The Effects of the Discussion of and the Drawing of Political Cartoons as Prewriting Activities to Increase Fifth and Sixth-Graders' Ability to Write Persuasively.

Douglas Mark Granier

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The effects of the discussion of and the drawing of political cartoons as prewriting activities to increase fifth and sixth-graders' ability to write persuasively

Granier, Douglas Mark, Ph.D.
The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col., 1990
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The Effects of the Discussion of and the Drawing of Political Cartoons as Prewriting Activities to Increase Fifth and Sixth Graders' Ability to Write Persuasively

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in The Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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August 2, 1990
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Abstract

The effects of the discussion of and the drawing of political cartoons as prewriting activities to increase fifth and sixth graders' ability to write persuasively were investigated. The subjects were 53 males and 49 females from two fifth grade and two sixth grade classes in a university laboratory school. The study was a randomized, pretest-posttest control group design with two treatment groups (discussion of political cartoons and drawing of political cartoons) and two control groups (discussion of a topic and drawing about a topic). Stratified random placement based on pretest scores enabled formation of four groups of approximately equal ability. Six treatment sessions were administered and data were collected in the form of three compositions which served as a pretest, a first posttest, and a second, delayed posttest. Compositions were assessed for quantity and quality, and a separate repeated-measures ANOVA was performed on each dependent measure. Descriptive statistics were also used for analysis. Results showed no significant effects between treatment groups and their respective control groups for both quantity and
quality. However, for quantity of writing, the groups that discussed scored significantly better than the groups that drew, regardless of whether or not political cartoons were used. Further, for quality, the group that discussed the topic and the group that discussed the political cartoons scored significantly higher than the group that drew about the topic. The group that drew political cartoons was not significantly different from the other groups. Recommendations to allow students opportunities to discuss their writing topics and to encourage students to find prewriting activities which work best for them were included.
Chapter 1
The Problem

Research Context

Writing a persuasive essay has been a difficult task for students from elementary school through the early college years (Ruth & Murphy, 1988). Recent research suggests that young writers master narrative earlier and more easily than more abstract forms (Erftmier, 1986; Keech, 1982). The structure of the persuasive task often presents difficulties for younger writers to handle.

Several research studies have shown that many fifth and sixth graders experience problems with persuasive writing. Wilkinson, Barnsley, Hanna, & Swan (1982) found that many ten-year-olds attempted to apply narrative even in their argumentative writings. Freedman and Pringle's study (cited in Ruth & Murphy, 1988) discovered that twelve- and thirteen-year-old children had much greater success using the schema for story structure than the schema for the structure of an argument. Prater and Padia (1983) judged persuasive writing tasks to be the most difficult type of writing
for their sixth-grade subjects.

Calkins (1986), in discussing fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade writers, noted that "as children grow older, and more experienced as writers, they can do more and more in advance of writing" (p. 96). They can use the time before beginning a first draft to explore ideas, gain information, and discover a direction (Calkins, 1980). If this is true, then certain prewriting activities might be successful in helping young students write persuasively. Because drawing (Leathers, 1987; Skupa, 1985/1986) and oral discussion (Blazer, 1984; Nunn, 1984) have been shown to have a positive effect on the writing of some elementary school children, these procedures hold promise for teachers seeking ways to enhance students' persuasive writing.

Planning is crucial for young writers. Without it, children have trouble finding a topic and a place to begin (Skupa, 1985/1986). Both Clay (1975) and Graves (1976) suggested that drawing could be a very important form of prewriting because children draw what they are thinking. This helps to bring ideas to the surface. Carroll (1981), Collins (1982), and Cooper
and Odell (1976) suggested that oral language activities can aid the writing process. Oral language activities give writers a chance to develop ideas before putting them down on paper.

The nature of political cartoons suggests that they also could be effective aids for fifth- and sixth-grade persuasive writers. Political cartoons make abstract ideas concrete; they focus on details as well as the whole; and they encourage translating, interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating. These skills are all essential to effective persuasive writing.

Logic suggests that a combination of these activities (the drawing or discussing of political cartoons) would be a very effective way of preparing young writers to compose better persuasive essays. However, no research has been done in this area.

This study investigates whether fifth and sixth graders who drew or discussed political cartoons before engaging in persuasive writing on a political, social, or environmental issue would write longer and/or better essays than those fifth and sixth graders who drew about or discussed a topic without considering political cartoons.
Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of two prewriting activities (the discussion of political cartoons and the drawing of political cartoons) on the quality and quantity of fifth- and sixth-grade students' persuasive compositions.

Background of the Problem

In recent years, educational researchers have begun to emphasize the process of writing over the final product (e.g., Graves, 1984). They have begun to pay close attention to the components of the writing process in an attempt to gain a better understanding of how a writer composes (Ziegler, 1981). This has led to a new understanding of writing as an active, cognitive process.

Prewriting, the first step of the writing process, has been shown to be crucial (Tompkins & Camp, 1988). For many writers, what happens before they begin to write is just as important as anything that occurs after they begin to put words down on paper (Murray, 1984). Much of the current research suggests that the
amount of time spent on prewriting activities affected the quality of student writing (Pfotenhauer, 1982). Prewriting appears to help the young writer by easing his frustrations about writing (Bushman, 1984). It also aids him in the process of discovering what he wants to say (Pfotenhauer, 1982). Unfortunately, however, research showed that this important procedure is almost totally neglected in many writing classes (Applebee, 1981; Bridge & Heibert, 1985; Emig, 1971; Harrington-Brogan, 1983).

The lack of prewriting activities is especially critical in the area of persuasive writing because this mode of composing is difficult for most student writers (Ruth & Murphy, 1988). They lack the necessary skills for successfully doing this type of writing.

There is, as I have stated earlier, a possible solution to this dilemma. Research has already shown that drawing (Leathers, 1987; Skupa, 1985/1986) and oral discussions (Barry, 1985; Meyers, 1980; Nunn, 1984) can have positive effects when used as prewriting activities. It is my belief that the drawing and discussing of political cartoons, when used as prewriting activities, will have an even greater effect
on student writing.

The political cartoon has a natural appeal to children (Heitzmann, 1983). By its very nature, it encourages discussion and thought. In addition, it promotes the development of thinking skills: translating, interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating (DeFren, 1988). For these reasons, several writers have suggested the use of political cartoons to stimulate student writing (DeFren, 1988; Monahan, 1983). However, no one has looked at a possible relationship between political cartoons and persuasive writing. It is my belief that some of the skills that are necessary to understand political cartoons (translating, interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating) are also the same skills which one needs to write an effective persuasive composition. If this is true, then the use of political cartoons as prewriting activities should have a positive effect on students' persuasive essays.

Research Questions

1. Does the drawing of political cartoons as a prewriting activity affect the quality of fifth- and
sixth-graders' persuasive writing?

2. Does the drawing of political cartoons as a prewriting activity affect the quantity of fifth- and sixth-graders' persuasive writing?

3. Does the discussion of political cartoons as a prewriting activity affect the quality of fifth- and sixth-graders' persuasive writing?

4. Does the discussion of political cartoons as a prewriting activity affect the quantity of fifth- and sixth-graders' persuasive writing?

Definition of Terms

prewriting activities - "those exercises children engage in prior to drafting" (Tompkins & Friend, 1986, p. 83).

persuasive writing - writing which "is intended to persuade the audience to take some action or to accept some belief" (Skupa, 1985/1986, p. 15).

student composition - the first draft of a student writing, composed during a 35 minute period.

writing quality - the general effectiveness of a written product. (In this study, it will be represented by the overall score of a student
composition as determined by two independent raters using an analytic scoring scale.)

writing quantity - the total number of words in a student composition.

analytic scoring method - a method of scoring that is based on an analysis of skills deemed necessary for effective writing

Limitations

1. I selected the sample from the accessible population and not the target population of all fifth and sixth graders. (Because I included a detailed description of the subject characteristics of the sample, the reader should be able to make his or her own judgments about the similarities of the sample to the target population.)

2. The external validity may have been limited by experimenter effects since I have worked with some of these students in the past. By mixing the four classes, the chance of experimenter contamination was greatly lessened.

3. Because of the limited sample size, no statistical comparisons could be made between fifth-
and sixth-grade writers. This information would be interesting, but it was not necessary for my study.

4. The scores of ten subjects were deleted from the study due to incomplete data caused by absences.

5. Because of time factors, only six treatments sessions were held.

6. It appears that the choice of topics may have had an effect on the subjects' performance in the study.

Organization of the Dissertation

The remainder of the dissertation presents what I have learned during my study. Chapter 2 lays the theoretical groundwork for my investigation through a systematic review of the literature. A complete description of my procedure is presented in Chapter 3. Detailed Results of the study are reported in Chapter 4. And lastly, Chapter 5 summarizes the study and discusses the findings. It also includes the implications of my study for both educators and researchers.
Chapter 2
Review of the Literature

This review of the literature explores the appropriate aspects of writing, persuasion, and political cartoons as they relate to the purpose of this study. It begins with a review of current theories of the composing process. Special emphasis is placed on the prewriting stage and on research which had been done in this area.

A study of the modes of discourse leads to a review of the theory of persuasive discourse. An investigation of persuasive writing and the research on persuasive writing follows. An analysis of current research on fifth- and sixth-grade writers precedes a study of the uses of political cartoons in the classroom.

Theories of the Composing Process

Recently, there has been a change of emphasis from the final product of writing to the process of writing. How one writes has become of great interest to both researchers and educators. While there is disagreement
among them as to the number and names of the writing processes, there is agreement as to the importance of exploring how these operations are involved in composing.

According to Hume (1983), "the literature contains many theories that differ primarily in the numbers and labels of their writing-process components" (p. 4). However, for the most part, all theories fall into one of two categories. One group sees writing as a linear process, while the other group considers it a recursive process.

**Writing as a linear process**

When scholars and researchers first began to focus on the process of composing, the dominant view was that the process was linear (Brannon, 1985). This theory held that writing consisted of a series of sequential activities through which the writer progressed. The writer proceeded from one activity to the next in a steady advancement towards the completed project.

Rohman (1965) described writing as a three-stage process: pre-writing, writing, and rewriting. He maintained that the successful writer followed a
definite pattern in the process of putting his thoughts into written form. Rohman saw pre-writing as a critical stage in this process because it played such an important role in what was to follow.

Britton (1978) also saw writing as consisting of three distinct stages; however, his steps were different from Rohman's stages. Britton identified preparation, incubation, and articulation as the processes that all writers work through. For him, preparation is when the writing task is determined, incubation is when the facts and ideas are organized, and articulation is when the actual writing of the piece takes place.

Some other theorists have added steps to this process. For Draper (1982), the process involved prewriting, formulation, transcribing, reformulation, and editing. Stallard (1977) described a six step process that included searching, reflecting, selecting, organizing, writing, and revising. Despite the differences, all of these theorists saw writing as proceeding from some type of prewriting stage, to writing, and then to revision.
Writing as a recursive process

In recent years, some researchers have begun to question the assumption that writing is a linear process (Flower & Hayes, 1981a; Nold, 1981; Perl, 1980; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1986). This has led to a shift from viewing writing as a linear process to perceiving writing as a recursive process. It is now commonly accepted that the writer must often go backward in the process of composing if he or she is to go forward (Brannon, 1985). There is no steady flow from one step to the next.

Perl (1980) was one of the first researchers to question the established belief that writing was a linear process. She advocated the following:

writing is a recursive process, .... throughout the process of writing, writers return to substrands of the overall process, or subroutines (short successions of steps that yield results on which the writer draws in taking the next series of steps); writers use these to keep the process moving forward. (p. 364)

She noted, however, that the elements that recur vary according to both the subject and the composer.
The most commonly cited design that showed writing as a recursive process was the one put forth by Flower and Hayes (1981a). They developed a cognitive process model of writing which describes the composing processes that they witnessed in their protocol research. For them, the act of writing includes three major components: the task environment, the writer's long term memory, and the writing processes. They explained the model as follows:

The task environment includes all of those things outside the writer's skin, starting with the rhetorical problem or assignment and eventually including the growing text itself. The second element is the writer's long-term memory in which the writer has stored knowledge, not only of the topic, but of the audience and of various writing plans. The third element in our model contains writing processes themselves, specially the basic processes of planning, translating, and reviewing. (Flower & Hayes, 1981a, p. 369)

These processes are not sequential stages, but rather cognitive processes which the writer uses over and over again.
Prewriting
The Prewriting Process

While most scholars and researchers agree that prewriting is a very important part of the composing process, they do not all agree on exactly what the process is and what it entails. Most of them, however, do concur with Murray's (1982) statement that "prewriting is everything that takes place before the first draft" (p. 15).

Rohman (1969) described pre-writing as "the stage of discovery when a person assimilates his 'subject' to himself" (p. 106). For him, this process consisted primarily of thinking about the writing task.

Baden (1975) suggested that prewriting should be a time for arousing the feelings of the writer so that he could make a passionate commitment to his writing assignment. In a similar vein, Behrens (1978) claimed that the only pre-writing that mattered was the motivation of the writer to accomplish the task successfully. He stressed that there was no one best way to accomplish this.

Others see prewriting as encompassing several distinct processes. For Koch and Brazil (1978),
effective prewriting consisted of experiencing, discovering, and making formal choices. Hall (1981) described the prewriting stage as involving two distinct skills: thinking and organizing. Boiarsky (1982) described four phases that a writer experienced during prewriting:

1. The writer participates in an event.
2. The writer gives meaning to the event.
3. The writer selects an angle for communicating the event's meaning.
4. The writer develops an organizational structure based on the angle to design an effective piece of written discourse. (p. 44)

Others described prewriting in a much less structured way. Graves (1977) characterized precomposing as the informal rehearsal that children should undertake before they actually write anything. He pointed out that prewriting could include drawing, painting, acting, discussing, and/or other similar activities. Petty and Jensen (1980) also described the prewriting stage as one that takes in any form of rehearsing for composing.

There are others who saw prewriting as not just a single step but as a repeated process throughout the
composing process. In Flower and Hayes' (1981b) recursive model of composing, the process of planning is very similar to what is commonly described as prewriting. However, in this paradigm, the writer returned to this process of planning at many different times during the writing task. Emig (1971) and Matsuhashi (1981) have also pointed out that planning continues to occur during the composing time.

**Research Involving the Prewriting Process**

Several researchers have reported that prewriting appeared to be a neglected part of the writing process of many students. Applebee (1981) conducted a national study of 754 teachers and found that most of them did not formally teach any invention skills.

Perl (1979) noted that when not given definite prewriting instructions, her five unskilled college writers began writing within the first few minutes. Warters (1979) found the same thing with her three basic college writers. Pianko (1979) discovered that the seventeen college freshmen writers in her study spent very little time on prewriting activities.

Emig (1971) found that her twelfth grade students
did very little planning before writing their first draft. Mischel (1974) found in a case study of a high school senior that the prewriting time for most of the subject's pieces was very short. In a study involving twelve secondary learning disabled students and twelve non-learning disabled students, Turner (1988) observed that both groups had no prewriting strategies. Metzger (1977) discovered that the grade seven, grade ten, and college-level writers in her six case studies generally did not prewrite or use any formal written plans.

Wilhide (1986) observed that many of the eighth grade students in his study did not seem to comprehend the prewriting stage and did not seem to engage in prewriting. They immediately began composing the rough draft. Sawkins (1971) found that little preplanning for writing was done by the sixty fifth graders who participated in her study. Bridge and Hiebert (1985) did a comparison study of classroom writing practices, teachers' perceptions of their writing instruction, and textbook recommendations for composing, in two first-, third-, and fifth-grade classrooms. They discovered that language arts textbooks did not recommend and teachers seldom used prewriting exercises to inspire
thinking. Bauman (1985) found in a case study investigation of six kindergarten students that some children engaged in specific prewriting plans while others did not.

It is important to note here that this lack of prewriting does not necessarily reflect a total lack of planning. Planning, like prewriting, includes generating ideas, organizing the composition, and setting goals. It can occur at different points in the writing process. As stated earlier, studies (e.g., Flower & Hayes, 1981b; Matsuhashi, 1981) have shown that some students plan during the writing time.

Some of the research also suggested that better writers usually spend more time in the prewriting stage than do less competent writers. In a study involving remedial college freshmen writers and traditional college freshmen writers, Pianko (1979) found a statistically significant difference in their time spent on prewriting, with the traditional students spending more time. (It should be noted that her sample was very small: ten remedial and seven traditional students.) Stallard (1974) also found that his senior "good writers" spent more time prewriting
than did his randomly selected writers. Selfe (1984), in a modified case study of eight college students, found that those labeled as low-apprehensive writers engaged in more overall planning and more written prefiguring in the prewriting stage than did those students labeled as high apprehensive writers.

**Prewriting Activities**

Most researchers, educators, and theorists agree that prewriting is a very important part of the writing process at all levels. However, some researchers have found that many children tend to begin writing almost at once when given a writing task (e.g., Burtis, Bereiter, Scardamalia, & Tetroe, 1983; Pianko, 1979; Podis & Podis, 1984). For this reason, it has been suggested that teachers present to children prewriting activities that can be used individually, in small groups, or with the entire class (Hillerich, 1979; Hoskisson & Tompkins, 1987; Tompkins & Camp, 1988).

Writers have put forth many different types of prewriting activities for use with students. Murray (1982), Reinsberg (1984), Stover (1988), and Ziegler (1984) promoted freewriting as a way for writers to
discover a focus or a purpose. Cowan (1983) and Tompkins and Camp (1988) suggested the use of cubing (considering a subject from six points of view) as a useful way to explore a topic. Ewald (1983) and Yinger (1985) advocated the use of journal writing as a way of discovering, choosing, and clarifying topics. Averill (1988), Hannan (1977), and Pfotenhauer (1982) encouraged the use of brainstorming as a means of generating ideas for writing. Boyle (1982), Buckley and Boyle (1983), and Tompkins and Friend (1986) recommended mapping as an effective organizing strategy that children could utilize in planning their essays.

Many writers have suggested that oral language activities aid the writing process (e.g., Blazer, 1984; Dyson, 1981, 1983; Graves, 1983, Reid, 1983, Tovatt, 1965). For this reason, several writers have advocated the use of class discussions as a worthwhile prewriting activity. Schwartz (1979) recommended a brief talk period before each writing assignment for relieving tension and exploring feelings. Kantor (1980) promoted class discussion to help students produce ideas for writing. Lopate (1978) also recommended class discussion for this purpose, but he warned that
too much discussion of a topic could kill enthusiasm for writing. Kossack, Kane, and Fine (1987) pointed out that class discussions could help students to develop not only ideas but also key words that they could use later in writing. Houpt (1984) advocated directed classroom conversations to help stimulate and organize students' thoughts. Heller (1988) recommended class discussions as a way of arousing students' prior knowledge of a topic.

Other writers have advocated the use of small group discussions as an effective prewriting activity. Golub and Reising (1975) suggested that group discussions could do much to motivate students to write. Carroll (1981) advocated talking in groups as one way for students to discover a subject worth writing about. Protherough (1983) also promoted group sharing as a way of generating writing ideas.

Several writers have advocated the use of paired student discussion as a beneficial prewriting activity. Cochran (1978) proposed student interviews as a way of creating an environment in which students would feel comfortable working on their writing. Meyers (1980) promoted one-to-one student interaction for discussing
what will be written. Carroll (1981) recommended paired discussion as one way for students to discover a subject worth writing about. Abbott (1989) advised having student partners discuss the ideas behind their essays in detail before doing any writing.

And lastly, drawing has been advanced as a useful prewriting exercise. Calkins (1986) claimed that, especially for young children, "the act of drawing and the picture itself both provide a supportive scaffolding within which the piece of writing can be constructed" (p. 50). Dyson (1985) also pointed out the natural connection between drawing and writing for young children. Clark (1985) suggested freedrawing as one good way to help students generate ideas for writing. Temple and Gillet (1984) recommended drawing as a rehearsal technique for young or hesitant writers.

Research Involving Prewriting Activities

Much research has been done in recent years on the effectiveness of many different types of prewriting activities. The focus of this section will be on the two activities that were chosen for this study: discussion and drawing.
Discussion As a Prewriting Activity. The research on the use of discussion as a prewriting activity has provided mixed results. Meyers (1980) examined the effects of paired-student discussion on college freshmen's descriptive, narrative, expositive, and argumentative compositions. He came to the following conclusions:

Using speaking as a pre-writing activity produces positive effects for assignments composed in each of the modes of discourse: for description, in mechanics; for narration and exposition, in general merit and total evaluation; and for argumentation, in all three — mechanics, general merit, and total evaluation (p. 12).

Barry (1985), in a naturalistic inquiry of twelfth-grade students, concluded that prewriting discussion could stimulate invention and ease apprehension as students proceed through the composing process. Golub (1970), in a study involving ninth graders, found that those who followed a model that went from stimulus, to problem, to controlled oral discussion, to written discussion, did significantly better on their compositions than those who went from
stimulus to problem to written discussion.

Beeker (1970) studied three fifth-grade classes to investigate the effects of oral planning on the quantity of student writing. She discovered that paired-student discussion produced the most T-units, followed by class discussion, with no discussion producing the least. Nunn (1984) did a qualitative study of paired student interaction during collaborative writing at the 4th/5th grade level. She concluded that "oral language played an important role in (a) the maintenance of interpersonal relationships; (b) problem solving relevant to the writing task; (c) exploration of language and new ideas; and (d) critical examination of existing ideas" (p. 105A).

In a study involving third-grade writers, Brusling (1973) (cited in Hillocks, 1986) discovered that the students who discussed a tape of nature sounds before writing scored significantly higher on their essays for organization and imagination than those who just listened to the tape.

Several other studies on the value of discussion as a prewriting exercise have had less convincing results. In a study of the effects of arts experience
and group discussion on education majors, Wagner (1980) found no statistical significance between either of the treatments and the control group. Her descriptive data, however, showed that students responded positively to both prewriting techniques, but that the arts experiences resulted in greater gains in self-confidence than did the discussions. Craig (1982) examined the results of discussion at different points in the writing process of college freshmen: small peer group discussion as prewriting, small peer group discussion as prerevising, and class discussion of the final draft. No significant differences were found among the three procedures on writing achievement or apprehension.

Reff (1966) had his experimental group of freshmen discuss a topic before writing while his control group had no conversation. He examined forty-one variables of length, subordination, and error in two sets of essays, and he found statistical significance with only four of them. He claimed that his results were inconclusive because topic seemed to have an effect. Mayo (1976) found that a brief prewriting discussion did not significantly affect the quality of tenth
graders' descriptive writing. She did conclude, however, that prewriting talk could help to improve the students' opinions about writing. Vinson (1980) studied the effects of using a model and imitation approach and a talk-write strategy as prewriting activities on the quality of ninth-graders descriptive paragraphs. She found the talk-write strategy to be more effective than the model and imitation approach or the traditional approach (control) in improving quality, but there were no significant statistical differences.

St. Romain (1975), in a study of children composing under different stimuli, found no significant effect for discussion on the creative writing of elementary school children. Roubicek (1984) found that fifth graders in a story dramatization group wrote significantly better essays than those students in a structured discussion group. McNulty (1981), in studying several motivational methods for the teaching of creative writing to fourth graders, found that teacher-student verbal interaction had no significant effect on the quality of the student essays. Lambert (1985) examined the effects of class discussion and
paired-student discussion on fourth graders' decisions to write. She found no statistical difference among boys choosing to write from the three groups (class discussion, paired student discussion, and control), but the number of girls choosing to write from the control group was significantly greater than those choosing to write from the class discussion group. Leathers (1987) studied the effects of several prewriting activities on the quality and quantity of fourth grade essays. She found no significant results for either group discussion or paired-student discussion on both quality and quantity.

Drawing As a Prewriting Activity. The research on drawing as a prewriting activity has not been as extensive as the research on the role of discussion as a prewriting activity. Yet most research on drawing in this role has indicated positive results. Dyson (1982) saw an interrelationship between drawing and writing for young children. She concluded from her study of kindergarten children that "the process of learning to write is, in part, a process of differentiating and consolidating the separate meanings of two forms of
graphic symbolism, drawing and writing, as children encounter them and make use of them in their daily activities" (p.379). This could explain why drawing appears to be an effective prewriting activity.

Clay (1975), in observing the writing of five-year-old children, discovered that drawing played an important part in the children's control of language. It also helped to bring their ideas to the surface where they could deal with them. Newkirk (1987), in examining the non-narrative writing of first, second, and third graders, also found a close connection between drawing and writing. Graves (1975) observed that many of the seven-year-olds he studied needed to draw before they wrote. He claimed that for many children, drawing was a significant step in the prewriting stage.

Skupa (1985/1986) examined the relationship between drawing and idea production in second graders' expressive, informative, and persuasive writings. She found that, in all three aims of discourse, students who drew before writing produced significantly more ideas in their writing than those who did not draw prior to writing. She also found that the students who
had their pictures available while writing produced significantly more ideas than those who did not have their drawing accessible. Leathers (1987), in a previously discussed study, found a significant difference in the writing quantity of fourth grade compositions between students who drew and students who had no prewriting activity. The difference favored the students who drew.

Only one study has found results contrary to the ones above. In a study of second-, third-, and fourth-grade students, Hudgins (1984) found that the manipulation and rotation of an object in a graphic design resulted in better quality stories. However, in the absence of manipulative experiences, children who wrote first rather than drew first wrote better quality stories.

Modes of Discourse

According to Connors (1981), the modes of discourse have been used to teach composition to more students than any other classification system. Mode of discourse is considered an important aspect of writing because it evokes different types of writing skills
Several different schemes exist for classifying the various types of discourse. According to Alvarez (1985), the most commonly accepted scheme classified writing into four modes: narration, description, exposition, and argument. Narrative writing tells a story. It is an account of events in which the writer details what he has experienced or observed. Descriptive writing paints a verbal picture. It is a sensory account of what one has experienced or observed. Expository writing explains something. It is the presentation and explication of ideas. Argumentative writing tries to get the reader to accept some belief or to take some action.

In recent years, the focus of writing instruction has shifted from product to producer (Rubin, 1984). Therefore, several theorists have put forth their own classifications of discourse which focused more on the aims of the writer (e.g., Britton, 1970; Kinneavy, 1971; Lloyd-Jones, 1977; Moffett, 1968; Wheelwright, 1968). The models of Britton (1970) and Kinneavy (1971), in particular, have received a great deal of attention.

Britton (1970) divided discourse into three broad
categories according to purpose: transactional, expressive, and poetic. Expressive writing is writing for self-expression, which is the dominant stimulus for writing. As a writer matures, he branches out from expressive writing to transactional writing (exposition or persuasion), and from expressive writing to poetic writing (novels, poems, etc.) (Brannon, 1985, p.19).

Kinneavy (1971) distinguished between modes and purposes of discourse. For him, the modes and purposes of discourse joined and could be used to describe all kinds of discourse. For writing, the mode of discourse would be what one wrote. He presented four categories: description, classification, narration, and evaluation. More important than these, however, were the aims of discourse. The aims of discourse told the reasons why people wrote. Kinneavy identified four purposes: expressive, literary, referential, and persuasive. Expressive discourse told about one's ideas, feelings, and/or experiences. Kinneavy listed diaries and journals as examples of this (p. 61). Literary discourse created a language "structure worthy of contemplation in its own right" (p. 39). Kinneavy listed short stories and lyrics as examples of this (p.
Referential discourse included scientific, informative, and exploratory discourse. It attempted to "designate or reproduce reality, in a manner of speaking" (p. 39). According to Kinneavy, a diagnosis would be an example of exploratory discourse, "proving a point by generalizing from particulars" would be an example of scientific discourse, and a report would be an example of informative discourse (p. 61). And lastly, persuasive discourse tried to induce the audience to believe or act in a certain way. He listed editorials as examples of this (p. 61). Kinneavy maintained that each aim of discourse dictated different thinking and planning strategies.

In discussions of purposes of discourse, two important points were made by several authors. First, no single piece of discourse is ever an example of just one purpose. One aim is usually dominant, and one or more than one function plays a secondary role (Alvarez, 1985; Rubin, 1984). Second, a writer who is successful in accomplishing one type of writing will not necessarily be effective in producing another kind of writing because different functions require different skills (Kinneavy, 1971; Lloyd-Jones, 1977; Odell,
Cooper, & Courts, 1978).

**Persuasion**

Persuasion was found to be in the domain of several different disciplines (e.g., communications, speech, psychology, English, and philosophy). Each discipline looked at it from a slightly different perspective, and some of them even defined it in a slightly different way (Woodward & Denton, 1988). The most general definition which encompassed persuasion in its various phases defined it as: "1. the process of preparing and delivering 2. the messages (through verbal and non-verbal symbols) 3. to individuals or groups 4. in order to alter, strengthen, or maintain 5. attitudes, beliefs, values, or behaviors" (Woodward & Denton, 1988, p.18).

This section examines persuasion as written discourse from an English perspective because that is the focus of my study.

**Persuasive Discourse**

There was some confusion in the literature as to exactly what persuasive discourse really is. While
many used the terms argumentative and persuasive interchangeably (e.g., Alvarez, 1985; McCann, 1989; Temple & Gillet, 1989), others saw a clear distinction between the two. According to Connor and Lauer (1988), Campbell (1776) and later Bain (1866) in an initial formulation of these classifications had distinguished argumentation from persuasion by means of faculty psychology, that is argumentation appealed to the mind and persuasion appealed to the will. When persuasion was dropped from the classification system, the teaching of argumentation focused almost exclusively on logic, particularly instruction in deductive and inductive reasoning. Lost was a concern for the two other appeals that had characterized effective persuasion—ethos and pathos, the credibility and affective appeals (p.139).

(According to this distinction, the focus of my study was on persuasive and not argumentative writing. To avoid confusion, the term "argumentative writing" will only be used when the researcher has used it to mean persuasive writing.)

One of the most widely accepted explanations of
persuasive discourse was the one presented by Kinneavy (1971). For Kinneavy, persuasive discourse "is that kind of discourse that is primarily focused on the decoder and attempts to elicit from him a specific action or emotion or conviction" (p. 211). Effective persuasive discourse combines rational, credibility, and affective appeals.

Persuasive Writing

Kinneavy's (1971) definition of persuasive discourse referred to oral as well as written discourse. However, all of the elements in his definition were found in most of the presently accepted definitions of persuasive writing (e.g., Connor & Lauer, 1985; Young, Becker, & Pike, 1970).

Applebee, Langer, and Mullis (1986), while discussing the importance of persuasive writing in our society, described it as the communication of certain points of view for the purpose of influencing others and engendering some type of change. They felt that, in addition to knowledge of subject, effective persuasive writing demanded an awareness of audience and of ways to convince others.
When persuasive writing was taught in the English class, it was usually thought to be in the domain of the colleges and sometimes the high schools. For the most part, it was neglected in the elementary schools (Larson, 1971; McCann, 1989). One of the main reasons for this was probably the widespread acceptance of Piaget's (1947/1971) theory that children performed better on concrete rather than on abstract tasks. (Rubin, 1984). For example, Moffett (1968), in *Teaching the Universe of Discourse*, declared that persuasive discourse was too abstract for young children. Another probable reason was that persuasive writing placed greater cognitive demands on the writer than did the other functions (Crowhurst, 1980; Crowhurst & Piche, 1979; San Jose, 1973). It required a focus on both content and structure (Glynn, Britton, Muth, & Dogan, 1982).

**Research on Persuasive Writing**

Many researchers have studied different aspects of persuasive writing in recent years. This section will focus on research related to my study.
Children's Ability to Write Persuasively. A review of the research in this area suggests two important points about children's ability to write persuasively: (a) most children experience some difficulties with persuasive writing tasks, and (b) some young children can write acceptable persuasive compositions.

Several large scale writing assessment reports have found that most students encounter some problems when trying to write persuasively. Two reports by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (National Assessment of Educational Progress [NAEP], 1980; Applebee, Langer, & Mullis, 1986) have found that, while there were the expected differences according to age groups, the fourth-, eighth-, and eleventh-grade students that they assessed, on the whole, performed poorly on persuasive writing assignments. A report on the appraisal of eighth grade writing by the 1987 California Assessment Program also found that the students tested were least effective on the persuasive writing tasks (Cooper & Breneman, 1988).

A number of recent research studies have also found similar results. Raley (1987) performed a
holistic assessment of 120 ninth-grade persuasive essays and concluded that the students did not perform well on the task. Veal and Tillman (1971) examined the effects of mode of discourse on the writing quality of second, fourth, and sixth graders. They found that the group mean score for persuasive essays was the lowest at each grade level. Prater and Padia (1983) also studied the effects of mode of discourse on fourth- and sixth-grade writing. They discovered that persuasive writing was more difficult than expressive and explanatory writing for all but fourth grade boys who did worse on explanatory writing. Erftmier (1986), in a study of fourth graders, and Freedman and Pringle (cited in Ruth & Murphy, 1988), in a study of 12- and 13-year-olds, concluded that most of their subjects did not possess a schema for written persuasion. Wilkinson, Barnsley, Hanna, and Swan (1982), in describing findings from their work with the Crediton Project, noted that many ten-year-olds applied narrative even in their argumentative writing. Erftmier and Dyson (1986), in a study comparing fourth graders' oral and written persuasive strategies, found that the students' papers exhibited little evidence of
strategies unique to persuasive writing.

As would be expected, McCann (1989) found that sixth-grade writers were less successful at writing persuasively than were ninth-grade, twelfth-grade, and adult writers. He noted, however, that even at this age, the children did appear to have some knowledge about the nature and purpose of argument.

Although most research has suggested that persuasive writing is very difficult for most elementary school children (e.g., Applebee, Langer, & Mullis, 1986; Prater & Paida, 1983), some researchers have elicited persuasive writing from students as young as second grade (Skupa 1985/1986; Temple, Nathan, Temple, & Burris, 1988). Others have gotten third and fourth graders to produce satisfactory persuasive essays (e.g., Rubin and Piche, 1979; Temple, Nathan, Temple, & Burris, 1988).

Factors Affecting Persuasive Writing. Researchers have looked at some of the different factors which affect persuasive writing. Several studies have explored the relationship between social cognition and persuasive writing. Some theorists have contended that
social cognition, an understanding of people and how they act and react, is crucial for effective persuasive discourse (Bonk, 1990). Rubin and Rafoth (1986) found that social cognitive ability played a role in the quality of the persuasive writing of their college freshmen. Piche and Roen (1987), in a study of eleventh-grade persuasive writing, found "a significant relationship between interpersonal cognitive complexity and abstractness and quality of writing, persuasiveness, appropriateness of tone, and level of persuasive strategy employed" (p. 68). However, Kroll (1985) found no significant correlation between social cognitive complexity and the persuasive writing of nine-year-olds.

Black (1989) examined the relationship between audience awareness and persuasive writing of college students. She found that when subjects were given information about the audience relative to the topic, the quality of their essays improved in several areas. Redd-Boyd and Slater (1989), in a somewhat similar study of college students, discovered that assigning a specific audience (a designated reader) did not significantly affect the quality of their persuasive
writing. However, it did lead to an increase in both interest and effort on the part of the writer.


Rubin (1982) examined syntactic strategies in fourth, eighth, and twelfth graders, and expert adults and found that intended audience played a part in their persuasive writing. Syntactic complexity was higher when they wrote for an unknown audience.

Several studies have examined the relationship between persuasive writing and certain specific variables. Vondran (1989) found that sex and intelligence were significant predictors of seventh and eighth graders' ability to write effective persuasive papers, but personality was not. Female subjects and subjects with high intelligence scores received higher scores. Wagner (1987) also found that the fourth-
grade girls significantly outscored the boys on her persuasive writing tasks. However, this was not the case at the eighth-grade level. Kean, Glynn, and Britton (1989) found no significant relationship between evaluation anxiety and the quality of college students' persuasive writing. Conte and Ferguson (1974) examined whether the writer's first hand knowledge of subject matter would have a positive effect on a persuasive letter. They found no statistical relationship in a study of twelfth graders.

Several other studies have pointed out the effects of age on the use of persuasive strategies. Rubin (1978), in a study involving fourth, eighth, and twelfth graders and expert adults found age related increases in their audience awareness. Rubin and Piche (1979), in a study of fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-grade students, and expert adults found that older writers were more effective in the use of persuasive strategies (number and type of persuasive appeals). Hennelly (1986) concluded that there appeared to be significant growth in persuasive writing between eighth and eleventh grade. Wagner (1987) found that eighth graders wrote significantly better persuasive letters
than did fourth graders.

Several studies have introduced certain activities as treatments in order to measure their effects on persuasive writing. Wagner (1987) studied the effects of role playing on fourth and eighth graders' persuasive writing. She found that fourth graders who participated in role playing wrote significantly better persuasive letters than did those students who received direct instruction and also those students who received no instructions. The eighth graders who participated in role playing wrote significantly better letters than did those students who received no instruction, but did not write better than those who received direct instruction. Scott (1987) looked at the effects of "topic-specific and audience-specific prewriting questions" on the persuasive letters of tenth graders. She found that both had significant effects on the quality of the letters, and that audience-specific questions had significantly better results than did topic-specific questions.

**Fifth- and Sixth-Grade Writers**

The review of the literature presented much
information about fifth- and sixth-grade writers both separately and as a group. The information was gathered from formal research studies as well as from informal teacher and researcher observations.

This section focuses on what is known about fifth- and sixth-grade writers in several important areas: writing ability, metacognitive knowledge, purposes for writing, audience awareness, prewriting, revision, and persuasive writing.

Writing Ability

Calkins (1986), in The Art of Teaching Writing, discussed what she had learned about fifth and sixth graders' writing ability. She noted that upper elementary school children had developed a new flexibility in their writing which was not there in their younger years. A refinement had taken place in both their composing processes and their final products. For example, revision was no longer just adding on; it now involved rereading, rethinking, and rewriting at many different points in the text. Children at this age seemed better able to examine and evaluate their options than when they were younger.
This process had become internalized for most of them. Calkins also noted that fifth and sixth graders had also shown growth in the areas of sequence, audience, dialogue, and voice as compared to students in the third grade and below.

In a research study on writing ability, Gordon and Braun (1986) found that their fifth grade subjects showed improvement after instruction that included modeling, discussion, and collaborative and individualistic writing.

**Metacognitive Knowledge**

Raphael, Englert, and Kirschner (1989) studied what fifth and sixth graders know about the processes of narrative and expository writing and what could be done to increase this metacognitive knowledge. They discovered that their subjects had some basic knowledge about both types of writing, and that an increase in metacognitive understanding (e.g., social context for writing and text structure) led to an improvement in their writing.

Raphael (1988) found that teaching "compare and contrast" text structure to his sixth grade subjects
resulted in an improvement in several areas of their expository writing.

**Purposes For Writing**

Several ethnographic studies have looked at some of the personal reasons why fifth and sixth graders write. Wheeler (1985), in examining the informal uses of writing in a fifth grade classroom, found six types of notes: friendship, love, go-between, apology, nasty, and information. Hubbard (1989), in a similar study of a sixth grade classroom, concluded that the students wrote for three main reasons: to present themselves, to share, and to order. She claimed that much learning occurs during these nonacademic activities.

**Audience Awareness**

Most studies involving fifth- and sixth-grade writers have found at least some sense of audience in their writing, although it did not always result in any major differences. Mancuso (1986) found that both gifted and nongifted fifth graders in her study displayed a sense of audience awareness. Horn (1987),
in a case study of a class of fifth graders, concluded that the students wrote with a sense of audience when they felt a close association with the audience; otherwise, they focused more on topic than the concerns of their readers. Strange (1986) discovered that the sixth graders in her study significantly changed their compositions according to audience concerns. Craig (1988) found evidence of some audience effects in the writing of his sixth-grade subjects. Smith and Swan (1978), however, found that a change in audience did not affect the syntactic structures of their sixth graders' writing.

Prewriting

There have not been very many prewriting studies involving fifth and sixth grade writers, and those few that have taken place have presented mixed results. As mentioned earlier, discussion was found to be effective as a prewriting activity in two studies that involved fifth and/or sixth grade students (Beeker, 1970; Nunn, 1984). On the other hand, Roubicek (1984) found that story drama was a significantly better prewriting activity than structured group discussion with his
fifth grade subjects.

Three other studies looked at prewriting on the fifth- and sixth-grade levels. Huntington (1969) studied the effects of several prewriting variables on sixth graders who had viewed a film as a stimulus for writing. He discovered that delay in writing, review of film content, and a second exposure to the film all had no effect on either the clarity or syntactic complexity of the compositions. Duin and Graves (1986) found that vocabulary instruction as a prewriting procedure had a positive effect on the quality of fifth- and sixth-graders' writing. Thompson (1988) found that an overnight incubation period had no effects on his fifth-graders' creative writing.

Revision

Calkins (1986) pointed out that fifth and sixth graders make many revisions when they are writing. Several recent research studies have given us more information about revisions at this level. Scott (1985) found that reading was an important part of the revision process for his fifth-grade subjects. Moore (1987), in a study of how fifth and sixth grade
students used information they obtained, found that some students revised more after peer conferences, while others revised more after teacher conferences. Erickson (1987) found in her qualitative study of sixth graders that an environmental approach was more effective than a naturalistic or presentational method in developing the students' revising skills. Grejda (1989) discovered that sixth graders who revised with a word processor performed significantly better than those who revised in the conventional way. Fernandez (1988) also found that sixth-graders' revision was positively influenced by word processing.

Persuasive Writing

As previously stated, persuasive writing has not been stressed at this level. Studies that have been done show that many fifth and sixth graders find persuasive writing to be a difficult task. Veal and Tillman (1971) and Prater and Padia (1983) found that sixth graders scored lower on persuasion than all other types of writing. According to Freedman and Pringle (cited in Ruth & Murphy, 1988) and Wilkinson, Barnsley, Hanna, and Swan (1982), many of the students at this
age level do not possess a cognitive design for written persuasion.

**Political Cartoons**

According to Monaghan (1984), Americans have been drawing political cartoons since our country was founded. They became standard features in U.S. newspapers in the 1890s (Desbarats & Mosher, 1979). Bostdorff (1987) claimed that political cartoons have played a very important part in the cultural history of the United States. Many people felt that they still play a significant role in our society today (e.g., Heitzmann, 1988; Medhurst & Desousa, 1981; Social Education, 1974).

Heitzmann (1988) defined the political cartoon as "basically an interpretive picture that makes use of symbolism and, most often, bold and humorous exaggeration to present a message or point of view concerning people, events, or situations" (p. 205). Press (1981), in a more specialized definition, maintained that political cartoons attempt to "bring order through governmental action" (p. 11).

Nevins and Weitenkampf (1944) listed three
criteria for good political cartoons: humor, truth, and moral purpose. Dennis (1974) pointed out that the strongest political cartoons are usually forceful attacks on people and issues.

Medhurst and Desousa (1981) discussed the persuasive nature of political cartoons. They maintained that "cartooning is a form of persuasive communication" (p. 198). They argued that the "graphic persuasion" of political cartoons and oral persuasion are similar in their general frameworks, but they are very different in the precise techniques each uses to solicit response.

**Uses of Political Cartoons in Social Studies**

There appeared to be a general consensus in the literature that political cartoons can be useful educational tools at both the secondary and the elementary school levels. Several writers have recommended the use of political cartoons in high school (Alexander, 1984; Heitzmann, 1986; Kohut, 1976; Mattos, 1972; McCarthy, 1977) and junior high school (Holub and Bennett, 1988) history classes. Their use promotes class discussions, encourages creativity,
provides historical information, and stimulates higher level thought. Some writers (Christensen, 1983; Entin, 1958; Eulie, 1969; Heitzmann, 1974, 1983, 1986) also suggested the use of political cartoons in other social studies classes for the same reasons. And Steinbrink and Bliss (1988) and Heitzmann (1988) pointed out that political cartoons can be very useful tools for teaching thinking skills to elementary school children.

In addition, many curriculum guides and activity source books (e.g., Carelli, 1981; Citizenship education in Michigan schools: A mock election and political awareness resource guide, 1984; Curl, 1980; Hughes, Bennett, Patchell, & Tozer, 1974; Lewis, 1980) included political cartoon activities. And most elementary social studies methods books (e.g., Jarolimek; 1977; Massialas & Hurst, 1978; Michaelis, 1980; Preston & Herman, 1981; Servey, 1981) recommended using political cartoons with children.

However, Langeveld (1981), while recommending the use of cartoons in the classroom, pointed out a few reasons why this might not always be a good idea. Among his major concerns were the facts that cartoons frequently oversimplify issues and that they often rely
on stereotypes to get a point across. He also noted that they usually require much explanation and background information from the teacher.

Uses of Political Cartoons in English

A few authors have recommended the use of political cartoons as a stimulus for writing. Richie (1983) maintained that a number of concepts and skills in reading, writing, and thinking can be presented with cartoons. Calder and McAlpine (1983) also stressed the value of using political cartoons in the elementary language arts classroom. Monahan (1983) proposed a specific activity that used political cartoons as a prewriting stimulus for writing. And DeFren (1988) suggested a method for having students first interpret a political cartoon and then develop that analysis into a written form.

Research on Political Cartoons

Very little research has taken place on the use of political cartoons. Langeveld (1981) suggested that this circumstance was probably due to two conditions: lack of interest and methodological difficulties. The
research that has been done sheds very little light on the effectiveness of political cartoons as either a persuasive or an educational tool.

There were a few studies that showed the difficulty that some people have in interpreting political cartoons. Carl (1968), in comparing the interpretations of 340 political cartoons between the artists who drew them and a surveyed sample of viewers, found that 70% of the responses were in disagreement. One study (DeSousa & Medhurst, 1982) found that college students had trouble interpreting many of the political cartoons in their study, and Bedient and Moore (1985) found the same thing in a study of fifth, eighth, and eleventh graders.

On the positive side, Shaffer (1930) examined the responses of a group of fourth through twelfth graders to ten political cartoons. He found that "the poorest responses were, in general, given most frequently in the lower grades with decreasing occurrence in the higher grades" (p.69). He recommended the use of political cartoons in the curriculum beginning in the junior high. And Johnstone and Nakhleh (1987), in a study of gifted eleventh graders' attitudes toward
methods of teaching, found that small group discussion and the use of political cartoons were the two highest rated choices.

**Summary and Rationale**

The review of the literature gave support for my study in several major areas. Although writing is now generally accepted to be a recursive process, the role of prewriting, or planning before writing, is still considered to be a very important step. Most researchers and writers agreed that what happens before one writes is as important or more important than what happens at other stages in the process. Many studies have documented positive effects of prewriting activities on students' composing, and others have demonstrated negative effects that sometimes occurred from a lack of prewriting. While the evidence of the effectiveness of discussion and drawing as prewriting activity was inconclusive, a case can be made that these activities do not impede and often help children in their composing.

The review of the literature on persuasive writing illustrated two very important points. First,
persuasive writing appears to be one of the most difficult types of writing. Most students, especially younger ones, have problems dealing with the schema and skills that are required for this kind of writing. In addition, most writers do not have much experience with persuasive writing until at least high school.

Second, although doubts were expressed by some researchers and theorists about the cognitive ability of young children to write persuasively, other researchers have maintained that it is experience and not ability that keeps children from effective persuasive writing. A few have provided evidence that children in the elementary grades can write acceptable persuasive compositions when they are given some background instruction. In addition, the literature showed that fifth and sixth graders at least possess the writing skills (if not the cognitive skills) that would be necessary to complete this task. Also, fifth and sixth graders have a sense of audience awareness which is a strong requirement for effective persuasive writing.

Finally, the literature on political cartoons supports my beliefs that political cartoons promote the
same skills that are needed for persuasive writing: translating, interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating. While a few writers have suggested using political cartoons as a stimulus for writing, no one has suggested its use with persuasive writing. And no research has been done in this area.

The literature supports the need for my study. Many indications suggest that the discussion of political cartoons and the drawing of political cartoons could affect the quality and quantity of fifth and sixth graders' persuasive compositions.
Chapter 3
Method

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of two prewriting activities (the discussion of political cartoons and the drawing of political cartoons) on the quality and quantity of fifth- and sixth-grade students' persuasive compositions.

Research Questions

1. Does the drawing of political cartoons as a prewriting activity affect the quality of fifth- and sixth-graders' persuasive writing?

2. Does the drawing of political cartoons as a prewriting activity affect the quantity of fifth- and sixth-graders' persuasive writing?

3. Does the discussion of political cartoons as a prewriting activity affect the quality of fifth- and sixth-graders' persuasive writing?

4. Does the discussion of political cartoons as a prewriting activity affect the quantity of fifth- and sixth-graders' persuasive writing?
Preliminary Study

Prior to the actual study, I field tested my persuasive writing lessons and several of my political cartoon activities with a class of 28 fifth graders in a neighboring community. The subjects were similar in make-up to the ones that I would use in my research. I met with them for one hour a day for two weeks. During this time, they generated three persuasive essays and two political cartoons for me.

As a result of my experiences, I discovered several areas that needed strengthening. First, my directions and explanations needed much more detail. Second, a few of my exercises needed modifications because the subjects did not relate to them. And third, my time schedules needed to be changed to provide more time for completion of both the activities and the essays.

I discovered two things, in particular, which gave me further encouragement for my study. First, with the proper instruction, most of the subjects were able to write at least an acceptable persuasive composition. And second, with the proper training, most of the subjects were also able to understand and analyze most
of the political cartoons that I showed them.

As a result of my findings, I modified my lessons and activities to reflect what I had learned. I also used information gained from the subjects to choose political cartoons for my study.

Site

This study took place at the Laboratory School of Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. The school is located on the campus and serves approximately 760 students in grades kindergarten through twelve. The student population is derived from a pool of applicants from throughout the city and the surrounding communities. Various factors (race, ability, occupation of parents, etc.) are considered in the selection of pupils in the pursuit of a diverse student body. Although various ethnic and socioeconomic groups are represented in the school, the majority of the students are white, middle class. Students pay tuition to attend the school, but reductions are available, based on need.

The classes are heterogeneously mixed and reflect the range of student ability from learning disabled to
gifted. The school is often used for research purposes; therefore, the students are accustomed to participating in formal studies.

**Subjects**

The subjects in this study were the members of the two fifth grade classes and the two sixth grade classes in the school. There were 56 fifth graders (28 boys and 28 girls) and 56 sixth graders (28 boys and 28 girls). Of the 112 subjects, 97 were Caucasian, 14 were black, and 1 was Hispanic.

All subjects normally spent at least a half of an hour each day in writing activities. The fifth grade classes usually wrote on assigned topics for about 20 minutes each day. They also did extra writing in the content areas at other times during the week. The sixth graders had a daily 15 minute free writing period during which they worked on topics of their own choosing. They also spent an average of 20 minutes a day on teacher assigned writing. Students in both grades spent approximately 20 minutes each week discussing current events in their social studies classes.
Permission to work with the subjects was obtained from the school principal. (See Appendix A for permission form.) Parental permission forms were not required since the parents had signed general agreement forms when their children first entered the school.

**Preparation of Subjects**

Two things were done to ensure that all subjects had at least a basic background of experience and knowledge from which to draw while writing their compositions. First, lessons in persuasive writing were taught to all subjects prior to the pretest. Second, fact sheets were provided for all of the topics that were discussed or written about.

**Persuasive Writing Lessons**

Because the fifth and sixth graders in my study had not had much experience with persuasive writing, all students participated in a series of persuasive writing lessons during the first four days of the first week of the study. The lessons were designed with two main purposes in mind: (a) to give the subjects experience with the skills and strategies that are
necessary for effective persuasive writing, and (b) to give the subjects an opportunity to practice writing persuasively. (See Appendix B for persuasive writing lesson script.) Because of the large size of the group, the fifth graders participated in a morning session, and the sixth graders took part in an identical afternoon session. This allowed for more student participation. Each session lasted approximately an hour.

Fact Sheets

Several writers have stressed the importance of topic knowledge in students' writing (e.g., Lalas, 1986; Newell & MacAdam, 1987; Ruth & Murphy, 1988). One study (Lalas, 1986) found that sixth and eighth graders who were given fact sheets did significantly better on explanatory and persuasive essays than did those students who were not given sheets. For these reasons, fact sheets on all topics were provided for all subjects in order to give them a common base of general knowledge about the subject. (See Appendix C for copies of fact sheets.) The sheets were read aloud and discussed to aid those subjects who may have had
trouble reading or understanding them. The subjects were able to keep the sheets and refer back to them during the entire session.

Research Design

The study was a randomized, pretest-posttest control group design with two treatment groups and two control groups. Stratified random placement based on pretest scores enabled formation of four groups of approximately equal ability. Each group contained 28 subjects. The groups were then randomly designated as one of four conditions: (a) drawing of political cartoons, (b) discussion of political cartoons, (c) drawing, and (d) discussion.

Because of absences during the study, ten subjects had incomplete data. This led to minor changes in group sizes and means when the data was analyzed. Treatment Group 1 (drawing of political cartoons) had 24 subjects, Treatment Group 2 (discussion of political cartoons) had 27 subjects, Control Group 1 (drawing) had 24 subjects, and Control Group 2 (discussion) had 27 subjects. The means remained close enough for the groups to be considered of equal ability. (See Table 1
Data Collection

The first composition was written before treatments began and was used as a pretest. After the last treatment in each group, an essay was written and was scored as a first posttest. One week later, another essay was written and was scored as a second posttest. Writing periods for all essays lasted 35 minutes. Drawings were also collected from those subjects who drew as a part of their experience.

Pretest

After a brief review of the key elements of persuasive writing, the subjects were asked to write a persuasive essay on capital punishment. The composition was to be written in the form of a letter to their best friend, whose father was a United States senator. The subjects' goal was to change their friend's thinking on the subject in the hope that their
### Table 1

**Research Schedule**

#### Week One (March 12-16)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>SESSIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Writing Lesson 1</td>
<td>45 min.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Writing Lesson 2</td>
<td>50 min.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Writing Lesson 3</td>
<td>55 min.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Writing Lesson 4</td>
<td>70 min.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>40 min.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Week Two (March 19-23)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>SESSIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Treatment 1</td>
<td>30 min.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Treatment 2</td>
<td>30 min.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Treatment 3</td>
<td>30 min.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>40 min.</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Week Three (March 26-30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
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<th>TIME</th>
<th>SESSIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Treatment 4</td>
<td>30 min.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Treatment 5</td>
<td>30 min.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Treatment 6</td>
<td>30 min.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Posttest 1</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Week Four (April 2-6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>TIME</th>
<th>SESSIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Posttest 2</td>
<td>40 min.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
friend would influence the senator to vote their way. The writing session lasted 35 minutes. (See Appendix D for script.)

**Treatment Group 1**

Treatment Group 1 underwent three treatment sessions (20 minutes each) on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of the second week. The lessons focused on understanding, interpreting, and **drawing** political cartoons. The topics covered were flag burning, the plight of the homeless, and recreational hunting. At the end of the third session, I asked the subjects to write a persuasive essay on recreational hunting. This essay was considered practice and was not scored.

During the third week, more treatment sessions (20 minutes each) were held on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. These lessons also focused on understanding, interpreting, and drawing political cartoons. The topics covered were animal research, television preachers, and the war on drugs. (See Appendix E for script.)
Treatment Group 2

Treatment Group 2 followed the same procedures as Treatment Group 1 with one exception: Treatment Group 2's treatment sessions focused on understanding, interpreting, and discussing political cartoons. (See Appendix F for political cartoons and permission letters). The subjects worked with a partner while analyzing a political cartoon on each topic. They dealt with the same topics as Treatment Group 1. (See Appendix G for script.)

Control Group 1

Control Group 1 experienced the same procedures as the treatment groups with one exception. This group was asked to draw about the same issues that were used with the treatment groups. (See Appendix H for script).

Control Group 2

Control Group 2 experienced the same procedures as all of the other groups with one exception. This group discussed the treatment topics with a partner. (See Appendix I for script.)
Posttest 1

After a brief review of the key elements of persuasive writing, the subjects were asked to write a persuasive essay on the war on drugs. The composition was to be written in the form of a letter to their best friend, whose father was a United States senator. The subjects' goal was to change their friend's thinking on the subject in the hope that their friend would influence the senator to vote their way. The writing session lasted 35 minutes. (See Appendix J for script.)

Posttest 2

The procedures and directions for the second posttest were the same as those for the first one. The topic was environmental pollution. (See Appendix K for script.)

Insert Table 2 about here

Assessment

The compositions were evaluated for both quantity
### Table 2
Design of the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Number</th>
<th>Treatment Group 1</th>
<th>Treatment Group 2</th>
<th>Control Group 1</th>
<th>Control Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introduction to Persuasive Writing (All groups)</td>
<td>PRETEST for all groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Draw Political Cartoons</td>
<td>Discuss Political Cartoons</td>
<td>Draw about a topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Practice Composition</td>
<td>Practice Composition</td>
<td>Practice Composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Draw Political Cartoons</td>
<td>Discuss Political Cartoons</td>
<td>Draw about a topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>POSTTEST 1</td>
<td>POSTTEST 1</td>
<td>POSTTEST 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>POSTTEST 2</td>
<td>POSTTEST 2</td>
<td>POSTTEST 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and quality. Tests for statistical significance (repeated-measures ANOVA's) were run on the data. Some descriptive analyses of the data were also made.

**Quantity**

To determine quantity, the number of words in each essay was counted by computer. A word count on each composition was obtained using the Grammatik III computer program.

**Quality**

Quality was determined by independent raters who used an analytic assessment scale for persuasive writing. The assessment scale was designed specifically for this study because I could not find a fifth and sixth grade persuasive writing scale that examined the skills that I hoped to measure.

Assessment Scale. Analytic scoring is a method of scoring that is based on an analysis of skills deemed necessary for effective writing. It is a type of holistic evaluation of writing (Cooper 1977). Cooper (1977) defined the analytic scale in this way:
An analytic scale is a list of the prominent features or characteristics of writing in a particular mode. The list of features ordinarily ranges from four to ten or twelve, with each feature described in some detail and with high-mid-low points identified and described along a scoring line for each feature. (p.7)

The assessment scale which was developed for this study looked at those features which were deemed important to the overall effectiveness of a piece of persuasive writing at the fifth/sixth grade level. There were six categories on the scale: identification of the issue, clarity of focus, analysis, audience, argumentation/persuasion, and presentation. All categories had equal weight except for argumentation/persuasion which was weighted higher than the other categories (See Appendix L for a copy of the scale).

Two main raters individually scored each essay on all six categories. When they agreed, the student received that score. When they disagreed on any categories, a third rater scored only those categories where there was disagreement. The student received the score that two out of the three raters agreed upon. In
those few cases where there was no agreement, the student received the average score. The total score for the essay was the number of points accumulated from each category. The range of scores was from 13 to 39 (See Appendix M for sample scored compositions).

**Raters.** The three raters that were chosen for this study have all had experience working with fifth and sixth grader writers. All three have Masters degrees in Elementary Education, and they all have had previous training in the assessment and evaluation of writing. Two of the raters were randomly assigned to the roles of main rater, while the third person became the tie breaker.

**Training of Raters.** Three training sessions were held with the raters to familiarize them with the instrument. Each session was approximately one hour long. During the first session, we reviewed the purposes and procedures of analytic assessment. Then, we reviewed and discussed the scale that would be used in the study. The raters next practiced with persuasive essays that had been generated in the
preliminary study. They spent the following two sessions practicing with essays, comparing scores, and discussing differences. They eventually worked to a common interpretation of each item on the scale.

**Validity and Reliability of the Scale.** To establish face validity, the scale was reviewed by several writing teachers at different grade levels. They were asked to examine the instrument on its capability to measure the following traits in student persuasive writing: (a) ability to clearly identify an issue, (b) ability to maintain a clear and consistent focus, (c) ability to understand more than one side of an issue, (d) ability to address an audience, (e) ability to present more than one side of an argument, and (f) ability to organize a composition. The evaluators agreed that the instrument did measure the features that were commonly held to be important for effective persuasive writing.

To establish reliability, the two main raters were given a set of essays from the preliminary study to score. This took place after the training sessions but before the actual study. Interrater reliability on
these practice essays was .82. Interrater reliability improved during the actual scoring of the study essays to .91 on the pretest, .94 on the first posttest, and .96 on the second posttest.
Chapter 4
Results

Analyses were performed to assess differences between experimental groups on two dependent measures: quantity and quality. Separate repeated-measures ANOVAs were conducted to examine each measure, using a 4 (group: drawing political cartoons/discussion of political cartoons/discussion of a topic/drawing about a topic) x 3 (time: pretest/posttest 1/posttest 2) design with repeated measures on the second factor. There was one between-group factor (group) and one within-group factor (time). (See Appendix N for raw data.) The Bonferroni approach was used for all multiple post hoc comparison tests. In addition, descriptive statistics were used to examine changes in writing quality by category scale.

For the purpose of this study, the following labels will be used: (a) Treatment 1 = drawing political cartoons, (b) Treatment 2 = discussion of political cartoons, (c) Control 1 = drawing about a topic, and (d) Control 2 = discussion of a topic.
Quantity

To assess differences between groups on quantity, a repeated-measures ANOVA was performed on the pretest, posttest 1, and posttest 2 writing tasks (see Table 3 for means and standard deviations). A significant difference was found between the four groups, $F(3, 98) = 6.19, \ p < .0007$. Based on post hoc comparisons, Treatment 2 ($M = 109.25$) and Control 2 ($M = 110.32$) who discussed significantly outscored Treatment 1 ($M = 81.96$) and Control 1 ($M = 81.97$) who drew ($ps < .05$). However, the two discussion groups, as well as the two drawing groups, were not significantly different from each other ($p > .05$).

There was also a main effect for time of task, $F(2, 97) = 10.38, \ p < .001$. The post hoc comparison tests showed that the pretest ($M = 108.06$) was significantly different from posttest 1 ($M = 88.08$) and from posttest 2 ($M = 91.49$) ($ps < .001$). There was no significant difference between the two posttests ($p > .05$). The interaction between group and time factors was not statistically significant ($p > .05$).
Quality

A repeated-measures ANOVA was performed on the pretest, posttest 1, and posttest 2 writing tasks to assess differences between groups on quality (see Table 4 for means and standard deviations). A significant difference was found between the four groups, $F(3, 98) = 4.02, p < .01$. Based on post hoc comparison tests, Treatment 2 ($M = 25.36$) and Control 2 ($M = 25.26$) performed significantly better than Control 1 ($M = 22.10$) ($ps < .05$). Treatment 1 ($M = 22.93$) was not significantly different from any of the other groups ($ps > .05$).

In addition, a significant difference was found for time of writing task, $F(2, 97) = 15.97, p < .001$. The post hoc comparison tests showed that, while the pretest ($M = 23.38$) was not significantly different from posttest 1 ($M = 22.47$), it was significantly different from posttest 2 ($M = 25.89$); further, posttest 1 was significantly different from posttest 2
### Table 3

**Means and Standard Deviations for Quantity of Writing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Post 1</th>
<th>Post 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treatment 1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>96.33</td>
<td>69.08</td>
<td>80.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(43.46)</td>
<td>(23.99)</td>
<td>(29.95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment 2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>118.70</td>
<td>99.07</td>
<td>109.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(44.61)</td>
<td>(41.87)</td>
<td>(36.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control 1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>102.29</td>
<td>73.63</td>
<td>70.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(57.50)</td>
<td>(35.74)</td>
<td>(33.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control 2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>114.93</td>
<td>110.52</td>
<td>105.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(50.02)</td>
<td>(35.97)</td>
<td>(40.21)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Treatment 1 = drawing political cartoons. Treatment 2 = discussion of political cartoons. Control 1 = drawing about a topic. Control 2 = discussion of a topic.
(ps < .001). The interaction between group and time factors was not statistically significant (p > .05).

---

Insert Table 4 about here

---

**Quality by Category Scale**

In addition to the analyses of variance, descriptive statistics were used to examine quality of writing by six major categories: Identification of the Issue, Clarity of Focus, Analysis, Audience, Argumentation/Persuasion, and Presentation.

Table 5 presents the means and standard deviations for each experimental group by time of task. Table 6 presents the frequency of each quality score (1, 2, 3) across groups by time of task.

In examining scores for groups in the six categories, several trends are evident. On Clarity of Focus, Treatment 2, Treatment 1, and Control 2 showed noteworthy gains from pretest to posttest 2. All groups showed gains from posttest 1 to posttest 2.

On Analysis, Treatment 2, Control 2, and Treatment 1 showed noticeable gains from pretest to posttest 2.
Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for Quality of Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Post 1</th>
<th>Post 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treatment 1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22.54</td>
<td>21.04</td>
<td>25.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(5.63)</td>
<td>(4.86)</td>
<td>(6.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control 1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24.11</td>
<td>23.78</td>
<td>28.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(4.85)</td>
<td>(4.85)</td>
<td>(5.23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment 2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22.50</td>
<td>20.08</td>
<td>23.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(6.28)</td>
<td>(4.37)</td>
<td>(5.47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control 2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24.37</td>
<td>24.96</td>
<td>26.44</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(4.58)</td>
<td>(6.05)</td>
<td>(5.97)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All of the groups showed some gain from posttest 1 to posttest 2.

On Argumentation/persuasion, all four groups showed improvement from the pretest to posttest 1 and from posttest 1 to posttest 2. The greatest improvement was shown by Treatment Group 2.

On Presentation, all groups showed improvement from the pretest to posttest 1 and from posttest 1 to posttest 2. The greatest improvement was shown by Treatment Group 2.

In examining the frequency of each quality score in the six categories, several things become apparent. The number of students receiving the highest score on Identification of Issue decreased from pretest (20) to posttests 1 and 2 (2). There was a large increase of students receiving a middle score from pretest (62) to posttest 1 (83) to posttest 2 (94). The number of students receiving the lowest score decreased from pretest (20) to posttest 1 (17) to posttest 2 (6).

On Clarity of Focus, there was a decrease in the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Post 1</th>
<th>Post 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification of issue</td>
<td>Treatment 1</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.31)</td>
<td>(0.90)</td>
<td>(0.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control 1</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.43)</td>
<td>(0.68)</td>
<td>(0.59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treatment 2</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.04)</td>
<td>(0.72)</td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>4.22</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.28)</td>
<td>(0.97)</td>
<td>(0.77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of Focus</td>
<td>Treatment 1</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.31)</td>
<td>(1.02)</td>
<td>(1.38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control 1</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.50)</td>
<td>(0.99)</td>
<td>(1.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treatment 2</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>4.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.05)</td>
<td>(1.08)</td>
<td>(1.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control 2</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>4.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.05)</td>
<td>(1.10)</td>
<td>(1.23)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Post 1</th>
<th>Post 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treatment 1</td>
<td>3.42 (1.10)</td>
<td>3.08 (1.02)</td>
<td>3.75 (1.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control 1</td>
<td>3.42 (1.10)</td>
<td>2.83 (1.01)</td>
<td>3.33 (1.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treatment 2</td>
<td>3.41 (1.22)</td>
<td>3.56 (0.85)</td>
<td>4.22 (1.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control 2</td>
<td>3.48 (1.05)</td>
<td>3.78 (1.28)</td>
<td>4.15 (1.35)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treatment 1</td>
<td>4.08 (0.71)</td>
<td>3.92 (0.93)</td>
<td>4.25 (0.90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control 1</td>
<td>4.00 (1.18)</td>
<td>4.25 (0.90)</td>
<td>4.50 (0.88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treatment 2</td>
<td>4.52 (0.89)</td>
<td>4.52 (0.90)</td>
<td>4.89 (1.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control 2</td>
<td>4.37 (0.97)</td>
<td>4.37 (0.97)</td>
<td>4.22 (0.64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treatment 1</td>
<td>4.88 (1.94)</td>
<td>4.38 (1.53)</td>
<td>5.88 (2.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control 1</td>
<td>4.75 (1.96)</td>
<td>4.00 (1.44)</td>
<td>5.13 (1.65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Treatment 2</td>
<td>5.22 (1.58)</td>
<td>5.11 (1.63)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Control 2</td>
<td>5.33 (1.52)</td>
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<td>6.22 (2.03)</td>
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<th>Post 1</th>
<th>Post 2</th>
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<td>2.92 (1.02)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Control 1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Treatment 2</td>
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<td>Control 2</td>
<td>3.48 (1.05)</td>
<td>3.56 (1.28)</td>
<td>3.85 (1.46)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
number of students receiving the lowest score from posttest 1 (41) to posttest 2 (20).

On Analysis, there was a noticeable decrease in the number of students who received the lowest score from posttest 1 (38) to posttest 2 (22).

On Argumentation/persuasion, there was a large increase in the number of students receiving the highest score from posttest 1 (5) to posttest 2 (22). There was also a large decrease in the number of students receiving the lowest score from posttest 1 (44) to posttest 2 (22).

On Presentation, there was a large decrease in the number of students receiving the lowest possible score from posttest 1 (48) to posttest 2 (27).

The areas of least change were students receiving the middle score on Analysis, Audience, and Argumentation/persuasion. Little change also occurred with students receiving the lowest score on audience.

________________________________________

Insert Table 6 about here

________________________________________
### Table 6

**Frequency of Quality Scores by Category**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Pre</th>
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<td>Identification of Issue</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Clarity of Focus</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>(2)</td>
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<td>(2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>34</td>
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<td>Audience</td>
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Chapter 5
Conclusions

Discussion of Quantity Results

The results of the repeated-measures analysis of variance do not support my hypotheses about the effects of the drawing of and the discussion of political cartoons on the quantity of the subjects' compositions. Neither Treatment Group 1 nor Treatment Group 2 scored significantly higher than their respective control group.

There is, however, a significant difference between subjects who drew and subjects who discussed. Students who discussed prior to writing wrote significantly longer essays than did those students who drew, regardless of whether or not political cartoons were used. Contrary to what some writers in the literature had warned (e.g., Lambert, 1985; Lopate, 1978), discussion did not stifle the subjects' enthusiasm for writing. If we can equate length of writing to enthusiasm for writing, discussion either stimulated students to write more or gave them more ideas about which to write.

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This finding is contrary to what Leathers (1987) found in her study of fourth graders. Her subjects produced significantly longer compositions when drawing was used as a prewriting activity. My finding suggests that as children become older and better able to express themselves, drawing may lose some of the importance that it had in the earlier writing process. Because of the cognitive development of the child, he or she may no longer have the need to graphically view what is to be written. The child has advanced to the mental stage described by Piaget (formal operations) in which he or she is able to deal with abstract ideas in his or her mind.

The main effect for time of task is somewhat surprising. Subjects wrote significantly less on both posttests than they did on the pretest. No previous study in the literature has reported these results; therefore, the reasons why this occurred are speculative. One possibility is that motivation waned as the routine of the activities set in. Periods of instruction were intense, focused, and rather tightly structured. Moreover, the entire project from pretest through instruction and including the second posttest
took place in a concentrated four week period. Perhaps if the same activities were more naturally sequenced over time and in the context of other writing activities, the decrease in quantity of writing would be less. Another possibility is that the students' interest was greater for some topics than for others. For example, the posttest topics (war on drugs and environmental pollution) have been discussed very frequently in the newspapers, on the television, and in the school. On the other hand, the pretest topic, capital punishment, has received less attention, but may have been of more dramatic interest to the students.

The effect of time on quantity of writing was consistent for all groups. That is, experience with the writing task does not appear to influence the amount of writing regardless of the treatments in this study. Whether that remains true over extended periods of time is worthy of further exploration.

Discussion of Quality Results

The results of the repeated-measures analysis of variance do not support my hypotheses about the effects
of political cartoons on the quality of student compositions. The groups who worked with political cartoons did not score significantly higher than their counterparts who did not.

There is, however, a significant difference between some of the groups. The two groups that discussed (both with and without political cartoons) scored significantly higher than the group who drew about the topic. The group who drew political cartoons was not significantly different from the other groups. From my results, we see that discussion is effective whether or not political cartoons are used. This finding is consistent with what several researchers (e.g., Golub, 1970; Meyers, 1980) have found about the positive effects of discussion on the quality of student writing. There are several possible reasons why this may have occurred. First, the discussion may have produced many new ideas, thus giving the writer a wider choice in what to say. Second, discussion may have allowed the subject the opportunity to discard poor or ineffective arguments. Third, discussion may have given the subject a chance to organize his or her ideas before putting them on paper. In addition,
discussion may have been effective because of the combined effects of these possibilities.

The main effect for time of task is not as surprising for quality as it is for quantity. Subjects did not score significantly different from pretest to posttest 1, but the scores were significantly higher on posttest 2. Also, posttest 1 results were significantly different from posttest 2 results. There are two probable explanations for this. First, it is possible that the experimental conditions did not have an immediate effect on the quality of student writing, but they did have a delayed effect. Second, practice with persuasive writing over time could have had a delayed effect on the subjects.

The effect of time on quality of writing was consistent for all groups. As in the case of group/time effects on quantity, whether that remains true over extended periods of time is worthy of further exploration.

Discussion of Quality by Category Results

An examination of the descriptive statistics prompts additional considerations. Over time, most of
the groups showed noticeable improvement in clarity of focus, analysis, argumentation/persuasion, and presentation. All of them showed at least some progression. The quality scores by category also reflect this phenomenon. This would suggest that children's abilities to perform these tasks improves with writing practice. These results support the results of the repeated-measures ANOVA on quality and help to focus on what areas the changes probably occurred in. Of all groups, the group that discussed political cartoons showed the most improvement in each of these four areas. This would imply that the discussion of political cartoons is especially effective in developing the specific skills of clarity of focus, analysis, argumentation/persuasion, and presentation. Because of the nature of the data collected on these factors, more detailed analysis could not be performed. Further study needs to be done in this area.

Another important discovery from this analysis concerned identification of the issue. While many students showed an improvement in this area, many other students showed a decrease. This negated overall group
improvement and resulted in most students receiving a middle score on posttest 2. Why this occurred is uncertain though it is likely linked to yet indeterminate student variables. These variables may be related to general motivation, familiarity with the topic, or the strength of feelings about the topic. The latter possibility suggests that perhaps the more strongly students felt about an issue, the less likely they were to formally and clearly identify it. The relationship between students strength of feeling about an issue and their performance in writing about it would merit further investigation.

Conclusions and Implications

Persuasive Writing

While the results of my study do not support my theory about political cartoons, I did have several findings which I think will be of interest to both educators and researchers. One of the main conclusions from this study is that the majority of fifth and sixth graders, when provided with persuasive writing instruction and background knowledge of the topic, can write at least a minimally acceptable persuasive
composition as defined by criteria developed for this study. This gives some support to those in the literature who claim that even young children can write persuasively (e.g., Temple, Nathan, Temple, & Burris, 1988). It is also important to remember here that the quality of scores on the second posttest were significantly higher than the pretest scores, indicating that students' abilities may be enhanced by focused instruction.

**Political Cartoons**

My findings do not, of course, support the use of political cartoons per se as an effective prewriting activity for fifth and sixth graders unless the use of such cartoons is accompanied by discussion. Hence, this study does not necessarily discourage the use of political cartoons in all situations. Children who discussed political cartoons were at least as effective as children who discussed the topic without benefit of political cartoons. In addition, students who discussed political cartoons showed noticeable improvement in several persuasive writing skill areas. Therefore, this approach may be useful with certain
students, in certain situations, and in improving particular skills. However, wholesale use of political cartoons as a means of improving fifth- and sixth-graders' persuasive writing cannot be encouraged based on the findings of this study.

One unmeasurable element concerning the use of political cartoons with students which I observed was the high enthusiasm with which they greeted both the drawing and discussion of political cartoons. The majority of them understood the cartoons that I used and were very eager to talk about them or to draw their own. This excitement lasted throughout the study. For this reason, other uses for political cartoons in the classroom, especially with sixth graders, need to be explored. One possibility in the English classroom would be using them as motivational tools with poor writers. Other possibilities for their use are numerous and include serving as a focus for descriptive writing and as a stimulus for creative writing.

Prewriting Activities

At this age level, prewriting activities involving discussion are much more effective than those involving
drawing. The important role that drawing played in early writing seems to have disappeared as the children have developed greater cognitive skills. Students should be given many opportunities to talk about what they will write or what they are in the process of writing when they feel a need to do so.

In general, my findings suggest that teachers should not force any one type of prewriting activity on a whole class of students. It is probably best to expose students to many different types of prewriting activities and then to let them find what works best for them in various writing situations.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

(1) This study needs to be repeated with fifth and sixth graders, but with longer treatment times and additional treatment sessions.

(2) This study needs to be duplicated with middle school children to see if different results would occur with children at a higher stage of cognitive development. This would shed more light on why the treatments were not successful with my subjects.

(3) The relationship between quality and quantity
in persuasive writing at this age level needs to be explored. Is there a relationship between the two, and if so, is it positive or negative?

(4) The relationship between the discussion of political cartoons and certain elements of persuasive writing (clarity of focus, analysis, argumentation/persuasion, and presentation) needs a more thorough examination.

(5) How the treatments in this study contribute to the success students with various abilities have with persuasive writing warrants further study.


Assignments in Composition: The Persuasion Paper


Campbell, G. (1776). *The philosophy of rhetoric*.

Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.


*Dissertation Abstracts International, 47*, 2875A.


Appendix A

Permission Form

L.S.U. Laboratory School
Louisiana State University
Baton Rouge, La. 70803

APPLICATION FOR USE OF LABORATORY SCHOOL FOR RESEARCH

Name of Chief Investigator: DOUG. GRANIER Date: 9-1-87

Phone: Office 387-3221 Home 1-627-7653

Chief Investigator Status: Faculty □ Doctoral Student □ Master's Student □ Undergraduate

College: EDUCATION Department LAB SCHOOL

Purpose of Research: Master's Thesis □ Doctoral Dissertation □ Other (please specify) □

Name of Research Advisor: DR. DAVID ENGLAND

Funding of Research: Type of Funding: Seed Money, Grant □ Project □ N.A. Funding Agency: □ Amount/Funding: □

Names of Faculty & Students Associated with Project: DOUG. GRANIER □ DR. DAVID ENGLAND □ DR. ROY CHARLESWORTH □ DR. TONY WHITSON □ DR. SARAH LIEGTRY □ DR. KEN WHITSON

Title of Research Proposal: USING POLITICAL CARTOONS AS A PREWRITING

Brief Summary of Research Proposal (Use back if needed): □

(SEE BACK)

Sample Needed: # of Females per Grade □ 28 # of Males per grade □ 28

Grade Level(s): □ 5-6 □ Other Descriptors □

Type of Space Needed for Testing: □ CLASSROOM

Time Subjects Needed (by subject, class, etc.): □ FLEXIBLE

Human Subjects' Approval attached: Yes □ No □ (If "No", anticipated date of approval: □)

DO I NEED THIS? (No)

If this application is approved, I agree to submit (a) a copy of test scores for each subject and (b) a research project report or a summary of the findings to the LSU Laboratory School office by □ AUG. 1, 1987 □ (approximate date)

[Signature]

[Approved] □ [Disapproved] □ (over for explanation)

[Signature]

[To begin] □ [Date] □
Appendix B

Persuasive Writing Lessons

I. Introduction (30 Minutes)

Instructor: What are some of the reasons why people write? ....... That's right. People write for a variety of reasons: to inform, to entertain, and to persuade. In the next few days, we will focus on one of these reasons, writing to persuade.

Many times in our lives we feel a need to sway the opinions of others. We try to convince them that our way of thinking is the best way. Written persuasion, in particular, is usually very effective because it makes tangible the thoughts and ideas that we want others to consider.

Today, we are going to watch a filmstrip on the persuasive essay. Please pay special attention to some of the main aspects of the persuasive paper because we will discuss them at the conclusion of the film.

Assignment: The students will view the filmstrip The Persuasion Paper from Assignments in Composition (Spectrum Educational Media, Inc.).
Instructor: What are some of the major things that you learned from the filmstrip? ..... Great. All of those are correct. Now, in conclusion, I would like to stress six of the most important things that I would like for you to remember about the persuasive composition. (1) A good persuasive essay should clearly identify the issue. (2) It should maintain a clear and consistent focus on the issue. (3) It should express an understanding of more than one side of the issue. (4) The paper should clearly address its audience. (5) It should offer more than one argument to support the author's position and/or support a single argument in more than one way. (6) The paper should be logically organized to include a statement of the issue, the author's opinion on it, the author's reasoning, and a clear conclusion or summary.

II. Writing Reasons (15 Minutes)

Instructor: Now that we know a little bit more about the persuasive essay, we can begin to take some of the necessary steps for writing an effective one. The first step in writing a good composition is to generate reasons to support an opinion that we hold. If we want
others to seriously consider our opinions, we must be able to give them reasons why we feel that our ideas are valid. In this exercise, we will gain some experience in writing reasons to support beliefs. You will work with an assigned partner, but you don't have to have the same answers on your papers.

Worksheet: Write three supporting reasons for each of the following opinions. Even if you disagree with the statement, try to write some strong reasons why someone else might agree. Be sure to answer in complete sentences. The first one has been done for you.

1. **Louisiana is a great state in which to live.**
   A. Louisiana has many outstanding colleges and universities.
   B. The people in Louisiana are friendly and helpful.
   C. The state has many lakes for fishing and boating.

2. **White mice make good pets.**
   A. ________________________________________________.
   B. ________________________________________________.
   C. ________________________________________________.
3. Florida is a great vacation spot.
A. 
B. 
C. 

4. (____) is a great movie.
A. 
B. 
C. 

5. School is a fun place.
A. 
B. 
C. 

6. Christmas is the most enjoyable of all holidays.
A. 
B. 
C. 

III. Writing Reasons For and Against (25 Minutes)
Instructor: In order to fully defend our position on any issue, we must first understand both sides of the argument. In this exercise, we will gain some experience in producing supporting reasons both for and against the same issue. You will work with an assigned
partner, but you don't have to have the same answers. Worksheet: Write two reasons supporting each of the following opinions. Next, write two reasons opposing the same opinions. Be sure to answer in complete sentences. The first one has been done for you.

1. Teachers should not give homework.
   FOR: Children need free time to think and play.
   FOR: Most homework is tedious and repetitive.
   AGAINST: Students need to reinforce what they learn in school.
   AGAINST: Homework helps students to develop good work habits.

2. Americans should pay more taxes.
   FOR: ____________________________________________.
   FOR: ____________________________________________.
   AGAINST: ____________________________________________.
   AGAINST: ____________________________________________.

3. The school day should be one hour shorter.
   FOR: ____________________________________________.
   FOR: ____________________________________________.
   AGAINST: ____________________________________________.
   AGAINST: ____________________________________________.
4. Baton Rouge is a great city in which to live.

FOR: 

FOR: 

AGAINST: 

AGAINST: 

5. Flying is the best means of transportation.

FOR: 

FOR: 

AGAINST: 

AGAINST: 

6. Students who drop out of school should not be able to get a driver's license.

FOR: 

FOR: 

AGAINST: 

AGAINST: 

IV. Examining Different Audiences (25 Minutes)

Instructor: A good writer will always pay very close attention to his audience. In this exercise, we will practice choosing supporting reasons that would be most effective for several different audiences. You will work with an assigned partner, but you don't have to
Worksheet: Write a good supporting reason for each of the following opinions, keeping each audience in mind. Remember to write in complete sentences. The first one has been done for you, and the second one has some suggestions from which you might choose. Please follow along with me as we read them.

1. Every family should own a home computer.

9-year olds: Computer games are fun and exciting.

18-year olds: Word processing programs make writing term papers easier and less time consuming.

30-year olds: Computers can make it easier to keep track of personal finances.

2. People should not smoke.

(9)

(18)

(30)

(Example reasons: Adults won't approve. It smells bad and makes your teeth yellow. It increases your risk of cancer. It is expensive. It sets a bad example.)

Instructor: What do you think would be the most convincing reason to use with a 9-year old? Why?

...... What would be the best reason to use with an
18-year old? Why? ..... And lastly, what would be the most effective reason to use with a 30-year old? Why? ..... Great, now complete the rest of these with your partner.

3. THE BEACH IS A GREAT PLACE FOR A VACATION.

(9) ____________________________________________________

(18) ____________________________________________________

(30) ____________________________________________________

4. TELEVISION IS A GREAT FORM OF ENTERTAINMENT.

(9) ____________________________________________________

(18) ____________________________________________________

(30) ____________________________________________________

5. SATURDAY IS THE BEST DAY OF THE WEEK.

(9) ____________________________________________________

(18) ____________________________________________________

(30) ____________________________________________________

6. SPRING IS THE BEST SEASON OF ALL.

(9) ____________________________________________________

(18) ____________________________________________________

(30) ____________________________________________________

V. Focusing on a Topic (35 Minutes)

Instructor: An effective persuasive essay will focus
on the chosen topic and not ramble aimlessly. 

**Worksheet:** Please read the following excerpt from an essay to yourselves as I read it aloud.

**FOURTH GRADE SCIENCE**

The fourth grade is having an exciting and productive year in science. Through the D.A.S.H. program, the students are becoming weather experts. They have made weather vanes and rain gauges and are observing wind speed using the Beaufort Scale. Both classes took trips to visit Channel 2 and were able to see first hand how weather is followed, reported, and predicted.

Throughout the year, the fourth graders have been learning about changes that take place in all living things. Currently, the children are studying mice and their habits. Having researched them extensively, and having made mice cages as well, the students are now observing mice and are hoping to have mice pups before too long.

**Instructor:** What is the topic of this essay? ......

Does the author remain focused on his/her subject or does he/she ramble? ....... What could he/she add or leave out to make it better? ....... Now, we will
rewrite a poorly written paragraph so that it has a clear and consistent focus.

Worksheet: Revise the following paragraph in the space provided so that the paper remains focused on the subject being discussed. You may add, delete, or relocate any details in the composition.

NO MORE FRENCH

Students in elementary school should not be forced to study French in school. French is spoken in many countries in the world. Students should spend their time in school learning the basics and learning how to think. There will be plenty of time in high school to study French. Some elementary schools teach Spanish instead of French. Giving children only a limited introduction to the language at an early age does more harm than good. The time would be better spent helping children to master English first. Only then will they be ready to learn a foreign language. Children in France sometimes study English.

Instructor: Now that everyone is finished, I would like for you to share your paper with a partner. Discuss why you made the changes that you did. Why is your copy a better paragraph than the one given?
VI. Organizing an Essay (20 Minutes)

Instructor: A good persuasive essay must be organized so that the reader can follow exactly what the writer is saying. In this exercise, we will examine a persuasive essay to identify its parts and strategies. We will discuss how it is successful in expressing an opinion and how it might be reorganized for improvement.

Worksheet: Read along with me as I read the following composition aloud.

MANDATORY DRUG TESTING

The illegal use of drugs in the work place has become a serious problem in America today. Many people believe that this has led to a major decline in the productivity of our nation's work force. In addition, drug users are much more likely to injure themselves or others than non-users.

Many businesses have resorted to mandatory drug testing of all employees. This testing has become a controversy throughout the business community. Debates continue to rage as to whether this testing procedure is a solution to the drug problem, or just a misguided attempt at dealing with the situation.
Personally, I am very much opposed to the whole idea of drug testing for a number of reasons. First, although the tests can be 95% accurate, there is still a 5% chance that a person could be wrongfully accused of being a drug user. These innocent people will lose their jobs just because the test was wrong. Secondly, it has been proven that some legal drugs can cause a person to fail the test. These people would also lose their jobs. And lastly, the United States Constitution guarantees individual privacy. I believe that no one has the right to force a person to prove their innocence unless there is concrete evidence that the person is under the influence of drugs at the workplace.

While I recognize the fact that some employees have drug problems and often cause difficulty for those with whom they work, I simply don't feel that mandatory testing is a workable and fair solution.

**Instructor:** (1) What is the issue being discussed? (2) Where is there a clear and consistent focus? (3) Give examples of how the author presented both sides of the issue. (4) What arguments did the author use to support his opinion? (5) How was the paper organized?
How could the paper be changed or improved? What additional points might be added?

VII. Writing a Persuasive Essay (50 Minutes)

Instructor: Before we write our own essay, we will practice generating a sheet of facts and arguments that could be useful to us in composing our composition.

Worksheet: Your family has a tradition of spending Sunday afternoon at your grandparents. You would prefer not to go there every Sunday, and on one particular Sunday, you would like to spend the afternoon at home with your brothers and sisters. List as many reasons as possible both for and against this situation. We will discuss them with the class when everyone is finished. . . . .

Instructor: Now, you are ready to put together some of the things that you have learned in order to write your own persuasive essay.

Worksheet: There are several things that you should remember as you write. (1) Your paper should clearly identify the issue. (2) It should maintain a clear and consistent focus on the issue. (3) It should express an understanding of more than one side of the issue.
(4) Your paper should clearly address your audience.

(5) It should offer more than one argument to support your position and/or support a single argument in more than one way. (6) The paper should be logically organized to include a statement of the issue, your opinion on it, your reasoning, and a clear conclusion or summary.

Assignment: In each of the following situations, the person or persons involved refuse to discuss the issue with you. Therefore, you are forced to write a letter trying to change them to your way of thinking. Choose one of the issues, and then compose a list of facts and arguments which might be used in supporting either side. Next, use everything that you have learned about persuasive writing to compose an essay which will get them to change their mind.

(1) Your best friend wants you to spend Saturday night at his/her house, but you want him/her to come to your house. (He/She has a Nintendo, and his/her mother is a great cook. Also, he/she has permission to stay up until twelve o'clock.)

(2) Your father wants to take you and your brother out on a Saturday afternoon, and he is willing to let the
two of you decide where to go. You would like to go to a movie that you have been wanting to see, but your brother wants to go to the L.S.U. basketball game. If you can't reach an agreement by Saturday morning, you will have to stay home.

(3) You are spending the weekend on your uncle's farm. You want to go fishing alone in the pond on the back of his property, but he insists that someone go with you because he fears for your safety.

VIII. Peer Response (15 Minutes)

Instructor: I will now break you into groups of four so that you can share your essays and receive some feedback. You may take notes if you like, but please don't write on your rough copy. At some time during your discussions, you should answer the following questions: (1) What are some of the characteristics of the most effective essays? (2) What could be done to make your essay better?

XI. Final Instructions (5 Minutes)

Instructor: I will need to keep the original copy of your essay for my study, but I will return a duplicate
copy of it to you tomorrow. I would like for you to take your essay home tomorrow night so that you can revise and edit it. The next day, we will display them on the wall so that everybody will get a chance to read all of them. Are there any questions?
Appendix C

Fact Sheets

Capital Punishment -- Background

* "Capital punishment is punishment by death. Since the early 1800's, most executions have resulted from convictions for murder." (The World Book Encyclopedia, 1985, Vol. 3, p.156c)

* "In 1976, the (U.S. Supreme) Court ruled the death penalty was not cruel and unusual punishment, as long as it was administered fairly." (Scholastic Update, November 4, 1988, p.13)

* "Many persons oppose the death penalty, chiefly because they consider it cruel. Other persons favor it because they believe it prevents crime." (The World Book Encyclopedia, 1985, Vol. 3, p.156c)

* "The U.S. is one of a handful of nations that permit the death penalty for offenders who committed crimes before the age of 18." (Time, July 11, 1988, p.16.)

* "Opinion polls have shown repeatedly that most Americans support the death penalty." (Scholastic Update, November 4, 1988, p.13)

* "Researchers reported evidence on July 7 (1986) that many prison inmates awaiting execution suffer from
severe—but unrecognized-psychiatric or neurological disorders." (The World Book Year Book 1987, p.392)

Facts and Figures

* The crime rate rose 2.1 percent in 1988, according to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports. The rate of murders was up 1.2 percent. (The World Almanac, 1990, p.848.)

* In 1988, there were 20,680 murders and non-negligent man slaughters in the United States. The murder/non-negligent man slaughter rate was 8.4 per 100,000 inhabitants. (The World Almanac, 1990, p.849).

* In 1988, there were 603,928 persons in federal and state prisons. Of this total, 2,210 were under the sentence of death. (The World Almanac, 1990, p.850.)

* At the present time, 36 states have the death penalty. Louisiana is one of them. (The World Almanac, 1990, p.850.)

* As a result of the Supreme Court ruling in 1976, a total of 104 executions have taken place in the United States from 1977 to 1988. (Statistical Abstracts of the United States, 1989, chart 326 &
The World Almanac, 1990, p.85.)

* In 1988, 11 people were executed under the death penalty in the United States. All but one of the executions took place in the South. (The World Almanac, 1990, p.850.)
Flag Burning -- Background

* "Many people were outraged when the Supreme Court ruled that the Constitution's free-speech protection extends even to occasional political protesters who torch and trample the symbol of liberty, the American flag. (Time, 134, 7-10-90, p.23)

* Some people, on the other hand, feel that Americans should "be as free to burn the flag as they are to wave it." (Time, 134, 7-3-89, p.15.)

* "Reverence for the flag is ingrained in every schoolchild who has quailed at the thought of letting it touch the ground, in every citizen moved by pictures of it being raised at Iwo Jima or planted on the moon, in every veteran who has ever heard taps played at the end of a Memorial Day parade, in every gold-star mother who treasures a neatly folded emblem of her family's supreme sacrifice." (Time, 134, 7-3-90, p.14.)

* Many people feel that "the decision that Americans have the right to desecrate their flag could be seen as yet another persuasive reason not to do so." (Time, 134, 7-3-89, p.14.)
Facts and Figures

* In 1989, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on a 5 to 4 vote that a person had the constitutional right to burn an American flag as a sign of protest. (Time, 134, 3-3-89, p.14.)

* President Bush is supporting a constitutional amendment to make flag burning illegal. "The ban would need to win support form two thirds of both houses and 38 states." (Newsweek, 114, 7-10-89, p.19.)
Plight of the Homeless -- Background

* Many of the homeless now live with friends, in cars, on the streets, in abandoned buildings, in maternity houses, and in jails and prisons. (USA Today, March 20, 1990, p.1)

* Many people feel that the government is not doing enough for the homeless. Jimmy Hewitt, a homeless ex-marine, claims that "the government won't do anything more than they ever did." (USA Today, March 20, 1990, p.1)

* Many other people feel that the government has done a great deal for the homeless. Millions of dollars are spent on this problem each year. (USA Today, March 20, 1990, p.1.)

Facts and Figures

* No one knows for sure how many homeless people there are in the United States. National homeless estimates range from 250,000 to 7 million. (USA Today, March 20, 1990, p.1)

* On March 20, 1990, 15,000 counters attempted to track down the USA's homeless for the 1990 census. This information will be used to make decisions about handling the homeless. (USA Today, March 20,
President Bush's budget proposal for the coming year seeks $250 million dollars to aid the "hard to serve" homeless people. (Sunday Advocate, March 25, 1990, p.10A.)
Recreational Hunting -- Background

* "Man has been a hunter since before time was recorded, because this activity provided him with food. But today hunting for the purpose of just staying alive is done by only a small part of the world's people." (The New Book of Knowledge, 1988, Vol. 8, p.289.)

* "Modern sport hunting has become a battle of wits between the hunter and the game, in which the animal or bird is given every opportunity to use its native abilities to escape the hunter." (The New Book of Knowledge, 1988, Vol. 8, p.289.)

* "Weapons give the hunter an advantage. But animals also have advantages. They can run faster than the hunter, they know the woods better, and they can smell and hear much better." (The World Book Encyclopedia, 1985, Vol. 9, p.398.)

* "Some people are opposed to hunting because they feel that it is cruel and inhuman." (Donovan Guilbeau of Trees, Inc. in Houston, Texas, February 12, 1990.)

* "Sportsmen are taxed and contribute money freely for the study, protection, and perpetuation of all kinds of birds and animals." (The New Book of
Knowledge, 1988, Vol. 8, p.289.)

* "Hunting is a good game management technique which prevents many animals from dying of starvation or disease by lessening the overall population of that species." (Donovan Guilbeau of Trees, Inc., 2-12-90.)

Facts and Figures

* In the 1985 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, 9% of the U.S. population claimed to be hunters. (Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1989, chart 393.)

* According to the 1985 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, the average expenditure per participant for hunting in the U.S. was $603 a year. (Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1989, chart 394.)

* 29,665,304 hunting tags, licenses, and stamps were issued in the United States for 1988. (Texas Parks and Wildlife Service, 1990.)

* During 1988, $380,747,727 was collected in the United States for hunting tags, licenses, and stamps. (Texas Parks and Wildlife Service, 1990.)
Animal Research -- Background

* "Each year scientists perform experiments on millions of animals. Animals commonly used in medical research include cats, dogs, guinea pigs, mice, monkeys, and rats." (The World Book Encyclopedia, 1985, Vol. 1, p.478.)

* Researchers at the L.S.U. Medical Center are shooting cats in the head to learn how to treat human beings who are shot in the head. (State Times, 9-18-90, p.7B.)

* "The denial of animals' right to freedom to live as they choose, or as nature intends, unhampered by humans, has reached such a crescendo that some animal advocates have found it necessary to pursue increasingly vigorous methods of protest." (Hastings Center Report, 19, Nov./Dec. 1989, p.37.)

* "Researchers test new drugs and procedures on animals whose biological characteristics resemble those of humans. Such work has led to important medical advances including kidney dialysis and polio vaccine." (Newsweek, CXI, 5-23-88, p.60.)

* "Animals in laboratories are subject to mutilations, artificial insemination, and other
invasive procedures, and live in confined, often poorly lit caging areas." (Hastings Center Report, 19, Nov./Dec. 1989, p.37)

* There is a growing concern among many people that scientists are choosing to avoid very important research that involves the use of animals because of public outcry. (Science, 244, April, 1989, p.415)

Facts and Figures

* The U.S. Army is paying the L.S.U. Medical Center about $2 million dollars for its experiments on head wounds. (State Times, 9-18-90, p.7B.)

* About 100 cats a year are shot in the L.S.U. Medical Center's experiments on head wounds. (State Times, 9-18-90, 7B.)

* "Congress has received more mail on the subject of animal research than any other topic, according to Dr. Charles McCarthy, head of the Office for Protection from Research Risks at the National Institute of Health; the mail runs 100 to 1 against the use of animals." (Newsweek, CXI, 5-23-88, 59.)
Television Evangelists -- Background

* "For many unchurched people around the globe, religious broadcasts are their only contact with the gospel. ....... televangelism spreads its own portrait of the Christian life -- for good and bad." (Christianity Today, 32, 3-18-88, p.28)

* "On television the evangelist is immediately the focus of audience attention. The small screen accentuates his personality as the camera returns repeatedly to his face." (Christianity Today, 32, 3-18-88, p.28)

* "In nearly all religious broadcasts, the evangelist is the attraction. Christian talk shows turn discussion into personality chats. The gospel may be preached, but cameras promote the preacher, whether he intends it or not, like the latest Hollywood star." (Christianity Today, 32, 3-18-88, p.28)

* In 1987, Oral Roberts announced a divine mandate to raise $8 million or God would "call me home"). (Time, 131, 3-7-88, p.47)

* Several well known television evangelists have been involved in serious scandals. Jim Bakker has been
investigated for moral and financial misconduct.  
(Canadian Today, 32, 3-18-88, p.44) Jimmy Swaggart was accused of sexual indiscretions.  
(Time, 131, 3-7-88, p.46)
* Many well known television evangelists, including Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, Billy Graham, and Robert Schuller have stayed clear of scandal.  
(Time, 131, 3-7-88, p.47)
Facts and Figures
* "A USA TODAY poll revealed that 55 percent of all Americans watch some religious television. The CBN network alone has 35.8 million subscribers on 7,582 cable systems."  (Christianity Today, 32, 3-18-88, p.34)
* A Louis Harris poll found that 41 percent of the people who watch television ministries think that TV evangelists do more harm than good.  (Christianity Today, 32, 3-18-88, p.34)
* Robert Schuller's yearly salary is approximately $115,000. His ministry collects about $41,000,000 a year. (Christianity Today, 32, 3-18-88, p.30) Jim Bakker's annual salary was $1.6 million dollars. (Christianity Today, 32, 3-18-88, p.34) His
ministry collected about $130 million a year.

(Christianity Today, 32, 5-15-87, p.31)
War on Drugs -- Background

* "Many people start to experiment with drugs out of curiosity, for a thrill, as an expression of rebellion, or because their friends use drugs. Others turn to drugs to escape depression or other personal problems, including difficulties with their schoolwork, job, or family. Regardless of why drug use began, large numbers of individuals continue the practice because they become dependent on a drug." (The World Book Encyclopedia, 1985, Vol. 5, p.288h.)

* "In recent years drug abuse has been increasing at a rapid rate in the United States." (The New Book of Knowledge, 1988, Vol. 4, p.330.)

* "The driving force behind the drug epidemic is not just the highly addictive nature of crack; many young hustlers never touch the stuff. They are drawn by the more enticing lure of fast money." (Time, Vol. 131, May 9, 1988, p.22.)

* "Essentially, law enforcement can only provide holding action until treatment and prevention can make a difference." (Time, Vol. 131, May 9, 1988, p. 30.)

* "The DEA investigates the smuggling of narcotics and

Facts and Figures

* "Drug use among American high school and college students continued to decline in 1988. The downturn in cocaine use, which began in 1987, continued in 1988, as did the use of crack by high school seniors." The 1987-1988 change was -3.1 for cocaine and -0.8 for crack. (The World Almanac, 1990, p.171.)

* In 1988, 2.5 million Americans used cocaine on a regular basis, and 0.5 million used crack. (Morning Advocate, February 14, 1990, p.1A.)

* "Columbia is reportedly responsible for 80% of the cocaine sent to the U.S. The U.S. has pledged $65 million in military aid and another $5 million to protect threatened judges." (Morning Advocate, February 14, 1990, p.1A).

* In 1980, there were 349 drug-related juvenile arrests in New York City, while in 1987 there were 1,052. The number of drug-related juvenile arrests in Washington, D.C. also rose from 315 in 1980 to
1,894 in 1987." (Time, May 9, 1988, p.23.)

* "In 1987, Congress appropriated $3.2 million for the USFS (United States Forest Service) to use to enforce drug laws." (Readers' Digest, October, 1988, p.198)

Environmental Pollution -- Background

* "Environmental pollution is a term that refers to all the ways by which people pollute their surroundings. People dirty the air with gases and smoke, poison the water with chemicals and other substances, and damage the soil with too many fertilizers and pesticides." (The World Book Encyclopedia, 1985, Vol. 6, p.260b.)

* "Environmental pollution is one of the most serious problems facing humanity today. Air, water, and soil (all harmed by pollution) are necessary to the survival of all living things." (The World Book Encyclopedia, 1985, Vol. 6, p.260b.)

* "Starting at the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, smokestacks have disgorged wastes into the atmosphere, factories have dumped toxic wastes into rivers and streams, automobiles have guzzled irreplaceable fossil fuels and fouled the air with their detritus." (Time, Vol. 131, January 2, 1989, p.26.)

* "Federal, state, and local governments have taken many steps to control pollution. They have passed laws limiting the amount of pollution that such
things as automobiles, industries, and sewage treatment plants can put into the environment." (The World Book Encyclopedia, 1985, Vol. 6, p. 260k)

Facts and Figures

* "Most of the nation's 27,000 identified hazardous waste disposal sites contain heavy metals and/or chemicals which are known to cause neurological disorders, hypertension, heart disease, and cancer in humans. Toxic substances dumped in landfills, surface impoundments, and drums leach into the soil, escape into the air, poison drinking water, and sometimes force temporary evacuations or even permanent relocation of area residents." (USA by Numbers: A Statistical Portrait of the United States, 1988, p.141.)

* 8 of 10 Americans live near one of the nation's identified toxic waste sites, according to information provided by the Council on Economic Priorities. (USA by Numbers: A Statistical Portrait of the United States, 1988, p.142.)

* "According to a study by World Resources Institute in Washington, D.C., ground based ozone was causing $5 million in annual U.S. crop losses. (The World Almanac, 1990, p.214.)

* "The EPA indicated that half the streams in the mid-Atlantic and southeastern states, areas not previously considered in the acid rain zone, were either acidic or on the verge of becoming so." (The World Almanac, 1990, p.214.)

* In 1988, "traces of some 400 chemicals were found in the Great Lakes- some from as far away as Latin America- posing a threat to people, due to the poisoning of marine life." (The World Almanac, 1990, p.214.)

Appendix D

Pretest Instructions

DIRECTIONS: Today, I am going to ask you to write a persuasive essay on a political topic. A political topic is an issue that deals with some aspect of government policy (e.g., taxation, trade, education, environment, etc.). Because government policy in our country is open to debate, we have the freedom to agree or disagree with any given issue. If we are able to convince others that our way of thinking is best, then we can affect change.

There are several things that we have learned that you should remember as you write. (1) Your paper should clearly identify the issue. (2) It should maintain a clear and consistent focus on the issue. (3) It should express an understanding of more than one side of the issue. (4) Your paper should clearly address your audience. (5) It should offer more than one argument to support your position and/or support a single argument in more than one way. (6) The paper should be logically organized to include a statement of the issue, your opinion on it, your reasoning, and a clear conclusion or summary.
ASSIGNMENT: Your best friend's father is a United States Senator. In two weeks, the senate will be debating a constitutional amendment to abolish the death penalty throughout the United States. Here are some facts about capital punishment. Let's spend some time talking about them. .......

Your best friend's position on the issue is opposed to your personal beliefs. For your letter, assume that if you feel that the death penalty should be abolished, your best friend thinks that it should not be. Or is you think that the death penalty should not be abolished, your best friend thinks that it should be. Because your friend likes and respects you, you know that he/she will listen to what you have to say. Write your friend a letter trying to change him/her to your way of thinking in the hope that he/she will influence his/her father to vote your way.
First, decide how you personally feel about this issue and why you feel this way. While doing this, you might want to refer back to the fact sheet on capital punishment. Then, use everything that you have learned about persuasive writing to compose a letter which will get your friend to change his/her mind to your way of thinking.
Appendix E

Treatment Group 1 Script

Treatment 1

Instructor: Today, we are going to do some work with political cartoons. Can anyone tell me what a political cartoon is? ...... Good. A political cartoon is a cartoon that carries a political message. How is a political cartoon different from a regular cartoon? ...... That's true. A political cartoon usually carries a message and tries to convince the viewer to think or act in a certain way. Can you give me an example? ...... Good. Where would I usually find political cartoons? ...... That's right. Political cartoons can be found in several different places. The most common places are in newspapers and magazines. Why do you think people would draw a political cartoon instead of just writing out their opinion? ...... Yes, that's true. All of those are probably reasons why someone might choose drawing their opinion over writing it.

Instructor: Now, let's look at some political cartoons. (Pass out cartoon sheets.) (1) What is the issue in this cartoon? ...... (2) Who or what is being
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portrayed? ...... (3) What is happening? ...... (4) Are there any symbols in this cartoon? If so, what do they stand for? ...... (5) What are some of the techniques used by people who draw political cartoons? ...... Are any of those techniques used in this cartoon? ...... (6) What interpretation could be given to this cartoon? ...... (7) What are two possible positions on this issue? ...... (8) What is the artist's bias? ...... (9) Do you agree or disagree with the artist? Why or why not? ...... Now, let's look at the second cartoon and answer the same questions. (Repeat questions.)

INSTRUCTOR: I would like for you to draw me a political cartoon on the topic of flag burning. First, let's consider some of the facts. ......

Decide whether or not you feel flag burning should be against the law. Then, try to visualize a scene that would illustrate your feelings on the subject. As you do this, consider the following questions. (1) What is the issue in your cartoon? (2) What are two possible positions on this issue? (3) Who or what is being portrayed? (4) What is happening? (5) Will there be any symbols in your cartoon? If so,
what will they stand for? (6) How will your cartoon be interpreted? (7) What is your bias?

Now, draw your political cartoon on the paper provided.

Treatment 2

INSTRUCTOR: I would like for you to draw me a political cartoon on the government's response to the plight of the homeless. First, let's consider some of the facts. ......

Remember the main features and purposes of political cartoons as you think about this issue. A political cartoon carries a political message and tries to convince the viewer to think or act in a certain way. It is usually focused on one idea. Symbolism, humor, exaggeration, and/or sarcasm are some of the main techniques used by people who draw political cartoons.

Decide whether or not you feel the government is doing all that it can to aid the homeless. Then, try to visualize a scene that would illustrate your feelings on the subject. As you do this, consider the following questions. (1) What is the issue in your
cartoon?  (2) What are two possible positions on this issue?  (3) Who or what is being portrayed?  (4) What is happening?  (5) Will there be any symbols in your cartoon?  If so, what will they stand for?  (6) How will your cartoon be interpreted?  (7) What is your bias?

Now, draw your political cartoon on the paper provided.

Treatment 3

INSTRUCTOR: I would like for you to draw me a political cartoon on recreational hunting. First, let's consider some of the facts. ......

Remember the main features and purposes of political cartoons as you think about this issue. A political cartoon carries a political message and tries to convince the viewer to think or act in a certain way. It is usually focused on one idea. Symbolism, humor, exaggeration, and/or sarcasm are some of the main techniques used by people who draw political cartoons.

Decide whether or not you feel that hunting for sport should be legal. Then, try to visualize a scene
that would illustrate your feelings on the subject. As you do this, consider the following questions. (1) What is the issue in your cartoon? (2) What are two possible positions on this issue? (3) Who or what is being portrayed? (4) What is happening? (5) Will there be any symbols in your cartoon? If so, what will they stand for? (6) How will your cartoon be interpreted? (7) What is your bias?

Now, draw your political cartoon on the paper provided.

Treatment 4
INSTRUCTOR: I would like for you to draw me a political cartoon on the use of animals for medical research. First, let's consider some of the facts. ......

Remember the main features and purposes of political cartoons as you think about this issue. A political cartoon carries a political message and tries to convince the viewer to think or act in a certain way. It is usually focused on one idea. Symbolism, humor, exaggeration, and/or sarcasm are some of the main techniques used by people who draw political
Decide whether or not you feel that animals should be used for medical research. Then, try to visualize a scene that would illustrate your feelings on the subject. As you do this, consider the following questions. (1) What is the issue in your cartoon? (2) What are two possible positions on this issue? (3) Who or what is being portrayed? (4) What is happening? (5) Will there be any symbols in your cartoon? If so, what will they stand for? (6) How will your cartoon be interpreted? (7) What is your bias?

Now, draw your political cartoon on the paper provided.

Treatment 5

INSTRUCTOR: I would like for you to draw me a political cartoon on television preachers. First, let's consider some of the facts. .......

Remember the main features and purposes of political cartoons as you think about this issue. A political cartoon carries a political message and tries to convince the viewer to think or act in a certain way. It is usually focused on one idea. Symbolism,
humor, exaggeration, and/or sarcasm are some of the main techniques used by people who draw political cartoons.

Decide whether or not you feel that most television preachers are sincere. Then, try to visualize a scene that would illustrate your feelings on the subject. As you do this, consider the following questions. (1) What is the issue in your cartoon? (2) What are two possible positions on this issue? (3) Who or what is being portrayed? (4) What is happening? (5) Will there be any symbols in your cartoon? If so, what will they stand for? (6) How will your cartoon be interpreted? (7) What is your bias?

Now, draw your political cartoon on the paper provided.

Treatment 6
INSTRUCTOR: I would like for you to draw me a political cartoon on the war on drugs. First, let's consider some of the facts. .......

Remember the main features and purposes of political cartoons as you think about this issue. A political cartoon carries a political message and tries
to convince the viewer to think or act in a certain way. It is usually focused on one idea. Symbolism, humor, exaggeration, and/or sarcasm are some of the main techniques used by people who draw political cartoons.

Decide whether or not you feel that our government is winning the war on drugs. Then, try to visualize a scene that would illustrate your feelings on the subject. As you do this, consider the following questions. (1) What is the issue in your cartoon? (2) What are two possible positions on this issue? (3) Who or what is being portrayed? (4) What is happening? (5) Will there be any symbols in your cartoon? If so, what will they stand for? (6) How will your cartoon be interpreted? (7) What is your bias?

Now, draw your political cartoon on the paper provided.
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August 10, 1989

Mr. Douglas Cranier
University Lab School
Louisiana State University
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803

Dear Mr. Cranier,

You have our permission to use our copyrighted material from the editorial pages of the State-Times and Morning Advocate in connection with your teaching activities at the Laboratory School.

This permission does not extend to publication of this material. It is intended to cover use of material in the classroom for discussion and instructional purposes.

Thank you for your interest in our publications.

Sincerely,

Linda Lightfoot
Asst. Executive Editor
LL/ed
Aug 15, 1989

Dear Mr. Kramer:

Pursuant to your letter of Sept. 10, 1989, you have my permission to use any of my Times cartoons which you deem necessary for your dissertation. I wish you luck in your efforts.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Dear Doug,

This letter constitutes permission for you to reprint the requested material for one time use only.

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Enclosed is our invoice covering the standard fees. Please return one copy of this invoice with your payment.

We would appreciate your advising us if you do not use this material. The search and/or service charge portions of this bill are payable whether or not the material is used.

Please let us know when we can be of service again.

Very truly yours,

Jim Cavett

Reprint Permission For: Various TMS Editorial Cartoons

Fee: $ 0.00
Total Due: $ 0.00

October 26, 1989
March 14, 1990

Mr. Douglas Cranier
University Lab School
LSU
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803

Dear Mr. Cranier,

Contingent upon your receiving permission from the cartoonists and syndicates, you have our permission to republish material from the editorial pages of the State-Times and Morning Advocate in your dissertation.

However, we need a listing of the dates the material ran and the page number. As I mentioned before, while we copyright the entire paper, we buy only one-time use rights from our local cartoonists and the syndicates maintain their copyright over their material.

I wish you the best of luck with your dissertation and look forward to writing you next time as "Dr. Cranier." Let me know if I can be of further help.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Linda Lightfoot
Asst. Executive Editor

LL/ac
Dear Sirs:

I am a doctoral student in Curriculum and Instruction at Louisiana State University. I am presently preparing a proposal for my dissertation on the effects of using political cartoons as prewriting activities to increase fourth graders' ability to write persuasively. Linda Lightfoot, the assistant executive editor of the State Times/ Morning Advocate, has given me permission to use cartoons from their editorial pages with the suggestion that I also receive permission from the individual syndicates. Since I would like to use several of your cartoons with my subjects, I am requesting permission to use them in my study.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Doug Granier

---

PERMISSION GRANTED. VERY IMPORTANT DISSERTATION!

CONGRATULATIONS,

R. LUCIF
Permission to use the cartoon from Cartoonews International in my dissertation was granted by telephone on June 7, 1990 at 3:23 p.m.
November 1, 1989

Doug Cranier
University Lab School
Louisiana State University
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

Dear Mr. Cranier:

Permission is granted for you to reprint the following cartoons by David Saavey and/or Doug MacGregor which appeared in USA TODAY:

- August 24, 1989
- September 13, 1989
- September 15, 1989
- September 19, 1989
- September 21, 1989
- September 29, 1989
- October 2, 1989
- October 9, 1989
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Thank you for writing USA TODAY.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Bland
Managing Editor, Library/Information Services
Appendix G

Treatment Group 2 Script

Treatment 1

Instructor: Today, we are going to do some work with political cartoons. Can anyone tell me what a political cartoon is? ...... Good. A political cartoon is a cartoon that carries a political message. How is a political cartoon different from a regular cartoon? ...... That's true. A political cartoon usually carries a message and tries to convince the viewer to think or act in a certain way. Can you give me an example? ...... Good. Where would I usually find political cartoons? ...... That's right. Political cartoons can be found in several different places. The most common places are in newspapers and magazines. Why do you think people would draw a political cartoon instead of just writing out their opinion? ...... Yes, that's true. All of those are probably reasons why someone might choose drawing their opinion over writing it.

INSTRUCTOR: Now, let's look at some political cartoons. (Pass out cartoon sheets.) (1) What is the issue in this cartoon? ...... (2) Who or what is being
posed? ...... (3) What is happening? ...... (4) Are there any symbols in this cartoon? If so, what do they stand for? ...... (5) What are some of the techniques used by people who draw political cartoons? ...... Are any of those techniques used in this cartoon? ...... (6) What interpretation could be given to this cartoon? ...... (7) What are two possible positions on this issue? (8) What is the artist's bias? ...... (9) Do you agree or disagree with the artist? Why or why not? ...... Now, let's look at the second cartoon and answer the same questions. (Repeat questions.)

INSTRUCTOR: I would like for you to get with your assigned partner now to discuss a political cartoon on flag burning. First, let's consider some of the facts. ......

You should ask each other the following questions during your discussion. (1) What is the issue in this cartoon? (2) Who or what is being portrayed? (3) What is happening? (4) Are there any symbols in this cartoon? If so, what do they stand for? (5) What are some of the techniques used by the person who drew this political cartoon? (6) What interpretation could be
given to this cartoon? (7) What are two possible positions on this issue? (8) What is the artist's bias? (9) Do you agree or disagree with the artist? Why or why not?

Treatment 2

Instructor: I would like for you to get with your assigned partner now to discuss a political cartoon on the plight of the homeless. First, let's consider some of the facts. .......

Remember the main features and purposes of political cartoons as you discuss this cartoon. A political cartoon carries a political message and tries to convince the viewer to think or act in a certain way. It is usually focused on one idea. Symbolism, humor, exaggeration, and/or sarcasm are some of the main techniques used by people who draw political cartoons.

You should ask each other the following questions during your discussion. (1) What is the issue in this cartoon? (2) Who or what is being portrayed? (3) What is happening? (4) Are there any symbols in this cartoon? If so, what do they stand for? (5) What are
some of the techniques used by the person who drew this political cartoon? (6) What interpretation could be given to this cartoon? (7) What are two possible positions on this issue? (8) What is the artist's bias? (9) Do you agree or disagree with the artist? Why or why not?

Treatment 3
Instructor: I would like for you to get with your assigned partner now to discuss a political cartoon on recreational hunting. First, let's consider some of the facts. ......

Remember the main features and purposes of political cartoons as you discuss this cartoon. A political cartoon carries a political message and tries to convince the viewer to think or act in a certain way. It is usually focused on one idea. Symbolism, humor, exaggeration, and/or sarcasm are some of the main techniques used by people who draw political cartoons.

You should ask each other the following questions during your discussion. (1) What is the issue in this cartoon? (2) Who or what is being portrayed? (3) What
is happening? (4) Are there any symbols in this
cartoon? If so, what do they stand for? (5) What are
some of the techniques used by the person who drew this
political cartoon? (6) What interpretation could be
given to this cartoon? (7) What are two possible
positions on this issue? (8) What is the artist's
bias? (9) Do you agree or disagree with the artist?
Why or why not?

Treatment 4
Instructor: I would like for you to get with your
assigned partner now to discuss a political cartoon on
the use of animals for medical research. First, let's
consider some of the facts. .......

Remember the main features and purposes of
political cartoons as you discuss this cartoon. A
political cartoon carries a political message and tries
to convince the viewer to think or act in a certain
way. It is usually focused on one idea. Symbolism,
humor, exaggeration, and/or sarcasm are some of the
main techniques used by people who draw political
cartoons.

You should ask each other the following questions
during your discussion. (1) What is the issue in this cartoon? (2) Who or what is being portrayed? (3) What is happening? (4) Are there any symbols in this cartoon? If so, what do they stand for? (5) What are some of the techniques used by the person who drew this political cartoon? (6) What interpretation could be given to this cartoon? (7) What are two possible positions on this issue? (8) What is the artist's bias? (9) Do you agree or disagree with the artist? Why or why not?

**Treatment 5**

**Instructor:** I would like for you to get with your assigned partner now to discuss a political cartoon on television preachers. First, let's consider some of the facts. ......

Remember the main features and purposes of political cartoons as you discuss this cartoon. A political cartoon carries a political message and tries to convince the viewer to think or act in a certain way. It is usually focused on one idea. Symbolism, humor, exaggeration, and/or sarcasm are some of the main techniques used by people who draw political
You should ask each other the following questions during your discussion. (1) What is the issue in this cartoon? (2) Who or what is being portrayed? (3) What is happening? (4) Are there any symbols in this cartoon? If so, what do they stand for? (5) What are some of the techniques used by the person who drew this political cartoon? (6) What interpretation could be given to this cartoon? (7) What are two possible positions on this issue? (8) What is the artist's bias? (9) Do you agree or disagree with the artist? Why or why not?

Treatment 6

Instructor: I would like for you to get with your assigned partner now to discuss a political cartoon on the war on drugs. First, let's consider some of the facts. .......

Remember the main features and purposes of political cartoons as you discuss this cartoon. A political cartoon carries a political message and tries to convince the viewer to think or act in a certain way. It is usually focused on one idea. Symbolism,
humor, exaggeration, and/or sarcasm are some of the main techniques used by people who draw political cartoons.

You should ask each other the following questions during your discussion. (1) What is the issue in this cartoon? (2) Who or what is being portrayed? (3) What is happening? (4) Are there any symbols in this cartoon? If so, what do they stand for? (5) What are some of the techniques used by the person who drew this political cartoon? (6) What interpretation could be given to this cartoon? (7) What are two possible positions on this issue? (8) What is the artist's bias? (9) Do you agree or disagree with the artist? Why or why not?
Appendix H

**Control Group 1 Script**

**Session 1**

_Instructor:_ Flag burning is a very controversial topic in the United States today. Some people feel that it should be against the law while others feel that it should be permitted under freedom of expression. Let's consider some of the facts. ....

Think about this issue for awhile and draw what comes to your mind as you reflect. You can draw more than one picture.

**Session 2**

_INSTRUCTOR:_ The plight of the homeless is a very controversial topic in the United States today. Some people feel that the government is doing all that it can to aid those who live on the streets while others feel that the government has turned its back on these unfortunate people. Let's consider some of the facts. ....

Think about this issue for awhile and draw what comes to your mind as you reflect. You can draw more than one picture.
Session 3
INSTRUCTOR: Recreational hunting is a very controversial topic in the United States today. Some people feel that the hunters should have the right to kill animals for sport while others feel that this practice is inhuman and should be against the law. Let's consider some of the facts. ......

Think about this issue for awhile and draw what comes to your mind as you reflect. You can draw more than one picture.

Session 4
INSTRUCTOR: The use of animals for medical research is a very controversial topic in the United States today. Some people feel that researchers have the right to sacrifice animals in order to search for medical cures, while others feel that this practice is cruel and inhuman. Let's consider some of the facts. ......

Think about this issue for awhile and draw what comes to your mind as you reflect. You can draw more than one picture.
Session 5

INSTRUCTOR: Television preaching is a very controversial topic in the United States today. Some people feel that most television preachers are sincere and that the money they raise goes to help the poor and unfortunate. Other people feel that most television preachers are not sincere and that most of the money they raise goes into their own pockets. Let's consider some of the facts.

Think about this issue for awhile and draw what comes to your mind as you reflect. You can draw more than one picture.

Session 6

INSTRUCTOR: The war on drugs is a very controversial topic in the United States today. Some people feel that our government is winning the war on drugs while other people feel that the government is losing this battle. Let's consider some of the facts.

Think about this issue for awhile and draw what comes to your mind as you reflect. You can draw more than one picture.
Appendix I

Control Group 2 Script

Session 1
Instructor: Flag burning is a very controversial topic in the United States today. Some people feel that it should be against the law while others feel that it should be permitted under freedom of expression. Let's consider some of the facts. .......

I would like for you to get with your assigned partner and discuss this issue in detail. Please make sure that both partners have equal time to talk. At some point in the discussion, you should answer the following questions. (1) Why would a person want to burn the flag? (2) What are some reasons for supporting flag burning? (3) What are some reasons for opposing flag burning? (4) Why do many people have such strong feelings about flag burning. (5) Who should decide whether or not flag burning should be legal? (6) What are your personal feelings on this issue? Why do you feel this way?

Session 2
Instructor: The plight of the homeless is a very
controversial topic in the United States today. Some people feel that the government is doing all that it can to aid those who live on the streets while others feel that the government has turned its back on these unfortunate people. Let's consider some of the facts.

I would like for you to get with your assigned partner and discuss this issue in detail. Please make sure that both partners have equal time to talk. At some point in the discussion, you should answer the following questions. (1) What is the government now doing to aid the homeless? (2) What are some reasons supporting the opinion that the government is doing enough? (3) What are some reasons opposing the opinion that the government is doing enough? (4) Why do many people have such strong feelings about the plight of the homeless? (5) Who should decide exactly what the government should do to aid the homeless? (6) What are your personal feelings on this issue? Why do you feel this way?

Session 3

Instructor: Recreational hunting is a very
controversial topic in the United States today. Some people feel that the hunters should have the right to kill animals for sport while others feel that this practice is inhuman and should be against the law. Let's consider some of the facts. ..... 

I would like for you to get with your assigned partner and discuss this issue in detail. Please make sure that both partners have equal time to talk. At some point in the discussion, you should answer the following questions. (1) What are some of the present laws regarding recreational hunting? (2) What are some reasons supporting the opinion that recreational hunting should be legal? (3) What are some reasons opposing the opinion that the recreational hunting should be legal? (4) Why do many people have such strong feelings about recreational hunting? (5) Who should decide whether or not recreational hunting should be legal? (6) What are your personal feelings on this issue? Why do you feel this way?

Session 4

Instructor: The use of animals for medical research is a very controversial topic in the United States today.
Some people feel that researchers have the right to sacrifice animals in order to search for medical cures, while others feel that this practice is cruel and inhuman. Let's consider some of the facts. ......

I would like for you to get with your assigned partner and discuss this issue in detail. Please make sure that both partners have equal time to talk. At some point in the discussion, you should answer the following questions. (1) What are some of the present practices regarding the use of animals for medical research? (2) What are some reasons supporting the opinion that the use of animals for medical research should be permitted? (3) What are some reasons opposing the opinion that the use of animals for medical research should be permitted? (4) Why do many people have such strong feelings about the use of animals for medical research? (5) Who should decide whether or not animals should be used for medical research? (6) What are your personal feelings on this issue? Why do you feel this way?

Session 5
Instructor: Television preaching is a very
controversial topic in the United States today. Some people feel that most television preachers are sincere and that the money they raise goes to help the poor and misfortunate. Other people feel that most television preachers are not sincere and that most of the money they raise goes into their own pockets. Let's consider some of the facts in this issue. .......

I would like for you to get with your assigned partner and discuss this issue in detail. Please make sure that both partners have equal time to talk. At some point in the discussion, you should answer the following questions. (1) How does a person become a television preacher? (2) What are some reasons supporting the opinion that television preachers are sincere? (3) What are some reasons opposing the opinion that television preachers are sincere? (4) Why do many people have such strong feelings about television preachers? (5) Who should decide whether or not preachers should be able to have their own television programs? (6) What are your personal feelings on this issue? Why do you feel this way?
Session 6

Instructor: The war on drugs is a very controversial topic in the United States today. Some people feel that our government is winning the war on drugs while other people feel that the government is losing this battle. Let's consider some of the facts. ......

I would like for you to get with your assigned partner and discuss this issue in detail. Please make sure that both partners have equal time to talk. At some point in the discussion, you should answer the following questions. (1) What is our government now doing to win the war on drugs? (2) What are some reasons supporting the opinion that our government is winning the war on drugs? (3) What are some reasons opposing the opinion that our government is winning the war on drugs? (4) Why do many people have such strong feelings about the war on drugs? (5) Who should decide what the government should do to fight the drug war? (6) What are your personal feelings on this issue? Why do you feel this way?
Appendix J

Posttest 1 Instructions

DIRECTIONS: Today, I am going to ask you to write a persuasive essay on whether or not the government needs to do more to win the war on drugs. There are several things that we have learned that you should remember as you write. (1) Your paper should clearly identify the issue. (2) It should maintain a clear and consistent focus on the issue. (3) It should express an understanding of more than one side of the issue. (4) Your paper should clearly address your audience. (5) It should offer more than one argument to support your position and/or support a single argument in more than one way. (6) The paper should be logically organized to include a statement of the issue, your opinion on it, your reasoning, and a clear conclusion or summary.

ASSIGNMENT: Your best friend's father is a United States Senator. In two weeks, the senate will be debating on whether to continue present efforts in our war on drugs or to take new and drastic measures.

Your best friend’s position on the issue is opposed to your personal beliefs. For your letter, assume that if you think the government needs to do
more to win the war on drugs, your best friend thinks that the government is now doing enough. Or, if you think the government is now doing enough to win the drug war, your best friend thinks that the government needs to do more. Because your friend likes and respects you, you know that he/she will listen to what you have to say. Write your friend a letter trying to change him/her to your way of thinking in the hope that he/she will influence his/her father to vote your way.

First, decide how you personally feel about this issue and why you feel this way. While doing this, you might want to refer back to the fact sheet on the war on drugs. Then, use everything that you have learned about persuasive writing to compose a letter which will get your friend to change his/her mind to your way of thinking.
Appendix K

Posttest 2 Instructions

DIRECTIONS: Today, I am going to ask you to write a persuasive essay on whether or not we are now doing enough to save our environment. There are several things that we have learned that you should remember as you write. (1) Your paper should clearly identify the issue. (2) It should maintain a clear and consistent focus on the issue. (3) It should express an understanding of more than one side of the issue. (4) Your paper should clearly address your audience. (5) It should offer more than one argument to support your position and/or support a single argument in more than one way. (6) The paper should be logically organized to include a statement of the issue, your opinion on it, your reasoning, and a clear conclusion or summary.

ASSIGNMENT: Your best friend's father is a United States Senator. In two weeks, the senate will be debating on whether to continue present efforts to protect our environment or to take new and drastic measures. Here are some facts about environmental pollution. Let's spend some time talking about them.

.....

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Your best friend's position on the issue is opposed to your personal beliefs. For your letter, assume that if you think the government needs to do more to protect the environment, your best friend thinks that the government is now doing enough. Or, if you think that the government is now doing enough to protect the environment, your best friend thinks that the government needs to do more. Because your friend likes and respects you, you know that he/she will listen to what you have to say. Write your friend a letter trying to change him/her to your way of thinking in the hope that he/she will influence his/her father to vote your way.

First, decide how you personally feel about this issue and why you feel this way. While doing this, you might want to refer back to the fact sheet on environmental pollution. Then, use everything that you have learned about persuasive writing to compose a letter which will get your friend to change his/her mind to your way of thinking.
Appendix L

A Scale For Measuring Fifth and Sixth Grade Students' Proficiency in Persuasive Writing

I. Identification of the issue (X2)

___ The paper clearly identifies the issue and the author's stance on it in a direct and forthright manner (3)

___ The paper implicitly identifies the issue and the author's stance on it, but not in a clear and direct manner (2)

___ The paper obscures the issue and does not succeed in specifically identifying the issue and the author's stance on it for the reader (1)

II. Clarity of focus (X2)

___ The paper maintains a clear and consistent focus on the issue and the author's orientation toward it (3)

___ The paper achieves some focus on the issue and the author's perspective on it, but the focus is not always clear or consistent (2)

___ The paper fails to focus on the author's orientation to the issue (1)

III. Analysis (X2)

___ The paper clearly expresses understanding of more than one side of the issue (3)

___ The paper expresses some understanding that the issue has more than one side (2)

___ The paper fails to acknowledge that the issue has more than one side (1)
IV. Audience (X2)

_____ The paper clearly addresses an implicit or explicit audience (3)

_____ The paper provides some evidence that the writer is addressing a particular audience (2)

_____ The paper provides little or no evidence that the writer has a particular audience in mind (1)

V. Argumentation/Persuasion (X3)

_____ The paper offers more than one argument to support a stance on the issue, and/or supports a single argument in more than one way (3)

_____ The paper offers only one argument with limited support in defending a stance on the issue (2)

_____ The paper does not succeed in providing an argument in support of the author's stance on the issue (1)
VI. Presentation (X2)

☐ The paper has an internal logic of organization which includes a statement of the issue, the author's perspective(s) on it, the author's reasoning, and a clear conclusion or summary (3)

☐ The paper provides a sense of some organization but the organization is not consistently effective throughout the paper and does not lead to a clearly expressed conclusion or summary (2)

☐ The paper lacks organization throughout and/or does not provide a conclusion or summary (1)
Appendix M

Sample Copies of Scored Compositions

Pretest Composition With the Highest Score (39)

Dear Niesha,

I know you father is a state senator and is about to make a decision on whether or not to have the death sentence. I want you to know I'm all for it. I know you're not. But just think about it Nesh, someone might come into your home kill your mother and father and you wouldn't want them killed? Please. How absurd can you get? I really doubt that would happen because you have guards all over your house. But think about how other people feel when it happened to them. Now I know me and you don't agree on everything especially clothes. But I think you can see my side of the debate. It's never happened to me but I think I'd know how they felt.

I also see your side. Killing is not the answer. But it's just showing people what could happen to them if they tried it. And I know you're saying just put them in jail so they can rot there but soon the cells would get over crowded. And I know you're also saying make more but it takes time and money that the
government just doesn't have to spare.

Did you know that crime raised 2.1 percent in 1988. And the rate of murders 1.2 percent.

I also realize that we might be killing too many people because in 1988, 11 (eleven) people were executed. All but one of them were in the south. And that from 1977 to 1988, 104 executions have taken place. But I still think you should look at my letter because I've already looked at the facts on your side.

Love,

#83
Pretest Composition Near the Mean Score (24)

Dear Lauren,

I feel that people should be put to death for killing people because if they weren't killed than they could go right back and kill someone else. I know that putting someone guilty to death is cruel, but killing an innocent person is worse. I've made my point now, thanks for the time.

Your buddy,

#7
Pretest Composition With the Lowest Score (13)

Dear Zalial,

I know you accidently took the wrong picture and they accused you of stealing it and when you told me you were going to sue them and take them to court you shouldn't do that you should just forget it because you'll probably lose your job and you should just forget it for another reason you know they said sorry because they didn't know just give them another chance

Yours truly

#44
Dear Katie,

How are you doing? By the way I want to ask you a serious question would you please tell me why you won't listen to me about my opinion. The state is not doing enough on the war on drugs I have 3 supporting reasons. 1) In recent years usage of drugs has been increasing at a rapid rate. 2) Essentially, law enforcement can only provide holding action until treatment and prevention can make a difference. 3) The number of arrests by the U.S. drug enforcement agency (DEA) were 12,997 in 1983, 13,126 in 1984, 15,727 in 1985, 18,687 in 1986, and up to 21,915 in 1987. As you can see the rate of drug usage is rapidly increasing, this is very important that you listen to me.

Your Best Friend

#64
Dear Jennifer,

I would like you to read this letter and consider my side on this issue.

I feel that the government is not doing enough on the war on drugs. I realize that they have done a little on the issue but not nearly enough. Recent studies have shown that drug abuse has been increasing at a rapid rate in the United States of America. I hope you will consider my side of the issue.

Your Best Friend,

#112
Posttest 1 Composition With the Lowest Score (13)

Dear friend,

I think the government is doing enough, I know you don't think that but please change your mind. The government already has put it against the law. What else can they do? Please think about this.

Your friend,

#35
Posttest 2 Composition With the Highest Score (37)

Dear Darrin,

I understand why you think the government is doing enough to protect the environment. You probably think that since the government has spent hundreds of billions of dollars, and they have passed laws limiting the amount of pollution being put into the environment, that they have done enough.

I, on the other hand, completely disagree with that. The government always talks about the new plans to save the environment, but they never get farther than that. The air we breathe every day in Baton Rouge is very high polluted. Four hundred chemicals were found in the Great Lakes in 1988.

I just think that the government is not doing enough to protect the environment.

Your Friend,

#17
Dear Meaghan,

I think the government isn't doing enough about the environment. Many places are now polluted with gases, smoke, chemicals, fertilizers, and pesticides. The government should spend more money on cleaning up the environment. Factories could get all the chemicals out of the water before they dumped it into rivers and streams. Cars should have tanks to store the gases and smoke. There should be a limit to the amount of fertilizers and pesticides people can put in the ground. Please tell your father my point of view.

Your friend,

#4
Dear Pat,

I think the government should do more. They should build toxic waste plants where it cannot harm anyone. They should maybe start sending waste into outer space. I really mean far outer space. I hope you will agree and get your dad to agree to do more about the environment.

Your friend,

#10
Appendix N

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Vita

Douglas Mark Granier was born in Plaquemine, Louisiana on January 7, 1951. He attended St. John Elementary School in Plaquemine. In May 1969, he graduated from high school at Cathedral Prep in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He received the degree of Bachelor of Arts with a major in History from St. Joseph Seminary College at St. Benedict, Louisiana in May 1973. In May 1975, he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts with a major in Elementary Education from the University of New Orleans at New Orleans, Louisiana.

From August 1975 until May 1979, he was employed as a junior high school Language Arts teacher at St. John High School in Plaquemine, Louisiana. He worked as a sixth grade teacher and guidance counselor at St. John Elementary School in Plaquemine from August 1979 until May 1986. In May 1980, he received the degree of Masters of Arts in Education with a major in Guidance and Counseling from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

He was employed as a Chapter 1 Reading Teacher for the Iberville Parish School System in Plaquemine during
the 1986-87 school term. Since August 1987, he has been an instructor in the Louisiana State University Laboratory School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Douglas Mark Granier

Major Field: Education

Title of Dissertation: The Effects of the Discussion of and the Drawing of Political Cartoons as Prewriting Activities to Increase Fifth and Sixth Graders' Ability to Write Persuasively

Approved:

[Signature]
Major Professor and Chairman
David A. England, Ph.D.

[Signature]
Dean of the Graduate School
Kathleen Heim, Ph.D.

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

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James A. Whitson, Ph.D.

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Rosalind Charlesworth, Ph.D.

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Sarah Liggett, Ph.D.

[Signature]
William Grimes, Ph.D.

Date of Examination:

13 July 1990