T.E.E. English scores and performance on reading and writing tasks by first year education students

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T.E.E. ENGLISH SCORES AND PERFORMANCE ON READING
AND WRITING TASKS BY FIRST YEAR EDUCATION STUDENTS

THE EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY

BY

TRACY JACOBS, BACHELOR OF ARTS (EDUCATION)

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the
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USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.
ABSTRACT

This study examined the literacy achievement of first year Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education) students at the Mount Lawley Campus of the Edith Cowan University. It had been suggested that these students possessed inadequate levels of literacy to function as competent teachers.

Students are assumed to have adequate literacy ability for the Bachelor of Arts course, and thus the teaching profession, when they receive a pass mark in their T.E.E. English or English Literature examination.

This study examined the correlation between the T.E.E. English score and the scores the students received on three other instruments measuring aspects of literacy.

The assessment scores firstly provided an indication of the literacy ability of each individual student, specifically indicating areas of higher or lower achievement. The correlation coefficients indicated the degree to which the T.E.E. English scores related to scores from other measures of literacy.

In summary, this study investigated the claims that the students studying for a Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education) do not possess adequate levels of literacy essential for their chosen profession.
Upon analysis of the results, it was concluded that the T.E.E. English Examination could predict, to some degree, the literacy ability of students. However, the results indicate that the T.E.E. English Examination is not a strong enough predictor to assume a student's literacy ability.

In conclusion, the T.E.E. English Examination is not a good predictor of literacy ability. It may be necessary for tertiary institutions to consider other instruments to measure the literacy ability of students. From the study it is also suggested that tertiary institutions conduct literacy skills development courses to upgrade the literacy skills of students. This will ensure that students graduating as teachers will have adequate literacy skills to provide their pupils with quality education in literacy.
DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract i
Declaration iii
Acknowledgements iv
Table of Contents v
List of Tables viii

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION 1
   Background 1
   Statement of the Problem 5
   The Purpose of the Study 5
   Definition of Terms 6
   Derivation of Hypotheses 7
   The Research Question 8
   Hypotheses 8
   Significance of the Study 9
   Limitations of the Study 11

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE 13
   Introduction 13
   Definition of Literacy 14
      Literacy and Functional Literacy 14
      Literacy and Basic Literacy 15
      UNESCO and Literacy 15
      Society and Literacy 16
      Cultural Literacy 16
Literacy as the Integration of all Language Modes 17
A Working Definition of Literacy 17

Standards of Literacy 18
Literacy After TEE 19
Adult Literacy in Australia 19

Literacy in Year Twelve 23
Year Twelve English 23
Levels of Literacy in Secondary Schools 25
Literacy Requirements For Tertiary Entrance 26
The TEE English or English Literature Score 27

Tertiary Literacy 29
Prerequisite to Tertiary Studies 29
Literacy and Tertiary Education Students 30
The Literacy Performance of First Year Education Students 32

3. METHODOLOGY 34

Overview of the Design of the Study 34
The Subjects 34
Instruments - Tertiary Entrance Examination 35
- ACER English Skills Assessment 35
- Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y 36
- Sample of Discourse 36

Design and Procedure 37

vi
4. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The Scores Obtained On The Test Instruments

The Pearson $r$ Analysis 42
Hypothesis One 43
Hypothesis Two 44
Hypothesis Three 45
Hypothesis Four 45
Hypothesis Five 46
Summary of the Analysis of Results 46

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Vocabulary Subtests 50
The Comprehension Subtests 51
The Written Discourse 51
Summary of Findings 52

6. CONCLUSION

Further Research 57
Implications of the Study 58

REFERENCES 62
APPENDIX A 66
APPENDIX B 73
APPENDIX C 85
APPENDIX D 87
APPENDIX E 89
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>Scores from the TEE English Examination and Subtests of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y, the ACER English Skills Assessment, and the Persuasive Discourse Written Essay</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>The Pearson r Analysis of the TEE ENGSCORES (Tertiary Entrance Examination score in English) and the Scores Obtained on Various English Skills Assessments</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3</td>
<td>The Literacy Skills at the End of Year 12</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4</td>
<td>Literacy Skills Expected of Tertiary Students</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5</td>
<td>Scores Obtained on the Persuasive Discourse Written Essay</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

The literacy skills of graduates from the education system in Western Australia are a matter of current public concern. Some newspaper reports (for example "The West Australian", May 3, 1988) suggest that students are leaving our educational institutions inadequately prepared in reading and writing skills to function in today's society. Of particular concern are the literacy capabilities of school leavers who gain entrance to the State's tertiary institutions with the intention of joining the professional workforce on completion of their enrolled course.

Not only are the literacy skills of school leavers and tertiary graduates under scrutiny, but the literacy skills of teachers have also attracted specific criticism and the voicing of great concern. If the literacy skills of teachers are suspect then the concern is indeed well motivated. That is, if there are teachers in our schools who do not possess high levels of competence in reading and writing, it is inevitable that pupils entrusted to them for the teaching/learning of these language skills, will have little chance of attaining the levels of literacy demanded by society.
It is the case that there is no data, in Australia, on the literacy of teachers. However, questions are being asked by the general public and by parents of students as to whether or not teachers do actually possess adequate literacy levels to fulfil their teaching duties. The existence of this doubt, however slight, requires that the educational fraternity should make every effort to ensure that its teachers possess the appropriately high level of skills in literacy. The difficulties of securing data from practising teachers are obvious. For example, most teachers would be reluctant to participate in the testing of their literacy skills as there is the possibility that results may indicate deficiencies in their ability and could thus be detrimental to their teaching career. Even if teachers did agree to being tested obtaining a valid sample and testing procedures would be difficult due to the wide spread locations of teachers throughout the state. The only time in a teacher's career when data are readily available is at recruitment and during training. Thus, one place is to begin with an examination of recruiting practices in the teacher training faculties of the State's tertiary institutions.

In their recruitment, employers and tertiary institutions place almost total reliance on Tertiary Entrance Examination (T.E.E.) scores to indicate a person's capabilities. This is especially so for tertiary
institutions. For those institutions considering recent school leavers for their courses, the T.E.E. aggregate score is used as a marking device which, they assume, predicts the probable subsequent tertiary performance of students recruited on the basis of it.

In the case of students entering the education faculties of the local tertiary institutions, The University of Western Australia, CURTIN University of Technology, Murdoch University and Edith Cowan University, the T.E.E. score must include a pass in English or English Literature. A pass in either of these subjects is assumed to indicate that the student has sufficient literacy skills to cope with the demands and expectations of tertiary education and beyond.

It is most important that students entering into the area of teaching possess high levels of literacy. In preparing students to become teachers, the teacher training course expects its undergraduates to demonstrate high levels of literacy including oral and written language. It is of great importance that students graduating as teachers possess high levels of literacy as these people become models to the students entrusted to them. Modelling is one way in which students learn especially in the areas of oral and written language. It is extremely important that teachers model the correct information. If teachers are modelling incorrect literacy skills then it is highly likely that their students will also adopt the incorrect
skills. It is therefore important that teachers at all levels of education are modelling high levels of literacy skills.

Teachers are expected to have significantly higher levels of literacy than most other adults as they must teach others literacy skills and act as good models, as mentioned above. Throughout the teacher training course little time is devoted to the teaching or upgrading of literacy skills. It is assumed that students entering into the teacher training course already possess the high level of literacy skills required of a student during the course and of a practising teacher. This assumption is based on the fact that the student achieved a pass mark in the T.E.E. English or English Literature examination. If the examination is a good indicator of a student's literacy ability then there is a good chance that he or she will meet the literacy requirements of the teacher training course and will meet the expectations for a practising teacher as far as literacy levels are concerned. However, if the examination is not an adequate indicator of literacy ability then it may be possible for some students to struggle through teacher training and become teachers who possess inadequate levels of literacy for their professional position. Therefore, it becomes crucial that a pass in T.E.E. English or English Literature does truly represent a high level of competence in the various facets of literacy.
Statement of the Problem

As stated previously the score achieved by students in T.E.E. English or English Literature is assumed to adequately measure their literacy standards. That students progress through undergraduate courses and join a profession which may still be susceptible to the accusation that some of its members do not possess adequate literacy standards, is a problem demanding investigation. In essence, the problem which is proposed for investigation in this study, is the possibility that, even with a pass in T.E.E. English or its equivalent, some undergraduate education students may not possess adequate levels of literacy to function as competent teachers. Expressed in another way, the problem is to evaluate the ability of the T.E.E. assessment in English to identify those students who have adequate literacy skills to fulfil their intended role as educators.

The Purpose of the Study

The possibility that teacher education students of doubtful literacy competence are presently being recruited is ample motivation for conducting this study, which examines the relationship between students' scores in T.E.E. English or English Literature and their performance on standardized tests of comprehension, language usage and the writing of the sorts of discourse required in their education course and, subsequently, in the discharge of their duties as teachers.
This study was specifically planned to examine the literacy standards of entering first year education students of the Edith Cowan University at the Mount Lawley Campus, and to relate these to the English component of the T.E.E. aggregate score on the basis of which they gained admission to the Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education) course. The results of the study will assist in indicating whether these students, soon to be teachers, currently possess the literacy levels required of practising teachers.

**Definition of Terms**

**TEE:** The Tertiary Entrance Examinations taken by students at the end of year twelve to assess their knowledge and skills in various Tertiary Entrance Score Subjects studied in year eleven and/or twelve.

**SEA:** The Secondary Education Authority, a statutory body, responsible for approval of secondary education courses, the moderation of results, the conducting of the Tertiary Entrance Examinations, and the certification of student achievement in secondary education.

**ASAT:** The Australian Scholastic Aptitude Test or Scaling Test is a general abilities test consisting of 100 multiple choice questions to be completed in three hours. Results of the test are used to scale marks between subjects so they are comparable and can be aggregated for tertiary admission purposes.
The score obtained by a student in the Tertiary Entrance Examination for the subject of English.

The Australian Council for Educational Research.

A standardized reading comprehension test devised by the ACER for undergraduates, testing their knowledge of vocabulary, speed and level of reading comprehension and other reading skills. It is a series of multiple choice questions to be answered in a given time.

A standardized test used to measure the competencies of undergraduate students in vocabulary, comprehension, usage of language and spelling.

The ability of a person to effectively and efficiently use language in written, and oral modes to convey or gain meaning.

This section outlines how the purpose of the study led to the formulation of a research question which was then reformulated into testable hypotheses.

The study was planned to achieve the following specific purposes:

To determine the relationship between a student's TEE English score and his/her performance on:
a) a standardized test of reading ability;  
b) the sub-tests of a language skills test; and  
c) a written task similar to that required of primary teacher education students. 

It was assumed in this study that the tests listed above would provide an adequate and accurate indication of the student's current literacy ability. These purposes were translated into the following research question.

**The Research Question**

The question researched in this study was:

Are the TEE English scores, achieved by the students comprising the 1990 entering cohort to the Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education) on the Mount Lawley Campus of the Edith Cowan University, closely related to their performance on an appropriate standardized test of reading ability, the sub-tests of a language skills test and a writing task similar to that required of undergraduate primary education students and primary school teachers?

This research question led to the collection and analysis of data relating to student performances on the above listed items.

**Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were generated to permit the
statistical evaluation of the significance of the relationship between student teachers' scores in TEE English (ENGSCORES) and the literacy variables discussed in the above section.

**Hypothesis one.** There is a positive and significant correlation between ENGSCORES and the vocabulary subtest of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y.

**Hypothesis two.** There is a positive and significant correlation between ENGSCORES and comprehension subtest of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y.

**Hypothesis three.** There is a positive and significant correlation between ENGSCORES and the vocabulary subtest of the ACER English Skills Assessment.

**Hypothesis four.** There is a positive and significant correlation between ENGSCORES and the comprehension subtest of the ACER English Skills Assessment.

**Hypothesis five** There is a positive and significant correlation between ENGSCORES and the score obtained from the assessment of a piece of written discourse requiring the writer to argue a point of view.

**Significance of the Study**

As indicated in the background statement of this document the literacy skills of school leavers are being questioned. At present a pass score in English or English Literature is assumed, by tertiary institutions, to indicate that a student has adequate literacy skills to study at a tertiary level. As there are no formal literacy units in courses like the Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education) it is again assumed, by the tertiary
institutions, that undergraduates entering into this course will have the necessary literacy skills to perform adequately both in the course and in the professional teaching field.

If the TEE English or English Literature scores do not accurately indicate the literacy level of the students then it is possible for students to enter into a course like the Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education) without the necessary literacy skills demanded of the course and in the teaching field. If those students pass the course with little improvement to their literacy skills, then they may enter into the teaching field with insufficient ability to teach other students the correct literacy skills. This could in turn create poor literacy levels in school students.

Therefore this study becomes significant as it will indicate the literacy level of first year tertiary students who, according to their TEE English results, have adequate literacy skills to take on tertiary studies. As the students in this study intend to become teachers it is important, to education standards, that they achieve adequate literacy levels.

If the sample in this study do not achieve the literacy levels expected of them then it may be necessary for tertiary institutions to revise their method of selecting undergraduates into courses like the Bachelor of Arts
(Primary Education). It may also be necessary to revise some units to include catch up literacy courses.

This study therefore becomes significant in analysing claims that both school leavers and teachers have poor literacy levels.

**Limitations of the Study**

Discussed below are the factors that should be considered when generalizing the findings to be subsequently reported in the study.

1. The sample in this study was only taken from one campus, (Edith Cowan University - Mount Lawley Campus) and thus may not be a true indication of the literacy ability of undergraduates from all universities.

2. There was a population of 222 students in this study. Only sixty students were selected from the population to make up the sample. The size of the sample may therefore be a limiting factor as it is only about one quarter of the population.

3. The instruments used in this study may also be limiting factors. Both ACER tests were compiled several years ago and may contain vocabulary and language skills that are not currently significant.

4. The population tested were aware of the study.
but were not advised as to how significant their efforts would be towards the final analysis and conclusions. Insufficient knowledge of the study and timing of the testing may have resulted in a poor effort from some students and therefore the results may not reflect their true capabilities.

5. Literacy tests were only administered in the first year of the Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education) course. Without testing in the third (final) year of the course we cannot determine whether the students involved may have improved their literacy levels incidentally throughout the course. If they did improve without formal teaching then their ability to teach literacy skills may improve.

6. The newspaper reports referred to in this study contributed to the formation of the research question as they were thought to reflect public views. However, newspaper reporting is often biased and may not be a useful tool in judging public opinion.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction
In modern Australian society there is a heavy reliance on the ability to read and write in order to function effectively and be able to interpret and contribute to the surrounding environment. The ability to read and write, often referred to as "literacy", incorporates many skills at various levels depending on one's involvement in, and contribution towards, society. For example, it is essential for those involved in business or education to engage higher order literacy skills if they are to participate effectively in their chosen field. It is therefore essential that a person is "literate enough" to cope with the reading and writing demands of society in general, and his/her field of study or occupation in particular.

Literacy is a difficult term to define as its ambiguous nature has lead to many varied interpretations. For example, The Macquarie Dictionary defines literacy as "the state of being literate; possession of education." (The Macquarie Dictionary, 1981). This is a very broad definition and does not state exactly what it is that makes a person literate. Literate could mean anything from being able to write your name to being able to write a ten page essay. Unless a clear and more specific
definition of literacy can be formulated, terms like "adequate literacy" are virtually meaningless. To overcome this problem, the next section is devoted to a discussion of definitions of different sorts of literacy and is concluded with the definition that is adopted in this study.

Definitions of Literacy

Literacy has always generated vigorous debate. This is so because there is no universal definition of literacy. As Resnick and Resnick (cited in Brock, 1990) explain, literacy is a "relative - not absolute - term." (p. 27). Simpson (1990) also describes literacy as, "...a relative concept which encompasses a range of reading and writing skills." (p. 9). Despite these broad views of literacy, some specific definitions have been composed to describe certain aspects of literacy.

Literacy and Functional Literacy

One aspect of literacy is referred to as "functional literacy". Functional literacy is described as, "...the ability to read and write well enough to accomplish simple everyday reading and writing tasks in a particular society," (Simpson, 1990, p.9). Resnick and Resnick (cited in Brock, 1990) also describe functional literacy as being "relative" and thus, changing with society. The definition of functional literacy can often vary
according to the setting in which it is defined.

Literacy and Basic Literacy

In the past "...the ability to read and write one's own name," (Withers, 1989, p. 76) was considered to be a sign of literacy. Simpson (1990) calls this "basic literacy". Today, basic literacy is a somewhat outdated term as a much higher level of literacy is required to comprehend and contribute to a modern society. Functional literacy, as described previously, has more significance than basic literacy.

UNESCO and Literacy

This shift from a basic concept of literacy to a more complex one is evident in two UNESCO statements. The first statement, issued in 1951, described a literate person as one, "...who can, with understanding, both read and write a short, simple statement in his everyday life," (cited in Toussaint, 1988, p. 4). This definition was later changed, in 1961, so that a literate person was then described as one, "...who has acquired the essential knowledge and skills which enable him(sic) to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in his(sic) group and community," (cited in Toussaint, 1988, p. 4). This change highlights the demands an increasingly complex society places on the literacy ability of its members.
Society and Literacy

It is suggested above, that society is a controlling factor in determining what is an acceptable definition of literacy. Each society functions in its own way, with its own needs and therefore, creates a context for which its own literacy requirements are determined. As societies continually change and develop, so too, do the literacy requirements they place on their members, and thus their definition of literacy. The rapid advancement of technology and more complex lifestyles, now characteristic of the Australian society, have accordingly changed the notion of literacy into a more complex one. A literate person, in this modern Australian society, must be able to demonstrate a number of complex literacy skills, for example reading and comprehending various forms of writing and being able to write in various forms, if he/she is going to be able to function effectively as a member of this society.

Cultural Literacy

Effective functioning in society also requires "cultural literacy", according to Boomer (1987). Boomer is referring to the ability of a people to, "...read their world sensitively and critically,"(p. 9). Simpson (1990) includes "cultural literacy" in her general definition of literacy by stating that literacy, "...includes the cultural knowledge which enables a speaker, writer or reader to recognize and use language appropriate to..."
different social situations." (p. 9).

**Literacy As The Integration Of All Language Modes**

One of the most widely used definitions describes literacy as, "...the integration of listening, speaking, reading, writing and critical thinking;" Simpson. 1990, (p. 9). Therefore, to be able to integrate all language modes in every day life, is a good sign of literacy ability.

**A Working Definition of Literacy**

On the basis of the previous discussion, literacy, in the context of an Australian society, consists of a person's ability: to effectively and efficiently use language in all modes (including written, aural and oral) to convey or gain meaning in order to function in society; to comprehend and respond appropriately to aspects of the surrounding environment (including print and non-print forms); and to develop, comment on, and justify his/her own thoughts and opinions in an effort to make sense of the world and control the direction of his/her life. This view of literacy attempts to incorporate other definitions of literacy that include basic literacy, functional literacy and critical literacy. Overall, it can only be considered a guideline as to what might be referred to as literacy. As society changes, there may be a shift in what is considered to be the important aspects of literacy. The definition will also change depending on
the specific context in which the term is used.

**Standards of Literacy**

In spite of the continual changes which definitions of literacy have undergone, literacy standards have always been of great concern to the public. Those concerns have been highlighted in newspaper reports (Donaldson, 1990; McKimmie, 1990; Mendez, 1990; Brandreth, 1988), and research papers (Nightingale, 1988; Parry, 1989; Toussaint, 1988; Wickert, 1989). As Brock (1990) explains, "...it does not matter where you dip into the history of education, you will find thunderous roars of utter conviction that standards are now worse than they were a generation ago." (p. 21). Brock goes on to say that, "...literacy has been declining since it was invented." (p.21) According to Brock, the claims that literacy standards have declined, are exaggerated statements induced by those who believe that literacy standards are never of the level required for effective functioning in society.

There is considerable disagreement with Brock's view (Wickert, 1989; Parry, 1989; Nightingale; 1988). These researchers believe there are problems with the literacy standards of individuals in society today. That there may indeed be problems is also reflected in reports that have appeared in the press. Some of these problems are discussed below.

-18-
Literacy After TEE

The public concern for adequate literacy levels in individuals in our society has no doubt been influenced by various media reports on the topic. One newspaper reported a statement from an army enlistment officer who said, "... the number of recruits under twenty one being rejected because of poor literacy and comprehension skills has risen 150 per cent in the past five years," ("The West Australian", April 21, 1990). In other words, the proportion of recruits scoring poorly in the test compared to those scoring well, was showing a marked increase. According to the enlistment officer, the literacy test, taken by the recruits, was developed at year nine level. All those who attempted the test had passed TEE English. Should this claim be accurate, serious doubts would be placed on the effectiveness of secondary English as a method of developing literacy, and of the ability of the TEE English score to reflect literacy ability. However, like many other media reports, the statement is not substantiated with further evidence and thus conclusions cannot be drawn from it.

Adult Literacy In Australia

Donaldson (1990) cited a recent survey on adult literacy by Wickert. Donaldson reported that one in ten Australians over the age of fifteen do not read well enough or at all. From a survey of over 1500 Australians,
half were unable to identify the correct dosage from a medicine bottle label. Twelve per cent were reported as being incapable of finding a specific intersection on a street map. However, definitive conclusions cannot be drawn from this report as it only utilised small fragments out of the context of the larger study. The report also failed to indicate how many of those tested were migrants or how many actually went through the school system and completed T.E.E. English. But the report brings to light some of the literacy capabilities, or incapacities, of young Australians, some of whom may have gone through the education system but still do not possess the literacy skills expected of them at this time in their educational life.

The nation wide survey conducted by Wickert in 1987, was titled "No Single Measure". It was the first report of its kind to be conducted in Australia, and was based on a similar American survey on adult literacy. Data were collected through interviews that often required participants to complete simulated literacy tasks. If the subject had been taught adequate literacy skills throughout his/her education then many of the tasks set would have been easily achieved.

The study viewed literacy as, "...the application of specific skills, for specific purposes, in specific contexts," (Wickert, 1990, p.24). The report also identified three dimensions to literacy:
1. **Document Literacy**: This involved the ability of the individual to identify and use information in documents (e.g., forms and memoranda).

2. **Prose Literacy**: This involved the ability of the individual to read and interpret prose (e.g., books and newspapers).

3. **Quantitative Literacy**: This referred to the ability of the individual to apply numerical operations to data contained in a simple text (e.g., menu).

Wickert believed that this was an appropriate and relevant way to assess literacy in adults. Some of her findings are listed below:

1. Most Australians could perform straightforward literacy tasks with only a small number completing tasks of moderate complexity in all three dimensions.

2. The qualitative dimension was the lowest scoring with 10% of the sample failing to achieve at all.

3. Those adults having the greatest difficulty with the more complex literacy tasks tended to be older with an unskilled occupation and/or family and had less access to literature in the home.
4. One per cent of the sample scored too low on the initial literacy tasks to continue the survey. More than half of this 1% included subjects from English speaking backgrounds.

Wickert (1990) later states that, "The best predictor of current literacy performance is the current level of literacy activity," (p. 27). Here Wickert is implying that the more involved a person is in literacy tasks, the more competent he/she becomes in general literacy performance. This is a significant point as it may suggest that certain literacy skills, used in tertiary studies, may improve the more the student has to use them.

This research completed by Wickert did not set out to prove that Australia had a literacy problem, but instead was aimed at identifying the incidence of literacy difficulties in the Australian adult population: the nature of the literacy difficulties; the socio-cultural factors associated with the difficulties; and the needs in terms of literacy programmes for adults.

Wickert's research, therefore, dealt exclusively with the literacy of Australian adults. The focus of this study is also the literacy of adults but the students comprise a different group. Wickert's research could be very useful to this study if she could determine the
educational background of the adults involved (e.g., identify those who had completed T.E.E. English). Since this study was designed to examine the literacy performance of first year education students, it is essential to look at the work done in literacy in year twelve of secondary school because this is the syllabus that has been developed to endow future tertiary students with adequate literacy skills.

**Literacy In Year Twelve**

**Year Twelve English**

Year twelve English is a course designed to prepare secondary students for tertiary study. The course emphasizes, "...the development of critical and analytical thinking, such as demanded in tertiary study," (Year Twelve Syllabus Manual, 1990, p. 119).

The "General Aims" of the year twelve English course are as follows:

The course is designed to enable students to:

* learn and use the language forms and conventions used in schooling and in the world beyond school.

* use English as a medium for learning and personal growth.

* learn about, share in, and develop a critical awareness of, the language and cultures of Australia.

* understand how structures, patterns and audience expectations influence language and meaning.
At the end of the year twelve English course the students are also expected to demonstrate a number of educational objectives that are categorized into process objectives and text objectives. Process objectives refer to the general language development of the students. They require students to demonstrate their ability to: write and speak Australian standard English; understand and use a wide vocabulary; shape their writing for an audience and purpose; identify characteristics of a text such as theme and arguments; develop a critical understanding of their reading; and demonstrate an understanding and control of textual elements. For further details on process objectives refer to Table 2 in Appendix A.

Text objectives refer to the content of the course. They require students to demonstrate development of comprehension and composing skills in relation to non-fiction texts such as expositions and newspaper/magazine articles, literature, including novels, short stories and drama, and non-print items such as documentaries and films. Tables 2 and 3 in Appendix A describe the various comprehension and composing skills expected from the students at the completion of the year twelve English course.

It is expected that when students successfully complete
year twelve English or English Literature, they will have sufficient competence in various literacy skills to be able to continue on to tertiary studies and meet the literacy requirements demanded of them there.

Levels of Literacy in Secondary School

Mossenson and Werner (1985), in a report on raising literacy standards in schools, believe that secondary students must reach an advanced level of literacy if they are to meet the demands of tertiary study. The advanced level is the top level on a three level scale they developed to describe the varying degrees of literacy. Level one, the basic or foundation level, is used to describe those students who have sufficient literacy skills to function effectively in a small group or community. It is expected that students of year ten level and above should achieve this level. Level two, the intermediate or graduation level, refers to students who have a literacy ability that enables them to, "...cope successfully with the ever-increasing demands of society for developed language and communication skills". It is expected that students completing year twelve should achieve this level of literacy. The third level is the further studies or advanced level. Mossenson and Werner believe students should achieve this more advanced level of literacy as a prerequisite for further study. The exact skills involved in this level of literacy are
described in Table 2 in Appendix A. A majority of the skills directly relate to those skills described in the year twelve English syllabus as can be seen in Table 2 of Appendix A. For example, The English syllabus explains how students should be able to make meaning from a whole variety of texts, which is similar to the Level 3 Literacy description explaining how people should be able to comprehend many complex texts. Both descriptions also explain that people should be able to write appropriately for given audiences. Therefore, the similarities in the descriptions could be an indication that Mossenson and Werner support many of the Year twelve objectives in TEE English and agree that achieving these would be a prerequisites for tertiary study. Theoretically, if students can achieve all of the objectives in Table 2 of Appendix A they should have the necessary literacy skills to achieve in their tertiary education and beyond. So, if the students pass in TEE English, provided the assessment tests— all those objectives in Table 2 of Appendix A— then they should have the literacy skills required for tertiary education and beyond.

**Literacy Requirements For Tertiary Entrance**

Although the ideas of Mossenson and Werner appear to have potential, the Ministry of Education has not yet considered their notion of advanced literacy as an essential prerequisite for tertiary studies. The Ministry does however, see the need to ensure that all students
accepted into tertiary courses have a level of literacy that is sufficient to cope with tertiary literacy requirements. The Beasley and McGraw reports both recommend that along with meeting subject requirements for tertiary entrance, students must also demonstrate a satisfactory level of performance in literacy. Toussaint quotes from a recommendation from Beasley that states "...explicit definitions of adequate performance in the range of necessary skills...be developed, test materials be developed to facilitate schools' assessment of their students' performance levels," (Toussaint, 1988, p. 3). Toussaint goes on to explain that developing a valid and reliable means of testing the specific literacy performance of possible tertiary entrants takes much time and effort. Therefore, it was decided that. "...an interim measure, year twelve English, be adopted as a measure of literacy". The recommendation by Beasley and update by Andrich is written as follows, "That the literacy requirements for tertiary entrance be satisfied by a pass in (TEE) English or English Literature," (Andrich, 1989, p. xiv).

The TEE English Or English Literature Score

The English score is calculated using a number of assessment details.

1. The school assessment requires the teacher to collect information on a student's performance over the year. The
information is summarized and submitted to the SEA (Secondary Education Authority) in a letter grade and numerical form.

2. The second assessment is the external examination. The examination paper is marked and given a raw score out of 100.

3. The scaling test or Australian Scholastic Aptitude Test (ASAT) is the final assessment completed by the student. This mark enables the SEA to compare the abilities of different groups taking different subjects. The distribution of abilities can be determined from this test.

4. The student's raw examination mark is then adjusted accordingly, to compensate for any unfairness that may result from variations in difficulty of various examinations.

5. A school assessment mark is then calculated to compensate for individual differences in teachers' assessment procedures.

6. Further adjustment in the form of scaling occurs to ensure that students are not unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged by their choice of TEE subjects.

7. The final score obtained for English, and similarly any other TEE subject, is a standardised, moderated, scaled score that, in theory, should reflect the true
ability of the student in that subject.

It is clear then, that the TEE English or English Literature score would be a useful assessment tool due to its statewide validity and extreme care taken to account for variables that may influence its result. Because the score is standardised, all students with equivalent English or English Literature scores can be considered on the same level.

Although the TEE English or English Literature score may be a convenient way to identify those students who are achieving an acceptable standard in the subject, it still remains questionable whether the score indicates a standard of literacy that will be sufficient for tertiary studies. Therefore it becomes questionable whether the TEE English or equivalent score is a true indicator of a student's literacy ability. That is, does a high score in TEE English indicate that the student has a high level of literacy.

Tertiary Literacy

Prerequisite To Tertiary Studies
Students are said to be sufficiently literate for tertiary studies if they have obtained a pass mark in TEE English or English Literature. These students have therefore, supposedly attained the literacy skills mentioned in the year twelve syllabus. If this is the
case, then the students should be very well prepared for the literacy demands of tertiary study. Although there are no set criteria as to what makes a tertiary student literate, the skills set out in Table 2 of Appendix A are those commonly required in a tertiary course. These skills, identified by McEvedy (1985; 1990), are closely linked with those listed in the year twelve syllabus. This being the case, then those students scoring a pass mark or better in TEE English or its equivalent should have little difficulties in their course work.

Literacy and Tertiary Education Students

Yet another media article on adult literacy was reported in The West Australian in 1988. The article, by Brandreth, reported on another literacy survey dealing with students entering the Diploma of Education course at the University of Western Australia. The students were given a basic literacy test three weeks into their first semester. Forty per cent of the students failed, with most errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Scriven, (cited in Brandreth, 1988) who was an academic at UWA at the time, claimed that these results would be reflected in all Australian universities. He also suggested that literacy testing be compulsory for all secondary students at year ten level and above. Scriven quotes, "The Beazley committee made recommendations on implementing literacy testing in secondary school, but
the Education Ministry lost its nerve and has done nothing about it." (quoted in Brandreth, 1988, p. 3). So much public concern was generated from these results that an article was published in the following West Australian (May 4, 1988). The report questioned the adequacy of the language programmes within schools. It also suggested that, "...many teachers are taking their poor skills back into the classrooms and passing them on, like a virus, to following generations." ("The West Australian", 1988).

Although no survey has formally been conducted to indicate the literacy capabilities of teachers in the field, there have been several studies that have tested the literacy ability of their students often in an attempt to determine the effectiveness of the teacher. Power, in an article assessing the effectiveness of secondary schooling, relates student learning outcomes to teacher effectiveness. He refers to a study where over 10,000 ten and fourteen year olds throughout Australia, were tested for basic literacy skills in 1975. The testing was repeated in 1980. Results showed a significant number of students failed to reach what the survey defined as adequate standards of literacy and numeracy. Power also described a quote by employers stating that, "..a disturbingly high proportion of school leavers had not achieved the standards of literacy and numeracy that would enable them to make a satisfactory transition from school to work or further study." (Power,
1989, p. 53). In this article, Power is adding to the speculation that some teachers may not be effectively teaching literacy skills to their students. This could be that the method the teachers are using to teach literacy skills is inappropriate, or that the teachers themselves do not possess a high level of literacy to be able to teach the skills. Articles like Power's support the purpose of this study, to investigate the literacy skills of potential teachers.

The Literacy Performance of First Year Education Students

A recent survey by Holbrook (1989), investigated the literacy skills of a sample of first year education students at the University of Newcastle. The study required the students to complete a standardised test on literacy skills (the English Skills Assessment), and compose a narrative essay. The results showed that a high percentage of errors in both the ESA and the written component, were related to punctuation. Sentence structure errors, particularly confused syntax, also proved to be quite common. Usage, including verb tense and idiomatic prepositions was another common source of error. These relatively simple sources of error raise serious doubt as to the literacy ability of these education students who hope to educate others in the future. Although these students will probably improve their literacy standards throughout their tertiary course, doubt is still raised as to whether they will
have a high enough standard of literacy to be able to educate others in this topic.

Holbrook's study (1989), is only one of many reports that question the literacy ability of tertiary students. Of particular concern is the literacy ability of those students in the education field who will be passing on information to the future generations of this nation. Should the information they pass on be incorrect then the effects could be devastating.

One way to prevent this problem from occurring is to ensure that those entering into a teacher education course begin with a relatively high level of literacy. At present, a person's level of literacy is officially determined by his/her mark in TEE English or English Literature. As mentioned previously, a pass in TEE English or its equivalent should indicate a reasonable standard of literacy. However, reports have clouded this method of judging literacy ability with doubt. Thus, it is timely that the ability of the TEE English score to predict tertiary performance on literacy related tasks, should be investigated.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Overview of the Design of the Study

The Subjects

The population in this study was the 1990 total first year intake to the Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education) on the Mount Lawley Campus of Edith Cowan University. All the students in this population were ranked on the basis of their TEE score in English (ENGSCORES). The population was then divided into three equal sub-groups:

1. High ENGSCORES
2. Average ENGSCORES
3. Low ENGSCORES

The actual ENGSCORES constituting the boundaries between the three groups were determined by the distribution of scores. Due to variation in particular assessment, those students who gained entrance to a tertiary institution on an English Literature score and not an ENGSCORES were considered separately. As only one subject entered the institution solely on an English Literature score, that subject was excluded from the study as the result would be insignificant.

The sample of subjects investigated in this study were drawn, in equal numbers, from the subgroupings described above for ENGSCORES. Twenty subjects were drawn from each subgroup. The top twenty students in the High

-34-
ENGSCORES group comprised the sample of HIGH ENGSCORE students. The twenty students in the middle of the Average ENGSCORES group comprised the sample of AVERAGE ENGSCORE students. The twenty students at the bottom of the Low ENGSCORE group comprise the sample of LOW ENGSCORE students.

Thus, the sample in this study comprised of sixty subjects allocated to three subgroups, each made up of twenty subjects.

**Instruments**

**Tertiary Entrance Examination.** The Tertiary Entrance Examinations in English and English Literature seek to determine if the student has acquired the literacy skills appropriate to and required by the course (see Table 3 Appendix A). The TEE English score is assumed, by tertiary institutions, to indicate a student's literacy ability. The English Examination results in the TEE were required in this study to determine the assumed literacy level of the sample entering into the Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education).

**ACER English Skills Assessment.** The ACER (Australian Council for Education Research) English Skills Assessment Test is a standardised test used to measure the competencies of the students in the areas of vocabulary, comprehension, usage of language and spelling. The test
had a total mark of 188. Marks were given for each section as listed below:

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Results of this test were required in this study to ascertain the level of competence the sample of students had in the areas of literacy described.

Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y. A second standardised test, the Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y (see Appendix B), was also used to measure the vocabulary and comprehension abilities of the reader. The test was divided into two parts with a total of 150 questions with multiple choice answers. Part 1 tested knowledge of vocabulary. It had sixty questions to be answered in fifteen minutes. Part 2 tested reading comprehension. Ninety questions were to be answered in twenty five minutes.

This test was used to complement the results from the ACER "English Skills Assessment" test because it is a more appropriate test for tertiary students.

Sample of Discourse. A hypothetical proposal (see Appendix C) was also presented to the students to critically evaluate in order to generate a piece of
discourse that could be evaluated by the researcher. The proposal was deliberately based on a topic that all students would have some knowledge of.

Design and Procedure
All students in the entering cohort of the Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education) admitted to the programme offered on the Mount Lawley Campus of the Edith Cowan University have previously completed their TEE or equivalent. These results were available to the researcher under strict conditions of confidentiality.

All students, who comprised the sample described above, had completed the subtests of the ACER Test of Language Skills. This test was administered during lecture time, by the Language Arts Department staff at the Mount Lawley Campus of the Edith Cowan University when the students first entered the Bachelor of Arts (Education) course in February of 1990. Correct administration procedures were followed by the lecturers.

Most students, completing the test, would have completed TEE English in the previous year and would now be turning 18. The results of the test, calculated by the staff concerned, were made available to the researcher by the Language Arts Department.

The sample of students, described above, also completed the subtests of the Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y in one of the periods devoted to the study
of Communications Education in the first year programme of the Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education), under the instruction of the researcher. This test was administered in August 1990 under the strict time and procedural guidelines outlined in the ACER Manual for the Co-Operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y (1982).

In order to generate the data required for the sample of discourse on argumentative writing, each subject was required to write on a specified topic during the same period of Communications Education used for the administration of the Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y.

**Scoring of the Test Instruments**

The ACER English Skills Assessment subtests were scored according to the manual accompanying the standardised test. Each subtest was given a score by the lecturer who administered the test. These results were then passed on to the researcher, who converted the relevant subtests to percentages for the purpose of the analysis.

The ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y was scored according to its accompanying manual. Each score was scaled. Both subtest scaled scores were then used in the analysis.

The written discourse was scored by the experimenter on the dimensions of technical considerations, discourse
considerations and structural considerations (See Appendix D). Two independent raters were engaged to check the ratings assigned by the experimenter to a sample of ten texts randomly selected from the subjects comprising the experimental sample. In this way interrater reliability was investigated and calculated at 90% agreement.

As the score for the discourse was out of one hundred it could be directly compared to the above standardised tests.
CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

This chapter provides data on the correlations of ENGSCORES and the scores obtained in the test instruments described in Chapter Three.

The Scores Obtained On The Test Instruments

Table 1 below shows the scores obtained on the test instruments described in Chapter Three. They are the scores obtained by students on the TEE English Examination, Subtests of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y, the ACER English Skills Assessment subtests and the scores obtained on the Persuasive Discourse Written Essay.

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### TABLE 1

Scores From the TEE English Examination, Subtests of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y, the ACER English Skills Assessment, and the Persuasive Discourse Written Essay

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### TABLE 1

Scores From the TEE English Examination. Subtests of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y, the ACER English Skills Assessment, and the Persuasive Discourse Written Essay

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<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>50.1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>66</td>
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<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>57</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>57</td>
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<td>58</td>
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<td>53</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Pearson $r$ Analysis

Table 2, overleaf, outlines the final statistical data obtained using the Pearson $r$ formula to correlate the TEE ENGSORES and the scores obtained on the test instruments used in this study.

See overleaf for Table 2.
TABLE 2

The Pearson $r$ Analysis of the TEE ENGSCORES and the Scores Obtained on Various English Skills Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Instruments</th>
<th>Pearson $r$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>$r^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGSCORE and the vocab. subtest of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension - Form Y</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGSCORE and the comprehension subtest of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension - Form Y</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGSCORE and the vocab. subtest of the English Skills Assessment</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGSCORE and the comprehension subtest of the English Skills Assessment</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGSCORE and the score from written discourse</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hypothesis One**

There is a positive and significant correlation between ENGSCORES and the vocabulary subtest of the ACER Co-operative Reading comprehension Test - Form Y.

According to Table 2, a positive and significant correlation exists between ENGSCORES and the vocabulary subtest of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y ($r = 0.62, p = 0.001$). The hypothesis was
supported. A correlation coefficient of 0.62 (Gay, 1985, p.233) considered adequate for making group predictions. Therefore, the TEE English score can be considered an appropriate predictor of scores obtained in the vocabulary subtest of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y. Thus, a student with a high TEE English score is probably going to obtain a high score in the vocabulary subtest of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y. However, the common variance for these two sets of scores is calculated at 38% which may place some doubt on the predictive ability of the correlation coefficient.

**Hypothesis Two**

There is a positive and significant correlation between ENGScores and comprehension subtest of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y.

The result of the analysis of the association between ENGScores and the scores obtained in the comprehension subtest of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y is positive and statistically significant ($r = 0.43$, $p = 0.001$). Therefore the hypothesis was supported. However, a coefficient of 0.43 is of little value for prediction purposes (Gay, 1985, p. 233) since the common variance is only 18%. Put another way, although the coefficient is positive and significant its predictive ability is unreliable as the common variance is so low. This means the student may have a high TEE English score but may not achieve such a high score in
the comprehension subtest of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y.

Hypothesis Three

There is a positive and significant correlation between ENGScores and the comprehension subtest of the ACER English Skills Assessment.

The result of the analysis of the association between ENGScores and the scores obtained on the vocabulary subtest of the ACER English Skills Assessment is positive and highly significant \( (r = 0.60, p = 0.001) \). Therefore hypothesis three was supported. As in hypothesis one, the coefficient 0.60 can be considered adequate for making group predictions. However, the reliability of the prediction is reduced as the common variance is only 36%. It may be the case that a student who scores well in the TEE English Exam will also score well in the vocabulary subtest of the ACER English Skills Assessment, but due to the low common variance this cannot be guaranteed.

Hypothesis Four

There is a positive and significant correlation between ENGScores and the comprehension subtest of the ACER English Skills Assessment.

The result of the analysis of the association between ENGScores and the scores obtained on the comprehension subtest of the ACER English Skills Assessment is positive and statistically significant \( (r = 0.51, p = 0.001) \). This result indicates that the hypothesis was supported. A coefficient 0.51 is a reasonable score to
base predictions on, but when expressed as common variance of 26% it is too low to assume that the TEE English score can predict the variance of the comprehension subtest of the ACER English Skills Assessment.

**Hypothesis Five**

There is a positive and significant correlation between ENGSCORES and the score obtained from the assessment of a piece of written discourse requiring the writer to argue a point of view.

The result of the analysis of the association between ENGSCORES and the scores obtained from the assessment of a piece of written discourse was positive and statistically significant ($r = 0.41, p = 0.001$). The hypothesis was supported. Although 0.41 represents a positive and significant relationship its common variance is only 17%. This is very low and any prediction from the results of the relationship between the above two sets of scores would probably be unreliable.

**Summary of the Analysis of Results**

From the above results it is fair to say that all hypotheses have been supported. However, only a small percentage of the variance in all measures is predicted by the TEE English score. The TEE English score is therefore a significant predictor of other literacy tests as all results were positive and significant. However with such low variance calculated the relevance of the TEE in predicting literacy ability is questionable.
The results are limited in that only certain facets of literacy have been measured. However, the content of the ACER assessments, along with the discourse activity, test the literacy skills assumed to be taught throughout the Year 12 English course and later tested in the TEE English. Table 1 details the literacy skills expected of students at the end of year 12. A majority of these skills were tested in the ACER and discourse assessments. This may indicate that although the TEE English is a significant predictor, it may not fully measure literacy ability.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study was concerned with the ability of the T.E.E. English Examination to predict the literacy standards of students entering into the Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education). It has been previously acknowledged in this study that student teachers require high literacy standards if they are to fulfil their duties as teachers upon entering their chosen field. As stated in Chapter One, no formal literacy courses are available during the Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education) course and therefore it is extremely beneficial if students already possess high literacy levels upon entering the tertiary institution. It is possible for students to improve their literacy levels incidentally throughout the course, but this improvement cannot be guaranteed. Therefore Tertiary institutions assume that these students have the required literacy levels if they are able to pass, or achieve the equivalent of a pass, in the T.E.E. English Examination.

The study set out to investigate the literacy ability of a sample of students entering into the Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education) course. The institution had already apparently assumed these students had the required literacy levels as a majority had achieved the 50% pass mark (or more) in the TEE English Examination. A small percentage of students scored just below the 50% pass
mark but were given University entrance on a combination of other criteria.

Three major areas of literacy were examined in this study:

a) knowledge and understanding of vocabulary;

b) ability to comprehend text, and;

c) ability to produce a piece of written discourse.

As explained in Chapter Three, two standardized tests were used to measure points a) and b). Students were required to write an essay on a given topic to enable the researcher to measure point c). A scoring scheme was drawn up by Les Puhl, a lecturer in Communications Education at the Mount Lawley campus of the Edith Cowan University (1990), to score the essays. Refer to Appendix D for the scoring scheme.

Finally the scores obtained from points a), b) and c) were compared to the T.E.E. English Examination scores using the Pearson $r$ correlation formula. This enabled the researcher to determine to what extent the T.E.E. English Examination predicted the literacy ability of the sample. A positive significant result from the correlation between the English Examination and the various testing instruments indicated some predictive qualities.

The common variance was also calculated for each coefficient to determine how much variance, in each literacy measure, was predicted by the TEE English score.
The common variance was very low for areas b) and c) listed above. It was still considered reasonably low for area a).

If the T.E.E. English Examination had the predictive ability apparently assumed by the tertiary institutions then those students scoring highly in the English Examination should have scored highly on the testing instruments described above. Those students who obtained moderate scores in the English Examination should have scored moderately on the testing instruments and so on.

The Vocabulary Subtests
As described in Chapter Four, the result of the Pearson r for the correlations between the TEE English Examination and both subtests of vocabulary were highly significant.

Students appeared to score more highly on the vocabulary subtest for the English Skills Assessment than they did for the Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y. This may be because the English Skills Assessment was designed specifically for students who have just completed secondary school, while the Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y was designed for tertiary students. It may be students would improve their knowledge of vocabulary throughout their tertiary course and thus their test score may improve if given at a later date.
The Comprehension Subtests

In Chapter Four, a significant, positive correlation was reported for both comprehension subtests and the TEE English Examination, indicating that the exam has some predictive ability in the area of comprehension. However, it would appear that the students did not score as well on these tests as might be expected with a low common variance (18% and 26%) reported.

Students again scored more highly in the comprehension subtest of the English Skills Assessment than they did in the Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y. The same reason could be used as explained in the vocabulary subtests. Therefore the TEE English score may not be a good predictor of comprehension ability.

The Written Discourse

A positive and statistically significant correlation was reported between the English Exam and the score obtained on the piece of written discourse. Again this indicates that the English Exam has some predictive qualities when measuring the students' ability to write a piece of discourse.

From Table 1 we can see that there is a great variation in the writing ability of the students. It can also be observed that those students scoring highly in the English Examination did not necessarily score the highly in the written discourse and vice versa. This would tend
to lower the predictive ability of the T.E.E. English Examination in the area of writing.

**Summary of Findings**

In summary, all test instruments have proven that the TEE English score can predict the literacy ability of students to a certain degree. According to Gay (1985) correlation coefficients of 0.4 are useful in research involving the investigation of relationships, but a higher coefficient of 0.6 or above is considered more useful in investigations of predictors. Gay also states that, "A correlation coefficient much below 0.5 is generally useless for either group prediction, or individual prediction," (Gay, 1985, p. 181). He goes on to say that, "Coefficients in the 0.60's and 0.70's are usually considered adequate for group prediction purposes." (Gay, 1985, p. 181).

The coefficient determines what the common variance will be. The higher the common variance the greater the relationship would be between the TEE English scores and the other test instruments. If the relationship is strong then the TEE English score may be considered as a good predictor of literacy ability. Gay explains that a common variance of around 16% is unable to predict a person's score on one variable according to their mark on another. If Gay is correct then two out of the five test instruments, the correlation between ENGSCORES and the
comprehension sub-test of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y, and the score from the written discourse, have very low common variance, (18% and 17%) indicating that the TEE English score is unable to accurately predict the scores for these literacy tests. However, the common variance on the other literacy tests are higher (38%, 36% and 26%) indicating that the TEE English score may be able to predict how well a group of students will score on these tests of literacy. An even more confident prediction could be made if the common variance was even higher.

Both the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y subtest of vocabulary and the English Skills Assessment subtest of vocabulary had coefficients around 0.6 indicating a useful relationship with the TEE English scores. From Table 1 it can be observed that a majority of the high scores for each vocabulary test were scored by those students who had the highest TEE English scores. However, some students with low English scores still scored well in the vocabulary tests. Scores in the vocabulary subtest of the Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y were lower than those in the vocabulary subtest of the English Skills Assessment. This may be because the English Skills Assessment is directed at those students who have just graduated from high school, whereas the Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y is meant for those involved in Tertiary
courses. The different levels of tests may assume that students do improve their literacy skills during their tertiary course.

The literacy tests with the lowest coefficients when correlated with the TEE English scores, were the Comprehension Subtest of the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y, and the score from the written discourse. The comprehension subtest of the English Skills Assessment also had a reasonably low correlation with the TEE English scores. There was a significant but low correlation between the comprehension test scores and the TEE English scores. This means some students with high scores in TEE English did not score very highly in the comprehension subtests and vice versa. Although there were some high scores in the English Skills Assessment comprehension subtest, scores for comprehension were quite low for students entering into a field where comprehension of text is an important aspect of the profession. This means that these students may require further instruction to improve their comprehension skills in order to become effective teachers of literacy.

The scores on the written discourse measure a significant but not high correlation with the TEE English scores. Table 1 illustrates how widely spread the scores were. There was no pattern in the scores. Students scoring highly in TEE English did not necessarily score highly in
the written discourse. Students with the lowest scores in TEE English did not necessarily have the lowest scores in the written discourse. The scores for the written discourse were generally low especially for students who are apparently assumed, by the tertiary institutions, to have an adequate level of literacy skills, particularly in writing. Writing is a vital part of a tertiary course, with a majority of the assessment being based on written assignments and exams. To write one must be able to read. Therefore, reading is also an important part of the tertiary course, and of literacy in general. Both reading and writing are important in the teaching profession. Teachers need to be able to teach students correct literacy skills especially in reading and writing. These aspects of literacy are used immensely throughout an individual's education and in the wider community.

It may be necessary for many students who scored poorly in writing to upgrade their skills to a level acceptable for teachers, who are to teach others these skills.
CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the data presented in Chapter Four and discussed in Chapter Five, it would seem reasonable to conclude that the TEE English Examination can in fact predict literacy ability. However, based on the data presented in Chapter Four and Five some concern may be generated as to how well the TEE English Examination can predict literacy ability.

The correlation coefficients between TEE English and other literacy measures ranged between 0.41 and 0.62. Although these scores indicate positive and significant relationships between the TEE English score and the test instruments, higher coefficients would make predictions more reliable. In fact, the coefficients of 0.41 and 0.43, obtained on two of the test instruments, are reasonably low and could not be used to make adequate predictions.

In summary, the TEE English score can predict literacy ability, but, according to this research study, it does not predict adequately all facets of literacy that may be required in tertiary studies and beyond. Therefore it may not accurately predict a student's literacy performance at a tertiary level. For professions like teaching, that require a high level of literacy ability, institutions should ensure that by the end of their course, graduates
had the necessary literacy levels for their chosen field. This could not be adequately predicted by the TEE English score.

**Further Research**

The findings of this study suggest that further research, examining a greater variety of literacy skills, could assist in measuring the predictive ability of the TEE English score. Only the areas of vocabulary, comprehension and written discourse were examined in this study. A future study may look in more detail at spelling, language usage and oral language and expand on written language. These are all important aspects of literacy, particularly for teachers who must pass on accurate knowledge and skills to their pupils.

Similar studies could be conducted but designed to overcome some of the limitations described in Chapter One. For example, a larger sample may be taken and students may be tested on entry to a tertiary course and at some time during the course to see if they improve literacy skills incidentally.

Further studies could look into the teaching field and attempt to investigate the literacy levels of practising teachers. A comparison of the literacy levels of pre-service and post-service teachers would be useful in identifying areas of concern.
High school students could also be tested on certain literacy skills using instruments other than TEE English. Scores in these tests could then be compared with the TEE English score. In this way tests could be administered around the same time as TEE English. There would be few other external influences if the tests could be administered at a similar time.

Implications of the Study

Given the limitations of sample size, administration of testing, suitability of test instruments and population awareness of the study, discussed in Chapter One, it is clear that the TEE English scores can predict literacy ability but is not the most reliable measure as explained in Chapter Five. The correlations are not strong enough to say conclusively that the TEE English score can predict the literacy ability of individuals.

If the TEE is not a strong predictor of the literacy skills then tertiary institutions cannot assume that those students with acceptable pass marks in TEE English have the required literacy levels for tertiary studies and beyond.

As stated earlier in this study, to become effective teachers of language, individuals entering into the teaching profession must have high levels of literacy. It was also stated that as there are no formal literacy courses in the Bachelor of Arts in Education, Tertiary
students entering into the course were apparently assumed to have the necessary literacy skills to complete the course and become effective teachers. The TEE English score was apparently assumed to predict the literacy ability of students. If this was the case then a good score would mean they had high levels of literacy. A pass, accepted as 50% but may be less if other criteria are taken into consideration, was also assumed, by tertiary institutions, to indicate that a student had the required literacy levels. However, this study has shown that students do not necessarily score well in literacy tests even though their TEE English score has apparently indicated that they have the literacy ability to score well in tests. This places a doubt on the reliability of the TEE English score to predict literacy ability. Therefore tertiary institutions may not be able to assume students possess the literacy levels required of the course and in the teaching field. To ensure students do not graduate into the teaching profession with inadequate literacy skills, institutions may need to firstly test students using other instruments (such as the ACER Co-operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y) to enable a more reliable measurement of literacy ability. From further testing, students with doubtful literacy skills can be identified and either excluded from the course or placed in compulsory literacy support classes conducted during the tertiary course. For example, the
sample in this study appear to be weak in the areas of reading comprehension and writing. A course developing these aspects of literacy could be of great benefit before these students enter into the teaching profession. Without a skills development course these students may enter the teaching field with inadequate literacy skills. This could be damaging to the pupils entrusted to them in the future.

It would also be of benefit if literacy tests were administered to tertiary students before they graduated and became teachers. In this way, students who still do not display high literacy levels could be required to enrol in literacy skills development courses.

This study has shown that we cannot rely on one test, ie. TEE English, to act as a predictor of literacy ability. Literacy skills need to be tested using several instruments to improve the accuracy and reliability of results. It is also necessary to assist those people who do not have high levels of literacy, according to the test instruments, but who intend entering a field where literacy skills are vital. Some literacy skills can be developed incidentally but in the case of tertiary education students the risk is too great to assume that by the end of the course they will have adequate literacy levels.

It is vital that the adults of the future learn and
maintain accurate literacy skills. Without them it is difficult to survive in our modern and ever changing society. Therefore it is of great importance that our educators demonstrate high levels of literacy so they can pass on their competent literacy skills to their pupils.
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### TABLE 3

**The Literacy Skills at the End of Year 12**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>English Syllabus</th>
<th>Level 3 Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* writes and speaks using standard Aust. English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* understands and uses a wide vocab. to clarify and express ideas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* uses oral language to engage an audience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* shapes writing and speaking for an appropriate audience and purpose.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* identifies themes, ideas, propositions or arguments in print/non-print texts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* has a critical understanding in reading of print and non-print texts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
\textbf{TABLE 3}

\textbf{The Literacy Skills at the End of Year 12}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>English Syllabus</th>
<th>Level 3 Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* relates critical understandings to own writing and speaking.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* demonstrates control of audience, purpose, genre, structure and style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* writing of a variety of compositions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* makes meaning from a variety of text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* identifies and understands the cultural and historical contexts in which a text was created.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* discerns the ideas, attitudes and values on subjects reflected in a text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* identifies point of view, genre, style and structure of a text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Comprehends complex texts:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* identifies author's assumptions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* infers meanings from texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* makes high level generalizations from specific information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Critically evaluates texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Recognizes ambiguity and shades of meaning of words in a test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Predicts meanings of unfamiliar words.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE 3

**The Literacy Skills at the End of Year 12**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>English Syllabus</th>
<th>Level 3 Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>READING</td>
<td>* identifies the ideas, propositions and arguments presented in an expository text.</td>
<td>* analyses the role of language, structure and selection of detail in the shaping of the article.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRITING</td>
<td>* demonstrates an awareness of context * demonstrates a sense of audience for composition.</td>
<td>* Writes appropriately for audience in most forms and formats required in school. * Able to adapt to demands of academic writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* demonstrates the ability to structure an argument, develop it in detail and substantiate ideas.</td>
<td>* uses introductions, topic sentences and paragraphs and conclusions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

-69-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>English Syllabus</th>
<th>Level 3 Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WRITING</strong></td>
<td>* demonstrates competent usage of full stops, commas, question marks, exclamation marks, and quotation marks.</td>
<td>* Observes punctuation conventions with occasional errors only. May skilfully go beyond conventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SPELLING</strong></td>
<td>* recognises and corrects own spelling mistakes.</td>
<td>* Spells accurately many words outside common use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VOCABULARY</strong></td>
<td>* Uses vocabulary revealing awareness of ambiguities and shades of meaning.</td>
<td>* Uses appropriate vocab. for the audience and subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDIT</strong></td>
<td>* Improves writing by restructuring and reworking entire texts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 4

Literacy Skills Expected of Tertiary Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>SPECIFIC SKILLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>READING SKILLS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Predicting</td>
<td>* contents from title, contents page, index.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* the meaning of unfamiliar words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Analysing</td>
<td>* structure of the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* author's purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* main ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* specific information/evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Evaluating</td>
<td>* author's reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* purpose and function of text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* relevance and reliability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Locating Information</td>
<td>* reading for specific information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* reading for information to complete a table</td>
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<td>* grammar and punctuation</td>
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General Directions: Do not turn this page until the examiner tells you to do so. This examination consists of two parts and requires 40 minutes of working time. The directions for each part are printed at the beginning of the part. When told to start the test, read these directions carefully and proceed as soon as you answer the questions.

All answers must be marked on the separate answer sheet. For each question indicate the answer you choose by placing a cross in the appropriate square e.g., if you choose the answer numbered 3 for any question you would mark it in the square under 3 beside the number of that question thus:

||| |
---|---|---|---|---|---|
1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

DO NOT SPEND TOO MUCH TIME ON ANY ONE ITEM.

ANSWER THE EASIER QUESTIONS FIRST; then return to the harder ones if you have time. There is a time limit for each part. If you finish Part I before the time is up, go on to Part II. If you have not finished Part I when the time is up, stop work on that part and proceed at once to Part II. If you finish Part II before time is up, you may go back and work on either part. No questions may be asked after the examination has begun.

You may answer questions even when you are not perfectly sure that your answers are correct, but you should avoid wild guessing, since wrong answers will result in a subtraction from the number of your correct answers.

TIME LIMITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part I: Vocabulary</th>
<th>15 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part II: Reading</td>
<td>25 minutes</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>40 minutes</td>
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Co-Operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y

READING COMPREHENSION

PART I: VOCABULARY

(15 minutes)

Directions: In each group below, select the numbered word or phrase that most nearly corresponds in meaning to the word at the head of that group, and put a cross in the square under its number on the separate answer sheet. It is quite likely that you will finish this part before the time is up. In that case, go on immediately to Part II.

1. Carol
   1. prayer
   2. song
   3. bird
   4. battle cry
   5. motto

2. Toxin
   1. poison
   2. weed
   3. failure
   4. illness
   5. disease

3. Alteration
   1. pause
   2. quarrel
   3. change
   4. step
   5. turning

4. Competition
   1. achievement
   2. capacity
   3. repayment
   4. selection
   5. rivalry

5. Filtering
   1. run
   2. replace
   3. cheat
   4. hurry
   5. upset

6. Symptoms
   1. harmony
   2. outline
   3. indication
   4. result
   5. invention

7. Verify
   1. taste
   2. weigh
   3. question
   4. confirm
   5. attempt

8. Partition
   1. span
   2. passageway
   3. division
   4. bias
   5. treatment

9. Tolerance
   1. allow
   2. disobey
   3. recent
   4. suspect
   5. censure

10. Aim
    1. approve
    2. enforce
    3. revise
    4. corrupt
    5. cancel

Go on to the next page.
Go on to Part II over the page.
Co-Operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y

PART II: READING

25 minutes

Directions: This part consists of selections taken from stories, articles, textbooks, etc. Following each passage, are several multiple-choice items concerning it. In each case, you are to read the passage carefully first, and then decide on the basis of the passage which one of the choices following each incomplete statement or question best completes the meaning of the statement or answers the question. If you cannot decide, you may go back to the passage. On the separate answer sheet put a cross in the square underneath the number of the choice you think is best. You are not expected to finish this part in the time allowed, but work as rapidly as you can without making careless mistakes.

Most boys at school have at some time learned the dates of the English kings. But as a rule they fail to keep this up and lose all the good of it. I have an old friend, a college classmate, who has carefully kept this knowledge alive. He is now able in his old age to get great enjoyment from saying these dates to himself. His keepers tell me that he shows many other signs of mental activity and often recites for them lists of genuine plurals and verbs that take the direc.

It pleased me, I must say, at my country place last summer when there was some mathematical difficulty about marking the tennis court to have one of my guests, a student in my classes at Yale, offer to work out the measurement with a logarithm. He said it was quite simple. He needed, in short, nothing but a hypotenuse and two acute angles, all of which luckily were found around the place. It was very interesting to watch the boy calculate, at first, I am certain he would have got the solution, only while he was preparing to mark the court by means of his logarithm the chauffeur marked it with whitewash.

1. It can be inferred that the young man did not get his solution was that
   1. he made a mistake in measuring the acute angles.
   2. he got the wrong hypotenuse.
   3. he did not know enough mathematics.
   4. he tried to hurry.
   5. his method took too long.

2. The writer hints that most boys learn the dates of the English kings because
   1. these dates are an essential part of history.
   2. they are required to do so.
   3. these dates may provide enjoyment in later life.
   4. it is a sign of mental activity to know these dates.
   5. most educated people know these dates.

3. There is evidence that the writer is a
   1. mathematics teacher.
   2. history teacher.
   3. college professor.
   4. Latin scholar.
   5. young man.

4. Apparently the old friend mentioned in the first paragraph
   1. had been a history teacher.
   2. has lost his memory.
   3. was in an insane asylum.
   4. was in jail.
   5. had studied too hard in college.

5. The writer introduces a little humour in the second paragraph by
   1. making fun of the chauffeur's efforts to mark the court.
   2. exaggerating the difficulty of marking the court.
   3. speaking of mathematical concepts as though they were concrete objects.
   4. stressing the simplicity of marking the court by mathematics.
   5. sympathizing with the boy's efforts to make his calculation come out right.

6. The main point of this passage is that
   1. many useless things are learned at school.
   2. memorizing damages the brain.
   3. dates are sometimes useful.
   4. mathematics is helpful in practical situations.
   5. almost all schoolings is a waste of time.

To increase its sale value, a cheap stone is often sold under a name closely resembling that of a valuable gem. For instance, some red stones are given names which suggest to the uninformed purchaser that they are a variety of ruby. Thus, red pyrope garnets are sold under such trade names as American ruby and Arizona ruby; red and orange spinels are called Bohemian ruby. A mineral as different from the true ruby as rose quartz is frequently offered as Bohemian ruby. Rose and pink topaz may be sold as Brazilian ruby, and red or pink tourmalines as Rubellite or Siberian ruby.

7. The best title for this passage is
   1. Rubies.
   2. Varieties of Ruby.
   3. Red Stones.
   5. Misleading Names for Gems.

8. Which one of the following is really topaz?
   1. Arizona ruby.
   2. Brazilian ruby.
   4. Siberian ruby.
   5. Brazilian ruby.

9. The passage states that trade names of the type mentioned are used to
   1. identify varieties of stones for purchasers.
   2. make it possible to sell certain stones at a higher price.
   3. describe imitation rubies.
   4. identify varieties of valuable gems.
   5. increase the sales of cheap stones.

10. The writer would apparently favor
    1. giving trade names only to cheap stones.
    2. giving trade names only to precious gems.
    3. forbidding the sale of stones that look like rubies.
    4. doing away with trade names for stones.
    5. giving a special trade name to true rubies.

Go on to the next page.
11. In the event of great changes of climate, it is likely that gorillas would
1. acquire the ability to change;
2. learn to like cold weather.
3. die out.
4. become more stupid.
5. become more variable.

12. The writer appears to believe that
1. ancestors of whales once ran about the forests.
2. the glacial epoch was unimportant.
3. gorillas are brighter than tigers.
4. children are likely to be brighter than their parents.
5. many gorillas were killed by earthquakes.

13. The writer emphasizes that one of the major differences between men and gorillas is that men
1. are weaker.
2. have been in existence a shorter time.
3. are more variable in ability.
4. are not such good cricketers.
5. are primates.

14. The writer indicates that gorillas may be conservative as a result of
1. stupidity.
2. choice.
3. circumstance.
4. variation.
5. change.

15. There is an implication that
1. change is almost always for the better.
2. gorillas once had the power to change.
3. uniformity is a good thing.
4. the average gorilla has changed for the worse.
5. gorillas can learn as quickly as men.

16. The answer expected to the question in the middle of the first paragraph is
1. "No reason."
2. "In order to keep the power to change."
3. "In order to survive."
4. "Because conditions might change some day."
5. "Because change is growth."

17. The writer states that survival is dependent upon
1. changes for the better.
2. changes in living conditions.
3. uniformity.
4. variation.
5. intelligence.

18. The word "There" (in the last sentence) could best be replaced by the phrase
1. "Beside the ruined fragments."
2. "In the Age of Pericles."
3. "Wherever there are mighty fleets and armies."
4. "By reading the books."
5. "In the vast cities of modern times."

19. The writer is probably most interested in
1. sculpture.
2. architecture.
3. literature.
4. painting.
5. warfare.

20. The writer implies that the most important information about the ancient Greeks concerns their
1. political activity.
2. ships.
3. ideas.
4. military skill.
5. vast cities.

21. The writer makes his point by
1. describing ancient ruins.
2. quoting from the books of Greece.
3. praising harbours and arsenals.
4. giving examples.
5. appealing to authority.

22. The main topic of this passage is
1. books.
2. modern Greece.
3. mighty fleets and armies.
4. Agammenon and Pericles.
5. ruined fragments.

Go on to the next page.
Co-Operative Reading Comprehension Test – Form Y

21. The passage implies that, of the following writers, the one born most recently was
1. Barrie.
2. Diderot.
3. Carlyle.
4. Rousseau.

22. The writer thinks the opinions of the literary critics of the nineteenth were
1. discriminating.
2. superficial.
3. hostile.
4. challenging.
5. astonishing.

23. Which one of the writers mentioned does the author of the passage think he most closely resembles?
1. Dickens.
2. Verne.
4. Kipling.
5. It is impossible to say.

24. Which one of the following qualities must have shown itself in the writings of the author of the passage?
1. Consistency.
2. Conventional.
3. Variety.
4. Fine literary style.
5. Originality.

25. If a writer believed in the assumption mentioned in line 2, that belief would almost certainly lead him to
1. imitation.
2. excellence.
3. originality.
4. progress.
5. recognition.

26. To gain emphasis, the writer relies chiefly on
1. exaggeration.
2. repetition.
3. deliberate understatement.
4. shocking statements.
5. reasoned argument.

27. The paragraph implies that, of the following writers, the one born most recently was
1. Barrie.
2. Diderot.
3. Carlyle.
4. Rousseau.

28. The literary critics in the period mentioned were seldom
1. scholarly.
2. sure of themselves.
3. surprised.
4. interested in newsmen.
5. familiar with the past.

29. "Fresh" in line 9 most nearly means:
1. up and coming.
2. talented.
3. odd.
4. new.
5. saucy.

Millions of dollars are spent annually in misleading the public regarding health facts, and other millions are spent by a屿le public in return. While Miss Jones has forty-five minutes a week (if she is lucky) with a class of fifty students to teach hygiene. She is more than frequently begrudged this time allotment because it is taken from some other more important subject in the curriculum such as algebra, trigonometry, the Renaissance, or Shakespeare. Her materials are often time limited because of an inadequate budget. Yet a manufacturing concern will pay a radio entertainer $8,000 for a single performance on a programme designed to acquaint the public with the health-giving values of a cathartic.

30. The writer uses the expression "if she is lucky" to indicate that
1. hygiene is easy to teach.
2. most teachers have less time to teach hygiene.
3. most teachers have more students in their classes.
4. advertisements can be used in the classroom.
5. advertisements on the radio makes hygiene courses unnecessary.

31. The writer would most likely support a movement for
1. founding a Shakespearean theatre.
2. increasing the number of radio programmes.
3. spending more money on the teaching of hygiene.
4. teaching mathematics on the radio.
5. the inadequacy of teachers' salaries.

32. The main subject of this paragraph is
1. hygiene courses.
2. health education.
3. commercial advertising.
4. the inadequacy of teachers' salaries.
5. the health-giving values of a cathartic.

33. The writer seems to be
1. satisfied.
2. philosophical.
3. glib.
4. amiable.
5. insinuating.

34. The claim made in the first line is partially supported by the statement that
1. Miss Jones has only forty-five minutes a week in which to teach hygiene.
2. there are only fifty students in Miss Jones' hygiene class.
3. Miss Jones' materials are limited.
4. the time for hygiene is taken from other subjects.
5. a radio entertainer receives $8,000 for a single performance.

35. The writer implies that cathartics
1. are not truthfully advertised.
2. are not widely used.
3. are sold at extravagant prices.
4. should not be mentioned in public.
5. should be advertised in classrooms.

Go on to the next page.
Co-Operative Reading Comprehension Test - Form Y

1. Last night I was endeavouring to converse with a young Englishman who had just finished his second year at Cambridge University. He did not know any of the distinguished professors there and had never heard of them. "Of course," he said, "I took rowing at once, and if you go in for it seriously, you live in a very restricted circle." Whereas he complained about the latest generation, saying that they had been spoiled by dancing and automobiles and shirted working for their colleges. Coming from his lips, "working" took me back. I questioned him; he meant football. I felt reassured.

37. "Working for their colleges" in line 11 means
1. earning money to meet expenses.
2. raising money for the colleges.
3. raising academic standards.
4. going out for varsity sports.
5. studying hard.

38. The Englishman evidently spent most of his time
1. with distinguished people.
2. at social affairs.
3. in mental activity.
4. in physical activity.
5. trying to make money.

39. The Englishman had not heard of any of the famous Cambridge professors because
1. he had not yet gone to class.
2. there weren't any.
3. he had been there only two years.
4. he was too busy studying.
5. he was not interested in academic matters.

40. "Took me back" in line 12 most nearly means
1. surprised me.
2. excited me.
3. amused me.
4. disgusted me.
5. recalled to my mind.

41. The writer felt reassured (last line) because he knew that
1. battles are won on the playing fields of England.
2. all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.
3. his original impression was correct.
4. the future of England was in good hands.
5. football is important.

42. The writer's attitude toward the Englishman is
1. mildly scornful.
2. approving.
3. sympathetic.
4. severe.
5. reassuring.

43. The writer is probably
1. a Cambridge graduate.
2. a Cambridge professor.
3. a former athlete.
4. a young American student.
5. not an Englishman.

44. "The latest generation" in line 9 refers to
1. students many years younger than the Englishman.
2. fellow students of the Englishman.
3. students preceding the Englishman by a few years.
5. students of the previous generation.

Pure gold is much too soft to be durable as a mounting. It must, therefore, be mixed, or alloyed, with other metals to increase its hardness. The gold content of these alloys, that is, their fineness or purity, is indicated by the term carat or karat, which means one twenty-fourth part. Thus, 18-carat gold, usually stamped 18C, consists of 18 parts of gold and 6 parts of other metals. In order to reduce the cost, alloys of lesser gold content are also used. Custom and practice permit 10C alloys, when so stamped, to be sold as gold, but an alloy with less than 50 per cent gold is not properly designated as gold. The term fine gold is used to indicate pure gold. Purity may also be expressed in terms of parts of one thousand; thus, 750 fine means that the alloy contains 750 parts of gold out of every 1,000. When gold is alloyed with different metals, changes in colour may be secured. These alloys are known as yellow, white, and green gold.

45. Which one of the following alloys cannot properly be labelled "gold"?
1. 10 carat.
2. 12 carat.
3. 15 carat.
4. 18 carat.
5. 24 carat.

46. A gold alloy that is 250 fine can be described as
1. 6 carat.
2. 8 carat.
3. 12 carat.
4. 18 carat.
5. 21 carat.

47. This passage is probably part of
1. an advertisement for jewellery.
2. a schoolbook about minerals.
3. an article in a popular magazine.
4. a jeweller's catalogue.
5. a law regulating the sale of gold.

48. How many reasons are indicated in the passage for alloying gold?
1. One.
2. Two.
3. Three.
4. Four.
5. Five.

Go on to the next page.
Co-Operative Reading Comprehension Test – Form Y

Read your favourite poem again and again, and the words lose their meaning. Meet your favourite picture or musical composition frequently and you find yourself growing blind and deaf to it. Saturate yourself with your favourite perfume and it loses its appeal. The fact is that any pleasant sensation tends to disappear upon too frequent repetition. One’s first Fils Mignon Bérénice is a ravishment. The second, unless it occurs after an interval of repose, is less effective. A third in rapid succession can hardly be thought of.

Any artistic experience, like any gastronomic one, requires a pause for thought and rumination. In many areas of experience, we automatically take reactions. We put the books back on the shelf, stay away from that room in the museum, go to another theatre. In music this is not so easy; we are not able to make up our own programme. When next you see me spawning out of a concert and inquire sardonically, “What! Aren’t you staying to hear the Pathétique”, you will hear me whisper, “No thank you. I’m on the wagon.”

54. The reason why the ants attempt to save their eggs is probably that they
1. want to safeguard their offspring.
2. like the taste of the juice given off.
3. are driven by parental instincts.
4. wish to destroy their enemies.
5. intend to eat them.

55. The writer believes that mother love among the insects
1. is frequently observed.
2. can be proved scientifically to exist.
3. is a sentimental fairy tale.
4. is accurately described by other writers.
5. is found in a few isolated cases.

56. Just before the passage quoted, the writer apparently discussed
1. mother love among the higher animals.
2. mother love versus father love.
3. the differences between human beings and other animals.
4. the harm done by sentimental feelings.
5. the importance of a backbone.

No man is devoid of placing himself in a disagreeable situation. But if he has no choice in the case, if there be no choice presented to him but a neglect of duty or the enmity of those who are called the world, he merits the contempt as well as the indignation of his country who can hesitate which to embrace.

57. In the last line, the word “embrace” most nearly means
1. desire.
2. choose.
3. deserve.
4. consider.
5. recommend.

58. The writer probably likes to think of himself as
1. crafty.
2. sociable.
3. flexible.
4. suggestive.
5. courageous.

59. The writer is probably leading up to a statement that he believes will result in
1. great popularity for him.
2. widespread indignation.
3. hesitation.
4. neglect of duty.
5. public reward.

60. The writer feels obliged to
1. avoid a disagreeable situation.
2. accept the verdict of public opinion.
3. do his duty.
4. hesitate over a difficult choice.
5. criticize his own country.

Go on to the next page.
Co-Operative Reading Comprehension Test — Form Y

I bought me a dollar watch and set it by the great clock on the Parliament House at 8.05 p.m., then went back to my room and buried myself in my book. Now the Parliamentary clock has a peculiarity that exists in no other clock. On the half hour it strikes the succeeding hour, then strikes the hour again at the proper time. After I had been reading for a while, the great clock began to boom and I counted — ten! I reached for my new watch to see how it was getting along; it was marking 9.10. It seemed rather poor speed even for a dollar watch, but I supposed that the climate was affecting it. I showed it half an hour ahead, took to my book, and waited to see what would happen. Soon the great clock struck ten. I looked — the watch was marking 10.30. This was too much speed for the money; I pushed the hands back a half hour. By and by the great clock struck eleven. The watch showed 10.30. I pushed it ahead some show of temper. Soon the Parliamentary clock struck eleven again. The watch showed up 11.30 now, and I beat its brains out against the bedstead. I was sorry the next day when I found out.

51. What was it that the writer found out the next day?

1. That he had damaged the bedstead with the watch.
2. That the great clock itself had been wrong the previous evening.
3. That his watch was broken beyond repair.
4. That he had broken his watch in his sleep.
5. That the great clock struck each hour twice.

62. At 9.30 the great clock must have struck

1. once.
2. eight times.
3. nine times.
4. ten times.
5. eleven times.

63. The writer was ready to believe that his watch was wrong because he had

1. a dislike to it.
2. reset it so many times.
3. just bought it.
4. never known the great clock to be wrong.
5. paid so little for it.

64. This passage was probably written principally to

1. warn the public against dollar watches.
2. make fun of the Parliamentary clock.
3. make fun of dollar watches.
4. advise against hasty action.
5. amuse its readers.

65. The writer considers a written poem to be

1. an accident.
2. a by-product.
3. a result of hard work.
4. a method of achieving ecstasy.
5. a reward for humility.

66. The writer values most

1. the desire to write.
2. the ability to write.
3. the restriction of poetry.
4. a mood.
5. patience.

To avoid or repair the results of ploughing we have the new ploughless system. It requires at least as many ploughs as the old system and should be called moldboardless farming, because moldboard ploughs, which turn soil upside down and bury the dead and live vegetation, are not used. The new ploughs have blades or rods that run along under the surface and kill the grass and weeds but leave the vegetable materials on the surface. A modern farmer, when he raises a crop of wheat, leaves all the straw on the surface after the harvest, because he knows that it is the best soil and crop insurance he can get. One drop of hard rain can wash bare soil eight inches into the air. The effect of billions of drops is to move tons of soil downhill.

67. The passage implies that the effect of leaving the straw on the wheat field is to

1. make ploughing unnecessary.
2. reduce erosion.
3. keep the soil from getting too wet.
4. make fertilizing unnecessary.
5. discourage insects and other pests.

68. The chief difference between the old and new ploughs is that the old ones

1. kill the grass and weeds.
2. leave only the live vegetation on the surface.
3. leave only the dead vegetation on the surface.
4. leave all the vegetation on the surface.
5. bury all the vegetation.

69. According to the writer, it is inaccurate to call the new system

1. ploughless.
2. moldboardless.
3. successful.
4. widespread.
5. modern.

Go on to the next page.
There is a later song that rivals The Rosary as America's choice—a musical setting for Joyce Kilmer's Trees. Here, too, the words play an important part. Ever since it was written, Trees has been the sort of poem that people cut out and carry around in their pochettebooks. This is not the case with From the Land of the Sky-blue Water or Evening-Star. The music for Trees is pretty bad but there is one thing in its favour. It is so like Raskay's Song of India that the two could be played at the same time without discomfort. Trees, therefore, like, Moonlight and Roses does not have to beat its own path to the brain. It travels a furrow already ploughed by a famous predecessor.

70. From the passage it is apparent that Song of India was composed before

1. The Rosary.
2. From the Land of the Sky-blue Water.
3. Trees.
4. Evening Star.
5. Moonlight and Roses.

71. The writer indicates that the words are a large factor in the popularity of

1. Song of India.
2. From the Land of the Sky-blue Water.
3. Evening Star.
4. The Rosary.
5. Moonlight and Roses.

72. In the last two sentences, the writer uses two figures of speech. Corresponding words are "path" and

1. "predecessor".
2. "brain".
3. "ploughed".
4. "traveled".
5. "furrow".

73. The writer's statements about the music for Trees can best be described as

1. flattering.
2. very faint praise.
3. noncommittal.
4. uncomplimentary.
5. bitter.

74. We may infer that the writer thinks the American people's taste in music is

1. improving rapidly.
2. good.
3. neither good nor bad.
4. poor.
5. disgusting.

75. It is most likely that the writer is sarcastic when he states that

1. people carry a copy of Trees around in their pochettebooks.
2. Trees is very popular.
3. the words of Trees are important.
4. there is one thing in favour of the music for Trees.
5. Trees and Song of India could be played together without discomfort.

76. The writer apparently believes that we should

1. visit Cordova.
2. live south of the Pyrenees.
3. use palaces as libraries.
4. know more about the Arabs in Spain.
5. have elaborate gardens with every variety of plant.

77. As used in line 14, "crowning" most nearly means

1. best-known.
2. historical.
3. intellectual.
4. royal.
5. greatest.

78. The writer mentions the orderliness of the library as evidence of

1. a love of beauty.
2. a respect for learning.
3. the medieval character.
4. the Spanish tradition.
5. the neglect of current historians.

79. In the latter half of this passage, the writer's main purpose is to

1. show evidence of a high civilization.
2. give examples of the works of Arab historians.
3. describe the Library of Al Hakam.
4. prove that Cordova was a centre of learning.
5. explain why scholars were attracted to Cordova.

80. For information in support of his ideas the writer relies on

1. current histories.
2. the best-known handbook.
3. Arab historians.
4. the literary academy.
5. the library of Al Hakam.

Go on to the next page.
The temper of the country was not revolutionary. There were hopes of a new heaven and a new earth among a few intellectuals in Paris; but men of sound sense could afford to smile at such dreams. There was a network of "secret" democratic societies; but as a rule they were well known to the police and without any real strength.

81. The dreams mentioned in the passage were dreams of
1. America.
2. democracy.
3. frontier life.
4. a return to primitive customs.
5. a new religion.

82. In the first sentence, the word "temper" means
1. mood.
2. hope.
3. anger.
4. intellect.
5. common sense.

83. The first sentence in the passage is supported by the statement that
1. there were hopes of a new heaven.
2. there were hopes of a new earth.
3. there were democratic societies.
4. the societies were known to the police.
5. the societies were without strength.

84. The word "secret" is in quotation marks to indicate that the societies were
1. illegal.
2. revolutionary.
3. not secret.
4. not democratic.
5. not important.

85. The writer's main point is that
1. men of sound sense were prosperous.
2. the police knew what was going on.
3. the intellectuals were hopeful.
4. the country was conservative.
5. there is always a preference for democracy.

No vulgar belief is more settled than that groups ofgregarious animals are usually ruled and protected by wise old leaders. Man himself is a gregarious animal and his leaders, though frequently old, are rarely wise. But the instincts of the lower animals are thought to move them to seek without error the wisest among them for leaders and to accept their guidance and help. No such reports, however, come from those, who, free from sentimental bias, have watched animals. There is never any setien that aims at siding another individual. It is a fact that monkeys often rush up at the cry of a wounded companion, but as often as not they inflict further injury upon the injured one. Stags, in particular, run away at the first sign of danger and rejoin the does and fawns only when it is past. When a herd of caribou is fleeing from wolves, the old bulls, it is true, bring up the rear and so expose themselves to being the first victims. But they have no choice; they just can't run as well as the cows and calves.

86. Compared with the females, old bull caribou are
1. braver.
2. wiser.
3. slower.
4. more selfish.
5. more active.

87. The most cowardly behaviour mentioned appears to be that of the
1. wounded monkey.
2. bull caribou.
3. cow caribou.
4. stag.
5. female deer.

88. "Vulgar", as used in the first line of the passage, most nearly means
1. popular.
2. coarse.
3. firm.
4. dubious.
5. rude.

89. In this passage the writer contends that, with respect to leaders,
1. man is no better off than other animals.
2. other animals are no better off than man.
3. wisdom increases with age.
4. man is guided by instinct as much as the lower animals are.
5. animals have well-developed instincts for choosing the right ones.

90. The writer believes that among animals
1. the strong care for the weak.
2. the males protect the females.
3. the wise care for the wounded.
4. the old protect the young.
5. each one must look out for himself.
APPENDIX C
Proposal for Critical Evaluation

The Western Australian College of Advanced Education is currently reassessing the structure of the degree Bachelor of Arts in Education. The college wishes to obtain students' views on the balance in the present programme between theory and practice.

To assist in this process, write a critical evaluation on the proposal that, "more than 50% of the of the B.A. in Education should be devoted to school practice rather than the 20% of the course presently devoted to it."
# Persuasive Discourse - Scoring Scheme

## PERSUASIVE DISCOURSE - SCORING SCHEME

### 1. Organisation and Presentation of Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. CONTEXT</th>
<th>NO CONTENT</th>
<th>Context clearly defined</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IMPORTANCE OF THE TOPIC ENSHED</td>
<td>No context</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>2. CLARITY OF THESIS</th>
<th>LOOSALLY FOCUSED</th>
<th>Sharply focused</th>
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<th>3. IDEA DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>IDEAS RANDOMLY LISTED</th>
<th>LOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS WITH RELATIONSHIPS CLEARLY SIGNALLED</th>
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<td>a) inter-paragraph (Sequencing and unity of ideas)</td>
<td>Ideas randomly listed</td>
<td>Logical development of ideas with relationships clearly signaled</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) intra-paragraph</td>
<td>Ideas randomly listed</td>
<td>Strong paragraph organisation</td>
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<th>4. SENTENCE CONCEPT</th>
<th>POOR SENTENCE CONCEPT-MEANING CONFUSED OR LOST, UNCLEAR REFERENCE, POOR PUNCTUATION</th>
<th>GOOD CONCEPT-MEANING CLEAR AND UNAMBIGUOUS, CLEAR REFERENCE, GOOD PUNCTUATION</th>
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<th>5. CONCLUSION</th>
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<th>SUMMARY STATEMENT LINKED BACK TO THESIS</th>
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**TOTAL 1** 80

## 2. Grammatical Features and Technical Conventions

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<th>FALLS TO MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE PERSON THROUGHOUT ESSAY</th>
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<th>2. CONSISTENCY OF TENSE</th>
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**TOTAL 20**

**TOTAL PART 1** 50

**TOTAL PART 2** 20

**TOTAL** 100

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TABLE 5

Scores Obtained on the Persuasive Discourse Written Essay

Part 1 = Organisation and presentation of content.
Part 2 = Grammatical features and technical conventions

* Results are calculated as a percentage.

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### TABLE 5

Scores Obtained on the Persuasive Discourse Written Essay

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