The effect of role play on year 9 students' creative writing

Kerry Mulholland

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The Effect of Role Play
on Year 9 Students’ Creative Writing

by

Kerry Muiholland BEd.

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Award of

Bachelor of Education with Honours

at the Faculty of Education, Edith Cowan University

Date of Submission: 27 November 1996
USE OF THESIS

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

The Effect of Role Play on Year 9 Students' Creative Writing

By Kerry Mulholland

This thesis investigated the effect of the teaching strategy of role play on Year 9 students' creative writing and attitudes towards creative writing in the English classroom. The aim of the research was to compare role play, as a student-centred strategy, with the more commonly used strategies in the teaching of writing in the secondary English classroom, and explore and measure the effects. An experiment was conducted with a class of 32 students of average to above average abilities, divided into two groups: one was taught creative writing through role play while the other group was taught by a variety of traditional teaching strategies. The research design incorporated a pre-test - intervention - post-test design with the creative writing programme being the intervention. A mixed-method approach was used to obtain quantitative and qualitative results. Two main self-designed instruments measured the quantitative results: (1) prose-text - measuring the creative writing achievement and attitudes (2) questionnaire - measuring attitudes. The findings were (1) the role play students performed significantly better than the traditional students in creative writing achievements (2) the role play students had more positive attitudes towards creative writing as measured by the prose text instrument; however the other findings showed no significant difference.
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.

Signature: ...........................................................

Date: 7th April 1997 ..............................................
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Broad Background to the Study
The background to the study involves the two major educational fields of English and Drama, both within the broader field of Educational Psychology. The study refers to concepts such as the major schools of thought that are operative in education and the nature of teaching strategies being utilised in secondary schools.

Broader concepts, such as the nature of the prevailing society and its influences, are also recognised as having an impact upon all aspects of education. While acknowledging such concepts, it is beyond the scope of the current study to discuss such a broad background, other than to refer to those factors that are highly relevant to the direct purposes of this study.

Schools of Thought
Within the field of educational psychology various schools of thought propose theoretical positions together with associated teaching implications and practices. According to Langford (1989) five major schools of thought can be categorised in the literature. Behaviourism and Humanistic Psychology are the two schools of thought of particular relevance to this study. Woolfolk (1990) offers a simple definition for behaviourism: behavioural learning theories focus on observable behaviours rather than on
internal events such as thinking and emotions. By contrast, humanistic psychology (or more simply, humanism) has a focus on internal events (emotions and thinking), and on the individual as a social being (Miller, 1990). If the various schools of thought are depicted on a continuum, behaviourism and humanism represent polarised and antithetical extremes.

Behaviourism can also be depicted as treating the student as an empty vessel in which a teacher can pour information (education as a product), while humanism treats the student as a maker of meanings who interacts with a teacher and his/her environment (education as a process). Another simplification aligns behaviourism with teacher-centred learning (the teacher has the controls) and humanism with student-centred learning (the student has the controls). Behaviourism also supports the view that individuals need to be disciplined by others (people basically cannot be trusted) while humanism supports the view that individuals can discipline themselves (people basically are trustworthy). The applications/variations are incorporated on the schools of thought continuum as illustrated in Figure 1 below:
Theories and practices of the various schools of thought have been and are the subject matter for on-going debate both by professionals and lay people. The adoption of particular schools of thought and their associated practices affects what and how teachers teach and what and how students learn.

Discussion of the major schools of thought involves considerable simplification within the scope of the current study. Literature on educational psychology and its various schools of thought has been extensively dealt with elsewhere (Langford, 1989; Woolfolk, 1990) and will only be referred to where it is highly relevant to the direct purposes of the current study.
The Social Context

In highlighting educational psychology as the broad background for the current study there has been a recognition of the impact of prevailing societies and their ideologies upon education. An educational system is influenced not only by the prevailing schools of thought in educational psychology, but also by influential groups such as parents, government bodies, industry, the business sector, workers' unions and churches.

There is presently a strong push from many parents, industry, the big business sector and workers' unions to focus on a back-to-basics education. Back-to-basics education can be more readily aligned with behaviourism than the other schools of thought because of its focus on students being trained to attain basic skills (rather than attending to all areas of an individual's development). Back-to-basics education is also aligned with economic-rationalist theories where educational outcomes are tailored to suit the needs of industry (education as a producer of workers). This back-to-basics approach contrasts strongly with the humanistic approach to education. Thornburg (1984) in discussing the future of education in America describes a situation that is currently reflected in the Australian situation:

There is a nationwide cry for education to be more relevant and have higher academic content. On the one hand, there are back-to-basics advocates who think children's abilities in math and science are deficient; on the other, there are individuals who plead for greater understanding of human behaviour and human interaction in an increasingly complex society. The developmental nature of schoolchildren causes different capacities to emerge at different
points. Thus, instructional strategies must shift. (p. 495)

Current major trends. Teacher-training institutions have put forward various theories and supported various practices throughout the relatively short history of public education; however currently trends generally support a teaching and learning environment that is a blend of the schools of thought more readily aligned with humanism than behaviourism. There is a recognition of the importance of student-centred learning in the development of independent learners and creative thinkers (Dewey, 1916; Bruner, 1960; Rogers, 1969; Neville, 1990; Miller, 1990). There is also a focus on the development of the whole person (intellectually, emotionally, physically and spiritually), most eloquently illustrated in the concept of self-actualisation (Maslow, 1968). Self-actualisation is the attainment of one's personal potential or self-fulfillment. Both these trends incorporate views that recognise that individuals' personalities and motives affect their learning (Langford, 1989). These trends can be jointly viewed as a major trend which recognises the importance of: (1) students having a central role in determining and contributing to what and how they learn.

The second major trend is: (2) a recognition of the importance of the social context in determining what and how students learn (Langford, 1989). It has been generally recognised by educationalists that what happens in the school yard, at home and in the wider community affects what and how students learn (Dewey, 1916; Rogers, 1969; Glasser, 1969; Bandura, 1986;
An individual's development can be hampered or enhanced through the interactions the person has with others, both at school and in the wider community.

Traditionally the majority of educationalists did not concern themselves with the background of their students (including issues such as cultural or socioeconomic differences). Emphasis was placed on teaching students academic skills in an 'artificially' isolated classroom. Generally the social context was ignored. Currently many educationalists recognise that education needs to address the social context in regard to student's learning.

Current major learning goals. Focussing on these two major trends it can be seen that each trend has an associated major learning goal. The major learning goal associated with the first trend is for students to become independent and creative learners and thinkers. Because they have a central role in determining their learning, their education should be highly relevant to them on a personal basis. Both their personalities and motives are considered and they have the opportunity to develop their full potential.

The major learning goal associated with the second trend is for students to become enabled as social beings. Because they are socially developed their education should be highly relevant both to themselves and to their role in society. Their own backgrounds have been considered in relation to other people's backgrounds and they have the opportunity to further their understandings.
Through social learning processes (such as collaborative learning) students are enabled as social beings. An implication of being socially enabled is that students have the ability to contribute to and gain from society.

An education that meets the needs of both individuals and their society seems the ideal that most schools of thought would have as an aim. The back-to-basics advocates, previously discussed, may still consider that society's needs are greater than an individual's needs. It is a matter for argument whether a back-to-basics education, or any approach focused only on society's needs, would be capable of addressing such needs. It is also a matter for debate, on ideological grounds, whether the educational needs of a nation or of its individuals should take precedence; however an education that meets both sets of needs is the ideal proposed in the current study.

Matching Teaching Strategies To Learning Goals

It can be seen that education needs to be relevant to both the individual and to their role in society in order to achieve the desired learning goals. Related to making education relevant is the matching of teaching strategies to learning goals. It is clear that how teachers teach and in what context they teach affects student learning (Bourke, 1989; Good & Brophy, 1991). The basis for selecting the most appropriate teaching strategies to match the learning goals is the process central to the purposes of the current study: how best to teach students what they need to learn so that they gain the skills relevant to themselves and to
Teaching strategies defined. A general discussion of examples of teaching strategies will be made in order to determine what teaching strategies are being used and whether they are appropriate in matching learning goals. Teaching strategies (also known as instructional strategies) are the methods or approaches teachers implement in order to meet learning objectives (objective is the more specific term for goal as used in the classroom lesson). An example of the exposition strategy will be described. It may be implemented to meet the following learning objectives: (1) describe the work of an anthropologist (2) identify what problems/feelings the anthropologist experienced in her work with the tribe (an adaptation of an example from Barry and King [1993]).

The teacher could introduce the topic or review a previous lesson on anthropologists. She/he could talk about the work of the anthropologist and write notes on the chalkboard. She/he could show the students pictures and ask the students questions. The students could write a paragraph about the work of anthropologists. The teacher and students could discuss the problems/feelings of the anthropologist.

Most examples of the exposition strategy would follow similar steps to those described, varying mainly in the use of resources and activities. This strategy is commonly referred to by teachers as 'chalk and talk'. It would be commonly identified by teachers
as the teaching strategy most used in classrooms.

An exposition strategy consists of four major steps: (1) setting the scene (2) presenting the material (3) student activity (4) checking understanding/transferring material to real life. The typical scenario is for the teacher to transmit the information while the students are passive receivers. Barry and King (1993) in describing this strategy highlighted its major limitation as its tendency to 'be boring, over long and poorly presented' (p. 174).

A guided discovery strategy may be used to meet the following learning objectives: (1) discuss predictions about characters and events in a plot (2) report predictions and ideas (3) discuss the reports in terms of the most likely predictions. An example of the guided discovery lesson could be the teacher asking the students to read the introduction of a short novel that introduces two characters and a dilemma. The teacher asks the students to predict what may happen in the novel from what they know about the characters. The students are asked to work in small groups and come up with ideas to present to the class. The teacher offers a structure for profiling the characters and writes on the chalkboard a simple method for presenting their reports. The students work in groups. The teacher is available for answering questions and offering suggestions. The groups present their reports. The teacher and students discuss the ideas and choose the most likely prediction/s.

The guided discovery strategy is described by Barry and King
(1993) as having three major steps: (1) the teacher sets the problem (2) students explore the problem (3) teacher and students discuss the problem and formulate conclusions. The guided discovery strategy is a form of discovery learning (Bruner, 1960) which encourages students to discover basic principles themselves. There is an emphasis on students being active in the learning process (learning by doing). Students are encouraged to form concepts or solve problems themselves with the teacher being a facilitator rather than an authority. Barry and King (1993) highlight its major limitation as not being suitable for transmitting a lot of information efficiently.

Direct/Indirect teaching strategies. In comparing the two strategies' characteristics it is clear that the exposition strategy is a teacher-centred method while the guided discovery strategy is a student-centred strategy. It follows that the exposition strategy is more readily aligned with behaviourism while guided discovery is more readily aligned with humanism. At this point it is important to note that teaching strategies fall into two main categories. The exposition strategy is in the category of direct teaching strategies while, the guided discovery strategy is in the category of indirect teaching strategies.

Flander's (1970) definition of direct teaching describes the teacher using his/her authority to direct and control the lesson, which is contrasted with indirect teaching where the teacher's role is facilitatory and students are encouraged to have a central role in controlling the lesson. Subsequent research in teaching
(Dunkin & Biddle, 1974) has challenged such a clear distinction being made about direct/indirect teaching; however for the purposes of the current study these two categories represent the polarised extremes of a continuum along which lie the majority of teaching strategies as illustrated in Figure 2 below:

![Figure 2. Continuum of teaching strategies.](image)

**Direct strategies associated with traditional strategies.** Direct teaching strategies based on behavioural models are those most commonly used in classrooms and those most researched (Bourke, 1989; Neville, 1990; Miller, 1990). Direct teaching strategies are considered to be those designated as ‘traditional teaching strategies’ for the purposes of the current study, because they have been, and are the strategies most commonly used in classrooms. Indirect teaching strategies are considered to be those designated as ‘non-traditional teaching strategies’ for the purposes of the current study, because they have been, and are the strategies least commonly used in classrooms.
Currently research in the area of teaching strategies has pointed to a recognition that teachers need to employ a variety of teaching strategies in order to suit their own teaching preferences, the subject matter, the objectives of a lesson, the needs of individual students and the teaching environment (Brophy & Good, 1985; Joyce & Weil, 1992). Teachers need to have the skills to implement the teaching strategies and also need to select the strategy that suits the background of the students (Barry & King, 1993). These principles for selecting the appropriate teaching strategy are also considerations of the current study's focus: matching teaching strategies to learning goals.

Many factors impact on why teachers employ certain teaching strategies. While a teacher may wish to follow humanistic practices, a myriad of other influences can impact on his/her teaching. Examples of such influences could include the lack of appropriate support systems; disapproval by school administrators of teachers employing non-traditional strategies; parental disapproval; and inappropriate classroom setting and resources. Whatever the influences are on how teachers teach, it is clear that teachers need to utilise various teaching strategies to meet the needs of students.

Summary. The broad background to the current study has covered the major schools of thought that are operative in education and the nature of teaching strategies being utilised in secondary schools. It is clear that while current research points to the necessity for teachers to use a range of teaching strategies
this is not the common practice, because teachers mainly use traditional (direct) teaching strategies rather than a variety of teaching strategies (including non-traditional or indirect).

It is also clear that the current two major research trends identified in the literature indicated that teachers needed to: (1) incorporate strategies which lead to students having a central role in determining and contributing to what and how they learn, and (2) consider the importance of the social context in determining what and how students learn. The two major goals respectively associated with the current two major trends were identified as (1) students become independent and creative learners (2) students become enabled as social beings.

It follows that because they are student-centred strategies and often incorporate social processes (such as collaborative learning), non-traditional (indirect) teaching strategies have the potential to meet these two major learning goals. Traditional (direct) strategies are more commonly used in classrooms, yet they have less potential of meeting the two major learning goals than non-traditional strategies because they are teacher-centred and less focussed on social processes.

The case will be now be made, in a further review of the literature, for the basis of selecting the indirect teaching strategy of role play as the most appropriate strategy for meeting the learning objectives associated with creative writing achievement in a secondary English classroom. Role play will be defined as to its
usage in the current study. Role play will be firstly discussed in terms of its relation to student-centred learning. Secondly, it will be discussed in relation to drama in education. Thirdly, it will be discussed in relation to the humanistic approach to education. Finally, it will be discussed in relation to the creative writing teaching practices in the English classroom. Throughout the discussion links will be made to the central focus question of the current study: how best to teach students what they need to learn so that they gain the skills relevant to themselves and to society.
CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Background to the Study

Role play defined. A definition of role play by van Ments (1984) illustrates a common understanding of the term:

The idea of role play, in its simplest form, is that of asking someone to imagine that they are either themselves or another person in a particular situation. They are then asked to behave exactly as they feel that person would. As a result of doing this they, or the rest of the class, or both, will learn something about the person and/or situation. Situations may be simple or elaborate, familiar or strange. (p. 16)

While van Ment's definition is considered a common definition of role play, the following definition more clearly illustrates role play as it is used in the current study. This definition incorporates the further characteristics of risk-taking and the negotiation of role:

The students are involved here in dealing with a problem where particularization [sic] of an attitude or point of view will be one of the means by which the participants will negotiate solutions to the problem. Certain values, either real or deemed suitable for the situation, will be tried out, and the students, seeing that they are protected by the cover of role, will risk expressing attitudes and points of view they might not venture in less protected situations. (Morgan & Saxton, 1989, p. 32)

It is important to note that role play as it is used in the current study is a dramatic, rather than functional strategy. Role play is often
used in conjunction with simulations which are more focussed on training techniques and modifying behaviours (O'Toole, 1992). The definition of van Ment's serves to illustrate this point as it is taken from his teacher's handbook on the use of role play as a training technique. There is often little room for negotiation of role in simulation situations: 'behave exactly as they feel that person would' (p. 15). Creative drama is only referred to as one of role play's uses in his text; however it is this use that is integral to the concept of role play as used in the current study.

A simple definition, as proposed by the researcher is: role play is a dramatic strategy that provides students with the opportunity of expressing ideas, feelings and actions in an imagined context.

**Student-Centred Learning**

*Students as active participants.* Role play is considered a student-centred strategy because the students are highly active participants in the learning process (Miller, 1990; Joyce & Weil, 1992). A model depicting teaching strategies on a continuum, ranging from teacher-centred to student-centred strategies, is cited in Barry and King (1993). The model shows a breakdown of teacher (T), student (S) and teacher/student (T/S) involvement at the three main stages of a lesson (introduction, development and conclusion). In Figure 3 below the format has been slightly adapted to suit the current study's needs and to include the strategy of role play:
Teaching strategies

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<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Broadcast     | T | T | T |
| Drill         | T | T/S | T/S |
| Exposition    | T | S | T/S |
| Demonstration | T | S | T/S |
| Concept       | T | S | T/S |
| Simulation    | T | S | T/S |
| Structured Group Discussion | T | S | T/S |
| Guided Discovery | T | S | T/S |
| Cooperative Group Learning | T | S | T/S |
| Role-play     | T | S | T/S |
| Imaginative   | T | S | S |
| Open Discussion | T | S | S |
| Learning Centres | T | S | S |

(Model conceptualised by Churchlands College Lecturing staff, circa 1973)

Figure 3. Teacher and student involvement in teaching strategies.

It is the researcher's assumption that role play was not listed because it is not commonly used as a teaching strategy. Role play, though, has an affinity with both the guided discovery and imaginative strategies. Role play and guided discovery have three main steps, previously described as: (1) the teacher sets the problem (2) students explore the problem (3) teacher and students discuss the problem and formulate conclusions. Role play is also similar to guided discovery because the teacher's role is as a facilitator (or guide) rather than an authority. Students are encouraged to make discoveries or form concepts themselves.
Role play has an affinity with the imaginative strategy because they share the major purpose of promoting creative thought and natural expression. There is also an emphasis on attitudinal development, originality, spontaneity, problem-solving and the development of fine motor skills (Barry & King, 1993).

Role play, guided discovery and imaginative strategies share the characteristic of students being highly active in the learning process. Students being active in the learning process is also linked strongly to the concept of students learning through experience (learning by doing or a hands-on approach). The separate research of Piaget, Erikson and Bruner as cited in Woolfolk (1990) emphasise the importance of a hands-on approach for enabling students to think logically and to solve problems.

Three domains of learning. Role play has the potential to incorporate the three domains of learning. In Bloom’s taxonomy as cited in Woolfolk (1990) the three domains of learning are (1) cognition (2) affective (3) psychomotor. The three domains, simply defined, are respectively intellectual, emotional and physical learning objectives. Learning that involves all three domains facilitates students’ holistic (whole person) development.

In order to illustrate role play’s potential to involve all three domains of learning, an example of a role play lesson will be discussed. The lesson previously discussed in the current study as an exposition lesson will be presented below as Version 1.
The lesson will be adapted to a role play lesson and will be presented below as Version 2:

Version 1: exposition lesson

The teacher could introduce the topic or review a previous lesson on anthropologists. She/he could talk about the work of the anthropologist and write notes on the chalkboard. She/he could show the students pictures and ask the students questions. The students could write a paragraph about the work of anthropologists. The teacher and students could discuss the problems/feelings of the anthropologist.

Version 2: role play lesson.

The teacher could introduce the topic or review a previous lesson on anthropologists. She/he could ask the students to do a role play about anthropologists based on what they know and/or imagine about anthropologists and their work. The teacher is available for questions. Students work in small groups on their role plays. Students present their role plays to the class. Students in role as their characters write a brief journal entry. The students talk about their own and each other’s role plays with the teacher.

The learning objectives were the same for both lessons: (1) describe the work of an anthropologist (2) identify what problems/feelings the anthropologist experienced in her work with the tribe. Both lessons commenced with the same introduction: the teacher sets the problem. In the body of the role play lesson students work in small groups developing ideas for their role plays. Students at this stage are mainly operating in the cognitive and affective domains. They can review what they know, form concepts and make connections in order to come up with ideas.
(cognition). They can interact with each other socially in a collaborative process in order to organise their role plays (affective).

In presenting their role plays students can operate in all three domains through their expression of ideas, feelings and actions. Through actions and gestures, both fine and gross motor skills can be developed (psychomotor). In both the writing and discussion activities students can be operating in the cognitive and affective domains through expressing ideas and feelings.

In the example of the role play lesson students have been highly active and have had the opportunity to develop skills in all three domains of learning. By contrast, the students in the exposition lesson were basically passive and had much less opportunity to develop skills in the affective and psychomotor domains of learning: there was little social interaction between students and little opportunity to develop motor skills.

Control and independent learners. In the role play lesson the students had the major control, in contrast to the exposition lesson where the teacher had the major control. Control in this context is linked closely to the concept of power. Glasser's concept of 'control theory' cited in Hamachek (1990) highlights the following points related to students having greater control in their learning processes: (1) students who have a sense of their own power and importance are more likely to become independent learners (2) learning is more relevant for students because they have a
central role (3) cooperative processes promote development in problem-solving skills (4) students are self-motivated (5) students are self-disciplined (5) students can have important psychological needs met (e.g. love, power, freedom and fun).

Room for creativity. Creativity has been defined as imaginative and original thinking or problem-solving in Woolfolk (1990). This definition tends to restrict creativity to the cognitive domain. Creativity is also evident in the affective and psychomotor domains. In the role play lesson students have the opportunity to be creative in all three domains of their learning.

The structure (or steps) of the role play lesson encouraged students to express their own ideas initially. Later they had the opportunity to learn from each other and the teacher. The teacher's role as a facilitator rather than an authority supported a classroom environment where students could express ideas, feelings and actions freely. Students were encouraged to use their imagination rather than rely only on the facts: 'do a role play about anthropologists based on what you know and/or imagine about anthropologists.' Students can therefore take risks in a safe environment: they can express unusual ideas, feelings and actions. Risk-taking is often an essential step in creative processes (De Bono, 1991). Students in the example of the role play lesson had the opportunity to take on the point of view of the imagined anthropologist and express his/her ideas, feelings and actions without restrictions. By contrast, in the example of the exposition lesson students relied mainly on the facts as
transmitted by the teacher, therefore their own ideas could not be easily expressed.

**Summary.** Role play is a student-centred teaching strategy in which students can be highly active participants in their own learning processes. They can be utilising all three domains of learning. Students can have the control in their learning processes and be independent learners and thinkers. Through role play students can express their original ideas in imaginative and creative ways.

*Drama In Education*

Role play is an educational strategy that has been traditionally associated with the subject of drama rather than the subject of English in education. It is important to note that when role play is used across the curriculum (across subject areas) it is as a simulation strategy rather than as a drama strategy as previously referred to in the current study's definition. Role play utilised as a simulation strategy is associated with learning objectives such as attitudinal changes. Students are involved in solving an issue-based problem. It is used functionally rather than creatively, and is mainly associated with the development of basic communication skills, rather than with the development of a wide range of skills. The strategy, when used in subject areas other than drama, is often utilised as a 'one-off' lesson rather than as a programme of role play lessons.

It is an assumption of the current study that the utilisation of the
role play (the dramatic strategy) is generally restricted to the drama classroom. It would be utilised to some degree in the English classroom, in regard to drama literature. While drama strategies such as role play are recognised as being useful there is a general resistance to their utilisation outside the area of drama studies (Thompson, 1987; O'Toole, 1992; Taylor, 1994).

*History of drama in education.* A brief review of the history of drama in education will serve to illustrate why drama strategies have the potential for meeting many educational learning goals and in particular the current study’s two major learning goals: (1) students become independent and creative learners and thinkers (2) students are enabled as social beings. In restating these two major goals it is also important to keep in mind the current study’s central focus question: how can one best teach students what they need to learn so that they gain the skills relevant to themselves and to society. The question will also be addressed as to why there is a resistance to utilising drama strategies across the curriculum.

Pioneers of drama in education led the debate on why such an approach had the potential for meeting major learning goals (Slade, 1954; Way, 1967; Wagner, 1976; Heathcote, 1980; Bolton, 1985). The main argument presented was that: a drama approach was holistic. It took into consideration the social context: students were active in the learning process and could become independent and creative learners and thinkers. Such arguments embrace the goals closely associated with the current study’s two
major learning goals. The research of the pioneers and contemporary drama theorists and practitioners (Byron, 1986; Carroll, 1988; Morgan & Saxton, 1989; Neelands, 1988; O'Toole, 1992; Booth, 1993; Edmiston, 1993) together has established strong arguments for a drama in education approach. The arguments that are common to the current study's major focus, drama in education and role play are presented below in Figure 4 as key points:
A Drama in Education Approach

Role play

Matching Teaching Strategies To Learning Goals

A SHARED FOCUS

KEY POINTS

student-centred learning
students are highly active participants
utilises indirect teaching strategies
collaborative processes
considers the social context
involves the three domains of learning
students have major control
room for creativity
students learn through experience
teacher as facilitator
holistic approach

Figure 4. Role play key points.
Summary. In considering the key points it is evident that a drama in education approach has the potential to meet the two major learning goals proposed in the current study. In 1975 The Bullock Committee (a report on secondary schools in England) recognised the importance of drama in education and its particular importance to the area of English studies. The report recommended that secondary schools should consider the effectiveness of drama strategies and that serious discussion and research should be carried out. Evans (1984) in referring to this report stated that 'precious little serious study and professional discussion of the kind the Bullock Committee advocated ... has taken place since 1975.' (pp. 2-3)

O'Toole (1992) stated that 'drama teachers in the UK and Australia have become adept at smuggling drama into the classroom under the noses of disapproving colleagues or Head teachers in the guise of "language arts" or "experiential approaches to history".' (p. 99). In these discussions both Evans and O'Toole support the view that while there is a general recognition of the effectiveness of a drama in education approach there is also resistance to its implementation in the classrooms.

There are explanations as to why a drama approach is resisted in the secondary classroom. Disapproval by colleagues and heads of departments of drama methods is one possible reason, as evidenced by the previous discussion. It has also been established that teachers mainly utilise traditional teaching strategies, therefore an assumption can be made that teachers are
not practised in non-traditional strategies. It is also assumed that changes are often resisted due to natural tendency for teachers (and people in general) to stick to tried and well-known methods. Teachers may also resist utilising teaching strategies in which they have not been trained. Whatever the particular reasons are for the lack of implementation of drama strategies, it is important to note that some teachers do ‘smuggle drama in’ and many teachers may wish to incorporate such strategies in their teaching. There is a need for research into this area to establish the 'serious study and professional discussion' that the Bullock report suggested.

**Humanistic Approach**

The humanistic school of thought has been discussed previously in the broad background to the current study. The focus in this section will be on discussing the humanistic approach in relation to both drama in education and role play. At this point it is important to note that the key points proposed as common to the current study’s focus, drama in education and role play are also common to the humanistic approach. Matching strategies to learning goals, role play, drama in education and humanism therefore are closely associated. Their relationship can be depicted as a top-down approach as shown in Figure 5 below:
Such a top down approach to learning makes it possible to implement the strategies that best match the desired learning goals. In contrast a bottom up approach is difficult to implement. A teacher would find it difficult to use role play in a school that did not support a drama in education approach. The school would find it difficult to implement a drama in education approach in a community or society that did not support a humanistic approach. It is not suggested that a bottom up approach is impossible to implement, but it is that much more difficult than a top down approach.

Holistic education. A humanistic approach to education is closely associated with holistic education. Holistic education is a broader concept. Humanistic education considers the three domains of learning and the social context. Holistic education considers the
three domains of learning and the social context, but goes much further - the very nature of society and culture are examined. Miller (1990) states that 'holistic education calls for a new recognition of the organic, subconscious, subjective, intuitive, artistic, mythological and spiritual dimensions of our lives.' (p. 153). This visionary view of education could be challenged by educational traditionalists as being beyond the concerns of educators; however it is a view that has been supported by many educators throughout history. The pioneers of holistic education (cited in Miller 1990) included people prominent in many fields: Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Channing, Emerson, Thoreau, Ripley, Alcott and Parker. A holistic view of education is also embraced by these pioneers' modern counterparts again cited in Miller (1990): Holt, Kozol, Kohl, Herndon, Denizen, Illich, Postman, Weingartner, Montessori and Palmer.

Most of these educators were viewed and are still viewed as radical educators. Though some movements and independent schools have embraced holistic education they are still a minority group. The research of Kramer, 1976; Palmer, 1978; Dorrance, 1982 (cited in Miller, 1990) has indicated that many schools embracing holistic education (such as the Montessori and Quaker schools) have succeeded in meeting both the desired learning goals of mainstream education and their own desired learning goals.

Both the humanistic and holistic approaches to education have been resisted. Resistance comes from the back-to-basics
advocates who want educators to focus on basic skills such as numeracy and literacy (cognition) rather than on a wider range of learning (all three domains). Resistance comes from the economic-rationalists who want educators to focus on the economic and technological needs of the nation. Resistance comes from traditional educators who expound arguments that such approaches are not as effective as other approaches, or are too impractical to implement. Resistance comes from many quarters, however many educators do support a humanistic or holistic approach to education. Arthur W. Coombe’s statement serves as an illustration of such support and indicates a view on the debate consistent with the current study’s position:

Humanism is no fragile flower, too tender for a tough world. Quite the contrary. It is a systematic, conscious attempt to put into practice the best we know about the nature of human beings and how they learn. That is the scientific approach advocated by educators for generations. Putting humanist thinking to work is not misguided. Ignoring its message is a far greater error. Humanistic education maintains that what students experience about themselves and their world is far too important to overlook. Instead, such human considerations must be included in every aspect of educational thinking and practice. (1990, p. 22)

Summary. Humanism, drama in education, role play and matching teaching strategies to learning goals are closely associated and can be incorporated as an integrated approach to education. As a top down approach they can be effectively implemented in schools in order to achieve desired learning goals. Holistic education is a broader concept than humanistic education
as it considers the organic, subconscious, subjective, intuitive, artistic, mythological and spiritual dimensions of learning. Both the humanistic and holistic approaches to education have been and are resisted by various groups concerned with education, though many educators do support these approaches.

*Creative Writing in the English Classroom*

This section will present the general background to teaching practices in the English classroom, focussing on what and how teachers teach. Literacy, as the broad background area to English teaching practices, will be defined and discussed in terms of matching teaching strategies to learning goals. Creative writing will be defined and discussed in terms of the current study’s central focus question: how best to teach students what they need to learn so that they gain the skills relevant to themselves and to their role in society. An argument will be presented for the utilisation of role play as a teaching strategy that can meet the learning objectives relating to creative writing.

*Teaching practices in the English classroom.* Many factors impact on what and how teachers teach as previously discussed in the background to the current study. Teaching practices in the English classroom are no exception. While back-to-basics advocates are calling for a focus on basic skills such as spelling, the mastery advocates are calling for a focus on advanced skills such as critical thinking. This debate will serve as a focus for examining factors impacting on what and how English teachers teach.
Mastery, in terms of the teaching/learning context, is defined by Woolfolk (1990) as the mastering of both basic and advanced skills, with a teaching emphasis on understanding and meaning (both product [skills] and process [method]). By contrast, basic skills teaching emphasises drilling or training students to achieve competencies (product only). English teachers are involved in such debates and it is where they position themselves (their own values) and/or are positioned by others (e.g. school and/or society's values) that influences the nature of their teaching practices.

The literacy debate. Currently in Australia the debates on issues such as literacy are reflected in the general debates on which school of thought should be operative as previously discussed in the broad background to the current study. Debates on which definition of literacy should be operative in language policies are also reflected in these general debates. Literacies as defined by the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) have distinct differences in learning goals (cited in Dwyer 1996):

'Literacy' involves the integration of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and critical thinking. It includes the cultural knowledge which enables a speaker, writer or reader to recognise and use language appropriate to different social situations ... 'Functional literacy' means the ability to read, write, speak and listen well enough to accomplish everyday literacy tasks in our society in different contexts, such as the workplace or the classroom. (DEET, 1990, p. 4)

It is evident that 'functional literacy', is more associated with the
back-to-basics approach, while 'literacy' is more associated with both the humanistic and mastery approaches. Humanistic and mastery approaches vary in both their concepts and practices, but the most important distinction is that the humanistic approach is a highly student-centred approach and has potential for learning in all domains, while the mastery approach is more teacher-centred and mainly focusses on the cognitive domain.

The mastery approach can be adapted to a student-centred approach and incorporate all domains of learning by utilising indirect teaching strategies. The research carried out separately by Peterson, McDonald and Good (cited in Woolfolk, 1990) supports this argument. The humanistic and mastery approaches can therefore be integrated to achieve the learning goals associated with 'literacy' defined by DEET as meeting advanced literacy goals. Because such an integrated approach has a focus on the holistic development of the student it has the potential to meet both students' and their society's literacy learning goals: students who are highly literate both in the school and social context.

Teaching writing in the English classroom, in reference to the literacy issue, is therefore influenced by the following factors: (1) the position the teacher adopts and others (e.g. colleagues, parents and other influential groups) adopt in the literacy debate (2) the views they and others have of what teaching strategies can best meet the literacy learning goals (3) the skills they have for implementing the strategies. It is evident that whatever positions
the teachers adopt or whatever skills they have, they need to consider the social context: teachers would have difficulty implementing an integrated humanistic and mastery approach in a school which did not value or support such an approach. Also such an approach may be inappropriate if 'functional literacy' learning goals were the set goals: another approach may be more effective.

Selecting the best teaching strategies to match the desired learning goals is a highly complex matter: many issues and factors are involved. An argument has been building, in the current study, for the adoption of a humanistic approach to education. It is also a recognition of the current study that direct or traditional teaching strategies are in some cases more effective: students may learn grammar better through a direct strategy (e.g. rote learning or drill) rather than a indirect strategy (e.g. guided discovery strategy). The teacher would need to consider which strategy would best achieve the learning objectives involved: if understanding a grammar rule was the learning objective then guided discovery might be the best strategy; however if reviewing a list of facts on grammar was the learning objective then drill might be the best strategy. What is most important is that teachers are able to implement the most effective strategies to meet the desired learning goals.

It is clear that teachers need to be skilled in a range of teaching strategies (including direct and indirect). and also need to be able to have appropriate support systems to implement them. It is also
clear that if the learning goals associated with 'literacy' are to be realised then teachers need to move away from the teacher-centred strategies that they have traditionally used in the English classroom (Carroll & Wilson, 1993). 'Literacy' (herein referred to as literacy) learning goals required students to be critical thinkers who could communicate in sophisticated social contexts. These literacy learning goals are reflected in the current study's two major learning goals: (1) students become independent and creative learners and thinkers (2) students are enabled as social beings. A humanistic approach necessarily encompasses a mastery approach because it focusses on the holistic education of students: development of students' full potential in all areas. A humanistic approach utilising the most effective strategies has the potential to best meet both the two major learning goals and literacy learning goals.

*Creative writing defined.* Creative writing is difficult to define as there is no general consensus as to what are its specific characteristics. Monteith and Miles (1992) offer the following characteristics of creative writing: 'inventive, imaginative, exhibiting imagination as well as intellect, and thus differentiated from the merely critical, “academic”, journalistic, professional, mechanical, etc. in literary or artistic production ...' (p. 10). For the purposes of the current study creative writing can be defined by referring to Monteith and Miles' description of its characteristics, and to the researcher's definition: creative writing is original, expressive writing that is both crafted and creative. It is important to note here that 'crafted' draws on both basic and advanced skills.
According to Monteith and Miles not only is a definition of creative writing problematic, but so is its place in higher education (including secondary schools). Currently in Australian schools creative writing would be associated mainly with the English studies area under the general area of literacy. In secondary schools terms such as 'expressive', 'composition' and 'nontransactional' writing are the terms commonly used when referring to creative writing. Such writing is generally defined in terms of its differences from transactional (or informational) writing. Transactional writing is functional writing which demonstrates commonly accepted conventions e.g. letter to the editor, argumentative essay and report. It is the writing previously referred to in Monteith and Miles' definition as critical, academic, journalistic, professional and mechanical writing. It is recognised in the current study that there is some overlap between these two categories of writing.

Currently there is debate on whether composition writing (herein referred to as creative writing) should still be included as a requirement for examination at Year 11 and 12 levels. Such a debate reflects the problematic status of creative writing in the curriculum. This debate reflects the debates previously discussed where teachers adopted positions both on approaches to education and on which definition of literacy should be operative. An examination of these previous debates in terms of basic attitudes towards education will serve to clarify the problematic status of creative writing in the English classroom.
The back-to-basics approach and the 'functional' literacy (herein referred to as functional literacy) definition were aligned because of a joint focus on acquiring basic skills. The humanistic approach and literacy definition were aligned because of a focus on students acquiring advanced skills. It follows that each alignment reflects an expectation level: higher expectations are associated with the humanistic/literacy alignment, while lower expectations are associated with the back-to-basics/functional literacy alignment.

It is important to review here that the current study has proposed a humanistic approach to education which has as its focus the holistic development of students. The holistic development of students has also been shown to be highly relevant to the needs of society: students who are both highly skilled and socially aware are enabled to meet both their own and society's needs. It follows that for the purposes of the current study there is an associated high expectation of education.

Arguments common to the debate on the status of creative writing in the English curriculum are reflected in the previous debates. If there is argument made for teaching at a back-to-basics/functional literacy level rather than on teaching at a humanistic/literacy level then an assumption can be made that there would also be an argument made for a stronger focus on transactional writing rather than on creative writing. Creative writing as it has been defined is clearly in the humanistic/literacy category. It is associated with literacy because it draws on a wide range of skills. It is associated
with a humanistic approach because it is a student-centred activity which facilitates learning in both the cognitive and affective domains: students are encouraged to express feelings and ideas in imaginative and original ways. This association of creative writing with the affective domain and the 'personal' is problematic for a group of secondary teachers who view creative writing at the best as a childish, self indulgent and/or feel-good activity, or at the worst as a waste of time (Kelly, 1991; Monteith & Miles, 1992).

The status of creative writing in the secondary classroom has been shown to be problematic. It is how teachers view creative writing that is part of the problem. Apart from the teachers who do not value creative writing because of its 'personal' aspect (affective domain) there are also the teachers who do not perceive creative writing's heuristic aspects (cognitive domain). Kelly asserts that 'the twentieth century has neglected and undervalued many of the heuristics that lie within the realm of creative writing, strategies that lead to good thinking and writing.' (1991, p. 1)

There is a group of secondary teachers who equate creative writing mainly with affective learning and underrate its potential for learning in the cognitive domain. Because creative writing is also associated with elements such as 'imagination', 'creativity', 'originality', 'personal', 'intuition', 'spontaneity' and 'subconscious' it is viewed by a group of teachers at the best as suspect and at the worst with no respect (Monteith & Miles, 1992).

It is creative writing's potential as a medium for students'
expression (in both the cognitive and affective domains) that is central to the current study's justification for its use as an instrument suitable for measuring such learning. Another important justification for utilising creative writing is that when it is taught, it is usually taught through traditional methods.

A traditional approach to teaching writing in the English classroom works on the assumption that students need to learn the parts so that they can construct a whole (Murray, 1985). Such an approach is skills-based and traditionally the teachers impart the skills to students mainly through direct teaching strategies. The non-traditional approach to teaching writing in the English classroom works on the assumption that students write first and learn the parts afterwards in order to construct the whole. Such an approach is process-based whereby teachers facilitate learning mainly through non-direct teaching strategies. The separate research of Graves, Martin, Moffett, Britton, Halliday and Wignell (cited in Cope & Kalantzis, 1993) supports the non-traditional (process-based) approach to the teaching of writing.

In-depth discussion of the various approaches to the teaching of writing has been carried out elsewhere (Moffet, 1968; Britton, 1981; Eagleton, 1983; Graves, 1986; Thomson, 1992; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Carroll & Wilson, 1993). What is highly relevant to the purposes of the current study is that presently the main approach to the teaching of writing in secondary classrooms is skills-based rather than process-based. Versions of skills approaches that are operative may also have a focus on the social
context as in the 'genre approach' (Cope & Kalantzis, 1992); however, what they do not focus on is the students' original expressions of skills, ideas, feelings and creativity. Skills approaches also utilise more teacher-centred strategies than student-centred strategies, while the process-based approach is associated with the humanistic approach to education. The process-based approach to the teaching of writing therefore has the potential to meet the two major learning goals as proposed in the current study: (1) students become independent and creative learners and thinkers (2) students are enabled as social beings.

*Role play and creative writing linked.* It is proposed in the current study that the process-based approach, rather than the skills-based approach to teaching writing is the better method of teaching creative writing. It is also proposed in the current study that role play has the potential to be the teaching strategy that best matches the creative writing learning goals. Role play has been shown to be a highly student-centred teaching strategy that has the potential for learning in the three domains. Because it also has the potential for students to express their original skills, ideas and feelings in a creative way, it is ideally matched to creative writing learning goals. For the purposes of the current study the learning goals (herein referred to as learning objectives) refer to: (1) enhancing student achievement in the area of creative writing (2) enhancing student attitudes towards creative writing.

*Further Links Between Role play and Creative Writing*

An argument has been developed in the previous discussion for
matching the teaching strategy of role play with creative writing learning objectives in the secondary English classroom. Role play and creative writing have been linked by characteristics such as: (1) student-centred learning (2) humanistic approach (3) there is resistance to, or devaluation by, a significant group of teachers and other groups such as back-to-basics advocates (4) neither are widely used compared with other strategies and areas of writing (5) both involve expressions of students' original skills, ideas, feelings and creativity.

Further links between role play and creative writing will be discussed in terms of their relevance to addressing the central focus question of the current study: how best to teach students what they need to learn so that they gain the skills relevant to themselves and to their role in society. The links will also be discussed in the specific terms of their relevance to addressing why role play is best matched to meeting the creative writing learning objectives: (1) enhancing student achievement in the area of creative writing (2) enhancing student attitudes towards creative writing. Important further links between role play and creative writing include: (1) language and literacy (2) collaborative learning (3) self-esteem and self-concept (4) motivation (5) creativity and problem-solving (6) imagination and unconscious learning.

Language development and literacy. The research of Vygotsky (1986) supports a view that language development is enhanced through interactions that are socially and culturally based.
Cambourne (1988) advocates a Whole Language Approach which also supports such a view. In the whole language approach students’ language development is enhanced through collaborative processes. Vygotsky’s concept of the ‘zone of proximal development’ refers to the phase at which a child can master a task if given appropriate help and support (Woolfolk, 1990). In terms of the classroom context students in collaborative processes can therefore have such appropriate help and support: language development occurs when there are opportunities for students to communicate (talking and listening) with each other (including the teacher) in a collaborative environment (Carroll & Wilson, 1993).

Literacy has been defined as involving the integration of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and critical thinking. It includes the cultural knowledge which enables a speaker, writer or reader to recognise and use language appropriate to different social situations. Literacy goals can therefore be achieved through collaborative processes because the students and teachers are communicating and sharing information in a social context. Both language development and literacy goals can be achieved in classrooms where students have opportunities to collaborate and receive help and support when needed from peers and teachers.

Role play has been shown to be a technique which focusses on students’ holistic development and so supports whole language development. Role play incorporates collaborative processes and the students interact in different social contexts, therefore students’
language development can be enhanced and literacy goals can be achieved.

In order to discuss language development in the specific terms of achieving creative writing learning objectives, it is useful to focus on an example of a role play lesson. The two creative writing learning objectives, referred to previously, are the broad objectives for creative writing in general. Each creative writing lesson would have specific objectives: e.g. (1) write a journal entry in role as an anthropologist (2) demonstrate understanding of the structure and content of journal writing. The lesson below is an adaptation of the lesson previously discussed (p. 19) as a simple role play lesson. It follows similar steps and is presented as Version 3 below with the differences from Version 2 in square brackets:

Version 3: creative writing lesson

The teacher could introduce the topic or review a previous lesson on anthropologists [and journal writing]. She/he could ask the students to do a role play about anthropologists based on what they know and/or imagine about anthropologists and their work. The teacher is available for questions. Students work in small groups on their role plays. Students present their role plays to the class. Students in role as their characters write a brief [now an extended] journal entry. The students talk about their own and each other's role plays [and journal entries] with the teacher.

Throughout the lesson above students had opportunities to communicate in many ways (e.g. talking, acting and writing) and in many social contexts (e.g. independently, in small groups, whole class and in role as an imagined anthropologist). The
teacher, as a facilitator, could provide help and support when it was needed (zone of proximal development). Overall the humanistic approach and the collaborative environment should contribute to enhancing students' language development and literacy skills. Such enhancement would be reflected in their writing.

Role play in this creative writing lesson has the potential to meet the specified learning objectives. Role play has been previously described as being expressive in an imagined context: students took on the role of an anthropologist or another imagined character. They communicated in many ways and in many contexts. Students in role talked, acted and wrote as if they were the imagined character - they had the opportunity to express a different point of view from their own. Being in role students had the opportunity to experiment with language. They could become experts (e.g. imagined anthropologist) and therefore communicate at an expert level. This role play technique is known as taking on the 'mantle of the expert' and research has shown that students' language development can be enhanced through this process (Heathcote, 1980; Morgan & Saxton, 1989).

In the creative writing lesson students could engage in talk at many levels and in many social contexts. This 'drama talk' builds a scaffold for both language development and literacy skills (Booth, 1993; Carroll, 1988). Students had the opportunity to talk and act as experts in the role plays. Because they had articulated ideas and feelings through drama talk they could also bring these
ideas and feelings to their writing: the drama talk provided the scaffold for the writing (Neelands, 1992; Wagner, 1994).

Role play has potential for learning in the three domains as previously discussed. In terms of achieving the specific learning objectives in the above lesson students were engaged in activities incorporating all the domains of learning. Such a holistic approach could enhance writing achievement as students bring to their writing what they have learnt in all three domains: a synthesis of skills, ideas, feelings and creative elements. Students' journal entries should reflect this synthesis. Students' language development and literacy skills have been enhanced through the 'mantle of the expert' technique, drama talk and the holistic approach: role play is ideally matched to meet the creative writing learning objectives.

**Collaborative learning.** The research of Schmuck and Schmuck (cited in Barry & King, 1993) has shown that collaborative processes (also commonly known as cooperative learning and group processes) are closely associated with a positive classroom climate. A positive classroom climate is one where students and teachers are supportive of each other in achieving their own and each other's learning goals.

Research by Slavin (cited in Good & Brophy, 1991) found that student learning was significantly greater in classrooms using cooperative methods as compared to those using traditional methods. Dewey (cited in Miller, 1990), a pioneer of progressive
education, argued that student learning could be enhanced in classrooms where students engaged actively in the learning process through social interactions. Prominent educators including Neill, Silberman, Featherstone, Fantini, Weber, Rogers, Perrone, Barth and Nyquist (cited in Miller, 1990), all support a move from traditional classrooms (teacher-centred) to open classrooms (students and teachers collaborating).

It is evident that the classroom climate is more positive when students and teachers work together to achieve learning goals, rather than in the traditional classroom where the teacher is the authority and students do not have a central role in the process. In positive classroom environments and through collaborative processes, student learning can be enhanced.

Role play has previously been shown to facilitate collaborative learning. The research on creative writing supports the view that student learning can be enhanced when it is taught through collaborative methods (Murray, 1985; Styles, 1989; Thompson, 1992; Carroll & Wilson, 1993). One particular collaborative method associated with creative writing and to a lesser degree, with role play, is that of conferencing. The common idea of conferencing is that of the teacher and student working together, on a one-to-one basis, with the teacher providing feedback on the student's writing (Murray, 1985).

Conferencing can also occur between students as peer conferencing or between groups as group conferencing. The
essential purpose is to provide feedback to the writers having an emphasis on constructive criticism. The classroom climate must necessarily be positive so that students can feel comfortable in both offering and receiving constructive criticism. Research has shown that feedback is instrumental in enhancing student learning (Good & Brophy, 1991).

In the previous creative writing lesson, Version 3, students and teachers were involved in conferencing when they shared ideas about each other's journal entries. The lesson could have been adapted to focus on such conferencing processes as peer conferencing. Students could select a partner and provide each other with feedback. The teacher or the teacher and students together could develop a structure for such criticism based on the specific learning objectives. Conferencing has also occurred in relation to the role plays themselves. Both the students and teacher discussed what they did in the role plays.

In the area of drama such conferencing is usually referred to as reflection. Reflection is also associated with self-evaluation. Students reflect on their own learning and come to greater understandings of their own learning processes (Edmiston, 1993). The strategy of role play is ideally matched to achieving the creative writing learning objectives as it has facilitated the general collaborative environment as well as the specific writing technique of conferencing.

It is important to review here, in reference to collaborative
processes in the classroom, that role play has been strongly associated with both student-centred learning and a humanist approach. It follows that the classroom climate must necessarily be a positive one. Role play as it has been defined is only useful in a safe environment where students can freely express their ideas, feelings, actions and creativity. It is also important to note that collaborative processes do not equate with dependent learning; on the contrary, collaborative processes lead to students becoming independent learners as eloquently stated by Vygotsky: 'what the child can do in cooperation today he can do alone tomorrow.' (cited in Carroll & Wilson, 1993)

Self-esteem and self-concept. Self-concept can be defined as 'the sum total of an individual's mental and physical characteristics and his/her evaluation of them' (Lawrence, 1988, p. 1). According to Lawrence self-concept is an umbrella term under which the aspects of self-esteem, self-image and ideal self are incorporated. It is the discrepancy between self-image and ideal self that constitutes an individual's self-esteem. The smaller the discrepancy the higher the self-esteem. Research has shown that there is a positive correlation between students' self-esteem and student achievement (Gurney, 1985; Lawrence, 1988; Pope, McHale & Craighead, 1988). Student self-esteem is also linked to student attitudes. Students who have high self-esteem also demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning (Rosenberg, 1985; Harter, 1985).

Role play has been previously linked to student-centred learning,
collaborative processes and a humanistic approach. All these factors contribute to role play processes building a positive classroom climate. Rogers (1990) argues that a positive classroom climate is also the basis for building students' self-esteem.

Both role play and creative writing have been shown to facilitate the expression of students' original ideas, feelings, actions and creativity. Because students' individual expressions are valued contributions in the classroom an assumption can be made that students will feel valued in themselves - enhancing their self-esteem. Students through role play also have opportunities to achieve in all domains of learning. Students who may not achieve in one domain (e.g. cognitive) can express their other abilities and skills through the other domains and thus build their self-esteem.

In terms of students achieving general learning goals, a positive or high self-esteem has been shown to be a significant factor. Role play and creative writing activities both contribute to building students' self-esteem because students' expressions are valued. In terms of students achieving the creative writing objectives self-esteem is also a significant factor. Because students' individual contributions are valued they can freely express all their skills and this should be reflected in their writing. Role play has been shown to provide opportunities for self-evaluation and reflection, and such processes are considered important in students forming realistic self-concepts and positive self-esteem (Laing, 1969; Spitzer, 1981; Edmiston, 1993). Overall, role play and creative writing are
linked through their significance in contributing to the development of students' positive self-esteem.

**Motivation.** Motivation in educational terms is the motive to learn. Motivation incorporates two basic concepts: (1) extrinsic motivation (2) intrinsic motivation. Both concepts have been defined by Woolfolk (1992) as follows: (1) extrinsic motivation is created by external events or rewards outside the learning environment (2) intrinsic motivation is the internal source of motivation such as curiosity or desire to learn - rewards are the activities themselves. Motivation is a complex concept and it is difficult to determine what specifically motivates students to learn. What is important is that motivation is a significant factor in relation to both student achievement and learning. Students who are highly motivated can achieve learning goals as evidenced by the separate research of McClelland, Atkinson, Clark and Lowell (cited in Woolfolk, 1990).

Behaviourist approaches to learning tend to stress the importance of extrinsic motivation while the humanistic approach stresses the importance of intrinsic motivation. Such emphasis is directly linked to the basic assumptions underlying each approach. It is proposed in the current study that enhancing intrinsic motivation is more important than enhancing extrinsic motivation for student learning as it focusses on the holistic development of the student.

Brophy (1990) has put together a synthesis of research on strategies for motivating students. In his comprehensive study
students' intrinsic motivation is recognised as a more significant factor than their extrinsic motivation in enhancing students' achievements and attitudes towards learning.

The intrinsic motivational strategies Brophy highlights in his research (1990) are closely linked to the nature of role play as it has been conceptualised throughout the current study. The strategies include: (1) teacher adapts tasks to students' interests (2) lesson structure includes novelty elements (3) lesson structure allows opportunities for student choices and autonomous decisions (4) students are highly active in the process (5) feedback is provided (6) students create and finish products (7) lesson includes fantasy and simulation elements (8) incorporates games (9) includes higher level objectives and divergent questions (10) provides opportunities for peer interaction.

Role play has the potential to stimulate, maintain and enhance students' intrinsic motivation as evidenced by its close links with the above strategies. Most links are self-evident and have been discussed elsewhere in the current study. Focus will be placed on the links involving novelty, fantasy and game elements. These links can be incorporated under the general concept of 'play' elements.

It is important to recognise the significance of play to learning in general. Many theorists and educators (e.g. Bruner, Vygotsky, Erikson, Glasser) and particularly those in the drama field (e.g. Slade, Way, Errington) highlight the importance of play in learning.
processes. Play involves students experiencing enjoyment in their learning through activities such as fantasising and games. Play is closely associated with the affective domain, but what is often not acknowledged, is that play involves all domains of learning.

It is an assumption of the current study that play as an element of education is generally disregarded in the secondary classroom. Such an assumption is based on the research findings, previously discussed in the current study, that teachers mainly utilise traditional teaching strategies. Such strategies have little room for highly student-centred activities such as game playing. The assumption is also based on the researcher's experience as a secondary teacher, that play is viewed negatively, or at best disregarded, by a significant group of teachers. It would be a commonly accepted premise that play, in terms of its use as a learning strategy, is not being significantly utilised in secondary classrooms. It is proposed in the current study that play should be incorporated into the learning process both for its extrinsic value (student achievement and attitudes towards learning) and intrinsic value (enhancing students' and teachers' enjoyment in the learning process).

Role play has been shown to be closely linked to intrinsic motivational strategies. Students taught creative writing through role play therefore can be intrinsically motivated. Motivation has been shown to be significant in enhancing both student achievement and attitudes and this should be reflected in the students' creative writing.
Creativity and problem-solving. Creativity has been defined previously in the current study as imaginative and original thinking or problem-solving. Though this is a simplistic definition for a highly complex concept it illustrates both the links between creativity and problem-solving and the further link with role play. Role play as a teaching strategy has been closely associated with the guided discovery strategy both in its steps of implementation and focus. Its steps follow the basic structure of the teacher setting a problem and the students solving the problem with the focus on students expressing their own original ideas in creative ways.

The teacher as a facilitator offers support when it is needed. Essentially the students are encouraged to trust their own judgment. In the role play lesson students can take risks, as previously discussed in the current study, and arrive at creative solutions. Clark (1988) in discussing whether creativity can be effectively taught argues that students need safe places for creativity to be expressed, together with the support of teachers and students who value creativity.

Creativity in problem-solving is also associated with critical thinking strategies. Through role play students have opportunities to employ thinking strategies such as brainstorming and divergent thinking. Brainstorming is the generating of ideas without stopping to evaluate them and therefore unusual or creative ideas can be expressed. Students are also encouraged to come up with many possible solutions to a set problem. Such thinking is known as
divergent thinking and is significantly related to creativity as argued by Guilford and Torrance (separately cited in Woolfolk, 1992).

Elements associated with creativity such as intuition, imagination, spontaneity, subconscious and originality are often viewed in the traditional classroom as suspect, as has been previously suggested in the current study. Neville (1990) asserts that 'teachers are commissioned by the culture to transmit information, skills and attitudes ... and that the school system as a whole does not reward spontaneity and originality.' (p. 163) Neville further argues that indirect methods of teaching are more powerful methods as they call on capacities of both conscious and unconscious processes which can lead to creative insights.

Role play as indirect teaching has the potential for students to generate unusual and creative ideas and freely express their ideas, feelings, actions and creativity in a safe environment. In terms of utilising role play to teach creative writing students can call on the unusual and creative ideas generated both by themselves and their class members. Students' feelings are not devalued or disregarded through role play and emotions aroused can positively influence both students' writing achievement and attitudes.

There is a body of research that supports writing approaches that emphasise feelings before skills (Murray, 1985; Byron, 1986; Styles, 1990; Thomson, 1992). The emphasis is on feelings
before skills and not on feelings before thinking. It is important to note here that feelings are not separated from thinking - both domains are interactive, and through role play processes are highly integrated (Byron, 1986; O'Toole; 1992; Thomson 1992). Thomson (1992) in referring to the affective aspect of the role play strategy argues that 'once we speak our feelings directly, instead of merely talking about them or writing about them, things do start to happen - feelings are stirred up and insights can occur.' (p. 136)

Through role play and particularly through its aspect of play students can be motivated by feelings of enjoyment and a sense of fun. Such playfulness can enter into their creative writing and achievement could be enhanced. Whether students achieve in their creative writing or not, it remains significant that the students' attitudes towards creative writing are positive. Students with positive attitudes can be taught skills, but it is much more difficult to teach students with negative attitudes. With many secondary students resisting writing in the English classroom the issue of student attitudes is highly significant (Cleary, 1990; Thomson, 1990).

*Imagination and unconscious learning.* Jung (cited in Neville, 1990, p. 87) in his discussion on the imagination and the part it plays in the development of the human potential for creativity asserts:

> The dynamic principle of fantasy is play, which belongs to the child, and as such it appears to be inconsistent with the principle of serious work. But
without this playing with fantasy no creative work has ever come to birth. The debt we owe to the play of imagination is incalculable.

Jung is not alone in his theory that imagination is integral to creativity. Rogers (1983), Johnstone (1981) and De Bono (1991) all support such a view. Imagination, play and fantasy have been closely associated with both role play and creative writing processes. Students are actively encouraged to use their imaginations. The steps of role play have been shown to promote critical thinking strategies which again invite imagination into the process. The concepts of play and fantasy are valued in the role play classroom and are carried over into creative writing activities.

Jung’s statement also serves to illustrate a commonly held view of play, fantasy and imagination as childish occupations. This view is reflected in the classrooms of many secondary schools as has been previously discussed in the current study. A significant group of educators view teaching strategies such as role play and activities such as creative writing as being in the realm of the primary schools: such strategies and activities are not deemed appropriate for the serious nature of secondary classrooms (Neville, 1990; Monteith & Miles, 1992; Thomson, 1992). It is apparent that there is a need for a reassessment of such attitudes if these strategies and activities have the potential for developing students' creativity, as is proposed by the current study.

Neville (1990) asserts that indirect teaching strategies rather than direct teaching strategies promote unconscious learning: direct
strategies focus on the teacher's knowledge while indirect strategies are more open-ended. Unconscious learning is the learning that individuals are not consciously aware of. Through role play students can be drawing on elements that they are not aware of, but that can be observed in their creative expressions: 'In the educational context this means inviting unacknowledged understanding and information to come into consciousness.' (Neville, 1990, p. 100). Both the imaginative and unconscious abilities of the students can be developed through role play and should therefore be reflected in the students' creative writing.

**Studies Linking Role Play and Creative Writing**

A search of the literature did not identify any study specifically linking the teaching strategy of role play with creative writing in the secondary English classroom. The research that has been carried out has been in the more general area of drama and writing activities in a variety of contexts: in both primary and secondary schools and in both the drama and English classrooms (e.g. Byron, 1986; Thomson, 1987; Neelands, 1992; O'Toole, 1992; Edmiston, 1993; Wagner, 1994 & Timms, 1995).

Research that is most related to the current study's purposes and methodology will be discussed. The research of Neelands (1992) focussed on the relationship between drama and writing in the secondary drama classroom. It utilised a naturalistic observation methodology to investigate both students' attitudes and achievement during the six month project. The project was not designed to provide statistical evidence, but focussed on finding
points of contact between drama and writing, particularly in the area of student motivation. A brief discussion of the main findings that resulted from students writing persuasive letters after a role play activity follows.

The findings indicated that: (1) many students experienced a close association with the writing due to having a strong sense of purpose (2) many students could relate to the characters and this empathising allowed them to write sensitively and from different points of view (3) the improvisations allowed a broad range of material to be generated which students could include in their writing. Both positive and negative comments about writing in drama were made by the students. The main negative comment was a concern about writing taking up drama time. The main positive comment was that the collaborative processes provided ideas and that they had more opportunities for a personal response. These findings are significant in relation to the current study's predictions that role play has a positive effect on student attitudes and motivation.

The research of Wagner (1994) was closest to the current study's research in both purpose and methodology. It focussed on the effects of role playing on persuasive letters of fourth and eighth graders (primary and secondary students). It was an experimental study that generated quantitative data. There has been minimal research utilising such methodologies in the field of drama (Hillocks, 1986).
Wagner's research differs from the current study's research significantly in the nature of the writing texts. Persuasive letters are considered a form (or genre) of transactional writing rather than a form of creative writing because they are functionally based and follow common conventions. There are also other important differences in the design; however the findings that are generally relevant to the current study's purposes will be discussed.

Wagner hypothesised that role play would stimulate students' language development and therefore enhance the writing. She also hypothesised that the fourth graders would benefit more than the eighth graders. A brief discussion of Wagner's research will be carried out focussing on the findings highly relevant to the current study's purposes. Students were randomly assigned to three groups. They wrote persuasive letters to their school principals on three different topics in one of three 35 minute instructional conditions: (1) role playing prior to writing (2) direct instruction prior to writing (3) no instruction.

Direct instruction refers to direct teaching strategies. The results demonstrated that the 'fourth and eighth graders who role play produce persuasive letters that are significantly more orientated towards their target than either students who have had direct instruction ... or those with no instruction' (Wagner, 1994, p. 33). It is beyond the scope or purposes of the current study to examine in depth Wagner's research; however, as evidenced from the results, role play has been shown to enhance students' writing in comparison with direct methods (traditional strategies).
Summary

The broad background to the study involved a literature review that focussed on a discussion of the major schools of thought in education and the factors influencing education. An argument was built for the humanistic approach to education in that it had the potential to best meet major learning goals. Two major learning goals were: (1) students become independent and creative learners and thinkers (2) students are enabled as social beings. These two major goals resulted from a recognition that teachers needed to: (1) incorporate strategies which led to students having a central role in their learning (2) consider the importance of the social context in student learning. The two major goals related to the current study's central focus question: how best to teach students what they need to learn so that they gain the skills relevant to themselves and to their role in society.

The background to the study involved a literature review that focussed on theories and practices that related to role play and creative writing in the English classroom. Links were made between the humanistic approach, student-centred learning, drama in education and role play, focussing on the current study's central purpose of matching teaching strategies to learning goals. Further links were made between role play and creative writing which built an argument for role play as a strategy having potential to meet the creative writing learning objectives.
Aim of Study

The aim of the study was to explore and measure the potential effect of role play on secondary students' creative writing and on their attitudes towards creative writing in the English classroom. The study aimed to observe and measure the sample Year 9 students' achievement in creative writing, comparing the results of the test group (role play group) with the control group (traditional group). The study also aimed to observe and measure the sample Year 9 students' attitudes towards creative writing, comparing the results of the test group with the control group. The study focussed on the effect of role play on students' creative writing and attitudes towards creative writing.

Justification for Research Methodology

A search of the literature on experimental studies linking role play with creative writing in the secondary English classroom found that no studies of that specific nature had been published. There was therefore a need for research that could provide information in this gap. Research of any type in the area of role play and creative writing has been shown to be very limited (Wagner, 1994). When it has been conducted, it has generally been restricted to naturalistic or qualitative methodologies. There is therefore a need for quantitative research in the area linking role play directly with creative writing. Such research could contribute to a balanced interpretation of findings both in the general area of drama in education and in the specific area of role play and creative writing.
General Outline of Experiment

The experiment was based on comparing students' creative writing achievement and attitudes towards creative writing between a role play group (test group) and a traditional group (control group) after they had both been exposed to the creative writing programme (intervention). Both groups were measured at pre-test and post-test times in order to obtain scores for creative writing achievement and attitudes towards creative writing. Both groups received the same treatment in every area except that the role play group were taught through role play while the traditional group were taught through a variety of teaching (traditional) strategies. The independent variable was role play. It is important to note here that the current study did not focus on the effect of traditional strategies on students' creative writing and attitude towards creative writing; rather, it utilised differences in scores as a point for a discussion focused on the effect of role play.

The current study utilised a mixed method approach in exploring and measuring effects, including both quantitative and qualitative methods in order to arrive at a balanced interpretation of the findings. The quantitative findings could provide a quantifiable measure of the effect of role play on both creative writing achievement and attitudes towards creative writing. The qualitative findings could contribute to the discussion of the effect of role play on creative writing and attitudes towards creative writing.
Need for Development of instruments

Because the research undertaken in the current study was novel there was a need to develop the instruments of measurement. No suitable standard instruments were available for measuring creative writing achievement. No standard questionnaires were available for measuring students' attitude towards creative writing. Because such developmental procedures need to be detailed, they will be discussed in this introductory section rather than in the methodology section of the current study.

Instrument to measure creative writing achievement. An instrument was needed to measure quantitatively the students' creative writing achievement both at pre-test and post-test times. An instrument needed to be developed which could measure both the quality of the writing and the length of the writing. This instrument was designated the Prose Text instrument. It included the four measures needed as scores: (1) pre-prose text score (2) pre-prose text length (3) post-prose text score (4) post-prose text length. The prose text instrument was essentially a piece of creative writing that the students wrote at pre-test and post-test times. An example of the prose text instrument is in Appendix A.

The prose text instrument was developed by the researcher as a practical means of evaluating and measuring students' creative writing achievement. The instrument could also serve as one means of measuring students' attitudes towards creative writing as indicated in the length of the writing pieces. It is commonly accepted by English teachers that length is one significant
indicator of a student's motivation to write.

Determining appropriate criteria for scoring creative writing achievement was necessarily important. The researcher attempted to accommodate both educational criteria and the prevailing literary criteria of the wider creative writing community. Such a selection of criteria could best meet the creative writing learning objectives, as defined previously in the current study: students achieve creative writing objectives both in the school and social context. The researcher as a practising creative writer attended creative writing workshops, seminars and poetry performances. She wrote and performed her original work and through these activities she attempted to arrive at a better understanding of the nature of creative writing.

The researcher selected the criteria developed by the First Steps Project (1993) which was currently being used by many English teachers in Western Australia as a major reference for creative writing ability indicators. The researcher also developed her own criteria for measuring creative writing achievement based on: (1) a review of relevant literature (2) her experience as a practising English teacher (3) her experiences as a creative writer in the writing community (4) the nature of the English classroom context (5) the ability level of the students. A workable document was designed and is referred to throughout the current study as the 'prescribed criteria for marking creative writing achievement'. The document is in Appendix B.
In the English classroom context, instructions to students were an important consideration at the pre-test and post-test times so that the students knew what the expected criteria were for the writing. The following extract from the prose text instrument (see Appendix A) indicates the nature of this contextual criterion:

As a reader I am looking for effective writing - writing that has an impact on the reader. I will not be focusing on spelling etc. The focus is on what and how you get your story across. The writing you do will be assessed on the following criteria (which is listed on the assessment sheet):

1. tell your story your own way (originality and effectiveness of character/s and events)
2. choose the language that best suits your characters and events (appropriateness and expressiveness)
3. focus on making your story effective (make the reader interested in what you write and how you write by using your writing skills and imagination)
4. demonstrate your creativity and imagination (choose the form and style that suits your purpose - you may include poetry etc.)
5. a minimum of 1 page, but you may feel you need to write more to make your story effective.

(note that the above extract includes the exact punctuation etc of the original document)

It is recognised in the current study that measuring creative writing ability is difficult. Creative writing is highly subjective in its nature: what one person values in creative writing another person may devalue. The prescribed criteria for marking creative writing achievement in the current study have been designed to be as objective as possible; however it is recognised that scorers (or markers) must necessarily be affected by their own subjective
responses to the work. Detailed procedures for scoring the data generated by the prose text instrument and related monitoring issues are in the procedure section of the current study (p. 90). It is important to note that the prose text instrument was identical in format for both the pre-test and post-test times.

The prose text instrument was also one means of measuring students' attitudes towards creative writing as indicated by the length of the writing: pre-test prose text length and post-test prose text length. Length was measured by a page score based on a scale of thirds e.g. (a) 1 1/3 pages or (b) 1 2/3 pages. Score (b) is greater because it is one and two-thirds pages as compared to score (a) which is one and one-third pages. The size of the paper was the same for pre-test and post-test therefore it could be quantitatively measured. An example of a student's pre-test and post-test writing is in Appendix C. The example includes its pre-test prose text length score and post-test prose text length score.

*Instrument to measure creative writing attitudes.* An instrument was needed to quantitatively measure the students' attitudes towards creative writing both at pre-test and post-test times. One instrument was developed and it is referred to throughout the current study as the questionnaire attitude instrument. It incorporated two measures: (1) pre-questionnaire score (2) post-questionnaire score.

The questionnaire attitude instrument was developed by the researcher over a period of six months. The researcher consulted
professionals in the areas of creative writing, English studies and educational research. The researcher also sought the opinions of secondary students as to whether the questionnaire seemed to be an effective measurement of attitudes in regards to creative writing. A pilot study was conducted and the results were analysed by the researcher together with university research consultants by means of an Analysis of Covariance. The purpose of the analysis was to ascertain whether the items had construct validity: i.e. if the items were measuring what they were supposed to be measuring. The findings indicated that several items were not accurately measuring attitudes, therefore the items were reworded or omitted.

The questionnaire attitude instrument was identical for both the pre-test and post-test: both had the same instructions and the same items. However, it is important to note that for practical purposes the post-questionnaire format included a student comment section. This section was to be analysed separately as qualitative data and will be discussed in the methodology section of the current paper. The questionnaire attitude instrument is included in Appendix D. In order to demonstrate how the questionnaire attitude instrument was scored, an example of two items (questions) follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score 1</th>
<th>Score 2</th>
<th>Score 3</th>
<th>Score 4</th>
<th>Score 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Creative writing is boring</td>
<td>( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Creative writing helps me express my feelings</td>
<td>( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In the above example students respond to the questions using the Likert Scale (Gay, 1992). A Likert scale asks an individual to respond to statements by indicating whether she/he: strongly agrees (SA) agrees (A) is uncertain (U) disagrees (D) strongly disagrees (SD). Each response is associated with a point value. In the current study the point value ranged from 1 - 5 with a 5 indicating positive attitudes and a 1 indicating negative attitudes towards creative writing. If a response for item 10 was a tick for (SA) then this would indicate that the student strongly agreed that creative writing let him/her express his/her feelings. This response would indicate a positive attitude and be given a score of 5. If the response for item 9 was a tick for (SA) then this would indicate that the student strongly agreed that creative writing was boring and that a negative attitude was indicated. This score of 5 would need to be reverse scored. The scoring for the questionnaire attitude instrument is included as Appendix E.

Statement of Hypotheses

It is hypothesised that Year 9 students who are taught creative writing through the teaching strategy of role play rather than through traditional teaching strategies will demonstrate greater creative writing achievement.

It is also hypothesised that Year 9 students who are taught creative writing through the teaching strategy of role play rather than through traditional teaching strategies will demonstrate more positive attitudes towards creative writing.
Predictions

It is predicted that Year 9 students who are taught creative writing through the teaching strategy of role play rather than through traditional teaching strategies will demonstrate better learning outcomes. The learning outcomes will reflect the student-centred and holistic learning processes they have been engaged in through role play and are considered as possible effects. Learning outcomes are a range of beneficial outcomes previously referred to in the current study in the discussion of links e.g. (1) language development (2) motivation (3) independent learning (4) holistic learning. It is beyond the scope of the current study to investigate in detail any of these outcomes; except where they are highly relevant to the purposes of the study.

Operational Definitions

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of the strategy of role play on the Year 9 secondary students’ creative writing and on their attitude towards creative writing. The independent variable was role play and the dependent variables were creative writing achievement and attitudes towards creative writing. Various instruments were developed to measure both the quantitative data and the qualitative data that was generated from the mixed method approach. Table 1 illustrates the operational definitions for the dependent variables measured in the current study:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operational Definition</th>
<th>Type of measure</th>
<th>What it measured</th>
<th>Time of measure</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent variables</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-prose text quality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-prose text length</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-prose text quality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-prose text length</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-questionnaire attitude</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-questionnaire attitude</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student comments</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher lesson observation notes</td>
<td></td>
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<td>I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student activity journals</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>G &amp; H</td>
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</table>

Table 1. Operational definitions
The operational definitions in the current study relate to the dependent variables of students' creative writing achievement and students' attitudes towards creative writing. The above table illustrates: (1) how each score was measured: quantitatively or qualitatively (2) what was measured: either achievement or attitude (3) what time it was measured: pre-test or post-test (4) where an example of the instrument that measured either achievement or attitude can be found in the current study. A detailed discussion of these dependent variables (DVs) is carried out in the method section of the current study. A brief discussion of the term 'prose text' will follow in order to clarify what it is, and its relation to student creative writing achievement and attitudes.

The piece of creative writing the students did at pre-test was defined as the pre-prose text. It was defined as 'prose text', rather than 'creative writing piece' in order to distinguish it from students' general creative writing pieces. It has both a quality and length component which are measured separately as: (1) pre-prose text quality (2) pre-prose text length. The piece of creative writing the students did at post-test is defined as the post-prose text. It has both a quality and length component which are measured separately as: (1) post-prose text quality (2) post-prose text length. Essentially students wrote a piece of creative writing at the beginning of the intervention (creative writing programme) and at the end of the intervention, and these two pieces of writing were scored on two components (four scores) and compared with each other: these are the four DVs relating to the prose text instrument.
CHAPTER 3

Method

Design
An experimental design was used with the independent variable, role play, being manipulated between the two groups: (1) role play group (2) traditional group. The dependent variables were the achievement in creative writing scores and attitudes towards creative writing scores, which were comprised of nine sub-scores. The dependent variables for creative writing achievement were given the names of pre-prose text score and post-prose text score, which are respectively scores for the pieces of creative writing that the students did at pre-test time and post-test time. Three dependent variables were measured at pre-test: (1) pre-prose text quality score (2) pre-prose text length score (3) pre-questionnaire attitude score. These variables were measured as quantitative data. Three dependent variables were measured at post-test: (4) post-prose text quality score (5) post-prose text length score (6) post-questionnaire attitude score. These variables were measured as quantitative data.

The design was a mixed-method approach measuring data both quantitatively and qualitatively. The following three dependent variables were measured qualitatively at post-test time: (7) student comments (8) teacher lesson observation comments (9) student activity journals. Figure (6) below illustrates the research design model:
### RESEARCH DESIGN MODEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time-frame</th>
<th>Procedures</th>
<th>Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior</td>
<td>pilot study questionnaire</td>
<td>test instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interview with principal</td>
<td>obtain participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interview with teacher</td>
<td>arrange course details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>meeting with students</td>
<td>overview of investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>send consent letters</td>
<td>ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>pre-test</td>
<td>obtain scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>random selection</td>
<td>obtain groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>creative writing</td>
<td>conduct lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to 9</td>
<td>programme (intervention)</td>
<td>collect data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>post-test</td>
<td>obtain scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>scoring data</td>
<td>monitoring data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interview teacher</td>
<td>discuss scoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>data analysis</td>
<td>monitoring analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6. Research Design Model.

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Participants

The researcher selected a state secondary school in the Perth district. Random selection of a school was not possible within the constraints of the current study. The school was considered by the researcher to be in an average socioeconomic district. The researcher sought permission from the Principal by interview and letter to conduct her research with an English class. A Year 9 class of 32 students was made available after consultation with the head of department of English. The size and the major characteristics of the class were considered suitable for the current study's purposes. A sample of 30 or more is considered, by Gay (1992) amongst others, to be a statistically useful size.

The students were in a 'streamed' class and were considered by the head of department as demonstrating average to above-average abilities in their English studies. A streamed class indicated that the class was considered fairly homogeneous in ability. They were following a curriculum unit of English studies (Curriculum Branch, 1987) that was considered suited to their ability level: Unit 6.1 (Appendix J). Both their English class grades and their Torch tests (Easy-Mark Testing Services, 1989) conducted in 1994 in their Year 8, had indicated that the students were in an average to above range in their year group (average age 14 years old) abilities. A Torch test is a standard test that provides diagnostic and interpretive information about students' skills in reading. It is a test commonly utilised in state secondary schools.
Ethical considerations consisted of the researcher seeking the permission of both the students and the parents or guardians for the students to participate in the study. A meeting was held between the researcher and the students where the researcher informed the students of the general nature of the creative writing programme (intervention) and personally requested the students' participation in the study. The students took consent letters (Appendix M) home to be signed and returned prior to the commencement of the study. The method of assignment of students to either the role play or the traditional group will be described in the procedure section of the current study.

It is important to note here that the researcher would also be the teacher involved in instructing both groups during the experiment. For the purposes of the current study when the teacher or researcher are referred to from herein, they are one and the same person.

Instruments
This section will provide a rationale for the instruments that were utilised in the study. The development and purpose of the instruments will be discussed (if not previously described). Considerations of reliability and validity will be discussed. The discussion will firstly focus on the instruments that were quantitative measures, and secondly will focus on the instruments that were qualitative measures.

It is important to note that some instruments were considered as
both quantitative and qualitative measures. It is also important to note that the study adopted a mixed-method approach both to data collection (using two or more instruments) and data analysis procedures (quantitative and qualitative). Such an approach utilises triangulation techniques which contribute to improving internal validity (Burns, 1994). Triangulation is the use of two or more methods of data collection, compared with each other, to improve internal validity. Table (2) can be referred to throughout the discussion.

Table 2. Instruments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Quantitative</th>
<th>Qualitative</th>
<th>Appendix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prose text quality</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prose text length</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire attitude</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student comments</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher lesson observation notes</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student activity journals</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>G&amp;H</td>
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</table>

*Prose text instrument.* The development and purpose of the prose text instrument (includes quality and length) has been previously described in the introductory section of the current study. The validity of the instrument as a quantitative measure of students' creative writing achievement was subject to the validity of the prescribed criteria for marking, which was previously discussed in the introduction. The reliability of the instrument cannot be
evaluated because as it was the researcher's self-designed instrument it had not been previously utilised.

**Questionnaire attitude instrument** The development and purpose of questionnaire attitude instrument has been previously described in the introductory section of the current study. The validity of the instrument as a quantitative measure of students' attitudes towards creative writing was subject to tests as previously described in the introductory section of the current study. The reliability of the instrument cannot be evaluated because it was the researcher's self-designed instrument and it had not been previously utilised. It is important to note that the pilot study was conducted on the first version of the questionnaire and not on the revised questionnaire.

**Student comments instrument.** This instrument was developed to provide a qualitative measure of students' attitudes towards creative writing as indicated from their comments. The student comment instrument was incorporated with the post-test questionnaire attitude instrument for practical purposes (see Appendix F).

Essentially students at post-test time would write comments about the creative writing programme they had participated in. The students' comments were to be analysed and put into three categories: (1) mainly positive (2) mainly negative (3) mixed response. The validity of this instrument was subject to students' self-evaluations and the researcher's interpretation of the students' self-evaluations. A typical analysis of examples of student
comments follows: (1) it [the creative writing programme] was thoroughly enjoyable, it helped me learn different techniques of writing creatively (2) it was a waste of time (3) it was fun, but I don't like writing much. Student comment (1) would be considered mainly positive. Student comment (2) would be considered mainly negative. Student comment (3) would be considered a mixed response.

The open-ended nature of the student comment instrument provided a qualitative measure of students' attitudes towards creative writing. Instruments that allow participants to express self-evaluations and open-ended comments are considered to be valid measures (Cohen, 1980). The student comment instrument data could be interpreted in light of the quantitative data of the questionnaire attitude instrument and provide a balanced interpretative viewpoint. This triangulation technique (Burns, 1994) helps improve this study's internal validity.

*Teacher lesson observation comments instrument.* This instrument was developed to provide qualitative data as a measure of both student creative writing achievement and students' attitudes towards creative writing. Essentially the teacher would observe the behaviours of the students in the lessons during the intervention. She would note the student behaviours that indicated both achievement and attitudes. The teacher would write the comments as soon as possible after the lessons. An example of the teacher's observation notes is in Appendix I.
The notes would be analysed at post-test time and would be put into five categories indicating either achievement and/or attitudes. The indicators would refer to both individuals and groups: (1) works independently (2) communicates effectively (3) completes task effectively (3) extends task effectively (5) cooperates in tasks.

Considerations of the validity of the instrument were subject to the teacher accurately observing and interpreting the behaviours. As the teacher would also be involved in instructional processes she would need to keep the notes to a minimum, focussing only on the behaviours that seemed highly relevant to the purposes of the study. Ideally an observer other than the class teacher would be utilised; however this option was not possible within the constraints of the current study.

A typical analysis of teacher observation notes can serve to illustrate how the evaluations could be approached. Two examples of sets of notes might be: (1) students completed their sonnets and they were of a high standard: they had achieved the lesson objectives (2) students laughed and talked together as they organised their role play ... one student tried out different accents for his American character, while another girl got so involved in role as headmistress that she broke her pencil. Example (1) would indicate that students had completed their task effectively. Example (2) would indicate that students were both communicating effectively and cooperating in tasks.
A second observer could also have provided a further measure of the accuracy of observation in comparing both observers' notes and thus improving internal validity. For the purposes of the current study the teacher would attempt as detailed and accurate a recording of observable behaviours as possible. The reliability of this instrument could not be evaluated as it was the researcher's self-designed instrument and it had not been previously utilised.

*Student activity journal instrument.* This instrument was developed to provide qualitative data as a measure of both student creative writing achievement and students' attitudes towards creative writing. Essentially the content of this instrument would be the students' creative writing demonstrated during the intervention. It would include the writing relating to the various lesson activities. The writing could include a variety of forms (transactional and creative writing) e.g. (1) notes (2) poems (3) drawings (4) narratives (5) letters (6) drawings.

The main purpose of this instrument was to be a rich source of data for informal qualitative comment. It was not intended to be a main instrument of measurement, rather its purpose was to provide the researcher with a point of reference for generally and informally evaluating students' achievement and attitudes towards creative writing. It was beyond the scope of the current study to analyse the vast amounts of data that could be generated by such an instrument.

The researcher, during the intervention and after the intervention,
would evaluate the journals, focussing on data that was highly relevant to the purposes of the study. Examples of student journal activity instrument extracts are in Appendix G and H. These extracts can serve as an indication of what the researcher perceived as high or low creative writing achievement: the example in Appendix G indicated low achievement while the example in Appendix H indicated high achievement. Further discussion on these extracts will be carried out in the discussion section of the current study.

The researcher had to rely on her own judgment as a professional teacher and creative writer in evaluating student achievement in the activity journals and this was the main consideration for the internal validity of the instrument. Standard considerations for validity and reliability could not be applied to this instrument, other than for the researcher to be as objective as possible in her evaluations of creative writing ability and attitudes towards creative writing, as they were considered to be beyond the scope of the current study.

**Procedure**

*Controlling the variables.* This section will describe in a chronological order the steps carried out by the researcher during the course of the experiment. Firstly, Table 3 below will list the variables that were controlled for throughout the experiment. Secondly, the intervention will be described. During the description of the intervention the researcher will refer to the measures utilised for controlling the variables: how the variables
were kept constant throughout the experiment.

Table 3. Variables controlled for in the experiment.

| 1. | individual differences between groups |
| 2. | teacher effects |
| 3. | environmental effects |
| 4. | testing conditions |
| 5. | creative writing programme and related resources |
| 6. | Hawthorne effect |
| 7. | Novelty effect |
| 8. | data monitoring and analysis procedures |

*Description of the intervention.* It is important to note that for the purposes of the current study the intervention was the creative writing programme. It is to be distinguished from the experiment itself. The experiment was the comparison of results between the teaching strategy of role play (the independent variable) and the traditional strategies. The creative writing programme was the means by which the researcher could measure creative writing achievement and attitudes towards creative writing (the dependent variables). Both the role play group and the traditional group experienced the same creative writing programme which was identical in: (1) learning objectives (2) resources and materials (3) subject matter. It differed only in the teaching strategies utilised: (1) role play (2) traditional strategies.
It is important to note that role play is referred to both as the strategy and the activity. It was the approach that was utilised with the role play group. It is also important to note that the second group (traditional group) were taught by a variety of teaching strategies (of a traditional nature). For the purpose of clarity they will be referred throughout the following discussion as one approach: traditional strategies.

The researcher taught the traditional group by a variety of traditional strategies because this is the most common method of teaching in the English classroom: teachers generally do not use only one strategy in every case e.g. they might teach creative writing in one lesson by the exposition strategy and in the next lesson by a demonstration strategy (modelling how to write). The purpose of the current study was to compare role play with traditional strategies as a group, not with one particular traditional strategy: a comparison with one strategy would not be useful because as previously stated that is not the normal approach by most teachers.

It is also important to note that a 'variety of traditional teaching strategies' is clearly distinguished from a 'variety of teaching strategies'. A variety of teaching strategies includes a mixture of indirect and direct strategies and is the preferred method of teaching as proposed in the current study and previously discussed in the background section. The researcher developed her creative writing programme to follow the steps of either the role
play approach or the traditional approach.

After a consultation with the participants' regular class teacher (also head of the English department) it was established that the researcher needed to incorporate her creative writing programme into the students' normal unit of study (see Appendix J) as practically as possible. This meant that the researcher had to rewrite her programme taking into consideration the objectives of the unit outline and the assessment pieces that needed to be produced by the students for grading purposes. The researcher and the regular teacher worked out which part of the unit objectives she would cover. The researcher also needed to mainly utilise the resources and materials suggested by the regular teacher which were also available in the school e.g. class novel sets.

As has been previously discussed participation consent letters went home with students prior to the commencement of the pre-test. The researcher in the first week administered the pre-test to the thirty-two students under the following conditions: (1) students were in their regular classroom (2) researcher explained how the pre-test would be conducted (3) students completed the pre-test (4) students were randomly assigned to groups. It is important to note that the pre-test was administered as a normal classroom test - students worked silently and independently. Refer to Appendix A for the detailed instructions for the pre-test. Testing conditions for both groups at pre-test and post-test times were identical, therefore testing conditions remained constant for both groups.
The random assignment was carried out by the researcher by means of students selecting lollies from a bag. Students could not see which lolly (Minties or Fantales) they were selecting. The Mintie group were assigned to the role play group and the Fantale group were assigned to the traditional group. This random selection was considered appropriate for the research design and fortunately resulted in each group having an equal distribution of males and females.

Students referred to themselves as the Mintie or Fantale group and did not seem to note whether they were in the role play or traditional group. The researcher did not draw the students’ attentions to the teaching strategies; rather she drew students’ attentions to the creative writing programme. The random assignment of students to groups was the best method of controlling individual differences between groups. Because the participants were considered to be a generally homogeneous group in ability this also contributed to controlling individual differences between groups. It is also important to note that the students in both groups, not just in the role play group, could feel they were being given special treatment. Through this the Hawthorne effect (Gay, 1992) could be controlled.

It is important to note that the researcher was familiar to the students because she was already known as a relief teacher at the school. It was an assumption of the researcher’s that she would be generally regarded by the students as a regular English
teacher. The teacher would not generally be regarded as a 'novelty', but if she was, the effect would be the same for both groups: the novelty effect of the 'new' teacher is therefore controlled.

The study was to be conducted over a period of ten weeks (see Figure 6, p. 73). The researcher administered the pre-test in the first week, as previously discussed. She conducted the creative writing programme for the next eight weeks, during which there were eight lessons - one of which was a non-teaching lesson (an in-class assessment piece. Refer to Appendix K). In the tenth week she conducted the post-test. The post-test was conducted under the same conditions as the pre-test.

The researcher taught both groups the creative writing programme at different times. Each group had a lesson of 70 minutes duration once a week during their regular English class-times with the researcher. While the researcher was teaching one group creative writing the regular teacher taught the other group their regular programme. For the first four weeks the role play group had their lesson on a Monday while the traditional group had their lesson on a Thursday. The groups swapped over for the last five weeks. This meant that both groups had had lessons in the same time-slots, both on Mondays and Thursdays. The environmental conditions were therefore the same for both the role play group and the traditional group: (1) same classroom (2) same time-slot. Environmental conditions were controlled.
Throughout the intervention the researcher endeavoured to treat each group the same e.g.: (1) same communication style and manner (2) same level of instructional skill (3) same class rules (4) same praise. The researcher aimed for a non-biased approach. This self-monitoring of teacher-bias was the main means of controlling the effect of teacher-bias. Ideally an observer would have monitored the teacher, but that was not possible within the constraints of the current study. The teacher considered herself to be equally skilled in both types of teaching strategies. She had been mainly trained in traditional strategies; however she also had some skills in role play strategies. The effects of teacher-bias and teacher-skill were controlled.

As was previously discussed the creative writing programme was the same for both groups. The eight lessons had the same learning objectives and utilised the same resources. Reference can be made to Appendix L which lists resources utilised. In some cases it was necessary to adapt the resources to the particular teaching strategy being utilised. An example was when the role play group were given cards with scenarios written on them for their role play, while the traditional group were given a worksheet with the scenarios written on them for their discussions. The researcher made adaptations of the resources where necessary to suit the strategies. Reference can be made to the creative writing programme lessons (Appendix K). As the creative writing programme was essentially identical for both groups the novelty effect was controlled: both groups could have increased motivation.
Marking of the students' pre-prose texts and post-prose text pieces was carried out by the researcher directly after post-test time. The students' regular English teacher was the second marker and he marked the pieces during the next week. The researcher had previously provided him with the prescribed criteria for creative writing achievement (Appendix B). As it was the end of the school term the researcher could not obtain an interview with the second marker until three weeks later at the beginning of the next school term. Having a second marker was considered the most appropriate method for increasing the validity of the prose text instrument. It was also a means of controlling experimenter-bias. Experimenter-bias is the tendency for the experimenter or the researcher (in this current study's case) to be biased towards the hypothesis (Gay, 1992).

The researcher had a follow-up informal consultation with the second marker and discussed: (1) his interpretation of the results (2) the similarities and differences between the two markers' scores (3) general observations of the behaviours of the participants throughout the intervention (4) values regarding creative writing (5) general evaluations of the creative writing done by the participants.

The researcher had a follow-up session with the students shortly after the interview with the regular teacher and thanked the students for their participation and for their great work. She explained that she would inform them of the results of her
investigation as soon as she had finished her analysis.

Further monitoring procedures. Data was collected throughout the intervention. The general procedure was that the researcher kept safely in her possession all the data that was to be scored. When possible and practical the data was kept in the researcher's secured file. Students needed to write in their student activity journals each lesson. The researcher collected them up after each lesson in order that they were not misplaced.

Several students asked to take their activity journals home to continue writing exercises; however this was not allowed for two reasons: (1) students might misplace their work (2) the work done could not be confirmed as their own work. The researcher, however, encouraged students to do any extra writing in a different book or on sheets of paper. Such data was not scored, but it was still considered as valuable data. The pre-test and post-test quantitative data was secured until it was marked. Data monitoring procedures were kept constant for both groups.

Neither the researcher nor the regular teacher could be blind (not knowing whose writing they were marking) to which student's prose text pieces they were marking. Both the researcher and the regular teacher were familiar with the individuals' writing styles. Both the markers had to rely on their own professional standards to be as objective a marker as possible.

The markers scored the prose text pieces by giving them the
normal grades that teachers commonly used in English classrooms: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F. These grades were converted by the researcher to a numerical score respectively ranging from 13 down to 0. The two markers' scores were added together and divided by two to give an average score for each student. Data analysis procedures were kept constant for both groups.

When the researcher conducted her analysis of results after the experiment she maintained the general monitoring standards: important test data was kept in a secured file. She also followed conventional data analysis procedures in the analysis of the data. Quantitative data was analysed using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) to control for individual differences (within and between groups) in pre-test scores (Gay, 1992). That is, this analysis controlled for any differences in subject scores which existed prior to the experimental manipulation. The two markers' scores were compared for inter-rater agreement both at pre-test and post-test times. A Pearson's Correlation test was applied to the two markers' scores to look at the relationship between them. Both the ANCOVA test and the Pearson's Correlation test can contribute to maintaining effective data analysis standards (Gay, 1992).
CHAPTER 4

Results

Method of Presenting the Results
Firstly the inter-rater agreement between the two markers' scores both at pre-test and post-test times will be presented: a short interpretation will follow. Secondly quantitative results will be presented. Each dependent variable's results will be presented. Focussing initially on students' creative writing achievement followed by students' attitudes towards creative writing. Thirdly qualitative results will be presented. Each dependent variable's results will be presented initially focussing on students' creative writing achievement followed by students' attitudes towards creative writing. After each result is presented a short interpretation will be made. A detailed interpretation of the overall results will be undertaken in the discussion chapter of the current study.

In regard to the quantitative results it is important to note that data was screened in order to ensure: (1) accuracy of entry (2) presence of outliers (3) the test assumptions underlying the analyses were in place. One participant was not present for the post-test; however this did not affect the results as the participant was from the traditional group: no outliers were identified. The assumptions underlying the ANCOVA analyses were not violated. An alpha level of .05 was used for all comparisons.
Inter-Rater Agreement

The Pearson's correlation analysis was used to determine whether there was a relationship (correlation) between the two markers' scores both at pre-test and post-test times when scoring the prose text quality score. Firstly the results relating to the pre-prose text quality scores will be presented. This analysis revealed that at pre-test time the correlation of the first marker's score with the second marker's score was $r = .67, p = .000$.

This result showed that there was a statistically significant relationship between the two markers' scores. An interpretation of this test's results indicates that the two markers had moderate agreement in scoring the pre-prose text quality.

The results relating to the post test scores revealed that at post-test time the correlation of the first marker's score with the second marker's score was $r = .33, p = .073$. This result showed that there was no statistically significant relationship between the two markers' scores. This test's results indicated that the two markers had a low agreement in scoring the post-prose text quality.

An interpretation of the above results indicated that while there was a moderate inter-rater agreement between the marker's scores at pre-test time there was a low inter-rater agreement at post-test times. One probable explanation for the post-test inter-rater results is that the two markers at post-test times were not in complete agreement as to what indicated achievement in the students' post-prose text pieces of creative writing. A more
detailed interpretation of these results will be made in the discussion chapter.

Quantitative Findings

Prose text quality scores relating to students' creative writing achievement. Both groups scores were compared to determine if there was a significant difference in their means. In the traditional group the observed mean was 7.166. In the role play group the observed mean was 8.562. To determine if groups differed on mean post-prose quality scores, the grouping variable 'traditional/role play' was entered as the between groups factor, post-prose text quality score as the DV and pre-prose text quality as the covariate in an ANCOVA. Adjusted means for the traditional/role-play group were 7.485 and 8.244 respectively.

The results of the ANCOVA showed that, when differences in the pre-prose text quality scores were controlled for, there was a statistically significant difference between the adjusted means of the two groups on post-prose text quality scores (F[1,28] = 5.39, p = .028). The role play group did perform better than the traditional group.

Prose text length scores relating to student attitudes towards creative writing. Both groups scores were compared to determine if there was a significant difference in their means. In the traditional group the observed mean was 3.160. In the role play group the observed mean was 3.700. To determine if groups differed on mean post-prose text length scores, the grouping
variable 'traditional/role play' was entered as the between groups factor, post-prose text length score as the DV and pre-prose text length as the covariate in an ANCOVA. Adjusted means for the traditional / role-play groups were 3.019 and 3.841 respectively.

The results of the ANCOVA showed that, when differences in the pre-prose text length scores were controlled for, there was a statistically significant difference between the adjusted means of the two groups on post-prose text length scores \( (F[1,28] = 4.79, p = .037) \). The role play group did perform better than the traditional group.

**Questionnaire attitude scores relating to student attitudes towards creative writing.** Both groups' scores were compared to determine if there was a significant difference in their means. In the traditional group the observed mean was 61.933. In the role play group the observed mean was 65.625. To determine if groups differed in mean post-questionnaire attitude scores, the grouping variable 'traditional/role play' was entered as the between groups factor, post-questionnaire attitude score as the DV and pre-questionnaire attitude as the covariate in an ANCOVA. Adjusted means for the traditional/role-play group were 62.606 and 64.952 respectively.

The results of the ANCOVA showed that, when differences in the pre-questionnaire attitude scores were controlled for, there was no statistically significant difference between the adjusted means of the two groups on post-questionnaire attitude scores.
(F(1, 28) = 1.30, \(p = 0.264\)). The role play group did perform better than the traditional group but this result was not statistically significant.

**Qualitative Findings.**

It is important to note that the qualitative findings mainly relate to the effects of the role play (IV) strategy on students' achievement in creative writing and students' attitudes towards creative writing (DVs). The qualitative findings though also relate to any effects that are highly relevant to the purposes of the current study as discussed previously in the predictions section of the introduction chapter.

**Student comments relating to attitudes.** This DV related to students' attitudes towards creative writing. At post-test time students wrote brief comments about the intervention (creative writing programme) they had participated in. These comments were written at the bottom of the post-questionnaire attitude instrument as previously discussed in the method chapter (Appendix F). It is important to review that these comments were categorised into the following groups: (1) mainly positive (2) mainly negative (3) mixed response.

There were thirty-one participants (16 in the role play group) and the following results were obtained: (1) 27 responses were in the mainly positive category (2) 3 responses were in the mainly negative category (3) 1 response was in the mixed category. Examples of students' responses in each category follow.
Examples of mainly positive comments included:

1. The programme that I have participated in has been most enjoyable. Especially doing small skits and dramatisations. It has given me a greater visualisation on creative writing. There was also a lot of freedom to express my own writing the way I wanted to.

   (role play group participant)

2. The programme has helped me interpret different styles and aspects of creative writing. I know how to develop a story better and develop a better storyline.

   (traditional group participant)

3. It was thoroughly enjoyable, it helped me to learn different techniques of writing creatively.

   (role play group participant)

The mainly negative responses were:

4. It been fun doing dramistic activities but I don’t like writing stories.

   (traditional group participant)

5. I think that it was harder on the students because the teachers were not entirely organised and we were given a lot of extra work in a short time limit. I did not enjoy the poetry but the work on science fiction taught us (or at least me) a lot about this type of book.

   (traditional group participant)
6. The programme has been interesting but since I don't enjoy creative writing that much, I think that I didn't benefit [sic] from it much. It may have improved my skills but I doubt it. But overall it has been a good learning experience.

(role play group participant)

The mixed response was:

8. I thought the creative writing programme was enjoyable but it taught us stuff that most of us already knew about and got a bit boring.

(role play group participant)

Both group's responses were compared and there was no real difference between groups. The students' responses revealed that both the traditional and the role play groups had a mainly positive attitude towards the creative programme they had participated in. While there is no real difference between groups in their attitude towards the creative writing programme they had participated in, it is important to note that these results indicated that both groups attitudes towards creative writing were positive in regard to the intervention. Further interpretation of these results will be carried out in the discussion chapter.
Teacher lesson observation notes relating to student achievement and attitude. This DV refers to the teacher's notes on observed student behaviours demonstrated during the intervention. It is important to note that the observed behaviours indicators relate to:

1. student achievement in creative writing
2. student attitudes towards creative writing
3. learning outcomes in general.

It is important to review that observed student behaviours (both individually and in group situations) were categorised as indicating:

1. works independently
2. communicates effectively
3. completes task effectively
4. extends task effectively
5. cooperates in tasks.

Examples of the teacher lesson observation notes follow:

Example (1) lesson

Lesson observation notes

Traditional Group
Small group discussions were generally on task. Some intense discussion went on about feelings of characters e.g whether Ender was afraid or not in shower setting. Students were able to write their letters without structure or guidance. They seemed involved in the task. There was only a small amount of time for students to peruse creative writing handout.

Observed behaviours: 1.  2.  3.  4.  5.

Role play Group
Role plays ranged from brief realistic portrayals to longer stylised depictions. Groups used dialogue from the text as well as making up their own in the context of their role plays. Students wrote letters in character and were involved in the task. I found I did not have to guide role play or writing task. Students discussed their role plays and did not require any assistance when it was offered.

Observed behaviours: 1.  2.  3.  4.  5.
Lesson observation notes

Traditional group
Most students were involved in tasks. Michael and David were talking off task and Michael made an inappropriate comment regarding a girl's poem. I reminded the class of the text as being a working text. I reminded Michael that criticism of other students' work should be kept to himself and rude remarks would not be tolerated. The session was intense due to the amount of content to be covered. Students were asked to write a lyrical poem on a parent/child theme as in She's Leaving Home for next lesson.

Observed behaviours: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Role play Group
Students' poems demonstrated their general fluency and knowledge of content and structure. David was talking off task and was reluctant to write. Students were keen to do role plays and the first group adapted the girl's role to a less passive one compared to original text. The second group stuck closely to the original text and were realistic in their depictions of characters. There was not enough time to view all groups and homework was set as for the traditional group.

Observed behaviours: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

The asterisk '*' indicated a behaviour or learning outcome that was highly relevant to the purposes of the current study. The numbers 1 - 5 refer to the five categories respectively. In example (1) the traditional group were observed to demonstrate behaviours or outcomes in the following categories: (1) works independently (2) communicates effectively (3) completes task effectively and (5) cooperates in tasks. In the same example the role play group were observed to demonstrate behaviours or outcomes in the following categories: (1) works independently (2) communicates effectively (3) completes task effectively (4) extends task effectively and (5) cooperates in tasks.

In example (2) the traditional group were observed to demonstrate
behaviours or outcomes in the following categories: (2) communicates effectively (3) completes task effectively and (5) cooperates in tasks. In the same example the role play group were observed to demonstrate behaviours or outcomes in the following categories: (1) works independently (2) communicates effectively (3) completes task effectively (4) extends task effectively and (5) cooperates in tasks.

Both the traditional and role play groups demonstrated behaviours and learning outcomes in the categories of (2) communicates effectively (3) completes task effectively and (5) cooperates in tasks. Overall the findings indicated that the role play group performed better than the traditional group in the categories of (1) works independently and (2) extends tasks effectively. Only the role play group demonstrated the behaviours and learning outcomes relating to 'extends task effectively'. Further interpretation of these findings will be conducted in the discussion chapter.

Student activity journals relating to achievement and attitude. This DV was informally analysed: the rich data generated from this DV was too vast to systematically analyse within the constraints of the current study (as was previously discussed in the method chapter). Both groups' activity journals were compared as to the extent of the writing: both groups wrote an average of 9 foolscap pages during the intervention with a range of 6.5 pages to 19.5 pages in length. It is important to note that this writing was completed in eight 70 minute lessons where students were also involved in
many other activities (e.g. role playing, discussions etc.) and school administrative procedures (e.g. roll-call). There was no real difference between groups as to the extent of the writing: both groups were considered by the researcher to have demonstrated positive attitudes towards creative writing as reflected in the extent (length) of their writing.

Both groups creative writing was evaluated by the researcher as to overall achievement. This evaluation of the writing was based on the prescribed criteria for creative writing achievement (Appendix B) and on the particular learning objectives of each of the eight lessons. The DV was given an overall grade at the conclusion of the intervention (creative writing programme). The scale used for the grade was the common English grade scale of F (fail) through to A+ (very high achievement).

Both groups averaged a grade of B (above average achievement). The traditional group’s range was from C to B+. The role play group’s range was from C (low to moderate achievement) to A (high achievement). An example of student’s work that demonstrated low to moderate achievement is in Appendix G and an example of student’s work that demonstrated high achievement is in Appendix H. Overall both groups were considered by the researcher as having demonstrated in their activity journals above average achievement in creative writing.

The forms of expression in the activity journals included narratives, poetry, letters, diary entries, drawings, models, notes, stream of
consciousness and many other forms. This rich data was informally analysed further to investigate whether any highly relevant ‘effects’ were produced through role play (IV). As previously discussed this analysis was exploratory in nature. The researcher noted that the role play group’s writing demonstrated ‘personal’ and ‘emotive’ and ‘creative’ expression as demonstrated in the two poems (below) from the role play group. The researcher also noted that males freely expressed themselves in their writing which in the researcher’s opinion was unusual in her teaching experience. It is important to note that both these poems were written in a 10 minute time-slot in the lessons.

Example 1. narrative poem by a female participant (lesson 8)

School Day

I wake in the morning - regretfully, angrily, sorrowfully.
It is Monday.
Dragging my unmotivated body and soul like a zombie to do the expected.
Slowly, procrastinating, I enter the monotonous boundaries of school - first class, second class, third class - there’s always a class to go to; be in; inside this drab, blackened prison.
The day eases on, surely enough, improving gradually - there goes lunch-time; a dry patch of freedom.
I’m feeling happy - the day, is over.
I triumphantly stride home from another staggering day at school.
I get home...
and do something completely outrageous.
Then...
I go to bed.

I wake in the morning - grudgingly, spitefully.
It is Tuesday.
Example 2. Lyrical poem by a male participant (lesson 7)

Untitled

Today was his birthday
He just turned 33
I sent him his present
but he was not home
I left a message for him
but he was too busy on the phone

Remembering his crisp golden hair
Sheds tears from my eyes
Looking at his bright blue eyes
I want his warm soft smile
Back in my home.

Now the worlds turned
And the child has learned
Who knows why the child is left

I made his favourite meal.

Both groups were considered by the researcher to demonstrate both positive attitudes towards creative writing and high achievement in creative writing as revealed in the informal analysis. It was the opinion of the researcher, based on her exploratory investigations, that the writing produced by the role play group demonstrated greater freedom, emotion and personal elements in expression, than in the traditional group.
CHAPTER 5

Discussion

This chapter will initially focus on the findings of the current study that related to the effect of role play on Year 9 students' achievement in regard to creative writing. The findings will also be discussed in relation to the major learning goals proposed in the current study: (1) students become independent and creative learners and thinkers (2) students are enabled as social beings. Where relevant, the findings will then be discussed in relation to important learning outcomes which were previously discussed in the predictions section of the current study (p. 69).

Secondly, the discussion will focus on the findings that related to the effect of role play on the Year 9 students' attitudes towards creative writing. Again these findings will be related to both the major goals and learning outcomes. All relevant findings will then be discussed in relation to the literature review and to other related studies. The theoretical and practical considerations of the current study will be addressed in terms of its conceptualisation and in terms of its limitations. Finally, in the conclusion, recommendations will be made for future research.

Interpretation of Findings

Findings relating to student achievement. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings of the current study showed that the role play group performed better than the traditional group in regard to
creative writing achievement. The quantitative results, relating to the prose text quality instrument, clearly demonstrated that the role play group performed better than the traditional group at post-test time. This result though must be interpreted in light of the inter-rater results which will be discussed after the interpretation of the qualitative findings.

The qualitative findings of the current study, relating to the teacher's lesson observation notes, also showed that the role play group performed better than the traditional group in two important learning outcomes: (1) works independently and (2) extends tasks effectively. Both these learning outcomes of the role play group are highly relevant to the current study's first major learning goal: (1) students become independent and creative learners and thinkers. Only the role play group extended their tasks. The students demonstrated that they were independent and creative thinkers, for example, in lesson 8 a role play group were asked to perform a role play based on a poem they had read. In their performance they extended the poem's original plot and themes and explored a further issue in an imaginative and creative way.

Both the role play group and the traditional group demonstrated achievement in three other important learning outcomes: (1) communicates effectively (2) completes task effectively and (3) cooperates in tasks. These three learning outcomes are highly relevant to the second major goal proposed in the current study: (2) students are enabled as social beings. Overall, findings relating to the teacher lesson observation notes, showed that the
role play group demonstrated behaviours and learning outcomes in these five important areas of learning. It was predicted in the current study that role play could enhance achievement in these important learning outcomes amongst others (p. 69).

The qualitative findings of the current study, relating to the students' activity journals, showed that both the role play and traditional group were considered by the researcher to demonstrate above average achievement in creative writing. It is important to note that these findings were informally analysed and are therefore highly speculative. It was suggested that the role play group seemed to demonstrate greater degrees of freedom, emotion, creativity and 'the personal' in their creative writing than that was demonstrated in the traditional group's writing. It was also noted that the role play boys' writing demonstrated emotional and personal elements. In the researcher's professional teaching experience such elements were considered to be generally lacking in boys' writing.

The noted elements of the role play group's creative writing are related to a learning outcome previously discussed in the current study: that role play as a teaching strategy allows students to freely express ideas, feelings and creativity. Creative writing too encourages such expression. Overall, the findings relating to the students' activity journals suggested that role play enhanced students' creative writing achievement; however it is important to note that these findings must be considered in the light of the informal nature of the analysis.
It is important at this point to note that the quantitative findings in relation to student achievement in creative writing need to be interpreted in light of the inter-rater agreement results of the current study. It was shown in the results chapter that the inter-rater agreement (between markers) at post-test time showed a statistically low correlation. A possible explanation for this result was previously suggested: the two markers were not in agreement as to what indicated achievement in the creative writing pieces (post-prose text quality). Though both markers had the prescribed criteria for marking creative writing achievement to refer to, they were both subject to their own bias in marking. It was previously recognised that what one person values in creative writing another person might devalue. Though both markers attempted to be objective in their marking of the creative writing pieces the possibility of either marker having a bias cannot be eliminated as a possible confounding variable in the current study.

The researcher (herein referred to as the first marker) attempted to establish what caused the low correlation scores at post-test by means of an informal interview with the second marker. It was also established that the post-prose text quality pieces that were scored very differently came from both groups (6 from role play group & 4 from traditional group). The researcher focussed her investigation on the 10 post-prose text quality pieces that were scored very differently by the markers: these pieces differed by 5 marks e.g. first marker scores an A+ and second marker scores a B. It was established from analysing the results that the first marker
generally gave higher scores to the post-prose text quality pieces (in 9 cases she gave a higher score and in 1 case the second marker gave a higher score).

The researcher asked the second marker why he thought the pieces deserved a lower score than that given by the first marker. It was established that the second marker stated that these post-prose text quality pieces demonstrated 'emotional' writing. He stated that he would have discounted this writing as 'uncritical' and 'romantic'. He stated that generally the post-prose text quality pieces indicated that 'emotional writing had been legitimised' in the intervention. He also stated that this type of writing was associated with girls' writing rather than with boys' writing. Emotive writing was loosely defined as personal experiences and feelings being expressed. The second marker seemed to associate such writing with 'romantic' and 'uncritical' writing. He generalised that feeling had replaced thinking in some of the writing. It was established that the post-prose text quality pieces came from both groups and from both males and females. The second marker said he was generally unaware of which group's post-prose text quality pieces he was marking.

It is important to note at this point that the prescribed criteria did call for students to 'tell your story your own way'; however there are no direct references in the prescribed criteria to be emotive in expression. It is recognised that 'emotional writing was legitimised' throughout the intervention and in both groups' classrooms by the researcher. It is also recognised by the
researcher that she did not discount emotive writing or associate this type of writing with uncritical writing. It is also recognised that the second marker was professional and experienced in his approach to marking; however what he devalued in the creative writing the second marker valued: emotive writing.

It is important to note here that the first marker was a practitioner in the creative writing field, while the second marker was not. An example of a post-prose text piece (Appendix N) can be referred to for the reader's own evaluation, where the first marker gave a high score and the second marker gave a low score.

It is also important to note that while the inter-rater agreement was low for the post-test it was moderate for the pre-test. It seems that the intervention had an effect on both group's creative writing, in that it legitimised emotive writing. Experimenter bias cannot be definitely ruled out; however the fact that the researcher marked both groups' writing higher demonstrated that she was not shown to be predisposed to enhancing the role play groups' scores in order to affect a result in favour of the current study's hypothesis.

In light of this probable explanation of why there was a low inter-rater agreement between markers, an assumption can be made that the results of the post-test inter-rater agreement did not negatively affect the quantitative results relating to the prose text quality instrument. Because the first marker generally scored both groups' creative writing higher, this did not bias in any significant degree the results.
It is also recognised in the current study that a better approach to scoring would have been to have had two or more markers outside the experiment score the prose text quality instrument; however within the constraints of the current study this option was not available.

Findings relating to student attitudes. The quantitative results, relating to the prose text length instrument clearly demonstrated that the role play group performed better than the traditional group. As was previously discussed length of writing is commonly accepted by English teachers as one important indicator of students' motivation. It was also previously established that motivation is closely associated with positive attitudes. The quantitative results, relating to the questionnaire instrument, showed that there was no statistically significant difference between groups in relation to their attitudes towards creative writing; however the role play group did have a higher mean than the traditional group. Both groups demonstrated mainly positive attitudes towards creative writing.

An explanation for why the role play group did not demonstrate more positive attitudes than the traditional group was that the questionnaire attitude instrument did not measure small degrees of change in attitude. The researcher had not anticipated that the participants would have mainly positive attitudes towards creative writing at pre-test time. One reason for this lack of anticipation was that the researcher did not know what ability levels the participants would have. The participants, in the current study, because they
were of average to above average in ability in English, may have been predisposed to more positive attitudes. A class in a lower stream may have had less positive attitudes towards creative writing at pre-test, and it follows that the questionnaire then may have been more useful as an instrument.

One implication of this result is that the questionnaire attitude instrument needs to be tested on another group to evaluate its validity and reliability. It seems probable after an evaluation of the other qualitative findings that this explanation is the most likely reason for no significant difference between the groups; however it is important to review that while there was no statistically significant difference between groups at post-test, the role play group did have a higher mean than the traditional group as to positive attitudes.

In general the qualitative findings relating to both the teacher lesson observation notes and student activity journals also showed that there was no real difference between groups in relation to their attitudes towards creative writing: both groups demonstrated positive attitudes towards creative writing. The findings in relation to the student activity journals for the role play group, did though, show that they performed better in the categories of (1) works independently and (2) extends tasks effectively. This finding is closely associated with positive attitudes.

What is apparent in light of all the findings on students' attitudes is
that both groups demonstrated positive attitudes towards creative writing: both groups enjoyed the creative writing programme as mainly evidenced in their student comments: 27 of the 31 participants' responses were categorised as mainly positive. The previous comments presented in the results section (pp. 96-97) and the following comments eloquently illustrate this important point:

1. I think its a great programme. It gives a chance for us to write about our feelings and thoughts. I like it how we read different things and performed short plays. I think it was good and it should be used in the future.

   (role play group participant)

2. I thought the programme was good because it gave us a break from normal school and it was something to look forward to. Also I think the activities involved made it a lot of fun and the programme was enjoyable.

   (role play group participant)

3. The creative writing programme has helped me a lot. I learnt a lot of things which helped me to do creative writing better.

   (traditional group participant)

4. I think the past 2 months of creative writing have been excellent. I have enjoyed the programme and the activities that we have done.

   (role play group participant)

5. The programme has helped me interpret different styles and aspects of creative writing. I know how to develop a story better and develop a better storyline.

   (traditional group participant)
It is interesting to note that both in these examples and in the previous examples that the comments refer both to knowledge (cognitive learning) and feelings (affective learning): this observation is generally reflected in most of the 31 comments. It can also be observed from the role play group’s comments that they referred to the role play and drama activities positively: e.g. ‘fun’, ‘enjoyed’ and ‘liked’. They also valued the creative writing programme (intervention). Again this observation is generally reflected in most of the 16 comments from the role play group. The traditional group comments, on the other hand, were more associated with knowledge rather than feelings: e.g. ‘learnt a lot’, ‘helped me’ and ‘know how to develop a story better’. Again this observation is generally reflected in most of the 15 comments from the role play group.

There was, however, overlap of references to knowledge and feelings in both groups’ comments. These comments can be associated with the teaching strategies used for each group: the role play group enjoyed the role play strategy and valued the intervention while the traditional group mainly valued the intervention.

In interpreting both the quantitative and qualitative findings relating to students’ attitudes towards creative writing it is evident that both groups enjoyed the creative writing programme and that the role play group enjoyed the role play activities. There were only four individuals who demonstrated that they either did not enjoy the programme or did not value it.
Overall, both groups demonstrated positive attitudes towards creative writing: participating in the programme had an effect on both groups. This effect was not a confounding factor in the experiment because it affected both groups. It is also important to note that the positive attitudes of students are closely associated with learning outcomes in both the cognitive and affective domains: gaining skills and enjoying collaborative activities respectively. These learning outcomes are closely related to the two major learning goals proposed in the current study: (1) students become independent and creative learners and thinkers; (2) students are enabled as social beings.

The generally positive attitudes of both groups are associated with important learning outcomes, as previously discussed in Chapter 2 and include: (1) motivation (2) self-esteem (3) collaborative learning (4) creativity (5) language development.

Summary. It was hypothesised that Year 9 students who were taught creative writing through the teaching strategy of role play rather than through traditional teaching strategies would demonstrate greater creative writing achievement: the quantitative and qualitative findings of the current study clearly support this hypothesis. It was also hypothesised that Year 9 students who were taught creative writing through the teaching strategy of role play rather than through traditional teaching strategies would demonstrate more positive attitudes towards creative writing: the quantitative findings, relating to the prose text length instrument clearly supports this hypothesis; however the other quantitative
and qualitative findings do not clearly support this hypothesis.

**Related Studies**

As was previously discussed there were no studies of the current study's specific nature found in a comprehensive search of the literature. One of the aims of this current study was to provide quantitative data to address this gap in the research into the effects of role play on students' creative writing achievement and attitudes in secondary schools: this aim has been addressed. Because the findings of the current study have been interpreted in detail and the results are clear, this section of the discussion will mainly focus on the effect of role play in relation to important learning outcomes, rather than only on creative writing achievement and attitudes towards creative writing.

The effects that are highly relevant to the current study's central focus question will be discussed. The central focus question was: how best to teach students what they need to learn so that they gain the skills relevant to themselves and to society. In previously addressing this question the researcher proposed that two major learning goals were apparent: (1) students become independent and creative learners and thinkers (2) students are enabled as social beings. Throughout the discussion the researcher will refer to those examples relevant in the current study and to other related studies and literature.

Firstly those studies that were previously associated with the current study will be referred to: (1) Neelands' study (1992) (2)
Wagner's study (1994). Secondly the relevant studies and research in the areas of student-centred learning, drama in education, humanism, creative writing practices in the English classroom and other relevant studies, previously discussed in the background to the current study, will be referred to.

Neelands' study (p. 57) highlighted the important effect of role play on students' writing as enhancing students' attitudes and motivation. He asserted that the students through being personally involved in a role play had more purpose in their writing. This effect was also clear in the current study's findings and will be discussed in light of Wagner's study. Wagner's study (pp. 59-60) was closest to the current study's purpose and design and its findings showed that role play enhanced students' writing. It also highlighted the following probable effects: (1) the oral communication in a social context provided a scaffold for the writing (2) the students had a sense of purpose in their writing because of the role play. Neelands too, noted these effects in his study. Again in the current study these effects probably contributed towards the role play students performing better on their prose text pieces of creative writing than the traditional group.

The role play group had more opportunities to scaffold their writing through activities such as: (1) drama talk (2) expressing actions in the role play (3) collaborating in a social context. One example from the current study was in lesson 8 where the role play students devised role plays around poems they had read. Without teacher instruction they explored the themes in the poems in their role
plays. One boy was so involved in the role play that he uncharacteristically swore. He apologised later; however the important point was that the role play group were experimenting with language. This effect of role play was demonstrated throughout the intervention, but more effectively so, towards the end of the intervention. The language development carried over to the creative writing pieces - the poems produced in this lesson were considered by the researcher to demonstrate high achievement: an example of one poem is on page 102 of the current paper.

Another important effect associated both with Neelands' study and the current study was that a sense of personal involvement stimulated both the role plays and the creative writing activities. In the above example a boy was shown to be personally involved in the role play. This behaviour was demonstrated by other role play students throughout the intervention. In lesson 3, one girl knocked over a desk 'in role' and the language of the group members showed that they were enthusiastic in their expression e.g. loud voices for an angry student and polished vowels and formal speech for the primary school mistress. This example demonstrates the effect of role play known as the 'mantle of the expert': students use expert levels of language in role play activities which require them to take on the role of expert.

Because the role play students are personally involved and can be free in their expressions they have more opportunities to: (1) experiment with language (2) express ideas and feelings (3)
have a sense of purpose in their learning. Carroll (1988) in his study on drama talk supports this view:

By changing the parameters of what can be seen as legitimate knowledge drama allows the pupils the freedom to experience and explore the issues of human concern and intellectual inquiry that the constraints of the centrally controlled classroom denies them. (p. 21)

The sense of freedom in a role play lesson is also closely linked to students being enabled to: (1) express their own original ideas, feelings, actions and creativity (2) have a sense of control (and power) in the learning process. Both these learning outcomes were demonstrated by the role play throughout the intervention. The findings of the current research clearly support these effects of role play: (1) role play students were shown to work independently (2) role play students were shown to extend their tasks effectively. Again the above examples of lessons 3 and 8 show that students were free in their expressions; that they worked independently; that they extended their task effectively (necessarily involves creativity). Morgan and Saxton (1988) argue that through role play students assume power and their language development can be enhanced.

O’Toole (1992) highlights role play’s potential to involve learning in all domains. Through role play students step into the shoes of another and can identify with characters in certain contexts and experience a wider range of learning outcomes. This learning is student-centred, holistic and experiential. This learning was demonstrated throughout the current study’s intervention.
In lessons 2 and 3 role play students took on the roles of characters from a novel they were reading: Ender's Game (Card, 1993). In role they explored ideas, feelings and actions closely associated with the characters in the novel. The role play students had enacted scenes prior to writing letters. The teacher in role as a character in the novel interacted with the role play groups after the scenes and several students responded in role. Later they wrote a letter, in role, as the character, Ender. These letters demonstrated a strong sense of purpose. An example will be presented of a letter written by a male participant. The science-fiction novel was based around children who were exceptionally intelligent and gifted. Ender was picked out as a battle leader to fight an enemy force (he was six years old). His sister Val was the only person whom he could trust. Peter his brother was jealous and cruel to him. Ender had just been involved in a brutal fight where jealous 'comrades' had tried to murder him. The letter's missing words and spelling mistakes etc. have not been altered in the example below:

Example of in-role creative writing

Dear Val,

How are you. I know this letter probably wont even get to you so I wont write much. I just wanted to tell you how much I miss you. I'm so scared. I think they might send me home because I killed a guy in the shower this afternoon. I'm becoming more like Peter every day now. The teachers here are bastards. They have turned everyone against me and six guys led by this kid Bonzo jumped me in the shower today. I handled just like Peter would and I'm so ashamed. My one real friend has gone since they
promoted me into another level and everyone wants to kill me. My only solution is to make their fear of me greater than their hate to me. I even drew blood in the battleroom because guys want to hurt me. Sorry. got to go. I've got a battle in 5 minutes. Bye. Love Ender.

This example clearly demonstrates that the student felt free to express both feelings and ideas that he had identified within the characters. In the above letter feelings are clearly linked to thinking and both these learning processes are linked to effective expression. Generally the role play group's letters showed more feeling and empathy in comparison with the traditional group's letters (who had discussed characters in small groups but had not role played). 'Feelings before skills' (Britton, 1981; Murray, 1985) writing proponents would argue that this is the best approach to teaching writing.

It is evident from the above discussion of the current study's examples and the related study's findings that role play has been shown to have a positive effect on the following student learning outcomes: (1) creative writing achievement (2) attitudes (necessarily involves motivation) towards creative writing (3) language development (4) independent learning (5) creativity (6) collaborative learning (7) personal involvement in the learning process (8) holistic learning in the three domains (9) student-centred learning (10) learning through experience. All these outcomes are highly relevant to both the two major goals of the current study and to the specific creative writing learning objectives.
Theoretical and practical implications of the findings. The findings clearly support student-centred learning theories. Role play as an indirect teaching strategy had a positive effect on the Year 9 students' creative writing achievement and on their attitudes. Student-centred learning necessarily involves collaborative processes where students communicate and solve problems both independently and with the teachers' guidance. The findings also support holistic learning theories closely associated with the humanistic approach: through role play students utilised the three domains of learning. The current study involved the dramatic strategy of role play being utilised in the English classroom. The strategy was shown to be more effective than the variety of traditional teaching strategies used with the traditional group. This finding supports the drama in education theories that highlight the benefits of student-centred teaching strategies.

Finally, role play was shown to have a positive effect on students creative writing achievement and attitudes: the process-based writing approach was more effective than the skills-based traditional writing approach in the teaching of creative writing in the English classroom. Apart from the theoretical implications of the findings concerned with role play, creative writing itself was shown to have been both valued and enjoyed by both the traditional and role play groups. As secondary students have been shown to resist writing in the English classroom, the implication is that a focus on creative writing could enhance students' motivation. Rather than focussing mainly on
transactional writing teachers could place more of a focus on creative writing.

The main practical implication of the findings is that Year 9 English teachers should utilise the role play strategy in their teaching of creative writing. The broader implication, closely associated with the effect of role play on student learning outcomes in general, is that English teachers should incorporate student-centred teaching strategies (indirect strategies) in their teaching rather than mainly using traditional teaching strategies (direct strategies) as is the common practice. A further implication of the findings is that language development was enhanced through the collaborative processes of role play, therefore English teachers should provide opportunities for their students to collaborate in a social context.

Together the theoretical and practical implications of the findings support an argument that English teachers need to reassess their teaching practices to evaluate whether they have utilised the teaching strategies that best match the learning goals: this means for many teachers a need to incorporate student-centred strategies such as role play into their teaching. Thomson asserts that 'Every thing a teacher does in a classroom is informed by a theory of learning, whether the teacher knows it or not ... there is a need to ask questions about the purpose and value of things we habitually do in classrooms' (1992, p. 7).

English teachers have been shown to resist drama approaches for various reasons; however if they try such new approaches and
find that they work, their jobs will be that much easier. It was evident in the current study that the students enjoyed both role play and creative writing. It is important to note here that the researcher, as the teacher, enjoyed her job too: the role play classroom climate proved to be as stimulating and enjoyable for the teacher as it was for the students. It would be commonly accepted by most theorists and practitioners of teaching that teacher stress is a widespread problem and if student-centered learning strategies, such as role play help reduce such stress, then this is a very important implication for education in general.

Limitations
The current study had five limitations: (1) relatively short length of the experiment (ten weeks) (2) instruments were self-designed and could not be evaluated as to reliability (3) participants' ability levels (4) inter-rater results (5) variety of traditional teaching strategies included a higher degree of student-centred strategies than was suitable to provide a true control. Firstly the limitations (1 to 4) will be discussed as they can be briefly clarified. Secondly, limitation 5 will be discussed and clarified.

The current study was carried out over one school term - ten weeks: a longer study, over six months, or a more intense programme (2 lessons per week) would have been a more realistic time-frame; however this option was not possible within the constraints of the current study. Ideally the research instruments should have been tested as to reliability on another group of 30 or more participants; however this option was not
possible within the constraints of the current study. Participants in the current study were considered to be average to above average in ability levels in their English studies; the findings may have differed if participants had had lower or other different ability levels; however a future study could test this possibility. The inter-rater results have been previously discussed and it was noted that a better procedure would have been to have had two outside markers score the prose text instrument.

The fifth limitation was only recognised by the researcher when she had begun her analysis procedures. In noting that some of the traditional group participants had in their student comments mentioned drama activities she realised that she had possibly incorporated more student-centred strategies than she had intended to into her 'variety of traditional teaching strategies'. Traditional teaching strategies in the English classroom were shown to be mainly direct strategies; however they did include some component of student-centred learning such as small group processes. The 'variety of traditional teaching strategies' therefore used in the current study probably included too high a degree of student-centred teaching strategies.

It is important to note that the researcher had intended to teach the traditional group as well as possible, using the best traditional strategies, so that the experiment was a valid one, as previously discussed in the introduction chapter. This well-intentioned approach, however, probably generally affected the current study's findings. One effect that could be linked to the findings
related to student attitudes, where there was no real difference in attitudes between both the traditional group and role play group: both groups' attitudes were mainly positive. The traditional group's attitudes were probably so positive because they had enjoyed the element of student-centred learning incorporated in their learning. If the 'variety of teaching strategies' had included more direct strategies and less student-centred strategies, as it should have done, then the results of the current study would probably have been even more in favour of the hypotheses: the traditional group would not have achieved so highly or have had such positive attitudes. In a future follow-up study the researcher would improve the experimental design by addressing this limitation.

Recommendations For Future Research
The aim of the current study was to explore and measure the potential effect of role play on secondary students' creative writing and attitudes in the English classroom. As no studies of this specific nature have been conducted there is a need for future research in this area. This would contribute to the generalisability of the current study's findings. A replicated study that took into considerations the current study's limitations could serve as a comparative measure. Also a future study that looked into, in more detail, the qualitative findings of the current study is recommended: the constraints of the current study meant that the researcher should not investigate in detail the rich data that was generated in the students' creative writing throughout the intervention. A study of this data could investigate and/or measure
the effect of role play on creative writing in relation to important learning outcomes in general, such as language development, rather than focusing mainly on creative writing achievement and attitudes as in the current study.

Conclusion
The current study's findings have shown that the Year 9 students taught by the strategy of role play demonstrated better creative writing achievement and generally more positive attitudes than students who were taught by traditional strategies. It was originally proposed that teaching strategies that incorporated student-centred learning, a humanistic approach and drama in education could best meet student learning goals. The role play strategy has been shown to be ideally matched to creative writing in the Year 9 English classroom.

It was also previously acknowledged that while a teaching approach that embraces student-centred learning, humanism and drama in education is the ideal, there are contexts when direct teaching strategies are more suitable. It is recognised in the current study that while role play has been very effective in the current study's context, other teaching strategies could also be more effective in different contexts. What is important is that student-centred teaching strategies should be utilised when they have the potential to best meet learning goals. The two major learning goals proposed in the current study were: (1) students become independent and creative learners and thinkers (2) students are enabled as social beings. The current study's
findings relating to student learning outcomes are reflected in these two goals. Essentially, role play incorporated in a humanistic approach to teaching can offer students, teachers and society the opportunity to reach their creative potentials. Words from a statement previously presented in the introduction encapsulate the researcher's overall view of both the current study's findings and her viewpoint on teaching values and practices:

Putting humanistic thinking to work is not misguided. Ignoring its message is a far greater error. Humanistic education maintains that what students experience about themselves and their world is far too important for education to overlook. Instead such human considerations must be included in every aspect of educational thinking and practice. (Coombes, 1990, p. 22)
REFERENCES


Curriculum Branch: Education Department of Western Australia. (1987). (Revised Ed.) *The Unit Curriculum: English (English, languages and communication)*.


literacy lexicon (pp. 225-236). Sydney: Prentice Hall.


conference on research of teaching.


Appendix A

CREATIVE WRITING PIECE

Date:

Name

Assessment Criteria

As a reader I am looking for effective writing - writing that has an impact on the reader. I will not be focusing on spelling etc. The focus is on what and how you get your story across. The writing you do will be assessed on the following criteria (which is listed on the assessment sheet):

1. tell your story your own way (originality and effectiveness of character/s and events)
2. choose the language that best suits your characters and events (appropriateness and expressiveness)
3. focus on making your story effective (make the reader interested in what you write and how you write by using your writing skills and imagination)
4. demonstrate your creativity and imagination (choose the form and style that suits your purpose-you may include poetry etc)
5. a minimum of 1 page, but you may feel you need to write more to make your story effective.

Choose one (1) of the following titles for your creative writing piece:

The Game
The Stars Came Out
Eldridd
A Song For Kim
Island

You have to the end of the period to plan and complete your piece. If finished earlier edit your piece, then you may silently read. Any questions?

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Appendix B

Prescribed criteria for marking creative writing achievement:
(1) refer to normal English standards for Year 9
(2) refer to first steps criteria
(3) refer to students’ criteria written on top of their creative writing piece instrument for both pretest and posttest
(4) refer to in-class test conditions - no prior plan or teaching, instructions, in 40 min. session
(5) give a grade from F to A+
(6) indicate elements of content and style by (L)ittle, (S)ome, (M)any aspects. First Steps narrative criteria below:

NARRATIVE

BEGINNING

Orientation
The child:
- writes a title that generally reflects the content of the piece written
- attempts to write the ending with some details of setting, includes essential events of time, space and characters with the inclusion of some description
- writes about stereotypes, e.g., the wicked witch, the brave prince etc.
- includes distinct events
- includes events which may be randomly related

Compensation
The child:
- writes a sequence of events but has difficulty in planning
- lacks characterisation and only performs actions that generally follow the details of the plot
- attempts to overcome the problem by adding more than one complication
- difficulty in deciding whether or not to complicate

DEVELOPING

Orientation
The child:
- writes a title that generally reflects the content of the piece written
- attempts to write the ending with some details of setting, includes essential events of time, space and characters with the inclusion of some description
- writes about stereotypes, e.g., the wicked witch, the brave prince etc.
- includes distinct events
- includes events which may be randomly related

Compensation
The child:
- has difficulty in writing the story line when extending more than one complication
- difficulty in deciding whether or not to complicate

TRANSITIONAL

Orientation
The child:
- writes a title that generally reflects the content of the piece written
- attempts to write the ending with some details of setting, includes essential events of time, space and characters with the inclusion of some description
- writes about stereotypes, e.g., the wicked witch, the brave prince etc.
- includes distinct events
- includes events which may be randomly related

Compensation
The child:
- extends the plot by including more than one complication
- difficulty in deciding whether or not to complicate

CONSOLIDATION AND EXPANSION

Orientation
The child:
- writes a title that generally reflects the content of the piece written
- attempts to write the ending with some details of setting, includes essential events of time, space and characters with the inclusion of some description
- writes about stereotypes, e.g., the wicked witch, the brave prince etc.
- includes distinct events
- includes events which may be randomly related

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The child:
- extends the plot by including more than one complication
- difficulty in deciding whether or not to complicate

Indicators

BEGINNING

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The child:
- writes a title that generally reflects the content of the piece written
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- includes distinct events
- includes events which may be randomly related

Compensation
The child:
- writes a sequence of events that do not seem to be leading to a complication
- includes characterisation but only performs actions that generally follow the details of the plot
- attempts to overcome the problem by adding more than one complication
- difficulty in deciding whether or not to complicate

DEVELOPING

Orientation
The child:
- writes a title that generally reflects the content of the piece written
- attempts to write the ending with some details of setting, includes essential events of time, space and characters with the inclusion of some description
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The child:
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- includes distinct events
- includes events which may be randomly related

Compensation
The child:
- extends the plot by including more than one complication
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Appendix C

Pre-prose text (3 pages)

(note herein material has been reduced [photocopied] for formatting purposes of the current paper)

ISLAND

Day 22.

Dear Mr. Scrap piece of paper,

I am writing to you today because I have nothing better to do. Of no one to do things with, for that matter. For ages and ages I've sat right here, lonely, starving, wasting away until I found you, my saviour. You have given me something to do—something to entertain my lifeless mind as I slowly fade away, like a sunset. But one day I won't come back; I won't wake up. Sitting here on the warm, pale yellow sand, it begins to dawn on me that I shall soon die. For days and nights I've sat and waited—waited for a sign, a signal. A glimpse of a passing ship, who by chance may see me and take me back home to my family. Oh, how I miss my family. They've probably given up hope on me-think I've kicked the bucket already—might as well have, well, I better stop dribbling on and using you up, Mr. scrap piece of paper, so I can write on you tomorrow—if it comes for me.

Yours forever (however long that'll be).

HOPELESS.
Dear Mr. paper,

Hello again! Just came back from my hundredth lap of this island—I know I like the back of me hand. I suppose you want to know how I came to be down on this scrap of land? It’s like this.

I was sailing with two of me best mates through the ocean during our holiday break in summer. The boat was owned by Trevor, one of the two, who wanted to test-drive it. We was going real fast, and then WHAM!! we’d hit a big stony rock that cracked the thing. Well, of course it sank (along with Trev who didn’t want to leave it) and I don’t know what became of Robert. As for me I spotted this damned patch of sand and swam towards it, thinking there’d be civilization on it (stupid me!).

Been here for so many days I’ve lost count—and my skin’s bright beetroot red and peeling (must look like a Sultana) and me clothes are sticky and tattered. The only shade there is here is one lousy dying shrub and a weed (wow), I found you because one day I was bored (well that’s like everyday) so I dug a hole to sit in and pulled up you! (I’m eternally grateful

BYE FOR NOW,

CRISPY.

Ps. You wouldn’t happen to have a friend down there, would ya?
DAY 27.

Dear Mr. Scrap piece of paper man,

GUESS WHAT?

I just saw a ship in the distance! This is so exciting. I think it's slowly coming closer - yes, it is!! Hooray, hooray! I'm saved! Thank you, Mr. Island, thank you, Mr. Sheeb, thank you, Mr. Weed, and especially thank you to YOU! If it wasn't for you I would have already given up completely.

But, I shouldn't get my hopes up now, just in case they refuse to take me on. Now! They wouldn't do that?? I'm sooo excited. See ya round, SCRAPPY!!

DAY 28.

I feel so foolish! Oh I should have never gotten my hopes up. That wonderful, life-saving ship turned out to be the sunken wreck of Terrors - great. I think I'll just go into grieving, or maybe drown myself. My life is officially over.

GOODBYE FOREVER.

JOHNNY.

5+
25-9-95  THE GAME

The game we used to play was very important to me. Nobody else saw it that way, but it was the only real time we could play and relax together, feeling free to do what we wanted - what we could do - not what we should do. During those times I really opened myself up and expressed myself - not like now. We cannot play our special game anymore. It was so special to me, like an oasis in the middle of a lonely, monstrous desert. My life is a vast desert. Full of emptiness and longing, for my dead best friend.

Her death was so horrific and tragic. I've closed myself off to everyone now. My family, my friends. I sit in a dark, cold, secluded corner of my uncomfortable bedroom, thinking, dreaming.

Sometimes I believe that my dead soul comes back and we play our game. I can feel her in my heart, just the same as before, and she lightens my separated, messed up life. She makes me happy.

One day I decided to open myself up again - to my mother. I told her about my wonderful experiences with Cathy, how she
comes back, and plays my game. I'll never do that again. All she did was give me funny insensitive looks—like I need to be turned into an asylum, like the weirdo I am. She rang up dad, whispering on the phone, so quietly, so secretly. Sensing what she was thinking in the moment I slipped away from her, back into the familiar shadows.

It has been a month since Cathy's death. Everyday she comes to me and we play our silent binding game. I talk to her aloud, and can hear only so-called 'loving' parents murmuring downstairs.

"She's talking to herself, Maggie, it might already be too late."

"Simon, no, it's only been a month, why not—"

"I can't take it any longer! She's driving me and the kids up the wall with her silence and carry-on. She's screwing up the family."

I can feel Cathy seep out of me, and wander to where ever she goes.

"Goodbye," I say sorrowfully.

"See ya!" exclaimed my raging father.

"Please Simon, I more week, and then we'll—"

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"Yes, and then we'll be rid of her."
"You don't mean that. You love your daughter."
"Loved. She treats me so coldly, I can't find it in my heart anymore."
My mother starts sobbing dramatically.

So my guess was right - they're packing me up and shipping me off to the loony bin. And it's just one week.

That night as I recalled that cruel conversation about me, Cathy returned. I could feel my heart warm, and smell her loving scent about me. She rested in me.

"Hi."

"I'm sorry for causing you such pain, Sarah. It's my fault."

"No."

"I talked to you and you could only talk back, couldn't you?"

"I chose to."

"Sorry."

"Cathy, you've brought me more joy in the times you've visited me than I'll ever have in my entire life. You're no reason to be sorry."

We sat in silence for a while, reassuring each other reverently, when Cathy delicately
started speaking again.

"Sarah, let's leave your home. They're going to send you away soon anyway, so why don't we go away and live our own lives together?"

"Where could we go?"

"Anywhere you'd like to."

I could feel a chill of excitement run throughout my entire body, thinking of the thrills of freedom.

Our minds locked, and I made a silent agreement, that as soon as I could, we would leave.

The next night I clambered out my side window with a bag full of food, clothes and books. Surprisingly, I was not sad to leave the house and my family. Not even regretful, I walked far from my house, far from our home town into the bush. I wasn't tired or scared - Cathy gave me great strength to endure the hard long journey. We walked all the next day and night as well, bringing us to a small,dry reflected, where I could sleep peacefully. That was where we stayed.
For weeks now Cathy and I stayed out here - I no longer need food and water because Cathy restores me - she keeps my mind in a wonderful trance. There we can be together, sit together, play our game together - I'm delightfully happy and fulfilled with my life now, as long as I'm with Cathy, and when I die, I'll be with Cathy again - I can't wait.

By Christine

Sarah's parents didn't even send out a search party after her - they thought it was for the best. A year later, her body was found and she had a smile on her face.
Appendix D

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

YOUR FULL NAME ..............................

PLEASE PUT TICK IN SPACE TO INDICATE YOUR RESPONSE TO THE STATEMENT. CHOICES ARE STRONGLY AGREE (SA), AGREE (A), UNCERTAIN (U), DISAGREE (D), STRONGLY DISAGREE (SD).

**SAMPLE:**

I like filling in questionnaires (✓) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

This answer indicates that you really like filling in questionnaires.

If you make a mistake cross out your tick and tick your new choice.

This indicates that you dislike filling in questionnaires: (✓) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Please respond to the following statements:

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<th>Statement</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>D</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Creative writing gives me freedom to use my imagination in the English classroom</td>
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<td>2. Improving my creative writing skills is important to me</td>
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<td>3. I think creative writing skills are very useful</td>
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<td>5. I really enjoy creative writing</td>
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<td>6. Functional writing skills (eg essays, reports, letters) are more important than creative writing skills</td>
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<td>7. I enjoy listening to or reading other students' creative writing</td>
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<td>8. Creative writing lets me use my original ideas</td>
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<td>9. Creative writing is boring</td>
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<td>10. Creative writing helps me express my feelings</td>
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<td>11. Creative writing is interesting to read</td>
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<td>12. I would like to do more creative writing in the English classroom</td>
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<td>13. I would prefer to do other types of writing rather than creative writing</td>
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<td>14. Creative writing is of little value to most people</td>
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<td>15. Being able to write creatively is important at school</td>
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<td>16. Being able to write creatively is important after leaving school</td>
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QUESTIONNAIRE

YOUR FULL NAME

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Short Answer Section

17. Please comment on the creative writing programme you have participated in over the past 2 months (could include evaluation of activities, content etc)
Short Answer Section

17. Please comment on the creative writing programme you have participated in over the past 2 months (could include evaluation of activities, content etc)

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Appendix G

Student activity journal writing (low achievement)

Science Fiction.

2/25/2020...

Los Angeles, November.

As the city was fast over the city, the special agent flies over the city while you could experience a view that you would never see in the city. It was amazing as the city was filled with strict regulations. The city was a crime scene with many cases under investigation. The city was a crime scene with the police force and the black market dealing in illegal activities or some cases known as crime syndicates.

I was walking past the scene when the police arrived and saw a body on the ground. The police officer asked the private guard if he had any leads. The guard said he had seen something while walking. He said he had seen someone dragging something. The police officer asked the guard to describe the person. The guard said he had seen a tall man walking with a black bag.

So here I am, walking the streets once again in this dark and dirty city of a few million, with most on the off-world colonies.
typical Mike, Smash Leon throws Mike into a line of trash (syndicate live to about 4 so they can develop emotions). "Longer than you!" He yelled, then grabbed Mike around the neck. "Long in fear isn't you, nice is it!" yelled Leo, pushing Mike in the face. "I agree, but don't expect me to cower!" Leon yelled. Only Leon collapsed, with a bullet through his head. Now his men came and turned around to see Leo as the same fellow. Effective cante had saved his life and cut his worst short.

"Cows over here" Leo said cool, "were at big trouble, a syndicate was reported to have land a bomb in the 6TH corporation building going to destroy his offices, apparently we can't find out were it was because the person who was in the phone got mugged.

Just great thought Mike were going to one of the 6TH buildings to blow up fuse go to the scene and see if we can find the 6TH syndicate were after.

Along with over the city, seeing the bomb did go off. BANG!
Mike and Luke quickly assembled the portable 4 barrel disposable rocket launcher. After two minutes they had the syndicate in their sights. A salvo of guided rockets slammed into the syndicate and was disintegrated instantly.

"There was that was close", said Luke. "To right but we're out of it now. No information" said Mike. I'm afraid your wrong. Today we received information that the mob is still out for revenge. But not our business now. It's theirs. I'm out and now your just a little people again said Luke.

But in this house he was still trying to get the bad thoughts out of his head. He was a killer. He should have emotions. He is a part of that much better either. This gets out of this place. He thought the next day he lightered a car and left his memories behind for a new start on a farm somewhere... in Oregon.
Luckily for him, traffic wasn't bad these days. There wasn't any in normal leave and what little of it was mostly 6 hours with no traffic jam at all.

Psycho Syndicate, outside of the Likis Corporate Building.

In everything we proceed out in the wildness of a forest in Oregon near the growing numbers of foresters of America. It's for life it and move over.

THE END.

Glad, writing V.

This work is derivative, from Blade Runner

(Which I too, enjoyed very much).

You can borrow some ideas etc. from other texts, but this work is too much like the original. C/4
Appendix H

Student activity journal writing (high achievement)

July 27th
2001

Dear Diary, today something most exciting but rather scary in a way happened to me. You must promise never to tell another soul for if anyone should find out people would think I was crazy, you know a loony bin and they'd send me away to one of those homes, like they did to Grandpa.

It all started this morning. I had a rather fight with my politics (or so she think) to brother Reece. I'd wanted my first oh no. It truly was my turn to play virtual reality, but he is so selfish just because his best friend gave it to him for his birthday doesn't mean I can't have a go. So naturally mummy took his side as usual and told me to go play with my stupid old Game Boy.

I decided to run away not for long of course just a while, enough time for them to get worried about me and feel guilty until they finally have to come out looking for me on their hover jets.

I went down to the beach. The soft sand was beautiful, like a thick blanket. I sat for a while watching the waves crash on the
phore, like tiny bits of foam and
then elude out to sea as if beckoning
one to another unknown world. And the
sun was setting ever so slowly over
the horizon... into the ocean like a
golden drop of syrup. But wait! It was
the sun... I was watching not at all. It was too close to the shore behin
a net of old, twisted rocks... twisted
like an old man.
I slowly walked towards the light
getting closer and closer. All the while
never knowing what I might find.
When I was close enough I could
see... No, it wasn't the sun at all.
it was a bright luminous shield
or kind of force field. I reached
out my hand to touch it and
"Buzz", it tickled. A tingling sensation.
I did it again "Buzz" and again.
"Buzz"... but the next time I put
my whole body through the force
field. When the tingling sensation had
gone and I opened my eyes, I beheld
a magical sight. But to me at the
time... rather frightening.

The earth had changed... I turned
around and looked behind... but
the beach had gone. I was now
terrified. I had goosebumps
from head to toe and my stomach
vibrated all queasy. In that momen
I promised I would never fight with bees again if I could just get home safely.

Through rocks, I ran trying desperately to find my way home. "This place could not possibly be earth," I thought to myself. There was no blue sky, it was a purple bank of fog and haze, where the once crystal blue sky had been. The ground was dry and hard. Thick black soil smudged into my sneakers as I ran and little rocks and pebbles, like crystals stuck into my shoes digging down into my feet till I got pins and needles and they went numb. I could run no more so I sat on the cold ground and tried to orientate myself. This place was so strange, large crystal domes the size of a nail petruded from the earth everywhere and the whole land looked dead, not a piece of grass or a tree was to be seen anywhere.

That's when I met my friend Oron.

A cold hand touched my shoulder but this wasn't any ordinary hand, this hand had six fingers. I screamed so loud that I even deafened myself. Slowly I turned
to face the horrid creature. I was shocked but not scared anymore. His eyes were so innocent, so sincere. If you could call it a he. It looked like a full grown human being except that its head was extremely large, like a toddler's and it was much more masculine to an earthly one. Not to mention it had six toes on each foot and hands. I could not tell whether it was male or female as it seemed to have no sexual organs.

He spoke to me and told me about himself and his home. Although I was unsure whether I was safe with him, I stayed in the presence of his company after all. It was better than being alone.

His name was Groon, a Sphi from Dimension III (5). He lived in those funny domes with his Mother and didn't have to go to school. Lucky thing he didn't even know what school was.

I didn't want to leave Dimension III. Groon taught me to fly like a bird! All you have to do is think of something that makes you happy and you can fly. We flew to the virtual reality zone where I played virtual reality with Groon all day long and then he took me.
to me his other friend. They were nice, but Oron was my favourite. This place was so different to earth, no animals, everything was computerized and people were so friendly.

although I wanted to stay and fly forever, never go to school and play virtual reality all day long. I couldn't, mummy would be worried sick so I decided I had to go.

Oron was sad. He had never seen a human before, he didn't want me to go, but I had to right? Oron showed me the way back home through the force field and onto the beach. He promised me if I ever wanted to come back I would all I had to do was come to the beach and he would be waiting.

I'll come back someday.

I promise.


Mummy was mad again today, not only am I grounded for running away, but the robot maid has broken down and daddy is ill so she is very busy. I didn't tell anyone about Dimension 5 not sure, Oron said that Spickett.
and humans are too different and if humans found out about Dimen
tor 5 it would be disastrous.
It's a bit strange really sometimes
I wonder if it was all a dream.
Daddy is so ill, it's horrible. The
doctors have never seen anything
like it. So today, I shall be good.
For Daddy's sake, not mummy's.

Love,

24 July

I am very worried, mummy
and Reece are sick too now an-
so is my best friend Ella. They keep
up vomiting and their skin has
turned yellow. There is nothing I
can do to make them better. It
is horrible, they keep on yelling in
pain, I'm glad I haven't caught
this illness. This seems far worse
than when I had a cold.

Love,

1 August

Today I went to visit Omega
again. We flew to a place called
Omega Zone. In Omega Zone
all you have to do is imagine
the place you would most like to
be and you are there. It's a bit
like Special Effect at Sci Tech but
way better. I had to come home
early though, because everyone is
still sick and the robot maid is
still broken go for now I am the
maid! (not fair)

♥ Lexy.

12 August
I am worried even more than before,
I haven't written for so long because
something terrible is happening, the
whole world has come down with
his terrible virus, everyone that is
infected me! The scientists have been
doing experiments on me while
everyone else is in hospital. The
streets are deserted. Everyone is
too sick to come and play with me.

Yours in fear,
Lex.

17 August
Today I visited Dronn and told
about earth and how everyone
is ill. I cried too much, I was
frightened everyone would die and I'd
be all alone.

Dronn looked worried, He took
me to the sphinctor king. We were
taken to a room in this dome.
It was so bright while I was
nearly blinded. Through a big monitor
on the wall I could see everyone
ill, on earth. This is what the
sphinctor king said: "Lexy, for
millions of years I have studied humans and their selfish ways. Sprixtors and humans would never get along together. We knew that if any human being ever found out about Dimension 5 that our planet would surely be in danger of mans destructive nature. You understand don't you that we cannot take that risk.

I'm sorry Lexy but many years ago I made an 'anticipate' that if any human were to find Dimension 5 as soon as the pass through the force field they would carry a virus back to Earth and pass it on to all Earthlings until every Earthling is wiped out? So you see there is only one way to save the world. How I asked. "By sacrificing the life of the host, the host of the virus. My heart sank. I couldn't believe I had been betrayed by Kroon and the Sprixtors. But I will still sacrifice my life to save this world I love."

"Lexy."

A/S: excellent. XXX.
Appendix I

Lesson 8

Objectives
1. List characteristics of narrative poetry
2. Dramatise a narrative poem
3. Write a narrative poem
4. Discuss poetic language

Resources
1. Photocopies of various narrative poetry (including teacher’s poem)
2. Handout on poetry (from last week’s lesson)
3. Students own lyrical poems

Activities:

Traditional & Role play Groups
1. Students in pairs read partner’s poem and discuss a. feelings & ideas b. effective language c. genre characteristics
2. Teacher exposition of narrative poetry and reading of her poem (noting above points a, b & c; use of metaphor; conflict and plot)
3. Students in groups read poems on teacher/student theme and dramatise poem for performance
4. Students write a narrative poem using either their character from role plays or an experience of teacher/student conflict they’ve had or can imagine

Lesson observation notes

Traditional
Students were keen on role playing the poems. The texts were a basis for the students’ work and groups showed their expressive abilities relating to the ideas and feelings. Some groups were cohesive, while others took quite a bit of time to work out their parts.
Observed behaviours: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Role play
I was surprised to see some of these students perform their poems. One group of three boys was so immersed in the action that one boy swore (uncharacteristically as in the class situation) and all were very confident in movement and speech. Another group went beyond their text and explored an issue from the text in a completely different situation. All groups worked completely independently from me. I didn’t need to be a guide and the groups seemed to have full confidence in their own interpretations and performances.
Observed behaviours: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
ENGLISH GENERAL 6.1

UNIT DESCRIPTION
In this unit you will study the following major areas:

1. Sequence of events and selection of detail in biographical and autobiographical texts.

2. Television news, documentary or current affairs programmes.

3. Sub-genre of novels and short stories; eg., romance or science fiction.

4. Forms of narrative and lyrical poetry.

5. Drama: from script to performance.

UNIT OBJECTIVES
This unit will aim to develop your ability to:

1. use the conventions of standard English in writing.

2. prepare and participate in a range of one-to-one, individual and graded oral language activities.

3. understand, order and convey facts, ideas, and opinions in a variety of comprehending and composing situations.

4. understand and respond to structure, style and tone, and vary language according to audience and purpose.

5. understand and use a wide vocabulary.

ASSESSMENT
In this unit you will be assessed on many student activities. Your teacher may select from these and add others they see as appropriate to provide a balanced assessment of the unit’s objectives. You will be assessed on a formal and informal basis. However, SEVEN tasks are formally graded.
COURSE OUTLINE 6.1

Week 1 Reading activities: features of biographical autobiographical texts. Read variety
1 of forms of biographical writing. Revise differences between fiction and non-
fiction. Note-making from library research. Note-making from class discussion.
Begin reading autobiography (To Sir With Love, Boy, Diary of Anne Frank, Black Like
Me).

Week 2 Continue reading novel. Make notes on sequence of events and selection of detail. Report
2 to class on features of a biographical text. Write an episode from your autobiography.

Week 3 View and make notes on television news programmes. Prepare for group discussion on
3 newsworthiness, bias, etc. Write own news items from two different viewpoints.
Prepare for essay in class on television news. Write about character from novel.

Week 4 Begin second novel. View TV documentary. Compare news and documentary treatment of a
4 current issue. Write a letter to the Editor or an Editorial on a controversial issue.
Write media essay in class time.

Week 5 Oral review of second biographical novel. Read and make notes on short stories from
5 Love, Science Fiction and Humour sub-genre. Revise terms... plot, character, setting and
significance of conflict to short stories. Write a parody of a short story sub-genre.
Begin reading novel (Z for Zachariah, The Chrysalids, Fahrenheit 451, A Patch of
Blue, Summer of My German Soldier).

Week 6 Read play in class. Write about dramatic elements: character, setting, conflict etc.
6

Week 7 Discuss staging a play. Group work on a scene. Revise technical terms... set, sound effects
8 etc. Write about a scene as the director.

Week 9 Novel study. Detailed study of character, setting and plot. Read and workshop a scene
9 from another play.

Week 10 Prepare for essay in class time on novels and short stories. Give a prepared talk on an
10 aspect of novel. Prepare for a test on term’s work.

(n.b. Your teacher may choose to vary these activities)

CORE GRADED ACTIVITIES
1. Write an incident for an autobiography.
2. Write about the author of an autobiography
3. Write an essay on television news and/or documentaries.
4. Present a poetry reading to the class or give a prepared talk on a novel
5. Write a parody of a sub-genre of fiction.
6. Write about staging a scene from a play.
7. Write about a sub-genre of fiction.
Lesson 1

Objectives:
1. read short story science fiction (selected sub-genre)
2. comprehend elements of story (content & structure)
3. list specific significant elements contributing to effective story

Resources:
1. photocopies of The Pedestrian by Ray Bradbury
2. worksheet of questions under headings (significant elements):
   a. introductory paragraph  b. mood/atmosphere
   c. detail    d. dialogue    e. conclusion
   f. title      g. situation/issues

Activities:
Traditional Group
1. listen to teacher & class mates read short story aloud
2. small groups discuss assigned element/s of the story
3. each group prepares a written response for whole class oral report
4. class lists headings and their significance to content /structure story
5. class discusses groups' answers through probing questions

Role play Group
1. listen to teacher & class mates read short story aloud
2. small groups discuss elements of story in preparation for role play scenes
3. groups perform role play focusing on assigned elements and scenarios
4. class lists headings and their significance to content /structure story
5. class discusses groups' performances through probing questions

Lesson observation notes:

Traditional Group
The class worked well. Each group completed oral report. The class were animated in their response to the story and to groups' reports. I need to complete lesson next session (two groups still to report).
Observed behaviours: 1. 2.* 3.* 4. 5.

Role play Group
Class worked well as above. Role play groups used the text as a basis for presentations in various ways. Some groups took words straight from the text while others only referred to the text through similar setting and characters. One pair did a scene with two robots commenting on the humans. We ran out of time and missed two other the presentations.
Observed behaviours: 1. 2.* 3.* 4. 5.*
Lesson 2

Objectives
1. read exposition of novel
2. list supporting details for character, plot and setting
3. discuss character in relation to setting and events

Resources
1. text Ender’s Game
2. teacher notes re exposition

Activities:

Traditional Group
1. review elements of science fiction stories in journal
2. writing predictions of text through attention to title, cover and blurb
3. reading exposition aloud
4. listing details for character, plot and setting
5. whole class discussion of character in relation to the events and setting

Role play Group
1. review elements of science fiction stories in journal
2. reading exposition aloud
3. listing details for character, plot and setting
4. individuals write in journals as Ender, Peter or Valentine
5. teacher interviews characters (in role) about their feelings during and after fight

Lesson observation notes

Traditional Group
Readers were enthusiastic and expressive in their reading. Some students dismayed by the size of the book when informed that they were required to read it in the next two weeks. Discussion of characters was lively.
Observed behaviours: 1. 2.* 3.* 4. 5.

Role play Group
Again the class read well though individuals were not as in character as traditional group. This is due to most of the students not being as confident in their reading. It was interesting to see female students take on the role of males, however, the reverse did not happen. When I talked to the students (in role) they responded as the character. I find I am running out of time each lesson in giving and getting adequate feedback from both groups.
Observed behaviours: 1. 2.* 3.* 4. 5.*
Lesson 3

Objectives
1. write a description of setting for battle room
2. relate character, events and conflicts to setting to be aware of links
3. construct setting details and dialogue for selected scenes

Resources
1. text Ender's Game
2. scenario cards

Activities

Traditional Group
1. Questioning for relationship of setting to mood/atmosphere
2. Writing in journals re battle room setting
3. Small groups discuss scenarios and construct setting details and dialogue
4. Groups present ideas and students make notes as to effective details
5. Discussion of student’s settings and the relationship to character events and conflict

Activities:

Role play Group
1. Questioning for relationship of setting to mood/atmosphere
2. Writing in journals re battle room setting
3. Small groups discuss scenarios and construct a role play to convey character, events and conflict
4. Groups perform role plays and class takes notes re setting, character events and dialogue
5. Discussion of student’s settings and the relationship to character events and conflict

Lesson observation notes

Traditional Group
Students’ details varied in their depiction of the battle room. The text did not offer many concrete details therefore the students used their imagination and pre-conceived ideas about science fiction and/or military settings. While two groups presented details for their settings, the other two other groups gave very little and no details for setting. A discussion of narration and dialogue arose when groups were not distinguishing between the two modes.
Observed behaviours: 1. 2.* 3.* 4. 5.

Role play Group
Students presented detailed battle room settings. They were imaginative in their variations on colours, textures and shapes. The settings responded to the logistics in the text. Only ten students were in class (others away on tours etc); however the role plays were well done. The first group’s was short, but active. The second group were expressive
verbally while drawing mainly on the text. The third group presented their
own dialogue and actions in a very enthusiastic role play (one girl knocked
over a desk 'in character') that seemed to reflect both the text and the
students' ideas. The fourth group did not get time to perform.
Observed behaviours: 1. 2.* 3.* 4. 5.*

Lesson 4

Objectives
1. Closely analyse a passage of text
2. Write a letter as a character from Ender's Game
3. Define expository and creative writing

Resources
1. Text Ender's Game
2. Handout for creative writing guide (Inside Story)
3. Handout for narrative plan (First Steps)

Activities:

Traditional Group
1. Students read p.227-231 or p. 313-315 text
2. Small groups discuss the characters' feelings, actions and motivations
   (Bonzo, Ender, Petra and Mazer)
3. Students write a letter from Ender to Valentine about situation
4. Discussion of the impact of the book on readers (effectiveness of writing)
5. Reading handout on creative writing re definitions

Role play Group
1. Students read p.227-231 or p. 313-315 text
2. Small groups perform a role play
3. Students write a letter from Ender to Valentine about situation
4. Discussion of the impact of the book on readers (effectiveness of writing)
5. Reading handout on creative writing re definitions

Lesson observation notes

Traditional Group
Small group discussions were generally on task. Some intense
discussion went on about feelings of characters eg whether Ender was
afraid or not in shower setting. Students were able to write their letters
without structure or guidance. They seemed involved in the task. There
was only a small amount of time for students to peruse creative writing
handout.
Observed behaviours: 1.* 2.* 3.* 4. 5.*

Role play Group
Role plays ranged from brief realistic portrayals to longer stylised
depictions. Groups used dialogue from the text as well as making up their
own in the context of their role plays. Students wrote letters in character
and were involved in the task. I found I did not have to guide role play or
writing task. Students discussed their role plays and did not require any
assistance when it was offered.
Observed behaviours: 1.* 2.* 3.* 4.* 5.*
Lesson 5

Objectives
1. Review characteristics of science fiction through comparison to fantasy
2. Evaluate Ender’s Game in terms of effective writing
3. Speculate on how writers get ideas for writing

Resources
1. Ender’s Game text
2. Handout about creative writing ideas (Inside Story)
3. Teacher’s plan for science fiction narrative short story
4. Photocopies of narrative plans (Stepping Out)
5. Teacher’s visualisation journey

Activities:

Traditional Group
1. Overview of lesson and reminder of in-class short story writing next week
2. Teacher exposition of characteristics of science fiction and fantasy genres
3. Students read ideas from creative writing handout and compare to Card’s ideas (referring to Card’s introduction)
4. Students write and Lesson observation notes of Ender’s Game focusing on their personal opinion and its qualities (effective writing, setting, characters, plot)
5. Students in small groups complete ‘atmosphere’ activity from creative writing handout to practise setting for own stories
6. Nominated students report back to class on ideas for setting
7. Teacher models her plan through exposition and black boarding of plan while students peruse narrative plan handouts

Role play Group
1. Overview of lesson and reminder of in-class short story writing next week
2. Teacher exposition of characteristics of science fiction and fantasy genres
3. Students read ideas from creative writing handout and compare to Card’s ideas (referring to Card’s introduction)
4. Students write and Lesson observation notes of Ender’s Game focusing on their personal opinion and its qualities (effective writing, setting, characters, plot)
5. Teacher takes students on a visualisation journey after explaining its possible use as a technique for ideas for writing
6. Students write a description of the room and dimension they journeyed to or ideas for setting if unable to complete visualisation task
7. Teacher blackboards her plan for short story while students peruse narrative plans

Lesson observation notes
Traditional Group
Students completed tasks. Discussion was teacher-directed in first half of lesson and more student-centred in second half. Each lesson has been intense in regard to covering content and completing activities. The
students have been positive during the lessons even though some were not particularly keen on science fiction.

Observed behaviours: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Role play Group
Students were willing to participate in visualisation journey. They were told to close eyes and try to relax. Some students may not have been keen but all co-operated. Most students wrote at length about their journeys.

Observed behaviours: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Lesson 6

Non-teaching lesson
Both groups had an in-class creative writing assignment: under test conditions.

Lesson 7

Objectives
1. define lyrical poetry
2. read lyrical poems noting characteristics
3. discuss ideas and feelings expressed in lyrical poems

Resources
1. handout re poetry (Inside Story)
2. copies of Beatles' She's Leaving Home
3. tape of She's Leaving Home and cassette player
4. copies of various lyrical poems

Activities:

Traditional Group
1. overview of poetry component and assignment
2. writing short poem to link emotion to description indirectly
3. discussion poetry as creative writing in terms of 'Writing with Three Eyes' exercise in handout
4. reading lyrical poetry on bird theme (include teacher's own poem)
5. discussing in small groups selected poem
6. defining lyrical poetry
7. listening to She's Leaving Home tape and reading text

Role play Group
1. overview of poetry component and assignment
2. writing short poem to link emotion to description indirectly
3. discussion poetry as creative writing in terms of 'Writing with Three Eyes' exercise in handout
4. reading lyrical poetry on bird theme (including teacher's own poem)
5. defining lyrical poetry
6. listening to She's Leaving Home tape and reading text
7. performing role plays in small groups using tape as catalyst
Lesson observation notes

Traditional group
Most students were involved in tasks. Michael and David were talking off task and Michael made an inappropriate comment regarding a girl's poem. I reminded the class of the text as being a working text. I reminded Michael that criticism of other students' work should be kept to himself and rude remarks would not be tolerated. The session was intense due to the amount of content to be covered. Students were asked to write a lyrical poem on a parent/child theme as in She's Leaving Home for next lesson.
Observed behaviours: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Role play Group
Students' poems demonstrated their general fluency and knowledge of content and structure. David was talking off task and was reluctant to write. Students were keen to do role plays and the first group adapted the girl's role to a less passive one compared to original text. The second group stuck closely to the original text and were realistic in their depictions of characters. There was not enough time to view all groups and homework was set as for the traditional group.
Observed behaviours: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Lesson 8

Objectives
1. List characteristics of narrative poetry
2. Dramatise a narrative poem
3. Write a narrative poem
4. Discuss poetic language

Resources
1. Photocopies of various narrative poetry (including teacher's poem)
2. Handout on poetry (from last week's lesson)
3. Students own lyrical poems

Activities:

Traditional & Role play Groups
1. Students in pairs read partner's poem and discuss a. feelings & ideas b. effective language c. genre characteristics
2. Teacher exposition of narrative poetry and reading of her poem (noting above points a, b & c; use of metaphor; conflict and plot)
3. Students in groups read poems on teacher/student theme and dramatise poem for performance
4. Students write a narrative poem using either their character from role plays or an experience of teacher/student conflict they've had or can imagine
Lesson observation notes

Traditional
Students were keen on role playing the poems. The texts were a basis for the students' work and groups showed their expressive abilities relating to the ideas and feelings. Some groups were cohesive, while others took quite a bit of time to work out their parts.
Observed behaviours: 1. 2.* 3.* 4. 5*

Role play
I was surprised to see some of these students perform their poems. One group of three boys was so immersed in the action that one boy swore (uncharacteristically as in the class situation) and all were very confident in movement and speech. Another group went beyond their text and explored an issue from the text in a completely different situation. All groups worked completely independently from me. I didn't need to be a guide and the groups seemed to have full confidence in their own interpretations and performances.
Observed behaviours: 1.* 2.* 3.* 4.* 5*
RESOURCES


3. Self-designed creative writing programme lessons.


5. First Steps Writing Modules. Obtained from school.

6. Unit 6.1 Outline. Obtained from school.

7. Researcher's original poems and creative writing pieces.

8. Various poems from school anthologies and researcher's own poetry books.

9. Researcher's self-designed worksheets, scenario cards and other various materials listed on lessons.

10. Music tapes from The Beatles' song: She's leaving home.
CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN AN INVESTIGATION (in accordance with the guidelines recommended by the Committee For The Conduct Of Ethical Research, Edith Cowan University)

PURPOSE AND PROCEDURES OF THE INVESTIGATION:

The overall purpose of my investigation is to enhance teaching and learning processes in the English classroom. The specific purpose is to see whether role play strategies will enhance students' performances and attitudes regarding creative writing.

Students will be taught using the appropriate teaching strategies to enhance their creative writing skills, therefore, the students should benefit from the research programme. As the investigation's class programme complies with their current class programme, no students should be disadvantaged in any way. The investigation will be carried out over a period of 10 weeks.

The findings of this investigation could also be a benefit for society, in improving teaching and learning processes in the classroom.

I am willing to answer any questions about procedures either personally (ph .......) or through my University Supervisor, Tarquam McKenna (.......).

Thank you for your consideration of participation. A parent or guardian will need to sign this consent form as well as the participant.

TITLE The effects of role play strategies on students' creative writing performance

I.................................................. have read the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realising I may withdraw at any time.

I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identifiable.

Participant

Parent/Guardian

Date

(signed)

Date

(signed)

Investigator

Date

(signed)

Kerry Mulholland

(Honours Student and Principal Investigator from the Department of Language Arts Education, Edith Cowan University).
Dear Parents / Guardians and Students,

I would like to let you know about an investigation I am conducting at (..........) Senior High School. My name is Kerry Mulholland and I am an English teacher and a fourth Year Honours student at Edith Cowan University. I am familiar with (..........) students as I have taught classes at the school on many occasions. I am looking forward to having an opportunity to work with (..........) students once again.

I am undertaking an important research investigation focusing on improving teaching and learning processes in the English classroom. Your child’s class has been selected by Mr (......), Head of English, and myself as the most suitable class for the research. The students will have an opportunity to improve their writing skills and, in particular, their creative writing skills. Their normal class programme will be followed, therefore, students will not be disadvantaged in any way.

I have attached a formal consent form in accordance with guidelines for research participants. I will gladly speak to any parent or student about my research and my home phone number is( ).

Yours sincerely,

Kerry Mulholland.
Appendix N

THE GAME

The game we used to play was very important to me. Nobody else saw it that way, but it was the only real time we could play and relax together, feeling free to do what we wanted; what we could do— not what we should do. During those times I really opened myself up and expressed myself—not like now. We cannot play our special game anymore. It was so special to me, like an oasis in the middle of a lonely, monotonous desert. My life is a vast desert, full of emptiness and longing, for my dead best friend.

Her death was so horrific and tragic—I've closed myself off to everyone now—my family, my friends. I sit in a cold, secluded corner of my uncomfortable bedroom, thinking, dreaming.

Sometimes I believe that my dead pal comes back—and we play our game. I can feel her in my heart, just the same as before, and she lightens my separated, messed up life. She makes me happy.

One day I decided to open myself up again—to my mother, I told her about my wonderful experiences with Cathy, how she
comes back and plays my game. I'll never do that again. All she did was give me funny, insensitive looks—like I need to be thrown into an asylum, like she worries I am. She rang up and whispered on the phone, so quietly, so secretly, sensing what she was thinking in the atmosphere, I slipped away from her, back into the familiar shadows.

It has been a month since Cathy's death, everyday she comes to me and we play our soul-binding game. I talk to her about, and can hear my so-called 'loving' parents murmuring downstairs.

"She's talking to herself, Maggie, it might already be too late."

"Simon, no, it's only been a month, why not—"

"I can't take it any longer! She's driving me and the kids up the wall with her silence and carry-on. She's screwing up the family!"

"Silence. I can feel Cathy seep out of me, and wonder to where ever she goes."

"Goodbye," I say sorrowfully.

"See you," exclaimed her raging father.

"Please Simon, I more week, and then we'll—"
"Yes, and then we'll be rid of her."
"You don't mean that. You love your daughter."
"Loved. She treats me so coldly, I can't find it in my heart anymore."
My mother starts sobbing dramatically.

So my guess was right - they're packing me up and shipping me off to the honeypot. And I've got one week.

That night as I recalled that cruel conversation about me, Cathy returned. I could feel my heart warm, and smell her loving scent about me. She rested in me.

"Hi."
"I'm sorry for causing you such pain, Sarah, it's my fault."
"No.
"I talked to you and you said only talk back, didn't you?"
"I chose to."
"Sorry."
"Cathy, you've brought me more joy in the times you've visited me than all our have. It's my entire life. You've no reason to be sorry."
We sat in silence for a while, reassuring each other mutely, when Cathy delicately
started speaking again.

"Sarah, let's leave your home. They're going to sent you away soon anyway. So why don't we go away and live our own lives together?"

"Where could we go?"

"Anywhere you'd like to."

I could feel a chill of excitement run throughout my entire body thinking of the thrills of freedom.

Our minds locked, and we made a silent agreement that as soon as I could, we would leave.

The next night, I climbed out my side window with a bag full of food, clothes and books. Surprisingly, I was not sad to leave the house and my family. Not even regretful, we walked far from my house, far from our home town, into the bush. I wasn't tired or scared—Cathy gave me great strength to endure the hard, long journey. We walked all the next day and night as well, bringing us to a small dry rubbish where I could sleep peacefully. That was where we stayed.
For weeks now Cathy and I stayed out here - I no longer need food and water because Cathy restores me - she keeps my mind in a wonderful trance. There we can be together, sit together, play our game together - I'm delightfully happy and fulfilled with my life now, as I am with Cathy. And when I die, I'll be with Cathy again. I can't wait.

By
Christie

Sarah's parents didn't even send out a search party after her - they thought it was for the best. A year later, her body was found - and she had a smile on her face.