will telephone again next year when K starts school.

R When K makes the Christmas cards does she do this with her mother's help or does she do it with her mother's help? Or does she think of the idea herself?

P And also the spelling of her teacher's name or her friends' name. So some name are a little bit difficult like spelling so also she just tell her in the correct spelling in each name.

R But whose ideas was it to make the Christmas cards. Did K say I want to make Christmas cards or did her mother say?

P Mmmm fifty fifty but also the Christmas season means the same time the end of class or school or preschool season and we would like to express sincere appreciation to preschool and school and friends and also it also kind idea and warm and warm hospitality to say thank you to write a letter and a couple of times I told her in Australia. Not only Australia but the Western countries if you just uhhh express your feeling not only not enough just to say thank you for (baba) but to say request in just a suitable way just write a letter.

R So K has been writing a letter.

P yes.

3rd December

R = Researcher
T = Tutor

((the parents are out and the English tutor who comes once a week to assist K aswers the phone. She talks to K in Japanese and asks her about any drawing or writing she has been doing))
I don't know if this is what you want but she's done a couple of pictures and one of them has got English numbers on it. and the other one she's written on it in Japanese.

And what is in the pictures?

Just a moment ((speaks in Japanese to K)) One is a picture of a cat in something and the other one she's got a house and a tree with a sun and a flower. And she's got a picture of her mother saying my mother gave me. Just a minute ((speaks in Japanese to K)) the drawing pens.

Is that written in Japanese or English?

In Japanese

So it's a whole sentence.

Yes. that's very interesting.

Could you ask her did she do the writing and drawing by herself or did someone help her?

((Tutor speaks to K in Japanese)) She said she did it by herself.

Thank you very much.

5th February

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Father)

Mr S I'm inquiring about K's writing. Has she been doing any writing since she started school?

Ah yes. Just a moment please.

Ah yes yes. About her starting so a little bit worried because the uh she had uh she catch she caught herself flu

Ah the flu.

Yes and the about the first day and second day she was attending but next day she took a day off a couple of days (.) due to aahhh flu

That makes it hard to come back doesn't it.

Ahh yes but now this time at this moment so her life story in the school she seems to get along with the social life and now she made a couple of friend

Oh that's good.

Yes and the so now currently she said about the I am very pleased to join the ((name of school)) state school. ((laughs))

Well that's good. Now does she have homework to do at night?

Ah so yes now she is learning a couple of so character. alphabet. ay bee cee.

Yes the letters in the alphabet.

Ah yes

Does she have something called Pictionary to do for homework?

Pardon?

Does she have something called Pictionary where she has to find pictures of things that start with the letter she has been learning?

Yeah yeah pictures yeah yes.

That's what she's doing?

Yeah yes. This is very enjoyable.

Now when she comes home with this homework to do do you or your wife have to tell her that now it's time to do this homework?

Yes every time. Yeah yeah.
R And then she gets her books out.
P Yes yes.
R And do you stay with her when she does it?
P Huh uh yep.
R And is she asking you for help?
P Yeah sometimes. But eventually she wants to do it by herself.
R And does she have any difficulty thinking of words starting with that letter?
P Ohhh at the moment I don't think so. Because the Pictionary is very good exercise because there is like the game or playing. Collect um the junk mail or something like the newspapers advertisements and cut out and paste on.
R Does she have to write the letters or the words?
P Oh yes.
R What does she have to write?
P Now is also mainly the homework ahh like the um ahhh from the beginning from the ay character. bee character. cee character.
R How far does she go?
P Not too bad.
R ay bee cee dee? Does she go all the way up to zed?
P Ah yes. And she likes having high motivation learning English not only learning English but getting along with her classroom and also nowadays she has just wrote a couple of cartoon character. Uuh one of them is just the Japanese cartoon but the other one is like the Looney cartoons
R Looney tunes
P Ah yes
R And she's drawing the pictures of the cartoons? And does she write some words with it?
P Ah yes.
R Can you hold on to some of those for me?
P Oh oh oh. Some of these she just write on some memo paper not sketch book or drawing book just memo paper and some of them just rubbish bin. But I just remind to remain.
R To hold them and keep them for me.
P Okay
…

19th February

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Father)

R Has K been doing any writing this week?
P Ahh. Just moment ((speaks in Japanese with wife))
Yes she has plenty of picture.
R Yes
P Draw
R Drawing pictures
P Yeah
R Has she had homework to do this week as well?
P Just moment ((speaks to wife in Japanese))
Not too many for work this week.
R Oh I see and um when K does some homework does she do it by herself or does your wife
P She does by herself
R Uhuh
Yeah and also but from last week. Now we just starting the private teacher for her and the learning English.

Ahh right. So where is she doing that Mr S?

Yes and now I just asking the private tutor. She is tutor and she is student of University of Queensland.

And has she had any lessons yet?

Ahh yes maybe (thirty) but a small but very short time. Thirty minutes.

Thirty minutes yes and during this time is there just talking or is there writing too.

Ahh just talking or like sometimes helped her homework and the uhh like sampling some games not in the sort Super Nintendo. ((laughs))

((laughs)) Not Super Nintendo?

Yes like game I mean about like the uhh ((wife talks in Japanese)) uhh. Like game I mean made by the teacher.

Yes and it involves talking and learning English words?

Yes playing and sometimes studying.

That sounds very interesting. Mr S have you collected any of her drawings or writing?

A lot. Plenty of this.

Could you put it in an envelope and write my name on it and ask K to give it to her teacher?

To her teacher?

Yes and her teacher will give it to me.

Okay.

5th March

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

Today my kids cannot go to school

Are they sick.

No. I am sick.

Oh you are sick. I am so sorry.

So my husband went to the Mackay from yesterday so

So you couldn't drive them. How are you feeling now?

Now is okay but very tired.

I understand. Have you got time to talk to me?

Yes yes.

I just want to find out about K. Thank you very much for sending me her drawings.

Yeah ((laughs)) What do you think about her picture?

Very lovely. She's drawing very well isn't she.

Yes she likes drawing very much.

She does very happy pictures.

Ah thank you very much.

Mrs S has K been doing any homework at home.

No

She doesn't have any work to do for school?

Ahh yes.

Tell me what she does.

Aah. One day ah one week two homework. Mmm so. It is um reading book

And does she read that to you or are you reading that to her?

First time I read to K. Then K read book.
R Then she reads it to you. And do you talk about the book?
P Ah yes.
R And does she do any writing?
P Ah yes so ay be cee dee ee ef. One day ah one word. If um today she
has eye.
R The letter eye.
P Yes. She looking for eyes word or um
R Pictures starting with eye?
P Yes. I run or everything ahhh mmm she is cutting from magazine
R And pasting them in her Pictionary?
P Yes and then she write eye
R And then she writes it
P Yes.
R Now when she has homework she does this two times a week. Okay. Do
you say to K (.) K it's time to do your homework or does K come home
and say I want you to look at my homework?
P Sorry. One more please.
R Does K do her homework by herself?
P Ah yes
R Or do you help her?
P Ahh I help K. Just a moment ((yells at children in Japanese)) Sorry. My
kids are very noisy.
R So K gets you to come and help her
P yes
R Now apart from her homework does K do any other writing? Or just
drawing?
P Ahhh sometime K write ( ) Japanese word or English word.
R Do you tell her to do it or does she just do it?
P Sometime I teach to K or she teach to school.
R Is K going to Japanese school yet?
P No 14th of month
R Oh so soon.
P Yes very soon. Yeah.
R Mrs S. Thank you very much.

13th March

R = Researcher
P = Parent (mother)

R How is K?
P Also very good. Very enjoyed.
R Okay. Tell me what she has been doing.
P Ahh last Saturday ahh she had a birthday party. In here.
R For her birthday?
P Yes K’s birthday.
R Was she six years old?
P Six six yes. But her really birthday is 26 January.
R Oh Australia Day
P Yes (laughs))
R So she had her party now on Saturday.
P Yes because Saturday is school holiday. If now she have this party she
can play with she friends.
R And did she have a good time.
P Yes very enjoyed.
R Good. Now did people give her birthday cards with writing in them?
P        Ahh yes
R        Could she read the words?
P        Aahh K did that card because aahh any card only name just name and I
        love you Happy Birthday.
R        Lovely. And has she been doing some writing at home?
P        Ahh so this week she was very busy but ahh she had ahh sketch book
        yes some writing.
R        Have you still got it?
P        Ahh yes.
R        Good. Could I have a look at it?
P        Oh yes okay.
R        And I can photocopy it and send it home with K again.
P        Oh thank you.
...

2nd April

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R        How is K?
P        Last week she is very busy because um my friend's family came to Japan.
        We had a lot of goodbye party.
R        Was that Mika?
P        Yeeees
R        I know her
P        Yes so Mika's mother said. You very kind for Mika. They very much
        enjoy Australian life.
R        That's good. Mika is a lovely little girl.
P        Ah yes many time they play together.
R        Did Mika and K do school things together when they play?
P        Ah yes. So after school sometime they play my house or her house.
R        Good. And has K done any maybe drawing or writing?
P        Yes. Maybe some writing.
R        What has she been doing?
P        Ahh many time pictures mother and dad.
R        yes
P        And this week ahh so she wrote bunny and because her English teacher
        teach to K about bunny picture.
R        So she's having English lessons is she?
P        Ah yes because ahh Y ((brother)) need English lesson and he finish K has
        a little bit English lesson.
R        When does she have this?
P        Here
R        Yes on which day?
P        Every Thursday at five o'clock
R        Every Saturday. Do you think you could ask the English teacher if I could
        come and watch a lesson.
...
P        Yes okay. So any time the teacher help K with homework then play
        together use a card everything.
30th April

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R Did she tell you she wrote a story yesterday on the computer.
P Very good?
R She wrote in the story about a kookaburra that was on the tennis court.
P Ohh I didn't understand I didn't know.
R Is she doing any writing at home?
P Ah yes.
R What sorts of things is she doing?
R So she's writing the words and drawing the pictures?
P Ah yes
R And are you telling her to do this? Or does she do it herself?
P Herself.
R Where does she do her writing?
P In her room.
R And Mrs S are you keeping some writing for me?
P Yes

... 

R And is K still learning English at home with a teacher?
P Yes every Thursday night. Come here. This week not come here.

... 

P One question. If you look children's picture
R If I look at children's pictures yes
P Can you understand children heart? so condition.
R No. not really. I wish I could.
P Ah so. Okay Bye bye

4th June

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R How is K?
P She is very good. Uh today she went to excursion so we invite yes.
R Did she have a good time?
P Yes very much.
R Did she write about it?
P Ah this week?
P Yes
R This week ah a little bit because ah a little bit busy.
R So what has she been writing this week?
P This week ah she had a lot of homework ah Japanese school. Any time she take uh homework.
R I see and what about from Mrs F? ((class teacher)) Has she had homework from Mrs F?
P A little bit. One day ah read a book. Ah one day writing.
R Ah what was that? What did she have to do?
P Ay bee cee a little bit.
R Was that in a handwriting book with red and blue lines?
P No no.
R    So it was just practising the alphabet.
P    Yes.
3rd November

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R Mrs A has Lia been doing any drawings or any writing this week?
P Umm this week she always played with computer.
R Ohh what has she been doing?
P Umm colouring. There is a picture and she's colouring the picture.
R On the computer?
P Yeah. Not with her hand.
R So have you got a little paint program?
P Yeah but my husband's printer is not colour so only in the monotone.
R So it only prints in black and white
P Yeah.
R Can you keep one of them for me?
P yeah but excuse me ((speaks to husband in Indonesian)) but usually my husband he not save her picture.
R Oh he didn't.
P Yeah.
R If she does any more can he save one for me?
P Yeah it's all right.
...
R Mrs A have you got some of Lia's drawings or writing for me?
P Yeah from preschool but she tell me that that for mum not (.)
R Oh it's not for me.
P Yeah ((laughs)) There's a Christmas tree and she'd drawing there in the Christmas tree.
R Perhaps I can borrow it and take a photocopy of it.
...
P Yeah okay
R And any things she has been writing or drawing
P The other things you can keep
R Thank you very much
...

12th November

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R Mrs A has Lia been doing any writing this week?
P Ahhh No he drawing. But today. Now he interested in colouring.
R She's been doing some colouring
P Yeah
R I see. She's been doing some drawing earlier in the week
P Yeah only early but now she started uh power for colouring because J ((preschool teacher)) gave her a book for colouring. Yeah from the ambulance.
R Oh yes. From that visit to the Wesley Hospital?
P Yeah. That's right.
R I understand. I'll ring you again next week Mrs A.
P Okay.
R Thank you very much. Bye bye.

19th November

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R How is L?
P Mmm May be she's ( boring ) with uhhh drawing. She's only uuh colouring and start to reading with A. A for apple. B for bear. ((laughs))
R good
P This week only one I think. But much uhhh colouring.
R A lot of colouring. So she's reading letters and saying the sound of them has she?
P yeah.
R But no writing?
P No sorry.
R No. I only want to know what is happening in the home. I am not expecting anything ( ) for you to do anything specially for me.
P Orright. L only start reading.
R That's good. Really good news.
P okay.
R Okay well I'll catch you again next week. Thank you
P You're welcome. Bye bye.

25th November

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Father)

P Yes ah she is not too much doing ahhh drawing
R mmm
P but she has about two or three I forget already and this afternoon she drawing uhh cow yes but the face of the cow it to look like a human ((laughs)) but it is a cow.
R I see and she was doing that this morning?
P This afternoon.
R And did you ask her to do it or did she do it by herself?
P She did all by herself because nobody at home my wife is going working and her sister and brother still at school and I am busy at my research so she ask me for a piece of paper and she drawing and then when she finished she ask me again for another piece of paper.
R So she's doing another drawing
P Yes
R Has she been doing the writing of any letters?
P Letters? No. But about two wait a minute three days ago I left her alone at home and she asked me to switch on the computer and she playing with I have a program for spelling (.) English (.) for English spelling and she asked me to switch on the software and she is playing with that computer.
R What did she Have to do when she had the software on for the spelling?
P She just click the word the number and. I do not know. I did not check if she did writing or something but she is just playing with the software.
R Was it like a spell check where she writes a word and then it corrects it.
P Oh no no
There is a number and a letter below the number about one until twenty or
something like that and she just press the button and then she she can
start in order.

Oh I see. Yes. That's good. And does she ever try to write something on
the computer?

No no.

You're probably using it yourself most of the time are you?

Yes.

10th December

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

L has started cutting. Everything is cutting.

Oh that's good practise. So she hasn't done much writing this week?

No no no. Just cutting with N and A ((older brother and sister)) and make
a Christmas card.

Oh yes

And I buy a Christmas card and she put her name in the card for teacher
and Anne.

Mrs A this is the last telephone call that I will make this year. I will phone
again when school begins next year.

5th February

R = Researcher
P = Participant (Father)

Has L been doing any writing since she started school?

Ahhh. I think she's ahhh drawing. Many drawing and now she also start
to put her name on everywhere on the paper on her book on the wall.

On the wall oh. ((laughs)) oh I see. And has she been coming home from
school with any homework to do?

Homework (.) reading you mean?

Yes.

Yes. I think she still cannot read but uh my wife help her to read and she
repeats it again.

So your wife reads it first and then L reads it.

Yes.

Good good. And I will ask you again if you can keep any pieces of
drawings or pieces of writing that she's doing and get her to put her name
on them and put the date on them again. That would be wonderful.

5th March

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

Nadia tells me you are working. What are you doing?
I am working in child care. Child care. I am working in child care in University.

Oh that's wonderful. Good on you.

((laughs)) May be I cancel maybe I will cancel next month because too tired for me. Still too tired maybe I will.

It's hard work with a baby of your own isn't it.

Yeah. So I'm not yet I didn't take care of L I do not. Because after back home I dinner then I'm very tired just to ((laughs)) sorry. But I still collect her drawing.

Good so has she been doing any writing when she is at home at the moment?

No not writing.

Has she got homework to do Mrs A?

Ahh only reading

Just her reading book.

Yeah and she always drawing on her diary what his ahh her doing today and he drawing if going to library or swimming or what else. Reading she drawing.

Drawing. She's not trying to write any words?

No.

That's okay.

It's all right?

Yes of course. Now you take care of yourself because you must be very tired.

yes I think after this month I work two weeks and then I will cancel.

You will stop?

Yes maybe only part time and not full time like now.

Well thank you very much.

Can I give you L's drawings?

Yes please. If you put them in an envelope and write my name on the front Mrs S will give them to me.

Okay

2nd April

What has L been doing at home?

Ah yes actually she is now start reading because of the. See everyday she has to borrow a book from the library

Yes

But sometimes she also select a difficult books with uh many words many sentence but she also trying to write to write the letter.

Oh good

I think she also did good thing about the spellathon because she she can answer all the questions about twenty. Twenty words I think.

And she knows them all?

Yes ((laughs sounding pleased))

That's wonderful and has she been writing some of them too or just saying them?

yes she try to writing it.

Have you kept some of the writing for me?

((laughs)) That's the problem. No. She suggest that she try to copy the letter like I have my books so she saw the books on my table and
sometimes she just make a copy of that letter. But I cannot. I do not know where is it.

R Where she's put it.
P Sorry about that.
R Never mind sometimes if you think of it just keep a copy of it for me.

30th April

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

P About L. Now she not writing. She interested reading.
R Is she. She's doing lots of reading?
P Yeah. Actually she try to read everything. I always promise to collect things from L but I always forgot but maybe four or five in my drawer.
R Oh great. Could you put them in an envelope and give them to Mrs S ((class teacher))
P Okay. Tomorrow.
R She doesn't have any writing for homework does she?
P No. Just reading. But she try to writing from the calendar. January. She tried to write down January or Lia. Everything she put her name. In the wall.
R She's writing on the wall!
P ((laughs)) We found and say Is this your writing? She is a bit naughty.
R Yes we want to see her writing but not on the wall.
P Yeah. I say that not good L. Write on the paper not on the wall. So four or five that's all right? I'll do it right now.

14th May

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Father)

R How are your studies going?
P Oh it's difficult now because the time comes closer and closer.
R yeah
P I hope to finish this year.
R That's the hard time when you have to produce the writing.
P That's right. But I have to do it.
R How's L going?
P Yes she's like she's writing.
R Is she. At home?
P Yes she writes every word every time. Like yesterday I do not know where she got the word but she wrote hell. aitch ee double ell.
R Did she
P Yes I do not know where she get that word and she wrote mama papa and the name of her brother and sister.
R So she's really writing by herself now and finding things to write is she?
P Yeah like yesterday ahh her teacher Mrs S gave her a ( ) because she collect ten sticker and look like name tag but she try to write her name on that name tag but she cannot write the address and she asked me to write it down for her.
R So she got the name tag because she'd got ten stickers. What did she get the ten stickers for?
P Sorry?
R She got the name tag because she'd got ten stickers. What did she get the ten stickers for?
P Sorry. I didn't hear.
R You said she got a little present a little prize from Mrs S.
P Yes it's a name tag like a ( ) name address and telephone number.
R Okay. Thank you very much Mr A. I will telephone you again.

4th June

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mrs A)

R How is L?
P Ahh about writing. She enjoy very much reading but not writing. Not too much writing during these one or two weeks. I do not know but yesterday when we received her report
R uhuh
P The teacher wrote poor in uhh pencil grip.
R yes
P But I do not know what happened but now her ask her to ( ) or writing but sometime she's lazy to go to doing that.
Grace

3rd November

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R Has G been doing any writing at home?
P yeah a little bit. I kept in a notebook. Yesterday she started a little bit so I put the date. If you want to see it I will show you.
R Oh good I would like to see it. Is it work that she has done for Korean school or for you?
P Oh not Korean. This week they have no homework because last Saturday they have speech night.
R So has she been writing in English?
P yeah and Maths or just write sometimes (the class). If paul ((brother)) studies Maths then ahh she want to do Maths. I want to study Maths also so I prepare some Maths questions and she start to write them.
R So she's doing sums.
R Ah plus and minus. So you've kept a copy for me.

19th November

R = Researcher
P = Participant (Mother)

((Telephone rings. Older sibling answers the telephone in Korean. R says her name and asks to speak to Mum. Child calls mother in Korean.))

P Hello?
R Hello Mrs K. Its Mrs F here.
P oh yeah. yeah.
R How are you?
P Good
R Thank you very much for your letter.
P Ohh. yeah. How do you think uh changing uh?
R Tuesday is fine.
P yeah yeah.
R What time on Tuesday?
R Evening? About seven thirty?
P Yeah. Seven thirty I think is all right because after ( ) if it hot if the weather is hot sometimes we () the children go out.
R yes
P yeah so I'm not sure whether we stay every day or not.
R So I'll ring about 7.30
P yeah. yeah.
R and then if you're not home I'll ring again a little bit later. Is that okay?
P yeah. yeah. Now I think it's okay but I'm not sure. Yeah but um now my husband is um at Korea now.
R Yes
P Yeah. uhh last um Thursday. Thursday night he uhh
R he left
P yeah. So we our family was very busy. Graduation. ((Rice sending))
service. Preparing to go Korea. So I was very busy.
R Yes I understand. Has G been doing any writing through the week?
P Yeah, yeah. mostly Korean umm because of coming Saturday there is
speech ( )speeches how do you say? Speech Day coming so they
prepare um speeches about speeches.
R Do they all have to speak?
P Yes
R Do the children have to speak too?
P yeah yeah.
R So she has plenty of Korean homework
P yeah yeah
R Does she have to do written homework or speaking homework?
P Speaking and there is written homework and speech homework.
R Mrs K does G play with the computer?
P computer? yeah. computer games
R she does.
P yeah
R When she plays on the computer
P When?
R When she does. Does she start it up by herself? Or does her brother
show her?
P Now I think um G can. G can um start organise which program she wants
by herself. But usually I don't allow her to play computer games too
much. um just for thirty minutes two or three times a week if I am very
busy
R she can
P yeah
R So she starts it up
P yeah
R And she chooses the program
P yeah
R And what sort of games does she play?
P I don't know
R You don't know
P They want to ( ) uhh how can I say have a lot of programs but my
husband and I. It's no good because they start to play games and they
don't want to stop.
R May be S ((big brother)) could tell the games that G plays sometime or G
could tell me what games she plays on the computer.
P Do you want to talk to S now?
R Yes. That would be fine and I will ring you again next Tuesday night.
P okay. Hold on please.
((Mrs K gets S and explains to him in Korean what R wants))
S hello
R hello is that you S? It's Mrs F here. How are you?
S I'm okay
R S can you tell me what games G plays on the computer?
S A game called Zool
R Zool. And what does she have to do?
S She has to shoot some jelly things.
R Shoot some jelly things.
S Yes
R Does she have to read anything when she's playing that game?
S No.
R It's just following some target is it?
S Yes
And what else does she play?
Crystal Caves
And what does she have to do in that?
Collect lots of crystals.
I see. And does she have to do any reading?
Yes
What does she have to read?
I read it for her
Do you?
She can't read it
I see. And anything else?
Jungle Book
Jungle Book. What's that about?
You have to collect these gems.
Uh huh. Any reading in that?
Yes. But she can read it.
Can she? What does she read?
The chapters. And before the game if you want to hear the story you can just go on to the story. She makes me read it for her.
So you read the text to her.
Yes
Well thank you very much S. I'll talk to you again later. Bye bye.
Bye.

25th November

R = Researcher
P = Participant (Mother)

How is G?
I couldn't collect many writing ah writing ahh but I collect some drawing
Yes
yeah
So has she been doing lots of drawing but not much writing?
Yeah just her Korean homework from Wednesday I have time to help my children's homework and study. Now is not normal situation.
Okay. So what sort of things has she been drawing?
Usually she drawing um the same pattern but from last week she uh draw um castle um castle?
castle like a princess's castle?
Yeah yeah yeah and before uh last week uh it was her friend Grace Court's birthday her birthday party and then uh she write her name Grace Kim's Court. Her name is Grace Kim but now all the time she say I am Grace Kim Court.
So has a friend called Grace.
Her friend's name is Grace and her surname is Court.
So she wants her friend's name too.
Yeah. yeah. Nothing else a special but the kinds of day.

10th December

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)
R Has G been doing any more writing since I saw you on Saturday?
P Saturday?
R Yes remember I went to Korean school with G on Saturday. Has she been doing any writing at home?
P Yeah she has had homework.
R I wonder if I could get a copy of the work that she did. There were some sheets stapled together and I said to the teacher could I photocopy it.
P yeah and S ((brother)) told me that you want to collect G's writing
R Yes you have been collecting G's writing for me haven't you?
P Yes mostly drawing. Drawing with a little bit of writing.
R So if you send that along as well.
P Yeah yeah I will prepare right now before I forget.
R So what has she been doing just the Korean homework?
P Oh and writing (.2.0) and writing. Yeah I can't remember.
R So writing and Korean homework
P Korean homework she has not done very much.
R Okay.

5th February

R = Researcher
P = Participant (Mother)

R Has she been doing any writing at home since she started school?
P Ohh not during holiday. School yeah schoolwork (. ) homework and yeah homework homework yeah.
R What has she been doing for homework?
P Homework. She brought a reader but sometime I try to and then I try to copy write.
R Uhuh. She has to (. ) you are getting her to write it are you?
P Yeah.
R Okay. And can she do that?
P Yeah. But not uh not very well. But she try.
R She's trying.
P Yeah.
R And what about reading the book?
P Reading book is I think is no problem.
R Are you reading it to her first and then she reads it? Or is she just picking it up and trying it by herself?
P yeah she try it by herself. She try to make a sound.
R Yes and sound it out. So she's making the sounds of the letters and sliding them together? Like mmm aaa tuh mat like that.
P yeah because of last year she heard um Paul's ((brother who was in yr 1 last year)) pronunciation (. ) ay be cee dee you know.
R The sounds?
P Yeah. ay for (1.0) so she. She knew already about a little bit.
R So she knew that ay said aaa.
P yeah yeah yeah like that bee says buh yeah.
R That's very helpful for her.
P Yeah. ((both laugh))
R And has she been doing any Korean homework.
PYeah. yeah. During the holiday there was a Korean language school. Homework she did. If you want to see I can show it to you.
R Did Korean school continue right through the Christmas holidays?
R: Yeah they give us homework.
P: Oh I see so no classes.
P: No classes. If they want to a little bit (one two) so they copy many things and then they homework. not class.
R: Good. And you've collected some things for me have you? that she's been writing?
P: Ohhh. Only homework. Nothing special just um without homework I couldn't try this because it was very hard (.) I three children. I just try to do homework and they liked it.
R: Could I have a look at the Korean homework that she has been doing? Perhaps if she brings it to school and I could photocopy and bring it back to you?
P: Yeah yeah. Tomorrow?
R: That would be great. I'll come over to the classroom and see if she's got it.

10th February

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R: How has G been going Mrs K?
P: Ohhh yeah nothing I am not pushing to do at home a lot of work because she tired at school but still she work she bring a reader every day I try to umm writing of that
R: The words in a book
P: Yeah yeah so I don't push it do extra work you know another uhh uhhh homework like that yep. But I try to do uhhhh uhhh school school work just like a repeat.
R: Yes
P: yeah yeah repeat word if she found a new word (.) hard word I try to umm work once again writing.
R: To go and write it.
P: Yeah yeah
R: I see. And when she has this work to do for homework do you have to tell her now it's time to do the homework or does she come to you and say Mum I want to do it.

P: Ahhh usually umm I must start from G because S and P ((older brothers)) they have to do homework or extra work so if I say to P it's did you finish reading your reader or you have to bring your reader out let's read it together. Yeah if I say like that then automatically ((laughs))
R: She goes and gets hers
P: Yeah yeah and she asks to uhhh do umm something and um sometimes she bring uhhh her reader. Anyway she even she is very tired at uhh school she bring the reader if she when she home or even just at school when I pick up her
R: She shows you straight away
P: Yeah ((little laugh)) at school look around here I wrote another book mum
R: So she's very interested
P: yeah yeah
R: Mrs K Have you been saving some things for me?
P: Uhh not much. Sometimes a few drawing. I think last time she brought some Korean school homework but she said me you didn't come to see it.
R: Ohhh I didn't know. If you tell G to give it to Mrs B ((teacher)) she will give it to me.
P: Yeah yeah okay
3rd March

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R  Did G come home and show you her writing today?
P  Today?
R  She did some lovely writing in school today.  Did she tell you about it?
P  No
R  She was writing about how she went to music school and then she did some music notes.
P  Ohh she told me only she asked everyone in her class Do you go to music school and she count only four people four students go to music school.  ((laugh))  I told G How do you know only four people go to music school? and she told me I ask to each.
R  She asked everybody?
   ((R and P laugh))
P  everybody
R  She is very proud.  Mrs K has she been doing any writing at home?
P  Ahh only regularly homework
R  yes
P  And writing out the reader and I bought a spelling uhh book.  How can I say?  A homework book at the bookshop.  She doing that sometime.
R  So that's a little spelling book with activities?
P  Yeah yeah activity book and sometime they use sticker.
R  Does she ever take a piece of paper and write a couple some sentences just making them up in her head?
P  Uhhh
R  You know like sitting down and writing something.  Drawing a picture and writing some words?
P  Drawing yeah yeah Many things Oh yeah she does.  Yeah yeah yeah.
R  Not copying but saying the sounds like bird buh and writing it down.
P  Yeah yeah sometimes uh.  At the moment P ((brother)) bring small book to learn words yeah so if he bring uh small book she repeat them.  But not exactly the same as P's one but she make a book.  Yeah.  And also.  Do you need this kind of information?  From when she was a Grade one I prepared one room for G.  From one she had her own room.  When you visit my place she started in living room.
R  That's right.  Now she has her own place.
P  Yes.
R  In her own room.
P  Yes
R  Perhaps she'll show me when I come to visit again.

7th March

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R  I saw G in her class today and she said oh I forgot again and I said forgot again? and she said I forgot to bring you the writing.
P  Yeah yeah.
R  So I said to her look talk to mummy and bring it along with my name on the front and Mrs B will give it to me.
P  Yeah yeah
R  How's she been going?
P Ahh I think that writing not I mean not sentence writing but ay bee cee writing (.) writing is okay. It is improved the letter.

R So she's been writing the letters and it is improving?

P Yeah yeah and also I can't she when she had um music lesson she sing very well so P and S remember you know I understand all what she sing. You mean the pronunciation very correct. So it different from my sons. They umm when they didn't sing Australian song at home because when they I think when they arrive at home they almost forgot. But G she singing very well.

R She's singing very well and she's remembering the words.

P Yeah yeah almost everything.

R Everything gee that's wonderful. Is she doing any other writing at home besides the letters? Is she doing writing of stories?

P Last uh last uh I encourage her to write reader.

R To write down her reader. And is she doing that?

P Yeah yeah.

R Do you have to tell her to do it?

P Yeah yeah but now she knows after she finished reading the reader that automatically she write. She knows even I busy to do another thing that she writes.

R So she's writing it out. And can she read her own writing when she is finished?

P Yeah yeah because I uhh uhhh I ask for her to reading the notebook because there is no picture and yes she read.

R So is she still doing the Pictionary as well? The little book she brings home and she has to look at one letter and find words or pictures that start with that letter.

P Yeah yeah

R She still doing that is she?

P Would you explain again?

R It's like an exercise book that's called her Pictionary.

P Yeah yeah

R It's like a dictionary but with pictures.

P Yeah yeah

R She's still doing that. Does she do that every night or just sometimes?

P Every night.

R Okay.

P Do you want to see the notebook where she write the letter?

R Yes that would be lovely I would very much like to see it.

R ... So if you can remember to send along anything she has been doing at home. Korean homework or her Pictionary or writing out her reader and I will have a look at it and send it home together.

P Yeah yeah

R Thank you Mrs K.

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

2nd April

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R How are you going?

P Ahh yeah ahh but I can't say nothing special about everything ahh G's work is improve slowly slowly.
I noticed yesterday she wrote a story on the computer at school. Does she do that at home sometimes?

Just the game.

Just for games.

But not much. A few times a week. Just one or two times a week.

She seemed to know all about the shift key to make the letter a capital letter and she seemed to know about spaces between words.

Ahh yeah but these day we have to fix up all program on the computer but before this time um they type sometimes and we use the typewriter. You know typewriter.

So she's used a typewriter.

Yes but a little bit long time ago. Not recently. But before we use computer.

Mrs K is G coming home after school or does she go to after school care?

No after school care. I pick her up every day.

So she goes straight home.

Yeah yeah.

And she's been keeping up her Korean homework?

Korean homework? yeah yeah yeah.

Okay and what about writing at home. Just writing.

yeah yeah but usually she don't write just a story she makes a book or cut a. Like the pic a pic. He drawing picture and write something.

And that's what she's doing at school. Rather than copying it from a book she is making it up herself.

Oh yeah. Usually she write name uh she a drawing something even people or something. He write the name or something.

Have you kept any of this writing for me?

Sorry

Have you kept any writing for me?

Not much

...

30th April

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

((Transcript of researcher's voice after phone conversation with Mrs K. The tape recorder had not been switched on))

During the conversation Mrs K said that G without her help because she had been too busy had been making birthday cards. Some of the children in her class have been having birthdays and so at home G has been very busy replying to birthday invitations or just writing cards for her friends. Mrs K said she had not had any time to work with G because she had been busy at work and that G's brother P has been helping G with her reading each night. That is the homework she has had from school. During the holidays G had some homework for Korean school. She hadn't been able to finish it all because the family had been so busy but she is still attending Korean school each Saturday.
14th May

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

R  How have you been going?
P  Yeah yeah nothing special.
R  And what about G. What has she been doing?
P  MmmThis day uh she actually didn't doing very much. Sometimes they ( ). I follow the normal things. She reading her reader reader and sometimes write again.
R  Writing out the words of the reader
P  yeah yeah something unknown word and she doing spelling homework book.
R  Is that from school?
P  No no I bought bookshop
R  So you bought it at a book shop?
P  Yeah yeah
R  So she's learning to spell words out of it
P  Yeah I prepare and some Korean work. And some just normal.
R  And does she do that every night?
P  Yeah every night.
R  For how long Mrs K?
P  Ahh I encourage my children ahh before we have ( ) they do it about one hour. Especially S ((oldest brother)) more than one hour. And then after we finished dinner before we go to bed one one hour one and a half hour. One and a half hour.
R  More?
P  Because at that time they doing music violin also and other things. Because you need to do English ah maths, Korean also violin and piano yeah everything.
R  It's a busy family
P  So if I doing something with S or P then G she is doing by herself.
R  She is working by herself
P  Yeah. Sometimes I just I read instruction if she um work spelling homework book I explain instruction. If she understand instruction she doing uhh by herself. Like that.

4th June

R = Researcher
P = Parent (Mother)

... R How has G been. Has she been writing at home?
P  Yeah yeah he she enjoy writing anything. ((laughs))
R  She enjoys writing at school.
P  yeah yeah I heard sometimes she give it to you.
R  Yes I am very pleased.
P  I don't know but I sometimes she told me but I don't know what she give to you.
R  She likes to come and show me her writing book.
P  All writing or just a copy?
R  No her own writing. Is she doing her own writing at home too?
P  Yes yes and also uh she asked the (    ) if she is not sure the spell and word she ask to me say at that time I say You try to make your own spelling and then I can correct you.

R  And have you got some for me?

P  No I couldn't collect because she wrote and sometimes she put in her bag to give to Mrs F (me)). But recently my friend give to her a new notebook and she started to writing and picture and I don't know I'll ask to G whether she show to you.

R  If she hasn't then tell her to come to me and I will photocopy it and return it to her.

...
APPENDIX E
Samples of writing

- Jeba
- Zena
- Kaori
- Lia
- Grace
Samples of Writing

**Jeba**

**Figure 1.** Home - Letters in alphabetic order

**Figure 2.** Home - Numbers in order
Figure 3. Home - Bangla letters in order

Figure 4. Home - Words to accompany letters
Figure 5. Home - Transcription of home reader

The great enormous hamburger

Put some meat
Put some sausage
Put some lettuce
Put some tomato
Put some onion in home

Put it up please

Figure 6. Home - Word recognition from home reader

Nine said
at and little
away come
four up yes

This went
will all you
three look six
do hello
Figure 7. Preschool - Self-portrait

Figure 8. Preschool - letter for mother
Figure 9. Year One - Father's trip to Canada

When I was little, my dad went to Knuda and when I was self I have one peniche on my dad or ef I don't know then.

Figure 10. Year One - See my school

see my school
Once upon a time, a girl had a little red cape, said her mother, said her grandmother.

She went to the forest.

She met a Little Red Riding Hood. She was a little girl.

She took the basket of food.

She went to see her grandmother.

She visited her grandmother.
Figure 11. Year One - Retell of Little Red Riding Hood
Samples of Writing

Zena

Figure 12. Home – Thank you card

Figure 13. Year One – Drawing of butterflies and flowers
Figure 14. Year One – Birthday

Today, Yuro gave me a poe for my birthday.

Figure 15. Year One – Wobbly tooth

I got a wobbly tooth and my birthday is in May and my sister’s birthday is in March.
Figure 16. Year One – I can see

I can see the tree
I can see the for
Figure 17. Home – Letters in Alphabetic order

Figure 18. Home – Words from memory
Figure 19. Year One – Apple tree
Figure 20. Year One – I see red

Figure 21. Year One – Recount of visit to Preschool
Dear Meg, I’m coming over to your birthday party. What sort of cake is it going to be? I’m looking forward to go to your party.
Samples of Writing

Kaori

Figure 23. Home - drawings

Figure 24. Home – Upper case letters and numbers to 10
Figure 25. Home – Drawings with Japanese characters

Figure 26. Home – Writing sums
Samples of Writing

Lia

Figure 27. Home – Drawing of family
Figure 28. Home – Naming siblings

Figure 29. Home – Strings of letters and numbers
Samples of Writing

Grace

Figure 30. Home – Picture book

Figure 31. Preschool – Envelope addressed to friend
Figure 32. Year One – Recount of visit to museum

Figure 33. Year One – Fruit list
Figure 34. Year One – Picture of Grace wearing crown

Figure 35. Year One – Drawing with simple sentence

this is a sun and
this is a sun
today I am going to my ouzec sollerl and I am going to have fun and I will get a stecu.

Wombats

Wombats are marsupials, they have a body covered in fur. Their legs are short and very strong. They have sharp claws. Wombats have a pouch that opens backwards. Wombats live in burrows under the ground. They eat grass and roots and berries. Wombats are nocturnal. They look for food at night. They sleep in their burrow all day.

Figure 36. Year One – Writing about personal experience

Figure 37. Year One – Descriptive report on wombats
APPENDIX F

Transcripts of videotapes of writing experiences in preschool

21st October

Activity 1
Participant: Jeba

Setting: Group of children at painting table.
Resources: Paint in plastic trays in middle of table
large sponges
Felt pens
paper
templates

J is sitting at a table writing her name on a piece of paper with a pink felt pen. On top of the piece of paper is a template of an elephant. J finishes writing, puts the cap back on the pen. She goes to pick up the sponge in the blue paint and then reaches for the sponge in the yellow paint. She sponges paint onto the template.

The teacher’s aide comes and sits at J’s right at the end of the table. She addresses a child sitting opposite J who is attempting to write his name.

TA: That’s good Robert (.) thats good (.) ROBE we missed one letter out (.) R.
ROBERT (.) Can you do a little r ↑in there↑

Robert: (inaudible)
TA: I’ll just fit it in for you (.) it goes down and then over (.) ↑right↑

J appears engrossed in her activity, does not speak or look at anyone else at the table. She gives no indication that she is aware of the TA presence.

Activity 2
Participant: Lia

Setting: blackboard easel on carpet
puzzle table (nearby)

Resources: Blackboard easel
magnetic letters
Puzzle of child (with different clothes outfits)

L stands in front of the easel.
The letters O and X are on the blackboard.
She picks up Z and places it in front of the other two letters (ZOX).

L moves towards the puzzle table where Tom and Holly are talking and doing a puzzle together. Holly is seated and Tom is standing next to her.
L looks over their shoulders and smiles.
Tom places a piece on the puzzle and then removes it. Holly grabs it from him and places it saying:
Holly: No put that back on (1.5) oooh so fine

L laughs.
Holly reaches into the container to take another piece of puzzle.
L puts her hand into the container too.
Holly moves the container closer to herself and looks at L.
L removes her hand.
Holly chooses a puzzle piece.

Tom: I don’t think (1.5) are they very ↑good↑
L: No that goes with that (pointing to pieces in the container) no hat no hat (1.5) I think thats the same one

L turns back to the easel and places a j to the left of the z (jZOX)
Tom leaves the puzzle table, stands in front of the easel and rearranges the letters.

Tom: No (. ) like um that
L: No

Tom leaves. L removes the letters leaving only O on the easel. She replaces the X (OX) and searches the container. She removes the X and places OO at the top left hand side of the easel. Then she removes an O and places a stick (not a letter) after the O. She places an 8 next to the stick, briefly, then removes all while looking across room at collage table.

L moves quickly over to the collage table.

Activity 3
Participants: Lia, Jeba

Setting: collage table
Resources: cardboard faces in variety of skin colours felt pens

TA is sitting with some cardboard cutouts of faces. L is given one and she moves the felt pen container closer.

TA: (to another child): Which one would you like
L: ↑This colour↑ (.5) ↑this one↑ (holding up her face for the child to see)
TA: Don’t forget to put your name on the back

L sits down and writes her name on the back of the face (3 fingers on pencil, incorrect grip, which is maintained throughout activity).
J (next to L) writes her name joining the letters together (like running writing)
J and L draw hair. J and L both search for the colours they want in the felt pen tub and continue drawing faces,

L: (to J) ↑Do you know this↑ (1.5) it’s not the ears it’s like the feet
J: Oh those
L: Yes (1.5) do the ears

L draws ears.
J draws a bow in the hair, returns pen to pot.
L: (to J) Do earrings

J watches L draw earrings, then draws her own.

J: Do you like ↑mine↑

L looks.

L: Yes
L watches J drawing little circles around the bottom of the face (a necklace) then draws a circle at the bottom of hers.

L (to J): This is a necklace (1.5) a necklace (1.5) around your neck (demonstrates around neck with hands).

L and J continue drawing necklaces.

L: (to another girl at table) This is a necklace is it ↑good↑ (1.5) (to J) that just doesn’t look good

J: What

L: That doesn’t look good (1.5) that’s green (. ) I like green (. ) I need green (. ) (pointing to J’s face) that looks like a mouth

J: That’s a necklace she’s wearing

L: A necklace is here (places hands around her own neck)

J: Here (1.5) you just can’t see the back

J moves and sits on the other side of L (further away from L)

Tom comes and looks at L’s work.

L: (to Tom) This is you (pointing to her face) no me (1.5) me

J: (to Tom smiling and holding up her face) And this is me

Tom sits down and begins a face.

J watches L then stands and walks away with her face to the collage trolley.

J chooses a paddle pop stick and places it under the face at the neck, then turns back to the table.

L looks at Tom’s face and laughs.

Tom: (to L) Do we just stick these in a ↑bag↑

L: What↑

Tom: Do we stick these on a ↑bag↑

L: You can if you like to (Tom leaves)

J sits down at the collage table again next to L.

J: (to J) Do you think mine’s gooder

L: You said mine’s not very good (1.5) your’s (1.5) mine’s gooder I think mine’s gooder

J leaves.

L explains what to do to Jane. J and Jane choose a face and begin drawing.

Jane comes to look at L’s face.

L: (to Jane with J watching and listening) ↑Is this good↑

Jane: Yes

L: This is the hair (. ) this is the earrings (. ) this is the necklace

Jane:
L: Now go and play
Jane: I'm not playing
L: Yours isn't white (.)(pointing to Jane’s face) mine's white (holds face up to her own face)(2.0) do it like this with mine (2.0) (Jane holds L’s face up to his face) looks good
Jane: Cut out the eyes so you can see
L: No

Children continue drawing, L sings along with the teacher who is on the other side of the room singing with a group of children.

L: (placing face up to her own face) You have to hold it like this (puts it up to Jane’s face) (1.0) is that good (pointing to Jane’s face) that’s yukky (.). that’s yukky (.). do it like me like me (.). you have to copy me (.). copy me

J, L and Jane continue drawing.
Jane: Have we got sticky tape?
L: Yes (.). over there (points to cupboard)

L and J look at each other’s work

L: (to Jane) Mine looks gooder (1.5) mine looks gooder (to J touching her arm) you have to do it round (pointing to the necklace on her own drawing) like me
J: Huh
L: You have to do it round
J: shakes her head
L: That’s better okay (1.0) otherwise it looks bad
J: Why did you do it round?
L: Its round and this is the back and you can take it off (pointing to necklace)

J, L and Jane continue choosing the coloured felt pens and drawing.
J walks over to collage trolley.
L: I’m already finished (1.0) I already stopped (2.0) (looking around) I finished (5.0)(draws some more) there finished

L stands up and walks to the shelf with her face.
J returns with stick and sticky tape and attaches stick to the back of her face.

L (to J) (inaudible)

J shows L the sticks and sticky tape on shelf. L cuts sticky tape with scissors and takes stick.

Activity 4
Participants: Grace, Lia, Zena

Setting: Home Corner (hospital)
Resources: dolls
telephone
trolley with medical equipment
sink
beds
desk with calendar, phone, address book, folder with red cross on it.
white coats

G sits at desk and pushes buttons on telephone. Stands and walks to Anna who is pushing the trolley. G puts the phone on the trolley, takes a bandage and walks over to a doll lying on a stretcher bed and begins wrapping its leg in a bandage. Anna sits beside the second doll and listens to its chest with a stethoscope. G puts a clear plastic mask over her doll’s face and carries it to the sink. Puts a plastic bottle in the doll’s mouth.

Anna: (to G inaudible)
G walks to trolley returns with stethoscope, puts it to her ears and listens to doll’s tummy.
L comes to sink and turns the taps, walks to the table and flips pages of calendar.

G: (To L) (inaudible) only two persons coming (inaudible) (appears to tell L that she couldn’t join the play area)

G walks to trolley and returns with an armband with attached pump. She takes the doll’s blood pressure. Anna watches G and then moves to trolley and takes the armband and pump as G replaces it. She returns to the doll on the stretcher and takes its blood pressure. She and G do not speak to each other.

G walks to trolley and gets needle, walks to Anna and shows her needle, says something inaudibly, Anna nods. G turns and gives doll injection in arm.

L continues turning the pages in the calendar. Looks at G and Anna.
L: (pointing to a page in the calendar)
Look guys this one

Anna and G look over. L leaves the area. G moves over to the table and flips back the pages. Anna approaches and flips back one more page.

G takes a bandage from the trolley and wraps it around the doll’s leg. She goes over to Anna who is sitting on a chair next to her doll on the stretcher and the two girls have a discussion.
G: Your baby (inaudible)
Anna: (inaudible)

G takes bottle from trolley and returns to her doll in the sink. She attaches the bottle to the mask on the doll’s face and blows into the end of the bottle.

Anna walks over to G.
Anna: Can I borrow it
Anna takes bottle and returns to her doll.

Sally and Z enter the area. Sally approaches the doll in the sink wearing a white coat. Sally looks at the doll, moves to the table, presses a telephone button, then picks up the stethoscope and moves back to the doll.

Z stands at the table and turns the pages in the calendar. One page is beside the calendar on the table. She appears to be listening to the others talking. G stands at the table, picks up the book with the red cross on it and a pencil and begins writing in it (top of page left hand side). She makes large, forceful marks in it – then turns the book upside down and continues. Some appear to be letter formations, others are obviously lines and scribbles.

Anna: (to Sally) I thought you were supposed to be playing over (inaudible)
G: What
Anna: That you oh (inaudible)
(to G) Look if we're doing this
G: I'm making (inaudible)

Anna: okay you tell me why but that's not for the doctors
G (loudly to Anna) ME
G closes the book and then opens it again and continues writing some letter-like formations, underlines them twice and does some loopy circles across the page underneath the lines.
Anna closes the book and then returns.
Anna: (to G) If you're going to make (1.5) then all you'll have to do is leave
Anna leaves (upset).
G: (to Z) WELL I'LL JUST FINISH NOW
G, upset, walks away.

Activity 5
Participants: Jeba, Grace, Zena
Setting: collage table
Resources: cardboard faces in variety of skin colours
felt pens
T= teacher

J sits alone at the collage table drawing on another cardboard face. She is holding a pink felt pen in her right hand. Her tall finger appears to be up on the pencil (incorrect pencil grip). She has drawn eyes, nose, mouth spots for cheeks and a hairline. She begins colouring the necklace.

G comes to the table and sits next to J. She draws on a cardboard face. She is holding a pink felt pen in her right hand. She holds the pen correctly. She draws eyes, nose, mouth, changes colour and draws in hair.

The two girls appear to ignore each other. G gets a stick and attaches it to the back of her face. From time to time G looks up watching what else is happening in the room. Anna and Z come to the table. Anna chooses a face. G stands next to her. Z, G, J and Anna all work at the table drawing on their faces without talking. Z's pencil grip is incorrect (tall finger up on pencil). T joins the table with Ian.

T: (To Ian) Put your name on the back (.), Ian (.), before you forget (2.0)
Grace is doing hers nicely (1.0) very well
(To J) you're doing running writing now J (2.0) you've changed again (3.0)
she's doing her running writing
Z and Ben look at J's writing.

T: Are you going to do me a face ↑Ben↑

Ben: I've already done one
T: Have you done one for your workbook (.), ↑mate↑ you're going to have a beautiful workbook to give to mum
Ben: No
Grace walks to T and shows her the two faces she has made.

T: Yes (. ) all right which ones for the workbook↑↑this one ↑do you want to put any woolly ↑hair on↑↑anything ↑else↑↑a beard↑↑we’ve got some lovely cotton wool for hair if you want to make some ↑no↑↑all right (. ) I’ll keep that for the workbook

Z chooses wool for the hair and begins spreading glue on her face using a paintbrush.
G watches and then does the same. G walks away and gets some bits from the collage trolley and sticks and staples them on her face. Z continues gluing bits. G walks away.

22nd October

Activity 1
Participant: Zena

Setting: 3 children standing at wall.
Resources: Birthday frieze on wall about 2 metres above floor. home pockets (pockets in rows on wall for T to put messages for home)
Z and Kay and Mary standing together pointing up at the birthday frieze. Cutouts of figures that the children have decorated (earlier in the year) to look like themselves are grouped under the months of the year.

Z: Well it has yellow hair (1.0) can you see right up there with yellow ↑hair↑
Kay: Do you mean that one with the polka dots on its ↑neck↑
(Z nods head)
Kay: Mines eighth of June (1.0) ↑whats yours↑ ↑whats yours↑
Z: Second of May

Mary: (inaudible)
Kay: So what do you want us to ↑say ↑to you
Mary: (inaudible)
Kay: What
Mary: (inaudible)
Kay: No we were seeing when our birthdays are (1.0) that’s not mean (to Z) is it
Z: No that’s not ↑mean ↑
Kay: ↑Not mean at all ↑

Z walks two steps past Kay to the home pockets on the wall.
Z: This ones mine (pointing to her name on a pocket) at the very bottom (1.5) I wish mine were this one or this one (pointing to the pockets above hers)
Kay: (to Mary) Which ones ↑yours↑
Mary: I don’t know
Kay: I do (1.0) this is my one here (pointing to a pocket at the top) that’s mine
Mary: This ones mine (pointing to a pocket next to Kay’s)
Kay: No (.5) we know it (1.0) you don’t have the name Kirk
Mary: (pointing to a pocket) Whose is that one
Kay: We don’t know oh that ones Beckys I forgot (1.5) whose is this one
I think it's yours (1.0) (points to name on pocket) this is your one (1.0) this is your one this is your one

(Mary shakes her head)
Mary: I know Sarah's
Z: (inaudible) (points to the name on the pocket)
Kay: (inaudible)
(to Mary) so now you have this one (1.0) you have (inaudible) now you have this one
Z: No you're not supposed to do that look (1.0) look at this one (points to pocket at the top)
Kay: That must be someone else's
Mary: ^Hannahs^-
Z: No not that one (1.0) see the one with no name (pointing to a pocket at the top)
Kay: Oh yeeaaah
up the top there must be –
Z walks away to home corner (a hospital is set up)

Activity 2
Participant: Zena

Setting: home corner.
Resources: dolls
telephone	
trolley with medical equipment
sink
beds
desk with calendar, phone, address book, folder with red cross on it.
white coats

Mary: Hey let's play doctors
Mary and Kay walk to the stand and take down white coats
Z: I'm not going to wear a coat
Kay: You have to
Kay puts coat back
Z: I don't have to wear a coat
Mary puts coat back.
Kay and Z sit down on chairs at the table.
Z takes the calendar
Z: I'll check the date

Kay: (inaudible takes calendar)
Z: (watches Kay turn pages) one two
Kay: one two twelve twenty-two that says (pointing to 22) (moves calendar) put it in the book

Z and Kay press the address book so that the cover springs up. Both girls smile.
Kay: (to Z, inaudible, but points to a tray of paper and tub of pencils on the sink)
Z brings them closer.

Kay: No the one with the red cross
Z gets the book with the red cross and hands it to Kay. Kay opens it with the red cross on the underside and both girls take pencils and write together in the book (scribble only) Kay says what she is writing but it is inaudible:

Kay: (while writing) the 2\textsuperscript{nd} **** the 2\textsuperscript{nd} there must be ***come quick

Zena takes calendar and scribbles on calendar while looking around room. Puts down calendar. Z takes face mask to doll on stretcher and puts it on her face. She returns the mask to the trolley and returns to watch Kay at the table. Z watches Kay, looks around the room, returns to the trolley, picks up an instrument and returns to the doll. She checks its ears and throat with the instrument. She replaces the instrument and returns to the table. She picks up a pencil and scribbles on the calendar. She sees Kay on the phone.

Z: I need to ring someone

Kay continues dialling and puts the phone to her ear dialling. Z reaches out to take the phone.

Kay: Not home today

Kay presses the button on the phone. Z reaches out and takes the phone and begins dialling. She says the numbers she is pressing (but not clearly)

Kay: Do you know what my real phone number is (1.0) 3202 6618

Z continues pressing numbers. Kay reaches out to take the phone.

Kay: I have to call someone

Z pulls back the phone and puts it up to her ear.

Kay: Who is it (1.0) is it for me

Z returns the phone to Kay.

Kay: You forgot to click (1.0) you have to press that one too (Z moves away) you have to click that one okay

Z takes a syringe from the trolley, ignoring Kay, and inserts it in the doll’s mouth. She lifts the doll’s blanket and drops the syringe between the doll’s legs, ignoring the other girl at the doll’s side. Z returns to the trolley and picks up a bottle, puts it in her mouth and sucks it. She takes the arm band from the trolley and returns to the doll’s side. She wraps it around the doll’s arm again ignoring the girl with the doll.

Z turns and skips away out of home corner.

Activity 3
Participant: Zena

Setting: blackboard easel
Resources: magnetic letters

Z searches through the tub of letters with Hannah. She holds up a letter V

Z: V that’s a V
She replaces it and continues searching with Hannah. She holds up a circle.

Z: How come there's a circle in there (3.0) (Z and Hannah continue searching)
   N there's an N (gives it to Hannah)
   M there's an M (returns it to the tub)
   do you want an O

Hannah: Yes but I've got an O
Z: eh
Hannah: I've got an O
Z: Oh there's a J

Hannah places the letters on the magnetic board that she has in her hand
Hannah: H a n I need another n
Z returns to searching.

Z: (chanting) where is N (1.0) where is N

Hannah takes N and places it on the magnetic board. She attempts to place an A but it falls to the floor. Hannah picks it up and looks at the back of it.

Z: Anyway you can just hold it there (Z holds the final A in place on the board)
Joanna: there Joanna

The girls replace the letters in the tub.

Joanna: What are you going to do now

Z looks around and walks to the puzzle table. Hannah follows. Z picks up a puzzle piece of a shirt and places it on the puzzle.

Z: Now we need a skirt.

Both girls look in the container for pieces. Z picks up a green skirt and places it on the puzzle.

Z: There
Hannah: How about the dresses

Z removes the pieces and Hannah puts down a dress on the puzzle. Then Hannah puts a hat on the puzzle. Z takes a shoe and puts it on. Then she puts on the other one.

Z: There we go
Hannah: Don't you think she needs a *
Z: I don't think so

Z returns the shoes to the container and looks around.

Hannah: Let's go and do something else now
Z: Let's go and play
Hannah: I want to do something else
Both girls walk over to the collage table.

Z: I’m going to do a *

Z walks to the collage trolley and looks carefully at everything with a finger in her mouth. She returns to the collage table and chooses a face. She sits down at the table opposite Hannah. She looks at the pencils in the tub, then checks the colour of her skin on her tummy. She searches for a pencil and then moves to find a pink felt pen in another tub. She begins to draw on the face. (Pen held in right hand, third finger up on the pen). She watches others as she draws but does not talk. She draws ears, hair, eyes, nose, mouth. Z goes to the collage trolley and returns with some bits of paper. She spreads glue around the mouth with a paintbrush and sticks little bits of paper on it cutting them to size. She spreads more glue, this time holding the paintbrush in her left hand then transferring it to her right hand to complete the task. Z takes her face to show the teacher.

T: Oh Z that’s beautiful (1.0) did you want a stick on it
Z shakes her head.
T: Has it got your name on the back (turns over face) oh let’s put your name on it somewhere
Z returns to the table and writes her name on the front of the face using a mixture of upper and lower case letters. Z turns the face over and writes her name on the back (exactly the same).

Z walks away to the painting table. She takes a piece of paper and writes her name on it. She chooses a dinosaur template and sponges paint over the template, changing colours to make it brown and green. Next Z chooses a bird template and repeats the process.

Activity 4
Participant: Zena

Setting: sitting at a table
Resources: board game

Z sits at a table with T and a group of children. They are playing a board game.

Everyone sings while children take turns at moving the train around the board:

Engine engine number 9
going down the preschool line
if the train goes off the track
will I get my money back

When the singing ends the T instructs the child whose turn it is to lift the train to reveal a colour on a dice under the train. The child removes that colour cube off the board. At the end of the game the child with the most cubes is the winner.

Z participates in the singing and has a turn at pushing the train. When the singing stops she lifts the train to reveal white. She takes one white cube off the board. She pushes the board on to the next child and continues singing.

T: Whoever gets blue or red this time can take all the blues or all the reds (1.0) the first person who gets blue or red can take all that colour
The board is passed to Z again. Everyone sings the rhyme, and Z lifts the train to reveal red.

T: So Z can take how many ↑reds↑
Z: Two reds
T: Okay and the last person has to get blue so let’s just spin the train around and see who can get blue

Z passes the board and everyone sings for the next child.
T: No William have a spin and see if he can get it

Kelly: What did she get
T: She got red

The board is passed and everyone sings. William lifts the train.

T: How many cubes did you ↑get ↑(1.0) four (1.0) so count up all your cubes and see how many you’ve got altogether (1.0) ↑who’s got the most↑

Children (together): Joanne

T: Joanne’s got the most (.5) let’s just count and see (.5) put them in a little line to double check (.5) let’s all count them together one, two three…

The children look at Joanne’s cubes and count with the teacher to 7 and then count each child’s cubes in turn.

T: So Joanne is the winner.

Everyone claps.

28th October

Activity 1
Participant: Grace

Setting: children sitting at the collage table.
Resources: sheets of coloured paper with straight lines drawn across the sheets, scissors

G is cutting along the lines and putting the strips into a container. She is holding the scissors in her right hand.

(G, K, Z all did this activity at different times)

Activity 2
Participant: Kaori

Setting: home corner (hospital)
Resources: white coats
trolley laden with medical equipment
desk with calendar, book, pens
dolls
beds
K puts on a coat and picks up the stethoscope and goes over to a doll being held by Hannah. K lifts the doll's shirt and listens to its chest. She puts down the stethoscope and picks up the telephone and puts it to her ear.

K: Hello
K removes the phone from her ear and presses buttons on the phone
K: Hello
K walks around talking quietly into the phone. She puts down the phone and walks over to the table and takes the calendar. She tears a page out of the calendar and makes some letter-like formations in the top left-hand corner of the page and then turns the page over and circles some dates on the calendar. She takes the page over to Kay who is sitting at the desk.

Kay: What's this I'll circle it

K walks over to the trolley and takes an instrument. She goes to the doll on the stretcher and examines its ears.

Kay: Here you go K here you go (handing K the page from the calendar) I can see you **
K: Oh
K puts the page on the sink and picks up the instrument again. She looks at it and then puts it back on the trolley. She returns to the desk and picks up a diary.

Kay: Let me see (1.0) let me see
K: I'll check (K turns the pages in the diary, chooses one, and shows Kay) this page this page

K moves over to where Hannah is holding a doll.

Hannah: Give her a bath

K takes the doll to the sink and puts the baby in the sink. She pretends to turn on the taps and wash the baby. K takes the baby back to Hannah.

Kay: K (1.0)
K: ↑What↑
Kay: *** one again
K: Oh again
Kay: No ***
K puts down the diary and picks up another and turns the pages. K watches and picks up the first diary.
K: (pointing to the page) oh this one (1.0) this one is the same one as that (1.0) I say this one is the same one as that

K walks away, picks up a pencil, and returns.

Kay: I like the Australia part (showing the map of Australia in the front of the diary)
its got * female * in it

K walks away and then returns. Kay talks quietly to herself. K picks up the diary and starts looking at the pages from the front.

Kay: Give me that (taking the diary from K) I have * coming with a tummy ache at four o'clock
K: Oh cool
K walks over to a clock and moves the hands on the clock, turns to Kay and says something inaudible. Kay doesn’t respond. K walks over to the eye chart and looks and points at the letters on the eye chart. She returns to the desk where Kay is still sitting and writes on the calendar. She pulls out one page and circles some dates on the calendar. (Pencil grip is correct).

Kay: (walks over to see what K is doing) No no no no no that’s ten (1.0) you have to circle

Kay moves to the calendar and says the number on each page as she turns them

Kay: 9 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19

K puts her page in the flip-up address book and closes the lid. She turns and pushes the trolley towards the beds. She chooses some bottles and sits down where Hannah is holding the doll. She attends to the doll without appearing to speak.

Activity 3
Participant: Grace, Zena

Setting: painting table
Resources: paint pots, paper

G is squirting paint onto one side of the paper to make a blot picture. Z has finished squirting paint and has folded her paper and is pressing the two sides together near G.

Z: Look at this
T: Beautiful Z I like those wiggly bits on the bottom

Z takes her painting outside to dry. G. continues squirting paint.

T: Your name G (1.0) what about your name

G picks up a pen in her right hand and writes her name in the top right hand corner of the page and then continues squirting paint. Z takes another piece of paper and writes her name in the top left-hand corner of the page

![Zena's name writing (re-creation)](image)

Both girls continue squirting paint beside each other. Neither girls speak or look at any one else’s work.

T: (to G) Okay why don’t you fold it now (. ) you’ve got a lot in there

G folds it.

T: Press it with your hand
G presses it with the palm of her hand then opens it.

G: T look at this (. ) T look at this

T: Beautiful G.
G takes her painting outside to dry.

Mary: (to Z) Is that your name (. ) is that your name

Z: (pointing to her name). That’s my name

Z continues squirting paint.

Activity 4
Participants: Grace, Lia

Setting: home corner (hospital)
Resources: white coats
          trolley laden with medical equipment
          desk with calendar, book, pens
dolls
beds

L is kneeling on the floor putting things in a handbag. G is watching her. L points at the video camera and laughs.
L (to G): Look at that
Look at that
G (leaning forward) What is it (said in “so what!” kind of way)
Both girls turn away from the video camera.

G picks up the telephone and presses numbers. She opens up the book with the red cross on it and turns the pages. She takes a pencil and scribbles on the first page and then turns the page and writes her name. She begins in the middle of the page and writes left to right. She begins her given name and her family name with a capital. Other letters lower case. Not all letters are formed correctly. She writes

![Figure 39. Grace’s Number writing (re-creation)](image)

She puts some loose pages back in the Appointment Book and then closes it.

G walks towards L, K and Hannah. She points to each of them as if counting them.
G (to L): There are 3 people see 1, 2, 3 (pointing to each in turn).
L (to G): No. 1, 2, 3, 4 (she points and counts also, but includes herself)
4 people now

G puts on a white coat, takes a bandage off the trolley and approaches a doll laid out on a blanket on the floor. K and L are sitting either side of the doll.
L: No we already have a band-aid
G: It’s not a band-aid.
G returns the bandage to the trolley and picks up the stethoscope off the floor next to Hannah.

Hannah: Hey (grabs the stethoscope) I need that.

G goes to the trolley and takes a dish of instruments.
G: (to Hannah) I need a bag
Child: I’ve got a bag
G: No another bag (2.0) I need another bag

G sits and watches the other 3 children.

G, L and K continue to play hospitals taking turns to be the patient, the doctor and the nurse.
(not all transcribed)

Activity 5
Participant: Zena

Setting: children sitting at the collage table with the TA.
Resources: sheets of coloured paper with straight lines drawn across the sheets, scissors

Z is cutting along the lines. She is holding the scissors in her right hand and cutting from right to left away from her body.

TA: (to group at table)
Do you know what we are doing? We are going to make paper chains to decorate our room. Beautiful chains to decorate our classroom.

Z (to TA); Yeah I know. I did one of these yesterday.

Activity 6
Participants: Kaori, Grace, Lia

Setting: children at the collage table with the TA.
Resources: sheets of paper folded down centre
Squeeze bottles of paint
scissors

K and G take paper from a shelf and sit at table with TA.

TA: (handing K a felt pen) Now K, you do your name
K writes her name in upper case(L to R). One letter (i) is in lower case.
G writes her name L to R first letter upper, rest lower case.

K G and L squeeze paint onto paper passing bottles to one another.
L draws a face with the paint. G and K look and do one too. K folds her paper and rubs it with her hand. She opens it, then goes outside to hang it to dry.

Activity 7
Participant: Grace
Setting: a corner of the classroom
Resources: magnetic board
Letters in a bin

G is placing letters on the magnetic board. She begins in the top right hand corner. G searches bin of letters for the ones she wants. She puts out p-e-g, then adds random letters (upper and lower case) to complete the line and begins the next line (return sweep).

G puts out two upper case Os, then moves them to where there is another upper case O. She removes the three Os. Then she chooses two ps on the board and removes them, two xs, and then randomly removes all other letters and returns them to the bin.

29th October

Activity 1
Participant: Lia, Grace, Zena
Setting: painting table
Resources: paint pots
paper

L is sitting at the table writing her name on the top left-hand corner of a piece of paper. She is holding the felt pen in her right hand. The thumb and first two fingers are grasping the pen.

L squirts many coloured paints randomly onto one side of a piece of paper, then folds it over and smooths the paper. She does not speak.

G writes her name on the top left-hand side of a piece of paper with a thick crayon. She writes left to right.
G squirts paint on to her paper.

G takes another piece of paper and writes her name again (exactly the same). She makes another blot picture. The paint does not come out of the squeeze bottle. The teacher tells her to shake it. She shakes it but does not speak.

Z joins G at the table. She shows Z how to squeeze the bottles to make the paint come out. The two girls watch each other making their blot pictures.

**Activity 2**

Participants: Zena, Jeba

Setting: children sitting at the collage table.

Resources: sheets of paper
Tubs of felt-pens
Collage trolley (cardboard, discarded household containers)
scissors

Z is writing her name on the top left hand corner of a sheet of paper. She is holding the pen in her right hand. Her thumb and first finger are holding the pen and her tall finger is resting under it.

Z pauses to watch J and to listen and observe conversations in other parts of the room. She draws a circle in the middle of her page with a brown pen and adds two dots for eyes, a nose and a mouth. She adds a crown on top and draws details on the crown. She draws a triangle for a body and adds dots on it. She adds straight lines for legs and then colours in the triangle shaped body. One child comments “that’s nice” and Z smiles. Z chooses orange and silver pens and adds more detail to the crown. She watches what the girl next to her is doing (out of camera range)

Z: What you need is another piece of paper. (no spoken response from the other girl)
Z continues drawing. She draws another figure like the one she has just finished. She adds squiggly lines around the figures and in the background.
J is cutting a strip off the edge of a piece of paper. She folds the remaining piece of paper and writes (left to right) on her creation. She chooses a different coloured pen for each letter.

![Figure 43. Preschool - Jeba’s letter to Zena (re-creation)](image)

J continues cutting paper. She draws two figures holding hands and umbrellas over their heads walking on grass. She pauses to listen to other children at the table talking about lunch boxes but does not say anything. She adds sky, a sun, a house.

The girl next to her asks if her sister is two.
J: No. She is not 2.
J turns over her picture and writes

![Figure 44. Preschool - Jeba’s writing on the back of her picture (re-creation)](image)

J folds up another piece of paper to make an envelope with the picture inside it. She glues the edges of the envelope and sticks the flap down. On the front of the envelope she writes:
Figure 45. Preschool - Jeba’s writing on an envelope (re-creation)

Z writes the following above it.

Figure 46. Preschool - Zena’s writing on envelope (re-creation)

The teacher tells everyone to tidy up.
J gives her “letter” to Z. Z runs outside to put it in her bag.

Activity 3

Participant: Lia

Resources: Magnetic board on easel, plastic letters

L places the letter C on the left-hand side of the board and adds an O and a £ (left to right). She puts the letters back in the tub and walks away.

L returns to the board and places the letters COM on the left hand side of the board. She removes them and chooses upper and lower case (H h). She places H on the board and turns the h around so it is upside down, looks at it and turns it again so that it is the right way up. She adds upper and lower case (R r) and adds them to the right of the first two letters. Then she removes them and walks away.

Activity 4

Participant: Lia

Resources: Glass panel in a frame standing upright. Paintbrushes Pots of coloured paint

L is standing on one side of the glass panel and another girlis standing on the other side. Both are painting tree trunks on the glass (copying each other). They both move to the paint pots to change colours.

L: Hey! A lizard. (L points to a small lizard running across the floor.)
Both girls laugh and continue painting.

L: Black. I've got black.

Activity 5

Participant: Lia

Resources: weather chart

L is standing in front of a magnetic weather chart with two children. The chart has on it:
- the days of the week in a list down one side
- a small map of Australia
- a sun
- numbers up to 31 in boxes (the date)
- pictures with captions (eg. Windy, Cloudy)

Counters are used to highlight features of the day's weather.

L places a counter on the map of Australia.
Child 1: That's Australia.

L moves the counter to the sun
L: There (L giggles)
Child 1: Yeah that's right put it there

Child 2 places a counter on Wednesday.
L: No not there that's Sunday.
Child 1 moves the counter to Tuesday
L: No that's Friday
L moves the counter to Tuesday
L: This one

Child 2 points to the picture with the caption "hot"
Child 2: Let's put it there it's hot

4th November

Activity 1
Participants: Kaori, Lia, Grace, Zena

Setting: collage table
Resources: strips of coloured paper
Bits and pieces in containers (bottle tops, pictures, shapes, pasta)
Buff coloured cut outs of faces
Wool
Felt pens
Boxes
Z is drawing a face and gluing wool for hair. She does not talk.

K and J are gluing things on a strip of paper to make a pattern. They do not talk.

G is gluing cereal boxes and toilet rolls to make a person but it does not stand up. She does not talk.

G goes to the collage trolley and chooses an envelope. She takes it to the collage table and tapes it (flap up) onto a piece of paper stuck on her cardboard person. She writes her name on the back of the envelope with a felt pen.

![Grace's name writing](image)

*Figure 47. Preschool - Grace’s name writing (re-creation)*

L is cutting a tissue box. She does not talk. She colours the top of the box with felt pens. She draws a window and traces around her hand.

Activity 2

Participant: Jeba

Setting: easel on carpet

Resources: magnetic board

Letters

J is standing with others at the magnetic board. There are lots of letters randomly placed on the board.

J: I’m making the A B C.

Boy: There’s no es here.

J: Yes there is

I need an e

J chooses a J and places it on the top left hand corner of the board. She moves the other letters away so that there is a space next to the J. She chooses an e from the letters on the board and places it next to the J.

J: J-e

J chooses a p from the board and places it next to the e, turns it around, and puts it back with the random letters. (rejected). She chooses a d and tries to place it on the board back-to-front so that it looks like a p. It does not hold in place, so
she returns it to the random letters (rejected). She chooses a b and places it next to the e.

J  J-e-b

J chooses an a and puts it next to the other letters.

J:  J-e-b-a

That’s my name J-e-b-a Jeba

J places lines under the name

J:  That’s my name J-e-b-a   Jeba
(The boy does not respond.)

Activity 3
Participant:  Jeba
Setting:  corner of room
Resources:  computer
            Simple Paint program

J is sitting at the computer. There is a line of children behind her waiting for their turn. She is holding the mouse in her right hand and moving the cursor to click on the icons at the side of the screen. She clicks on the eraser and clears the screen.

J clicks on the paintbrush icon and begins drawing a thick stick figure on the screen. She clicks on the eraser and clears the screen. She chooses a thin line and draws a circle. She chooses the thick paintbrush and “scribbles” across the screen.

The other children crowd in and say her name (They want a turn). J gets up and moves away.

Activity 4
Participant:  Grace

Setting:  table in centre of room
Resources:  large sheets of paper
            Thick wax crayons
            Green paint
            Paint rollers

G is drawing a picture on a piece of paper. She is sharing the paper with a boy on the other side of the table.
G draws a row of triangles at the bottom of the page with rectangles (roofs of houses with chimneys?)
She draws a yellow sun, green grass and some yellow background.
The teacher comes to the table with a tray of green paint and a roller. She instructs G to cover her drawing with paint. G takes a roller and covers her picture with green paint. She does not speak to the teacher.
Activity 5
Participant: Kaori, Lia
Setting: corner of room
Resources: computer

Simple Paint program

K is seated at the computer. L and a boy are looking over her shoulder. On the screen is a dialogue box which says: *Clicking the [ ] chooses the eraser.*

K sits with her right hand on the mouse. The boy leans forwards and points to the eraser icon on the side of the screen. K attempts to click on it, but cannot.

L: Rub

The teacher walks past.
Teacher: Oh I'll get that for you K what we need to do to get out of that is you come down to this one here (points to screen) and click.

Teacher places her hand over K’s on the mouse and guides her hand to the spot. The dialogue box disappears and the teacher stands back and watches.

K clicks on the erase icon and wipes out the scribble on the screen.

Boy: It’s like a vacuum cleaner (referring to the eraser)

K clears the screen.

Teacher: Very good K

Teacher watches K click on icons.
Teacher: Pick it up K. You can actually lift it up in the air like this (Teacher leans over and places her hand on top of K’s) and put it over here. You’ve got more room to do things then.

Boy: Look there (points to icon).
Teacher: She’ll get it.

K moves the cursor across the screen.

Teacher: Now over to this one (pointing to drawing icon at side of screen).

K moves the cursor to where the teacher is pointing.

Teacher: Just wait. Wait until it goes black. Now come back over here (points to middle of screen). Now draw.

K draws on the screen.

Boy: I want a turn
L: What’s your name.
Boy (to K):   Come on.  
            Hurry up.  
            I want a turn
K (to boy):   In a minute
K chooses the eraser icon and rubs out her drawing.  She walks away.

Activity 6
Participant:  Lia, Grace, Zena
Setting:    corner of room
Resources: computer
Simple Paint program

L sits at the computer.  She places her right hand on the mouse and erases the 
lines on the screen.  She chooses the paintbrush icon and does a scribbly 
movement on the screen.
Child:  Who’s having a go there.....L
    L can you tuck in a bit?
L:    What?
Child: Can you tuck in a bit?
L:    What?
Child: Put your chair in a bit.
L:    Okay (L pulls her chair in)
L clicks on the eraser icon and erases the scribble off the screen.  She walks 
away.
G sits at the computer.  She clicks on the paintbrushes and moves the cursor 
across the screen, making broad scribble movements like painting.
Teacher:  Okay G I think you can come away from there now.
G does not show any response but stands, clicks on the eraser icon and begins 
rubbing out the scribble.
Teacher: (to G)  Are you letting (child's name) have a turn?
G:    I'm rubbing it out.
Teacher (quietly to G)  Leave it.  You let her do it.
G stands next to the keyboard and points to the screen to show the child where 
to click.  She reaches out and presses a key.  She watches for a moment and 
wags away.

Z is sitting at the computer.  She has painted the screen by brushing the cursor in 
wide scribbly movements.  She clicks on the eraser icon and uses the same 
stroke across the screen but it is not rubbing out.
Teacher:  If you move it just a little bit Z it might be better.  Click it again.  Now 
you've got your little box back (points to the screen) you can rub out.

Z has not lifted her gaze from the screen or visibly responded.
Teacher:  Tricky isn't it?
Z:  Yes
Z moves the mouse back onto the mouse pad and begins rubbing out.
T:  There we go. (Pause)  
    Now Z because we're running short on time Lovey, I'll just get you to do a little 
bit of drawing.  Come back over here (places hand on Z's and guides it) and click
Z:  Click
Teacher:   Okay click on that one
Just see what you can do with that.
You can have a bit more time next time.

Z carefully draws a squiggly circle and then makes random sweeping movements (scribble) across it. She stops and gets up from the computer and walks away.

Activity 7
Participants:  L, girl, Z

Setting: On the carpet
Resources: Weather chart on easel
          Magnetic counters

L places a counter on Monday, hesitates and removes it
Girl: Jenny said it was this (places counter on Wednesday.
L removes it.
L: Ask someone....(pause) remember
L places a counter on Monday.
Girl: It's not that day.
L turns and calls to the Teacher aide
L: Anne, Anne is it this day? (points to Sunday)
Teacher aide: No the next day.
L points to Monday.
L: This day?
Teacher aide: No the next day. Tuesday.
Girl: See I told you
L places the counter on Wednesday.
Teacher aide: The one up L, Tuesday.
Z:: This one (points to Tuesday). That's Wednesday.
L places the counter on Tuesday.
Z points to each day starting at the top of the chart and recites:
Z: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday.
Z repeats saying the days with L watching.

L takes a counter and places it on the square with 4 in it.
L: This one's number 4 like this.
A boy moves it to number 5
L: That's number 5.
Z: It's supposed to be 4
L moves the counter across to higher numbers and laughs.
The boy tries to stop her.
Children: It's supposed to be 4
Girl: It's 4. 1-2-3-4
Girl: It's October not November.
L gathers all the counters
L: Got it. I'll have all of these.
Boy: Can I have one?
L: No (loudly)
L (holding counters in two hands away from boy): You’re supposed to be my friend.
Boy: Okay, you can do whatever you want. (Points to 4) Put it there.
L: I know
Boy: You have 2 and I'll have 2 (looks at counters in L’s hand) You have 3 and I'll have 2,
L gives boy 2 counters. She places a counter on the number 4.
Boy: It is number 4 (meaning it is the 4th).
L places a counter on Tuesday and on October.
L: Is that July? July’s my birthday.

Activity 8
Participant: Kaori
 Setting: Collage table
 Resources: cardboard boxes, Glue, Felt pens

Kaori is writing her name on her cardboard box construction. She holds the pen in her right hand correctly. (accepted grip) She writes right to left, starting in the middle of the box. The o is placed before the A. All letters capitals except for i.

![Figure 48. Preschool – Kaori’s name writing (re-creation)](image)

Activity 9
Participant: Jeba
 Setting: easel on carpet
 Resources: magnetic board, plastic letters

J and a girl are sorting through the tub of magnetic letters. J chooses an M and places it on the board. The girl puts it back in the tub. The girl puts a string of random letters on the board (right to left).
Girl: That’s not my name.
J picks up some straight lines and places them under the row of letters. She pauses and listens to the teacher talking to the children at the computer. She turns back to the board.
J: I know how to spell L. L is like this (J takes two straight lines and puts them together to make L).

![Figure 49. Preschool – Lia’s letter L (re-creation)](image)

Both girls return the letters to the tub and walk away.
Activity 10
Participant: Jeba
Setting: Collage table
Resources: envelope, old Christmas card
Glue
Felt pens

J chooses an envelope and an old Christmas card. (The card has been cut in half so the picture is retained) J turns the card over and chooses a black felt pen. She holds the pen in her right hand and writes a letter to mummy (see Appendix E Figure 8):
After writing “to mummy” J pauses and listens to the teacher read out a Christmas card to a child on the other side of the table.
Teacher (to child): That’s already got some writing on it. What does it say?
   To Grandma, Grandpa and Tony,
   It’s a Christmas card isn’t it
   May the peace and beauty of Christmas be with you through the New Year.
Now what are you going to say? You can use your own words. What words are you going to write on yours?
J gets up and gets a tray of stamps. She chooses one and attempts to peel it off the backing paper. It won’t peel so she takes scissors and cuts around the edge until she can get it to peel. She brushes glue on the back of the stamp and sticks it in the bottom right hand corner of the envelope. She continues writing on the card (see above). J takes the card and the envelope over to the teacher.
Teacher (reading) To Mummy (pause) What does this part say (pointing)
J: How are you
Teacher and J: How are you today.
J: I am fine.
Teacher: I am fine
Teacher to J: That’s beautiful. Isn’t that lovely (shows another child) That’s what J’s written. I like this little person down here too (points to person on card). Are you going to put it in the envelope? J turns over card to show stamp.
Teacher: Oh You’ve got a stamp on it as well. Maybe you can write “To Mummy” on the front. Can you do that?
J nods
J: (to teacher) Can you put this one in?
Teacher: Yes. Will it fit. Oh it’s a bit long isn’t it. Maybe you might like to cut a bit off the end. That might make it fit.
J returns to the collage table and cuts a strip off the end. She tries to put the card in, then cuts off another strip and puts the card in the envelope. She removes it and cuts a strip off the top of the card and closes the envelope. She writes on the envelope

Figure 50. Preschool – Jeba’s writing to mum (re-creation)
J takes the envelope outside to her bag.

11th November

Activity 1
Participant: Zena, Grace, Jeba

Setting: painting table
Resources: paper
Paint
Cookie cutters

Z is sitting at the table with a sheet of paper in front of her. She has written her name at the top left-hand corner of the page. She chooses a star shaped cookie cutter and places it in the paint and then counts 1, 2, 3. She stamps it on the upper left-hand side of the page and counts again 1, 2, 3. She repeats this over and over again left to right, line after line until the page is full. She chooses a felt pen and writes BeLL beside her name. There is a space between the letters of her name and that of the word BeLL. She does not speak while she is doing this activity. Other children at the table stamp their pattern randomly on the paper.

Figure 51 Zena’s pattern-making and name writing (re-creation)

Z goes over to the teacher with her paper. She pats the teacher’s arm.

Z: Look look What does that say? (Z points to the writing on page)
Teacher: Lovely Z. Stars everywhere. (Reads) “Zena Bell”
Z nods and laughs
Teacher: Can you read it too? You read it.
Z looks at the teacher and says “Zena Bell”
Teacher: Very good.
Z walks away.
Z,G and J are writing their names in the top right-hand corner of the sheet of paper. J looks across at G writing her name. G has written her name (as before) but the last letter appears as a W instead of an M.

J: Isn’t the W M? M?
G looks at her name and changes it.
Note: J appears to be aware that the last letter of G’s name is not correct. She is asking G if the W should be an M.

G and J do random stamps on the page.

Activity 2
Participant: Grace Jeba

Setting: collage table
Resources: cardboard with bird outline drawn on it. Felt pen Feathers
G, K J and other children cut out the bird shape on the cardboard. They choose a feather and glue it on their bird for a wing. They take a pen and draw in the eye.
G glues her feather on the tail and draws wing feathers with a pen. She writes her name on the body of the bird (capital letter for first letter of given name, lower case the rest; family name all in capitals). She writes MR/W and draws a box around them.
G: (to herself) MR/W

![MR/W](image)

Figure 52. Preschool - Grace’s writing of computer command (re-creation)

She takes the bird to the teacher.
Teacher: What is it? I just want G to tell me this again.
G: MR/W I do that on the computer
Teacher: What does that mean? Does it mean anything special?
G does not respond
Teacher: Just letters is it?
G: I do that if I want to play a game.
Teacher: Oh. So that’s like a little command to tell the computer to play games.
G nods her head.
Teacher: I’ll have to remember that. I don’t think my computer does that.
G: But my computer does.

G goes to the collage table and takes some bits and pieces and glues them onto her bird. She holds her bird up above her head and “flies” it across to the TA. She pretends the bird is speaking to the TA.
G: Hello Anne.
TA: Hello little bird.
G continues to “fly” her bird out to her bag.

G returns and makes another bird as above. She writes her name (as above) and
puts a dot at the end, then writes the letters DAR. She scribbles over the top of
these and begins again writes DAR\W and adds a dot (see below). She says
each letter as she writes it. (D-A-R-slash-W.).

```
DAR\W.
```

*Figure 53. Preschool – Grace’s writing of Computer command (re-creation)*

At the top of the bird’s back she writes :

```
36/33 71
```

*Figure 54. Preschool – Grace’s writing of phone number (re-creation)*

G: (to no one in particular) That’s my phone number.
G gets up with her bird and takes it to the TA.
G: That’s my phone number
TA: Oh is it. Double 3 71 9342
G walks out side with her bird making squawking noises.

J makes a bird. She writes her name on her bird: She uses some cursive and
some printing.

```
Jebatou Sumin
```

*Figure 55. Preschool – Jeba’s name writing using cursive and print script
(re-creation)*

Z decorates her bird with cut up feathers. When she is finished she turns it over
and writes her name (the family name is Banks). All letters (lower and upper
case are uniform in size and spacing).
L is cutting out her bird outline. She watches Z writing her name. She takes a pen and writes on a scrap of cardboard. (see below)

L (to Z) That says Z. One of my sisters...No. one of my friends writes this. Z ignores her and walks away.

Z: I can draw a banana.

She draws a shape and then says

L: No that’s wrong

L puts a cross on the picture that she thinks is wrong and re-draws her banana.

![Image of Lia's drawings](image-url)

*Figure 56. Preschool – Lia’s drawings (re-creation)*

L finishes cutting out her bird and writes her name on it. She writes the L using dot points and then connects them. She writes from right to left, holding the pen in her right hand.

![Image of Lia's name writing](image-url)

*Figure 57. Preschool – Lia’s name writing (re-creation)*

**Activity 3**
Participants: Grace, Lia, Jeba, Zena, Kaori

Setting: at a table

Resources: hessian squares with a broken line drawn on it

Needle

Wool

TA = teacher aide

The children are all stitching along the lines on a hessian square

L: This is for home

G: No it’s for workbook

Boy: I’m doing one for my workbook and one for my home.

Girl: Me too.

G: If we don’t give this one to Jenny, we can keep this.

Girl: What?

G: This (waves hessian square)

J: I don’t think we can keep this.
The teacher comes to the table to assist the boy. She says “Down and up and pull. You say that. Down and up and pull. All of the children repeat this three times”.

Note: This activity differs from others because of the conversation going on while the children are sewing. L particularly chatters about a farm visit and a horse that she saw. Z and K are silent except when they want assistance from the TA

**Activity 4**  
**Participant:** Kaori, Jeba

**Setting:** *home corner*  
**Resources:** stethoscope, bandages, other doctor’s equipment  
A desk with notebooks, pop-up address book  
K is lying on the stretcher (the patient). J and other children are caring for her (J wraps her arm in a bandage, peers down her ear with an instrument and listens to her heart with the stethoscope.  
J opens the notebook on the desk and scribbles inside it, turns the page and scribbles some more. She takes the second notebook and does the same. She presses the button on the pop-up address book (which is empty) and closes it.  
She takes a piece of paper and scribbles on it. She folds the piece of paper up, turns to walk back to K and throws the piece of paper on the floor.

18th November

**Activity 1**  
**Participant:** Zena, Grace, Lia, Jeba

**Setting:** *home corner with a sign “School”*  
**Resources:** table, blackboard on easel, weather chart  
name cards  
Paper, pencils, rulers  
Basket of plastic shapes  
Worksheets  
A Clock  
Some books

Z ((Z sorts through a pile of name cards and finds her name and puts it down in front of her. Girl 1 looks through the pile and finds her own.))

Girl 1 (yes that one’s mine)

Z ((Z watches. Girl 1 then holds up each card for Girl 2 to recognise her name. When she holds up a card with David on it Z recognises it))

Z: (no that’s David I know that one)
((Each card that’s held up, Z and Girl 2 say “No” until her name is shown.))

Girl 2 (Yes) ((Z nods))
Z (I’m going to copy my name).
Girl 1 ((hands out paper and pencils to Z and Girl 2)).

((Note: Girl 1 is adopting the role of “teacher” showing the cards and handing out the paper and pencils. Girl 2 is passive and receptive. Z stands, leans over, then sits, as if she is going to help herself, but then waits for Girl 1.))

((Z writes her name left-to-right in the middle of the piece of paper. She looks at the name card before writing each letter. Note: Until this day, Z has always written her name with a capital A for the last letter. Today she copies the lower case a. Dot shows starting place and arrow shows direction))

Figure 58. Preschool – Zena’s writing of the letter a (re-creation)

Z: (there I did my name)

Girl 1 Do you want to do an activity sheet? Or do you want to do a drawing? Z nods and reaches across and takes a coloured pencil.

Girl 1 ((to Z)) ((She is holding out a yellow pencil)) (Put it back)

((Z puts the pencil in the pot and moves it to the middle of the table where it is accessible to all the children.))

Z (I’ll put these here) ((She begins to colour in the bottom of her page.))

Girl 1 ((to Girl 2)) (would you like to do a stencil? would you like to do a stencil?)

((Girl 1 places a large flat triangle on Girl 2s page. She begins to trace around it.))

Z (Can I do a stencil?) ((looks up at girl 1)) (can I have a stencil?)

Girl 1 (yes of course you can)

Z ((Z takes the small blue square that the girl is holding out and begins tracing around it.))

Girl 1 (Now when you’ve finished give it back to me okay?) ((Girl 2 hands the triangle back to Girl 1)).
Girl 2 (Can you get me a circle?) ((Girl 2 takes the two circles she is given - one big and one small. She gives the large one to Z and begins tracing around the small one.))

Girl 1 (Have you done a triangle yet?)

Z: (Not yet.)

Girl 1 (A big triangle or a little triangle?)

Z (A little triangle) ((Girl 1 passes Z a triangle. She traces around it.))

Girl 1 (now you two take it now and put it in your bag) ((Z stands and folds her page and puts it in her bag.))

((Z returns to the writing table. There are 4 children present now, 3 seated at the table and Girl 1 who is playing the teacher. She takes a worksheet. It is a writing sheet about the numbers 0 and 1. It has pictures and lines of 0s dotted for Z to trace. She writes her name at the top. The first 3 letters she writes from memory and then looks at the name card before she does the last letter lower case.))

Girl 1 (Do you know what to do Z?)

((Girl 1 shows Z what to do, pointing at the different sections of the sheet. Z begins tracing the zeros. The first 0 has a dot and arrows to show starting place at the top and direction. Z begins each zero at the bottom and does some in a clock-wise direction and some in an anti-clockwise direction. Girl 1 stands near her elbow watching.))

Girl 1 (Does anyone need to measure anything?) ((Girl 1 picks up a ruler and hands it to Girl 2 who places it on her sheet. Z watches, picks up a ruler and places it on her worksheet.))

((G approaches.))

Z ((to G)) (you are not even in it only four people are allowed ((This appears to be a rule for any activity))

Girl 1 ((to Girl 2)) (how many centimetres is it?)

((She leans over Girl 2 and takes the pencil out of her hand and measures her sheet. She puts a dot at one end of the sheet near a number on the ruler and does the same at the other end of the sheet. ))

Z: (hey hey hey) ((Girl 1 comes over to Z)) (um after this can I be the teacher?)

Girl 1 (yes)

((Z “measures” her sheet while Girl 1 stands by her elbow to assist. Z continues to trace over the 0s and then traces over the letters z-e-r-o. Z begins working on the number 1. She places the ruler to cover the work completed. Other children are talking and Z listens as she works. She keeps an eye on G who is still watching the activity))

Z ((to G)) (no only four)

Z (to Girl 2) (I’m very close to the end)

Girl 2 (so am I)
(G is still trying to join the activity. She is standing at the magnetic weather chart. It has days of the week down one side, months of the year down the other side, and squares with numbers up to 31 (dates). It has pictures and words describing the weather. G has placed a counter on Tuesday, 20, December, and Windy.)

(Z stands and leans against the wall near her chair. She watches G. Z looks upset.)

(G moves the counters around. She appears to be reading the words and numbers as she moves them (Inaudible).)

G ((The two girls get up from the table and come over to G.))

Girl 2 ((to G)) (are we allowed to draw with the chalk?)

((G nods and looks at the books. She glances across at Z.))

G: ( ) (says) ( )

((Z, the only one left at the table, puts the name cards back in the pile and walks away.))

Activity 2
Participant: Grace, Lia, Jeba

Setting: home corner with a sign “School”

Resources: table, blackboard on easel, weather chart
name cards
Paper, pencils, rulers
Basket of plastic shapes
Worksheets
A Clock
Some books

((L and J come to the table and sit down. G is standing at the weather chart. L takes the bundle of name cards and begins looking at each one. She passes a name card with Grace on it to Sarah. J watches and takes her name when it appears in the pile.))

Sarah ((pointing at card in time with speech)) (that is not my name)
J (that is not my name)

G ((G comes to the table and takes 2 worksheets. She places a sheet in front of J and Sarah.) (there you are) ((She walks to the blackboard, takes a piece of chalk and writes 1 + 2 and then adds a line and then more lines in a circular motion. Over the top of this she writes an = sign, a circle and writes a 3. See below. Then she picks up the eraser and rubs it out.))
Figure 59. Preschool – Grace’s sum (re-creation)

L  ((L is still looking for her name in the pile of name cards.))  (how do you spell my name?)
J  (L I A)
Sarah  (can you give me find my name please?)
L  (I don’t know your name ah here’s my name) ((L puts her card down in front of her)
((G comes over to the table and takes the pile of cards out of L’s hands.))
L  (hey!)
G  ((sorts cards looking for Sarah’s name))
Sarah  (there’s my name. give me my name please)  ((G passes Sarah her name card))
J  ((J leans past L and takes a ruler))  (mine)
L  (hey! this is mine)  ((L takes the ruler back))
J  (teacher)
G  (yes)
J  ( )
G  (   ) (just wait. I just remember) (   ) what chs name start with?)
J  ((J holds up her card to show G that she already has hers. G puts the cards down in the basket.))
L  (can i have another one. This one starts with AL (   ) I A)  ((pointing to letters))
G  ((G picks up the namecards and finds one beginning with L - Lindsay))
   (here) ((G hands the card to L, giggling))
((Note: Lia’s name is really Aulia))
L  (that’s not my name Lia)  (L hands back card to G)) (this one) ((L shows G her namecard))
G  (that’s not Lia. that’s Owl. I mean Owlia)
L  (y-e-ss. this is Lia)
G  ((G continues to sort through the cards))
J  ((J is writing her name at the top of her sheet)).
((L reaches across the table and takes a large blue square. She looks at the writing worksheet on the table in front of her)) (is this where you write your name?)

J ( )

L (I can write it again) ((L and J giggle))

J ( again)

Sarah: (teacher can you please take this away.) ((G leans across table and takes the large yellow circle and puts it in the basket).

J (Teacher ) ((makes the shape of a ruler with her hands))

((G drops a ruler on the table in front of J. J and L reach for it. L takes it))

L (Hey I have this) ((L holds a crayon in her right hand with thumb on one side and three fingers on the other. She writes her name.))

G ((G takes two storybooks a bear book and a cat book from a trolley to the table and puts them down. One book bumps L’s hand as she is writing.))

L (HEY! wait)

G (which one can I read?)

L ((L points to a bear book)) (that one)

G ((G points to Sarah)) (what about you?)

Sarah ((Sarah points to a book)) (that one. the bear one)

G ((G points to J)) (you)

J ((J points to the cat book))

G ((G puts her hand on the cat book)) (this one? right this one) ((G holds up the bear book as the chosen one and puts them back on the trolley near the clock which shows 12.30)) (when it’s 1 o’clock)

((G moves to the weather chart and moves the counter to November. J and Sarah continue writing. L watches G))

G (that’s november) ((L gets up from the table and taps her pencil on June and July)) (july) ((G moves the counter. L sits down again. J and Sarah are writing. L picks up the ruler and rests it across her worksheet as she reaches out for the tub of pencils. G snatches the ruler and hands it to J with a slight smile on her face))

L (HEY!) ((L and J wrestle for the ruler. L takes it back)

J ((J leans towards L with her left hand extended in a fist)) (“ °”)

L ((L holds the ruler in her left hand away from J and smacks J’s hand twice (stop it. stop it.)

440
G ((G attempts to snatch L's worksheet. L puts her hand on it. G snatches the ruler)) (give that one of your friends) ((G holds the ruler above her head and walks behind L))

L ((L reaches across J to take Sarah's ruler)) (give me it)

Sarah (DON'T)

J ((J watches L and Sarah. G touches J on the back and passes J the ruler. J holds the ruler under the desk and smiles G walks back to the end of the table))

L ((L turns to J)) (i'm gonna ° °) ((L looks at G. G tidies the namecards and the basket of shapes. J and Sarah continue tracing numbers. L says something inaudible to G.)

G (group two)
Sarah (not group two)

G ( )

L takes a little look at J's lap, gets up and stands behind J peering under the desk. At this moment a boy enters the activity area and takes the pile of namecards. L sits down quickly))

G ((G snatches the namecards)) (what. there's only 4 people. 1 2 3 4. there's four people already) ((The boy retreats to just outside the activity area))

Sarah (he just needs his name)

Boy (the teacher says I have to get my name) ((G begins looking through the cards. L turns in her seat to look and listen to what is going on behind her))

Boy ((The boy returns to G)) (the teacher says I have to get my name) ((he watches G sort through the cards, takes his namecard and retreats))

Teacher ((in background)) (Sarah I think we'll give K a little turn now. Sarah (I just got in) Teacher (I don't think so. come on Sarah. come away and give K a turn)

((Sarah leaves and K takes her place. G takes a worksheet from the trolley and passes it to K.))

G ((to K)) (what's your name. I'll get it for you)

K (K)

((G points to Sarah's name on the table and K picks it up and passes it to G. G sorts the cards))

L (you don't know which one is K anyway)

G (I do) ((G continues to sort the cards)) (It's this one) ((K takes the namecard and begins copying her name))

G (It's nearly 1 o'clock)

L (when it's 1 o'clock I'm not going to get out)
((David approaches the table for his name card. The girls all say his name. G goes through the cards looking for his name. L picks up the card with David on it and hands it to him))

L  
(here’s David)

((David puts the card down in the basket and watches G still searching.))

L  
(D for David. D for David)  
((G begins showing David each card which he looks at says “No” and puts down in the basket  L calls out the names that she recognises.))

L  
((picks up a card with G on it) (is this your name?)

G  
(it’s my name see G R A C E)  
((G spells the letters in her name pointing to each one. David goes away.. The TA comes and finds David’s namecard and walks away. G watches. She returns to the table and watches the children working. She goes to the blackboard and does some pretend running writing. She rubs it out and writes her name and her brother’s name. See below))

G  
(jenny! I can write Paul Kim. jenny! I can write Paul Kim)

T  
(What can you write?)

G  
(Paul Kim)

T  
(why don’t you write that for me. I’ll come and look at it)

G  
(I did it)  
((G draws a line under Paul Kim) (I don’t know how to write Samuel Kim)

T  
((T comes over to the blackboard to see))  
(you could write Sam. oh! very good do you know what Sam starts with?)

G  
(yes)  
(writes an S on the board

T  
(S then an A)  
((G writes an A))  
(then an M)  
((G writes an M. Other children gather to watch.))

G  
((looks up at the teacher))  
(Samuel)

T  
(okay Samuel U like a big horseshoe shape)  
((points to the U in Paul))

(like this one)  
((G draws the U) (nearly E L well done)  
((T walks away))

G  
((After Samuel G writes KIM. She writes symbols that look like number equations on the board and pretends to read them. Then she rubs it out))

Figure 60. Preschool - Grace’s blackboard writing
((K gets up from the table and brings her worksheet to show G. G holds it briefly and turns back to the blackboard. K returns to her seat. G walks over to the clock and book on the trolley))

K (nearly finished. Teacher what to ina do?)

G (wait for your friends now if you are finished) ((G turns to the blackboard and K stands beside her. G writes on the blackboard))

\[
\begin{array}{c}
+ \\
1 \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

Figure 61. Preschool – Grace’s sum writing on blackboard (re-creation)

(now what’s one plus ten equal. What’s one plus ten?)

K (i know eleven) ((G writes 11 in the circle and puts a tick beside it)

G ((G writes \(1 + 16 = \left( \right)\)) (to K ))

(1+17?)

K (what?)

G (1+17? 18) ((G writes 18 and gives it a 4))

K (K walks over to the weather chart. G joins her)).

G (dont)

((J and L continue tracing the letters. The teacher calls G to come away and let others have a turn in the school. K walks to the end of the table))

K ((to J and L)) (i’m teacher now. all right? I’m teacher) ((K goes to the blackboard and writes a line of numbers left-to right.))

K ((to L)) (are you finished?)

L (nearly)

K ((K returns to the blackboard and rubs out the last circle and makes it bigger. She writes a four in the circle and gives it a tick. See below))

\[
\begin{array}{c}
0 \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

Figure 62. Preschool – Kaori’s recording of sum (re-creation)

K ((K moves from the blackboard to the weather chart to the table and back to the blackboard))

L ((L leaves the activity area and takes her worksheet to the TA))

TA (oh that is lovely work. you sit here and show me. show me your beautiful work)
L ((pointing to sheet)) (that says one)
TA (and what does that say?)
L (zero)
TA (that's right very nice) ((L walks away))

K ((K sorts through the name cards.) (where's my name where's my name where's my name oh here's my name) ((she starts to show the cards one by one to a girl beside her)) (is this your name? Is this your name?) ((each time the little girl says no until she finds her name, takes it, and says yes))

K K takes a piece of paper and rules a line across the page with a ruler, folds it and puts it in the trolley. She moves the hands on the clock and turns back to the table. ))
(when its one clock you can pull ours out)

Girl ((to K)) when does school finish? when does school finish? ((K ignores her and turns back to the blackboard))
Girl ((teacher, teacher when is school finished?))
K (it's not finished yet)
Girl (time for going to sleep)
K (yeah time for going to sleep)
Girl (time to go home?)
K (no) ((K moves the hands of the clock to say 5 o'clock)) (now it's sleep time)

K K sits at the reading table and looks at books. She looks at the cover and then turns the pages looking at each page.

Activity 3
Participant: Jeba, Kaori
Setting: collage table
Resources: large green cutouts of Christmas trees
Containers of glue and brushes
Containers of bits of coloured foil
Containers of crayons

Children are pasting bits and pieces onto the tree to decorate the Christmas trees. K has drawn a round smiley face and a flower on the tree.

Activity 4
Participant: Jeba, Lia
Setting: courtyard
Resources: paint
Rollers
Easel
J and L are painting vertical stripes on their large sheets of paper. J invites L to look at her colours.

L (how do you make orange?)
J (easy peasy these two) ((J holds up the red and yellow paint rollers)
L (how do you make purple?)
J (easy peasy these two) ((J holds up two more rollers)

J ((Alice comes to look at J’s work.)) (Do you know how to make this colour?) ((J points to orange))
Alice (orange red and yellow)
J (yes that’s right do you know how to make this colour?) ((points to brown))
Alice (any choice)
J (no)
Alice (oh red and green)
J (yeah ) ((J claps))

25th November

Activity 1
Participant: Zena, Jeba, Kaori, Grace

Setting: collage table
Resources: cardboard stars
Paint, brushes
Glitter

Children are decorating stars. There is no conversation or interaction.

Activity 2
Participant: Kaori, Grace, Lia, Jeba

Setting: home corner with a sign “School”
Resources: table, blackboard on easel, weather chart
name cards
Paper, pencils, rulers
Basket of plastic shapes
Worksheets
A Clock
Some books

((G is standing in front of the weather chart moving the counters around. K enters the activity area))

K (who is the teacher?)
G (me I mean you)
K (me)
G (yes)
K ((K takes the basket of name cards and turns to G (which one is this your name?) ((showing G the card on top))
G (no)(G has taken a worksheet from the trolley. She turns and takes the cards out of K's hand and puts them one at a time back into the basket.
L ((L enters the activity area and approaches K)) (can I play?)
K (I'm teacher)
G ()
L (I know) ((L turns to the weather chart. K is moving the hands of the clock. G is looking through the name cards))
K (you have to do 1 o'clock) ((to L))
L ((to K)) (no have you just came in?)
K (yeah) (one o'clock of one o'clock of five)
L ((at the same time that K says “five”, L says “July” and places a counter on November))
K ((turns to G)) (one o'clock of five that's the number) ((G has found her name and is seated at the table with a pencil. K is tidying the pile of namecards in the basket.))
L (October) ((L places the counter on October)).
G ((Grace writes her given and family name at the top of the worksheet. She does not look at the name card which has her given name on it. She begins tracing over the line of zeros on the page L to R))
K ((K takes a blank piece of paper and stands next to G. She traces around a small yellow circle on the top left-hand corner of the sheet.)
L ((L watches G)) (you can colour it in) ((she moves to the trolley to take a worksheet, changes her mind and goes to the top of the table and watches Dom))
Dom (can I have thee um)
L ((L gets a ruler and puts it down in front of Dom)) (one for you) ((L gets a worksheet from the trolley and sits down at the table next to Dom)) (I need a ruler because I've got an a)
Dom ((K is tracing around a square)) (teacher’s drawing). ((To L)) (you've got to do your name)
L (I know but it doesn’t matter if you don’t want to do your name)
Dom (yeah it doesn’t matter)
L (anyway but you're not the teacher you're three)

Dom (no I'm not three i'm five)

L (I said you are not the teacher!)

K ((K has now completed tracing around a circle, a square and a triangle. She holds it up for Dom and L to see.)) (when yu finished you have to do this one)

L (you don't have to)

K (I know only if you want to) ((K draws a circle around the shapes on her sheet and puts the sheet under the basket of shapes. She walks over to the blackboard. She draws a line from left to right across the board. She writes the numbers w, 3 and 6 and 0. The 6 is back to front. She walks to the clock and moves the hands. She addresses the children at the table)) (look you have one o'clock on five) ((The teacher calls K who leaves the activity area))

L (after K it's mine after K I'm the teacher) ((L has pen poised and ruler positioned on sheet, but she doesn't appear to have done anything. She seems intent on the social aspect of the situation))

Dom ((to L)) (I'm doing only one line of this you know)

L (I'm doing this one) ((points with ruler)) (that's all)

G ((G is sitting at the table quietly tracing over the numbers and colouring the pictures. She has taken no part in the dialogue around her.))

Dom ((to G)) (wow! look you've already nearly finished) ((G does not respond but starts to slide under the table))

G ((to Dom)) (help! Help me Dom) ((G sits back up again))

L ((to Dom pointng to the bottom section of the worksheet)) (you don't do it on here)

Dom (yes you do)

L (I know but you don't do it on here)

G (you do)

L ((to G) (the teacher say)

G ( you do ) ((shaking her head))

Dom (well you can do it if you want)

L ((L puts her pen back in the tub and gets up)) (I'm the teacher now) ((She goes to the blackboard and picks up the chalk. She turns to the children at the table I know what 1+1 a real one is you know) ((she writes on the blackboard beginning in the top left-hand corner, see below)) (there one plus one equals) ((she walks over to the table)) (I know what one plus one is (2.0) two one (1.0) eleven)
Figure 63. Preschool – Kaori’s record of 1+1 (re-creation)

G (turns to look at L) (no one plus one is two. two plus two is four. four plus four is eight.) (L vigorously shakes her head and goes back to the blackboard) (G turns to Dom and holds up a pointer finger on each hand.) (one plus one is two) (G rubs out the blackboard and draws a circle in the middle upper half of the blackboard. G comes over and takes a piece of chalk and draws a line under the circle.) (L you know what? You can’t pass this line or right?)

L (what)

G (gesturing to the line) (you can’t pass this line)

L (what do you mean?)

G (G pushes L with her left shoulder to dominate the space in front of the blackboard) (you can’t pass this line)

L (oh yes I can)

G (know you can’t) (G nudges L with her shoulder again, grabs the left hand side of the board with her left hand and bobs down. At the same time she begins to write the names of her brothers and her own name. Note: the teacher had shown G how to write Samuel the week before. Grace writes each letter and says its name ie. S-A-M. L moves around behind G to the right hand side of the blackboard picks up a piece of chalk and draws a box around the lower half of the board where G is writing)

L ( ) (I’m going to ask my teacher at my other school)

G (no it means my brother’s name. (G begins to draw above the line. Note the line was the boundary of the space that she had successfully negotiated with L

L (let’s rub it out) (L begins to rub out the drawings above the line.

G (NO IT’S MINE)

L (but you’re not the teacher)

G (I AM)

L (no you’re not I am) (L begins to rub below the line and above it and rub out the line as well) (L chants “I am” over and over. G begins to draw above the line and below it.) (It is me. ( ) says it’s me. I am I am I am) (L continues to chant “I am” and rubs out the scribble that G is drawing all over the board)) (that’s it ( ) (G stands up)).(I’m the teacher)
((An inaudible exchange takes place between G and L. K approaches looking stern. She speaks abruptly.))

K ((to L and G)) (who's teacher?)
L (ME)
K (um G. G teacher now!) ((points at G as she speaks))
L (no! I just have a little game)
K ((K points at G then L)) (I fink you. I fink you are Jenny and you are Anne) ((Note: K is telling G that she is the Teacher and L that she is the Teacher Aide)) (you are Jenny. you are Anne) ((K walks away))

L ((to G)) (no. you are Anne. You are Jenny and I am Jenny)
G (you are Anne and I am Jenny)
L (no you’re (            ) ((L laughs. G turns to L with her arm raised))
G (I’m not)
Teacher (girls can I interrupt for a minute. L can you come and do your decorations on your star please) ((L walks away. G gives a triumphant grin (↑eh↑ ↓eh↓) and turns back to the blackboard.))
K ((approaches G)) (you Jenny. what I need to do?)

G ((G points to table)) (writing) ((K walks away))
Teacher (G have you done yours)
G (Yes) ((G writes on blackboard 1 + 100 = 200. She moves to the weather chart and places counters on each section.))

K ((K sits at the table with her worksheet and her name card. She writes her name at the top of her worksheet and then puts the name card back in the basket and begins to trace over the zeros.))

G ((G moves the hands of the clock. The short hand is on the 12 and the long hand is pointing to the 5. She turns to K.)) (5 o'clock. time to go)
K (no five o'clock is five and one) ((G moves back to the clock and moves the hands so that they point to the five and the one.)) (right five o'clock see) ((the hands of the clock flop down to the six. G moves back to the weather chart.))

K ((K cleans the blackboard. She draws a horizontal line across the board and then draws a circle in the upper half on the right hand side. She writes a string of numbers and lines from left to right. In the lower half of the board she writes the numbers to 5, adds to straight lines (equals?) and then a circle))

Figure 64. Preschool – Kaori’s string of numbers (re-creation)

((K walks to the table where children are tracing numbers on the She walks around to where a girl is tracing and she bends over and points with the ruler. She appears to be telling her what to do. She walks back to the blackboard.))
where another child is standing, picks up the chalk and puts a little line under each number. The other child walks away. K walks back to the table)) (finished?) ((She says this to a girl. She takes a pen and begins tracing the numbers on the girls sheet.)) (I helping. I helping you) ((K leaves the activity area))

J ((J enters the activity area. She goes to the blackboard and writes the numbers 1 to 7 and then writes her name. On the next line she writes symbols that appear to be numbers in Bangla Deshi. She moves to the table and takes a piece of paper and a pen. She stops and looks at Sally who is seated on a chair reading a book out loud and turning the book around to show the pictures to an imaginary audience. Sally is making up the story. J and another girl move to the side of Sally to see the pictures. Sally closes the book and asks J to get her another book. J gets her another and then leaves the activity area))

((Later on during the morning four children are playing in the School area. G and K approach. G enters and stands near the table. K stands on the edge of the activity))

Tess: (1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5)
K ((points and counts)) (1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5)
Tess (no me and Sarah were already here) (          )
K (no I think G)
Tess (G or Hannah has to leave)
K (You got (        ) tomorrow. G out!)
G (no!)
K (Hannah out!)
Hannah (no!)
K (well I think Sarah or Carol)
Carol (no!)
K ((pointing at Sarah)) (Sarah)
Tess (No not Sarah. she is reading a book with me. we were here first. these three)
K (So not Sarah or Grace?)

(not Hannah) ((unsure who is speaking))

K (Sarah or G?)

(not Sarah) ((unsure who is speaking))

K (well G)

Girls (yes)

K (you have to go)

G (          )
K (Out! Out! you have to go out) ((K wags her finger at G as she speaks. G remains seated))

K (          ) (it’s you) ((points her finger at G. K moves to the blackboard then stands beside Tess who begins reading a book to her)).
Tess ((Tess tells K to read it after her. Tess knows some parts of the book off by heart)).
G  ((G moves over to stand on the other side of Tess to listen and look at the
pages. Then she takes a book off the trolley and sits down on the carpet
and looks at the pages one by one starting at the front of the book. ))
K  ((Tess finishes the book and moves away. K takes the book and sits on
the chair and reads the book to herself. She reads out loud making up the
story from the pictures. She reads from the book and turns the pages one
at a time.))

((Note that both K and G stayed in the activity area despite the fact that there
were more than 4 children there.))

Activity 3
Participant:  Jeba

Setting:  collage table
Resources:  cardboard
Collage trolley laden with bits and pieces
Scissors
         glue

J is making a Christmas card. She has drawn a Christmas tree and coloured it
green. She has put a yellow star at the top and decorations on it. She is
colouring the border of her card.

Activity 4
Participant:  Zena, Grace

Setting:  round table
Resources:  set of picture cards

((Z is turning over cards looking for a matching pair. The children are
taking it in turns to turn over cards to find a matching pair. She matches a
pair, so she gets another turn. When it is G’s turn Z helps her to find a
pair)).
APPENDIX G
Transcripts of videotapes of writing experiences in year one classroom

5th February

Setting: Year One classroom
Desks are clustered in groups of four to form a table
There are name cards at the top of each desk

T = teacher

Zena, Grace and Jeba are seated at a table with another girl Annika. They all have their writing books out on their desks and their colouring pencils.

T ((to Z)) (Are you ready now? Have you thought about what you want to write about? Are you going to draw a picture to help you? That's a good way to start isn't it because when you draw a picture it helps you to think about what you want to say in your sentences in your words)

((J takes out an exercise book and looks at the cover. She puts it away and looks at G who is drawing a picture. The T is walking around the room from table to table talking and assisting children with their writing.))

((her voice is sometimes heard)) (that is why we have words up all around the room so you can use them that's why they are there. you are welcome to use them and the ones you can't find you write them yourself)

G ((to Anne pointing at her picture)) (what's that?)

Annika (my swimming pool)

Z ((to Annika)) (I’m remembering when I was in Melbourne I went to the zoo and I went into the butterfly house where all these butterflies were)

Annika ((she takes a pencil out of her tidy tray)) (Hey is this yours?) ((She shows the pencil to Z who looks at the name on the end of it.))

Z (Z Z) ((Z takes the pencil))

Annika (Oh yeah)

G (I went to the zoo as well)

J (    )

G (I did)

J (in the a butterfly house?) ((G nods))

Z (butterflies like to eat beautiful blue flowers)

G (Z Z do you know you copied (    )

Z (you know what um this is what colours butterflies like to eat red and blue)

((Everyone at the table continues to draw))

G ((across table to Z)) have you seen a blue and a green tree? No

J (    )

((G writes at the top of the picture: I see red Dog. Then she goes on drawing. The TA comes to the table and bobs down next to Annika))

TA ((to Annika) (What did you write about Annika? You tell me)

Annika (    )

TA (Do you like going swimming?)

Annika (    )
Z  (I'm having swimming lessons)
Annika  (I'm going swimming after school)
J  (Me too)
G  (you know where I'm gonna swim? At uni pool)
TA  (That's a very big pool isn't it)
G  ((to Z)) (I saw you I saw you I saw you but I didn't say hello) ((Z smiles))

TA  ((The TA moves around the table between G and J.  J has drawn children swimming in her picture)) (Oh lots of swimming there too) ((The TA points to G's writing)) (did you write this G?) ((G nods.  The TA moves around to Z.)) (Z there are lots of butterflies in your story)
Annika((loudly)) (what's my name?)
TA  (Annika)
Z  (when I was in Melbourne (             )) ((Z nods her head up and down at the TA while Annika talks over the top of her))
Annika ((covering up name tag)) (No different name me. no it's not that name. teachers just call me that name)
G  ((grinning at TA and pointing at the children at the table she muddles everyone's name up)) (she's Z and she's Annika and she's G and she's J)
TA  (I'm leaving you now I'll come back and see you later. I'll try to remember your names)
Annika (yeah yeah I'm Annika)

TA  (oh just tricking me were you) ((The TA moves away. Annika points and names the children at the table using the wrong names. She speaks loudly )))

T  ((across room)) (Annika are we doing lots of work there or lots of talking? Lots of work and lots of writing. You've finished your writing. I'll come and see yours. Have you done your writing?)
Annika (I don't know how to)
T  (Well would you like to write your name for me?) ((Annika shakes her head)) (You have a go at writing your name today)
Annika (I wouldn't know how to write my name)
T  (you can copy it off the top of the desk) ((Z and J point to Annika's name. Annika looks for her pencil in her desk,))
T  ((to class)) (children we're going to finish off now. You've all done very well. It's exciting isn't it starting to write doing lovely stories for me. Mrs E's enjoyed them and so will I. We're all going to finish now.))

J  ((J quickly writes under her picture: your gr))
T  ((The T comes to the table to collect the writing books.)) (Z I love that picture you've drawn today did you write your name for me?) ((Z nods and closes her book. T looks at G's page)) (I love your red dog, was he out in the sun too long?) ((G laughs))

12th February

Setting: Year One classroom
Desks are clustered in groups of four to form a table. There are name cards at the top of each desk (given and family names)
Participants  Grace, Zena, Jeba

((The children take out their writing books and coloured pencils and begin drawing a picture. The T is walking around the room assisting children to get started))

T  (I like the way some children are writing their names at the top of the page. That’s good)

Z  ((Z immediately takes out a writing pencil and writes her name at the top of her book. She writes her name in lower case except for the last letter which is a capital)).

T  ((The teacher approaches G’s table))  (G how are we going?)  ((T squats down beside G’s table. (What are you going to write about? any ideas?)  ((G half-smiles))  (Are you still thinking or would you like to talk it through with me)

G  (I’m still thinking)

T  (You’re still thinking well if you want to have a talk to me you just put your hand up or you might have a little talk to Z about it. that way you can share ideas)  ((T moves over to Z’s table and date stamps her work. The two girls continue drawing. T moves away and looks at other children’s work))

G  ((G writes the word Love and draws an arrow to a part of her picture. She takes out her pencil sharpener and begins sharpening her pencils))

T  (G are we just sharpening today or are we writing? mainly sharpening by the looks of things)  ((G smiles and puts away the sharpener. The teacher points to G’s picture))  (What’s this G?)

G  (a bike)

T  (Who’s on the bike?)

G  (Dad)

T  (Could you write something about that? What could you say?)

G  (My Dad is riding a bike)

T  (He is isn’t he. It’s a lovely picture of your Dad on the bike. sitting up on the seat. looks very comfortable. Do you go riding with your Dad?)

G  (G nods)  

T  (no training wheels well you’re grown up aren’t you)  ((T points to the bike in the picture again)).  (tell me about the bike. You know some of those words don’t you. Think about what you know. Think about the sentence. Think about all those words that you know running around in your head. Have a try G)  ((T gets up and moves away))

T  ((approaches Z’s desk))  (Z are we writing something today or just drawing? Look at those)  ((points to drawing))  (what are they?)

Z  (seagulls)

T  (where are they?)

Z  (at the back of the )

T  (OK would you like to write about your seagulls today? Are you going to write some words today? Can I help you get started? Can I help you with the sentence (1.0) with what you want to write? No? not today? Well if you decide you want to write something you put your hand up and I’ll come and help you)
G ((G writes Dad is. She pauses and then goes to the T who returns with G to her desk.

T (What are we trying G?)

G (rrriding. can you help me with some of those letters? Rrriding rrr.) (3.0)
T (can you hear the sounds there? mrriding mrring rrr can you hear any sounds there?) (3.0) (come on. Off we go with riding. I think you can do this G if you just think and listen to the sounds in rrr. Are you going to try?) ((G nods)) (Just you say the word and then you might be able to think up the letters that make up that word)

G (riding)

T (say the word again. Rrrriding. can you hear some of the sounds? What can you hear?)

G (d)
T (I can hear a d. Good girl. at the beginning of the word or in the word?)

G (in the word)
T (can you hear what it’s starting with? Rriding. Can you hear what it’s starting with?)

G ((G shakes her head))
T (have a try what do you think. (3.0) I’d like to see what you’re thinking in your mind. (3.0) say it again. say the word again and that might help. Rrrr. We were talking about it...)

G ((interrupting the T)) (r)
T (oh ( ) good girl) ((G writes a lower case r))
G (rrr)
T (you are doing well aren’t you. have a try because I think you can do it. I really do) ((T moves away))

G ((G sits and looks around the room. Then she talks to the boy at the next table)) (Have you got a spare rubber? A rubber)

Boy (I know)
G (r r)
Boy (?)
G (no r that’s the best letter)
Boy (I know r says i)

G ((G turns and adds a lower case a and an upper case D to the r and then stands up and takes her book to the teacher. The teacher returns with G to her desk to look at her work))

T (You’ve had a try with riding now what was the rest of your sentence again?)

G (a)
T (a do you know how we write a?) ((T says the word as uh)) (what about bike (2.0) a bike (5.0) (Dad is riding a bike come on G you can do it) ((T smiles as she says “you can do it” and G smiles too)) (are you thinking about those words?) ((G nods and smiles)) (I can see you are thinking trying to work it out aren’t you? Have a try how you think it might go) ((T looks at G’s picture and points)) (you’ve written another word here haven’t you. What’s this word?)

G (love)
T (why did you write love?)

G ()
T (you love those people. I bet that’s your mum and dad and Sam and Paul)

((G nods and smiles)) (oh we’re missing Paul. is he under the diving board?)

G (he’s hiding)
T (he’s hiding. What’s this?) ((T points to a part of the picture))

G (a snail)
T (of course it's a snail (2.0) under a mushroom) ((the T turns to respond to another child and moves away from G))
G ((G writes in and takes her book to show the T. The T looks and smiles and G goes back to her seat.))
T ((The T tells the class to stop writing and to tidy up and come to the carpet to share their stories.))

19th February

Setting: Year One classroom
Desks are clustered in groups of four to form a table. There are name cards at the top of each desk (given and family names)
Participants J, Z, G
Z J and G are all drawing pictures.

Child ((at another table)) Mrs B it's my mum's birthday today)
T (it's your mum's birthday today. I'll have to wish her a happy birthday. Have you made her a special card for her birthday?)
G ((to Z)) (Do you know what? Do you know how much my mum is? 29 years old)
Z ( )
J ( )
G (oops I got it wrong my mum's 35) ((The girls resume drawing)
T ((The T approaches the table and stamps the date on each child's work.))
G (how do you spell ( )
T (How do you spell? Have a try G)
J (t he) ((G and T smile at J)
T (J almost got it right. Very good try Jeba) ((G begins writing: this is a))
J (a bunny)
T (what's the bunny doing?)
J ( )
T (a traffic light and what's happened when the bunny came to the traffic light?)
J ( )
T (oh dear. you might be able to put some of that down for me.) ((J nods and the teacher moves to Z's desk)) (Z are we going to write some words today?)
Z ((z nods)) (I did some yesterday too)
T (that's right so you did) ((T moves away))
G ((G puts her hand up)) (Mrs B)
T (yes G)
G (how do you spell tree?)
T  (oh I want you to have a try at that G have a try)

G  ((G takes a book The Barbecue (her reader) from a folder under her desk
and looks at each page and then she closes it up and puts it away. Then
she looks at the worksheets in the folder and puts them away. She has
not found the word tree. She looks at J (Do you know how to spell tree?)

J  ( t w ) ((J shakes her head)) ( t r)

G  ((G begins to write the letters))

J  ((pointing to a chart which has numerals to ten with the words beside
them e.g. 1 one, 2 two)) (copy that two but put r ((N)) okay?) ((J says t-w-r
slowly as G writes))

G  (Is it this Mrs B?) ((while G waits for Mrs B she copies the word and from
the previous day’s writing on the page before and continues to write this is
a )) ((to Z)) (do you know how to write sun?)

J  ((J spells the letters slowly as G writes)) (s u n)

T  ((The T comes to G’s table in response to G’s call and looks at her work.))
(Great sentence G read it to me)

G  (This is a tree and this is a sun)

T  (Is there anything else happening with your tree and your sun?)

G  ((G shakes her head))

T  (There’s a lot of blank space here) ((points to her work)) (what’s
happening in here?) ((G begins to draw and teacher moves to stand
behind Z and look at her work and then moves away))

J  ((J turns her book around to show G her work. She has written a word at
the top of her page, above her picture. It says toc. The c is back to front.
G ignores her. J turns her book around again and continues to write.))

Z  ((to J)) (How do you write f? no) ((Z points to the words she has written
and reads out loud)) (I see the. how do you write the?)

J  (t h e) ((J leans across to see Z write)) (h e) ((J resumes her own writing))

Z  ((to G)) (how do you write tree?)

G  ((points to her own work)) (copy this t w r)

J  ((J leans across to listen to G and then watches Z and spells the letters
again slowly as Z writes)

Z  ((to G)) (How do you write bush?)

G  (d’ I mean b)

Z  ((to J)) (J do you know how to write bush?)
J (bush b (2.0) u no sorry b o s ((shakes her head)) h. b o h ((J pauses while Z writes))
Z ( h )
J ( s ) ((J pauses while Z writes the s)) (n)
Z (n) ((Z writes the n))
G (how do you spell there)
J (what?)
G (how do you spell there)
J ((smiling apologetically)) (I don’t know how to spell that)
G (it’s easy if you don’t help me you can’t use my rubber)
Z ((to J)) (you can use mine. How do you spell flower?)
G (f)
Z (no not yet) ((Z hurriedly writes. J stands up and leans on table towards G))
J (to G) (What did you say?)
G (there)
J ((J looks around the room)) (four) ((G writes))
Z (how do you write flower?)
J (to Z slowly as she writes) ( f o l )
G ((to J)) (how do you spell traffic light?)
J (t r ) ((G turns back to Z)) (flower f o l )
Z (flow – er)
G ((G leans across table and attempts to hit J to get her attention. J turns back to G))
G (to J) (traffic light t r f k l e t a) ((J spells the letters slowly as G writes))
G (is it traffic light?)
J (yeah not this one) ((J points to the a on the end and G rubs it out. J takes the rubber and rubs out all of the words she has written))
T ((The T approaches J’s desk)) (Have you done some words yet? Are you going to write something about your picture? Have you thought about what you are going to write?) ((J nods and begins to write. T looks across at Z’s work))
G ((G leans across table and attempts to hit J to get her attention. J turns back to G))
G (this is a tree and this is a sun and four is a dog and four is a traffic light)
T (This is a tree and this is a sun and four is a dog and four is a traffic light)
G (I really like what you’ve drawn today and I’m pleased to see so many words. well done. you’ve had fun today haven’t you) ((T turns to G))
G (G begins to read her writing and then stops)
T (what were you saying here?) ((T points to the word four. G was wanting to write there))
G (Is that what you were meaning to say?)
T ((G smiles and nods. The T smiles too. G continues reading))
T (Well that is a terrific effort. You've really said that word carefully to yourself and worked out what it is like. Very good lots of good writing today G) ((The T moves away))
J ((J is writing with her head down trying to ignore Z and G's attempts to ask her for help.))
G ((G has written *thea is a*. She turns to J)) (How do you spell person?)
J (p a s n. That's all)
G (How do you spell there?)
J (t h e a. Yeah that's it)
Z ((Z is writing the alphabet at the bottom of her page))
T ((to whole class)) (Children we're going to stop there. I'd like you to finish off the words you are writing and put your book on the shelf where it belongs and come and sit on the carpet)
J ((J takes her book and goes to the T)) (How do you write *said*)
T (That's a hard one said isn't it. You try s e d) ((The T sounds out the sounds slowly. G sits down and takes her pencil.)) (Sound it out a few times J and you might get some of the sounds.)
J ((J writes z e a n and then rubs out the n and replaces it with a capital D)
Z (oh look I did the alphabet) ((The children put away their books)

26th February

Setting: Year One classroom
Desks are clustered in groups of four to form a table. There are name cards at the top of each desk (given and family names)

Participants  Grace, Zena, Jeba

The teacher has had some discussion with the children and done some model writing on a little blackboard for the children. She has written:
On Tuesday we went swimming with Mrs. Davidson.

The three girls have taken out their writing books and finding the next page on which to write.
G (Are you going to write 1999?)
Z (8 1998)
J (I know how to write that 19 and then 9 and 8)

((Z begins drawing at once. G looks around for a moment and then begins drawing as well.))
T ((to whole class)) (so now we should all be thinking thinking about what we're going to write) ((The T is walking around the class settling children and writing the date at the top of each page. G calls Mrs B who comes to her desk and writes the date at the top of the page))
Z (how come you have to write the date?)
T (I always put the date on Z so we know when you wrote it)
Z (but how come you have to write it?)
T (because my date stamp doesn't work any more)

((The girls continue drawing))

G (to Z) (are you drawing a swimming pool?)
Z ((Z does not answer. She continues drawing)) (Is that a swimming pool J?) ((J nods)) (I'm drawing a swimming pool)
J (where?)
Z ((Z points to the pool on her page)) (here)
J (no where is it?)
Z (It's at Yeronga.)
J (Does it have an apple tree?) ((Z nods)) (does it have apples?)
Z ((smiles)) (no my apple tree at Yeronga doesn’t have any apples on)
((The three girls continue drawing))
T ((T puts the date on Z and J's work)) ((to J)) (J any good ideas for today?)
((no answer)) (sweetie?) ((J’s response is inaudible))
Z ((Z gets down under her desk and picks up a coloured pencil)) (look what
I found) ((Z checks her own pencil case and the other two girls check
theirs)) (I've got a red)
G (I haven't)
Z (Can I have a look?) ((Z peers into G's pencil case)) (Look in your tidy
box) ((G looks in her tidy box. Z stands up and holds the pencil out to
Mrs B))
T (It might be G’s)
G (I don't have one)
Z ((Z gives the pencil to G who snatches it from her hand and then goes
around the table and puts it in J's pencil case. G takes another one out of
J's pencil case and returns with it to her desk)).
T (G lots of writing this morning okay?) ((G shakes her head and smiles at
the T)) (You can think about writing now instead of walking around think of
some writing that you are going to put on that paper)
G ((G takes out her pencil and begins to write and so does Z. G writes I
went swimm))
Z (has anyone got my rubber?)
J (I haven't)
Z ((to G)) (can you have a look?) ((G stops and looks in her tidybox))
T (G what are you looking for? ( 3.0) G what are you looking for?)
Z (I asked her to look because I can’t find my rubber)
T (no I think we should concentrate on our writing and not start looking for
things because you don’t need a rubber G. Z if you need a rubber then I
will lend you one and you can give it back to me. Now get on with your
writing G because you are fiddling around a bit G)
G ((G returns to her writing))
J ((to Z)) (you can use my rubber)
Z (Mrs B J’s going to let me use hers) ((T returns with a rubber for Z)) (it’s
okay J)
G ((G leans forward to see the blackboard and copies the word with))
Z ((to J)) (Is that backwards J?)
J (What?) ((Z points to her word)) (yes)
G ((leans over to look)) (what?) ( 2)
Z ((Z rubs out her work and writes it again.) ((It is isn’t it J that’s the right
way) ((Z turns her book around this time so J can see it. J nods and Z
turns her book hack and gets up from the table. She returns with a
rubber.))
G ((G is standing up to see the blackboard and then sitting down to write
each letter before standing up again)) (Nick, get out of the way I can’t see)
T (G come on well I think you can manage to some of that yourself. you
have a think about those words without worrying about looking what we’ve
written. you have a go yourself because I’m sure you can)
G ((G begins writing again but continues to copy from the board)).
J ((J is also copying from the board))
Z (how do you spell the J how do you spell the?)
J (t h e) ((more slowly (t h e) ((J walks over to the board to check the writing))
Z ((to G)) (how do you write tree t) ((writes t))
G (r) ((looks at Z and repeats)) (r)
Z ((to J)) (tree I've done t)
J (t r)
G (treeyuh) ((G exaggerates the ending to make it sound like a yuh sound. She turns back to her own writing))
J ((J walks out to the board again and back to write another word))
G (J how do you write had had) ((J ignores G)) (J is had h d?)
J ((J nods))
G (J what's nya? J what's nya?)
J (I don't know)
G ((speaking out loud what she wants to write)) (had lots) ((G rubs out)) (how do you spell lots?)
Z ((to J)) (how do you spell swimmingpool?)
G ((still looking at J)) (lots lots luh luh luh)
J (how do you think you spell it?)
Z (is it s? s)
G (how do you spell of?)
J ((to Z)) (swimming)
Z (swimmingpool pool pool)
J (just pool?) ((Z nods)) (p)
G ((To J)) (How do you spell lots? Ill) ((makes the sound of I)
J (l)
((J leans across the desks talking to both Z and G. She puts her hand first on one table and then the other,)) (like I will tell you then you you you like that okay) ((to Z)) (so don't write that okay?)
Z (but I've done p l )
J ((J looks away))
Z ((to J)) I'm not doing lots I'm doing pool pool pool
J (I know) ((J moves along her desk edging closer to G))
G ((to J)) (How do you spell of fun of fun of fun)
Z ((to G)) (no you're doing it to me. p l )
J (o (2.0) e) ((Z writes o and e))
G (of fun of fun how do you spell of fun?)
J (of fun that's a word you're (              )
T (children we're going to finish off very soon) ((J quickly begins writing)) (Finish off the sentence you're working on. Finish off the word you're working on because we're going to share our stories today. So when you've finished the word you're working on would you bring your book and come and sit on the floor finish off the word you're working on or what you're working on)
Z ((Z takes her book to the floor)
G (Mrs B Mrs B)
T ((approaches G's table)) (G here we are calling out)
G ( (              )
T (pardon?)
G ( (              )
T (I can't hear you you read your story to me) ((G reads but it is inaudible))
(keep trying look you've done all that) ((gestures towards G's work)) (of is the easy part of you say it. have a try)

G (G writes of f and then hesitates with pencil poised. T walks over to the carpet area))

J ((J stops writing and goes out to the board and back to her desk copying the words from the board))

G (how do you spell nots? How do you spell nots?) ((J ignores her and goes to the carpet with her book. G quickly writes u n, puts her things away and joins the class on the carpet.))

5th March

Setting: Year One classroom
Desks are clustered in a group of three to form a table. There are name cards at the top of each desk (given and family names)

Participants Grace, Jeba and Zena

((G Jena and Z have their writing books on the table.))

J & Z ((J and Z are drawing a line across their pages.))

G ((G is watching them. She has drawn a line across the page half way down. She quickly begins to write I lik to pl)) (J what says yuh) ((J does not respond. She is busy writing I can see hao frm)) (what says yuh) ((G looks across at Z who is drawing a tree)) (Jennaa Jennaa) ((J does not respond. G takes out a rubber and rubs out the pl. She looks at J)) (what says arjeebah uh what says arjeebah) ((J smiles but does not answer. G looks down at her work.)) (puh) ((G takes her rubber and rubs out again.))

G and J continue to write. Z is drawing.

G (what is ed Jena?)

J ((J puts her hands over her ears and frowns at G)) (you ask me that before (3.0) what do you like?)

G (I like to jump on the bed) ((G points with her pencil as she reads her writing))

J (p u h) (j a p)

G (on the bed)

J (b e d)

Z (I don't bounce on my bed because it's not bouncy)

J (but my bed is)

G (my bed is. mine is very bouncy mine is so bouncy I could reach my top my roof)

J (I think yours is very tall)

G (yeah that's why mine is very bouncy)

Z (from my bed you can touch the roof)

G (my bed is the top bunk and that's why I can reach it) ((J and G return to their writing and Z to her drawing)) (hey Z I'm drawing some ( ) smell M because he smells like a poo) ((G begins drawing))

Z (I know)

J (and I heard it from you guys) ((J points to G and Z. J leans across the table to G)) (what did you write?)

G (I like to jump on my bed)

Z ((to J)) (how do you spell we? and on?)

G (on that's o n and n o is no)

Z (I know no)
J (              )
G & J (s t o p)

T ((The T approaches Z table and points to her picture. They have a discussion with the T pointing out parts of the picture)) (what's this?)
Z (apples)
T (what are you going to say about it? What are you going to say about your sun and your apples?)
Z ((Z turns to the T and talks about her trip to Tasmania. Most of it is inaudible))
T (It's lovely down there. well when I saw those apples it reminded me of Tasmania do you know why? what did you see growing in Tasmania?)
Z (passion fruit)
T (did you see passion fruit? they probably grow passion fruit and they also grow lovely apples. now you can write a really good story about Tasmania can't you off you go) ((T moves around the table to J)) (J how are we going?)
J ((J points as she reads her writing)) (I can see from my glasses now) ((J continues to write))
T ((T watches for a moment and then moves away)) (That's good J keep going)
T ((T moves around table to G)) (oh well done G) ((T smiles looking pleased)) (what does it say? start from the beginning and read it to me I can read it but I want you to read it to me)
G ((G reads very softly)) (I like to jump on the bed and I like to jump on the trampoline) (                        ) ((G appears to ask T how to spell trampoline)
T (you have a try) ((T moves away pausing to watch Z writing))
G ((to J)) (                        )
J (you've got to stop asking me) ((J shakes her hands at G))
G (                        )
J (stop asking me I can't write for you please don't ask me)
Z (but you'll still help me because I don't know how to write something) ((Z turns to G) (you write lots)
J (actually I sound it out and think about what to write when I have something I don't know how to write)
Z ((Z looks thoughtful and speaks out loud but not looking at J)) (I wonder how to write the?)
J (t h e)
Z ((Z gives a triumphant grin and writes it down))
G ((G is attempting to write trampoline. She looks at J)) (how do you write ram?)
J (r ran ran it means ran) ((J uses her arms to show running))
G ((G makes a frustrated sound and ignores J. She writes p))
J ((J points and rereads what she has written several times saying the words out loud)) (I can see from my glasses now I said to my) ((she continues writing self and then draws a picture))

Z ((Z sucks her thumb, thinking.)
G ((G puts away her writing pencil and begins colouring in her picture)) (I'm finished) ((She takes her work to the T)) (can I show Mrs F?)
T (later some children are still writing. are you finished totally or are you going to put some more?)
G ((G returns to her desk))
Z (Mrs B how do you write Tasmania?)
(that would probably be a bit much to expect what if I write it. there you are now you are on the track okay?) ((The T walks around to G and points to her word jap (the j is back to front))). (Is this jump? you listen to jump jump jump jump um can you hear another sound in there? What sound can you hear? you've got a u there and an a there which one do you think you might have?) ((T points first to the u in jup and then to the a in jap)) (you say jump for me what sound can you hear? )

G (uh)
T (what letter makes that sound?) ((points to the u in jup))
G (u)
T (because you've got u there how about you fix up this one and make it a u too) ((T moves away))
G ((G rubs out and changes the a to a u))
J ((J is talking (softly) to Z. She goes around to Z's table and rubs out the last letter Z has written. Z writes a d instead of a b. J returns to her desk and colours in her picture))
Z (Is there anything else in and?)
J (a nd a n d and)
Z (Z rubs out and rewrites and)
T (right children. we are going to stop there. finish what you're finish the words you are writing when you are finished the words you want to put in your story bring your book and come and sit on the carpet)
Z ((Z goes over to the T and speaks to her softly. Z returns and writes the letter t and then sits and thinks))
T (Z put down the first sound)
Z (I've done t)
T (draw it would that be the best? if you're really stuck on the word draw a picture for it that's quite all right you start your story you finish your story with a picture and we'll know what it is)
Z ((Z draws a picture of a snake. She colours it red and then goes to the carpet))

12th March

Setting: Year One classroom
Desks are clustered in a group of three to form a table. There are name cards at the top of each desk (given and family names)
Participants G, Jena and Z
((G Jena and Z have their writing books on the table. G and Z are drawing pictures. J is busy writing. She has written: On Wansday I plo sat pet and I h))
G ((G leans across the desk towards J)) (had is h a um d I mean. ahd?)
J (no aitch a d )
G (haitch? haitch?)
J (aitch a d) ((she points to an h in her family name on her desk))
T ((T addresses a boy who has just arrived at school and G and J and Z pause and look up and listen)) (Mark good morning did you just slip in so quietly I didn't know you were here?)
Mark (I slept in)
T (slept in you know I felt like sleeping in)
boy (so did I)
T (you know I think it's these nice cool mornings) ((to Mark)) (you can tell me all about sleeping in in your story. were you like lazy mary? did your mum have to come in and say mark mark will you get up?)

Mark (no)

J ((J rereads her writing quietly to herself and continues writing saying each word out loud as she writes it.) ((J turns to Z)) (can I use your rubber?) ((J takes the rubber and rubs out a letter and continues writing))

G ((G leans across and takes the rubber and rubs out a part of her picture))

J ((J attempts to take the rubber back))

G (don't!) ((G continues rubbing out))

J ((J stretches her hand out towards G)) (can I have the rubber again)

G ((puts the rubber in her pencil case )) (it's mine)

J (please) ((J appeals to Z)) ( ) ((J takes the rubber and rubs out again))

Z (you can use my rubber only if you need it)

J ((J snatches the rubber off G's desk and holds it in her hand as she re-reads her writing. She returns the rubber to Z's desk and then takes it again and makes some corrections. J's work now reads: On Wansday I pls In santpet and I had MaK a Sant))

G ((G has begun writing below her picture. She looks up and speaks to J)) (There's a the in brother)

J ((J points to G's word across the desk)) (bru the)

G (how do you spell was J? how do you spell was. was was w" o" z" w" o" Z" woz woz it's w something something) ((G writes the w)) (w" o" what says z")

J (z)

G ((G writes woz. The z is back to front. She reads her writing)) (was jumping how do you spell jumping? jumping jumping j")

J (I know. what did you write? jump you write jump) ((J points to the front of G's book indicating that she has written jump before))

G (jump I write jump)

J (J edges around the table towards G as if to help her find it))

G (appears aggressive)) (I know!) ((G quickly looks at the word jump that she has written previously and quickly turns back to the page she is writing on)) (j u m p) ((G writes and J turns to her chair)) (jump ing)

((to J)) (what says ing?) ((J ignores G)) (ing jump ing in) ((J writes ine and then rereads her writing)) (my brother sam was jumping in the water) (how do you spell water? how do you spell water!) ((G leans across the desk to J and demands to know how to spell water in an aggressive way))

J ((J is looking through some sight words on cards that she has in a plastic bag. She appears to be ignoring G))

G (I've already done w)

J (t) ((G writes the t)) (I don't know how to spell ( )

G (wa tuh wa tuh wa ter)

Z (t h e the)

J (w)

G (I did w! I done w!) (impatiently))

J (t w e t )

G (wait wait) ((G reaches across to take Z's rubber))

Z (holding the rubber) (don't I'm using it)

J (softly to G) (don't Z has to use it and you have to wait)

Z (hey do you know how to spell big?)

G (yes big p" b i)
J  (I do know now I forget how to spell big)
Z  ((to G grinning and holding out her rubber)) (hey G do you need your rubber?)
G  ((G snatches the rubber, uses it and returns to Z.  J says something quietly (inaudible) to Z who puts the rubber in her desk))
T  ((approaches the table)) (how are you girls going?) ((to Z)) (Z are you going to write something about that beautiful picture?)
Boy  (from the table behind Z) (is that a rainforest?)
T  ((to Z)) (It looks like a rainforest that's what it made me think of)
Z  ((shaking her head)) (it's in Tasmania in the bush)
T  (well if it's in Tasmania it)
Z  (cos when I was in Tasmania I went lots um my auntie showed me this is where we're staying and my auntie (                  ) and then it was in the bush)
T  (because it couldn't be a rainforest in Tasmania because it's not hot enough)
J  ((J points to some orange circles in Z's picture)) (is that orange?)
Z  (no peaches)
T  ( aahh they do grow lots of fruit in Tasmania like peaches and apples and apricots. And does your auntie have some fruit trees at her house?)
Z  (um we planted some um near the forest but um they didn't grow)
T  (they didn't grow?)
Z  (they didn't grow)
T  (I wonder why?)
Z  ( (Z shrugs))
T  (perhaps it was the wrong soil? would you like to write something about that lovely bush picture?) ((Z nods)) (you've got fruit in it. who's this in it?) ((the T points to the person in the picture))
Z  (my auntie)
T  (your auntie)
Z  (and she (                  ) she went away for a whole year)
T  (did she that's a long time isn't it. are you going to write sometthing for me? you could do it on the next page because that's a very nice drawing of your auntie's bush)
Z  (I'll have to do it there because) ((Z shows the teacher that the following page is blank but that the previous page is covered with another picture and some words))
T  (there's not enough room you could do it on the next page because I'd really like to see that because it's such a nice drawing and you've included such a lot of things in that drawing haven't you)
Z  (Will I write there?)
T  (yes you can write over the page) ((T gets up and moves to J who is looking through a pile of sight words in her plastic bag)) (J are you looking for a word?) ((J nods)) (Do you know which word you are looking for?) ((J nods again and the T moves away))
G  (b i b i g big)
J  (thankyou) ((J turns to Z)) (                  )
Z  (what?)
J  (                  )
Z  (b h e?)
J  (no big) ((J takes the words out of the plastic bag again and starts looking through them again))
G  ((G comes around the table to stand next to J and looks at Z)) (big b i big b i g I'll show you) ((G takes the plastic bag of words away from J and starts looking through them))
J  (oh there it is) ((she takes a word card and places it on her writing book))
(thank you) ((G returns to her desk))
T  ((to whole class)) (Children I think that most of you have finished with your
story writing. If you have finished you may bring your book and put it in the
shelf but if you want to finish the story you are working on you may keep
working. Otherwise put your book in the shelf and sit on the floor please)
G  ((G is finishing her picture. Her writing says: my Brthe sam woz Jumpine
in the wet and I med a sad kas))
Z  ((Z has turned the page and written the following words/letters two thirds
of the way down the page and about 4 cm in from the left hand side of the
page: see me (the s is back to front. There is no space between see and
the. She rubs out the word the and begins writing again))
J  ((to G pointing at the top of her picture)) (what's that?)
G  (Just green stuff)
T  ((the T is sitting on the carpet with the children looking at their writing and
pictures))
G  (J guess what it is J J guess what it is)
J  ((J is rereading her writing quietly to herself))
G  (guess what it is J guess what it is)
Z  ((to J)) (do you know how to spell auntie?)
J  (n )
G  (no a n t)
J  (yes I know a n t)
Z  ((Z has written: see my ant)) ((the s is back to front)) ((J closes her book))
T  (Z if you finished come and put your book here near me and we'll look at
it later when we've got time to talk about it together) ((Z takes her book to
the teacher and sits on the carpet))
G  (castle c’ no s a d k a s)
J  ((Jeba puts away her plastic bag of sight words and her pencils. She has
written: On Wansday I pla In the sant pet and I Makabig sant kasal))

19th March

Setting: Year One classroom. There are two computers at the side of the
classroom. The T (Project Officer Technology) is assisting the
children to compose at the computer. Each key on the keyboard
has been covered with a coloured spot that has the lower case
letter written on it. Z and J are seated by side by side at the
computer. G is sitting at her desk.

Participants  Jeba and Zena

Z  ( (and now it's going to be teared down and
there's going to be blocks of flats there)
T  (are you going to write about that today?)
Z  ((nods))
T  ((to J)) (Z's got her idea. she's going to write about her house being pulled
down and made into two blocks of flats)
Z  (but we're going to stay there maybe we have we'll probably be able to
stay there another month)
T  (okay and what about you J what are you going to write about?)
Z  (And I know something happier my grandma's got a new puppy)
T  (has she?)
(just like a puppy puppy)

T (well while J's doing her writing you think about which story you are going to write about)

J (I've already wrote my dad has gone to Bangladesh)

T (have you heard from dad?)

J (I just talked to him last night)

T (on the telephone?) ((J nods)) (do you want to tell us about that in your story?)

J (I already did that)

T (You've done that too so what ideas are you going to write about today?)

J ((J pauses))

T (well do you want to think about your ideas while Z does her writing?)

J ((J nods))

T (then you come and sit here and be the helper. Z can move over into the driver's seat) ((Z slides across to sit in front of the computer screen while J comes around and sits in the seat Z has just vacated)) (and you're the passenger)

T (okay Z how's your story going to start?)

Z (My) ((T nods)) (grandma has got a new puppy)

T (okay you type that my grandma) (( to J)) (you help her to remember what she's writing)

J ((J points to the letters m and y on the keyboard and says their name for Z. Z presses them and then presses the space bar twice.))

T ((to J)) (remember you're thinking about what you're going to write about) ((to Z)) (come on Z) ((T points to the computer screen)) (my. what was the next word?)

J (grandma) ((T nods))

Z ((Z presses the g key and both girls look at the g on the screen))

T (funny looking g isn't it is that the way you do your gs?)

girls (no)

T (let's change it then) ((The T changes the font))

(now what comes next?)

J (r)

T ((to Z)) (do you think J might be right? do you think r is next? grrrrgrandma)

Z ((Z nods and looks for the letter r without success))

T (it's on the top line somewhere) ((Z points to k)) (no that's not r)

Z (no that's k)

T (there she's found it) ((Z presses the letter r)

Z (n?)

T ((gr a´ndma gr a´ndma)

Z (a) ((Z types a and then J points to the n)) (it doesn't look like the n on m computer)

T (do you type on your computer at home?)

Z ((nods))

T (what sort of things do you type at home?)

Z (like we have this new colouring in thing and you have to press the colour of the crayon and it fills in in that colour)

T (do you do that on the computer?)

Z ((Z nods))

T (now where are we up to? gr and ma)

Z (d)

T (d says duh do you see it? grand ma) ((Z types the d))

J (I know what I'm going to write about I'm going to write about my bed that fly away)

T (oh that sounds interesting) ((to Z)) (ma mmmm aaaaahh) ((Z presses ma and then a space))
T (now what's the next thing you're going to write?)
Z (my grandma just got a new puppy)
T (my grandma) ((pauses))
Z (just)
T (just my grandma just got okay)
J (j)
T ((you're a good helper aren't you J))
Z ((Z presses j))
T (make the sounds Z)
J (j a s t j ust)
T (do you think that's right Z?) ((Z nods, types the letters and looks at what she has typed on the screen))
T (space before the next word?)
J (it's wrong)
T (how do you know it's wrong)
J (because I went to my sister's school in my sister's class in year and like they said it tells you when its wrong)
T (do you know what tells you there's a spelling mistake there?)
J (yes the red line) ((J moves her fingers to show a wiggly line))
T (now you listen to me say the word just j u s t.) ((pauses)) (the letter that's not quite right is the letter a)
J (o)
Z (I want to go right back)
T (you can use this one to go back) ((showing Z the direction key. Z goes back to the letter a)) (now you have to think of the letter that says uh that goes there)
J (o)
T (does o say uh?)
Z (no)
T (j u s t. u.) ((no response))
J (e)
T ((to J))(what do you think it is?)
J (e)
T ((to Z)) (e says? what does e say?)
Z (e)
T (eggs in eggcups e e e well what's the one that says umbrellas up u u u?)
J (u)
T ((to Z)) (well that's the one you're looking for isn't it)
Z ((Z puts in the u))
T (ah now the red line 's gone away to tell you it's okay. but you need a space again. my grandma just)
Z (got)
J (had got)
T (got)
Z (g r that's not on mine) ((Z is pointing to the stickers on the keyboard))
J (because they have um that's like a sticker)
T ((see there's capital letters underneath. you haven't learned the capital letters at school yet so we thought we'd just show you the letters that you have learned to make it easier for you. g o t'))
Z (o)
T (you're right. where's the o?) ((Z presses the o))
J (t got) ((Z presses the t)) (she's right)
T (what now?) (2.0) (do you want to read it Z?) ((the T points to the words on the screen))
Z (My grandma got)
J (a a ) ((J leans across Z and presses the a key)
T (oops look you forgot to put a space in. better put a space in)
J (dog d o g) ((she points to the keys and Z types them))
T ((to Z)) (You've written a whole sentence. what do you put at the end of a sentence when the sentence is finished?)
J (a full stop)
T ((to Z)) (do you know where that is?) ((Z shakes her head)) (just here) ((T points to the key)) (are you going to write anything else Z?) ((Z shakes her head)) (that's your story is it. well we might see if we can print that out now and then J can do her story. can you swap chairs again now)((J and Z change places))

J ( ) (I)
T (what should it be J. is that the right I. is that the one you wanted?)
J ((J says each letter as she types it. Z watches.))
T (are you writing used? it starts with the letter u. let's just get rid of this one first) ((T backspaces to remove the letters)) (used. it starts with a u)
J ((J continues to type and say each letter)
T (what about a space J?) ((turns to Z)) (remember you're helping Z)
T (I used to what?)
J (have)
T ((to Z)) (do you remember that when it was your turn you help J find the keys on the keyboard?) (3.0) (J read it to me)
J (I used to have a space a)
T (I think you've forgotten to leave a space. what is that word you've just written there?)
J (bed)
T (bed b\^e\^- d\^-. what does that word say? (2.0) b\^e\^- a\^-. d\^-. what's the letter in the middle? b\^e\^- d\^-?)
J ( )
T (e\^e\^- e\^e\^- eggs in eggcups e\^e\^- e\^e\^-). what's the letter that says e\^-?)
Z ((Z leans forward and presses the e key))
J ((J continues to sound out the letters in the words she is writing and typing them in. Z is looking around the room.))
T (Z would you like to go and get your writing and draw a picture to go with it. You could go back to your desk to do that. Can you see it? Come and show me Z. oh look at it. can you read it to me.)
Z (My grandma just got a new)
T (ohh we forgot new. never mind. just got a)
Z (puppy)
T ((pointing)) (dog. go and draw the picture)
J (I need to rub out that) ( )
T ((to J)) (do you want a help with house? there are some extra letters that you can't hear in the word house. there's a u in it. because when o and u are together they say ou. (2.0) then you can put a little silent e on the end. you can't hear it but it's there)
J ( )
T (do you want to fix it up?)
J (yes)
T (we need to make it two words. (2.0) we used to have a bed in my house)
J (a bed in my house and)
T (space first)
J ((J continues to say the words, sound them out and type the words))
T (it sounds a bit like the word day doesn't it. do you know where the word day is up there?) ((pointing to the screen))
J ((J points to the word day))
T (so does that help you to write way with just the same ending on it?)
J (w a y)
(that's right. now read me the whole story)

(I used to have a bed in my house and one day it flew away)

(is that the end of the sentence? so what do you put at the end of a sentence?)

(J types in the full stop)

(finished or are you going to write more?) ((J shakes her head)) (draw me a beautiful picture now?)

((and they didn't know it was ours)

(was it a bed or a bird that flew away?)

(a bed)

(a bed that you sleep in) ((T rests her head on her hands as if sleeping))

(no)

(I thought it was a bed that flew away. a magic bed)

(no)

(a bird) ((J nods)) (oh and we've written bed in your story. do you want to fix it up?) ((J nods)) (I think we'd better cos otherwise I was expecting a picture of a bed. but it isn't it's a bird. in the middle its an ir sound. do you know how to write ir?)

(e r )

(yes but this time its an i r) ((J types ir)) (now it says bird. go and see if your writing has come through. I think it's over there on the floor)

((to Z and J)) (I'll come and see your picture before I go)

((G is sitting alone at her table writing. She has drawn a small picture and written the words: today I am giveg to the ms ekscl)

(what are you writing today G? can you read it to me?)

(today I am going to the music school)

(to the music school? what do you do at the music school?)

(I play the piano)

(where's the piano)

((G points to the piano in her picture))

(oh it's upstairs and is that you sitting at the piano. can you write notes of music? would you write some notes of music for me. (3.0) write them with the writing pencil G not the yellow pencil. I'd love to see some music. I'll come back and see some music in a minute. okay? )

26th March

Setting: Year One classroom

Three desks have been pushed together to make a table. The three girls are sitting at the table. They have their names stuck to the top of their desks. The T is moving around the room quietly assisting children with their writing. The room seems quietly busy.

Participants: T (Mrs B), Grace, Jeba, Zena,

(J and Z are drawing. G is sitting quietly watching and thinking.

G takes a crayon and draws a line across the middle of her page dividing it in half. She also begins to draw. The girls draw quietly without speaking for several minutes.))

G J. J.

J yeah? ((Looks at G's drawing)) Wow.
G: ((grins))
M: ((M calls G several times to help with the letters in the words eat and very well that she is writing. G says the sounds in the words and tells her the names of the letters she can hear))
G: eee tuh. eee tee. … vvv(.)ery. vee. ((turns back to her work. Looks across at Z)) Are you copying me?
Z: No
G: ((pointing to her tree))
Z: …
J: ((to Z)) How do you spell have again?
Z: haitch. have. hh(.)av. have. haitch
G: ((to J)) how do you spell saw?
G: Is that all?
J: yeah
G: No.
J: ess oh vee eee?
G: not a vee ((writes sove)) so vee. Nooo. ((pulls a face at J. Takes rubber and rubs out the ve)) sovee.
Z: ((leans across and whispers in J's ear))
J: What?
Z: ess oh
J: ((shakes her head)) I'm not sure
G: ((shakes her head and gets up from her desk. She walks over to the box with readers in it that she has been taking home and brings a book called Sleeping Out back to her desk. She copies the word possum out of it and then puts it back in the box.))
Z: ((to J)) What says tee eee.
G: ((to J)) What says ing? ing. ((turns to the back of her book and writes et. She looks at it and then writes e on the end)) Is it eee tee eee?
J: What?
Z: I know how to spell (vet).
J: easy. ( )
Z: Yeah.
G: eat
J: it. eye tee
G: ((pulls a face at J))
G: ((takes a rubber)) No
J: yeah. eye tee it. When my mum said it to me. ((J makes the letters with her finger on the top of her page)) eye tee. it.
Z: oh yeah. eye tee. it.
J: yeah that's it. eye tee it.
G: ((G rubs out the et and replaces it with it and then continues writing. When finished she adds clouds to her picture))
Z: ((re reads her writing. Z watches her)) I have a macadamia nut tree
J: tree? easy. tee eee aitch. tee eee ar
M: ((approaches table)) tee ar eee eee
J: Dooon’t. Don't tell us. okay?
G: I tell her. ((referring to earlier assistance to M))
J: If I tell it to you how do you feel?
M: ((goes to T))
T: Tree. Tree. What about the tree?
Who wants to know how to spell tree? G? Are you helping G now?

M  G, give it to spell.

T  ((laughs)) She asks you and you are going to ask me. Treeee. It's like the cheshire cat. treeee

J  oh. double eee.

T  It's a double eee. Good girl J.

J  tree. tee double eee ar

T  trrreeee. Remember our cheshire cat?

J  tee eee ar?

T  No tee rrrr

J  oh. tee ar double eee

T  That's right. tee ar double eee

Z  ((offers J her rubber)) Do you have a rubber

J  thank you. tee ar ee eee. Here Z ((returns rubber)) It's a bit like thee but it hasn't got an aitch in there. aitch in there. in the middle

G  ((G leaves the table to go and read a story to the TA))

Z  I'm going to have two stories.

J  what?

Z  I'm going to have two stories.

Z  ((pauses and then begins to write))

J  ((to Z)) How do you spell we? How do you spell we? How do you spell we?

Z  ((looks up)) we?

J  double you

Z  www

J  double you

Z  www www. I don't really know

J  double you eee.

J  ((walks over and whispers to M at her table)) (        )

M  (        ) ask teacher ((points))

J  ((smiles)) no. ((sits down again))

M  ((goes and asks and then returns to J's table)) doubyou eee. doubyou eee.

J  doubyou eee

M  doubyou eeeee.

J  ((holding up two fingers)) two ees? Two ees? Double you eee?

((pretends to write)) nother eee? nother eee?

M  ((pointing to J's writing where she has written we)) no more. no more.

((returns to her seat))

Z  ((saying what she is writing)) Today we ((turns to J)) now I'm doing we.

J  wee?

Z  wee

((both girls laugh))

G  ((G returns to her writing after reading to a TA)) I wish I had a triangle

J  I wish I had a circle

G  I wish I had a square one

Z  You were supposed to read the book (        )

G  I did! And now I put it back. ((indignant))

T  ((to whole class)) Children if I've seen your work you may put your book away and find something quiet to do for a couple of minutes whilst we finish off. Some of us I think are having a talk today instead of thinking about our writing. It's all right to talk about your writing but when you finish talking about your writing go back to finish off. It's quite all right to talk about your writing.

Z  ((leaning over J's work)) Ooooh look at how much writing you've done today.
J ((J stands up))

…

Z ((tapping J)) How do you write uh?
G Ay
Z Oh yeah. That's right.
J How do you write collection?
Z collection?
G kay
J kay eee?
G no. kay ell. kuh(.),lek(.),shn.shn. shn.
Z ((to G)) How do you write are G? ((leaning across desk)) Are. How do you write are?
G ((loudly)) ay! ((points to her own writing))
Z ((sitting down and writing))
G That can be ar or ay
Z go
G gee ((opens her desk and takes out her soap box. G starts looking for the word go)) gee
Z oh?
G ((puts her soap box away and stands up with her book))
Z ((writes going and turns to J)) how do you write tee?
J tee? tee. tee
Z tee yeah.
J ((J comes around the table and writes it for Z))
Z ((reads her writing to J)) Today we are going to
J (reads her writing to J) Today we are going to
Z Oh. (writes in the o on the end of the t to make to) You said how do you write tee. You said that.
Z ((flicking her head with her pencil)) oh. to.
((re reads her writing and then continues writing))
I've finished. ((Takes her work out to show the T))
G ((Is standing beside the T reading her writing)) One day I saw a possum eating an apple.
T eating an apple. Well done. And look at your possum eating the apple. It's falling off the tree and the possum's coming right down to get that apple. ((points to the picture)) Well done G. How did you find out how to write possum?
G ((pointing to the book box)) (                   )
T And that was how you worked it out. Well that was a clever thing to do. We can use books and other things. Well done.
Z ((shows her writing to the T and reads it)) Today we are going to see (. ) our buddies. I write two stories.
T You have written two stories and I know you haven't just copied that off the board have you. ((Note: on the board is written: Today we will see our buddies))
Z ((shakes head))
T because you read exactly what you've got.
Z ((reads again))
T See you've missed out the our. We'll have fun with our buddies won't we? Do you think we'll sit with our buddies under the apple tree? ((looking at Z's picture and exchanges smiles with Z))
Z no
T No. They're going to come to the room today. You'll be able to show them some of the things you've been working on Z.
Z (          )
T Yes. You could show them some of the stories you've written. Thank you Z.
Z ((Z returns to her desk))
J ((J is still writing. She reads after each word and says the next word slowly making each sound and writing it down. J walks to the T to show her))

T J I’m just handing out these books and then I’d like to see yours. Can you wait a minute?

J ((J waits and then sits down with the T and reads it out loud.)) I have a macadamia nut tree and we share it them and sometimes we sell them.

T ((pointing to a word)) Is that share it or collect? What were you trying to write because that looks more like collect to me.

J ((looks carefully at it)) collect

T collect them. That’s a good word isn’t it when we gather things up.

J ((nods))

T ((pointing)) and sometimes we sell them. ((to J)) Where’s your tree growing?

J ( ) near our house ( )

T ((nods)) lots of nuts?

J ((nods vigorously))

T I love macadamia nuts. Nice in ice cream ((J nods)) And they make nice biscuits. ((J nods))

J ( )

T ((pats J on the shoulder and gets up))

31st March

Setting: Year One classroom

Desks are clustered in a group of three to form a table. Z and J and G are sitting together. There are name cards at the top of each desk (given and family names). On the blackboard are the words: hermit crab. Next to them er has been written and circled. A story about a hermit crab is on the ledge under the board. There is a hermit crab in the classroom that one of the children brought in for Show and Tell.

Participants: Zena, Grace, Jeba

K, J, and G have their writing books on their tables. J is drawing. G and Z have not yet begun.

G ((laughing)) (hey J. I can eat paper and plastic)

J (yeah. me too. I can eat paper too. yum) ((G and J look at each other smiling)) (I can show you as well) ((J tears a small piece of paper from the corner of her page and puts it in her mouth and begins to chew))

G ((G opens her mouth wide and J does the same exposing the paper in her mouth))

J ((removing the paper from her mouth and pulling a face)) (it’s not very yum is it) ((she tears a smaller piece from the first paper, and extends her hand to Z and G (paper, paper.) ((J puts the paper back in her mouth and chews, smiling. She returns to her drawing.))

Z ((Z is drawing a picture.))

G ((G takes a sheet of paper from her tidy tray and puts it on the desk. It has been done on the computer. It says:

I saw Alexandra at the shop.
She was being an iscream.
G has drawn a picture of two girls under it.))
(now my writing) ((J takes her pencil and begins writing. She clasps her hands together, puts her head to one side and bats her eyelids at Z)) (can I have your rubber please?)

(Z smiles and gives J her rubber) (here J) ((J rubs out her writing))

((G comes to J's desk)) (hey) (three people)

J (one two three four. um here is Nick and here is Mary and here is Jane and here is David. I know I'm not really good at drawing) ((J begins writing again. She says the name of each letter as she writes and each word)) (I w e n t I went to) ((she puts two fingers down on the page to mark the space between the words)) (to I went to I went to my)

G ((G has begun writing. She is copying the word Alexandra from the sheet on her desk)).

J ((J leans across to G's desk)) (is that the same as that) ((she points to the sheet and to G's writing book))

G (what?)

J (is that the same like that?)

G ((G continues writing))

J (you're just copying a bit aren't you)

G (NO!)

J (a bit)

G (NO!!)

G ((G continues writing. She puts the sheet of paper away under her desk and continues drawing a picture. She walks over to J's desk and tells her something quietly))

((G and J and Z turn to watch S composing at the computer with a T))

J ((to Z)) (how do you write sh he again?)

Z (what?)

J (sh he)

G (no she)

J (s h e)

Z (no it's not s h e. it doesn't sound like it a word)

J (I didn't want it to be colourful)

J ((J is talking to a TA)) (house h u s e)

TA (good girl. well put that down. very good try. you go and write that down)

J (I did)

TA (oh you did already)

J ((J returns to her desk, looks at her writing and goes back to the TA)) (I did it h u s e and then I copied some other words and then I did it again h u s e)

TA (that was a very good attempt J) ((J returns to her place))

Z ((Z has begun writing under her picture. She has written the word To. She gets up and goes to Matthew's desk and copies the word Matthew from his name tag at the top of his desk))

Z (how do you spell brought?0

G [b

J [b ((both girls laugh at saying b together))

J (r)

G (r) (2.0) (t e r)

J (that's all)

Z (brought. br. or or or. it has an or in it)
J (o t)
Z (o t)
J (yes, so rub off the t)
Z ((Z rubs out and writes b r o t)) (in in in. how do you spell in?)
J (i n)
G (yeah. i n)
Z (Matthew brought in)
...
G ((sliding slowly under the desk)) (I'm getting smaller. I'm getting smaller. I'm getting smaller) ((Z and J laugh and slide under their desks too))
G ((G reappears from under the desk and then stands up on her chair)) (I'm bigger. I'm bigger. I'm bigger) ((J stands on her chair too))
G (I'm biggest)
J (=I'm biggest)
G (=I'm biggest) ((G moves her chair against a wall and stands up on the chair back)) (I'm biggest)
T (G and J. back to your writing please. we're going to stop now. finish the sentence you're working on)
G (I'm finished)
T (J are you finished?)
J (just a little bit)
T (well finish it off)
J ((J continues writing))
Z (how do you spell a?)
G (a)
J ((writing)) (big b i g)
G ((grinning)) (no big b o g)
J (b i g)
J (you said you know how to spell (             )
G (yeah but I don't know how to spell everything)
G (ninety-nine I can do)
Z (everybody can do that)
J (      )
G (adults and sisters can)
Z (no not everything. not everything. adults don't even know how to spell (      ) so much)
J (my daddy and my sister can count up to (     )
G (even my brother can)
J (      )
G (you're stur:bing me)
J (I'm not talking to you I'm talking to J)
G (but you're stur:bing me)
((J and Z continue writing. G takes out a pattern sheet and begins colouring in))
T (children we're going to finish off there. Open your writing book in front of you. Leave your writing in front of you whilst I come and look at your work and then we'll put them away)
Z ((Z copies the words hermit crab from the board))
9th April

Setting: Year One classroom. It is the day before the Easter break. The children have just returned from the assembly hall where they have been rehearsing for the Easter Hat Parade which will be held in the afternoon. L is visiting Mrs B’s classroom as Mrs S has to play the piano for the Year 2’s practice.

Participants: Jeba, Grace, Zena, Lia

T = teacher

J: I’m going to write Easter
T: oh I’m sure everyone
Z: you’re going to write about Easter too are you Z?
Z: ((Z nods))
T: ((what are you going to say?))
Z: don’t know yet I’m going to think about (what I want to say)
T: what about you G. you’re thinking now aren’t you.
T: which page are you going to start on L?
L: ((indicates left page))
T: well move it over in front of you ((T pushes book so that the left page is in front of L)) (I think we need to have. we need to have a minute when we don’t talk to each other so we can think. when you’ve had your minute thinking you can start writing.

…

T: Z now it’s time to start thinking and writing. no talking for a minute
J: ( ) ((begins to write))
L: are you gonna copy her?
Z: I’m not copying her I’m doing my own ((Z begins drawing))
L: I’m going to write first
Z: I’m going to draw first
J: me too. oh I need my thing to (see) ((takes her Easter basket out of her desk and puts it beside her writing book and begins writing))
L: I’ve got my hat. I’ve got my hat
G: ((pointing)) There’s my hat there
L: ( ) that’s cool
J: ((to L)) at your classroom
L: yes
J: ( ) this is our classroom
((At this moment Z is drawing, J is writing, L and G have not started))
L: I know what I’m going to say. yeah ((puts her pencil at the top left-hand side of the page))
T: ((quietly to G)) what are you going to write about G? the Easter hat parade?
L: I’m going to write my rabbit I’m going to write that my rabbit
T: where is your rabbit? do you have a rabbit?
L: no
T: so why are you going to write about it?
L: ( )
T: you just thought of it
Z: maybe it’s a made up story
L: oh I’ve got a rabbit a (door) rabbit in my house
T: a toy rabbit. okay write [about your toy rabbit
J (yeah I have lots of um bunny rabbits that you and
I ( )
Z Me and E ((little sister)) just got little bunny rabbits from D. real?
Z ((nods her head)) no ((shakes her head))
L I love real
T ((to G)) show me your hat for the easter hat parade. where is it? ((G points))
Z mine's that one there with just the big ears ((points))
T well now it's time to decide what you're going to write about
Z I know what I'm going to write about
T okay well I want to see you writing now
L how do you write toy?
T I'll help you with the other letters in the word toy because there are two more letters in the word toy ((T takes pencil and writes))
J t y o
T o y says oi. you were nearly right J.
T I just did it the other way ((gestures with her hands))
J yes o y says oi. my. see it has this [letter. yes. ((writing y))
J [m y
T see it's not an e it's a y that says i in my. yes
T my toy. what are you going to write next? My toy
L is a
T All right. off you go
J is i s
T Thank you for helping J
L I know how to write is. ((writes)) a rabbit. a. mmm
T ((leans over L adjusts pencil hold)) let's hold that pencil properly. The thumb and this finger holding. that one underneath. that's better. the other two tuck away ((pointing)) my toy is
L rabbit
T is a
L I can't do a so much ((does an upper case A))
T Read it to me ((T points and L reads))
T My toy is a rabbit rrrabbit. I wonder what rrrabbit starts with?
L r
J I know
T write it down ((T moves away towards G and then returns)) (6.0) what comes after the rrr in rabbit? rrr a^'
J a a b
G ((G is busy writing. she has written: I Lak my hat))
L ((L turns towards G)) (Hey G) ((G continues writing)) (12.0)
T what comes next? What have you got here? rr
L a
T a'
L b ((writes b))
T rab bit
L t ((writes t))
T now read me your writing ((T points to the first word))
L my
T big loud voice
L my toy is a rabbit
T now what else are you going to say
L um that's all ((L adds a full stop))
T oh you can tell me what he looks like. what colour is he?
L pink and yellow
T okay what are you going to say
L ((L points to the full stop at the end of her sentence))
T what did you put there?
L a full stop
T why did you need a full stop there?
L umm I just wanted to
T you just wanted to, well I would put a full stop there because that's the end of your sentence, the end of your first idea. now you're going to go on and give me another idea you're going to write about what colour he is. what are you going to say?
L brown
T Do you just write my toy is a rabbit brown
L no
T what do you say then
L brown and yellow
T My toy is a rabbit. brown and yellow
L yes
T I think you need to give me some more words. he is brown and yellow. do you agree? do you agree? he is brown and yellow. how do you write he?
L umm h e
T that's what you have to go on and write ((across table to Z)) Z I can't see any writing on your page yet
L ( )
Z I'm trying to think about the word I've spelt
T what do you want to write?
Z when it is (dark) I go out and find all the eggs
T when. what sounds can you hear in when
L w
G w i
T w i n t w i n t
G [does that help Z?]
T [that's went]
J no. [w i n
T [can't hear a. off you go (10.0) ((T leans forward and corrects L's pencil grip)) what's the next word to write L?
L yellow
T yellow. what does yellow start with
L y
T mm ((L writes)) (12.0) ((To J who is drawing)) J I'd like you to start your writing now. it's a beautiful picture. I can see it's an easter picture but there's not any writing. G does her writing first. that's a good idea because then she can spend the rest of her time on the picture.
L and me
T would you like to read what you've written G? big loud voice?
G I like my hat. my hat is green. I like
T what were you going to say next?
G it
T it. okay you keep writing. (4.0)
L ( ) brown ((looks towards
T you sound it out. what sound do you hear first in the word bbrrown. b" rrr
L ((moves around table to Z))
L b
T you know how to write it then. ((to Z)) read what you've got Z
J (standing up looking at the word Easter on the board)) easter easter e a e s
T You said you were going to write when it is dark weren't you
J e a s
T when (2.0) it. write it ((Z writes))
J ((stands to see the word Easter then sits to write some more letters. She rereads what she has written and then the letters out aloud as she writes them))
T where did you find that word
J show me. I didn't see. you go and point to it ((J goes to the board and points to Easter. Everyone looks))
T Ooh. what does it say
J easter
T and you copied it from there. what a sensible idea finding words all around the room like that
LGZ (       )
L like I did over there ((pointing to the wall))
T what did you see up there?
L um. I read some yellow
T Is brown up there too to help you with brown. go and point to brown.
L um ((L looks but does not move))
T go and walk over there and find it L ((pats L's hand))
Z I see it
G I see it. I see it
T you go and show it to her Z
L I know ((L gets up))
T oh no she's found it
L ((L points to it)) there
T what does it say?
L brown
T can you say the letters?
L b r o w n
T now you can write it can't you. what a clever girl to find that on the wall and this isn't even your classroom. ((L returns to her desk smiling))
T now back to writing ((Everyone continues to write)) ((reads Z's writing))
when it is. easter. how are you going to write Easter
Z (       )
T well. go ahead. ((Z walks to the blackboard to copy easter)) read me your writing J ((moves around to J's table))
L (loudly) there. I'm finished
T what are you going to do now L?
L draw
T okay
J ((writing)) when
L w e n t
G that's went
L w e n t
......
T what sound does it start with J?
J w
T if you say w e n t that's went
L I know that
T It's w h e n. there's w h together say w". that's a blend you are going to learn soon.
J when its i t
L (       )
"it is it
so why did you do it?
((reading)) one easter morning when I
((approaches G)) G read me your writing
((G reads)
I have a problem here ((points)) when I say the word like listen to the word
in the middle I i k. what does the letter a say?
J
I think you need to think about what letter goes in the middle of the word
like
L
I thinks it's an i
J
I think it's an e
T
what sound does the letter e make J?
G
like like
J
Do you need an e in the middle of like? would that be helpful?
L
((no answer))
T
there is an e in the word like but it's that sneaky little fellow that hides on
the end and doesn't make any sound. it's a silent one on the end
L
((T moves around to L)) L when you're doing your writing you're writing on
every line. can you see what G is doing here? ((moves G's book over))
When G is doing her writing she makes it nice and big and then she
leaves a line in between that doesn't have any writing on it at all so that
it's easy for the person reading it. do you think next time you do your
writing you could do it as well?
J
I do it as well
T
you do it too do you J? ((points to Z's writing)) we can't see if Z does it but
she might decide she's going to write down here on the next line so
there's a space ((points to L's writing and reads)) my toy is a rabbit. he is
yellow and brown. do you like your rabbit? ((L nods)) why don't you do a
bit more writing
L
okay
T
what could you say about it
L
(((silence))
T
where's your pencil
....
((to L)) what's the next letter. have
T
v
yes that's right. good girl. there's that sneaky little e on the end that
doesn't say anything. put that sneaky little e on the end too. make him
sneaky. you can't hear him but he sits there on the end of have. let me
see him. there he is. ((takes a rubber)) you know you do him as a little
letter e not a capital letter e.
L
((L writes a lower case e))
T
that's easy
J
we only use capital letters when it's the beginning letter in a sentence.
Z
or in names
T
or a name. that's right Z ((reads L's sentence)) I have
two. there ((points to a chart on the wall))
T
where did you find that?

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L there ((points to the number chart)) and over there as well
T and over there as well
L w o

... ((L and G and Z are all writing and sounding out aloud as they go))
G Do you know L we do this nearly every day
Z yeah see how much we've done ((indicates pages in book))
G I only have to do these much more ((indicates pages left in her book))
L ((turns to previous page)) This is when umm Mrs D she's in 1B. umm we
give her a present and we have a snakes party

Z J do you know how to spell find?
J find
LG f
J n
LG n
J d
LG d
J oh you copied me
G no I didn't
L I just I just learned
G I just sound it out
J yeah me too
L I have to be quick because I have to go to my class. I hate doing this.
J I love doing this
Z me too
G I hate doing writing
All me too
Z I like colouring
L yeah. me too I hate writing. I like doing this
Z Anyway. I still have to draw

30th April

Setting: Year One classroom
Participant Grace, Jeba and Zena

The three girls are sitting at an hexagonal table with their writing books open in
front of them.

1 J I wish G we could have lots of fights with you
2 G yeah. Throwing toys at each other
((Z and J giggle. G turns to Z)) messing up your room ((Z giggles))
Messing up your mum and dad's room
3 J Hey I'm putting this in my pencil case ((J puts her reader in her pencil
case))
4 G Look how fat my pencil case is ((G stands her pencil sharpener up in her
pencil case)) look how fat my pencil case is ((holding it up)) Look how fat
my pencil case is
((The three girls pause))
5 J What can I write about?
6 Z me. Write about me
G Tonight
Tonight J is going to Z's house. Tonight
You could write that ((points to G))
Tonight. Tonight I am going to Z's house like you. ((pointing to J)) I am going to write that.
((pointing to the paper badges on G's shirt front)) You've got two things
No I've got three. one two three ((points to her badges))
I haven't finished mine. ((to Z)) You could write Tonight J is coming to my house and I could write Tonight I am coming over to Z's house. We are having a ( )
I don't know how to write ( )
I've done u
t u n
tn tn tn
oh ((looks for her rubber. Gets up and moves away))
what do you have to rub out?
((G leans over and writes on Z's book and giggles))
((Z returns with her rubber, looks at her book, smiles and then rubs out))
t l
Don't!
to night to night to night ((writes then stops and looks around and moves over to watch children writing on the computer))
Hey to n ight ight? ight? ((J looks in her reader and turns the pages))
((G looks at the camera and smiles)) How do you spell holidays?
((copying G)) How do you spell tonight?
How do spell dog?
do g
oh yeah dog
I'll help you. t t to night night ight
yeah t i ((writes)) t
I'm not sure. I'm not sure
t and another t
museum museum moo seum moo seum ((continues to say sounds in museum))
((rubs out her writing))
I know how to write it's easy. t n i t. tonight
((G has written: At the hollodays I went to the moseym.
((to G)) Is that all you want to write? what does it say? ((leans across to look at G's badges)) What's that? Can I see that? Wow!
((G gets up and walks over to watch the children writing on the computer and then returns))
tonight
((leans over and looks at J's writing)) that's not right
tonight tin tn tin tint tint
((Z has written trt. She writes an i over the last t and then takes a rubber and rubs it out.))
(The girls playfully throw the rubber around. G turns to look at the computer)
((coming up to G)) G are you working hard or are you busy watching what they're doing on the computer? You had a turn yesterday and you'll have a turn another day but today I'd like you to write in your book and J.
I'd like you to write fairly quickly today because some days you spend a lot of time thinking and not writing. See how much you can get down today. Remember what we talked about before? If you're not sure about how a word sounds what do we do? If you're not sure of the letters
j
sound it out
t
we listen to what we can hear. Sometimes we can't hear all the sounds. Does that matter? We get down what we can here. okay ((to G)) You read it to me ((T crouches down beside G's desk))
g
((G reads)) At the holidays I went to the museum.
t
What did you do there?
g
I ran around.
t
Ran around? At the museum? Did you look at anything?
g
((G shakes her head))
t
Well did you write that?
g
I was dizzy
t
You were dizzy? From running around? How could you put that in a sentence?
z
((to T)) You know what me and J are doing? J's writing tonight
t
Just a minute because I want to listen to what G's sentence is going to be. How could you put that in a sentence? (3.0) See what you can write for me about what you did at the museum. That would be terrific. ((T turns and watches J and Z for a moment and then moves away))
.....
j
Z how do you spell z
z
((spells her name))
.....
((holds up her book)) Is this right Z?
z
yes
j
house
g
h a p p y. That's happy.
z
How do you spell J
j
((J spells her name slowly as Z writes))
.....
t
((returning to G's table)) G have you decided what you did in the museum? What happened? ((crouches down beside G and reads)) At the holidays I went to the museum. Run. Is that a whole sentence?
g
((G shakes her head))
t
I'm sure you could make it into a whole sentence. How could you make it into a whole sentence? What do you need?
g
I

t
You need an I don't you. ((corrects G's pencil grip)) Can you hold your pencil a bit closer down towards the tip. That's the girl.
g
((pointing and reading her own writing to herself)) Tonight we are going to Z's house and
t
((to G)) Did you make a big noise when you were running around?
g
((G shakes her head))
t
You didn't? You ran around quietly? G I can't believe you ran around quietly ((laughs)) I don't think that would happen. Who were you with?
( )
t
What is your friend's name?
( )

t
So I run. What's his name? So what could you say? I run around
z
Say I ran not I run ((T smiles at Z))
t
I ran around. I can run. I can run around with. Who did you run around with?
g
Joseph
Well you could write that. And then perhaps you could draw. The museum. Are you sure you didn't see something there? When I go to the museum I usually see things.

I only saw one thing ( ).

There you are. You told me about that dinosaur. Could you write about that for me? Good. Come on.

((G nods and T moves around table to J))

J this looks interesting

((J reads)) Tonight we are going to Z's house and we will have. ((J continues to write have))

Now do you remember we talked about have yesterday. Can you remember what was on the end of that?

Good girl. Excellent J. You remembered very well.

((J continues to write and then pauses))

What do you think you might do after dinner?

Play

There you go. Write some more about what you are going to do after dinner.

((to J)) Can you help me spell coming?

Do you know how to write come?

Come and then write ing. Do you know how to spell ing?

Yes

but I don't know how to write come though

((G moves over to Z watches Z write)) m e. . An m and then an e and then i n g. m e (1.0 ) i n g. ((G begins to sing the letters: me  ing. J and Z join in))

Are we having a little singing lesson here? What are we singing about?

Nothing

me ing

me ing. Is that a word?

yeah.

what does it say J?

ing

ing's i n g isn't it. We've been talking about ing on the end of words haven't we.

((to G)) Come on I want to see you. I want to see you write about you and Chris running around the museum. What happened next after you ran around with Joseph? I'm sure it wasn't ( ) that you were running around. Were you running near the dinosaurs? Or were you running around the dinosaurs?

Around the dinosaurs

Well I want to read about it. Come on.

... (J re-reads her writing out loud and then continues writing))

... (to G)) You've been wonderful authors today so I'm looking forward to listening to some of these wonderful stories. So finish off what you're doing and come to the floor with your writing in about two minutes.
('J G and Z all begin to write quickly'))

Z How do you spell house J?
J h
T J you've done a wonderful effort today. And G. Read it to me.
G ((G reads)) At the holidays I went to the museum. I ran around the museum with Joseph. I was dizzy.
T I bet the museum staff were dizzy too. That's a great effort G.
...
G V says v˘ Do you know what a v is? ((goes to write on Z'a book))
Z I know ((pushes G away))
T 1 2 3. Eyes on me.
((G and J pack up. G moves to sharing time on the carpet.))
Z How do you write they?
J they. t h a
Z ((Z writes)) J how do you spell will?
J will. w e l
Z ((Z writes and then re-reads her work)) have have. how do you spell have? ((looks at J)) What are you drawing?
J The table
Z It's round
J ooh. ((Takes rubber and rubs out))
Z ((re-reads again)) have. h˘. What says h˘
J h
Z ((Z writes)) How do you spell have?
J h e v. h e v e.
Z ((Z writes and then taps J with her pencil)) Does it have a magic e on the end?
J Yes. what are you doing again?
Z have. [h e v e
J [h e v e
Z ((Z rereads her writing)) dinner. How do you spell dinner J?
J d e n a.
Z I'm finished
J Will you wait for me? I've got to do just one thing.

7th May

Setting: Year One classroom
Desks are clustered in groups of four to form a table
In the middle of the table is a Pictionary (picture dictionary)

Participants Grace, Zena, Jeba

('Z is turning the pages of her writing book. She is looking at the pictures and commenting on her experiences to G and J))
Z That was when I went to ( )
G ((G points to one of Z's pages and makes a comment (inaudible)))
Z Yeah
Z ((keeps turning the pages)) Oh that was when I. That was when. That was when
G ( )
Z (laughs) yes. ((stops turning the pages)) Is this the right page? Now what can I write about?
((G begins writing.  Z looks for her pencil in her desk.  Jeba is writing.))

G    ((sounding out a word)) nnn yooo. nnn yooo.
J    ((leaning across to G)) How do you spell ( ) again?
G    ((repeats the word)) ( )
J    yes
G    I don't know.  look in your soap box.
Z    Look in your soap box.
J    ((J gets up and then sits down again and looks through the words in her
    soap box. Y (           ) fish (          fish       ) fish (      )
G    eff eee aitch ell
Y    ((Y repeats each letter that G spells out and writes it down)) oh! fish ( )
G    fish. fish. fish. fish.
Z    ( )
G    ((flapping her hands)) itchy itchy itchy
Z    ((leans over and looks at Y's name tag)) I just want to copy your name
G    I need someone's rubber
J    ((passes her rubber across))
Z    ((Z has written: Today Yuk)) J how do you write ( jame )
J    Jame
Z    Gee
G    eee. no ay vee
Z    ((Z writes))
T    G. That's a lovely story very quickly.  Read it to me.
G    ((G reads))
T    ((pointing and reading)) Today I am going to music school and I am going
to be fun? Instead of I am going to be fun do you mean a different word
there? Does that sound right?
G    ((rereads quietly)) I will have fun
T    You could say that.  I will have fun. If you say I am going to be fun does
that sound right?
G    No.
T    No.  It doesn't quite sound right ( ) does it?  Have we left a word out or
need to change a word?
G    Change it
T    Change it.  What do you think you could change it to?  I am going to be
fun.  I am going to be fun.
J    have fun
T    What would you put there Z if it were your writing?
Z    have fun
T    ((puts arm around G)) Let's read it with have and see if it sounds better?
Today I am going to music school and I will have fun.  Does that sound
better than be?
G    ((nods))
T    We usually only use be when ( )
...
T    You don't have to rub it out.  You can cross it out and write it above.  Or
you can rub it out if you want to.  ((T moves away G reaches for the
rubber.))
...
T    ((to J)) J what a wonderful sentence starter  ((T watches over J's shoulder
as J writes)) You're really working those sounds out aren't you.  (3.0)
Well done. I really think you need your pencil sharpened.  ((reaches
across desk for a sharpener)) Can we borrow that Z?  I think it will be
easier to write with a point don't you? {continues to watch J for a few moments and then walks around the table to Z})

T  {to Z) What's the next word you're going to put?
Z  gave.
T  gave. You say it for me. guh ay vv ay vv
Z  a
T  a. that's right. what's next? guh ay vv
Z  vee. {Z writes})
T  That's right. Now remember we've been talking about words like that haven't we. You listen to gave. Can you hear ay saying its own name?
Z  {Z nods})
T  Normally the ay if we write it like that would be gav. guh aaa vvv. gav wouldn't it. What do we need on the end [of that word? Well done.
Z  [eee
T  {moves around to G) G. Do you remember yesterday when we were talking about have? If we say it like that what does the ay say? Do you remember { }{moves away}) We do need an ee don't we Z. Good girl.

G  {G brings her writing book over to the T who is sitting on a chair. She reads her writing to her. The T is holding the book and pointing to the words while G reads})
T  G can you write go for me? How do you spell go?
G  gee oh
T  Mmm so if we wanted going how would we write going?
G  gee oh I enn gee
T  Mmm. So where you've got go would you like to go and put it the correct way. Because I think you're at the stage now where you can spell go you can { }

Y  {Y is reads her writing to Z and then Z goes back to her own writing})
J  {J reads her own writing to herself})
Z  {is busy writing. J speaks to her})
J  If you want to write from it's eff ar oh. eff oh ar em. from Write that.
Z  No I'm writing Today Yuko gave me a purse for
Y  {(standing over Z looking at her work)} { }(returns to her desk})
Z  {(reads her work again) Today Yuko gave me a purse for my birthday (Z puts down two fingers to make a space and then looks at Y}) Do you know how to write birthday?
Y  { )birthday card
Z  {(Z takes an envelope out of her desk that has To Zena written on it. She opens it. It is a birthday card from Y}) Oh! I already have one of these {She opens it and Y points to where she has written the word birthday. Z copies birt and then re reads her writing.})
Y  dee ay why
Z  no. I have to write aitch. {finishes writing. She takes the card and tries to read the writing on the front of the barbie card}) Today I am six. {She takes out the purse and tries to open it but can't.})
Z  {to J) You'll get to see it at Show and Tell.
J  {J continues writing and then turns to Z) How do you spell (other)? the th the {sounds out the word she is trying to spell and resumes writing}) oh I forgot something {J re reads her writing and then rubs out some of the words and re writes. When finished J takes her work to show the T})
Z  {Z has taken her work out to show the teacher. She reads it to her})
T ((grinning broadly and putting out her hand to shake hands with Z)) Z! Congratulations! What was in the present?

Z ((Z points to the purse))

T Oh it's pretty isn't it. You've done a great job there today haven't you? ((T says the words and gives each one a tick. She omits birthday)) I'm going to show you present because you might like to put that in your pictionary. So if you need that word again you'll know where it is. Would you like to bring me your pictionary and I'll put it in for you!

Z ((Z walks away))

J ((J brings her writing to the T and reads it to her))

T J. That's terrific and I'm so pleased with some of the words you've used. When I was little my Dad went to Canada. When I always sleep I have one picture of my dad or else I cry. So do you have a picture of your Dad beside your bed?

J When I was little

T But your Dad's in Bangladesh at the moment. Got a picture there again?

J ((smiles and shakes her head))

T ((The T smiles too)) No? Are you missing Dad?

J ((J nods))

T Yes I'm sure you would be. Well you are doing a wonderful effort with your work and I really like the sentence start when I was little. That's a good way to start a sentence. It's different isn't it.

J ((J nods))

T ((re reading J's writing again)) okay. When I was little my Dad went to Canada

J ((helps the T by prompting with words))

T I'm just going to write down what you say down here. ((writes J's words below writing)) How did you work out Canada?

J I sounded it out

T You've done a really good job at sounding out Canada. Look what I've done. I've left out some words. My dad Canada wouldn't make sense would it?

J ((J shakes her head))

T ((T continues writing))

J ((pointing to her picture))

T Oh this is J lying out on the bed. I like that.

T Did you enjoy writing that? ((J nods)) That was a good story today. Well done. ((T turns and takes a merit stamp and puts a laughing kookaburra stamp on her work))

Z ((Z returns to T with her Pictionary))

T And we're going to Prrpresent. prr. I'm also going to put. There's present. And I'm going to put purse in there for you too Z. Because sometime if you would like to use that because the present was a purse. There you are. Good effort. Good girl. It's exciting isn't it. All this writing we're doing.

Z ((nods in agreement))
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14th May

Setting: Year One classroom
Two trapezoids pushed together to make a round table.

Participants Mrs B (T)
G, J, Z, L (Note: L is visiting Mrs B's room for writing)

The three girls are writing in their writing books.
J (((J is leaning over L's desk)) ay
L ((L writes and then looks for a rubber and rubs out))
Z ((Z is writing))
G ((G is looking at a chart with pictures of fruit on it. She returns to her desk and writes down the word kiwi. She is making a list of fruit))
Z ((to J)) J. How do you spell window? ((J and G respond))
J double you (.) eee (.) dee
G [double you (. ) eee (. ) enn (. ) dee
J ((looks at G)) oh yeah
G dee oh
L enn oh
G No. No. double you. double you eee dee oh
Z ((Z looks around))
L ((L sits with her knees resting against the edge of the table)) J what's after ell in (      )?
G ((G gets up and looks at the fruit chart again and then sits down and writes another item on her list. She continues to do this. The other three girls are busy writing))
L There I've done it. ((L reads her writing)) (    ) Orright. Just finished. I write that. ((L begins to draw a picture))
J ((leans over and speaks to L)) (      )
L No I can't
J ((leans over and speaks quietly to L again and then returns to her writing))
L ((how do you spell your name Z?))
Z zed eee en ay
...
T ((to G)) Are you writing a list? Great. A shopping list?
G (nods)
T What are you buying? ((no response)) What do we call all these things? ((points to G's list))
G (4.0) vegetables
T vegetables or?
J fruit
T ((nodding and smiling)) I think they might be fruit G ((moves away))
J ((leans across and points to G's list and reads upside down)) Banana. What's that?
G kiwi
J what?
G kiwi
J kiwi ((moves her pencil down the list)) pumpkin?
G no
J What is it? ((G does not respond))
J (((smiling at G)) I see you're hiding my rubber
L (((to J as she is correcting her pencil grip with her left hand)) Is that how you hold it?
J ((J holds holds her pencil up)) like this ((They compare))
L I hold it like this ((J and L return to drawing))
Z Do any of you know how to spell (butterfly)
J I think I do. bee you.
Z How do you spell butterfly?
J bee you tee
Z No. how do you say it!
J butterfly

Z ((puts her head in her hands and stares down at her book. She picks up her pencil and continues writing. She writes But and then says the word slowly and tries to sound it out. J leans over to help but Z ignores her.))
Z ((to L)) Have you had your birthday too?
L yes ((L and Z and J discuss the dates of their birthday and how old they are))
G ((G is over at the collage trolley poking around))
Z Yesterday it was G's birthday. ((Z continues sounding out the word butterfly. She says the word slower and slower and then writes down the letters she hears))
L Fly. Fly. I know how to spell fly. eff ell
J why
L yes. eff ell why.
J ((J comes around the table to Z to help))
Z ((speaks through set teeth)) I don't need help. ((She hits J with her pencil)) I don't need your help. ((J returns to her desk))

Z ((Z looks at L and then pokes her tongue at her)))

Z ((taps J's pencil case and calls her)) J. J.
J What?
Z Does (camel) start with a (cee) or a (kay)?
J camel?
Z ((nodding))
J a cee
Z ((Z writes))
J ((leans over and rubs out on L's page)) Hey look at this ((to L))
L ((L turns and looks)) Hey don't do that
J ((smiles))
L ((leans over and scribbles on the edge of J's page)) la la la la la
J ((J rubs it out))
Z ((Z begins to draw a picture of a house at the bottom of her page))

Z ((takes her pencil and begins writing again. She writes I see a. She turns back some pages in her book and looks at the writing and then turns back))
L House. haitch. house. eye. no not eye. double you. ess
Z It's not like birthday
L eee? ess. cee? vee? cee I think
Z ((I think it's on other pages)) ((turns back the pages in her book and looks))
L Let me see. I think I do ((turns pages))
Z ((pointing to a word on a page. It says hoos)) Is this house?
L yep
T Z how did we go with that story?
Z okay. I'm just ((begins rubbing out the letters she has written for house))
T (what's that line?) Are these the things that you can see? ((Z nods)) Tell me what you can see
Z ((finishes writing house))
T ((moves around to L)) L would you read that to me?
L ((reads to T))
T (_____) in year four? Who is her teacher?
Mrs E  (looks at the writing) And a cake?

no

No cake. And what are you doing down here?

well done L. I love your picture.

((returning to Z who has now finished writing)) Now read your list

((reads))

Five things that Z could see

(Z adds an s to the word window that she has written))

Well done Z ((to whole class)) Authors. Bring your books to the floor please.

21st May

Setting: Year One classroom
Two trapezoids pushed together to make an hexagonal table

Participants Kaori, Lia, Grace, Jeba, Zena

((The five children are sitting at the table with their writing books open. Noone is speaking. They all appear to be thinking.))

I don't know what to write today.

((G begins to write))

Oh yeah. Now I do ((J begins to write))

I know. Today (. ) I (. ) am (. ) going (. ) to (   )

((These words spoken as if reading.))

((J and G giggle))

(to K) How do you spell (   ). Oh yeah. why.((begins to write))

((J leans over to watch L))

I know.

why. ee. ess.

why. ee. ess. yes ((grins and claps her hand over her mouth))

why. ee. ess. um. why. ee. ess. tee. aitch. eee arr (   ) ((giggles))

why. ee. ess

I've done that

tee aitch.

(today)

[yesterday]

tee oh dee ay why ((J begins to write again))

ay why

huh?

(pee ess why)

No

((leaning over towards L)) yesterday. yee eee ess (. ) today. tee oh dee ay why

((L begins to write. Throughout the discussion about the spelling of yesterday, K and Z listen in))

yes (. ) terday. yes (. ) today

yes (. ) today? yes? today? ((enjoying playing with the word))

((who has finished writing the words. you're right.))

((using her hands and face for expression)) Yes? today?

... ((general laughing and noises (4.0)))

How do you spell there?
there? (  )
K  tee aitch
    ((J writes and L peers over to see))
L  arr
J  I've done it. there were ((continues writing))
    ... ((all girls are writing and saying the letters as they write. It is
    impossible to distinguish who's saying what))
L  How do you spell boy?
K  what?
L  how do you spell (day?)
K  bee oh why
G  How do you spell morning?
J  em oh
L  that's boy. bee oh why. that's boy
K  yes.
J  em oh en igh en gee
    ... ((general noise of saying words and sounding out))
K  (  ) story
L  ess. ess tee oh. ess tee oh. ess tee oh. ar ess.
J  ((looks at the word she has just written)) ow that's people? ow (  )
    sorry. ((screws up her face and takes a rubber and rubs it out))
K  today. today. today I.
Z  today we
K  today.
L  ((to K)) is that all?
Z  (  )?
L  ((leans across and looks at K's writing and points to the first word)) That's
    wrong. Today. tee oh dee ay why.
Z  ((pointing)) you're supposed to have an a on the end.
K  That's all?
L  ((passing K a rubber)) yeah. you're supposed to rub that out.
K  oh ((rubs out and writes again))
G  ((to J)) is that all?
J  it's an ess.
G  No it's not.
J  ((pointing to G's work)) one word. two. three. four. (  )
G  ((pointing to J's writing)) (  ) ((said indignantly))
J  I'm going to write Today
G  Let's see then ((counts the words J has written)) one. two. three.
J  ((J returns to her writing. So do all the others. There is a lot of talk - each
    child saying the word they are writing, saying the letter they are writing
    and re reading the words written.))
Z  J how do you spell (  )?
J  (  )? ess eee ( 3.0) ess eee
K  Today I. Today I. no my. ((K rubs out the word I)) Today my. ((writes
    again)) today my brother ((continues to write))
L  ((to K)) Do you know how to spell birthday.
K  Birthday. I know ((turns back the pages in her book))
L  I know ((turns back the pages in her book and then reads out the letters))
    bee eye ar tee aitch dee ay why.
K  I know how to spell birthday ((re reads her writing and continues))
L  I know that ((L picks up a piece of paper from the middle of the table and
    begins to unfold it. She sings the following song as she unfolds it)) I don't
    want to go. I don't want to go. I don't want to go.
Z  ((slowly and firmly)) Don't do that L
what? ((puts the paper down and returns to her writing for a moment and then begins calling out increasingly loudly)) Do you know (silda)? Do you know (silda)? G. Do you know (silda)? G. Do you know (silda)?

G ((G ignores L))

K Today. my. brother.

T ((approaches the table)) How are we going girls? Let's have a look and see how we are going. ((T leans over G's book and silently reads her writing. She pats her on the back as G continues. She turns to J)) J sit down on your bottom. That's the good girl ((J was sitting with her feet tucked under her on the chair so her body was across the table. She sits up.)) Oh I like the way you started that J. ((T reads J's work silently and moves around the table to L. She places her hands on L's shoulders)) You're L aren't you. Read me what you've got L.

L ((L reads and continues to write))

T ((T looks across the table at Z who is sitting with her head in her hands looking thoughtful)) Zena. Come on. What's going to come next? ((moves around the table to Z)) What have you written so far?

Z (       )

T Now Z have a think. What did Mrs B put up the other day. on the chart. can you remember? ((pauses and strokes Z's arm. Z looks thoughtful)) family words?

Z oh yeah

T yes. Now have a look down that list of words. now what does sssister start with?

Z ess

T so can you find sister on that chart?

J ((moves quickly and points to sister for Z, turns and nods at Z and then returns to the table))

T ((T moves away as Z begins to write))

J ((L has picked up the piece of paper in the middle of the table again. J leans across and takes it out of her hand))

L oh I want it ((said in a whiny voice))

J It has my name on it

I Where did you get it from?

J It's my (paper)

L ((L and J continue to talk but it is inaudible))

Z gets up and stands in the middle of the room looking at the family chart. She returns to her desk and sits down and writes.

... ((general sorting out of which rubber belongs to whom and then everyone returns to their writing))

G ((G leans over and looks at J's work pointing at some letters)) That's an ess. That's an em.

L ((turning to K with her pencil in her hands)) I can break this you know. It's not real ((appears to try to break the pencil with both hands and then laughs)) It nearly break you know

Z J (look at this) (       )

L ((to J)) hey watch

J I'm watching this ((not taking her eyes of Z's book))

G ((G leans over towards Z's book. Z appears to be rubbing over something with her pencil))

J who's your buddy's name? who's your buddy's name? ((touches J's sleeve with her pencil))

Z Alison Madeline.

G She's got two.

Z And Mine is . ,)(David)

G Mine is (Jiggy) and (Bageli)
L Mine is (Ahjiggeli)? (repeating G's words and smiling)
G Jiggy!
Z Jiggy?
G Jig (.) eee!
Z Jig (.) eee
L Well mine is (Ageeta). I really like her. She's black.
Z ((leans across to L)) You shouldn't (   )
L I know
J ((holding up her rubber)) now I have this rubber
Z (   )
L No
Z ((turning to L)) My finger (rubber. See. (rubs her finger across her writing))
L ((copies K and then looks at her finger)) Aaah
J Look. I wrote my name. See my name. Look at my name. Jee eee bee ay ((pointing to her book))
L Hey. Give me that. (takes J's pen and holds it up in her right hand and adjusts the finger grip with her left hand) This is how you hold your pencil
J ((J wrests the pen from her hand))
L ((yawns and then speaks to everyone)) I'm going to go on the monkey bar. Are you?
K Yeah. Too easy
L Yeah. Too easy. Remember? I could go (   ) fast ((looking at K. Turns to J)) Can you? (L makes some noises and waves her hands and her head around))
J ((makes hopping noises and uses her hands to demonstrate climbing across the monkey bar fast))
L Oh you can do it. Can you? Maybe.
Z Yeah ((smiles and copies what J has done))
L I can get in the middle. And I can go on the other side you know. I could.
J (((J repeats the sound and movements as before))
K I'm doing Ironside um ((returns to writing))
L Oh I like yours. ((looks at Z)) Do you really care? I do. She's (   )
J Woe! ((appears to be drawing a picture at the bottom of her page))
L Do you know Spice girls? ((turns to Z)) Z do you know (   )
J (Z does not respond)
L ((taps K with her pencil)) oh look. look. look. I look at this! ((points to her picture)) I think it's on that page ((turns page)) Know it's not. ((turns back two pages)) (   ) ((begins to peel off a sticker))
Z Who are you giving that sticker to? Who are you giving that sticker to?
L To the monkey bar ((giggles))
K yum ((giggles))
L sticks the sticker onto the back of her hand ((K and L giggle))
J (L takes the sticker and puts it on the table in front of Z) here you want that ((L immediately takes her pencil and looks as if she's going to break it.))
Z Don't break that in half
L Whose is it? ((to K)) Is it yours?
K No
J mine because I don't have an orange
L ((L takes J's pencil case and looks for an orange in it then goes back to attempting to break the pencil))
J Don't
L I always break my pencil
T ((approaches table near J and L)) How are you going?
L good
T ((looks at L's work))
L I don't know how to spell (       )
T What are you trying to spell?
L my bookes name
T your book's name. Can you remember the name of your book?
L yes but it's hard to say it.
T What's it called?
L I forgot
J Is it Sammy? Sammy Brown
T You've forgotten. Perhaps you can make it up. If you can't remember it's name make it up. What is it about?
L Huh?
T What is your book about?
L (                   )
T You make up a name
L ((L smiles, moves forward on her seat and picks up her pencil))
T ((The T pats L on the shoulder and moves away))
J ((J leans over and takes the orange pencil off L's book)) Make it Sammy Brown
L No ((taking it back)) I still want to use this. give it back. Okay I'll write (Fred)
G ((to J)) Hey J (       ) ((shows J that she is going to trace around her hand)) (       ) Right?
J okay. ((puts her hand on her page and begins to trace around it.))
L ((L begins to trace around her hand too)) There! ((laughs)) That's my hand. see
Z I'm not going to draw my hand. Everyone's doing it except me.
L oh. I'm hot ((takes off her jumper))
K ((to Z)) Sometime when I going back to our class I do like this (spreads her hand on her page as the other children have done) and we have to make it. hand work.
Z ((re reads her writing)) shopping
L shopping. ess
Z (It's all right. I don't like help)
I Oh you always say that
K ((putting her hands over her eyes)) no more book. I can't write
G Don't you know how to write book? bee oh kay
J book? bee oh oh kay
L bee double oh kay
K I just doing the picture and now too little
L (       ) ((laughs)) haa haa
J You just have to do some a bit bigger writing. You just have to write like (looks back in her book))
G ((getting up and turning J's book over)) Can I see that picture again? ((looks at J's picture and then her own))
J no ((turns book back))
G That's a magic rubber
Z That's my rubber
L I have a magic rubber. Why are you rubbing it? ((looks at Z and G who are both rubbing out))
Z Mine isn't rubbing out
L It doesn't work then. Soon
G ((still rubbing out)) It is a magic rubber ((said with surprise and wonderment))
Z Mine's a magic rubber as well
L Mine is really magic! It's in my desk ((leans across and takes a rubber out of J's pencil case))
Z You should have brought your own things like your own pencil case
L I know
K I can't write (           ) now
L Book?
K this little book
L ((leaning over and drawing a book on K's page)) yes. that big and you can rub it out
J If you just do it little you can do.((leans across to look at K's page)) How little did you do it? You could just write like this. um. write a book but it's not a book((draws a small book on her own page))
G ((leans over and rubs out the book that J has just drawn))
L ((attempting to take the rubber)) Let me rub it! ((playfully))
G ((G pulls back)) It's not your rubber ((to L)) Want me to rub it out? ((to J))
L ((to G)) I hate you. I rub it out. That brown one.

Z Last time K um G and J and K (           )
G No. ((makes a circle with her arm to include everyone at the table)) We go to the same preschool and we're writing together and we're Grade 1s together
L Nothing amazing about that. My birthday's at July.
G I had my birthday
Z me too
L I had my birthday too. I'm six
K I'm six
Z I'm six
K I'm six
J I'm six. I'm going to turn seven this year
L ((pointing at J)) No. You are going to turn two
J No
L yes
J No (shaking her head))
L You just look at two
J No I'm not
L Yes you are
J no I'm not
L Yes you are
L Doo on't ((shakes her finger)) I'm not going to be your friend. I'm not going to be your friend
Z You're turning seven this year aren't you J?
L No
Z And she lost her lunch box. Remember me and J came over to your classroom
K And you came in my classroom too.
L why? ((seriously))
J ((to get my lunchbox)
G ((to find it). Hey! This is a real magical rubber because it [(               )
L ((ignores G)) [urgh! what is this? ((wipes her finger across her page)) Yuk! ((turns and wipes her finger on K's hand.)
L She's only two. ((gestures towards J)) Just look and see.
K ((wiping her hand)) Hey! That's my rubber. ((tries to take rubber))
L No.
J I'm not turning two.
L You are
J ((shaking her head)) No
L ((loudly)) Yes. You. Are!
J Who said?
L Yes you are
J Who said?
L I know. Just leave it.
J I'm not two anyway
L You're just stupid. Because you don't know anything and I'm bigger than
you. You're tricking
Z No. You're not bigger than her because she's turning seven in July.
G ((pointing to J)) I think you're seven and a half
J ((J laughs, pleased))
Z No she's not seven now. She's turning seven in July
L uh aah ((shaking head)) No sir
G ((G leans over and uses her "magic rubber" to rub across J's page
vigorously))
L I am bigger than her
J ((smiling at G)) Thank you
L I know. I stand up ((gets up)) You stand up ((to J)) Let's see. (moves her
hand from the top of her head to the top of J's head as if measuring))
G get back to back ((G moves around the table to join them))
J yeah back to back
G ((begins pushing J and L together back to back)) Back to back. Back to
back. ((leans over to check their feet and then their shoulders)) Toes to
toes. Toes to toes. ((stands up and moves the flat of her hand across the
top of the two heads))
You're just the same size!
L Don't call me. I'm six. okay. ((J and L are smiling and G sits down))
Z You're both six but J is older.
L No I'm older because I'm six.
G ((pointing first to L and then to J)) She's six and a half [and she's six.
Z ((pointing to J then L)) She's turning seven
this year and you're turning seven next year
J And I'm going to turn this year seven and a half
L No I'm six and you're six
K J. Do like this. ((holds her book up and brushes the rubber residue off))
L I don't like you J. My mamma said we hate you. My mamma said.
what?
J ((looking at her feet)) Let's try if our feet um are the same shoes um are
the same size shoes.
L ((L puts her foot out beside J))
J Aah. Nearly the same shoes isn't it?
L I'm bigger
J No.
L Yeah.
J Nearly the same. Nearly the same
L But I'm bigger.
J No.
G You're ((
Z ((pointing to J)) She's older. She's turning seven this year and you're
turning seven next July.
J ((to L)) You're turning six this year and I'm turning seven and a half this
year.
((A little girl approaches the table and stands between J and L. L picks up the sticker that is in the middle of the table and sticks it on the front of the little girl's dress. She peels it off and puts it on the table and moves away affronted. L picks up the sticker and sticks it on the rubber she is holding (K's rubber)))

Z Last year you know what?
K ((leaning across to take her rubber)) Don't stick on my rubber ((she doesn't get it))
L ((holding the rubber in one hand and the sticker in the other but looking at J)) Okay well I'm going to go. I'm going to (             ) ((standing up))
J What?
L ((begins to move away)) (               )
J ((putting hand out)) Okay. You're big. Okay I'm two.
L ((sitting down)) (Leave it there)
J What?
L I don't really know. My brother said and he's a Grade twoer. I've got lots and lots of brother (          ) near me.
J Well I'm seven and I've got lots of (                 )
L (               ) and that was my last birthday. my last birthday.
G Well you know my brother Paul's birthday?
J Yes
G Well it's on the holidays
J ((taking a small crayon from her pencil case)) who wants my crayon?
G [Me
Z [Me
L Let me see
J Do you think it's a yellow or do you thinks it's a light greenish? ((pointing to G and Z)) Don't tell you guys okay? Don't tell you guys.
L yellow
J no. ((draws with the crayon on her book to show L))
L That's not magic
J It looks like yellow but it's really greenish
L Well it is yellow on the outside. You know in the olden days?
J Yes
L Ummm I've got an olden days car. And. Well I've already got in it. Dad fixed it. But we had to pay seven thousand dollars. That's a lot.
G Can I use your lead pencil? ((reaches across the table and takes a pencil))
L No. That's my lead pencil. ((pointing to another)) That's J's.
T You just worked all the time. Don't you. I don't know K um L so well. But it's nice to see you though L in my room. But this girl just works so hard ((touches J on the arm and J smiles back)) Great little champions this lot.
Z J
J ((standing up with her book)) I'm finished
Z J. Just wait. Just wait. Just wait. I just need you
J ((J sits down again and adds something to her drawing))
Z I don't know how to spell with. J. J. How do you spell with?
J With. doubleyou (.) eee(.) aitch. double you (.) aitch (.) eee (.)
L Finished. I'm finished. ((reads to herself)) Yesterday(.) I (.) bought (.) a book (.) and it's name
Z ((to J)) How do spell shopping?
J ess aitch
Z I've done that.
J ow
G pee
J ing
Setting: Year One classroom
Two trapezoid desks are pushed together to make an hexagonal table. Grace, Zena and Jeba are seated around it.

Participants Grace, Zena, Jeba, Lia

J  ((J is sitting at the table with her writing book in front of her. She has turned around to watch a friend do her composing on the computer. She turns back and rereads what she has written on her own book.l)) Today we went to the Ironside ((turns around to spell the letters of the word Ironside from the computer screen)) eye ar oh enn ((writes these letters and then turns around and spells the rest of it)) ess eye dee eee ((writes and then turns to look at the modelled writing that has been done conjointly with the teacher on butcher paper and pinned up on the blackboard)) State. ((J copies the letters of State and looks for preschool. She finds school and looks around until she finds preschool and then writes it. She re reads as she writes.))

L  ((L comes in to join G, J and Z for writing))

T  ((coming to L)) L. We're all writing about our visit to the preschool. You've been to visit the preschool haven't you? On Tuesday?

L  Yeah

T  You could write about the preschool too if you would like too. That's what G and J and Z are writing about. I'll just get you a date stamp.

Z  No. She's already got the date.

T  ((turning the pages in L's book until she finds the next page)) There you are ((T moves away))

L  I don't want to write about the preschool

Z  We're all writing about the preschool. We had to.

G  ((to J)) Hey. Have a look at Alastair's picture.

Z  Where's Alastair's picture?
G ((there! Points to his picture (self-portrait) on the wall with her pencil. All the pictures have the children's names under them))

All ((The girls all laugh))

G He looks like a girl

All Yeah

G And look at Louie's

Z ((laughing)) Oh yeah

G And look at Toby's

All ((all laugh)) oh aah

T G. Busy writing?

G ((nods and all four girls return to their writing))

J ((pretending to write in a flurry)) Ironside pre pre preschool

G How do you spell school? ess=

All =ess

L ((Looking down at her t-shirt that has school written on it)) cee

J No. ess aitch.

All yeah

L ((stretches out her t-shirt so J (opposite) can read it))

J ess cee aitch double oh ell

Z yes

L On. oh en. I know what.((starts to write))

J ((Gets up from the table and walks over to where a friend is composing at the computer. She kneels down next to her friend.) Can you read that to me? ((proceeds to read the first word with her friend and then pauses to let her friend read.))

[Today

S1 [Today we went to (          )

J ((pats S1 on the back and smiles encouragingly. J returns to her desk))

Z ((re reading her work)) Today we went to preschool

G ((re reading her writing)) Then we went to the preschool. pray(.)school ((laughs))

J ((gets out of her seat and walks to the middle of the room to look at the modelled writing pinned to the blackboard)

L ((leaning forward on table)) How spell Tuesday? How spell Tuesday?

J ((returns to her desk and spells the letters in the word preschool.)) pee ar ee ess aitch oh oh el

...

L ((L is copying letters from G's writing while G is talking to J))

J ((reads her writing and G listens)) Today we went to the Ironside State Preschool and

G ((now G reads her writing and J listens)) We went to the Ironside preschool. When I went to the preschool I

J I had lots of fun ((still looking at G's writing. Appears to be verbally finishing G's sentence for her))

Z ((listening)) That's not a very good sentence

L Yeah. That's a dumb sentence

Z I'm going to try and write down to the bottom of the page

J Me too

G That's not good

Z Yes it is

G ((leans over and pretends to cross out a word on J's page)) Cross it out

J Cross it out ((also pretends to cross out))

G Oh can I cross it out?

J No

G Do it really

L ((L reaches across and crosses out a word))
J No. Don't.
…((The girls discuss the difference between the words State and straight. Use a pencil to demonstrate that the pencil is straight. J had said Ironside straight school))
((The girls return to their writing. Z looks across at L's writing))
Z That's not a very good double you
L what?
Z ((leans over and fixes it up))
G ((turns her book around to show Z)) Is that neat writing Z?
Z yes
G ((turns back a page)) And I did really neat writing here too didn't I.
Z Yeah. You do really neat writing.
Z ((turning back to L)) You could just rub it out ((referring to the w))
L Don't want to. ((L writes over the top of the w))
Z You're not holding your pencil correctly
L ((holds up her hand with the pencil in it to show Z))
Z ((Z shows L how to hold her pencil correctly))
L ((L adjusts her pencil grip and both girls turn back to their writing))
G ((to J)) That's a big oh.
J Yeah. That's a big oh.
Z ((Z walks out to the modelled writing chart and looks for a word. She returns to her desk and writes it down))

… ((The children discuss a little boy in preschool that they think is naughty. G and J refer to the little boy as "she". L and Z remind them it is "him" and "he" not "she". G and J correct themselves.))
J ((re reads her writing. She says straight instead of State. Z corrects her and they laugh about it))
J ((walks over to the computer where her friend is printing out her writing. She returns to her desk.))
… ((discussion about J's lost pencil which she has hidden in her hair))

G Do you know what? My uncle has come to live in my house for ever now. Today.
J Forever?
G Yes because he's my uncle.
J double you (.) oh

…((general noise of girls re reading, sounding out and saying letters as they write them))

G I done really neat work. ((G walks over to show the T her writing. T is sitting in a student's chair)))
T ((takes G's book and silently looks at it))
S2 ((looking over the T's shoulder)) (         )
T Yes she does do grown up writing doesn't she. Read it to me G
G ((reads))

T Good girl. It's a good story. ((looks at G's picture)) Is that you playing with the play dough?
G ((G smiles and nods and points to herself in the picture))
T There you are playing with the play dough. Well done. Grace have you finished? [Do you want to write some more?
G ((G nods and returns to her desk))
Z ((as G sits down)) She's gonna do another. ((to G)) Why don't you do another witch?
G ((G shakes her head as L throws a pencil onto G's book))
Z Put it in her pencil case
G Put it in my pencil case ((said between clenched teeth))
L ((puts the pencil in the pencil case and starts to draw on her page))
Z ((to L)) We're not allowed to draw with our writing pencils
L Why! ((continues to draw with G and Z watching)) How do you like this? It's an arrow. How do you spell happy? haiitch
G haiitch ay peepee why. haiitch ay peepee why.
L ((writing)) double pee
Z haiitch ay peepee why
double pee not peepee
G peepee
L double pee
G ((to J)) I still am the first one to finish
Z I'll be the last probably because I'm seeing if I can write a whole page.
J I've done one two three ((counting the lines she has written))
G I've got one two three too ((G and J laugh as they realise they have written the same number of lines. G turns to a previous page and counts)) One two three four five. I've done five.
J How come?
G ((G does not respond))
Z ((Z stands and turns to look at the modelled writing chart)) made
Z I'm not talking to you ((turns to G)) Do you know how to spell made?
J made. em ay dee
G ((Nods)) may duh
L Made. made. made
G ((Get back to your work! You're not (         ) Get back to your work!)
Z Yes. (Go to your room!) ((smiles)) We're grade sevens.

G Hey. You know what? My house is straight across from the school.
Z What school?
G This school.
J Yes. Mine too
Z No you're not.
G But I just have to cross the road
Z ((to J)) But you have to just walk all the way. Anyway it's further than G's. You have to walk all the way. G just has to cross the road.
G I just have to go one step forward and I'm finished
J No you don't
G Yeah
Z I believe you. I believe G. ((looking at J)) I don't believe you.
L ((to J)) I don't believe you. I believe G. ((to Z)) She's starting to cry. ((to J)) You starting to cry
J I'm not. I'm not a baby
L ((laughing)) ah uh. She's a little baby
S3 ((showing her work first to Z and then to G)) Look I got great ((teacher's comment on her book))
T Okay everyone. Bring your work to the floor.
T ((approaching table)) Girls here. When you're ready. You can finish. Finish yours off and then you can come to the floor. But finish working first if you're working on a sentence.
((turns to Z)) Great work Z.
((turns to L)) L. I like your picture. What's happening here? ((points to picture))
L It's my messy table
T ((laughing)) It is a messy table isn't it. ((T moves away))
Right authors on the floor please when you are finished.

((The four girls resume drawing or writing))

J tee oh why
G What did you say? How do you spell toy (. ) let?
L toy
G tee oh why
((girls all drawing or writing again))
Z How do you spell had?
L haitch ay. [haitch ay dee
G [haitch ay dee
J dee
L Yeah dee. a dee. not a bee a dee
Z I know!
L Hey when’s your birthday. When’s your birthday J?
J I’ve had it
L When’s your birthday Z?
Z sixth of May. I had it.
...
L cee
G no. kay
L arr (1.0) enn

Z how do you spell of? o`vuh. oh vee. oh vee. J! oh vee?
J ((nods))
Z o` vuh. o` vuh.
G ((holding up her book to Z)) Is that neat writing too? Is that neat writing too? Is that neat writing too?
Z ((glancing up)) yes
G better than my other neat writing?
Z yes
G There. ((stands up with her book))
Z Do you know how to spell fun?
G eff you enn
Z eff you emm
G you enn
Z J. I’ve finished mine. ((walks away with her book))
J ((stands and walks to the T with her book))
((The bell rings for morning tea))
T ((has just finished sharing time with the rest of the class.)) Oh it's morning tea time. How about we have a look at these after we've had something to eat. Is your tummy telling you you're hungry?
All yes
T Well we'll look at these after morning tea.

4th June

Setting: Year One classroom
Two trapezoidal desks are pushed together to make one hexagonal table.
Participants: Grace, Jeba, Zena, Lia
((The four girls are sitting around the table with their writing books open on their desks. They are having trouble deciding what to write about))

Z J had her birthday
G No. My brother's birthday
J ((J is writing her name on a pencil sharpener. G is watching))
J There. Jeba
G Tashnim ((J's surname))
J tee. oh yeah. thankyou thankyou thankyou. ((continues to write on the sharpener))
L What shall I write?
J ((giggles)) Jeba Lishnam ((G and J discuss how to write the letter T, both heads bent over the sharpener))
L What shall I write? ((noone responds))

J What shall I write today about? ((pencil in mouth looking around))
L I'm going to write something. Today my brother birthday. my brother birthday. ((begins to write))
G ((standing up and attacking J.)) Yes. Yes. Yes. ((J rebuffs G by shouldering her away and continuing to ponder))
Z ((to L about her writing)) what does it say? I've got my first wobbly tooth ((wiggling her front tooth))
L ((continues to write))
G,J,Z ((sit wiggling their teeth))
T ((approaching with date stamp and stamps each book)) Are we having a dental session here or a writing session?
Z A writing session
T A writing session. That's good. You could write about your teeth. How many wobbly teeth do you have Z?
Z One
T Have you got some wobbly teeth L?
L (    )
G I've got three
T You've got three wobbly teeth?
J I've got none wobbly teeth.`
T No wobbly teeth. ((correcting J))
G My brother's got four.
T It's about this time of year when you're in Year one that the teeth all start to wobble don't they.
J Then I won't have any teeth left ((J had almost all of her teeth removed when she arrived from Bangladesh as they were rotten and poisoning her system))
T And then what happens when they've wobbled and fallen out?
J Then you have no more teeth
G Then I'm going to do it like this ((shows how she will eat with no teeth))
T What happens to your teeth when they have fallen out? What happens L?
L Aaah ((giggles))
Z You get new ones
T You get new ones don't you. You get adult teeth.
J But I wouldn't have any because this is my ((shows her front teeth and taps them with her finger))
T They're your adult teeth so you have to look after those don't you. They're the only ones you'll get.
Z (( showing T the wobbly front tooth.)) (    )
T That's wobbly isn't it
Z (    )
You've probably given it a little bump at some stage. But it will be ready to pull out soon Z I'd say. So ready to write now? Remember my people about writing between the lines?

Yes yes yes

Off you go then. (T moves away but pauses to pat G on the head) That story you wrote yesterday was great G. (The four girls loll on the table and look around thinking about what they are going to write.)

Now I know what to write.

I can't think of anything because everybody's talking. (J, Z and L begin to write. G leans over and elbows J deliberately in the arm)

Tomorrow. How do you spell tomorrow. J? (J and G exchange looks and spell the letters together)

[Tee. oh. em

T (approaching table) Are we writing? J. On your bottom and off you go. (puts hands on J's shoulder so J sits down on the chair.) Thought of some ideas?

No.

Yes.

((to J)) Have you thought of something?

I've thought of something

I haven't

Why don't you write a once upon a time story and make it up? Instead of writing about something that's happened G you could write a once upon a time story

((turns to talk to the T))

Off you go then.

(The girls begin to write)

((to Z)) How do you spell my?

You're not supposed to start up here (indicates the space between the top line and the edge of the page) You are supposed to start here. (indicates space between the lines)

Who cares. I don't want to use a rubber.

((showing her writing to J)) Is this good?

((ignores her))

How do you spell car?

see ay ar

see ay aitch ar (not accepting what L is saying)

No. see ay ar. see ay ar because my brother's got a car.

((leans her hands on the table and lifts herself up so that her feet are on the chair and her bottom is sticking up in the air))

G! sit on your chair

((to T)) I forgot how to spell car.

car. cuh ar. There's that ar sound ay ar says ar.

see ay ar.
G ((writes and then re reads)) Today when I was getting out of my car
((continues saying the letters of the words she is writing as she writes
them))

L ((touching G on the arm)) bru ther. bru ther.

G ((gesturing)) on the chart there.

L Which chart?

G That chart!
((Everyone is sounding out words and writing except L who tries to get
attention by laughing, and making noises))

G ((to J)) How do you spell off?

J oh oh eff

G oh oh eff ((looks up at the camera)) I forgot to spell off

J ((copying G and talking to the camera)) oh ef. off.

...((everyone writing))

L ((leaning forward to G and J)) How do you spell birthday? ((watches J
write the name. J has written nam)) en ay em ee. ((leans forward and
points)) en ay em ee. You have to do ee because en ay em ee. I've been
looking in my banking. en ay em ee. ((tries to write it for J))
a small ee

J Don't ((shrugs L away and rereads her writing.)) Hello everybody. My
name is ((adds the ee on the end of name and continues writing and
reading her writing))

L ((to G)) Look what you did. ha ha ((laughs)) a scribble. Who cares?
((leans across to Z)) can you do a you?

Z ((ignores L but passes the rubber to G who leans across and asks for it))

... ((everybody is writing except L who is leaning on her elbows watching
the others))

J what

L double you ay
double you ay.

L no.no. no. Double you aitch ay tee

J ((J writes))

...Z

((to J)) (         )

G ((to J)) How do you spell get?

J ((to Z)) I had that too. I was good the other day but mum didn't want me
to go with you in case I have them again that's why.

L There! How do you like my write. Is that scribble or is that writing?

Z Let me see.

L ((turns her book around))

L It's running writing

J I have a book at home that's all Big ays and then little ays and it's all
running writing.

G ((takes J and shows her that there are letters on the T's table with
children's names on them)) Letters. I'm going to write about letters.

L ((to Z)) I saw Mrs B at shopping town. She was at the music shop. I just
saw her.
((G and J put their heads together and giggle as J writes some running
writing letters on her book and then rubs them out))

G ((walks over to where the T is working with another group of children and
asks her how to spell her name. The T says that she thinks G can work it
out as she knows how to spell the first part of it and then just add the
ending. Before G can try to spell it for the T another child says the letters.
G returns t her desk with it written on a piece of paper))

L ((who can see the T's name on the welcome sign on the front door of the
classroom)) Mrs B. It's em ar ess. ((L spells out the letters in the surname
too))
... 

G  I did one, two, three, four, five words.
J  I did one two three four five six seven rows.
G  I've done three rows.
Z  ((Z goes to the teacher and asks her how to spell tooth. T talks with Z about the sounds in the word tooth, then writes it down for her. Z returns to her desk)) Mrs B said to be quiet.

G  ((re reads her writing carefully checking her writing and making adjustments where needed))
T  ((comes to table and bobs down next to L who reads her writing as the T points to the words)) What are you going to put next?
L  He is going to be turning seven.
T  All right. What's your sentence going to be?
L  umm I don't know.
T  How could we say that? Tomorrow is my brother's birthday and 
T  ((acknowledges G's contribution)) and he 
Z  and we are going to have fun 
T  ((acknowledges Z)) you could put that, yes. or you could say what G is saying 
J  (           )
T  ((directed at J but said to all)) L wants to say how old he is so we need to put that in a sentence. L wants to tell us how old he is so we need to put that in a sentence. So G has suggested we say Tomorrow is my brother's birthday and which is a joining word 
L  No. He's seven.
T  And he will be seven ((gesturing towards L's book)) Okay. come on. you do it. and en dee And he will be six 
L  And he will be seven 
T  ((to J who begins to spell it)) no. You let L do will. will wh ill
Z  and we are going to have fun 
T  ((acknowledges Z)) you could put that. yes. or you could say what G is saying 
J  (           )
T  Have a look at that L. What does ee say?
L  ((writes))
T  And. good girl. He 
G  aitch eee. aitch eee .
T  ((to L)) It's wonderful having a little scribe next to us isn't it.
L  ((writes he))
T  And he will. ((to J who begins to spell it)) no. You let L do will. will wh ill
L  ((writes w e l))
T  What can you hear?
L  ((thinks)) e
T  Yes e. eggs in eggcups. e says e so that would say wh e ill wh ill. What can you hear?
L  ((L writes w e l))
T  Have a look at that L. What does ee say?
L  ((thinks)) e” 
T  Yes e. eggs in eggcups. e says e so that would say wh e ill well.
G  ((laughs))
T  ((raises hand to silence G)) No. Let L try. ((to L))Can you hear the difference? That is well like I am well. But we want will. wh i ll.
J  eye eye eye
G  ((passes rubber to L))
L  ((changes the e to an I))
T  Will is a very useful word that you can use a lot. ((re reads)) And he will be ((writes it))
T  be seven. If you look around my room you might find seven over there. 
((gestures to the wall))
L  ess eee vee eee en 
T  You can spell seven already. Good girl. Now if you want to write some more you could write about um. Well you could think about what you
might do when he turns seven. I'm sure you'll have fun. Are you going to have a cake?
L No
T No cake. Are you having a party? With some friends?
L Yes
T How many?
L All of his boy friends.
T Whose class is he in?
L 2B
T That's Miss B. Well he'll have a lot of fun won't he. Want to write some more about his birthday? Are you going to give him a present? Not sure yet. Well you could write some more about that if you wanted to. Good girl. Good effort. ((moves around table to Z))
Z I don't know how to write birthday
T Do you know what Z? I think we can write birthday together. Buh er thday. I can hear er. What says er?
Z eee ar
T What else can say er?
Z eye ar. you ar
T sure can. birth. you ar can say er but in birthday it's eye ar like in bird.
Z ((Z writes))
((A little girl returns from showing her writing to the Deputy Principal. She shows the sticker she got on her work to the T.))
G Can I take my writing and show Mrs F? ((another teacher))
T You can but I know that Mrs F is often busy in the morning so at morning tea time you can find her then. But I did show Mrs F your work yesterday.
Z Can I too?
T Of course. birthday. bir(.)th(.)day. Now we've been talking about birth and our tongue comes between our teeth. What sound does that?
Z tee aitch
T ((nods)) tee aitch. and what else?
Z dee ay why.
T ((spreads her arms)) Well. there you go. You didn't need me at all Z. We just needed to have a chat about it didn't we. ((stands up)) And I really like the way you remembered about writing between those lines.
J Me too
T Yes you did too J. How are you going to finish that off Z?
Z my birthday is in May
T You'll be able to write that won't you.
Z ((nods and continues to write))
J ((re reading her writing)) and when
Z I remember how to spell win
J double you aitch eee
G double you eye enn
Z oh yeah. double you eye enn
J I can't remember how to spell when. double you aitch
G double you aitch ay tee. double you aitch en ((saying letters slowly))
J double you aitch enn
G double you aitch enn. That's all.
J ((writes))
L when. double you aitch
J when you
G that's a vee. That's a vee. Don't you know? ((rub's out on J's book and writes a letter))
J How do you spell you?
G You did a vee
J I need a rubber again ((looks in her pencil case))
G I can do a magic trick. ((Waves her hands and produces a rubber. Gives it to J and then looks at the pictures she has drawn on previous pages))
Hey. Look at the dog I've drawn.
L It looks like a horse.
G Well it's a dog.
L There's no such thing as a red dog.
G There is a red dog.
T ((rings her bell)) Children. Excellent writing this morning. Well done. ( )
Z Can you help me finish this quickly? sister's. ess. ess. Do you know how to spell sister's G?
G yes. ess tee. ess. tee. ess eye ess tee
Z what?
G ess (.) eye (.)
Z eye?
G yes. ess eye. ess tee
T ((coming briefly to the table)) If you want to finish off the sentence you're working on and then come and join us. Just come when you've finished off the sentence you're working on.
Z How do you spell it again? G. G
....
G ess eye ess
Z Done that. Done tee
G tee eee are
Z two tees?
G no. eee ar ess
Z ((writes))

((G goes to the carpet for sharing time. Z and J continue writing but listen to the other children too))
Z ((to TA)) Can you show me which month is March?
TA ((walks to chart where the months are displayed as petals of a flower and points to March.))
Z ((Z writes it and then goes to the carpet))
J ((draws a picture of a girl at the bottom of the picture and then joins the others on the carpet.))

11th June

Setting: Year One classroom
Participants Jeba, Grace, Zena

On the little blackboard easel are the words the teacher has been discussing with the class. They are story starters.
The
Tomorrow
On the weekend
Once upon a time
Today
In the afternoon
((G, J and Z are writing at the hexagonal table. G gets up and looks at the little blackboard and returns. J is re reading her writing. G and Z are writing))
Z ((Leans over J's work)) What's that ((points to with))
J with
((The girls all continue writing. G walks away))
J ((re reads her writing and then looks at Z)) Do you know how to spell our?
Z ay. I think it's a. you. ay or you.
J ((writes an a and then stands up to look at a chart to see if she can see it)) 'a' ou(r) ((writes aor))
Z ((leaning across)) That's not right. It should be on our last ride
G ((returns and continues writing. Goes to the teacher for help with spelling girl))
T ((working with other children)) guh ir I'll. How do you write ir?
G eee arr.
T or?
G eye ar
T In girl it is eye ar.
G ((returns to her desk and writes it down))
Z ((to G)) Do you know how to spell are?
G r? the letter r?
Z ((reading her writing)) Tomorrow we are
G ((thinking)) are. I think it's ar ay. no. ay ar. ay ar (.) ay ar. That's all.

Z going
G That's easy
Z yeah
G go and ing
Z yeah ((writing))
....((girls are quietly writing, sounding out to themselves))
G ((to Z)) Can you spell mummy? ((she has written mum))
Z em
G yeah
Z you. em
G yeah
Z em eee.
G oh yeah.
Z ((leans over the desk to watch G write)) No. not why. eee. mum(.mee
G ((leaves the spelling as mummy)) Z can you ask Mrs B if we are sharing our (.) you know (.) writing
Z okay. We'll ask Mrs B if we can go and show Mrs F
G ((goes to Mrs B and whispers))
T Yes. If she's in her room after morning tea.
J ((quietly goes and asks the T if she can show Mrs F too. Then returns to the table))
Z You didn't have to ask. We asked. You just copied! Copy cat!
G Now I have to rub it all out. ((attacks work with rubber)) J do you know how to spell mummy?
J Yes em (.) em(.)you em em why
G I'm right ((re reads)) Once upon there was a girl and she didn't have a mummy. She had a sister and she was sad.

Z ((re reading))Today we are going to. Tomorrow we are going to
G Hey Z. Guess what. J's got the same rubber as you. ((to J)) show us.
J ((goes to get rubber))
Z I know!
G ((takes rubber and writes on it)) I'm going to put your initials on it.
J Jay tee?
G Yes
J ((takes rubber)) Hey that's not it. It goes that way the jay. ((shows G with her finger))

… ((G rubs it out and writes it again))

Z ((re reads her writing)) Tomorrow we are going to the (.) theatre
J Theatre?
Z It's all right ((indicating to J that she doesn't need help. J walks away))
G Do you know how to spell theatre? Look. ((G walks over to her folder and gets out a library book)) It could be this. It says theatre. ((Shows Z the title on the book)) It's not The Theatre because it doesn't have a space. It just says THEATRE!
Z okay!
J ((returning to the table)) What does it say?
G Theatre! It's not The Theatre because it's not The Theatre because it's not a space ((pointing to the the at the front of the word theatre))
Z ((copies the letters in lower case. The title is in upper case)) When I have finished this. ((doesn't finish sentence as she stops to listen to the teacher talking to another child))
G Mrs B. Mrs B.
T Yes G.
G I spelt sister without looking
T Wow! Well done G.
G ((smiles, pleased and sits down to continue writing))

… ((G plays with the rubbers again and talks about the importance of naming them so they don't get mixed up.))
Z ((ignores G as she is concentrating on her writing. She re reads again and continues))
G Have you finished theatre?
Z yes
G ((puts her book back in her folder))
Z ((to both)) How do you spell and?
J ay en dee.
G ay dee en ((What follows appears to be a game on G's part))
Z ((smiles at G.)) ay en dee!
G dee en ((grins))
Z&J ay en dee
G ay dee en
Z ay en dee
G okay. I'll put ay en dee ((rubs out))
J ((leaning over and spelling slowly)) ay en dee
G dee ((writes with J watching))
Z Don't you know how to spell and?
J ((reading from G's page)) ay dee en?
Z ay en dee
J I'll show you how to spell and ((writes it below her own writing))
G Oh. So I know how to spell it now ((writes))
Z ((looking across at G's work)) dee ay en?
G ((rub out and writes it correctly))
J ay en dee. Yes!
Z Yeah. That's it!
G I'm going to draw it more neater.
Z ((to J)) How do you spell will again?
G ((reading her own work)) friends
Z How do you spell will? will!
G double you eye ell ell
Z Oh yeah.
J ((re reads her writing out loud again))
G Can you do a proper dee for me ((rubbing out her attempt))
I did it. Now I remember how to spell and.

Once upon a time there was a girl and she didn't have a mummy. She had a sister and she was grumpy. Because she didn't have a mummy. Why was she was grumpy? Because she didn't have a mummy. Was she grumpy or sad?

Grumpy.

Why was she grumpy?

Because she didn't have a mummy.

We're not going to do another one today G because we're going to stop in about three minutes.

Oh. I've got to get going ((re reads her writing))

Now let's try fairy. What can you hear? fairy. fairy.

Oooh! ((writes))

fair(.y). eee. eee on the end of a word is usually?

why

That's right. Good girl.

((writes))

We won't share our stories today J. We'll share tomorrow. We have some other work that we must do on with today, but we will share our stories tomorrow because some of this work is just wonderful isn't it. Just great writing.
T: Now put your why on the end of that word. Remember why says eee on the end of a word. Now let's have a look at that word. What's it missing? What does it need to make it a word. ((J leans over and listens))

Z: A vowel.

T: And why can be a vowel sometimes can't it. If we sounded it out what would it actually spell. Because the why is saying eye. And eff ar together makes a blend and that says frr.eye. That's fry isn't it.

Z: An ay?

T: We want fairy so yes we need an ay. Where would we put the ay?

Z: ((points between the ar and the why)) Here.

T: frrrairy or fuh.eye.

Z: An eee?

T: It needs an ay. And the ay goes after (.)

Z: ((points between the f and the r)) the eff and before the ar. That's it. Good girl. And fairy's actually one of those words. I'll write it here for you because that was a really good effort.

Z: ((nods))

T: Because fairy you need ay eye ar. It's actually the word air in it.

Z: ((nods))

T: ((Turns to J)) J. Nearly finished?

Z: tale. tttaaale

T: ((turns back to Z)) Well that's one I think you can work out. tuh.eye. I'll give you a clue. It's a magic eee. So what will that make? tuh ayl. What's ay saying? (2.0) Is that saying it's own name? Tuh ayl. What's it start with? (1.0) I'm rushing. Get fairy down first and then we'll do tail.

Z: ((Z is re writes fairy))

T: Tuh ayl. Off you go.

Z: ((writes))

T: tale. tuh ayl

Z: ay?

T: ((Nods))

Z: ((writes))

T: Tuh ayl

Z: ell?

T: ((nods)) make that ((points to a )) say it's own name because that's tal isn't it.

Z: ((adds an e on the end))

T: Okay. Let me show you something. Fairy tale is like the story. When we talk about a tale that's a story. Like a book. ((writes the word and draws a book)) I can't draw very well. Is that like a book?))

Z: ((Z nods.))

T: Now there's another tail that we talk about. The tail on an animal. Now that's spelt a different way. That's tee ai eye like in fairy ((points to word fairy in Z's writing and then writes tail)) Two vowels together the first one says its own name. And there's your tail ((draws a tail of an animal)) Two different ways to write tail.

((T moves away from Z))

G: Mrs B. See my picture

T: Very tiny. Is that the grumpy sister?

G: No. Sad.

T: Oh. She's sad now? You didn't have to change it to sad. She probably would be grumpy if she didn't have a mother. You can have grumpy (2.0) Perhaps she was grumpy and sad. I think if she was grumpy she would be a sad person. Don't you G

G: ((G smiles, looking pleased with the T's comments))
T ((moves around to J)) J. Read it to me.
J ((reading)) had ((continues to write))
T Did you start that one yesterday?
J yes
T ((reading the last sentence in J's writing)) And when we had our. our
J ((continues to write))
T When you've finished that sentence you can finish off for today.
((moves away))

J scariest ride. Scariest ride. Scariest ride ((continues writing))
T J. Are you finished now? ((reading)) We had our last ride. It =
J =it was the scariest ride
T What do you know about was. We've learned was ((pointing to the word
in J's writing))
J double you
T uhuh. You've ( ) the sound at the beginning. What should it be?
J double you
T Then what comes next?
J oh?
T Think about was. What did we learn about was? What was the word we
learned with was? Do you remember?
J ((shakes head))
T Remember was and saw together?
J Oh! a double you ay ess.
T Good girl. That's right.
J ((J rubs out and fixes it up))

16th June

Setting: Year One classroom
Two trapezoid desks have been pushed together to make an
hexagonal table.
Participants Grace, Zena, Jeba

((The three girls are sitting with their writing books open. Z and J are
writing. G is thinking about what to write. J rubs out with her finger
because she has no rubber. The three girls experiment and discuss
rubbing out with a wet finger.))

G How do you spell Thursday?
J What day is it today? Thursday. Tee
Z Have a look up there. ((points to a wall chart)) Thursday. It's over there.
J ((turns her head to look and then rubs out on her page))
G Oh yeah. I can dig holes and put ( ) out. And make vegetables.
((spreads her arms)) hoy oy.
J ((smiles and copies G's sounds)) hoy oy. ((begins to sing the sounds and
then continues with a nursery rhyme)) Jack (.) be (.) jum (.) Jack be quick.
[Jack jump over the candle stick.
G [Jack jump over the candle stick ((sings along with J))
J ((to G)) What is it again?
J&G ((chanting together)) Jack be nimble Jack be quick. Jack jump over the
candle stick.
J I'm going to write that. um. poem
T Right. 1D. On the floor please.
J&G ((whingeing sound)) oooohhhh
T and S come to the floor for a moment please.

JGZ ((together)) What about us?

T No no no. I don't need you. You're right. I don't need you.

J [Yes

G [yaaaay

J ((J goes to a nursery rhyme chart and locates the rhyme. She returns to her desk and says it slowly as she begins to write. G joins in.))

T ((turning in her chair and addressing the three girls writing)) Are you girls right to go on? ((to G)) What can't you spell?

G Thursday

T Thursday

Z Look up there. ((points to the wall chart))

T Well if you look up there you'll be able to find it. ((points)) G. Thuh thuh. Think of thuh. er. eee ar. eye ar. you ar say er. and that's thur. sss (.)
day.
Have a try or look up there.
((T turns back to the rest of the class on the floor and begins to introduce the writing time. She talks about sounding out words and having a go at writing down the sounds that the children can hear)) I'll be coming around to help you. You don't have to do all the words correctly D because can we do that yet?

D ( )

T Well lots of us can do lots of words correctly. The main thing that I want you to do today is to write a lovely story. It might be about something that you want to do in the holidays. It maybe somewhere special that you're going during the holidays. The thing that I want you to remember is that we write on a line and we? [leave a line

S(s) [leave a line

... T I want to see your work today. Without too much help from your friends. I'll come around. It doesn't matter about spelling. Now I just want the people who haven't finished their email? Is there anyone else who still hasn't done their email? N. Has everyone else done their email?

Z I haven't

T Know I know you haven't sweetheart. Have you finished your story?

Z (nods)

T Well we'll do yours later sweetheart.

J ((tiptoes over to the chart and walks back and keeps writing))

G I didn't want to write Thursday. I want to write Tuesday. ((rubbing out)) ((to S sitting at computer)) I saw you coming in to school but you didn't see me. ((repeats this and then rests her head on her hand))
Now what can I write? ((gets up and walks across room))

T Is your tooth sore G or your ear?

G ( )

T very sore or a little bit?

G A little bit

Z ((walks over to a wall chart to find a word and then returns to her desk))

J ((stands in front of the nursery rhyme chart. G comes and joins her. J returns to her desk and continues to write))

Z ((pointing at J's work)) You haven't done a space. You haven't done a space.

J No. That's candlestick. ((indicating that it's one word. J continues to get up and down copying the nursery rhyme from the chart.))

G ((G begins to write. She too is writing a nursery rhyme. She begins to copy Baa baa black sheep from the chart.))

J ((leans over Z's work)) What are you writing? ((reads it out loud)) On the holiday I. I've already write mine.
(J stands in front of the chart reading the nursery rhymes with obvious enjoyment, accentuating the rhythm and rhyme)

G (G dances her way over to the chart, finds the word she is looking for and dances her way back to her desk. She continues to do this)

Z (Z walks with her book over to her friend's desk to copy her name off the name tag on her desk. She returns to her desk and re reads her writing)

On the weekend I must go to ((she continues writing))

G um. ((G goes over to look at the nursery rhyme chart to see if it is there))
the mouse jumped over the. oh whatever ((smiles)) What is it again Z?
((singing)) the mouse ran over the clock
J the mouse=
G =ran over the clock
J no. up the clock.
Z ((without looking up)) the clock struck one
GJZ the mouse ran down. Hickory dickory dock.
G Tickk tock. Tick tock.
J Can I borrow your rubber please? I'm going to write another poem.
I'm going to write poems over there ((points to the space on the page))
and there. poems. poems. If you want to help me you can.
((J begins to sound out the words tick tock writing down the sounds she hears.))
G ((G continues to dance over to the chart and back copying words))
J Tick tock. ((to Z)) How is it again? Tick tock. Tick tock.
Z ((singing)) The mouse ran up the clock. ((stops)) No. Hickory dickory dock. The mouse ran up the clock ((J joins in singing this))
J Yeah
Z ((gets up and goes to her friend H's table and copies her name from the name tag on her desk.))
J (to G) How do you spell ran?
G I know. I know. I know. ar ay en eee dee
J No. it's= G =Yeah it's rrr a~ nnn duh.
J ranned?
G when you do duh it's ranned.
J ((rereading)) The mouse ran up. you pee up.
G over the clock
J up the clock
G over the clock. over the clock.
J No look. ((Singing)) Hickory dickory dock. The mouse ran up the clock.
G No ((holds J's arm)) Over the clock. I'll show you. ((walks over to the chart and points as she sings)) Hickory dickory dock. The mouse ran (. ) over the clock
H ((approaching the table with a book. She giggles and shares a funny moment with J and G))
T ((approaches table)) Girls. How are we going here?
G Me and J are doing= ((gestures towards chart))
J poems
T What do we call those?
J poems
T and?
J rhymes
T What was the special name we gave them last week when we went to the theatre?
J poems and rhymes
T yes and? (looking at G) [Nursery Rhymes. Yes
G [Nursery Rhymes
J ((singing and pointing to her writing)) Hickory dickory dock. The mouse ran up ((continues to write))
Z ((Z is now writing her friend A's name and copying it from his desk. She returns to her desk.))
J Mouse. I need mouse. em oh you ess eee.
T ((approaches table)) Girls I'm going to get the others to the floor now. ((sharing time)) But you might like to finish what you're working on. Finish the sentences that you're working on.
Z ((is copying J's name to the list of friends she plans to play with on the holidays. She takes her work and joins the children on the carpet.))
J ((re reading, singing)) Hickory dickory dock. The mouse ran up the clock. The clock past one. The mouse ran
G down
J How do you write down again? ((J reaches for her ABC book)) I know it starts with um ((turns to the page with dee on it.)) oh. it's drum. ((The dee page has a picture of a drum and the word drum but not the word down)) Down.
G dee ay
J It's supposed to be in our word book.
J ((gets up and gets her word book 2. She turns the pages looking for it but does not find it. She sings the nursery rhyme again pointing to the words and continues to write. When finished she draws a picture))
G ((re reads (singing) Baa baa blacksheep. She reads as blah blah blacksheep. G draws a picture.))
T ((Children are sharing their writing. T is discussing children's writing and doing some on the spot teaching)) You know N tried to spell took and I said to N think of a word that sounds like took. Think of a word that we've learned that sounds like took. ((G and J are listening and joining in even though they are still writing at their table))
S(s) look
T How do we spell look
S(s) el oh oh kay
T So if we can spell look and the double oh is saying oo”. Then we can spell lots of words. We can spell took. ((makes a list on the board))
G cook
T We can spell hook
S(s) ((children call out suggestions))
T Someone's saying shook. How would we spell shook?

... T So we've said to ourselves we can spell look. And now look. Look how many words we've been able to spell because we know look. That was one of the first words we learned in our word book. So we can look in our word book. Remember our glasses. The double oh make the eyes.

... Next term after the holidays we're going to do that a lot. If we can find one word we can spell we can find a lot of others. We can think of those sounds at the beginning. The initial sounds. The ending sounds. And look
at what we can do. Anything! Once we know a few words anything's possible. We can build on all those words that we know.

S1 They rhyme
T Sometimes words rhyme but they're not spelt the same but that helps us with our reading. For example
S1 Like bear and where
T yes. Like who.
S(s) ((Children call out suggestions of words that rhyme with who. G does too. T reminds them to put their hands up. Accepts all their suggestions. G walks over to join in.))

... zoo and you. They sound the same but they are not spelt the same. And that is where our writing can become tricky. Because you've got double oh saying oo and oh you saying oo
... ((G returns to her desk and continues writing))
T A has just told me that when I write boo I have to put a line with a dot under it. What do we call that special mark A?
((G puts her hand up))
A An exclamation mark.
T And why do we need an exclamation mark?
A Because it's a loud noise and makes people surprised.
S(s) ((Children practise saying boo as an exclamation))

...

G Can I copy your jack be nimble jack be quick?
J Yes.
G ((takes sheet))
J First let me finish. ((takes sheet back) You can copy that ((points to chart))
G No. Then it takes hours and hours.
J But it's taken me hours and hours.
G ((walks over to the chart with her writing book and pencil))
Z ((Z shares her writing with the class. J runs across to listen to her.))
T Great work
...
J ((J re-reads her writing of baa baa blacksheep by singing the rhyme)) She prompts herself and keeps writing)}