Looking for Leadership: Searching in a Middle School for Reactions to Stimuli in Social Environments.

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*Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College*

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ABSTRACT

Leadership development lies at the heart of establishing a meaningful legacy for students. More important than subject matter and curriculum content, the affective traits we instill in our students will guide them. Such traits are at the core of leadership development, the focus of this qualitative research case study. An eight-month immersion in a fifth grade gifted enrichment program addressed the following questions: (a) What leadership opportunities do students have in a gifted enrichment program at the fifth grade level? (b) What could enrichment programs do to foster leadership development in their gifted students?

Four themes emerged during this study: knowing self, planning, building relationships, and evaluating. Teachers facilitated students' experiencing of self-knowledge by helping them identify and value their personal gifts. Students and teachers sought leaders that were mature, patient, confident, intelligent, and responsible. The best leaders were risk-takers, independent thinkers who were motivated and set good examples for others.

Teachers and students constantly planned, setting priorities, meeting goals, and establishing new goals. Leaders envisioned a project from beginning to end; remained task committed, organized and punctual.

Students were encouraged to make commitments and build relationships; it was this theme that emerged as the foundation for instilling affective traits in the students. Listening was the primary characteristic for building relationships. Students valued someone who cares, shares, cooperates, is helpful, considerate, diplomatic, influential, decisive, and fair to all parties.
Finally, ongoing evaluation was evident through self-evaluation, peer and teacher evaluation; immediate feedback was an important part of the evaluation cycle. Evaluation was most effective when it was impartial and allowed for improvement.

Implicit in the findings is the need for further study. Additional research is needed concerning the ways youth value and establish leadership. Although this research primarily focused on gifted students, the findings of this study could be applicable to students in other situations. Leadership development can serve as a powerful tool that individuals can utilize in everyday situations. Students develop leadership abilities by learning from experience, learning from people, and learning from successes and failures. A student’s character is formed in reactions to stimuli in social environments.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

“The times cry out for leaders to guide the people safely in a world where, without vision, more people will perish in more different ways than have ever perished before” (Hollingworth, 1939).

These words, written sixty years ago, hold particular significance in today’s society and in today’s schools. According to William H. Foster (1987), “Schools are supposed to contribute to the creation of good citizens” (p. 1). Foster states that furnishing new leadership is vital to society. It is, therefore, the school’s responsibility to “teach all students to understand leadership... and accept a higher level of social involvement and responsibility” (p. 2). Today’s students will inherit the world that we leave them. Parents and teachers need to establish a meaningful legacy for tomorrow’s leaders. More important than subject matter and curriculum content, the affective traits we instill in our students will guide their future. Affective traits are those characteristics relating to personality, values, social skills, and moral thinking. More than fifty years of research has shown that understanding and teaching the concept of effective leadership is a difficult task.

In 1938 Arthur Jones, a University of Pennsylvania professor, suggested that civilization is a race between education and catastrophe. “Catastrophe is inevitable... unless education is the kind that will provide a constant supply of trained, intelligent leaders” (p. 3). Considering the importance of providing a society with effective leaders, schools should not ignore leadership development.
The continuation of this nation as a world power is dependent upon the guidance given to tomorrow's leaders in today's classrooms.

Gardner (1990), who has served six United States Presidents in various leadership capacities, expresses the notion that leadership can and should be taught. "Most of the capabilities that enable an outstanding leader to lead are learned...Young people with substantial native gifts of leadership often fail to achieve what is in them to achieve. So part of our task is to develop what is naturally there but in need of cultivation" (p. 157-158).

What is the role of schools in leadership preparation? How should schools be preparing students for the changing world? What is our investment in the young with regard to affective traits? Burns (1978), noted authority on leadership, implores us not to "ignore or underplay the force that may be the most important in shaping most leaders: learning. Learning from experience, learning from people, learning from successes and failures, learning from leaders and followers: personality is formed in these reactions to stimuli in social environments" (p. 63).

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore the leadership development opportunities that fifth grade children have in a gifted enrichment setting. This study focused on leadership development in areas such as problem solving, decision-making, and effective communication in the particular setting of gifted enrichment classes. Each of these areas was examined to determine the efficacy of a program that purports to develop effective leadership skills in its students.
Setting

The Gifted Enrichment Program

The gifted enrichment center began at the Riverside Middle School in the fall of 1978 with approximately forty students in grades four through six. (The name of the school as well as all participants are pseudonyms.) According to one of the founding teachers who later became the supervisor for the district, the philosophy in those days was similar to what it is today. The goals of the program were:

1. To increase or develop creative and logical thinking skills
2. To develop social skills with intellectual peers.

The curriculum was based on Renzulli’s Enrichment Triad Model (Davis and Rimm, 1985), and incorporated Junior Great Books (Parker, 1989), hands-on science, and academic competitions. The Enrichment Triad Model includes three sequential steps. Type I activities are the general exploratory activities designed to acquaint the students with a broad range of interest areas. Type II activities involve group-training activities dealing with creativity and research skills. Type III activities allow for the investigation of real problems that are presented to a real audience. Parker (1989) describes Junior Great Books as a program of specific readings using shared inquiry and discussions to lend insight to outstanding literary works.

Time at the center was organized to provide teacher-directed instruction in content areas in the mornings and learning centers in the afternoons. Thus, a student who was interested in science received in-depth instruction twice a day in that area, and someone interested in reading could delve further in that area. Lessons were
structured around the interests of the students and included guest speakers and field trips.

The program expanded over the years, adding teachers, additional grade levels, and additional curriculum offerings. Creative problem solving was added to the curriculum, as well as art and drama. The program expanded its boundaries to other schools, and currently serves over 1200 students in various schools throughout the entire district. From a humble beginning of 40 students, the Riverside program currently has over 100 students in the enrichment program in grades five through eight, and about 275 students in the academic program.

The School

Riverside Middle School is a 98-year old school in a south Louisiana school district. As of September 1998, the district had 30,206 students and Riverside Middle had a school population of 626 students in grades six through eight.

The school’s mission statement read: “We, the faculty and staff of Riverside Middle, believe that our primary responsibility is to prepare individual students to become independent creative thinkers and problem solvers who are actively involved, responsible, and contributing citizens of the community. Goals and programs are centered around developing each student academically, socially, and emotionally. We strive to develop a safe and orderly educational environment which will enhance each student’s educational environment to reach his/her potential.”
The Participants

The gifted enrichment program in the district houses students on three different campuses: about 100 students at Riverside, and approximately 180 students at two other schools in the district. This research project examined the fifth grade enrichment students who attended Riverside one day a week.

There are two different components to the gifted program: the academic segment and the enrichment segment. Students in the academic program in sixth through eighth grade attend Riverside five days a week, taking academically advanced classes in language arts, math, science, and social studies. Students who attend the enrichment program are not full-time students at Riverside. The enrichment program is a “pullout” resource program, drawing fifth through eighth grade students from 18 schools throughout the district. They attend their base school four days a week and a bus transports them to Riverside one day a week to receive gifted services in art, drama, creative problem solving, personal communication, science, writing, and logic.

This study concentrated on the enrichment aspect of the program only. I purposefully selected the enrichment program because I felt it could provide a rich environment for the development of leadership. I focused on fifth graders since this is the first year that these students are together at Riverside, thus eliminating possible predetermined notions of leadership among the students. There were approximately 40 fifth graders attending Riverside from 14 different schools throughout the district, 19 attend on Friday. The number of students can vary, as students are admitted into the program throughout the year.
Prior to participation in the program, parents of the gifted students met with one of the teachers and completed an IEP (Individualized Education Program) for their child. The IEP is a document mandated by the State of Louisiana, and serves as a specified means of differentiation. The IEP is reconvened and reconstructed every year as parents and teachers work together to set up the individual program that best suits the needs of the child.

The enrichment teachers at Riverside developed a set of objectives for students in the areas of critical and creative thinking. The objectives included the following leadership development goals:
(a) participate as a leader in two to three activities, (b) interact in small group activities, (c) exhibit oral communication skills in two to three presentations, (d) demonstrate time management and task commitment skills by completing two to three class projects by deadline.

I worked with three teachers in the program: Robin, Betty, and Diane. Robin is a white female who has 15 years of experience, five of those in the gifted program at Riverside. She teaches thinking skills, creative writing, art, and research. Betty, a white female, has 20 years of experience, twelve of these at Riverside. She teaches oral communication, science, leadership, and problem solving. Diane teaches computer literacy to the students in the program. She is an African-American teacher with 33 years experience, 18 of these in the gifted program.

I chose these teachers for the study because of the nature of their program and their philosophy concerning the development of leadership. All of the teachers
agreed to participate in the study, and expressed the notion that they are interested in the findings of the study because, as one teacher stated, "We would love to discover just what it is that we do to help these students become successful leaders."

I chose to observe five students in the enrichment program who attend on Friday. According to my criteria, I selected from students whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) indicated leadership development as one of the specified objectives.

Significance of the Study

Farrall and Kronborg (1996) state: "The study of leadership, as a cognitive and affective phenomenon, is particularly suitable for gifted children. Many are interested in over-arching themes such as justice, and in the political, social, environmental, and economic challenges which face the world in the future" [On-line]. Additionally, these authors note, "There is a need for gifted students who may become society's intellectual leaders to be given the opportunity to develop a substantial knowledge base in one or more domains. Thinking skills and problem-solving abilities, as well as the motivation, attitudes and disposition towards creative production are necessary in order to facilitate intellectual thought" [On-line].

Past research provides evidence of the importance of leadership training or development for gifted students. This study sought to explore one enrichment program in a south Louisiana school district concerning the leadership development of students. This research used thick description (Geertz, 1973) to portray the development of five fifth-graders, examining their possible growth in leadership abilities. By studying the complex interactions of the students, I offer insights into
how other programs, in other areas and with other children, might take advantage of this research.

**Research Questions**

1. What leadership opportunities do students have in a gifted enrichment program at the fifth grade level?

2. What could enrichment programs do to foster leadership development in their gifted students?
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Definition of Leadership

The literature presents no agreement on what constitutes leadership. Clark (1988) defines leadership as "a set of skills that enable a group to reach its goals to maintain itself with mutual satisfaction, and to adapt to environmental change; and that allows individuals within the group to attain self-fulfillment" (p. 526). Some characteristics of successful leaders are as follows: above-average intelligence, decision-making skills, abstract-concepts ability, flexibility, self-confidence, perseverance, and advanced oral or written expression.

Bass (1974) acknowledges that leaders excel in intelligence, scholarship, dependability, and active participation. Leaders are determined to a large extent by the demands of the situation. Leaders possess sociability, persistence, initiative, self-confidence, adaptability, and verbal facility.

Karnes and Bean (1998) note the following characteristics that gifted youth possess which enable them to profit from leadership development: (a) desire to be challenged, (b) ability to solve problems critically and creatively, (c) ability to tolerate ambiguity, and (d) ability to motivate others [On-line].

Gardner (1995), developer of the Multiple Intelligence theory, feels a leader is likely to achieve success only if he or she can do the following:

(a) consciously construct and convincingly communicate a clear and persuasive story, (b) appreciate the nature of the audience(s) including its changeable features, (c) invest his own (or channel others') energy in the building and maintenance of an organization, (d) embody in his own life the principal contours of the story, (e) either provide direct leadership or find a way to achieve influence through indirect means, and (f) find a way to
understand and make use of, without being overwhelmed by, increasingly technical expertise (p. 302).

Commonly, all of these definitions refer to the intelligence and flexibility of the leader, as well as to his or her ability to move others to action. Additionally, the leader has to have a vision, and to be able to express that vision to the followers.

**Theories of Leadership**

The quality of leadership is one of the most important factors in determining the success and survival of groups and organizations. The need for effective leadership is so highly valued that top executives earn salaries much higher than that of their subordinates. Why is leadership such a prized commodity? What theories drive effective leadership practices? Leadership theory seems to be extremely complex, and it often obscures more than it uncovers.

Interestingly, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (1933) notes the appearance of the word *leader* in the English language as early as the year 1300. However, the word *leadership* does not appear until the first half of the nineteenth century in writings about the political influence and control of British Parliament. Although the definition did not appear in the dictionary until the 1300s, the idea certainly was not new. Leadership themes are revealed in Plato’s *Republic*, Homer’s *Iliad*, and Machiavelli’s *The Prince* (Bass, 1981).

The earliest literature on leadership focused primarily on theoretical issues such as identification of different types of leadership and the function of leaders within the society. Theorists sought to discover how leaders emerged and what qualities they possessed. Current theorists no longer explain leadership in terms of the individual or the group. Rather, they believe that characteristics of the
individual and demands of the situation interact is such a manner as to permit one or perhaps a few persons to rise to leadership status.

In the revised and expanded version of the Handbook of Leadership, Bass (1981) notes that leadership changed from the Great Man Theory where a single person is born to the role of leadership to an interactional theory where the situation determines the leader. Leaders are transactional, concentrating on interactions between an exchange relation that the leader and follower want, or transformational, focusing on the leader striving to arouse and satisfy the needs of the followers. Research on the characteristics of leaders indicates that personality is an important factor in emergence as a leader and in maintaining the role. Additionally, leaders scored higher than followers in a wide variety of characteristics, including intelligence and ability, task motivation and performance, and social competence. Leaders differ from followers in that they are able to contribute more to the group. However, an excess of information can handicap the leader, making him ineffective. Leaders can be too able. Authoritarian personalities are often rejected. Groups operate more successfully and experience less stress when task structure, leader personality, and follower personality are compatible. Group survival is dependent upon an able leader who keeps members working together toward a common purpose, maintains productivity at a level sufficient to sustain the group or to justify its existence, and satisfies member expectations. Society needs competent leadership in times of crisis to unite the efforts of members and to strengthen cohesiveness.
The real test of leadership lies not in the personality or behavior of the leaders, but in the performance of the groups they lead. Groups, when free to do so, appear to select leaders who they expect to maintain goal direction, facilitate task achievement, and ensure group cohesiveness. The behaviors furthering task accomplishment are not necessarily the same as those fostering cohesiveness. Some leaders are extremely effective in furthering task achievement. Others are exceptionally skilled in the art of building member satisfaction and inter-member loyalty, which strengthen group cohesiveness. The most valued leaders are able to do both.

Implications for Education

It appears that mankind has come a long way in this century toward understanding this enigma called leadership. How does this assortment of theories affect education? Gallagher (1985) notes that the inclusion of leadership in the roster of characteristics identifying gifted children raises questions. Is there such a common trait in the first place? It is difficult to observe leaders or leadership as a product because children have so little opportunity to exercise it.

Arnold (as cited in Gallagher, 1985) lists characteristics often associated with leadership:

1. A strong drive for responsibility and task completion.
2. Vigor and persistence in pursuit of goals.
3. Originality in problem solving.
4. Self-confidence and a sense of personal identity.
5. Willingness to absorb interpersonal stress.
6. Willingness to tolerate frustration and delay.
7. Ability to influence other persons’ behavior.
8. Capacity to structure social-interaction systems to the task at hand (p. 65-66).
Renzulli, Smith, White, Callahan, and Hartman (as cited in Gallagher, 1985) reported on their attempt to “validate the leadership scale in their teacher-rating battery by comparing peer sociometric ratings on three hypothetical leadership situations involving social, athletic, and intellectual skills” (p. 66). They then compared these with teacher ratings on general leadership qualities and noted high concordance. Of interest is whether teachers can develop such traits in those individuals who show evidences of leadership, or whether they can build those traits in individuals who show little evidence of these qualities.

Karnes and Merriweather (1989b) conducted a survey on the perceptions of teachers, students, and parents concerning leadership. Karnes and McGinnis (1995) conducted a follow-up to the 1989 study to determine if students’ perceptions of leadership had changed over time. In the earlier study, a leader was defined as someone who exerted influence and control over others, someone with the ability to direct others. The more recent study cited such qualities as strength, trustworthiness, determination, devotion, mercy and compassion as indicators of leadership abilities. “Morals and high standards were mentioned equally as much as risk-taking and being ambitious. Wisdom, intelligence... good communication skills, loyalty, faithfulness and being open-minded were other characteristics mentioned” (p. 31).

In a most recent study of leadership models, Roach, Wyman, Brookes, Chavez, Heath, and Valdes (1999) reported results from a decade-long study of leaders among at-risk youth. This study noted that youth leadership differs from adult leadership. Specifically, young people tend to focus not on who the leaders...
are, but on how leadership happens. “Youth constantly negotiate their roles within
groups of peers and family in response to the multiple contexts of their daily lives.
To look for leadership…and expect forms that mirror adult formal roles is to ignore
varying types of leadership that already exist in the lives of youth” (p. 17). This
report calls for “substantial rethinking of youth leadership within the framework of
gifted and talented education…. The individual, competitive, incremental models
that predominate adult theories of leadership hold little relevance for today’s youth
or for future learning demands in organizations” (p. 21).

Characteristics of Gifted Children

Considering the many definitions of leadership, gifted students can be an
appropriate population to study leadership development. Many gifted children share
certain characteristics. Martinson (1974) and Colangelo and Davis (1991) compiled
a list of common characteristics (Appendix A). Additionally, Galbraith (1983)
divided the characteristics into five areas of ability (Appendix B). Davis and Rimm
(1985) list those characteristics commonly found in gifted children:

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<td>Low anxiety</td>
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<td>Early reading/advanced comprehension</td>
<td>Better self-concepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Logical thinking</td>
<td>High moral thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early writing, math, music, and art</td>
<td>Independence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced interests</td>
<td>Superior humor</td>
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Affective characteristics are those relating to personality, values, social
skills, and moral thinking. Intellectually gifted students intuitively comprehend
values and moral issues. They are less egocentric, thus able to empathize with the rights, feelings, and problems of others. They are usually honest and trustworthy. Values and a sense of fairness and justice develop early, leading to an interest in social issues. Additionally, creatively gifted students exhibit high self-confidence, independence, risk taking, high energy, playfulness, and humor, idealism, attraction to the complex, and artistic and aesthetic interests. Many of these traits can help the gifted student in leadership development.

Plowman (1981) describes extraordinary leaders as using expert capabilities to discover and develop the abilities of followers, communicate solutions, and attain goals. He acknowledges that gifted students are particularly suited to these leadership qualities. Specifically, they are able to do the following: (a) change their interpretation of the meaning; (b) use facts and systems in new ways; (c) produce creative and valid solutions and products; (d) move individuals and organizations toward agreed-upon goals; and (e) overcome difficult obstacles.

These attributes, present in many gifted children, lend themselves to effective leadership abilities. It might be advantageous, therefore, for educators to consider leadership training within the gifted program.

Programs for Leadership Ability

Instructional Strategies for Teaching the Gifted (Parker, 1989) provides an approach for comprehensive, integrated programming for gifted students. Parker believes that society cannot survive without talented and innovative leadership. Sensing the need for a curriculum model structured around the leadership perspective, she designed the Leadership Training Model (LTM). Parker divides
her model into four integral parts: cognition, problem-solving, interpersonal communication, and decision-making, each of which she describes in great detail. The cognition component includes the areas of exploration, specialization, investigative skill training, and research. These areas can prepare the student for the lifelong continuous acquisition of new skills and information. The Leadership Training Model proposes a six-step approach to creative problem solving: problem perception and definition, incubation, creative thinking, analysis, evaluation, and implementation. The development of effective group dynamics is an integral part of the third component of the LTM, interpersonal communication. This component includes self-awareness, concern for others, cooperation, and conflict resolution. The final element of the LTM is decision-making. Effective decision-making, according to Parker, requires independence of thinking and action, self-confidence, acceptance of responsibility, task commitment, and moral strength. Her model provides “a combination of abilities to which the philosophy of gifted education can readily espouse. The intertwining of academic exercise (cognition and problem solving) with the affective component (interpersonal communication and decision-making) lends a balance that integrated curriculum demands” (Parker, 1983 p. 12). Parker’s book includes rationale as well as specific examples and sample strategies for putting the plan into practice.

Karnes, Meriweather, and D’Llio (1987) designed a Leadership Studies Program for future leaders. These authors noticed that most efforts at leadership training concentrated on adults, with little or no attention to ensuring the training of leadership qualities in young people. The original study was a summer program
which provided a "systematic, comprehensive approach for training average to superior students with leadership potential in grades six through eleven" (Karnes et al., p. 241). The major purpose of the program was to provide potential leaders with the skills necessary to achieve optimum growth. Their plan targets nine areas:

1. Fundamentals of leadership
2. Written communication
3. Speech communication
4. Group dynamics
5. Problem solving
6. Values clarification
7. Personal skills
8. Decision making
9. Planning

As a result of this program, participating students gained significantly in all nine areas as measured by the Leadership Skills Inventory (LSI). The LSI is a self-scored instrument that measures personal leadership skills, assessing strengths and weaknesses in the nine areas. This diagnostic and prescriptive assessment allows the student to determine skills already acquired and those needed to be learned. The teacher and the student then select instructional activities to improve each individual's weaknesses. The authors tested the effectiveness of their program with pretests and post-tests of the Leadership Skills Inventory and then analyzed the scores. "The claimed results are due to the intensive instruction in leadership concepts and skills, which supports the
statement by Stogdill (1974) that these important components can be taught” (Karnes, et al., 1987, p. 241).

There is little disagreement that children need development of leadership skills. Review of the literature indicates that many researchers are in favor of some type of leadership training. (Clark, 1988; Davis and Rimm, 1985; Davis and Rimm, 1989; Farrall and Kronburg, 1998; Feldhusen and Kennedy, 1988; Gallagher, 1985; Gardner, 1990; Karnes and Merriweather, 1989a; Karnes and Bean, 1998; Marshall, Ramirez, Plinsky, and Veal, 1998; Sisk, 1988; Webb, Meckstroth and Tolan, 1982).

As far back as 1982, Webb, Meckstroth, and Tolan discussed the notion that gifted children should be guided in the organization of things and people, and helped in their ability to analyze situations. They felt it particularly important to help gifted students become good followers as well as good leaders. Davis and Rimm (1985, 1989) addressed the issue of leadership training for gifted children with specific programs. Programs could include the following: mentorships (in which gifted students tutor peers or younger students); in-school leadership projects (such as improvements to physical plant or programs); and community projects (in which students take on neighborhood problems and simulations which could involve, for example, establishing banks, stores, etc.).

Drawing on the ideas of Plowman (1981) and Parker (1983), Davis and Rimm (1985) suggest that teachers should expose students to the topic and content of leadership itself. Training should include teaching students the interaction between leaders and followers, principles of participatory democracy, characteristics of competent leaders and development of effective communication.
Gallagher (1985) notes that Stogdill recommended intensive leadership training for adults in 1974 and concluded that the results of research suggest that “direct training and techniques of leadership result in improved effectiveness as a leader” (p. 66). Gallagher contends that direct training could subsequently produce improved leadership abilities in students.

Feldhusen and Kennedy (1988) report that the appropriate education of leaders calls first for the development of a knowledge base in a discipline. A leader must have some area of expertise to share with members in the group. The development of leadership in gifted youth should be a process of recognizing the areas of their talent potential and providing educational opportunities for the growth and development of special talents. For leaders who will provide guidance to others in a social sense, explicit training in leadership skills and the development of the self in relation to others is appropriate.

Feldhusen, Hynes, and Richardson (1977) developed a set of leadership training materials based on insights derived from a review of research and theory publications. The specific topics include the following:

(a) understanding leadership and understanding self as a potential leader, (b) planning and initiating leadership behaviors and activities, (c) mastering parliamentary procedure, (d) developing goals with a group, (e) differentiating levels of leadership in a group or organization, (f) developing the skills of a group leader, (g) identifying the skills of a group member, (h) developing group cohesiveness, (i) organizing and coordinating committees, (j) communicating effectively as a leader, (k) understanding the internal operations and dynamics of groups, and (l) clarifying the goals and outcomes of leadership (Feldhusen and Kennedy, 1988, p. 227).
These authors reported the results of field tests of the leadership training materials in thirty classrooms. They judged the material to be effective in developing the skills of leadership.

Parker (as cited in Feldhusen and Kennedy, 1988) noted five common strands in most leadership programs: (a) exploration of the concept of leadership; (b) examination of leadership styles; (c) experiences in leadership; (d) awareness of one's own strengths and weaknesses as a leader; and (e) evaluation of one's own leadership potential. According to this author “students can use their own self-understanding to gain a better control of their own underlying motivations, dispositions, and styles that characterize their work in various domains” (p. 227).

Karnes and Bean (1998) believe that it is possible to infuse leadership concepts into the curriculum. “Major emphasis should be placed on leadership development in all academic areas, including fine and performing arts. Thematic curriculum units and reading lists should include biographies and autobiographies of outstanding leaders” [On-line]. Other areas that should include leadership development are arts, sciences, and humanities. Karnes and Bean believe that several strategies strengthen and broaden educational experiences of gifted youth. Teachers should provide instructional units on leadership development at each grade level in a resource room or pullout administrative arrangement. Some secondary schools offer structured credit courses on leadership. Students should prepare and periodically update their personal plans for leadership. Mentorships and internship programs are additional opportunities for youth to work with adult community leaders who are willing to help nurture future leaders [On-line].
Farrall and Kronborg (1998) note that leadership development programs can involve gifted students in reading, discussions, group projects, mentorships, self-assessment, and real life experiences. “Through active participation in discussion of ideas, concepts and skills of leadership, gifted and talented students can construct their own understandings of leadership” [On-line].

Marshall, Ramirez, Plinsky, and Veal (1998) conclude there is no one right answer to programming for gifted and talented students. These authors challenge school administrators to create conditions that enable gifted students to thrive. They describe several essential issues that administrators must address before implementing programs. School administrators and program developers must seek to discover the vision and purpose of the program, exploring educational beliefs about how to build human capacity and nurture talent, as well as how to nurture and sustain these learning relationships.

Role of Education in Moral Development

According to the World Book Dictionary, moral is defined as follows:
(a) good in character or conduct; virtuous according to civilized standards of right and wrong; (b) capable of understanding right and wrong; (c) conforming to accepted standards of general conduct; (d) concerned with morals or ethics; (e) teaching a good lesson, having a good influence.

When considering the teaching of leadership, teachers cannot ignore the issue of morals. Newspaper articles and television reports express concern regarding the lack of integrity in television evangelists, professional sports players, politicians, and even the President of the United States. Every action of our leaders,
regardless of the level, must be judged according to a high standard of conduct. It seems that whatever the leader allows in his own life, others will use as justification to do the same in their lives.

The challenge to create a more humane social order is at the heart of leadership. Ramey (1991) warns of possible dangers in a valueless society. “In a new decade on the verge of the third millennium, we all intuitively sense that we live on the edge of social, political, and economic extinction, but cannot quite grasp its significance for our human destiny. We are at the crossroads, changing paradigms of human meaning, making a quantum leap of consciousness where everything appears beyond our control, even our abilities to control ourselves” (p. x).

Morality in leadership is not a new topic. Most of the major educational philosophers from Plato to Dewey have embraced character building and imparting values along with developing intellect. “Indeed, some of the leading proponents of cognition and rationality—Aristotle, Kant, and Dewey among them—actually devoted much of their educational philosophizing to ethical issues such as the problem of deciding just which moral dispositions or character traits education should foster” (Carbone, 1987, p. 1). Plato and Aristotle both addressed this issue in their teachings and writings. Aristotle believed that strong character was the foundation for leadership. He wrote that the single indispensable ingredient for the public to believe in and support was character. Bennett (1993) adds the idea that character must be lived: it must be practiced in our daily routines. “Dispositions of character, virtues, and vices are progressively fixed in us through practice” (p. 441).
Gardner (1990) addresses the issue of moral development in his book *On Leadership*. He writes: “The contemporary mind recoils from the word moral. To many, it recalls religious bigotry, a cold, unforgiving view of human frailty...Such memories are not inaccurate, but they constitute a woefully incomplete interpretation of the word moral” (p. 76). Morality, according to Gardner, refers to the standards by which a group determines the rights or wrongs of conduct. Our attitudes toward genocide, rape, and torture are elements of our morality. In looking at the array of societies, historians and anthropologists find many instances of healthy societies in which humans have devised a framework of values and norms of conduct. He noticed that the society weakens when the community’s broad consensus disintegrates. People can no longer find meaning in their lives. Nothing holds together. Gardner believes that our society has not come to that pass, but signs of disintegration are not hard to discern. When a high school drug counselor was asked if she approached students who are known drug users, she responded: “It’s not a problem if there is no effect on the kid’s performance. I mean, who are we to say what’s right and wrong?” (p. 76).

Despite such obvious symptoms of disintegration, Gardner (1990) believes that we enjoy some agreement on moral issues. Though not clearly defined, it is the prevailing condition under which society operates. He urges us to search for leaders who will work with us to defend the fundamentals our forefathers founded. We must seek common ground to defend our “commitment to freedom, to justice, to equality of opportunity, to the dignity and worth of the individual, and to the sanctity of our private religious beliefs” (p. 76). Gardner encourages leaders to keep
alive the values of “moral responsibility, about caring for others, about honor and integrity, about tolerance and mutual respect, and about individual fulfillment within a framework of values” (p.77).

Bryant (1995) discusses lessons he has learned concerning leadership while serving as a Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Air Force. He notes five characteristics of an effective leader: integrity, initiative, loyalty, caring, and wisdom. His number one priority is that of integrity. “Personal integrity should be the prized possession of every leader. It must be guarded closely, protected as if it were a priceless jewel in a world of thieves” (p. 2).

Crouse, (1994) in a speech to the National Student Leaders Conference in 1994 connects leadership and morality. She discusses the internal ingredients of leadership that form the basis for a leader’s decision-making and actions, namely ethics, character, and integrity:

Morality is a hot topic these days. Stephen Covey’s The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, the #1 best seller, is about restoring the character ethic…. Cliff Jones has written a book for leaders titled Winning through Integrity. Now there’s a novel idea in our modern world! …. It’s amazing; there is remarkable variety in the way leaders succeed. But there is a distressing sameness in the ways they fail. Most fallen leaders get tripped up in their internal faults… Moral authority is the basis of credibility. And, without credibility, you cannot lead when times get tough and real threats are encountered. That is why leadership MUST flow from the inside out. Leaders, who lack a core of character and integrity let their moral authority gradually erode and when they need people’s trust and cooperation to deal with a problem, it isn’t there (p. 493).

Lipman-Blumen, (1996) an international authority on leadership, reiterates the necessity of morally desirable forms of leadership in her book The Connective Edge. She notes that connective leaders depart from the Machiavellianism of The
Prince not only by operating from a consistently ethical base but in other significant ways as well. Specifically, she states that connective leaders:

(a) join their vision to the dreams of others by connecting and combining, rather than dividing and conquering; (b) strive to overcome mutual problems; (c) create a sense of community, where many diverse groups can hold valued membership; (d) bring together committed leaders and constituents for common purposes; (e) encourage constituents to assume responsibilities at every level; (f) join with other leaders, even former adversaries, as colleagues, not as competitors; (g) nurture potential leaders, including possible successors; (h) renew and build broad-based democratic institutions instead of creating dynasties; and (i) demand serious sacrifice first from themselves and only then from others (p. 17-18).

Connective leaders serve their societies, concentrating on their stewardship and obligations to the organization. Lipman-Blumen (1996) highlights several unconventional leaders, successful people who have made it in business through their own personal efforts, and with their own unique style. One such leader is Anita Roddick; owner of “The Body Shop” with over 1300 franchised outlets in forty-five countries. Roddick said she looks for leadership in unexpected places, in ordinary people. She laments that we do not have a system for celebrating moral leaders. Roddick is particularly critical of the media, and the negative part they play in helping us to define our leaders:

Media, I think, are one of the greatest protagonists of diminishing the role of heroes and leadership in our society... There’s a cynicism that pervades everything. It seems to me that when you become outspoken, when you are altruistic in an environment that doesn’t celebrate humanity in any way, in which business has not played a compassionate role, the media do not know what to make of you as a leader (p. 305).

Roddick maintains that an organization, through its leaders, can do well financially while doing good deeds. She works to connect her employees’ vision to her own and to the visions of the customers she serves internationally. This
connection benefits her company and also contributes to the good of a global society.

What does corporate leadership have to do with education? What role does education assume in moral development? Childs (1987), leading spokesman for the social reconstructionist point of view in American educational philosophy, notes the importance of deliberate education. He contends that education is never morally neutral. Schools establish principles designed to make children something other than what they would become if left to themselves and their surroundings. The moral interest not only pervades the work of the school; it also pervades the entire educational program. The moral factor appears whenever the school or the individual is for certain things and against other things. The moral element appears on the playground as sportsmanship, in the social life as the young treat those of a different race or religion, or those with handicaps. It is found in academic subjects, in the selections teachers make on who and what to study. It appears in literature, in the novels, poems, and dramas that are read. It appears in the organization and government of school, in the part that the superintendent, principal, teachers, students, and parents play in the making and maintenance of regulations. Morals pervade the rituals performed and the programs assembled. It appears in the communities who organize the schools and the state and federal government, which support it. It most assuredly appears in the children themselves as they struggle to take part, find themselves, and believe in something. Moral values are pervasive, and will not go away just because they are controversial or subject to review. Moral values concern the very fundamentals of human existence including rights,
responsibilities, beliefs, faiths, and allegiances of human beings. Consciously or not, adults shape young people’s lives in the way we encourage attitudes and habits. The choices given our children will have consequences in their lives. Childs concludes: “Viewed from this perspective, education undoubtedly ranks as one of the outstanding moral undertakings of the human race” (p. 137).

Noddings (1992) discusses the hesitancy of teachers to venture into the moral realm. She asserts that at the public school level, teachers are often hesitant to talk with students about moral matters. She has heard teachers say, “We’re not trained for that.” Many protest that they do not have a right to impose their values on students, but these same teachers enforce all sorts of rules—sensible and mindless—equally without questioning the values thus imposed. “Surely intelligent adults can and should talk to the children about honesty, compassion, nonviolence, consideration, moderation, open-mindedness, and a host of other qualities that most of us admire. This talk need not be indoctrination any more than mathematics teaching need be lecture and rote learning” (p. 18).

Teachers have to create caring relations where they are the ones who care, and they also have a responsibility to help their students develop the capacity to care. Caring teachers listen and respond to their students. Noddings (1992) suggests that moral education with respect to caring consists of four major components:

1. Modeling. The teacher shows the students how to care by creating caring relations with them.
2. Dialogue. Dialogue is open-ended, neither party knowing in advance the outcome or decision. Parents and teachers cannot enter the dialogue with children knowing that the decision is already made. It is maddening to young people to enter into dialogue that is already predetermined.

3. Practice. Experience shapes attitude. Teachers need to provide opportunities for students to gain skills in care giving and to develop caring attitudes.

4. Confirmation. This involves the act of affirming and encouraging the best in others. When we confirm someone, we spot a better self and encourage its development. "Confirmation lifts us toward our vision of a better self" (p. 22-25).

Moral schooling is not, however, something to be embodied in a list of maxims; it has to pervade the whole of the school experience. The danger is that lessons on values and morals could easily become indoctrination by the teacher or the school. This may be a justified fear, but there are ways around this dilemma. The school should concentrate on how the child can make value decisions, focusing on the process of student decision-making rather than on the absolute authority of the school.

Raths, Harmin, and Simon, (1987), attempt to define the process of valuing. They believe that something must satisfy all seven of the criteria in order for it to be a value. The seven criteria are as follows:

(a) choosing freely, (b) choosing from alternatives, (c) choosing after careful consideration of the consequences of each alternative, (d) cherishing, being happy with the choice, (e) affirming our choice to others, (f) acting upon our
choice, and (g) acting repeatedly, in some pattern of life, behaving and living in accordance with our choices (p. 200-201).

However important they may be, discussions about values seem to make public school leaders extremely nervous about including them in any discussion about schooling. This tends to cause youngsters striving for idealism to believe they live in a valueless society dominated by self-interest and shadowy figures, a harmful message to send to our children.

Lawrence Kohlberg (1985), a well-known proponent of moral education, has devised a hierarchy relating to a developing sense of morality. He studied the philosophies of John Dewey and Jean Piaget, and developed a set of stages through which each person progresses. Kohlberg emphasizes three stages: the pre-conventional level, the conventional level, and the principled level. The pre-conventional stage emphasizes punishment or rewards as consequences for actions, with rules being determined by those in authority and followed in order to avoid punishment. The conventional level suggests that people become less selfish, showing loyalty to others. Behavior is “right” because it helps to maintain social order. The final stage is the principled stage where people reason according to moral principles. In this stage, an individual’s conscience determines “right.” Self-chosen ethical principles such as justice, equality, or the dignity of the individual guide behaviors.

**Gifted Education and Moral Development**

Why should educators be particularly concerned with gifted children? Does superior intellectual ability allow the person to have a deeper understanding of moral issues? Davis and Rimm (1985) state that the characteristics of giftedness
warrant our giving this group special attention. "With many gifted children, their high levels of comprehension, wide interests, eagerness to learn, and logical thinking lead to a number of intertwined affective consequences related to moral thinking" (p. 25). Gifted students are more sensitive to values and moral issues, and they intuitively understand why certain behavior is good or bad. Developmentally advanced children tend to be less egocentric; they are able to see a situation from another's viewpoint. They are more likely to acknowledge the rights of others. Additionally, gifted children and youth are likely to develop, refine, and internalize a system of values and a keen sense of fair play and justice at a relatively early age. These students are also likely to develop an interest in social issues, particularly when someone violates reason and justice.

Davis and Rimm, as well as other authors including Parker (1989), acknowledge that not all gifted children develop high moral values. Some gifted children turn to crime and delinquency, where an antisocial peer group recognizes and rewards their talents. The dangers seem greater among gifted children than other children since gifted children have a tendency to be risk takers and creators of their own rules.

Many—but certainly not all—intellectually advanced gifted children think and function at a higher stage of moral development than their peers. In some cases, a gifted child may function at a higher level than that of his teachers or parents. These are the children who find that following the rules simply "because I said so" is absurd.
As for teaching moral development, Kohlberg (1985) suggests that a teacher might expose children to concepts just one step higher than their current stage and encourage them to think at this more mature level. Role-playing can give them opportunities to think about moral matters such as cheating. Teachers should allow children to practice making the decisions that require high-level moral thinking. Davis and Rimm (1989) feel that, especially for gifted students, Kohlberg’s six stages themselves might be good curriculum content for helping students understand moral thinking. Parker (1989) cites moral development as an important prerequisite for decision making.

Curriculum developers should carefully select activities that will enable gifted program facilitators to clarify and strengthen the democratic values brought to the class situation by the individual student. It is important that the facilitator’s personal values not be forced upon the students, as a dogmatic attitude may prove counterproductive in the development of independent decision-making skills (p.8).

Colangelo (1989) criticized Kohlberg’s stages of moral development. He noticed that all of the major characters in the Kohlberg dilemmas were male. He suggested that girls can more readily relate to girls’ problems, and boys can relate to male problems. Second, Kohlberg uses adults as the main characters in the dilemma. Colangelo noted that gifted students could better relate to characters that are of their own age group. Thirdly, Kohlberg’s dilemmas involve family and authority relationships. He suggests that gifted students should discuss issues of friendship and love relationships as primary areas of moral conflict. Fourth, Kohlberg’s dilemmas focus essentially on two types of issues: public welfare and life and death. Gifted adolescents concern themselves more with family relations, peer relations, sexual relations, alcohol and drugs, self-concept, cheating and
stealing, and reporting infractions. Colangelo advocates an atmosphere of open
discussion where gifted students’ thinking is challenged and where they can “begin
to explore strengths and inconsistencies in their own moral thinking. This is
opposed to an indoctrination approach where right or wrong perspectives are taught
to the student by an adult or authority” (p. 12). Colangelo recaps his findings:

1. Gifted adolescents are highly sensitive to moral aspects of a number of daily
   life situations.

2. Discussions or hypothetical dilemmas need to be sensitive to the sex of the
   protagonist. Boys are more responsive to stories with a male and the same
   is true for gifted girls.

3. The search for self-esteem is considered a moral issue for gifted students.

Colangelo concedes that just because students are able to state principles of
morality does not mean they will behave in a moral fashion. However, he feels
strongly that gifted youngsters have strong and varied moral sensitivities and should
be given opportunities to explore and share their own thinking. Teachers should
take time to encourage these youngsters and help them in their thinking as they
struggle toward resolution.

Lindsay (1988) questions whether education toward moral excellence is
feasible or even attainable. He notes that at times, gifted leaders are difficult to peg,
and are at times “counter-institutional if not counter-cultural” (p.8). He cites
Charles Manson as an example. He strongly stresses the necessity to educate gifted
children toward moral excellence. He discusses the differences between leadership
training and leadership education. Training insinuates that the learning process will
develop skills according to pre-established goals. He prefers education, in which
the learning process equips the individual to make intelligent, humane, future-
oriented decisions that will result in the enhancement of the individual, his group,
his state, culture, and planet.

Of all the programs in gifted education we have examined, consulted with,
done workshops for, discussed informally, NONE has dealt with moral
education as an essential component of the total curriculum for gifted. For
most of us, moral education is indeed moral indoctrination, teaching from
authority with certain desirable and acceptable value systems as pre-
established outcomes. Also, when we try to implement programs, we fear
that alternative outcomes will challenge our own leadership (p.8).

Lindsay concludes the following:

For years, the schools have, for myriad reasons, struggled to educate the
nations' children in a relatively value-free environment. Now it becomes
evident that we must establish moral education at the core of the curriculum,
particularly for students gifted in leadership. If we are to regain our national
conscience, our sense of propriety, our hunger for excellence in every
endeavor, we must begin with the design of a curriculum in moral education
that will provide our future leaders with the appropriate models and
methodologies for reestablishing these values at the center of consciousness.
If leadership education (not training) is imperative, it must incorporate moral
education (not indoctrination). Moral education is a cultural imperative (p.9).

Gallagher (1985) discusses those criteria that would mark a student as
morally gifted: (a) chooses the ethical rather than the expedient alternative when
faced with an interpersonal dilemma, (b) stands against public sentiment when
such sentiment threatens to compromise his values; (c) feels allegiance and
responsibility for principles and causes; (d) identifies with humanity beyond the
immediate confines of his own group; (e) feels compassion for wrongdoers
without condoning specific acts; (f) perceives and admits to his own
shortcomings; and (g) holds to personal ideals transcending such qualities as appearance and social acceptability.

Passow (1988) agrees that teachers should educate caring and concerned persons. Teachers need to recognize that the individual does not grow up in isolation and education does not exist in isolation. We are all part of an overall network of relationships and interdependency and the children need to understand this and learn how to live with a world beset with problems, both constructive and destructive. Students must make ethical choices in decisions about mercy killing, about world hunger, about world peace, or problems of the environment.

Passow believes that gifted children have enormous potential for they will be the ones with the capacity to save the world, or the capacity to destroy it. He feels that we need to build upon our base of gifted education, attending to another dimension of giftedness: “the development of caring, concerned, compassionate, committed individuals who develop and use their giftedness for society’s benefit as well as for self-fulfillment” (p.13). He recognizes the research that suggests gifted children have the potential for greater and more profound social, moral, and ethical concerns. Gifted programs seldom include developing the skills, the motivation, and the values of leaders. Gifted students’ knowledge base should include thinking about the morality of that knowledge. Curriculum should include strong affective process components as well as strong cognitive components. To that end, Passow suggests the following:
Peace Education: The teaching profession should prepare young people to live in the nuclear age. Our young people need to see their generation within its historical context, and work toward peace.

Ethical Education: Gifted students must think about the moral and ethical dimensions of the subjects they study, and raise questions of conscience regarding their content. It is not just with facts and concepts, but with the values of our curricula with which we must deal.

Futures Education: Gifted populations should think about the future, their own futures, in a larger context. They need to think about the “possible,” the “probable” and the “preferable” futures that they will have the power to determine.

Passow encourages educators to deal with real-life problems, networking with other gifted children in other nations to better understand the lives, the aspirations, and the concerns of a global people. “Self-actualization is but one goal of gifted education; self-actualization in service to humankind is the twin goal” (p. 15).

Hirst (1974) stressed the need for a specific program for moral education. Somehow, every school curriculum should provide opportunity for pupils to acquire the very considerable amount of knowledge that is necessary for morally responsible living in our complex democratic society, and the intellectual skills and dispositions the making of moral judgments demands (p. 175).

Hirst argues a case for explicit moral education. He places emphasis on cognitive and rational analysis, and commitment from the teachers in words and action. He believes that moral education should not be taught “in passing.” Rather,
it should be a specific area of study. Considering the time children spend in our
care, educators should seriously consider the role of moral education in the
curriculum.

Bennett opened *The Book of Virtues* (1993) with this writing by Plato:

> You know that the beginning is the most important part of any work, especially in the case of a young and tender thing; for that is the time at which the character is being formed and the desired impression is more readily taken.... Anything received into the mind at that age is likely to become indelible and unalterable; and therefore it is most important that the tales which the young first hear should be models of virtuous thoughts....

> Then will our youth dwell in the land of health, amid fair sights and sounds, and receive the good in everything; and beauty, the effluence of fair works, shall flow into the eye and ear, like a health-giving breeze from a purer region, and insensibly draw the soul from the earliest years into likeness and sympathy with the beauty of reason. There can be no nobler training than that (p.17).

Dewey (1909) wanted democratic schools for moral and intellectual
development ninety years ago. Perhaps Dewey’s time has finally come. In
conclusion, it appears that our society is in need of able leaders. Leadership
development cannot be left to chance. We must explore and develop programs that
will be of benefit to our future leaders. Addison, et al. (1987) state, “We need to
proceed for the good of the students and for the good of our free society which is
always in need of emerging leadership” (p. 4). In keeping with this philosophy, this
study will attempt to identify certain components of a gifted enrichment program
that are effective in the development of future leaders.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Case Study Approach

"Case Study research is an attempt to develop and understand universal principles by a close examination of particular cases" (Moon, 1991, p. 158). Case study research stems from the qualitative and the phenomenological paradigms. The focus is on holistic perceptions of reality from the perspective of the participants. According to Stake (1995), a case study catches the "complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances" (p. xi). Bogdan & Biklen (1998) liken the general design of the case study to a funnel. "The start of the study is the wide end: the researchers scout for possible places and people that might be the subject or the source of data, find the location they think they want to study, then cast a wide net trying to judge the feasibility of the site or data source for their purposes" (p. 54). The researchers then begin collecting data, making decisions and adjustments as they go, possibly modifying the design or developing new ideas. The data collection then narrows to particular themes and questions. From broad beginnings, the research moves to a more directed study and analysis. According to Gall, Borg, & Gall (1996), case study research is "the in-depth study of instances of a phenomenon in its natural context and from the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon" (p. 754).

Moon (1991) describes five different types of case study that can direct research in gifted education: (a) clinical, (b) developmental, (c) observational, (d) situational analysis, and (d) task analysis case studies. For my study, I employed
developmental, observational, and situational analyses. According to Moon, “Developmental case studies attempt to understand the development across time of an individual, an organization, a program component, or a concept” (p. 161). I observed the enrichment program at Riverside Middle School over a period of eight months in order to understand the development of leadership.

In observational case studies, the researcher gathers data by observing an individual or a group of individuals in naturalistic contexts. Observational case studies examine a specific group of children, some activity in a school, or a particular individual. This type of study is similar to ethnography in that both use participant observation, interviewing, and triangulation. I studied the program by observing and interviewing three teachers and five students. I utilized Moon’s Protocol (1991) for observational case study.

Situational analysis allows the researcher to examine the particular event from the viewpoint of the participants. “The goal of such research is to provide an in-depth understanding of the impact of an event on the lives and institutions affected by the event” (Moon, 1991, p. 162). By gathering field notes, journal comments, and interview responses, I was able to obtain the perspectives of the teachers as well as the students who participated in the study.

Moon (1991) notes that these methods are not mutually exclusive, often overlap, and may be more powerful in combination. These three types of case studies added fullness to my data analysis. I did not utilize the clinical case study because it is designed to understand a particular type of individual with clinical analysis using test results. Task analysis involves studying the performance of an
individual and then generalizing that performance through multiple replications. Again, this type of case study would not be appropriate to my research.

Because of my interest in leadership opportunities and the way that leadership skills contribute to the overall social atmosphere in an enrichment class, a qualitative research design seemed best for this study. Long-term immersion allowed me to gather comprehensive, systematic, and in-depth information about the enrichment program components, the teachers who facilitated the lessons, and the students who were involved in the social interactions. I observed and recorded the events that took place over an eight-month period with three teachers concerning a variety of topics and themes. In the course of these observations, I paid particular attention to five students whose objectives as documented on the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) indicated leadership development.

Spradley (1980) compares the ethnographer with an explorer mapping a wilderness area. The explorer/ethnographer begins to gather information, going first in one direction, perhaps retracing the route, then starting out on a new course. Like the ethnographer, the explorer seeks to describe a phenomenon rather than simply trying to find something. This metaphor seems particularly appropriate in arguing for the long-term immersion in one setting necessary for a thorough qualitative study.

This study attempted to be non-interventive and empathic. "We try not to disturb the ordinary activity of the case... We try hard to understand how the actors, the people being studied, see things. Ultimately, the interpretations of the researcher are likely to be emphasized more than the interpretations of those people
studied, but the qualitative case researcher tries to preserve the *multiple realities*, the different and even contradictory views of what is happening" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 11-12).

**Qualitative Methodology**

Qualitative methodology was most appropriate for this study. The settings were naturalistic with the investigator positioned to describe human behaviors and reactions to stimuli in social environments. Data were gathered and analyzed as themes and patterns emerged contributing to the holistic understanding of the social situation being studied. Using qualitative methodology facilitated the gaining of meaning, which is the primary concern of qualitative researchers who are interested in process rather than outcome (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

**Selection of Participants**

This study utilized a purposeful sampling called criterion sampling to develop a deeper understanding of the phenomena. Gall, et al. (1996) note that in criterion sampling, the researcher selects cases that “satisfy an important criterion that would yield rich information about aspects of the program that work well or poorly” (p. 217). “The sample size in qualitative studies typically is small...The purpose in selecting the case, or cases, is to develop a deeper understanding of the phenomena being studied” (p. 217). “It is clear that purposeful sampling is not designed to achieve population validity. The intent is to achieve an in-depth understanding of selected individuals, not to select a sample that will represent accurately a defined population” (p. 218).
Previous research on the subject of leadership approached the problem from a particular perspective. That is, the researchers sought those individuals who exhibited existing leadership skills, or who were recommended for their study because they showed leadership potential. My study took a different approach. I purposefully selected a program that had never been researched, and I selected students whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) plans indicated the objective of leadership development. A special education teacher along with the parents and student designed the IEP to target various areas of development. There were six students who filled this criterion, and I selected the five females. I was interested to see the similarities and differences among the girls participating in the program. There was only one male who fit the criterion, and I felt that I would not be able to make a valid analysis with a single male subject; therefore, I chose females only. I observed them for a period of eight months, seeking to understand how the gifted enrichment program helped to develop leadership skills in these young girls. By approaching the problem in this unique manner, I bring a new perspective to the literature.

Patton (1990) notes the concern that qualitative research may be more intrusive than other types of research because of the highly personal and interpersonal aspects and because of the in-depth interviewing. Therefore, every effort was made to address issues in a professional manner. The identities of the participants will remain confidential as well as the names of the school and the school district in which this study took place. Permission was obtained at the administrative level to conduct this research, and permission was obtained from the
parents of the five students since they were under 18 years of age. Every precaution was taken to respect the rights of privacy of all individuals participating in the study.

**Data Collection Techniques**

Qualitative methods consist of three kinds of data collection: (a) in-depth, open-ended interviews, (b) direct observation, and (c) written documents (Patton, 1990). Utilizing all of these data sources to corroborate the same finding serves as a convergence of multiple evidence, which is called triangulation (Yin, 1994). Therefore, I collected evidence through prolonged engagement with selected professional staff and gifted students at the school site. Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the timeline and procedures for collecting and analyzing data.

**Initial Procedures**

Gaining access to a welcome environment is the foundation for gathering data. Therefore, phone calls, discussions with the principal and teachers, and visits with the district supervisor served as preliminary activities for this study. I obtained permission to conduct this research from the district school board (see Request for Permission to Conduct Research in Appendix C). I contacted the supervisor of gifted education as well as the principal of the school to schedule visitations. I completed and submitted the Application for Exemption from Institutional Oversight upon approval of this study (see Appendix D). Because this study intends to focus on minor children, I obtained written permission from the parents of these children to conduct interviews (see Parent Permission Letter in Appendix E).
### Data Collection and Analysis Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-field Experience</td>
<td>June-October, 1998</td>
<td>• Contact participants&lt;br&gt;• Secure approval and consent&lt;br&gt;• Write prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Experience</td>
<td>October 1998 to April 1999</td>
<td>• Participant Observation&lt;br&gt;• Collect and review field notes&lt;br&gt;• Audio record&lt;br&gt;• Informal interviews&lt;br&gt;• Peruse archival data&lt;br&gt;• Member checking&lt;br&gt;• Peer debriefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Refinement</td>
<td>November 1998 to April 1999</td>
<td>• Analyze data&lt;br&gt;• Confirm emerging themes, patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Composition</td>
<td>March-June 1999</td>
<td>• Convene external audit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Triangulation of Data Sources

Triangulation of the data sources served to foster the reliability of the study. These data sources included teacher interviews, student interviews, principal and supervisor interviews, a student focus group, review of archival data, and field notes. There were several key informants: three teachers at Riverside Middle School, five students attending the school one day a week, and the former gifted supervisor for the district.
Observations

Bogdan & Biklen (1998) describe participant observation as follows: “The researcher enters the world of the people he or she plans to study, gets to know them and earns their trust, and systematically keeps a detailed written record of what is heard and observed. The material is supplemented by other data such as school memos and records, newspaper articles, and photographs” (p. 3). I wrote field notes, transcribed audio recordings, and kept a journal to record questions and opinions. Spradley (1980) describes the progression of observations from descriptive to focused to selective. I began with descriptive observations and described everything that happened in the setting. Focused observations directed my attention to a deeper and narrower portion of the data. I began to formulate themes from the observations and interviews. At this point, I refined the characteristics of and relationships among the objects of study, “looking for differences among specific cultural categories” (p. 128).

Interviews

I interviewed each participating teacher and student. Interviews served to discuss issues and clarify intentions. While the questioning was open-ended, sample questions guided the sessions (see General Interview Questions for teachers in Appendix F and General Interview Questions for Students in Appendix G). I also interviewed the principal of the school and the district supervisor of gifted education to gain insight into their considerations of leadership development. In response to several questions that I had concerning observations, I conducted a focus group interview with four of the five students.
Archival Data

I gathered additional sources of data throughout the research process. Key informants shared their lesson and unit plans. I reviewed student products, goal sheets, and self-evaluation forms. I also asked each teacher and each of the five students to keep anecdotal notes in a journal-type log to facilitate the observations made by the researcher. Although many did not write large volumes of material, the information gathered helped to facilitate my understanding of their thoughts and feelings concerning leadership and their personal philosophy toward its development. Informal conversations with students and teachers served to strengthen the research. I carefully recorded field notes and transcribed expanded notes.

Data Analysis

According to Bogdan & Biklen (1998), data analysis is the “process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others” (p. 157). Analysis involves working with the collected data, sorting and organizing, searching for patterns, discovering what is important, and what you intend to report to others.

Data were broken into manageable parts and analyzed. Analysis was an ongoing process that began at the onset of the project. It was in the early stages of data collection that the units of analysis emerged. In concordance, Moon (1991) suggests that the researcher have a “general analysis strategy in mind before beginning to collect data” (p. 169).
Following the suggestions of Bogdan and Biklen, I began analysis in the field by planning data collection sessions in light of my discoveries in previous observations. I kept observer's comments about ideas generated in the field, and kept memos to myself about insights I gained during observation and interview sessions. I followed their suggestion to "think with what data you have; do not put off thinking because all of the evidence is not in" (p. 195).

Once I completed the observations and interviews, I began to develop coding categories. The case study gives the reader a general flavor for the setting by describing student interactions and leadership opportunities. Information gathered from student observations and interviews developed into descriptions of students, each case reporting background information on the student and the situation. Finally, a summary analysis described how the information relates to the problems outlined in current literature. "Constant comparison analysis," a term coined by Glaser and Strauss and described in Gall, et al. (1996) refers to the continual process of comparing segments within and across categories. "Using constant comparison, the researcher clarifies the meaning of each category, creates sharp distinctions between categories, and decides which categories are most important for the study" (Gall, et. al, 1996, p. 566). By comparing the literature on the subject of leadership development in youth with my own research, I was able to draw conclusions and to make recommendations for further research based on findings.
Trustworthiness

The techniques designed to check the trustworthiness of the findings included: (a) prolonged engagement/persistent observation, (b) triangulation of data, (c) peer debriefing, and (d) member checking.

Prolonged Engagement/Persistent Observation

Research began with a preliminary visit to the school site and 30-40 observations. Each observation was approximately two to four hours. After initial observations, I selected and interviewed five students. In addition to observing the teachers within the program, I paid particular attention to the selected students’ interactions and to their leadership development over time.

Triangulation of Data

Triangulation of data for the case occurred through interviews and observations of the students, the teachers, and the archival data such as lesson plans and thematic strategies designed to elicit leadership skills. I interviewed and audio recorded each of the five students and the three teachers. Transcripts of each interview provided valuable information for later analysis.

Peer Debriefing

Peer debriefing followed the case report. A doctoral candidate in Curriculum and Instruction served as peer debriefer because of her interest in gifted students and her knowledge of qualitative research methods. Together we read field notes, discussed and debated hypotheses, and searched for possible biases. Additionally, a teacher of the gifted in high school English proofread and edited the paper.
**Member Checking**

Member checking insured accuracy of information through informal conversations with the teachers. I also checked with the participants whom I interviewed and verified the accuracy of the information I had recorded in my field notes. Teachers were asked to read these notes and report suggested corrections or deletions.

**Dependability and Confirmability**

An audit trail helped insure dependability and confirmability of the results. I maintained a notebook of field notes as well as a journal of opinions and questions. I collected additional process notes and transcripts of interviews. I noted categories and patterns that emerged. I also used an external auditor to discern whether the research findings are grounded in the data, whether the findings are logical, and to check for biases.

**Conclusion**

Moon (1991) describes a vision for the future of case study research in the field of gifted education. "Case study research is a particularly powerful methodology for developing rich descriptions of gifted individuals, gifted family systems, and various aspects of educational interventions on behalf of gifted students... A growing literature of such rich descriptions will build the knowledge base of the field and provide a sound foundation of research with which to examine prediction and causation... Case study methods hold great promise for helping to bridge research, theory, and practice within the field of gifted education" (p. 175). I share Moon's vision, and offer my research to build a knowledge base for leadership...
development in our young gifted students who hold the promise and the possibility for tomorrow.
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA COLLECTION

Riverside Middle School Gifted Enrichment Program

The nature of the gifted program inherently defies traditional instructional roles and was therefore difficult to capture in easily packaged descriptors. Differentiated strategies attempt to meet individual students’ needs. The program components are overlapping, nebulous and fluid by design. For the purpose of this study, I chose to tell the story of the gifted enrichment program through the opportunities the students had for leadership development as facilitated by the three teachers.

According to one of the teachers, who established the gifted enrichment center 20 years ago, there has always been an emphasis on developing leadership. Though not specifically labeled as such, teachers taught leadership through social skills. As she related, “Students were given many opportunities to present themselves in public, expressing their passions, and learning to compromise.” She stated that the program evolved to include leadership as a main focus, and thus leadership development became an integral component of the program.

There is freedom within structure in the daily routine of the enrichment center. On Fridays, 19 fifth-grade students from six different home-based schools attend Riverside Middle School for enrichment. Teachers described the following typical schedule:

7:40 Arrival at school
8:05 Homeroom (Attendance, Pledge of Allegiance)
8:15 Art
9:05 Morning lesson #1: Critical or creative thinking activity
10:15  Morning lesson #2: Creative or critical thinking activity
11:20  Lunch
11:50  Recess
12:10  Study Hall (Complete homework from home-based school or read a book of choice)
12:30  Afternoon lesson #1: Critical thinking activity
1:15   Afternoon lesson #2: Creative thinking activity
2:05   Afternoon lesson #3: Computer class
2:55   Dismissal

The teachers tended to adjust the schedule to meet the demands of the non-traditional classroom. Their flexibility enabled adjustments to be made to suit the students’ needs.

One of the most disruptive occurrences at Riverside was the intercom system. There appeared to be no routine time for the announcements. According to the teachers, announcements were supposed to be read once in the morning, and then once before the end of the day. Typically, the intercom system interrupted the classes about five to six times a day. The announcer always apologized for the interruption, then proceeded to announce the names of students who were to go to the office, or report to a particular room. Everyone assumed the reason for the announcement was punitive, but no one seemed to know for sure. The result of this constant battering of voices appeared to be that no one listened anymore. Teachers continued with their lessons and students continued to talk amongst themselves. When I inquired about this interruption, the teachers expressed irritation at the intrusion. The teachers had told principal their feelings at various faculty meetings but nothing had changed. Although daily routines and regulations did not apply to enrichment teachers, every teacher seemed irritated by this imposition and wanted a change of policy that did not seem to be forthcoming.
The three teachers in the Gifted Enrichment Program collaborated to offer a differentiated curriculum through the use of dynamic topical units of study. These units, which lasted from six to ten weeks, were designed to meet the individual interests and needs of the students. Activities within these units were structured to provide opportunities to develop leadership as well as skills in the areas of critical thinking, research, interpersonal communication, role-playing, decision-making, creativity, problem solving, and technology.

**Leadership Opportunities Facilitated by Robin**

Robin, the youngest member of the team, was tall and slender with red hair. Her green eyes sparkled as she spoke softly to the children. Her dress and her manner were casual yet professional. Robin did not allow daily frustrations to upset her; she preferred to see the humorous side of any situation.

Robin had a video camera set up in the room and two computers were available to the students. On the wall above the computer was a poster which read, “Diversity creates dimension in our world.” Two walls were covered with green chalkboards. Underneath the boards was a two-foot high wall of beige cinderblock. Robin had allowed the students to personalize these cinderblocks with tempera-paint designs of handprints, flowers, birds, and other animals. These student-created decorations added a personal touch to the room, forming an inviting atmosphere. There were several bulletin boards that had students’ works on them. On the opposite wall were a refrigerator, two hamster cages, and a bookshelf that separated this area from the main part of the room. The area to the left of the divider held two sofas arranged in an L-shape, a rectangular carpet, and a ten-gallon fish tank. More
low bookshelves were set against the wall closest to the door. The two windows in this large room gave a view of the playground. On the far right wall, a materials center held students' artwork, construction paper, crayons and markers, scissors, glue, clipboards, and other items the students needed for their projects. Each time the students began a project, the teacher reminded them that these materials were available for their use, and they were to keep the materials center neat.

**Book Creation**

The first day I observed Robin, there were fifteen students seated on the sofas and the carpet. On one of the chalkboards were the words “Lesson Agenda” followed by “Let's travel around the world.” Robin explained that the students were going to spend the next several weeks writing a book. “You are the main character in your book. We will be traveling to the seven different continents. We will be going on a magic carpet. What would be the circumference to the nearest ten inches of a magic carpet that would hold the entire class plus the teacher?” This was the students’ first introduction to group problem solving as Robin allowed them to interact in small groups, work on estimation, and make predictions. The students discovered a variety of ways to solve this measurement riddle. One group physically sat in a circle as one member of the group measured their circumference with a tape measure. Another group measured only one student, and then multiplied by fifteen. Robin reminded them that she would also be a passenger on the carpet ride, so the measurement was recalculated to include sixteen people. After fifteen minutes, all groups seemed to have their calculations. Robin asked everyone to get on the carpet, as she verified the correct size for the magic carpet. The students seemed
pleased and surprised that their calculations were amazingly close to the actual circumference.

Robin then displayed the book *Children from Foreign Countries*. Everyone huddled in a circle, and all eyes focused on the book. Students seemed relaxed and freely made comments about the clothing, hats, hairstyles, or houses from various countries. They openly discussed differences between the children from foreign lands and themselves, adding comments to others’ ideas.

The rest of the lesson continued this way with the teacher sparking the students’ interests and getting to know them through their comments. The students became excited about completing this eight-week project. They talked excitedly amongst themselves, choosing a topic. Several of these children know one another from their home-based school, but most are meeting for the first time.

The following week there were twelve students in attendance. The teacher had the agenda on the chalkboard: “Task Commitment.” Robin began class with a discussion of the meaning of this phrase. “When you are writing your book you will have to pace yourself, so you don’t wait until the last minute. Procrastination puts stress and pressure on you.” Robin had written, “I Met My Deadline!” on one of the chalkboards. To encourage task commitment, any student who achieved his goal for that day would write his name on the board, and he received applause from fellow classmates. I sensed teamwork and shared commitment from the group and they seemed genuinely excited when someone reached his/her goal even if they had not yet met their own goal. This accolade became an incentive to continue with a commitment to their goal. Robin explained story writing, including the elements of
illustrations and text. “I like differences in style—you’re all individuals. I will expect that your booklets will all be different, and will reflect your unique style.”

Their next task was to design a cover page, which was a personal description in pictorial form. As the students worked, the teacher walked around the room with soft-spoken compliments. “Just by looking at one page, I can learn a lot about you.” The magic carpet had carried them to India, and Indian music played softly in the background. After they had worked on their cover page for twenty minutes, the students brainstormed the differences between critical and creative thinking and produced the following lists:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITICAL</th>
<th>CREATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logic</td>
<td>Creative writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluative thinking</td>
<td>Oral communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative problem solving</td>
<td>Brainstorming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Divergent thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Robin explained how they would use each of these two avenues of thinking to create their unique book. Students shared rough drafts of their completed drawings. Comments were positive from all of the students toward each other’s work.

The students continued with the creation of their book for the next several weeks. Robin showed them a sample book completed by a former student and explained how simple yet effective the text and illustrations worked together to “convey a message to the readers.” She reviewed several children’s books, pointing
out differences among the pages. Some pages were entirely text while others were simply illustrations. Some of the illustrations wrapped around the text; some words were at the top and bottom with illustrations in the middle. Each student received a layout sheet for text pages, a template for planning his pages. She said that the students had entire freedom when planning. Their choices should reflect their interests and should have balance: “Not too many words, not simply a picture book.” She asked, “Why is it important to plan ahead?” The students responded with answers such as, “So the book can be readable,” and “So that you make it interesting for others to read.” Several recalled a time when they didn’t plan ahead, and the end product looked messy and unplanned. Robin asked them to “visualize the finished text even if you don’t know what the text and illustrations are going to be.”

The agenda board explained the progression for the next several weeks:

- Cover page: Illustrations only
- Pages 2-3: Hometown
- Pages 4-5: South America
- Pages 6-7: Africa
- Pages 8-9: Asia (Japan)
- Pages 10-11: Europe
- Pages 12-13: Australia
- Page 14: Antarctica
- Page 15: Home

The students were to work at their own pace with guidelines set each week. For example, some would still be working on Africa while others would move on to Asia, but all had to plan their time so that they would finish the entire book by the final date that the teacher would set.
Robin encouraged the students to design their layout. “Look for patterns. Every page does not have to look alike, but some pages are similar and flow. How can you make your book different and unique, while maintaining your own personal consistency?” She walked around the room while the students were designing their layout pages, encouraging them to look at the sample books she had in the room, and complimenting their products. She complimented every student on some aspect of their work as she checked each one and suggested possible alternatives for those who needed some assistance.

Each week the students continued to make their way around the globe, working on the rough drafts of the various pages. Robin reminded them that this was only their rough draft, and they needed to make the necessary edits and corrections now before the final product. Several worked at tables, showed each other their work, and complimented one another. One girl helped another with the spelling of several words, and others were walking about the room, gathering encyclopedia and other books to complete the various pages of their book. Each student had selected a particular theme of interest from the various regions: foods, clothing, agriculture, weapons, and monetary systems. Robin had ample reference materials available for the students to conduct their research. Before the class period ended that day, Hallie met her deadline for completion. Everyone applauded as Hallie proudly wrote her name on the board under the bold words “I MET MY DEADLINE!” Robin then said, “Class, if she did it, YOU CAN TOO!” As class ended each week, every student saved his work in a personal folder.
Each week brought more and more independence on the part of the students. Students completed pages without much assistance. Several sat on the sofa, four worked at a table, one student worked with Robin, and one student used the overhead projector. Every student was busy. Robin quipped, “Y’all are meeting MY objectives. There are fewer and fewer questions asked of me! You are becoming independent researchers! I’m SO pleased!” Students helped one another rather than relying solely on Robin for advice. One boy showed Robin several pages he had completed. She commented: “See how you put yourself into the story. Beautiful! I had no doubt!”

As the project continued, students became more autonomous. Not all students were on task, but all were in charge of their own time management. A boy wasting time could do so. The teacher did not tell him to get back to work. He did nothing for about eight minutes. Eventually, the novelty wore off, and he returned to work without a single word. It was apparently not much fun to waste time alone, when he looked around and discovered everyone else was on task. Another student struggled with a concept, unsure of how to proceed. Robin quietly approached, and asked, “If you went to France, if you were actually there, what would you do? What would you see? How can you make this a personal experience?” The student thought about this, as Robin checked some of his finished work. She complimented: “I love this illustration! Don’t forget about your personal sentence in there!” I noticed him quietly smiling and then, rejuvenated, went back to work on the France page. Robin remained calm and helpful. If a student needed help when Robin was
particularly busy, she quietly asked the other students, “Can someone help?”
Several immediately responded, “I will! I will!”

One particular day, students were working on their books, singing and
swaying to the music on the radio. The radio was set to a popular radio station.
Several students began softly mouthing the words to the songs. The song “I smell
sex and candy here” began to play on the radio. Several boys glanced at each other,
but no one stopped the singing. The teacher didn’t seem to notice. When singing,
they said all of the words out loud except the word sex. They sang, “I smell (pause)
and candy here.” They were apparently imposing a restriction on themselves by not
saying that word aloud. The teacher didn’t have to correct them; they corrected
themselves.

At one point, a student was having trouble finding information. The teacher
told her: “You know how your computer has a search mode? You are going to
search your mind for ideas....” Another student having trouble with spacing was
given a timesaving suggestion. To the whole group, she said, “If you’re still in
Peru--you need to get to work when you come in next week. Forget about visiting
and playing until you meet your goal. It’s the key to success!” I noticed that she
made comments and suggestions that were softly spoken and totally non-
threatening. She quietly encouraged them to complete their tasks. I commented
about this during our post-class discussion. She responded: “Wait until the deadline
gets closer. I start to panic, and I am not so calm then! I’m more like a crazy
woman!”
At the end of each class, Robin made individual comments to each student as they handed her their folders. “Good work today! Great story line! Loved that illustration!”

In the following lesson, Robin asked the students to create an appealing cover. “You know, we always say: Don’t judge a book by its cover—but we usually do anyway!” Make your cover interesting and inviting so that someone will want to open your book and discover what’s inside!” Robin posted the deadlines once again. Some met them, others didn’t. Robin reminded the students that the presentation date was fast approaching, and they wanted to be sure to have a finished product to show their parents. Students who had finished their work earlier went over to help others with their products. Robin showed them how to create a two-page spread. She showed them examples from real books, as she cautioned them not to go too close to the edge of the paper, or it would get covered up when they bound the book. She reminded them to give themselves credit by noting the author and illustrator’s name under the title of the book. She made suggestions to individual students on ways to eliminate errors. She attempted to put the decision back on their shoulders: “The possibilities are endless! You choose!”

One day, a student was obviously frustrated, as wads and wads of paper mounted around him. Robin had asked him to redo the title page since the words were too crowded. He was not happy about this, as evidenced by the crumpled paper, the facial frown, and low mumbling. Robin ignored his negativity and continued to help others. After several minutes, he realized that no one was going to make the corrections for him, so he set down to work. Others continued
diligently working, cutting out letters for the title or working on the author information page. Several asked their friends if the information they had written about themselves was accurate and complete enough. The frustrated boy ended the class period with a finished cover page that he had reworked. He seemed much happier with his finished product. He had been near tears, but he was now smiling and happily throwing away all of the crumpled paper. Robin commented on how pleased she was with his work effort and with his persistence!

On the day of the presentation, students held a bound copy of their books complete with laminated covers. All but two of the students had a parent or other adult there to watch their presentations. The day began with each student sharing one of his pages with the audience. Robin described the process from start to finish, admiring the students for their creativity and task commitment. She shared little anecdotes with the parents, helping them to realize the enormous task the students had accomplished.

Gifted Attributes

The agenda on the board read: Gifted. The students brainstormed various terms: different/diverse/original/strange/creative/unique/sharp/open atmosphere/open minded/expressive/intelligent/persuasive. From these terms, they created a group poem:

Welcome to our class (A)
We’re different in a way (B)
Original and diverse (C)
In everything we say (B)
Although the students usually select their own teammates, today the teacher selected the groups randomly. I had noticed that the students tend to work with the same groups every week, with very little diversity unless the teacher forced it upon them. A discussion began on leadership, and what it took to have leadership quality. Several students shared stories about their leadership opportunities outside of school. The students were to design an original stamp, which depicted one aspect of their leadership abilities. Robin began, “The postal service has chosen you as an important world leader. What image, symbol, or design can you create that would capture the spirit of your leadership skills?” Brad was stuck on his idea, and he was soliciting advice from the group. He wanted to do something concerning friendship but he couldn’t think of a symbol. His group suggested hands, a smile, or a heart; he rejected all of these. On a poster on the wall was a bird in flight. He seemed to like that, as he toyed with the idea that friends stick together like birds that flock together. He wanted to show three birds’ wings coming together at the center, but he couldn’t draw the first bird, so a friend drew the first one, and he took over from there. He thanked his friend for the help, and he seemed pleased with the final result.

When students are having difficulty with a task, the teacher redirects the question by asking probing questions and getting the students to come up with their own solutions. She rarely gives away an answer. The answer always comes from the one who asked the question in the first place. One of the students is physically handicapped. Mitch offered to help him cut out his design. Robin noted the leadership qualities of the helping friend and thanked him for it. The handicapped
boy drew a cross of Jesus because he knew the most about Jesus in his religion class. One girl was a good listener and knowledgeable, so she designed a ribbon award. Others accented their good timing, their hard work, and their ability to contribute ideas. The boy who designed the birds noted that all were flying in the same direction. "Sometimes you lead, sometimes you follow, but you're all going the right way!" Only one student chose not to share her finished product. She was very shy, and Robin did not force her to do so. The session ended with all of the finished stamps being posted on the bulletin board.

Thinking Skills

The students began a series of lessons on thinking skills. This four-week topic included logic, evaluative thinking, deductive reasoning, and divergent thinking. Using logic puzzles from the series Discovering Logic and Adventures with Logic, students solved various riddles in teams of three. Robin advised initial consideration of the group's approach before the solution. "Do you think working with three great minds is the best approach? Could you divide up the chores? How will your team solve the puzzle? You decide." Robin explained that solving logic puzzles was different from creativity. Students should seek only one answer, not multiple solutions. To solve a matrix logic puzzle, students would have to draw inferences and use deductive reasoning. The first team to answer correctly received a point. After all had solved the first puzzle in less than four minutes, Robin discussed the strategies necessary for successful completion of the puzzle. The teams moved on to a more difficult double matrix puzzle and worked together to solve it as fast as they could. A group evaluation followed. Robin asked, "What's
working and not working for each group?" The students responded that they had helped each other, and that they split up the workload. Robin then asked them to describe their individual roles in the group. She continued, "What’s the hardest thing to overcome?" Responses were that they did not like being thought of as the loser group, they noticed that some of the groups had clashing personalities, some talked too loud and shouted over the others, and it was therefore hard to hear answers that they should consider. Robin asked, "What can be noted about the successful groups?" The students noticed that the successful groups helped each other, took turns, and listened to one another. A group of boys had difficulty solving the puzzles and also had trouble with evaluation. These boys tended to blame the others in the group. "He’s never ready," "I can’t write because I write too slow," "I don’t like getting fussed at by the other members," and "I don’t like listening to them complain," were the responses from this group. The teacher listened patiently, then said that if something wasn’t working, what could they do to fix it? "This is not about the individual; it’s about the team, which is a much more difficult task." She then asked each individual in that group to state what he could have changed on his part. Mark agreed that he should have taken a more active role and listened to others’ suggestions. William agreed to be the referee when the other two boys argued and would attempt to help them compromise. Chris noted that he should try to be less bossy "so Mark and I can get along better." The teacher then changed the objective for this group only. Instead of working to be first, their objective for the rest of the class period was to cooperate to solve one more puzzle. Neither Chris nor Mark seemed willing to try. Robin physically moved Mark to the
middle, since the other two refused to listen to any of his suggestions. This seemed to help, but now Chris was not happy with the arrangement. He did not want to sit that close to Mark and he physically moved his body so he would not have to sit too close to Mark. Robin approached them and asked how much they had accomplished. The boys had completed about half of the puzzle. Robin praised them, “Half way? That’s pretty good! Do you feel better about working together?” All three acknowledged with a nod.

After the lesson ended and the students had left, Robin told me that other students had difficulties accepting and listening to Mark. He had made some progress in this area, but not much. She was going to make a conscious effort to work on that with him.

Later that day, the students rejoined Robin for another activity. This one was very different from logical reasoning. It involved fluency, flexibility, elaboration, and originality. She explained each one of these to the group. She grouped the students differently this time. They had pulled numbers from a hat and were randomly grouped according to their numbers. The group was so small that it limited selection. Three of the girls from the same school ended up together, and two friends from another school were paired with the only boy still present. In 20 minutes, the students were to use newspapers and masking tape to make various items on a list. Sample items from the list included the following: something a cheerleader would use and something you’d find in a grocery store. The students seemed excited to begin as they began talking all at once about their ideas. They huddled together to discuss their options. The teacher had told them she was
looking for originality and elaboration. That meant that the item had to be highly recognizable, and that no other group could create the same item. At the end of 20 minutes, both groups showed their items and awarded points for originality and elaboration. Group One received seven points for originality and five points for elaboration. Group Two received the same exact score. Both groups seemed happy with the end result, even though there was no apparent winner.

The following week, Robin revisited the topic of evaluative thinking that she had introduced during their book creation. A chart on the board compared the definition of evaluative thinking to the definition of the scientific method:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluative Thinking:</th>
<th>Scientific Thinking:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) make a prediction</td>
<td>(1) form hypothesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) get information</td>
<td>(2) gather data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) test prediction</td>
<td>(3) experiment/survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) draw conclusions</td>
<td>(4) draw conclusions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Robin noted that evaluative thinking was different from logical thinking, which has only one right answer. "You are to look at the data and make some evaluation of it. Today, we are going to be working on athletic skills! What do athletes need?"

Answers included determination, perseverance, and reaction time. Robin divided them into three groups. She demonstrated the test, which was to hold a ruler at the 6-inch mark. A person stands opposite you and tries to grab the ruler before it falls to the ground. His score is whatever number his fingers grasped. It was very important to observe the event, and then record the number correctly. There would be no practice, only one chance at the score. The teams divided and quickly
recorded their scores on the board that was already set up for the recording with a chart. Afterwards, Robin asked students to draw some conclusions. They concluded that two had the same score, and they noted who had the best score and the second best score.

The next test considered coordination. Each child was to get ten chances to throw a tennis ball into a wastebasket from behind a line about five feet away from the basket. Then the child was blindfolded and had to try again to throw the tennis ball into the wastebasket ten times. Robin recorded the scores of each child on the board. Once Robin recorded the scores, the students noted the individual average as well as the group’s average.

Finally, they put both the coordination scores and the reaction time scores side by side on the original data chart. The children quickly noticed that the better score for the reaction time was a low number, and the better score for the coordination was a high number. The teacher let them discover this, and they decided to plot numbers going in ascending order on the y-axis as well as numbers going in descending order along the same y-axis. They seemed satisfied with this inverted double data information. This unique way of displaying the data allowed the students a view of both kinds of data on the same chart. Once all scores were recorded, the students could make an evaluation about the data. They made many comments concerning those bits of information on the board. I noticed that all of the comments were positive toward their fellow students. For example, they commented that the boy who had scored the lowest on reaction time had scored very high on coordination. This evaluative thinking reflected the improvement for this
child in this area. One student who was a good athlete scored the best out of everyone on both tests, a fact that several students in the class noted.

**Creative Dramatics**

That afternoon, the students worked on situational dramatics. The teacher wrote the criteria for judgment on the board. The role-playing drama had to be two to three minutes long, and had to depict realistic characters in a clearly defined situation. Suggestions for improvement and a ranking chart ranging from “try again” to “excellent” finished the criteria list. The students pulled situation cards from a bowl; for example, a blind man is sitting on a bus making a peanut butter sandwich. None of the three cards really related to one another, so it was up to the team to get the message across to the audience in any way they could. They had to work hard to force fit the information into the conversation somehow. After about 15 minutes, they were ready to perform and to videotape. The students picked various hats, wigs, dresses, and scarves from costume boxes.

After the performances, the students critiqued each other. When a performance was good, the students praised the work. When the performance needed work, the students suggested ways to improve. The students who did not do a good job received low scores, and those who succeeded received top scores. The students did not seem upset by this criticism and agreed with the low scores when they received them. Only one boy tried to make excuses as to why his team didn’t score very high. He blamed it on the time they wasted gathering props and costumes rather than preparing their script. After they finished all the evaluations,
the teacher allowed them to view the videotape, and she made suggestions such as controlling the voice and not turning their backs to the camera.

**Chocolate**

February brought a new topic: chocolate. The students watched segments of “Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory.” On the board was the agenda: Use flexibility, fluency, originality, and elaboration. Create 1) a new kind of candy 2) a list of ingredients 3) an elaborate wrapper. After the children watched about ten minutes of a pre-selected segment of the movie, they divided into groups of their choice and set about creating a new candy bar. Robin advised them to brainstorm, selecting the best way their group could function. “You need to function efficiently. In your group, you decide who writes, who speaks for the group, and what other tasks you need to complete. Whatever works for your group is the plan you should go with. Not every group will agree on the best way to go about things. Also, not everyone in the group will agree with all of the decisions. This is when you have to compromise, and give and take.”

Robin explained the objective of the lesson: “You are chocolate engineers. You are to create a wrapper that will stand out among other candies on the shelf. Choose a catchy slogan or song. Work it into a commercial. Choose a name that will make everyone want to buy it and eat it! Chocolate must be the main ingredient.” Robin went over the rules of fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration, set a ten-minute time constraint, and reminded them to use whatever they needed from the supply center. Filming allowed for self-evaluation, and they were given an opportunity later that afternoon to improve their commercials. Robin
posted the criteria: 1) 30-60 seconds, 2) everyone must have a speaking part, 3) name at least 3 ingredients in your commercial.

As the students continued to create their candy wrappers, Robin said, “I have seen some highly attractive work, some really creative ideas here. Some of you need to push yourselves a little more.” Three boys in particular were having a very difficult time. They could not agree on a candy name or a wrapper shape. She tried several times to casually toss out ideas, but they refused any help. Finally, at the end of the time, they had two individual products to share. She told them, “Y’all are a group. I can’t referee. You have created two individual candy bars that have nothing to do with the group candy bar. You all have to work together to make one completed project. What can you do to compromise?” At the end of the class, they still seemed to be at an impasse, with no one willing to budge. The students completed a self-evaluation. They were to ask themselves, “Would you pick your candy off the shelf?”

During the next class, students watched portions of the video they had created. Robin asked them to look at themselves with a critical eye. “I wish we would’ve…” could be heard as they viewed themselves. The criteria posted on the board now showed additional factors: Include three ingredients/make message clear/include a catchy phrase/learn and practice script/use eye contact/keep everyone visible to the camera. The students added criteria after viewing the video. They thought these items would make the performance even better. All groups would be given an opportunity to redo their commercial. Two students were absent, which left one person alone in a group. So Robin suggested she borrow a student
from another group to perform with her. Mitch agreed to fill in “for a fee!” Mark walked around wasting much time repeating the phrase “her-kA-lee” (Hercules) over and over again. Other students kept working, and some rolled their eyes at him. Finally, Robin looked over and whispered, “Mark, are you getting done what you need to in order to be able to film ten minutes from now?” Once again, Robin showed her management style: ignore what you can, and quietly correct what you cannot ignore by placing the obligation squarely on the shoulder of the misbehaving student. It appeared to be very effective, as Mark sat down to work.

The second week of the chocolate unit continued with poetry concerning chocolate. Students brainstormed the attributes of chocolate, then created two to four line stanzas. Erin created a humorous poem complete with illustrations:

There once was a man named Steve  
Chocolate was his pet peeve.  
One day he went to the store  
Of gumdrops, they had no more.  
He got chocolate, can you believe?!  

Another activity involved creative dramatics. Once again, the students randomly selected situation cards listing a plot, a character or characters, and a setting. The students were to act out the plot, making sure to include chocolate somewhere in the story line. This time, they could not use props and costumes. They had approximately 20 minutes to complete this task. Robin quietly coaxed them: “You can do it!” After the children performed this impromptu dramatic interpretation, Robin asked them to self-evaluate. They were to select their best criterion from the list, and then select the one they thought they needed to improve.
Thinking Skills Revisited

Robin revisited thinking skills under several topics including a three-week unit on *Alice in Wonderland* that included a variety of strategies for the gifted. The agenda was printed on the board: Evaluative thinking

**Survey/research**

1) Form hypothesis

   Who is your favorite Alice in Wonderland character?

2) Gather data (survey)

3) Analyze results

4) Form a conclusion

The students discussed the four parts of evaluative thinking and formulated a hypothesis concerning the character they believed would be voted as a favorite in the story. Several students conducted a survey in another class, a new experience for them, as they had never even ventured into another part of the building. As instructed by Robin, they asked the teacher for permission, surveyed the class, and thanked the teacher. The students had guessed that Alice would be named as the favorite character. However, results of the surveys showed Alice at the bottom of the list and the Cheshire Cat and the White Rabbit at the top of the polls. Robin asked the students to venture guesses concerning the discrepancy. Suggestions included ideas such as the different ages of the people surveyed. Some of the respondents had read the book while others viewed the movie. The memory of some students could be weak, or perhaps there was a difference between the responses of girls compared to boys.
Robin asked what would happen if the population expanded to include family members or neighbors. Students noted that age and gender differences could alter the survey. They also noted that the larger the survey, the more errors could occur. They even discussed what would happen if they considered electronic mail. Robin then asked, “How would you feel if people weren’t serious about their responses?” Many students expressed concern and dismay that some people would not be truthful or serious in their responses. They had obviously taken this task very seriously, and they expected their respondents to do the same.

As the students were working in Robin’s room finishing the survey results, Betty walked in briskly with a crumpled up section of bulletin board border. She loudly asked, “Who did this? Who crumpled up this border?” Hallie immediately admitted it. “Me—It was on the sofa in our office, and I didn’t need it. Sorry.” Betty responded, “Sorry! This stuff is expensive!” Then, in a softer voice, she added, “Next time, ask if anyone else needs it.” Hallie repeated, “Sorry, sorry, I didn’t know….” Betty smiled a half-hearted smile, and walked out of the room. Robin remarked, “Thank you so much for your honesty, Hallie, and for admitting you did something wrong. So often, something is done, and no one owns up to it.” Once more, Hallie softly whispered, “Sorry.”

The lesson continued as Robin told the students to pick a character from a fishbowl and design a hat for that character for the Mad Hatter’s Tea Party. Jessica was happy when she picked the Cheshire cat. Erin chose the March Hare, and Hallie picked the Mad Hatter. She was not happy with this choice, perhaps because of the honeybee border incident, but she did not protest too loudly.
The teacher wrote the following agenda on the board: Divergent Thinking

Criteria:
1) hat has to stay on head while you bow to the king and queen,
2) party hat parade will be judged for originality and elaboration,
3) any materials in the room can be used to decorate your hat.

Everyone scurried around gathering materials. Some grabbed glue and glitter, others snatched pieces of construction paper. Some were folding the construction paper and checking to see if it would fit on their head. Some were cutting strips of paper to add color; others were folding and crinkling paper to add three dimensions.

After about 15 minutes into the session, one boy was frustrated. He called out “I don’t know how to make a hat!” Robin smiled and softly replied, “This is where your creative thinking comes in...It would be no fun if I showed you how!” The boy began thinking of a way he could make it work. Throughout this hour, there was lots of noise, lots of activity, and lots of creative action. Barbara had been absent the previous week, so she was hurrying to catch up, creating a hat with individually colored toilet paper rolls! It was creative, and clever, and highly complimented by Robin. She complimented her for getting so much done in one hour “without whining about being behind.” Elise helped Barbara with attachments; Hallie helped Kendra with a part of her hairpiece and streamers.

For the Mad Hatters Tea Party, desks were rearranged in long rows, and Robin had decorated the tables with tablecloths and flowers. As the students entered the room, they donned their hats and took their respective places at the table. At the appropriate time, students bowed before the King and Queen of Hearts. They
had to make sure their hats did not fall off, or the queen would shout, "Off with his head!" Fortunately, this fate did not befall any of the guests. Students selected the type of tea they desired by telling why their character would choose that particular type. After the tea party, students played a game called "Off with your mouths." Students stood in a straight line side by side facing Robin. She selected the hearts from a standard deck of cards, approached each student and placed a card over his or her mouth, saying, "Off with your mouth." The student could not see the card, and no other student could view it either. She continued down the line giving the cards. At the appointed time, students gave silent clues to one another to place themselves in ascending order according to their card. The first attempt took 34 seconds. After several attempts, they cut the time to nineteen seconds. The students really seemed to enjoy this game, as they asked to do it again and again. After each time, Robin discussed with them the problem solving and decision-making strategies used for successful completion with no verbal cues. The tea party was a success, and the students left the classroom with smiles and laughter.

**Leadership Opportunities Facilitated by Betty**

Betty was about five feet two inches tall with short red hair and green eyes. She was lively and animated when teaching her lessons and obviously enjoyed teaching. Her workload was heavy, she admitted, since the principal asked her to be in charge of the Southern Association five-year study. Betty’s primary focus for lessons included oral communication, leadership and group skills, and problem solving.
Gifted Attributes

The first day I observed Betty was a crisp, clear fall day. The poster on her door clearly stated, “Only positive attitudes allowed beyond this point.” Other inspirational posters lined the walls, including “What you believe, you can achieve,” and “If you fail to plan, you plan to fail.” Nine students were sitting on the floor working on a problem-solving activity. They were considering the “Circle of Life” and selecting all of the things that occupy their time. The five boys and four girls brainstormed a list of daily obligations. Examples included school, homework, sleep, and family time. The students explained that they were having trouble trying to “get it all in” with school, after-school activities, and family obligations. “Life is about looking at various solutions to problems. Sometimes things get tangled up. Sometimes we have to make a commitment to one thing and eliminate other things in our lives.” Betty led an open discussion of commitment and setting priorities. The students acknowledged that there was not enough time to do everything they wanted to do, so they would have to set priorities in order to determine what to include and what to eliminate. They realized that it would take a commitment to continue in the enrichment program, because there are so many other obligations that consume their time. But if they are committed, and if they set this program as their priority, then they can fit it in. If other obligations take precedence, then they will be unable to keep up with the enrichment commitment. Betty added, “It’s up to you; how badly do you want it?”

Following the discussion, she handed each student a long piece of silk ribbon. One student, representing life, stood in the center and held one end of
everyone’s ribbon, similar to a Maypole. Students had to go around the “Circle of Life” and try not to get tangled up in obligations and commitments. The movement started slowly, then the teacher told them to move faster, as obligations keep mounting. As students moved faster, the ribbons tended to get tangled up, and then they had to figure out a way to untangle the mess. Additionally, students soon realized that they couldn’t stand still, they must “go with the flow and move with life” or they would get lost in the tangle. They also discovered that they had to keep traveling in a forward direction; they could not regress by going backward.

Betty then had the students make a list of their daily routines, and prioritize the activities. She asked them to make a commitment to the enrichment program and to set it high on their list of priorities. She reminded them that they must revisit such a list often, and that the list might need revision depending on circumstances.

Betty ended the lesson with an image of a human hand on the overhead projector. On each of the four fingers was a large letter A. Under the letters were the phrases “Accept responsibility,” “Keep Agreements,” “Ask for what you want,” and “Pay Attention.” The thumb had a large letter “I” on it with this word written below it: “Integrity.” They discussed these words and phrases in great detail with students and teacher adding input as to the importance of each of these. Betty would mention these phrases and terms often in the months to come as situations occurred and students needed reminding of integrity, responsibility, and attention.

Each time I entered the classroom, Betty had the agenda clearly printed on the board, allowing the students to get a glimpse into the lesson. Often, a simple phrase or catchy title invitingly teased the students into wanting to know more about
the lesson. Betty listed her objectives on the board so that she and the students could know the focus of that day's lesson.

Betty introduced the book *A Different Kind of Boy* by Elizabeth Hise. She noted that the illustrations actually told more than the text. For example, the text simply read, "Eric likes music. Eric hears music in his head." The illustrations were quite elaborate and unique with piano keys representing the road and birds representing musical notes. The hedges were drums, the trees were maracas, a trumpet was a person, and the teacher was a jack-in-the-box. These representations amused the students and they eagerly searched for other unique illustrations. Betty explained, "This book is an analogy. Did you know that not everyone thinks like you?" She continued reading the story. In the next scene the boy's teacher was annoyed because he was weird. "Any of us have teachers like that?" The students nodded, and Betty continued reading from the book. The boy in the story decided to change; he decided not to be different anymore...but then he encountered a multitude of problems. She finished the story, which ended with Eric appreciating his gifts and his differences. Then she asked, "Do you ever get tired of being gifted?" One student yelled out, "Everyone's different!" Betty mentioned the books *The Road Less Traveled* by M. Scott Peck and *The Children's Book of Virtue* by William Bennett, suggesting these as good books for the students to read.

She asked the students to tell about something they could do that was different from other people; something they do better than others their age. Various answers included playing the guitar and being a good fisherman. Betty concluded, "Each of us, in his own way, is like Eric. What does being gifted mean to you?"
The students decided they could do things better or easier than others could. Betty added, “If you are gifted creatively, you might find a place to hide like Eric did in the story. You also have to know when and how to use your gift appropriately. Each of us has the potential to be gifted. Some don’t use it; some waste it, some don’t find out, because they don’t try. What are YOU gifted at?”

Betty put the following statistic on the board: The average person has to hear something at least eight times before it sinks in, some people need to hear or see it 15, 30, or 50 times...A gifted person only has to hear it three times to get it. She queried, “When you were born, did you ask to be gifted?” How can we lose our gifts?” Student responses included being in a car wreck, choosing not to use them, having brain surgery, doing drugs or alcohol, and sniffing glue. Betty explained Renzulli’s three-ring conception of giftedness (Gallagher, 1985). She stated, “Joseph Renzulli, an expert on gifted education, said that it takes three things to be gifted.” She displayed an icon on the overhead projector, which showed the following words in three joined circles: Above-average ability, creativity, and task commitment. She explained each of the three rings of the circle.

Following this lecture, Betty asked each student to grab buttons out of a bucket. She did not tell them how they were going to use them; she just told them to take as many as they wanted. Some students grabbed a comfortable handful, others took a small amount, and still others stretched their hands to get as many as they possibly could. The number of buttons grabbed ranged from twelve to thirty-four. Betty gave each student a piece of paper and asked them to write down the number of strengths (facts) about themselves that corresponded to the number of...
buttons they had selected. "By the end of the day, we'll know ___ # of things about you!" You could hear laughter and groans as students thought about whether or not more buttons was a good thing. Students were able to write the first five or six things easily; then it became increasingly harder to find additional strengths. Several remarked that it was difficult to "brag about myself." As the activity continued, those that knew one another began to look over their friend's list and to suggest things they had not included. At the conclusion of the lesson, Betty asked the students to share their strengths with the class. The teacher concluded that they were all very talented and that she was glad they had shared a little of themselves with the group today.

**Shadow Show**

After spending two weeks discussing gifted attributes, Betty began the unit on the Shadow Show, saying that the students would have about six weeks to design the shadow characters, the script, the movements, and the scenery. She emphasized the idea that the students would design it, not the teacher. She invited them to limber up with thumb and finger calisthenics. Betty then turned on an overhead projector, and the light reflected onto a white wall. She positioned her fingers to show examples of the various shadows. The students made comments of delight and laughter as she presented a dog, a goat, a swan, and a pig. Soon students were trying to guess the various animals and began to position their hands to replicate the animals. Betty showed them examples from several books of shadow puppetry and photos of animals that previous students had created. She told them which shadows were mandatory to learn, and which were optional. She described the criteria for
judgment, and the idea that only those judged the best would perform in the show. The students seemed excited to take up the challenge as they scrambled from the floor and made their way to the eight overhead projectors that were positioned around the room. Hands, fingers and bodies were busily jockeying for position as each student tried to get in front of the light and make their fingers create the animals. The teacher was generous with scores, not giving anyone lower than a three, and she constantly encouraged them to "keep trying." Betty continued to show the students how to place their fingers to make the right shape using her hands to teach them. She actually positioned fingers, arms and bodies for success. All seemed interested in learning this new task. Betty encouraged this shadow playing and complimented their efforts. Before the end of the hour, everyone had successfully completed the swan, and several had scored a perfect five on one or more of the other animals. She collected the self-evaluation forms and praised each student for his efforts as much as for his successes. She asked some students to use their time more wisely in the next session. All agreed to continue trying to improve their shadows.

After the students left the room, Betty asked me to stay so she could talk to me. During the shadow practice, I freely walked around the room, made positive comments to the students, and offered to help some with their movements. Some of the students would call me over to see what they had accomplished. She asked me whether or not I should be walking around the room, or if I should merely be observing. I responded that this was her classroom and that if she did not want me to interact with the students, I would remain in the corner quietly taking notes. She
had several reservations about my being there. She wanted to know if she could see what I was writing and wanted some assurances that I would not steal any of her ideas. She explained that she had been hurt before when another researcher had been in her classroom. That researcher had never let her look at the finished product and had promised her things she didn’t deliver. I assured her that she would have full control of her classroom and that I was there at her whim. If there were a desire on her part for me not to observe, I would leave. If she didn’t want me to interact, I wouldn’t. She seemed relieved that she would be in control, and I encouraged her to keep the lines of communication open. “There are many teachers who come and observe and steal my ideas,” she said. She acknowledged that it was stressful having someone in her classroom often because it changed the way she taught. I encouraged her to be herself, and I assured her that I was not there to judge her but to conduct research.

As I entered the room the following week, the students had already begun the lesson for the day. They were working on the story design for their shadow shows. They had chosen various characters, and they were creating story lines, scenes, and characters. Betty had given them a script from about ten well-known fairy tales such as “The Bremen Town Musicians,” “The Three Billy Goats Gruff,” and “The Three Little Pigs.” The groups selected their favorite stories, rewrote the scripts, and changed the characters to create an original script. Betty explained that she had selected stories that came from the countries the students were studying with Robin. She explained the criteria: “Everybody writes; we will select the best. In real life, publishers reject books, scripts, and articles. The lesson to learn here is
that you might get rejected. If you are rejected, TRY AGAIN! Don’t give up! Use a pencil in case you have to erase... Make sure you add enough voices for ALL of the characters in case I choose you to play that part. A student last year wrote lots of lines for the troll, thinking that would be the part she would play. After auditions, they chose her to be the dog, and she had only written one line for the dog! Then she got mad because she didn’t have a big part! Whose fault was that? Her own! Remember that you will all audition for the various parts, and you do not know which part you will be chosen for, so make sure you provide enough speaking parts for all of the characters.”

While some students practiced their shadows, others edited the scripts. The teacher walked around the room, holding auditions for the various parts. She then asked the top three students to re-audition. The teacher selected the best of the three to play that character in the shadow show and selected a backup in case that person was absent. The students spent the entire class time modifying their plays. Class ended with everyone picking up the scripts and returning them to the teacher.

The students continued to work on the shadow show for the next several class periods. Some worked on their transparencies, feeling free to move about the room and gathering the necessary materials. Some worked at the computers typing the scripts. Others highlighted dialogue and made copies for each individual’s part. Betty reiterated: “Everyone will get a shadow, everyone will get a voice...some may have two shadows or two voices. We will need everyone’s participation in order to pull this thing off effectively.” One student had questions concerning the script writing:
Student: “How many lines should the swan have?”

Betty: “If YOU were the swan, how many lines would you like to have?”

Student: “What do we do if one person is absent?”

Betty: “Work it out without them!”

Betty: “Who put a paperclip on the overhead transparency?” (It helped steady the tracing paper underneath)

Student: “ME!”

Betty: “That is good problem-solving. Can we use ideas from other students? Of course! That is called piggybacking!”

In the following weeks, the students filmed a rehearsal of the shadow show in order to see and eliminate their errors. Betty wrote ripple effect in bold letters on the board. The teacher discussed this concept, explaining that if something goes wrong, a ripple effect occurs. They were unsure of this idea, until it became real for them as they progressed through the activities of this day. One student had been absent the week before and was unsure of what to do. Another student volunteered to fill him in on what he had missed. The students completed background transparencies and created scenery for the shadow show. They strung sheets from the ceiling and placed corrugated strips as a frame in the middle of the sheet. This became the screen on which they would project the show. All actors would hide behind the sheet, and the audience would only see the shadows the students created. They generated all of the music and voices from behind the sheet. Some students were listening to and deciding on the various musical selections needed to move
from one scene to the next. Other students created the shadows, the backgrounds, the voices, some even manned the cameras.

Betty explained, “We will film non-stop. I will not tell you what you did wrong or right. You will work it through, seeing your own mistakes on film. Some of you will like what you see, others won’t.” After viewing the shows, she asked the students to record what they liked and didn’t like about every script, including their own. They began to notice mistakes in the shadow formations, in the placement of their heads, in the positions of their arms, in the hesitations of the voices, and in the lapse of the music. Betty asked, “What did you do wrong? If you mess up, what happens?” In unison the students responded, “Ripple effect!” After watching themselves on film, the concept of the ripple effect had real meaning to them. They understood firsthand the positive and negative effects of their actions on everyone else participating in that play. She asked the group, “Just because the first person makes a mistake, does that require that you make a mistake also? Not necessarily! As a leader, you have to be ready in case someone else makes a mistake; you have to be ready to compensate. The play is only as good as you want to make it. It’s not about only YOU—it’s about US!”

The students spent a great deal of time critiquing everyone. Betty noted that it was important to acknowledge criticism and work to change and improve without getting upset. Two students dropped out of the program effective today. It was too hard for them to continue and to make up the work they were missing in their regular class. Betty informed me that this was very normal, and students worked to readjust their script to accommodate this change. They taped the next rehearsal
without interruption so that it could be timed. One student was absent last week and
the others reminded him of the ripple effect. They had downsized, and he had lost
his job! One of the students criticized another student for doing a poor job at the
camera. Other kids criticized him for being too harsh; they reminded him that
everyone makes a mistake. Betty smiled and winked at me as she heard her words
echoed by the students.

In another lesson, students worked on the idea of *Time on Task*. The time
allotted for this class was 50 minutes. One student admitted that he worked for only
10 minutes and had wasted 40 minutes. Betty noted, “I’m not going to do the play
for you. If it is good, it’ll be good for you. If it is bad, it’ll be bad for you. It’ll be
your fault.” One student responded, “Actually, if the play is good or bad, it will be
our fault, the whole team.” The teacher agreed, adding: “I can only suggest so
much; after that, it’s up to you. You have a choice. What can you do to make it
better?” Students suggested ways to make the plays better. Students accepted some
of the suggestions and discarded others. As a group, they decided what else needed
to be done. They came up with this list of actions: get invitation typed/ design
border/ make a welcome sign for parents. They eagerly volunteered for various
tasks. Betty allowed the students to compromise and decide who would do the
various chores. One student went to the teacher and volunteered for a particular
chore. She said nothing, shrugged, shook her head, and redirected him to the
narrator saying, “I’m not in charge. Who is? Go to them and ask them if you can
do the job.” One student helped a boy turn on the computer, so he could type the
invitation. He worked diligently to make the invitation look nice. Afterward, we heard him say, "Y'all did good. Well done, mates!"

The students gathered in a circle around the teacher. She began by noting that in a real job you get paid for your work. So she gave every child two candies, which represented $2000. She added, "When you do a good job, you get a bonus." She then proceeded to go through a list of things she saw that were good in each play, handing out candies generously for the individual good things she saw performed on each of the shadow shows. She listed all of the good things first, as the children excitedly accepted the bonus candy. Shouts of, "What about me? What about me?" could be heard as she threw candy to another student. Some of them received as many as ten bonus candies. Then Betty noted that if you do something wrong, you might have to give up some of the bonus. She proceeded to list the errors she saw, and the student had to give up some of the candy. We heard hoots and howls when someone else got candy taken away from them. Everyone seemed to know that this was all in fun, and no one took the snickering too seriously, including Betty who allowed it to continue. One student, Chris, made faces when he had to give up something, and he never seemed happy with the type of candy that she gave to him. He was the one who was least able to take the kidding from the other kids. He seemed to get more and more upset as Betty noted his faults. In the end, he did agree to try to work harder for his group, but he still wanted to blame others for his mistakes. When she had given all of the candy out, Betty asked, "Are you that valuable?" Some students had as many as thirty candies in their hands. The teacher answered her own question with, "Yes! If you believe
"It, you can achieve it!" She allowed the children to eat some of their candy or to trade with others for some that they liked better. All seemed pleased with the overall result of today's work session.

For the next several weeks, the teacher had to cancel classes due to holidays and parent-teacher conferences. Therefore, the students only had one more opportunity for a dress rehearsal. One student was absent, and no one substituted for her, so the play stalled. Betty had to step behind the curtain and tell someone to fill in. She was not happy about this and remarked to me on the side that this group definitely showed very little student incentive. She seemed frustrated, and I could tell she was anxious about the success of their performance since it was the following week. Still, she allowed them to take control of their own situation and to flounder if necessary. She announced to the students that this was the worst performance she had seen in the last eight years. The students began blaming each other for the mistakes. Self-evaluations revealed scores of 60%, 40% and 70%. Betty noted, "How pleased am I? You want to blame others? It's not others, it's "WE." If you point the finger at others, you notice that you have one finger pointing away, and three pointing back at you! If we present this way, the parents are going to wonder what you've been doing for the last eight weeks!" As students were leaving, Betty asked each one of them to reflect on mistakes and to verbalize ways to make changes to eliminate those mistakes. Betty added, "The important thing is not that you messed up, but that you learned from it. When you make a mistake, you also make a discovery." Each student remembered that phrase as she asked, "What did you discover today?"
They presented the shadow show to the parents the following week. Betty talked about the behind-the-scenes production woes, and the cooperation and commitment it took to complete this project. She acknowledged the contributions of the students and said that this was their show, not hers. She noted that the parents would see her in the audience, not behind the stage assisting the kids. She recalled the leadership skills needed for such a production and also noted several anecdotal references to things that happened in the previous weeks of preparation. The performances were effective, and the students seemed proud of the final efforts of their teams. Several noted that they had made mistakes, but parents had not noticed, so all was well. They left for the afternoon, satisfied that the performance was a success!

**Dissection**

Betty changed the focus of her lessons to the topic of dissection. Before she allowed the students to enter the room, she held them outside and told them that they were entering a DANGER ZONE. There were mines everywhere, and “You must follow directions EXACTLY or you will die.” I noticed that there were about eight overhead projectors around the room, with electrical cords snaking their way in every direction around the room. The teacher had placed student desks over some of the cords but had purposefully left some exposed in the walking area of the room to show students how to carefully negotiate their way around them without tripping or disconnecting them from the wall. Their task was to enter the room and step on a series of block tiles on the floor. The teacher led the group, and the student directly behind her was to position herself and do EXACTLY what the
teacher did. The student following the first student was to follow EXACTLY what the first student did, and so forth. They not only had to step on the correct block, but also had to turn their feet and body in the proper direction. Those who made a mistake had to step outside of the room, go to the back of the line, and try again. Several of the students had to try four or five times before they got it right. After about 15 minutes of this, students entered the room and sat on the floor around the teacher. She asked them if they knew the reason for this lesson. Several noted the importance of following directions carefully. The teacher explained the importance of following directions, and following the leader in front of them, using that person to help them negotiate hazardous moves. She told the students that this process would be extremely important when they would begin the dissection lesson in the weeks to come.

The following week, Betty waited in the hallway, and before allowing them to enter the room, announced to the students, “I’m different now; I’ll be a different teacher. You will become the professional. I’ll say things once, and if you do not listen, I will ask you to leave the room. Dissecting can be dangerous, and if you do not listen, someone might get hurt. I expect professional behavior in the lab. I will teach you to THINK— to think ahead. If you don’t think you can handle a job, let me know and we’ll adjust the team. I expect you to act professionally; you must also dress professionally. So, before entering the room, you are to put on your lab coat. These were donated to me by real doctors, so there are names monogrammed on the pockets.” She proceeded to outfit each student with a lab coat. She adjusted sizes, fixed collars, and buttoned closures. She showed the students how to roll up
their sleeves, and how to fold the coats when they finished the activity so that they would be less wrinkled when they wore them the next time. She examined each student to determine if they were neat, clean, and trustworthy before she allowed them to enter the room. Their attitudes changed as they attempted to become a professional. Once inside the room, she gave the students a lesson on the various members of the surgery team. Betty told them that they could choose their jobs. At first, several remarked that they wanted to be the doctor. Betty advised them to wait until she explained the job descriptions. She then proceeded to describe each job in detail. She wrote the following descriptions on the overhead projector: (1) the doctor (Dr.) was to dissect, maintain order, and clean the tools. "If someone on the team makes a mistake, it's the doctor's fault as the head of that team. He or she must be willing to take responsibility and to be observant. In real life, doctors go to four years of college, four years of medical school, plus more years of internship and residency, and then more years for whatever specialty they undertake. In real life, they are also the ones that make the most money." After this explanation, some were more reluctant to take on that much responsibility and were eager to listen to the rest of the jobs. She continued the explanation: (2) The physician's assistant (P.A.) was to assist the doctor, hand the tools, measure the specimens, and clean the tray. (3) The registered nurse (R.N.) was to label the specimens, measure each, explain its function, and complete the final report. (4) The doctor of philosophy (Ph.D.) is the one who does not like to get his hands dirty. This research scientist finds information about the specimen, writes facts, and cleans the table. A student said, "Yeah, I heard it's 90% mental, and the rest is in your head." Betty agreed, "If
you tell yourself you can’t, then you can’t. If you tell yourself that you’re going to get sick, then you will. It’s up to you!” The students then watched a 30-minute video on the dissection of a frog. Betty stopped the film to point out various body parts that the students would have to identify on their frog. Most seemed anxious to begin, several were not so sure they’d like it. All were disappointed when she told them that the lesson was over, and they wouldn’t begin dissecting until next week. Before the class ended, the teams assembled and negotiated for their positions on the team.

The students donned their lab coats and very seriously entered the operating room the following week. Their task was to dissect a frog to see its various organs. The team placed the organs on a piece of paper, labeled each part, weighed it, and identified it by its function. Each team had a booklet of information they could use to access the various bits of information needed to complete the tasks. Students chose their teammates and assigned the various jobs. The only intervention needed by the teacher was if one of the teams had no doctor, she asked a willing participant from another group to switch teams and serve as the doctor. During the morning, Betty had conducted a sample dissection to show the students a step-by-step progression. In the afternoon, each team had the chance to dissect. The dissection was always kept optional. If a student did not want to participate, he was not required to. “Take care of you. No one is obligated to participate, touch, or even get close.” Only one student had to separate herself from the group, and only for a short time. Others, who thought they’d be more squeamish, were able to handle it.
with maturity and seriousness. The day ended with comments of satisfaction on the part of the students.

The following week, students voluntarily switched jobs. They took turns with the jobs. This time, they were dissecting a fish. Everyone put on his lab coat, and some put on gloves, depending on their job assignment. Some of the students began dissecting the dead fish, while others practiced suturing. The teacher posted the directions for suturing on a chart. Stitches include running and interlocking stitches. Written descriptions along with illustrations and also sample stitches that other students had done were all on display for students to refer to if necessary.

The following week, students dissected a live minnow. Betty conducted a sample dissection, pointing out the various parts of the fish, including the anal/pelvic fin. She waited to see if students could handle the word anal. A few glanced at each other, but no one said a word. She pointed out the pectoral fin, the dorsal fin, the trunk muscles, heart, intestines, air bladder, stomach, eggs called gonads, crystalline lens, spleen, liver, gall bladder, mandible, and maxilla. She reminded them that they should not cut too deep into the stomach or they would rupture the air bladder, which would cause the fish to die. She also reminded them that they were required to score 60% to pass, which is the criteria they set on the labeling of each body part. The teacher and students had set up these criteria together, with individual points for various items agreed on ahead of time.

The students first practiced suturing on an index card, stitching two sides together to form an envelope or pocket. They were to hold their pocket over a bucket and slowly pour water into their paper pocket. If the water leaked through,
they had to start again, because the sutures were not tight enough. Once they completed this process, they could begin practicing on an olive. This would help them get the feel of the wet minnow and help them to develop more sensitivity in their hands with the needle.

The following week, she wrote these statements on the board: "To go beyond what you think you can." "What you think, you can do." "What you believe, you are." "Change your belief to I CAN!"

Students were now ready to complete the stitching and practice suturing on the olive and the index card. Betty gave the children explicit directions on how long to make the thread, how to thread the needle, how to make a small knot, and how to make an interlocking stitch. She demonstrated as she taught and made sure that everyone saw her demonstration. Additionally, there was a poster of all of the directions if someone needed to review them. Before beginning the actual dissecting, she invited them to take a risk. She had brought in some caviar and crackers. She invited them to taste only if they wanted: two students chose not to taste it, three students noticed the saltiness of the caviar and several of the students actually liked the taste.

As he was suturing an olive, Mark got hurt with the needle, slightly. He reacted as if he had been stabbed with a knife, yelling loudly. Betty went over to him, and seeing that he was only slightly injured, quietly asked, "Who created this situation? What could you do next time? All you did was whine; you didn’t ask for help. ASK for what you want!" He sulked for a few minutes, then asked her for a bandage. Betty smiled and showed him where she kept the bandages. Later, she
spent at least five minutes quietly talking to Mark, telling him that he was in charge of his actions and responses.

One student became frustrated with his stitching. He cried, then tried again after Betty encouraged him not to give up. He got frustrated again, fussed, started to cry again, and became angry, muttering that he couldn’t do it. Betty overhead his mumbling and replied loudly enough so that everyone could hear, “You’re right! If you think you can’t, you’re right!” She got him to realize that he had set himself up for failure with his negative attitude. He left the class, slightly less angry, pondering this thought.

On this same day, I overheard one boy say to his friends, “I’m so excited. I’ve waited my whole life to dissect!” This was a particularly poignant statement, since the young man was confined to a wheelchair with cerebral palsy and was unable to actually complete the dissection of the animal. He did assist, however, in the measuring and labeling as much as he could. The other students on his team allowed him to complete as much as he was physically able and assisted him when necessary.

Chocolate

The next thematic unit occurred around Valentines Day and involved chocolate. The agenda board posed the question: “Are you a chocoholic?” The objective of the lesson was to learn to think creatively using fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. The teacher explained that they would use fluent thinking by describing words associated with chocolate. Betty gave the students a piece of paper, and they had three minutes to brainstorm. They counted the words
they generated, and Betty gave them points for words that no other group chose to use (originality). Those with the most responses (fluency) received a candy. She then asked them to list words associated with C. She read this letter aloud. The idea was to see if the group was flexible enough to use see or sea. Betty tested elaborative thinking by asking students to come up with lots of ways to incorporate candy bars into an original message, and she also rewarded original ideas.

Betty had a number of different candy bars on the table including Zero, Runts, Three Musketeers, Butterfinger, PayDay, Whoppers, Cowtails, Twix, and Almond Joy. She asked students to create a letter to someone using the candy bar names. Ex: I may have Zero money now, but I will get One Hundred Grand on Payday. This was an individual project, and she encouraged them to be as creative as possible. After giving the students about fifteen minutes, they shared their letters with the class. Betty gave those judged the most creative, fluent, and elaborate a choice of candy bars to eat, and everyone else got peanuts. Most of the students included ten to fifteen candy titles in the letter.

After this activity, Betty gave them time to play charades. She put a list of expressions associated with the word chocolate into a fishbowl. Students pulled out one of the famous phrases and had to give their team clues to guess it. Sample titles included chocolate birthday cake, chocolate bunny, and chocolate egg. If the team guessed correctly, the student received a candy. A paper plate was on the floor next to Betty. One student accidentally tripped and knocked the plate over, spilling the candies. This caused several others to laugh at him and to snicker. He quietly sat down, and Betty proceeded to correct him about being careful. She said it was
nothing to worry about, and she replaced the candy onto the plate. She began to explain to him that he could learn from this mistake. Suddenly, he burst into tears and loudly exclaimed to the students, “What are you staring at? Huh? Quit staring at me! It wasn’t my fault!” He put his head down and continued crying. The room became silent, and Betty waited a moment. She then explained to the group that everyone makes mistakes, and that the real lesson is to learn from those mistakes. “Anyone could have done that.” She encouraged the boy to get over his frustration and told him that no one was criticizing him. He didn’t seem to believe her. The game of charades continued with this boy hanging his head for the remainder of the class time. After the other students left the class, Betty asked him to stay behind and talk to her. She wanted to make sure that he had calmed down before leaving her class. She assured him that he could learn a lesson from this experience. Afterward, she told me that this young man often had outbursts and that she was working with him on this issue.

The next lesson involved analyzing ingredients in candies and checking for nutritional value. She asked them to find out the nutritional value of the various candy bars that were laid out on the table. They began by looking at the labels and converting portions to individual servings. They recorded these on a prepared chart, which had sections for fat grams, protein grams, vitamins, and calories. Analysis of items led them to discover whether or not they got protein and the source of vitamin C. One of the students noticed that there was no nutritional value in Sweet Tarts. Someone came over to double check then concluded that he didn’t care; he liked
them anyway. This lesson ended with a discussion of the importance of nutrition and the necessity of a balanced diet.

Betty kept me after class to get an update on my research. I generally told her that I was finding some interesting ideas without giving too much detail. She said that for years people have told her that they were impressed with what she did in her class, so she was anxious to see my findings.

The Beehive Company

The last thematic unit I observed was The Beehive Company. Betty said, “This unit will be based on cooperative learning and developing creativity and creative problem solving skills. They will have a company that they’re going to go up the company ladder to become a company president and that’s building good leadership.” As I entered the room, I noticed a small stapler decorated to resemble a bee...black and yellow felt stripes, yellow ball head, pipe-cleaner wings, and antennae. On the board was the agenda: Company meeting/ pledge/ old business/ uniform/ new business/ organize room.

The students had teamed up to form four different companies. Each company had to have a binder to store all business materials. Each person had to learn the pledge: “I promise to uphold the ideas of the Beehive Company. I will represent the honeybee, which symbolizes hard work, task commitment, and industry. I will honor and respect fellow bees, from worker to president.”

Each team had to create a company name, a company product, and a magazine. Sample company names were Bee Express and The Buzzy Girlz. The students received a packet, which indicated the various aspects of this unit along
with the points awarded for completing the various criteria. An organizational chart helped them to see the jobs and to initiate assignments. Additionally, there was a place to mark due dates, so the students would know exactly when each portion was due. Betty explained that a honeybee stands for task commitment, hard work, and industry. The Beehive Company thrives on group participation. WE is emphasized over ME.

Several students volunteered to erect the office walls, which were bed sheets hung from strings on the ceiling. When completed, these sheets divided the room into four parts. Some bargaining was done so that one office got a couch, another got the aquarium, and still others got bookshelves or a desk. Each team worked to secure valuable items for their office. Some other members of the team were busy making signs and logo items for their entrance. Still others listened to each other recite the pledge. At the end of the class each week, each student completed a written self evaluation stating his assignment for the day, his accomplishments, his goals for next week, and rank himself 1-10 to indicate how busy he was that day. Each written evaluation itself would be worth ten points, even if the child gave himself a low mark for his industry that day. They established policies and responsibilities and then noted them in the journal.

When the class was voting on which hand gesture they would do during the pledge, the students held up their hands to vote. After the voting, Mark said: “Wait! I want to change my vote and take away a vote from something else.” Betty answered, “Too late! Next time think before you act. Make a decision and stick with it.” Betty had also told the students that if one third of their clothing was
yellow or black, they would get five points for their company. One student protested, “Dad wouldn’t let me wear my yellow shirt.” Betty pointed out that this could be a problem he would have to work on solving. “How can you communicate better with your parents? How can you solve this problem?” Sample suggestions from others included, “Ask earlier,” “Stress how important it is,” and “Remind your mom so your clothes will be clean and ready for Friday.” Betty added one more thought, “Ask nicely. As a leader, it is not only what you say, but also how you say it.”

The whole class decided on the criteria for the project. They wanted to be judged on neatness, creativity, quality, and usefulness. They decided that they needed to achieve an 80% in order to pass. After they determined this, Betty heard each person recite the pledge. She reminded them to stand tall, be proud, speak clearly, and practice so that there were no hesitations.

She also asked them what information they wanted printed on their business cards. Each team was in their office planning for future events. Betty had set deadlines, so they knew the due dates ahead of time. Additionally, they were to interview someone who embodied the characteristics of the honeybee, namely, task commitment, hard work, and industry. Sample questions were listed in a binder for the students to get an example, but no one could copy the questions exactly. The class ended with each team cleaning up its area and planning what it needed to do before it met again the following week.

Erin, Elise, and Barbara (the Buzzy Girlz) worked on their game board project, discussing the rules and trying them out to see if they would work. They
made some corrections as they went along. In the other girls' group, Hallie and Jessica set up additional decorations.

The last day I observed the students, they were busy in their offices, completing their projects and working toward earning the points needed to progress up the corporate ladder. Two new students had joined the class for the first time. In their corporate meeting that morning, several of the students invited the new students to join their group. Additionally, they explained the criteria and several students showed them how to become president of the company. They shared shortcut secrets with them, explaining how they could move up the corporate ladder in just three short weeks. Instead of being overly competitive, they were more than willing to share the spotlight with these newcomers.

**Leadership Opportunities Facilitated by Diane**

Diane, an African-American female with thirty-three years of experience, had less contact with the students than the other two teachers. Diane coordinated her computer literacy lessons in order to complement the activities of the other two teachers' topical units, and she searched for innovative ways to incorporate computer skills into the daily lessons.

**Creative Problem Solving and Postcard Project**

The first time I observed Diane was in September at the start of the school year. Although she primarily teaches computer literacy, she was working with the students on creative problem solving. Students worked in pairs with the product Capsela. The agenda posted on the chalkboard noted the students' task: Design an original product that runs on a motor. Thirteen students grouped themselves into
teams of two and three, and I noticed that they primarily chose their friends. They connected the pieces which fit together similar to Lego pieces. Some found sample models to follow while others began creating a unique object of their own design. Several tried to build a tall object, noticing the problem with heavy pieces. Most groups worked together cooperatively. One student would hold the objects together while another student gathered connector pieces, wires, the motor, the speed reduction capsule, or whatever objects were needed to complete the product. Some students had trouble getting started. One group looked at sample models for about five minutes before grasping the general idea and proceeding to create an original product. Some were fascinated with the intricate pieces, and some were nonplussed, as they had obviously worked with Capsela before. The teacher walked around, offering suggestions. She explained how the motor would have to be connected, and that the wires had to make a complete circuit in order to run. She made sure they had fresh batteries, so their motor would operate. I heard her say, "When building, don’t quit." One team of girls and one team of boys couldn’t complete a product in the time allowed because they refused to cooperate with one another. Erin and Elise were unable to produce a workable product. Hallie and Jessica completed theirs quickly and accurately. After presentations of the products, Diane asked the students to self evaluate and peer-evaluate. Those who were successful described how they worked as a team, with no one individual taking over. Those who were unsuccessful reluctantly admitted that they failed because they couldn’t work with their partner. Several students tried to make excuses and blame the other partner. The teacher turned the discussion around by asking, "What worked? What
could you change to make it work better?” She also asked, “Can you fail? Yes, but you get to try it again another time!”

Most of the groups basically cooperated to complete or at least attempt to complete a product. Some encountered more problems than others did. Most worked through their problems together using a discovery approach to see what worked and what didn’t. The boy’s group that did not produce a product basically wasted their time chatting and did not work cooperatively to solve their problem. In the end, they admitted their shortcomings and were ready to quit. The girl’s group that was unsuccessful was ready to try again, when the time ran out. Those groups that worked together were successful, and those who wouldn’t cooperate were basically unsuccessful.

For the next several class periods, Diane’s lessons complemented Robin’s theme of creating a book about children around the world. Students explored the Internet for information about various countries then conducted a telecommunications project with students in other parts of the country and the world. Diane explained how to enter Netscape, the browser they would use to access the Internet. She taught them how to find out about weather. She encouraged them to “be somewhere else in the world!” The students excitedly booted up the computers, accessed maps, looked at weather in a particular place, even checked out the weather in their hometown and compared the differences. Diane encouraged them to study the correlation between the map and the corresponding weather patterns. “Is your area close to the equator? Is it hot or cold there?” Where are you today?” She encouraged them to “GO FAR!” She allowed
them to explore the computer as they accessed the various sites and learned how to maneuver around the world via a computer. As they were leaving, she asked each student to name the best place he visited that day and to provide a reason for his choice. Several chose exotic resorts and noted that the weather was wonderful there; it was hot there, or the fishing was good there.

For Parent Day in December, Diane explained to parents the cooperation she shared with the other teachers. She briefly demonstrated software that she used to coordinate lessons with travel around the world. Then she asked the students to go on a scavenger hunt with their parents observing them. They were to find ten different locations on the map (for example, the Pyramids, Mount Rushmore, and the Gobi Desert). The students seemed confused, as if they had never attempted this activity before. It was not long before the parents became frustrated, and they wanted to know why the teacher did not help more. The parents began complaining to each other and became quite angry when their children could not complete the scavenger hunt to their satisfaction as the time ended for this session. Diane did little to ease their frustration, and simply helped individuals.

Dissection

In conjunction with Betty’s unit on dissection, the students searched the Internet to find information about frogs. Several pulled up some interesting photos and web sites, which they shared with the whole group. They learned to use various search engines to choose the sights and sounds of the different types of frogs. Diane allowed them to print a picture from the web site of their choice.
Gifted Attributes

Diane worked with the kids on the multiple intelligences theory as explained by Howard Gardner. The multiple intelligences theory notes that people can be gifted in any of several areas including verbal, visual, musical, kinesthetic, logical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal abilities. The student’s assignment was to play a computer game and identify which of the seven areas were being targeted. Choices within the CD-ROM game Dr. Brain included puzzles named Monkey see, Monkey do; Caveman Rock; and Alchemy. After experimenting, students decided which game was good for which of the seven intelligences and talked about their own strengths in some of these areas. Diane explained that she was trying to get them in touch with their own personal gifts.

Another lesson incorporated the use of multimedia. The students brainstormed everything they had done in enrichment with all of the enrichment teachers. Their task was to complete a multimedia presentation to tell visiting fourth grade students about the program. “You should think about what you had wanted to know before you came here. What can these students who are planning on coming here next year expect? You can be the voice of experience. Only one video presentation is going to be saved for viewing, so work carefully.” Some of the students worked alone, others worked in pairs. Erin and Elise were working on a situation where a coach and a student were discussing the good teachers and the good program here at Riverside. They had included three different scenes, much dialogue, and lots of humor. As class ended, students viewed the finished products,
selecting the one that they considered the best. Erin and Elise’s product received the most votes and they saved it to disk for viewing by the fourth grade students.

**Chocolate**

In coordination with the other two teachers on the chocolate unit, Diane asked the students to use the internet and other reference sources to discover which countries import and export the most cocoa and sugar. Students again used the discovery method to search various sites, read maps and charts, and glean the information needed to complete the activity. Interestingly, each group searched a different search engine, and all came up with different sites from which they accessed their information. Diane pointed this out to the students and encouraged them to always seek more than one source for verification of information.

**Bee Product**

One of the last days I observed Diane, she was helping the students design an original product in association with their beehive company, choosing from a variety of options. Several teams made business cards, creating original designs and company logos. Another group promoted their company by designing a tri-fold brochure advertising their product. Diane allowed the students to print their product and distribute it to the other teams.
CHAPTER FIVE
DATA ANALYSIS

When analysis of the data began, I remembered a story I read several years ago about geese and an analogous relationship to human behavior. The story of the geese is as follows: When you see geese flying along in “V” formation, you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in the “V” formation, the whole flock adds at least seventy-one percent greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own. People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag of resistance of trying to go it alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front. If individuals had as much sense as geese, we would stay in formation with those people who are headed in the same direction.

When the head goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point. It is sensible to take turns doing demanding jobs with people.

Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. Additionally, when a goose gets sick or wounded and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly or until it dies, and only then do they launch out on their own or with another formation to catch up with their group.

When working with a team, we should stand by each other like that.
This story depicts the philosophy of the teachers and reflects what I witnessed in the enrichment program. The teachers lead the formation in the beginning, showing students how to fly with the uplift of each other. Later, as the students became more confident, the teachers rotated back, allowing the students to fly point, allowing the other students to take advantage of the lifting power of the new bird in front. As students tested their wings, teachers and other students encouraged and supported them in order for the new student to maintain speed and lead the group. The teachers offered help and protection, staying with the students who fell out of the formation, allowing the students to learn from their mistakes, and growing from each day's opportunities.

Analysis involves a way of thinking about the data. It refers to a systematic examination of parts, relationships among parts, and their relationship to the whole. Analysis is a search for patterns. As recommended by Spradley (1979), I experienced the ethnographic research cycle of conducting observations, asking questions, collecting data, making the ethnographic record, and analyzing the data several times during the course of this study.

In searching for patterns, I recorded what I witnessed, what people said and what people did. I made inferences and began the questioning again. Close scrutiny of field notes prompted discovery of patterns in the data that led to the descriptions of observed behavior, student products, and journal responses from the teachers and students. Long term observations afforded opportunities to make thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of data.
I immersed myself in the program over eight months, and used developmental, observational, and situational analysis (Moon, 1991) to examine the program events through the eyes of three teachers and five students. I formally interviewed each teacher and each student separately; then I conducted a focus group interview with four of the five students to gather additional data and to learn more about the program’s impact on their leadership development.

**Teacher as Unit of Analysis**

**Robin**

Robin taught art, creative writing, creative dramatics, and thinking skills. She was soft-spoken, quietly affective, and quietly effective. She seldom corrected the students, seeming to prefer the more positive approach. Instead of making a negative comment, she turned it around and posed a challenge for the students. For example, when one student asked her a question, she answered, “Ah, there’s a wonderful opportunity for you to use your creativity.” When a child asked her opinion of his artwork, she utilized the Socratic method, “What do YOU think about it?” She then proceeded to praise with specific explanation about what she liked and the good things the child had completed on the work.

Robin’s main topics of study included creating a book, creative dramatics, and thinking skills (divergent, logical, and evaluative). Her lessons easily incorporated group work, and she was, therefore, able to provide many meaningful leadership opportunities. Students completed problem solving, decision making and evaluation activities through each of the topical themes.
Robin was quite specific about her agenda, always posting it on the board. She explained her criteria well in advance. However, she allowed for flexibility by giving the students input on several areas of the criteria, adjusting it to meet the class needs. For example, she noted three areas of evaluation when filming their creative dramatics. After the students had an opportunity to view themselves on tape, they noted several other areas that should be critiqued and evaluated. These were added to the criteria list. I had the impression that the students felt very comfortable in her class; they were able to discuss openly any topic. There was ample opportunity for self-reflection, for peer evaluation, and for group interaction. Robin had an easy, gentle way about her that made everyone else around her feel comfortable.

Robin’s journal entries reflected her introspective nature. When explaining her philosophy of leadership, she told the following story: “On most days after school, I take my dog to the park. There are always several dogs there when we arrive, some wandering in from the neighborhood and some with their owners, but usually the same dogs are there everyday. The same hierarchy immediately develops as soon as we get there. My dog is the biggest, so he becomes the uncontested alpha animal. The omega dog makes himself available to be chased by Java (my dog). This omega dog does not seem anything but eager to take his position, and he is not really the smallest dog there. The other dogs follow the chase without really getting involved.

There appears to be an instinctive acceptance of each dog’s position within the group, and the occasional newcomer very naturally slides into place. The only
time Java displays any aggressive behavior is toward the low dog on the totem pole. And he is not really mean—it’s his role in the play.

The simplicity and submissive acceptance always makes me compare the dogs to humans. Would it, in fact, be better if our instincts were like the dogs’ and conflicts over leadership were eliminated in the initial “sizing-up” of the competition? I know that we have evolved to the point where intellect and intuition and desire allow the omega animal in all of us to overcome obstacles to leadership opportunities, and that is actually best. But when I witness the fact that, with dogs, ego has no place in their society, I realize that they are freed from the feelings of rejection and greed and conscious superiority that have in fact played so strong a part in man’s downfall.”

Her thoughts and ideas reflect a concern for families as well as students in her classroom. “I was thinking of leadership in terms of parenting. I am beginning to realize that if one thing could be taught to break the cycle of serious dysfunction in families, maybe that one thing would be leadership.”

She considered examples of leadership: “I was talking to a friend of mine who is second in command at a very busy office. The boss is setting a poor example of leadership (coming in late, losing his temper, insulting employees, etc.), and my friend is constantly smoothing things over and keeping morale from completely dissolving. I wonder—who is the real leader?”

Robin treated the students with warmth and understanding. She was innovative in her style and always seemed open to new ideas and to sharing her risk-taking adventure with the students. She moved through each lesson, modeling the
behaviors she expected in them; namely, respect for each other, self-discipline, and
creative activity. She enjoyed a comfortable rapport with her students and was
always available to listen to them.

Betty

Betty taught oral communication, leadership and group skills, and problem
solving. Betty’s topics included the following: gifted attributes, shadow show,
dissection, and the beehive company. Betty was vivacious and enthusiastic about
her teaching. She directed the students to each activity, providing a safe
environment for them to experiment, and sometimes fail. As she described it, “It
was not a mistake, it was an opportunity for discovery!”

Betty was always in motion; she never sat at her desk. Her exuberance
enveloped the children and drew them into her room. She was always near the
students, interacting with them and leading them through the lesson. She described
a part of her teaching style by stating, “I create a moment in time or space where I
allow them to fail…they have to see it for themselves. That’s how I develop
leadership, I allow students to see their choices, and they are responsible for the
choices they make.” She described how she taught leadership skills within the
context of her topics. “But dissecting is just the tool…I really taught them risk-
taking, decision-making, leadership, responsibility.”

Of the three participant teachers, Betty was the least open to my
observations in the beginning. The first few times, I sat in the back of the room and
simply took notes. After several weeks, I interacted with the students, walking
around and observing more closely. They would ask me questions, or show me
their work. At the end of one lesson, Betty asked me if I was “supposed to be interacting with the students?” I told her that I would do whatever made her feel comfortable. I explained that my role was that of participant-observer and that I should be interacting with the students as the lessons progressed. I also told her that this was her classroom, and that if she did not feel comfortable with my walking around and interacting with students, then I would stop doing that. She reluctantly agreed that it was fine for me to speak with the students.

She often stopped me after class to discuss something that had occurred during the lesson. “Did you notice the way I corrected Brandi?” or “What did you think about the way I handled the spilled candy situation?” I spent time reassuring her that I was not there to judge or criticize her; I was there to observe the lesson. She reminded me that she had gotten hurt with another researcher who abused the privilege and had disappointed her. This researcher never shared information or field notes with Betty, nor did she allow her to even see a sample copy of the dissertation. Betty felt used and was not anxious for that to happen again.

Later, after several months of observations, Betty revealed that she was glad I had been there. Although she was hesitant at first, it seemed that my presence had made her “a better teacher” more alert to her own teaching, and more aware of the students’ individual needs. She said that I was putting pressure on her to excel, and “that’s a good thing!” Once we achieved this breakthrough, our conversations became more personal and meaningful, turning away from her thinking I was judging her, and moving more toward our shared philosophies about teaching, children, learning, and life. I came to a more complete understanding of the ways in
which she delighted in the students’ accomplishments. I think we came to more fully appreciate each other’s gifts, and our leadership abilities.

Diane

With thirty-three years of experience, Diane is the most traditional of the three in her teaching style. Yet, she is not content to remain in the status quo. Diane is constantly reading articles and searching for ways to bring new and innovative computer techniques to the attention of the students. The computer lab has IBM as well as Macintosh computers, so “the students can compare the programs, and they get to look at the differences.” She is excited about all of the new technology because “it opens up new avenues…we have a whole new world.”

She works cooperatively with the other two teachers to ensure that her lessons coincide with their units. For example, when the students were writing a book about children around the world, she incorporated the Postcard Project, a telecommunications project utilizing the Internet and electronic mail. When the students were working on a unit about chocolate, she incorporated lessons on cocoa, sugar, and other agricultural products. The students used geography software to determine where these products were found, and which countries distributed these goods through exportation. When the students were dissecting in Betty’s class, Diane saw to it that they researched frogs, and dissected a virtual frog. She enjoys this cooperation with her fellow teachers, saying, “One of the advantages of the program is that we can sit down and talk about when we’re working on a particular unit. The fact that we can sit down and work together and plan an activity is important. Also the fact that we have the freedom to choose to do something
independent from what the others or everyone else is doing. So, I can do something to coordinate, or I can do something totally different. And so that allows me the freedom to choose. I appreciate that I can choose something I may want to do in a different part of the web altogether.”

Diane is an itinerant teacher, which means that she is only at Riverside for several hours a day. Because of scheduling, she interacts with the students for approximately 1 hour a day. Additionally, because students are working at a computer, they have much less interaction with each other. In Diane’s class, the students primarily work alone or with one other student. Nevertheless, many opportunities for leadership and followership are evident in this class, as the students work in teams of two. The students determine the best way to gather the information with their teammates, and report to the whole group at the end of the lesson. There is ample opportunity for creativity, as the students design and create unique products as varied as their personalities. For example, in association with Betty’s beehive company unit, the students were required to complete a product. One group chose to design a letterhead, two groups chose to create business cards, and yet another group created a tri-fold brochure inviting others to visit their office.

Diane seemed open to new ways of teaching and learning noting, “Growth comes from the new venture. While doing something different you really see beauty in people, their human spirit, and you see your own spirit change and maybe improve.” She was most flexible in giving up her time if the other teachers needed more, and easily adjusted to teaching first, second, or third period to accommodate the other two teacher’s schedules. She instructed her students according to her
planned agenda, and showed them samples of the software they were to use that particular day. She gave as little instruction as possible, preferring that the children discover it for themselves. Sometimes, this frustrated the students. But after a while, the students learned to work out their problems by themselves or asked friends to help out. Diane fostered independent thinking, as they learned to work out difficulties for themselves first.

Describing her philosophy of teaching, Diane wrote in her journal, “Education teaches us there is a time to be both leader and follower. It helps us reason through why we are willing to have a person as ‘the leader.’ It gives us the confidence to be in charge. Of course, other things determine a willingness to be the leader, for example time in our life, past experiences, and so forth.”

Concerning student leadership, she realized, “As adults we sometimes take on an ‘I-know-it-all’ attitude. Working with children provides an insight into how much we all must learn. Using computers provides a change and a chance to learn something new everyday.” She added, “Using the computer provides hands-on practice in using a tool for the next time period. Books are still important. The many experiences other people have had can provide insight and develop empathy in leaders. Additionally, listening skills are needed by leaders in order to hear all of the music.” She noticed that, “Every generation questions children’s ability to lead. Yet every generation has had great leaders. My concern is that we find a way of working with the large variety of peoples to solve world problems, not the superficial talk, but real open willingness to listen and bring about change… Risk takers at heart should be the motto for leaders. These brave souls enjoy the risk of
using poor ideas and some foggy thinking on the part of others. They must be willing to help bring about change and step up to the plate.”

Throughout the observations, I found Diane to be helpful. She would explain the purpose of her lesson, and always encouraged the students to do their best. She offered the students many opportunities to work together with others or alone if they preferred. Diane seemed to know all of the students’ personalities, and she tried to accommodate various learning styles. Although she had only a little contact with these students, her influence appears to be great. The students discovered and tried new things, which they stated they were not able to do in their regular school. Diane used a variety of media tools to incorporate her lessons with that of the other teachers in the program.

**Student as Unit of Analysis**

I approached this case study of the gifted enrichment program from several perspectives. I attempted to develop an understanding of the opportunities that students have for leadership development in this particular setting. Through long-term observations, I learned of the various opportunities afforded to students. I interviewed the teachers to gain their perspective. I also observed and interviewed five girls who participated in the enrichment program. The following is a description and analysis of the five participants and their perceptions of the program with regard to leadership development as recorded in interviews and in personal journals. Seeing things through their eyes has provided insight into this nebulous concept of leadership.
Hallie

Hallie was a fifth grade student from Cottonwood Elementary, a public school about eight miles from Riverside. She had shoulder-length brown hair, brown eyes, and an engaging smile. She appeared relaxed and confident, displaying an easy manner in her work activities. Hallie had one older brother, and she enjoyed reading in her spare time. She came to the enrichment program with excellent leadership skills. She was able to complete her work quickly and accurately, and then offered to help fellow classmates. She possessed exceptional organizational skills and the ability to move others to action with little effort. She grasped the entire picture and had a personality that endeared people to her. Betty remarked, “I haven’t taught Hallie anything about leadership abilities; she’s got it!”

Hallie tackled every activity with enthusiasm and completed projects with little assistance. She possessed a strong sense of self worth and was willing to share her kind nature with others. She was quick to smile and rarely became discouraged with difficult tasks. Hallie noted, “If you are a good leader, you can do anything you set your mind to.” She also acknowledged that intelligence alone does not make a good leader. “Even if you are really smart, you could be the worst leader in the world. You have to have cooperation with other people, patience, and group working skills to be a great leader.” She explained that you have to recognize a problem before it becomes an emergency. She noted, “If someone in your group has a problem understanding or is a little bit slower, you have to show them. If you wait too long, they are lost and there is no return. You are so far ahead, that no
Hallie explained that she enjoys the gifted enrichment program because “they show you how to look at different ways of doing something.” She acknowledged that the worst thing about the program is that “you only come once a week.” She noted that there was some pressure associated with completing various projects, but that being in the program was “more positive than negative.”

Hallie was the student who was reprimanded for crumpling a piece of border in Betty’s class. Even though she knew Betty was upset, she immediately owned up to her wrongdoing and apologized for her actions. There was no hesitation on her part to accept responsibility for her action, an indication of her leadership abilities.

Jessica

Jessica, a fifth grade student at Cottonwood Elementary, was a tiny child with brown hair, brown eyes, and a bright smile that remained constant. She was the most outgoing of the five girls. She greeted me each time I entered the room with a smile and a hug. When she was absent for several weeks, she asked me to fill her in on what I had been doing since she last saw me. She would show me her work, ask me to watch her, and often would seek my approval of some project on which she was working. She does not often assume the leadership role. She and Hallie were good friends, and she seemed to prefer to let Hallie make the decisions for their team. However, when Jessica was in another group, she appeared to take on a more active leadership role. She appeared to make progress in her leadership
over the eight-month period as she became more assertive and took on more responsibility than in the earlier months of this study.

Jessica did not write much in her journal, and she was absent for the focus group interview. In the individual interview I conducted with her, Jessica noted that a leader needed patience and needed to know a lot of things. She seemed to be concerned with safety, and she worried about her dad who was an electrician. When discussing dissecting, she noted that, “If I handed the tools the wrong way, like if I handed the scissors where you cut, I could cut the doctor.” She also noted that a leader helps others when they are stuck. “John wasn’t finding much of his stuff...after I found my stuff, I looked for his.” Jessica felt that her strength was resolving conflicts among her friends. “I just think trying to get them together and talking is the best thing.”

When I asked her about getting along with boys who were in the group, she relayed an incident in the cafeteria in which the boys aggravated her. They were arguing about the strongest professional wrestlers and Jessica was not at all interested in that topic. She tried to initiate another conversation, to no avail. After relaying this incident to me, she added, “Sometimes I just want to get to their neck!”

She also noted that she does not like a leader who is too mean or bossy. She prefers to follow someone who exhibits “kindness, quickness, is a smart problem solver, who knows a lot of things and is able to compromise.”

**Elise**

Elise, a fifth grade student from St. Joseph Catholic School, had medium-brown hair, brown eyes, and braces on her teeth. She was a quiet child, seeming
scared at first, then relaxing a bit. Once she got to know me, she was warm, open, and relaxed. Elise smiled often and had good eye contact with the person to whom she was conversing.

Elise was interesting to observe. She appeared to be struggling to gain acceptance in the group. She was friendly, yet somewhat shy. Rather than force a situation, she waited for others to approach her. When she was in a group with friends, she got along well and was able to make valid points. When she was with strangers, however, she seemed a bit intimidated, especially if the group had more boys than girls in it. She described an occurrence at her regular school, “The other day in class we were put into groups with no leader. Then one boy decided to take over. Everyone except me just went along with it. I got so annoyed with him I wanted to scream. It wasn’t fair.” Elise wanted to be a leader; she didn’t quite know how. She appeared to be struggling for recognition as a leader. She described her dance class, “At dancing I pay attention and do everything right. One of my friends is good but talks a lot. Then for the dance she is in the front and I am in the back with the slow pokes. She always acts like the leader of the dance. I think that the one that is doing the right thing should be the leader not the most loud and hyper.” She wondered at the injustice of this idea of leader choices, “Why do leaders sometimes end up stepping all over other people to get to the top?” She added, “I don’t mind being a follower when I have a good leader. I would like sometimes to be a leader.” In her journal, she posed this question, “Why is it that the quiet ones end up being the followers, but the loud ones get to be the leader even if the quieter one would do a better job?”
In the focus group interview, Elise noted that she liked the fun things that she was able to do in gifted enrichment, but she did not like “how you get graded on everything.” She also disliked “having to evaluate your own self.” She described a time when she rated her group higher than she rated another group and the students in that group rated her lower than she thought they should have. She surmised it was because she had ranked them lower, even though she felt that it was an honest evaluation. She was the only student who expressed concern about not having enough opportunities to practice her leadership skills. She commented, “I wish sometimes that once somebody is a leader, they can drop down because everybody thinks that once they are a leader, they’ll always be the leader, and they never give anybody else a chance. I’d like to have more of a chance.”

Elise would be an ideal candidate to study in depth to follow her leadership development more closely. She appeared to have the potential but not the means with which to follow through with her desires.

Erin

Erin also attended St. Joseph Catholic School. She had straight, medium brown hair that hung down below her shoulders, and bangs that went to her eyebrows. Her blue eyes were hidden behind glasses. She was an attractive child, but her posture and stance seemed to suggest that she did not think she was attractive. Erin had two younger brothers whom she sometimes baby-sat, and she stated that she enjoyed dancing. When interviewed, she was nervous and fidgety. She fiddled with her hair and with her loop earrings. It seemed as if she wanted to elaborate on her answers to the questions, but she seemed a bit reluctant. She did
not look at me during the entire interview. Erin is Elise’s friend. She, too, had great potential for leadership but was often overlooked for the more popular student. She and Elise seemed most comfortable when placed in a group together, as they shared ideas and provided support and encouragement to one another.

She explained, “A good leader is a problem solver. He should be able to turn riddles into solved riddles.” She described a television program where she saw an example of bad leadership: “This one guy was babysitting all these kids, and he said yes to everything they asked. It ended up being a hilarious disaster!” She also talked about a substitute teacher from her regular school: “She didn’t know a lot about teaching. So, everybody was talking and changing desks. She made a big mistake of letting us play charades. And at recess, these girls came in and asked her if they could have some candy from the drawer. She said yes, and they left and told everybody, so she had to give everyone candy!”

In the focus group, Erin admitted she likes the creative aspects of the gifted enrichment program but agreed that the deadlines made her nervous. She, too, complained about the grading procedures and suggested that the teacher should have more input since “the teacher really does have the best judgment, and she knows what she is doing.” She lamented about the time problem: “We don’t have a lot of time in class to get our stuff done.” Erin liked the idea of shared leadership, stating “I learned that you don’t have to be the one leader, your whole group can lead. Everybody in your group can be equal, and there doesn’t have to be just one leader.” She noted a problem with leadership opportunities at her home based school:
“Sometimes in my regular class, I don’t get a chance to be a leader because they think I get a lot of chances at GT. So, they eliminate me from the chance.”

Barbara

Barbara, also a student at St. Joseph Catholic school, was tall and thin with bright-blue eyes and brown hair. She was shy and quiet at first, then began to blossom as the year progressed. She smiled and laughed easily, exhibiting direct eye contact with me during our interviews. She had the opportunity to take part in a television commercial for a local car dealership and had accepted much praise and friendly teasing from her classmates concerning this project.

Barbara was the one student that I think exhibited the most progress in her leadership development. She began the year indifferent to most activities, participating because it was expected of her, not because she truly wanted to be there. She was absent often and seemed to find any excuse to miss enrichment. She relayed comments her mother made regarding gifted enrichment that seemed to be less than complimentary: “My mom says that it really should not be this much pressure. Enrichment is supposed to be fun, not so much work.” Her mother was one of the guests that gave Diane a difficult time at the open house in the fall. Toward the end of the semester, however, Barbara became more attentive and enthusiastic and seemed to be enjoying the program more. Whereas before she was quiet and shy, now she was overt and rambunctious. She enjoyed teasing with the other girls. She began taking a more active role in the decision making within her group and often initiated the direction rather than waiting for others to begin. She noted that in a leadership role “you have to be respectful and responsible.”
acknowledged, “It can be easier being a follower, but sometimes it’s better to be a leader. It may be harder as a leader, but you learn to be patient, respectful, and responsible.” She added a comment about the leader’s role: “A leader must not get angry when something happens. If a follower does something wrong, the leader shouldn’t discipline them. It’s part of the leader’s fault that the thing happened. He was in charge and is therefore responsible for that thing that happened.”

**Summary**

Although each of the teachers had a personal style, they shared a common bond. The teachers treated the students with respect and each contributed to the overall success of the program. They were independent thinkers who set an example, modeling the behavior they expected from their students. As a team, they were cooperative and committed to working together; yet they allowed each other the flexibility to bring a varied approach to a particular topic. These teachers depended on teamwork, effective communication, and participative decision-making.

All of the teachers had high expectations for their students and encouraged learning through the discovery method. They modeled good listening and caring behaviors, remaining flexible and sensitive to student needs. They were risk-takers and were open to new ideas, both from the students and from fellow teachers.

A healthy respect for one another is crucial to the success of a project, and respect was evident from all of the teachers when dealing with each other and with the students. Table 5.1 describes topics teachers used to facilitate opportunities for leadership development. The teachers worked cooperatively with one another to
complement each other's lessons. The arrows in the chart indicate the connection of the lessons among the teachers. The head of the arrow points to the primary opportunity for leadership development. The base of the arrow indicates the complement to the primary lesson. The double-headed arrow represents a balanced opportunity for leadership development.

Table 5.1
Opportunities for Leadership Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Shadow Show</th>
<th>Gifted Attributes</th>
<th>Dissection</th>
<th>Chocolate</th>
<th>Beehive Company</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Betty</td>
<td>Shadow Show</td>
<td>Gifted Attributes</td>
<td>Dissection</td>
<td>Chocolate</td>
<td>Beehive Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robin</td>
<td>Book Creation</td>
<td>Gifted Attributes</td>
<td>Creative Dramatics</td>
<td>Chocolate</td>
<td>Thinking Skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diane</td>
<td>Creative Problem Solving and Post Card Project</td>
<td>Gifted Attributes</td>
<td>Dissection</td>
<td>Chocolate</td>
<td>Bee Product</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Betty and Robin differed in their opinions of replication. Betty felt that the regular classroom setting could not duplicate the strategies and the opportunities for leadership. Betty said, "I know that what we do in enrichment, we could not do in academics... I couldn't get away with it because in academics; I would be responsible for mastering the subject." Robin disagreed. "I don't see why in a regular classroom that you can't let every child understand that they have leadership
traits that they may not be aware of... I think it’s important for every child to learn that somewhere in his or her life that they’ve got a little spot inside of themselves that they can serve as a leader... It’s not just the student council president.” These teachers succeeded in improving leadership skills in their students in a number of ways. Teachers focused on seeing things from different perspectives, encouraging students to identify personal feelings and helping them to understand how others felt to work toward solutions to problems.

Four themes emerged that were common among all teachers, all students, and every aspect of the program: knowing self, planning, building relationships, and evaluating.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergent Themes in Leadership Development</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Knowing Self</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patient</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk-taker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent thinker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sets example for others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Planning                                  | Evaluating                |
| Envisions project                         | On-going                   |
| Sets goals                                | Analytical                |
| Set priorities                            | Open to criticism          |
| Organized                                 | Give constructive criticism|
| Punctual                                  | Impartial                 |
| Task committed                            |                           |

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Students were encouraged to develop self-knowledge. They learned to identify and value their personal gifts. Through the activities, students learned more about themselves and built their individual strengths, which facilitated group cohesion.

Planning was a recurring theme as teachers modeled the importance of preparation in the development of group projects. Lessons were carefully planned and coordinated with other teachers, the agenda was clearly stated, and criteria established and explained. Students were given flexibility within these parameters to negotiate change and to initiate their own personal planning.

Within group activities, students developed commitments to relationships. Through the numerous activities and lessons, students learned to listen to one another, to cooperate and compromise, to help each other, to be responsible for their own actions, and to make group decisions that would complete the project successfully. Students learned to coordinate ideas and to negotiate their roles on the team. The need for power or domination was not a necessary component, as the students discovered that shared responsibility resulted in a successful product and a more satisfied team. Those students who could internalize these ideas produced the best products and were the ones that were chosen to be a leader for the next project.

Finally, students participated in the evaluation process. Self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and product evaluation were an integral part of the daily routine. Evaluations helped the students to focus on success, eliminate and learn from errors, and work to improve their products. Additionally, evaluation allowed the students to analyze problems and to adjust their ideas in order to complete the present goal.
and work toward a new goal. Each step in the process became a building block for the next project.

The common themes of knowing self, planning, building relationships, and evaluating would echo in the program itself as the teachers planned appropriate activities, acknowledged personal talents, shared their gifts with the team, and constantly evaluated themselves and the program in light of its relevance to the students being served.

One of the students captured the theme of group leadership during a class in early January. Brad entered the class with a broad smile and a confident strut, laughing and joking with fellow classmates. That image quickly changed as the teacher explained the lesson for the day. The students were to create an original stamp that depicted one aspect of their leadership abilities. Brad’s eyes no longer reflected the confidence he exuded when he entered the room. He cupped his cheek in his hand and settled his head on the desk. He sat motionless for a few minutes as those around him gathered the needed materials and began their projects. Finally, he lifted his head and asked those at the table for advice. He knew he wanted to do something with friendship, since that was his leadership strength, but he couldn’t think of a symbol that would represent friendship. Joined hands, a smile, a heart, and a ladder were all friendship symbols suggested to him. He did not like any of these ideas and settled his head on the desk again as frustration settled in. As he glanced around the room, he spied a poster depicting birds in flight. Quickly picking up his head, he snapped his fingers and declared that the bird would be a good symbol. He toyed with this idea, then became dejected again as he realized
that he did not know how to draw a bird. Once again, his spirits sank as he rested his head on the desk. A friend, sitting next to him, quietly offered his help, saying that he would draw a bird as an example, and Brad could copy it. That seemed to please Brad, who began to trace his friend’s bird onto the paper. He verbalized his thoughts: “Friendship involves more than one person, so I am going to draw more than one bird.” He added, “I am going to make them all fly in the same direction, because friends are usually going toward the same place.” He posited an additional thought: “Hmmm... I don’t know which color to use... I know! I am going to color them all different colors, because everyone is different even if they are friends!”

After he had completed his drawing, he held it up for the class to see. Brad had once again become the confident, happy student as he proudly explained his friendship stamp.

Brad, through his depiction of the birds, recognized the importance of teamwork and friendship. Additionally, he reflected the idea of working with individual differences, as his colors represented the fact that “everyone is different.” He also noted that the birds were all going in the same direction, moving toward a common goal.

Like the geese story, Brad’s scenario reflected the class philosophy on leadership. The students were birds in flight, each different, yet each reaching for a common goal, a shared vision. Like a mother bird, each teacher strives to push students from the nest, allowing them to experience life for themselves. The goal was to teach them to venture forth into an unknown world, seeking to discover their place in that world. The teachers encouraged the students to take risks, to gain
insight, to explore, and to discover free flight. If teachers in this program were successful, the students would be the ones to take over leadership roles in the future.
CHAPTER SIX
FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

An in-depth case study at Riverside Middle provided the chance to study leadership development at the middle school level. This study initially sought to answer two questions relative to gifted students in an enrichment setting:

1. What leadership opportunities do students have in a gifted enrichment program at the fifth grade level?
2. What could enrichment programs do to foster leadership development in their gifted students?

Burns (1978) stated that the most important force in shaping leaders involves learning from experiences, learning from people, and learning from successes and failures. Observations of the gifted enrichment classes indicate that the students had many opportunities to hone their leadership skills through experience with others, and from their own successes and failures. With every teacher, in almost every class, and throughout every thematic unit, teachers called upon students to work cooperatively with others, make decisions that ultimately affected the entire group, and solve problems to mutual satisfaction.

Each teacher’s philosophy concerning leadership characteristics and the development of those characteristics directly influenced her teaching style and the content of her lessons. Initial views of leadership as noted in the review of the literature are changing. Evidence of this change is revealed in the words of the participants themselves.

Teachers and students had similar responses concerning the definition of leadership and the characteristics of a leader. Listening, goal setting, task
commitment, cooperation, compromise, and communication were common descriptors. In the teacher responses to leadership characteristics, no one mentioned words like power or authority (see Appendix H). Student responses noted the importance of showing kindness, taking everyone’s ideas, helping others achieve their goals, and being responsible (see Appendix I).

Findings

This study addressed two questions concerning the development of leadership at the fifth grade level. In response to the first question concerning the leadership opportunities for students in a gifted enrichment program at the fifth grade level, findings emerged during the course of my research. These findings developed into the four main themes of knowing self, planning, building relationships, and evaluating.

Knowing Self

Students learned about themselves through a variety of activities such as learning about multiple intelligences, learning about their personal strengths and weaknesses, and learning to be patient, confident, and responsible in daily activities. Self-discipline was evident, as correction from the teacher was virtually unnecessary. In the eight months I observed these teachers and students, I noted only four times when the teachers had to correct a student for misbehavior. The teachers primarily ignored misbehavior unless it caused a safety problem. The result was that the student would cease the behavior and get back to work. He or she did not get the attention, and therefore, the disruption ended. The student’s behavior became a personal, intrinsic issue that did not require outside authority.
Self-control became more evident as the weeks progressed. Teachers complimented good behavior and ignored inappropriate behavior. Much of the responsibility settled squarely on the shoulders of the students themselves. The teachers encouraged the students to make decisions for themselves, and showed them the consequences of inappropriate actions so that they could learn from their mistakes. I often heard the phrase “It is not a mistake; it is an opportunity to learn something!” Teachers echoed phrases of encouragement as students learned to become risk-takers, independent thinkers, and vital participants in their own leadership development.

**Planning**

In every class, the teacher wrote the agenda on the board so that everyone knew the general procedures and expectations for that day. Each teacher began the lesson by clearly stating the objectives so that everyone knew what the activities were and what the teacher expected concerning that day’s activities. The students clearly knew what was expected of them, and what they were to produce during that class time. Students often glanced at the board to note their progress toward the intended goal.

Teachers set goals for the students by establishing criteria for evaluation and clearly expressing these criteria to the students. There was never any doubt as to criteria for judgment as the criteria was explained before the students began working. Sometimes, the students would help determine criteria, often modifying them to suit the particular needs of the class. The teachers were willing to allow them this flexibility, which showed true concern for individualism on the part of the
teachers. Additionally, it gave the students ownership for many of the decisions in the class. They seemed more willing to participate when they had a voice in the outcome. The teacher outlined pre-established criteria but would adjust them if the students could show a reason for the change. As students learned to set their own goals for the projects, they became more organized. Additionally, students learned that task commitment was a necessary component for successful project completion. Students had to envision the project from start to finish, organize their goals, and remain committed to the team’s project until the end.

**Building Relationships**

Students were given ample opportunity to practice group cooperation, compromise, sharing, and cooperating, especially in Robin and Betty’s classes. Students were often in small groups solving problems or working on completion of a product. There were many opportunities for informed decision making. The cross-curricular topics and interdisciplinary units allowed students and teachers to work together to complete the particular task. Diplomacy in moving everyone toward established goals became a part of the daily routine as students negotiated roles and worked toward a common commitment within their groups.

Teachers maintained a level of positive energy. I never witnessed a teacher sitting at her desk or not working directly with the students. Throughout the research, teachers were alert and active participants with the children. Collaboration and cooperation emerged and expanded from teacher to student and then from student to student. The teachers worked together to coordinate and complement each other’s lessons through the thematic units in the program. There was an easy
flow from one section to another, and the teachers obviously cooperated to form a cohesive group amongst themselves and with the students.

Teachers modeled what they encouraged in their students. They set goals, planned activities, displayed positive attitudes, and cooperated with one another. Nancy Hensel (1991) outlined strategies which teachers could use to develop leadership and pro-social characteristics in children. Hensel suggests that the teachers should model caring behaviors, find alternate ways of handling problems, focus on different viewpoints in everyday interactions, help children make decisions by having choices, and help them develop interactive skills through collaborative work. Teachers in the enrichment program completed these actions often in order to facilitate their students' leadership development.

Noddings (1992) suggested that moral education should include four components: modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation. All three teachers at Riverside incorporated these four strategies into their daily teaching. Teachers cared for the students and helped them to create caring relations with each other. Dialogue with students was open-ended, and the outcome was not predetermined, allowing for interaction to flow both ways. Teachers provided students with opportunities to gain skills in care giving and to develop caring attitudes. Lastly, teachers confirmed students with daily praise that was genuine. Additionally, by allowing students to evaluate each other, they encouraged and affirmed the best in each other. Teachers supported a caring community of learners amongst themselves and the students at Riverside.
Evaluating

Evaluations were an integral part of the enrichment program as students and teachers analyzed situations and adjusted their objectives to produce outcomes. On-going evaluations allowed teachers to provide feedback to students, which reinforced their motivation and commitment. Students assessed each other's works, giving suggestions for improvement. Additionally, students completed self-evaluations that provided them with a clear measure of accomplishment relative to their own goals and objectives. Self-evaluations refocused the students toward their original goals, allowing for correction and improvement before completion. Davis and Rimm (1985) note that evaluations are often burdensome and are usually avoided. “Good evaluation is the only way to determine the most effective way to enhance the education of gifted learners” (p. 404). Teachers in this gifted enrichment program encouraged evaluations daily as students experienced successes and failures. As Betty stated, however, any failure was an opportunity for discovery.

Studies of leadership development are prevalent in the history of research. Previous research from the last two decades primarily focused on youth training with respect to adult theories of leadership. The latest research indicates that views of leadership are changing. Terminology has shifted focus from individualism to distribution of roles, from leader to participant, from authority to shared responsibility.

Roach et al. (1999) conducted a ten-year study in under-served and at-risk communities concerning the promotion of leaders within out-of-school
communities. Although selection of participants was different, these recent findings are the most applicable to findings in my study. Specifically, these researchers found that successful programs need to build leadership among young people, valuing their definitions and providing ample opportunity for all students to participate in leadership development. Areas of correlation between the Roach study and my findings include high expectations, a willingness to try new ideas, and planning, preparation, performance and evaluation. Leadership is seen as emerging, shifting, and mutual. Students allowed new members into the setting as full participants, negotiated and shared leadership roles, and shifted roles depending on the capabilities of the members. Additionally, mutual respect, listening to one another, knowledge of the team members, and constant assessment promoted leadership development among the students. The fluidity of roles proved beneficial to the satisfaction of the team members and allowed for successful completion of the products. Self-knowledge, planning, building relationships, and evaluating the outcomes in order to refocus the group were common themes that echo through both studies. The development of leadership in youth should recognize student potential and provide educational opportunities for them. Group engagement through sustained work on projects depends upon task commitment and cooperation. Evaluation is a necessary component for success and to refocus the group toward new goals. A correlation of findings from both studies is presented in Appendix J.

Recommendations

To answer the second research question concerning what gifted programs could do to foster leadership development in gifted students, several issues emerged.
Many of the activities were fun and interesting to the students, but had little relevance to the students' daily issues and real life situations and problems. There should be more opportunity for these students to go into the community and solve current problems, or at least to deal with the real issues that face today's 11 year-olds. Betty made an attempt to do this the first week of the session, when she asked the students to tell about the pressures in their lives and the priorities they set in order to meet their responsibilities. Students seemed to appreciate these open and personal discussions. Some students stated that they had no one to talk to, no one to guide them, no one who truly understands them. More discussion of a personal nature would be useful and helpful to them. All of the girls I observed seemed to feel pressure from parents, teachers at school, personal conflicts, and time constraints. They were open to having someone actually listen to them, as they asked me to come back and interview them again and again.

The original goals of the program encouraged interaction with community members through field trips and guest speakers. I did not see evidence of either of these during my eight months at Riverside. Mentorships are an important component of an effective leadership program, according to Davis and Rimm (1989), Farrall and Kronborg (1998), and Karnes and Bean (1998). Community resources are an invaluable part of plans for the gifted, including “mentoring plans, enrichment-oriented field trips, and career education” (Davis and Rimm, 1985, p. 52). The teachers themselves modeled good leadership, but did not bring the community into the classroom, or provide opportunities for the students to go into the community.
Students selected groups more often by who their friends were, making cooperation predetermined; more opportunity should be made to mix the students so that they are able to work with students other than their friends. Learning to cooperate and coordinate ideas with students they did not know well would give them an opportunity to enact their leadership and followership skills. I did witness several opportunities when the teachers grouped the students randomly, and they did not know one another as well. In these instances, leadership became more evident as students negotiated positions without knowing the personalities of the others in the group.

One of the areas that could not be triangulated was the relevance of attendance in the gifted enrichment program. Students were often absent when they had activities at their home-based school such as pictures, parties, and field trips. The teachers could perhaps find ways to encourage better attendance. However, they did not perceive absenteeism to be a problem. When I asked the students about this in the focus group interview, they agreed with my perception that there was a problem. The students admitted that it was difficult to attend the enrichment center because activities at their regular school interfered. This put dual pressure on them even though the teachers were vigilant in providing opportunities for make-up work. Absenteeism was not an issue of contention for the teachers. Apparently, they were accustomed to the flexibility that allowed them to accommodate absences along with other changes.

Hensel (1991) notes that teachers need to help children learn to talk about their feelings and discuss classroom problems and other real-life problems openly.
Although this was done to some extent, teachers could do more in this area. Specifically, the Circle of Life unit should be revisited often, so that the teachers could monitor the students’ feelings more closely. Social sensitivity, solving problems, and resolving conflicts could take on a more personal note and, therefore, have more application to the students’ daily lives. Additionally, the students could make a marketable product in the Beehive Company, one that they could actually sell to the public.

In the area of creative dramatics, instead of creating scenarios from nonsense situations, perhaps they could take the scenarios from real issues that these students face. Farrall and Kronborg (1998), Karnes and Bean (1998), and Parker (1983) advocate leadership programs that involve students in real-life experiences including community projects and a personal plan for leadership. According to Karnes and Bean (1998), infusing leadership development into the curriculum would strengthen and broaden their educational experiences.

As stated in the research, there are a number of characteristics that allow gifted students to become great leaders. There are also some negative characteristics that need addressing. Judy Luker (1992) noted several characteristics that could be detrimental for a gifted leader. The tendency to dominate others, being impatient with restrictions, being intolerant of those less capable than themselves, and difficulty with peers are some of the negative behaviors noted in gifted children. The teachers at Riverside worked to turn negatives into positives. However, there were several students who were unable to produce products because of their inability to cooperate with teammates. Teachers should concentrate their
efforts on these students, allowing them to see the value of effective leadership skills. As Bass (1981) noted, these students need to recognize the fact that authoritarian personalities are often rejected.

**Implications for Further Study**

This study affords opportunities for further research. This research project limited the findings to one site and with only one grade level. A multiple case study comparing the two sites in the district where enrichment students learn leadership development might be valuable to offer comparison strategies. A longitudinal study would serve to follow the development of individual students as they progress through the program from fifth through eighth grade.

I limited the scope of the research within the gifted program offerings to the enrichment portion only. Additional research could be gathered concerning the opportunities that gifted students have in an academic setting compared to those evidenced in an enrichment setting. Are the opportunities the same? Are there more opportunities in one academic subject over another? How can teachers in an academic setting provide sufficient opportunities for the students while maintaining the requirements of teaching the content areas?

I also confined this research to gifted students. Do regular education students have leadership opportunities within the classroom setting? Research conducted by Roach et al. (1999) showed that average-ability students in at-risk environments benefited from leadership activities in out-of-school settings. Could these same findings prove beneficial to activities within a school setting and to populations other than gifted students?
Additional questions could be posed and researched. Is there a difference between the leadership opportunities for boys and girls? How do parents feel about the development of leadership for their children? Can we gain insight into leadership potential based on parent perceptions of leadership characteristics? What is the best age to begin the development of leadership skills?

Roach et al. (1999) suggest that "leadership with youth needs to derive from field-based studies of the ways youth themselves define, value, and enact leadership" (p. 13). The team of researchers suggests that students need to see themselves in leadership positions by "situating young people as resources engaged with others in bringing group projects to excellent outcomes" (p. 13). Additionally, this research suggests that teachers can help with leadership development "by finding ways for young people in groups to commit to work that will bear benefit for others and be judged by tough criteria" (p. 13). My research supports the findings of this longitudinal study. Additionally, the Roach study furthers the transferability of findings to populations other than gifted students.

In contrast, the Roach et al. study suggests that "such programs will probably need to be based in summer activities or in out-of-school or after-school programs that may eventually carry credit and be tied in with academic year courses" (p. 13). It is my optimistic opinion that leadership development has a definite place in regular as well as gifted education classes, in academic as well as enrichment settings, and for at-risk as well as gifted students. My research serves to build a knowledge base concerning leadership development in all young people who hold the promise and the possibility for tomorrow.
REFERENCES


Hollingworth, L. S. (1939). What we know about the early selection and training of leaders. Teachers College Record, 40, 575.


APPENDIX A
LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS OF GIFTED CHILDREN

(Adapted from: Martinson, 1974; Colangelo and Davis, 1991)

1. Keen power of observation; willingness to examine the unusual; sense of the significant
2. Power of abstraction; conceptualization; interest in inductive learning and problem solving; pleasure in intellectual activity
3. Interest in cause-effect relations; ability to see relationships; interest in applying concepts; love of truth
4. Likes structure and order; likes consistency
5. Retentiveness
6. Verbal proficiency; large vocabulary; interest in reading breadth of information in advanced areas
7. Questioning attitude; intellectual curiosity; inquisitive mind; intrinsic motivation
8. Power of critical thinking; skepticism; evaluative testing; self-criticism and self-checking
9. Creativeness and inventiveness; liking for new ways of doing things; interest in creating; brainstorming; free-wheeling
10. Power of concentration; intense attention that excludes all else; long attention span
11. Persistent, goal-directed behavior
12. Sensitivity, intuitiveness; empathy for others; need for emotional support and a sympathetic attitude
13. High energy; alertness; eagerness; periods of intense voluntary effort preceding invention
14. Independence in work and study; preference for individualized work; self-reliance; need for freedom of movement and action
15. Versatility and virtuosity; diversity of interests and abilities; many hobbies; proficiency in art forms, music, drawing
16. Friendliness and outgoingness
17. High tolerance for ambiguity; independent divergent thinking; risk taking; imaginative, sensitive
18. Persistence in areas of interest; intensity of feelings and values; independence
19. Sees discrepancies between real/ideal; truth/expression; sets high standards; capable of analysis and evaluation
## APPENDIX B
### ABILITIES OF GIFTED STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Ability</th>
<th>Intellectual</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High rate of success in subjects of interest</td>
<td>Observant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursues certain areas with vigor</td>
<td>Gets excited about new ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good memory</td>
<td>Inquisitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehends well</td>
<td>Learns rapidly, easily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquires knowledge quickly</td>
<td>Independent learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widely read in special areas</td>
<td>Has a large vocabulary compared to others of same age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thinks abstractly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enjoys hypothesizing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intense</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Creative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likes structure</td>
<td>Independent thinker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-confident</td>
<td>Expressive (oral or written)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-accepted by peers</td>
<td>Keen sense of humor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows good judgment</td>
<td>Is resourceful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Doesn’t mind being different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulate, verbally fluent</td>
<td>Is original, unconventional, imaginative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foresees the consequences of things</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual/Performing Arts</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability for expressing feelings, thoughts and moods through art, dance, drama or music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good coordination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibits creativity, imagination</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Observant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes to produce original products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Adapted from: Galbraith, 1983.
## APPENDIX C
### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

**LAFAYETTE PARISH SCHOOL BOARD**
P. O. Drawer 2158
Lafayette, Louisiana 70502

Application requesting permission to do Graduate Study/Research Projects in Lafayette Parish Public School System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Graduate Student/Agency</th>
<th>Lucy G. Begnado/LSU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>536 Aloma Dr., Lafayette, LA 70503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>(318) 989-9019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Place of Employment</td>
<td>Lafayette Parish School Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Telephone</td>
<td>(318) 235-1301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title of Study</td>
<td>Looking for Leaders: A search within a middle school gifted enrichment program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed time period for conducting study/research</td>
<td>Aug 1998 – May 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of study/research</td>
<td>To determine efficacy of teaching leadership development in a middle school gifted enrichment program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What values will Lafayette Parish School Board derive from information obtained from this study?

Hopefully, this study will expose elements of excellence and determine areas of improvement in order to better prepare our students to succeed in the workplace. Additionally, there could be implications for introducing leadership development in regular education classes.

How many local public schools will be involved in the study?

One

How will the research site(s) be selected?

Gifted Enrichment Center (middle school)

How many public school students will be involved in this study?

35-50

How will the students be selected?

Gifted classes; interviews of volunteers

In what types of activities will students be involved?

Primarily observation; As research

How many public school teachers will be involved in this study?

4

In what types of activities will teachers be expected to participate?

Observation by researcher; interviews

How will the teachers be selected?

Voluntary participation

How much displacement time per teacher will the study require?

None

Will a report of the study be made available to participants?

Yes, if desired

If so, in what format?

Completed dissertation
APPENDIX D
APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION FROM INSTITUTIONAL OVERSIGHT

HSSC-accesion #: LSU Proposal #: 
LSU Office of Sponsored Research/OSR 388-1492; FAX 6792
LSU: HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECTS

APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION FROM INSTITUTIONAL OVERSIGHT

Unless they are formally qualified as meeting the criteria for exemption from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight, ALL LSU research/projects using living humans as subjects, or samples or data obtained from humans, directly or indirectly, with or without their consent, must be approved in advance by the LSU IRB. This Form helps the PI determine if a project may be exempted, and is used to request an exemption.

NOTE: Even when exempted, the researcher is required to exercise prudence in protecting the interests of research subjects, obtain informed consent if appropriate, and must conform to the Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects (Belmont Report) and LSU Guide to Informed Consent; (Available from OSR or http://www.osr.lsu.edu/osr/comply.html)

Instructions: Complete checklist, pp 2-4; if exemption appears possible, see instructions on p. 4. Otherwise apply to the IRB

Principal Investigator LUCY G. BEGNAUD Student? Y/N
Department/Unit Curriculum and Instruction Ph:

Project Title Looking for leaders: searching in a middle school for reactions to stimuli in social environments Agency expected to fund project N/A

Subject pool (eg. Psychology students Teachers and 5th grade students)

Circle any "vulnerable populations" to be used: (children <18, the mentally impaired, pregnant women, the aged, other). Projects with incarcerated persons cannot be exempted.

I certify my responses are accurate and complete. If the project scope or design is later changed I will resubmit for review. I will obtain written approval from the Authorized Representative of all non-LSU institutions in which the study is conducted.

PI Signature LUCY G. BEGNAUD Date 11/30/98 (no per signatures)

Screening Committee Action: Exempted ___ Not Exempted ___

Reviewer Signature __________________ Date ______

Comments _____________________

cc PI (signed face page only); OSR Director (application with protocol) 117 David Boyd Hall, LSU.

Help available from Karen Baiamonte 388-1492; karenb@lsu.edu

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Part A: DETERMINATION OF "RESEARCH" and POTENTIAL FOR RISK

This section determines whether the project meets the Department of Health and Human Services definition of "research" and if not, whether it nevertheless presents more than "minimal risk" to humans that makes IRB review prudent and necessary.

1. Is the project a systematic investigation designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge? (Note "systematic investigation" includes "research development, testing and evaluation"; therefore some instructional development and service programs will include a "research" component).

YES ✓ Go to Part B: Project constitutes research

NO Go to 2

2. Does the project present physical, psychological, social or legal risks to the participants reasonably expected to exceed those risks normally experienced in daily life or in routine diagnostic physical or psychological examination or testing? You must consider the consequences if individual data inadvertently become public.

YES Check C2 and stop here: IRB review required

NO Check C1: Apply for exemption from IRB oversight

Part B: EXEMPTION CRITERIA FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS

This Part establishes whether the project is confined to research activities that may be exempted from IRB oversight.

Please answer each question 1-5; although a single exemption criterion may be sufficient to exempt a project, some projects contain several elements that may be met by different criteria.

1. Is this research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, AND does the research involve normal educational practices (e.g. research on regular and special education strategies or research on the effectiveness of, or comparison among instructional techniques, curricula or classroom management methods)? (NOT exempt, merely because conducted at LSU)

YES ✓ Check C1 & go to 2: This exemption criterion is satisfied

NO Go to 2: This exemption criterion is not applicable

2. Will this research use educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior?

YES ✓ Go to 2.1

NO Skip to 3: (Criterion not applicable)
2.1 Will minors (<18y) be subjects AND does this research use survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior in which the observer participates?

**YES**  Check C2, and skip to 3: IRB review probably required

**NO**  Go to 2.2

2.2 Is the information recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified directly, or indirectly through identifiers (such as a code) linked to the subjects?

**YES**  Go to 2.3

**NO**  Skip to 3: This exemption criterion is satisfied

2.3 Will any inadvertent disclosure of individual human subjects' responses have the potential to place the subjects at risk of criminal and civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability or reputation?

(The collection of sensitive data regarding the subjects' (or relatives' or associates') possible substance abuse, sexuality, criminal history or intent, medical or psychological condition, financial status, or similarly compromising information are examples of instances which will require an answer of YES):

**YES**  Go to 2.4

**NO**  Skip to 3: This exemption criterion is satisfied

2.4 Are the human subjects elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office?

**YES**  Check C1, go to 3: Exemption criterion satisfied

**NO**  Check C2 and go to 3: IRB review probably required

3. Does this research involve the collection or study of existing* data, documents, records, pathological or diagnostic specimens? ("*existing* implies a retrospective study)

**YES**  Go to 3.1

**NO**  Skip to 4: (Criterion not applicable)

3.1 Is this material or information publicly available, or will it be recorded in such a manner by the investigator that the subjects cannot be identified directly, or indirectly through identifiers linked to the subjects?

**YES**  Check C1 & go to 4: Exemption criterion satisfied

**NO**  Check C2 & go to 4: IRB review probably required.
4. Is this a taste or food evaluation or food acceptance study?
YES__ Go to 4.1

NO✓ Skip to 5: (criterion not applicable)

4.1 Will only wholesome foods without additives be consumed? OR any food ingredients (including additives) consumed will be demonstrably at or below the level, and for a use found to be safe; are agricultural chemicals or environmental contaminants demonstrably at or below the level found to be safe by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service?

YES ____ Check C1 & Go to 5: Exemption criterion satisfied

NO, or unsure____ Check C2 & go to 5: IRB review may be required

5. Does the project include ANY research activity with human subjects not exempted under one or more of the above criteria?

YES__ Check C2: IRB review required

NO✓ Check C1; Go to Part C and proceed accordingly

Part C: PRELIMINARY EVALUATION of EXEMPT STATUS by Investigator:

C1 ✓ C2 ✓ If C1, or C1 AND C2 are checked, seek an exemption. If only C2 is checked, IRB review is required: obtain instructions from Sponsored Research or Web address on p 1.

Exemption Applicant: Send 2 copies of completed form, a brief project protocol (adequate to evaluate risks to subjects and to explain your responses to Parts A & B), instruments, and the consent form to ONE member in the most closely related department/discipline or to IRB office.

HUMAN SUBJECTS SCREENING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES: MASS COMMUN/SOC WK/AG:
Dr. Baumeister* (Psych) 388-4663 Dr. Nelson  (Mass C) 388-6686
Dr. Williamson* (Psych) 388-1494 Dr. Archambeault(Soc Wk) 8-1374
Dr. Geiselman * (Psych) 763-2695 Dr. Kim (Soc Wk) 388-1109
Dr. Deseran (Socio) 388-1113 Dr. Rose (Soc Wk)388-1015
Dr. Honeycutt (Speech) 388-6676 Dr. Biswas (Marketing) 388-8818
Dr. Dixit (Comm Sc./Dis) 388-3938 Dr. Bedeian (Mgmt) 388-6141
Dr. Keenan* (Hum Ecol) 388-1708
Dr. Paskoff (Lib/Sci) 388-1480
Dr. Keyn (Hum Ecol) 388-1535

ED/LIBRARIES/INFO SCI
Dr. Kleiner (Middleton)388-4016
Dr. Taylor (Admin&Fnd) 388-2193 Dr. Munro* (Curric & I)388-2352
Dr. Saia (Lab Sch) 388-3221 Dr. Wandersee (Curric) 388-2348
Dr. Landin* (Kinesiol) 388-2036 Dr. Paskoff (Lib/Sci) 388-1480

(* = IRB member)
Dear Parent:

My name is Lucy G. Begnaud. I am a doctoral student at LSU in Curriculum and Instruction, and I am currently working on my dissertation. I am particularly interested in the area of leadership, and how students exhibit leadership qualities. I am also interested in the role that the gifted enrichment program plays in developing leadership skills.

I have been observing in classrooms at the school in order to begin this research. In addition, I will need to conduct interviews with teachers and students. The interviews will be for the purpose of obtaining additional information, and for verifying facts. No one will have access to this information except my professors and myself. Your child's name will be changed to ensure anonymity. The questions I will be asking will be general in nature, inquiring about leadership characteristics, and things that are done in a classroom to help or hinder leadership skills.

I need your permission to conduct an interview with your child. Please sign the permission form below, and return it to your child's gifted enrichment teacher next week. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Lucy G. Begnaud

My child, __________________________ has my permission to be interviewed by Lucy G. Begnaud. I understand that this will take place during school hours, and on the school grounds. I also understand that the information will be kept confidential, and that I may have access to this information if I so wish. I give permission for my child to be photographed in a classroom setting.

__________________________  __________________________
(Parent Signature)           (Date)
APPENDIX F
GENERAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

What is your name?
How long have you been teaching?
What grade(s) do you teach? What subjects?
How long have you been teaching at this school?

I am interested in learning more about what goes on in a classroom over the course of a day. If I were the teacher in this class, what would a typical day be like?

If I were a student in this class, what types of opportunities would I have to ask questions?
What are all the opportunities I would have to do group work?
What opportunities would I have for decision making?
What opportunities would I have for communication with others?
What types of opportunities would I have for problem solving?

When you think of the word LEADERSHIP, what comes to mind?
Can you identify leaders in this class?
What makes them leaders?
How do these particular students exhibit leadership skills?
What are the major differences between those you consider leaders, and those you do not classify as non-leaders?
Please describe any differences that you notice in the way these students are treated either by teachers, or by other students.
What do you think about leadership development at the ___ grade level?
As a teacher, what opportunities have you had for leadership within this school? Outside of school?
How have your leadership skills helped or hurt you in your teaching?
APPENDIX G
GENERAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

What is your name? Your age?
How long have you been going to this school?

I am interested in learning more about what goes on in a classroom over the course of a day. If I were a new student in this class, what would be the typical routine? What could I expect that my day would be like?

I am particularly interested in looking at how students show leadership skills. People have identified certain components of leadership: communicating, cooperating, making decisions, and solving problems.
When you think of the word LEADERSHIP, what comes to mind?
What opportunities would I have to ask questions?
What opportunities would I have to do group work?
What opportunities would I have for decision making?
What opportunities would I have for communication with others?
What opportunities would I have for problem solving?

Who do you think are the best leaders in this class?
What makes them leaders?
Do you consider yourself a leader? Why or why not?
Would you like to be considered a leader? Why or why not?
What kinds of things have you done in this class that might make others think you are a leader?
What kinds of things have you done outside of this class that might make others think you are a leader?
What do you think about leadership?
How have your leadership skills helped or hurt you in situations?
APPENDIX H
LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS TEACHER RESPONSES

The following is a compilation of comments and notes obtained from journals that teachers kept over several months and from both informal and formal interviews.

I. KNOWING SELF

- Independent thinker / Self disciplined / Has confidence (but not too much)
- Sets an example / Models good works
- Solves their own problems (handles own problems)
- Openness / willing to try something new / Curious
- Motivation / Someone who follows through with enthusiasm

II. PLANNING

- Task commitment / Stays on task / Thinks before speaking or acting
- Goal setting / Reaching goals / Able to help others achieve their goals
- Assumes responsibility / Decides on priorities

III. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

- Group work / Willing to work with someone else / willing to share / Sharing ideas
- Communication / Diplomacy / Express needs without being bossy
- Share the spotlight with someone else who knows more in one area
- Take diversity and make it cohesive
- Cooperation / Cooperation, and dividing up the workload

IV. EVALUATING

- Able to take criticism
- Gives criticism appropriately
APPENDIX I

LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS STUDENT RESPONSES

The following is a compilation of comments and notes obtained from journals that students kept over several months and from both informal and formal interviews.

I. KNOWING SELF
   • Smart / Is experienced with life
   • Has patience
   • Quick / A good thinker
   • Is bold, not shy

II. PLANNING
   • Is responsible / In charge / Shows up most of the time
   • Makes decisions / Solves problems

III. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS
   • Willing to listen to ideas / listens to others
   • Takes everyone's ideas / Compromises
   • Cooperative / Works together with others
   • Communicates
   • Helps with projects / Helps others achieve their goals / Does what is good for the team
   • Is able to handle people / Resolves problems with friends / Tells people what to do
   • Shows kindness / Is nice / Is not too bossy / Doesn't overdo the job / Is courteous
   • Worries about others' feelings / Can't always have his way

IV. EVALUATING
   • Knows me
   • Gets everybody going in the same direction / move them to action
### Correlation of Findings

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<td>Constant Evaluation</td>
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<td>Strong Links with Real World</td>
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VITA

Lucy Gremillion Begnaud attended elementary school at Mount Carmel and high school at Cathedral-Carmel High School in Lafayette, Louisiana. She is one of eight children born to Edgar and Margaret Gremillion. She attended the University of Southwestern Louisiana, where she received her bachelor of arts degree in special education. Following a brief move to New Orleans while her husband attended law school, Lucy began teaching special education classes. She quit teaching for nine years to raise her two children, Barbara and Geoffrey. During that time, she began taking classes at U.S.L. toward her master of education degree, which she obtained in 1978. Lucy taught at both private and public schools for the next several years while working on her educational specialist degree, which she obtained in 1991. She added computer literacy and gifted education certification to her list of accomplishments.

Lucy has taught special education, regular education, and gifted classes for nineteen years, teaching students from second through fifth grades. She helped write the curriculum and she taught and supervised teachers in the Creative Scholars Program at U.S.L. She served as adjunct professor for two summer sessions at U.S.L. In addition, she has made numerous presentations at local, state, and national conferences. She has been actively working on her doctoral degree since 1996. The degree of Doctor of Philosophy will be awarded in August of 1999.
Candidate: Lucy G. Begnaud

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

Title of Dissertation: Looking for Leadership: Searching in a Middle School for Reactions to Stimuli in Social Environments

Approved:

[Signatures]

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination: June 8, 1999