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“What is this literachurch stuff anyway?”: Preservice teachers’ growth in understanding children’s literary response

During the spring and fall semesters of 1993, I [Wolf] asked the preservice teachers enrolled in my class in children’s literature to conduct a reader response case study with a young child. The teachers, including the two coauthors of this article, read with individually selected children on a weekly basis, documenting each session with the date and time spent, books read, questions asked, intriguing comments made by the child, activities connected with the reading of the text, and ideas for the next session. The teachers submitted their field notebooks twice during the semester for my commentary and used both notes and commentary as the foundation for a final paper on an aspect of their child’s response to literature and on their own growth as teachers of children’s literature.

The assignment had two main purposes: (a) to expand the preservice teachers’ understandings of response to literature by analyzing an individual child’s responses over time, and (b) to enhance the teachers’ instructional strategies and critical stance toward literature. At the beginning of the assignment, one teacher told a 4-year-old child that they would be reading and discussing literature. As she began to open her first storybook, the child looked at her quizzically and asked “What is this literachurch stuff anyway?”

This same question might just as well have been asked by the preservice teachers, who began the class with some lack of faith in the recently exalted position of literature in the elementary school curriculum. Even more problematic, however, was their skepticism about children’s abilities to articulate a critical response to literature. Yet, over time, as the teachers listened to and

learned from children, read relevant research, attended class lectures, and participated in class discussions, their perceptions of children’s capacity for response broadened. Teacher after teacher commented in their field notes how “intrigued” and “amazed” they were by what young children had to say about literature. The teachers realized that their own expectations for response, typically cast in straightforward comprehension questions, were often the cause of *limiting* the children’s response, rather than that the children’s insights were *limited*.

As the teachers explored questions with their children that focused on interpretation rather than imitation, they learned that children have much to say about text and its relationship to their lives. The teachers also learned that response is not always bounded by what children *say* about literature, but can, instead, evolve in what they *do* with literature.

Theoretical framework

In general, the reading field has seen literature as the end purpose for learning how to read (i.e., what children do once they have mastered the basic reading skills); the children’s literature field has been more concerned about the books themselves and less about instructional issues.... In recent years, however, the situation has changed. (Walmsley, 1992, p. 509)

In the past, teachers were given basal textbooks filled with artificially constructed slices of literature, often accompanied by teachers’ guides that provided explicit questions to ask along with expected answers from chil-

“What is this literachurch stuff anyway?”: Preservice teachers’ growth in understanding children’s literary response

IN THIS yearlong study, the authors analyze the effects of using carefully assisted case studies to prepare preservice teachers to be more knowledgeable and skilled in supporting children’s response to literature. As a part of a class assignment for an undergraduate course in children’s literature, 43 preservice teachers read to and kept careful field notes on individually selected children. Drawing upon their field notes and final papers as well as the course lecture notes, handouts, activities, and assigned readings, our analysis reveals intriguing patterns that mark shifts in the preservice teachers’ perspectives on literary response. The teachers began the study with relatively low expectations. In their initial, comprehension-based view of response, they privileged the text over their case study child. Over the course of the study, however, the teachers moved towards a vision of literary response that highlights interpretation over compre-

hension. Their broadened expectations emphasized the affective, personal, and social nature of literary discussion which privileges intertextual connections between the text on the page and the texts of readers’ lives. Here we argue for a side-by-side model of children’s literature instruction—with the university course on one side and the case-study children on the other—moving from the more distanced study of children in articles and books to the here and now of working with real children who will comment on, challenge, question, and/or silently resist preservice teachers’ efforts to engage them in literature. Thus, a university course infusion of new research ideas with multiple, though distanced, examples must be balanced with authentic, literary interaction with children, if we expect to see preservice teachers shift from limited, comprehension-based expectations to broader interpretive possibilities for literary engagement.

“¿De qué se trata esto de la literatura?”: Desarrollo de la comprensión de la respuesta literaria de los niños en los docentes en formación

EN ESTE estudio anual, los autores analizan los efectos del uso de estudios de caso cuidadosamente controlados, para promover en los docentes en formación conocimientos y habilidades de apoyo a las respuestas de los niños a la literatura. Como parte de una actividad de clase en un curso de grado sobre literatura infantil, 43 docentes en formación leyeron textos a niños seleccionados individualmente y elaboraron notas de campo. A partir de sus registros y trabajos finales, así como de las notas de clase, los impresos, las actividades y las lecturas asignadas, nuestro análisis revela patrones curiosos que señalan cambios en las perspectivas de los estudiantes sobre la respuesta literaria. Los docentes comenzaron el estudio con expectativas relativamente bajas. Al comienzo, desde una perspectiva de la respuesta basada en la comprensión, privilegiaron el texto sobre el niño. En el curso del estudio, sin embargo, los docentes adoptaron una visión de la respuesta literaria que coloca a la inter-

pretación sobre la comprensión. El aumento de las expectativas promovió la naturaleza afectiva, personal y social de la discusión literaria que privilegia conexiones intertextuales entre el texto impreso y los textos de las vidas de los lectores. Aquí argumentamos a favor de un modelo conjunto de enseñanza de la literatura a los niños—el curso universitario por un lado y los niños del estudio de casos por otro—desplazándonos del estudio distanciado de los niños en artículos y libros, al aquí y ahora del trabajo con niños reales que comentan, desafían, cuestionan y/o resisten en silencio los esfuerzos de los docentes por involucrarlos en la literatura. Por lo tanto, un curso universitario que introduzca nuevas ideas y múltiples ejemplos distanciados debe balancearse con una interacción literaria auténtica con los niños, si esperamos que los docentes en formación transiten de las expectativas limitadas basadas en la comprensión a posibilidades interpretativas más amplias.

Weg mit den “alten Zöpfen” in der Literaturpädagogik! Über das wachsende Literaturverständnis bei Lehramtsstudenten im Umgang mit Kindern

IN DIESER einjährigen Studie analysiert der Autor die Auswirkungen von sorgfältig betreuten Fallstudien mit dem Ziel, Lehramtskandidaten auf die Begegnung mit kindlichem Literaturverständnis kompetenter und effizienter vorzubereiten. Als Teil eines Seminarauftrags für Lehramtsstudierende im Studienbereich “Kinderliteratur” hielten 43 Lehramtskandidaten Lesestunden und führten darüber sorgfältig Aufzeichnungen, im besonderen über einzeln ausgewählte Kinder. Aufgrund der Ergebnisse der Feldforschung, der Abschlußberichte sowie der Kursaufzeichnungen, anhand der verwendeten Arbeitsblätter, der gesetzten Handlungsaktivitäten und des ausgewählten Lesestoffes eröffnet diese Analyse spannende, interessante Perspektiven, die Veränderungen im Bewußtsein der Lehramtsstudenten deutlich markieren. Die Lehrer begannen das Studium mit relativ geringen Erwartungen. In ihren anfänglichen, auf das Sinnverständnis ausgerichteten Fragestellungen gaben sie der Textinterpretation den Vorzug gegenüber ihrem “Fallstudienkind.” Im Laufe des Kurses jedoch zeichnete sich eine Schwerpunktverschiebung hinsichtlich der Erwartungshaltung insofern ab, als daß die allgemeine Sinnerfassung gegenüber dem leserzentrierten Textzugang an Bedeutung verlor. In erweiterten Anforderungen betonten sie die emotionale,

persönliche und soziale Komponente der literarischen Diskussion, wobei innertextliche, interaktive Querverbindungen zwischen dem Buch und dem Leser als bedeutsam angesehen wurden. Folglich sind einander ergänzende wie unterstützende didaktische Modelle für Lehramtsstudenten im Bereich der Lese- und Literaturförderung für Kinder zu befürworten: Einerseits eine universitäre Fachausbildung, andererseits Praxisstudien mit Kindern, wodurch eine Verschiebung von der distanzierten akademischen Betrachtungsweise mittels Fachliteratur hin zur wirklichkeitsnahen Arbeit mit Kindern möglich ist. Die Kinder gestalten durch ihre Kommentare, ihre Herausforderungen, durch ihre Fragen oder ihren inneren Widerstand die Bemühungen des Lehramtsstudenten mit, wenn dieser sie zu literarisieren versucht. So gesehen bedeutet dies, daß ein Universitätslehrgang mit neuen Forschungsideen und vielfältigen, doch wirklichkeitsfernen Beispielen ergänzt werden muß mit authentischer, lesepädagogischer Interaktion, wenn wir erwarten wollen, daß Lehramtsstudenten sich von begrenzten, auf das Sinnverständnis allein bezogenen Lernzielen wegbewegen hin zu den umfassenden interpretatorischen Möglichkeiten eines am Kind orientierten lesepädagogischen Engagements.

「このLiterachurchスタッフとは一体何なのか？」：
子供の文学への反応を理解していく見習い教師の成長

この長期にわたる研究で、著者は見習い教師が、入念な補助を受けたケーススタディーを使うことによって、子供の文学への反応を促進させるための知識や技術をいかにより多く身につけるか、その効果を分析した。大学の児童文学の授業での宿題の一環として、43人の見習い教師が個々に抽出された児童に対し注意深く観察記録をつけた。彼らの観察記録、授業のノートや最終レポート、ハンドアウト、作業、リーディング課題などを集めて分析してみると、文学への反応に対する見習い教師たちの展望の違いを示す興味深いパターンが見い出された。その研究を始めた時の教師たちの期待度は低いものだった。彼らは最初は、反応に対し理解に基づいた見方をしており、ケーススタディーの子供よりもテキストに重点を置いた。しかし研究を通して、教師たちは理解よりも解釈に重きを置く文学への反応を見るようになっていった。彼らの期待度は広がりを持ち、文章のテキストと読み手の生活のテクス

トとの間の相互のつながりに重きを置くような文学の議論の感情的、個人的、そして社会的本質を強調するようになった。ここで我々は、一方では大学の授業、また他方ではケーススタディーの子供たちといったような隣合わせの児童文学指導をすること、そして文章や本における子供たちといったような距離をおいた研究から、コメントをしたり、反論したり、疑問を投げかけたり、また見習い教師が文学を読ませようとする努力に対し静かに抵抗するといった目の前の子供たちを通して研究する方向に移行することを主張するものである。したがって、もし見習い教師が理解に基づく狭い見方をするところから文学とのかかわり合いにおいてより広い解釈の可能性を志向していくのを求めるのであれば、距離はあっても複合的な例を使って新しい研究の考えを導入した大学での授業は、子供たちとの本物の文学的やり取りをすることでバランスが保たれなければならないだろう。

“C'est quoi, ces bouquins?” La progression d'enseignants en formation initiale dans la compréhension des réactions des enfants à la littérature

DANS CETTE étude portant sur une année, les auteurs analysent les effets produits par l'utilisation d'études de cas soigneusement épaulées pour préparer des enseignants en formation initiale à être mieux informés et plus compétents en ce qui concerne les réactions des enfants à la littérature. Dans le cadre d'un cours de premier cycle consacré à la littérature de jeunesse, quarante trois enseignants en formation initiale ont fait la lecture et pris soigneusement des notes sur des enfants sélectionnés individuellement. En se basant sur leurs observations écrites et leurs dossiers de recherche, ainsi que sur leurs notes de cours, photocopiés, activités, et lectures obligatoires, l'analyse effectuée a fait apparaître des structures étonnantes témoignant de changements relatifs aux perspectives de ces futurs enseignants à l'égard des réactions des enfants à la littérature. Au départ, les enseignants avaient des attentes relativement faibles. En vertu de leur conception initiale de réponses basées sur la compréhension, ils privilégiaient le texte sur les cas d'enfants étudiés. Chemin faisant, ils ont évolué vers une vision des réactions à la littérature où l'interprétation l'emporte sur la compréhension. Leurs

attentes ont évolué de telle sorte que l'accent s'est déplacé vers une discussion littéraire de nature affective, personnelle, sociale, ce qui privilégie les connections intertextuelles entre le texte figurant sur la page et les textes des vies des lecteurs. Nous défendons ici un modèle bilatéral d'enseignement de la littérature enfantine, avec d'un côté le cours de l'université et, de l'autre, les études de cas d'enfants, dans un mouvement qui va de l'étude plus distanciée des enfants dans les articles et les livres vers le travail ici et maintenant avec de vrais enfants qui font des commentaires, contestent, posent des questions, et/ou résistent en silence aux efforts des futurs enseignants pour les faire entrer dans la littérature. C'est ainsi qu'une infusion de cours d'université, avec de nouvelles idées de recherche et des exemples multiples mais distanciés, devrait être équilibrée par des interactions littéraires authentiques avec les enfants, si on veut voir les enseignants en formation initiale passer d'attentes limitées basées sur des attentes de compréhension vers des perspectives interprétatives plus larges favorables à un investissement dans la littérature.

dren. Under these conditions, literary discussions looked more like the rote repetition of a script than an authentic discussion taking individual interpretations into account. Hartman (1991) suggests that “what has counted as *good* comprehension is a slavish fidelity to recounting the story line or the main ideas of a passage” (p. 373). However, current research rejects a normative view of response to literature and focuses, instead, on the relationship of the reader and the text (Beach & Hynds, 1991; Rosenblatt, 1991a).

Bakhtin (1986) believes that a creative understanding of text comes when the reader travels through a character or situation as deeply as possible, while keeping sight of personal experience. The reader thus creates meaning as a new whole that is achieved in dialogue between the self and other authors. Social constructivists (Bakhtin, 1981; Vygotsky, 1978) emphasize the importance of taking on multiple voices and perspectives in understanding literature and in analytical thinking in general. The key idea is that meaning is socially negotiated and mediated through multiple sign systems.

Current research (e.g., Sloan, 1991) emphasizes modeling on the part of teachers to help students gain control over a wide range of interpretive processes to support individual and social explorations of meaning. These processes include understandings of innovative instructional practices such as grand conversations (Peterson & Eeds, 1990), interpretive questions (McGee, 1992a), literature logs (Kelly & Farnan, 1991), dramatic enactments (Wolf, 1994), and artistic representations (Siegel, in press). Teachers thus guide children to demonstrate their thinking to others and to see problem-solving in and through the text. As teachers today are increasingly faced with teaching reading through authentic, unexpurgated literature, the understanding they have of how to go about such a task is critical (Scharer, 1992; Short, 1992a). This is particularly true when we consider how their expectations for children can either shut down or open up possibilities for response (Eeds & Wells, 1989; Hickman, 1983; Purcell-Gates, 1995; Raphael & McMahon, 1994; Wolf & Heath, 1992).

The capacity for diminishing or expanding literary response is a critical concept in preservice teacher education. With relatively little experience with children, young teachers may work from the traditional frames of their own experience (Lortie, 1975) rather than incorporate new ideas. Borko and Putnam (in press) remind us that “research on teachers’ learning suggests that for knowledge to be useful for teaching, it must be integrally linked to, or situated in, the contexts in which it is to be used.”

Learning about children’s response to literature must be done *with* children. Lectures, readings, class ac-

tivities, and professorial expertise can support, but cannot replace, what children have to tell us and show us in the context of literary interaction. Thus, the university class model we present in this article combines, as Walmsley (1992) suggests in the opening quotation of this section, the reading field with the children’s literature field. This combination balances an overview of current, diverse, and classic books for children with an investigation of recent research in what children and teachers can do with these books.

The central question in this research asks: What are the effects of using carefully assisted case studies of literary interaction to prepare preservice teachers to be more knowledgeable and skilled in supporting children’s response to literature? More specifically for this article:

1. Are the literary interactions between preservice teachers and their children affected by teachers’ expectations? Do expectations for the project, for the children, and for the preservice teachers themselves shift over time?
2. Are the literary interactions affected by teachers’ understandings of intertextuality? Do these understandings change over time?
3. What is the relationship between expectations and intertextuality? How does this shift over time?

We place a central focus on expectations in this paper because they exert a powerful influence on how teachers and children interact (Good & Brophy, 1994). Dweck and Bempechat (1983) tie expectations to children’s and teachers’ theories of intelligence. Children with an *entity* theory “tend to view intelligence as an attribute they possess that is relatively global and stable, that can be judged as adequate or inadequate, and that is both limited and limiting” while children with an *incremental* theory “view intelligence as something they produce—something with great potential to be increased through their efforts” (p. 244). Teachers working from an entity model often define children according to the labels given, and when their students are not categorized as smart, teachers tend to break up and slow down instruction (Allington, 1991). Teachers working from an incremental model, however, see themselves as guides with children as apprentices in a learning process that is kept whole as well as consistently connected to context (Rogoff, 1990).

If we compare these models to current understandings in reading research, we can align a traditional view of comprehension with the entity model. In this view, the meaning of a text is relatively inflexible and reflects what Rosenblatt (1991b) calls an “efferent bias,” which places “accent on students’ reporting their memory of details, and recounting the sequence of ideas or events” (p. 123). Certainly, the meaning can shift slightly to take in the importance of varied background knowledge

(Pearson & Fielding, 1991), but overall there is a specifically implied meaning in the text—a meaning held in the minds of authors, critics, and teachers, a meaning that the child must learn to match.

In literature discussions, this can result in simple questions or guessing game activities that demand less thinking from students (Hiebert & Fisher, 1991). At the same time, teachers may inadvertently dismiss children's authentic responses in favor of topics "focused on adult concepts of relevance" (Roller & Beed, 1994, p. 511). Lewis (1993), for example, writes eloquently about how her own text interpretation—which "privileged textual clues over connections to personal experience"—ultimately discredited a child's quite different point of view (pp. 455-456).

New definitions of reading comprehension (Tierney, 1990), which we prefer to call *interpretation*, align with the incremental model. Interpretation places high emphasis on children's engagement with written text, which allows children an active role in constructing meaning rather than a more passive role in reproducing a set meaning (Benton, 1992). Interpretation stresses the affective, the personal, and the social nature of literary discussion that privileges intertextual connections between the text on the page and the texts of readers' lives (Hartman, 1992; Kamberelis & Scott, 1992; Wolf & Heath, 1992). Thus, the story in print interacts with the story in the mind, implying that "every text, the discourse of every occasion, makes its social meanings against the background of other texts, and the discourses of other occasions" (Lemke, 1992, p. 257).

However, as Bloome and Egan-Robertson (1993) suggest, a juxtaposition of texts "must be proposed, be interactionally recognized, be acknowledged, and have social significance" (p. 308). Intertextual connections, in other words, are social constructions with import for those creating and acknowledging the juxtaposition. In this interpretive model, teachers simultaneously value the connections that children make as well as see potential in leading children to new understandings (Goldenberg, 1992/1993; Villaume & Worden, 1993; Wolf, 1991). They have broad expectations for children's capacity to interpret text as well as reflective insight into their own role as teachers of literature as they insert their own questions and interpretations into the literary conversation.

Shifts in understanding from comprehension to interpretation, which take new theories of reading, materials, and instructional practices into account, require a commensurate shift in teacher education practices. Much of the necessary work to guide and support preservice teachers' growing understandings of literary response can be accomplished in university class settings that emphasize subject matter knowledge. Expectations are integrally

linked to teachers' subject matter knowledge and the instruction they use to relate that knowledge (Grossman, 1990). As Borko and Putnam (in press) explain:

teachers with greater subject matter knowledge tend to emphasize the conceptual, understanding, problem-solving, and inquiry aspects of their subjects. Less knowledgeable teachers tend to emphasize facts, rules, and procedures and to stick closely to detailed lesson plans or the text, sometimes missing opportunities to emphasize important ideas or connections among ideas.

Still, subject matter knowledge is only a part of the necessary training for preservice teachers. To arrive at a more complete understanding of children's literary response, preservice teachers must be involved with children—moving from the more distanced study of children in articles and books to the here and now of working with real children who will, without a doubt, comment on, challenge, question, and/or silently resist the preservice teachers' efforts to engage them in literature. Thus, a university course infusion of new research ideas with multiple, though sometimes hypothetical, examples must be balanced with authentic, literary interaction with children, if we expect to see preservice teachers shift from limited comprehension-based expectations to broader interpretive possibilities for literary discussion.

This article is the first report from a study on preservice teachers' growth in understanding literary response. While future articles will highlight the teachers' questioning styles as well as their understandings of the role of the arts (drama, illustration, storytelling) in language arts, the purpose of this primary article is to emphasize the overarching role of expectations and intertextuality across preservice teachers' literary interactions with children. We begin with a description of the methods and sources of data, followed by the results. We close with some implications for how carefully assisted case studies of children's response to literature provide preservice teachers with opportunities to learn about effective literary interaction.

Method

The participants in this study are 43 elementary preservice teachers (37 females and 6 males) who were enrolled in children's literature in the spring and fall semesters of 1993 in a state research university in the southwestern U.S. Predominately Anglo and female, most preservice teachers do their coursework for teacher licensure while completing undergraduate degrees in liberal arts. The remaining preservice teachers have already completed undergraduate degrees and enter the School of Education as fifth-year students. The admission re-

quirements for the School of Education are some of the most stringent in the state, and the program itself has a strong emphasis on theory and research. The case-study children—also predominantly Anglo—were selected by the preservice teachers and ranged from 20 months to 11 years, with the average at 6 years of age. Three preservice teachers read with 2 children (either siblings or cousins), bringing the total number of children to 46, with 21 females and 25 males.

When the authors use *I* or *my*, the voice belongs to the course professor, Shelby Wolf, but the surrounding text is a mingling of the three authors' voices; Angela Carey and Erikka Mieras were originally preservice teachers and participants in the study and later joined in the analysis and write up of the work.

The reader response case-study assignment built on the methods of cross-grade tutoring outlined by Heath and Mangiola (1991)—where older students read to younger children and kept careful field notes on the reading sessions. I asked the preservice teachers to read with their individual children for at least a half hour a week and emphasized that for every half hour of direct interaction with the child, they should reserve another hour to write up their field notes. These field notes included the books, questions, answers, and activities (e.g., dramatic enactments, artistic renderings) of each session. More important, the field notes were an opportunity for the teachers to reflect on what they had learned. The number of sessions the preservice teachers had with their case-study children ranged from 5 to 15 sessions. On the average, the teachers had 8 sessions with their children.

The field notes were turned in twice a semester for my commentary. Here I focused not only on helping the preservice teachers see patterns in children's responses to literature, but on their own growth in understanding these patterns as well. I counseled teachers to connect their findings to research on children's response to literature (e.g., Beach & Hynds, 1991), research on instructional strategies (e.g., McGee, 1992b), professional reviews of specific books and/or articles by or about particular authors (e.g., *The Horn Book*), and analyses of certain genres (e.g., the fairy tale in Zipes, 1983). The teachers looked across the patterns in their field notes and wrote a final paper on a selected theme supported by the research literature.

Data for this study were collected at the end of each semester and included the preservice teachers' field notes and final papers, my own commentary to students, as well as class lecture notes, handouts, and anecdotal records of class discussions. We began analysis by extensively reviewing the data to ensure that the three members of the research team were equally familiar with the

cases as well as search for patterns. We then created a preliminary coding system made up of 10 separate categories, which combined some a priori themes based on current research that I strongly emphasized in the course (e.g., intertextuality, dramatic enactments) with themes that emerged as we discussed the cases as a team (e.g. rereading, expectations). For example, clear expressions of shifting expectations, often linguistically marked by mental state verbs ("I was surprised when the child...", "I was amazed to learn..."), permeated the data and helped us to understand when and why these shifts occurred.

We divided up the cases to enter segments from the data into the computer and tentatively apply our codes. These data segments included passages from field notes and final papers in which preservice teachers reflected on what they were learning about children's response to literature as well as representative examples of the literary discussions and activities that occurred. Data segments from written journals and papers closely match the concept of *verbal episodes* in which topic shifts signal bounded sections of speech (M.D. LeCompte, personal communication, May 17, 1995).

In the preservice teachers' writing, topic shifts were often clearly signaled by paragraph markers, skipped lines, or transitional statements. The data segment selection process followed the developmental procedures outlined by LeCompte and Preissle (1993). As we shall explain later, we began our analysis with a relatively broad selection and then, over time and familiarity with the data, narrowed our selection to data segments that added insight to our typical cases as well as unique and/or contradictory information.

The data segments used in this article were taken verbatim from the preservice teachers' field notes or final papers. Words in quotation marks within these segments indicate direct speech or passages the preservice teachers read from trade book texts to their case-study children. Words in parentheses are comments the teachers wrote, which are asides or additions to their main text. Only words in brackets are our own, and they often serve to provide reference information or to add clarification. Each data segment is marked by the preservice teacher's code name, the date of the passage, and the age of the case-study child (e.g., UAT, 10/14/93, age 5). Sessions without dates are marked by session number (e.g., #1).

Our initial coding served to alert us to inadequacies in our original codes and places where we could possibly collapse categories. For example, rereading was subsumed under intertextuality because reading the same text multiple times allowed the preservice teachers to compare children's within-text interpretations across time. At this point, we redistributed the data, making

sure that we were responsible for different cases, and entered what individual members of the research team felt were additional and needed data segments.

We recoded the data to confirm key assertions warranted by multiple evidence sources as well as search for discrepant cases (Erickson, 1986). We then redistributed the cases once more. During this third run, each of us checked to make sure all pertinent passages were entered and coded. Finally, as principal investigator of the study, I went through each of the cases a fourth time and brought any discrepancies in unentered data and questions of coding to the team for discussion and resolution.

The Appendix summarizes our analytic categories with illustrative examples: (a) features of language that mark preservice teachers' expectations, either for the project or for what they thought children and teachers could do with literature; (b) teachers' recognition of intertextual connections (e.g., connections between life and text as well as among and within texts); (c) the kinds of questions the teachers asked the children (e.g., known-information questions, conditional questions); (d) the teachers' recognition of children's dramatic interpretation of story (e.g., children imitate, interact with, or extend text through dramatic play); (e) perceptions of how response is expressed through illustration (e.g., response for young children is often dependent on reading the illustrations or drawing their own responses); and (f) features of the teachers' story reading art (e.g., planning for sessions or using intonation, dialect, or gesture). After coding the field notes and final papers, we applied the six analytic categories to the content of the course itself, coding the lecture notes, handouts, activities, and commentary on field notes and final papers. In this article, we emphasize teachers' shifts in *expectations* and in understanding *intertextuality*.

Because many data segments were representative of more than one category, we have used a multiple coding system for those responses. For example, in the following segment from one teacher's final paper on her case-study child's intertextual connections, there is a shift in her expectations for response:

[I have read that:] "We do not take meaning from the page unless we bring meaning to the page." This is a concept which, in theory, I knew, but it wasn't until I began this case study that I actually witnessed this process objectively. My case study demonstrates that, while the meanings readers construct from a text may be very different and individualized, they are, none the less, legitimate. Although I might not make the same connections to the text that [the child] has made, his interpretations are very valid because they help him form the relationships necessary for synthesis (ACT, 11/24/94, age 8).

This segment would be coded as TL—a category of "intertextual connections" that indicates that the child made links between the book being read and a real life theme. In this case, the child constantly made associations between the text and his own love for football, though the written text had nothing to do with football.

However, the segment is also coded as ECT and EPT, part of the expectation category system, to indicate (a) that the child was acting as a teacher—demonstrating the extent of children's capacity to connect text to life as well as (b) that the preservice teacher was reflecting on how the child's intertextual connections can inform her role as a future teacher of literature. Thus, assigning a category with one dimension does not, by any means, rule out involvement in other categories.

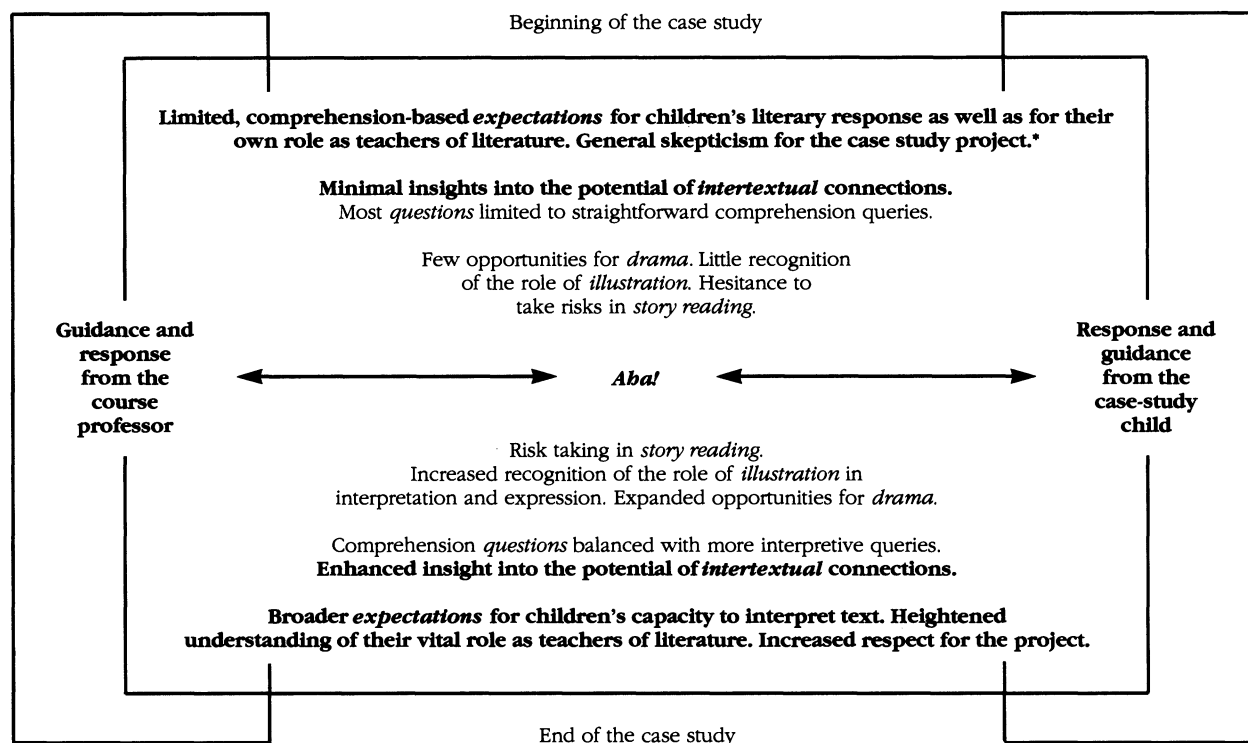
After coding the data, we divided the preservice teachers' sessions into thirds—with beginning, middle, and final sessions—and studied the kinds of codes that seemed to be typically associated with these sessions. Several intriguing patterns emerged that all marked shifts in perspective as the preservice teachers grew in their understandings of literary interaction over time. We then assembled representative passages in order to highlight the kinds of insights the teachers had at different points in the study and made counts of the coded categories within the three time periods. We also paid particular attention to the instructional context of the class to look for points of comparison between what the teachers were learning in the case-study assignment and what they were learning (or, at least, what was being taught) in the university class itself or in my written commentary on field notes and final papers.

Results

Across analytic categories, the changes in our preservice teachers took on the shape of an hourglass (see Figure). The shape not only represents the shift in teachers' perceptions over time, but demonstrates the emphasis teachers placed on individual issues.

The wide band at the top represents teachers' expectations. Almost every teacher in our study commented on what they expected from their case-study children, and in the beginning of the study their comments often emphasized limited, comprehension-based expectations for what children could do as well as what role they should play as teachers of literature. Although they did not comment as much on intertextual connections or questions (represented by the next level), the data reveal minimal insight into intertextual potential as well as the predominance of straightforward comprehension queries. Finally, there were very few attempts at drama, with little recognition of the role of illustration, and a

 Preservice teachers' growth in understanding children's literary response over time



*Bold print indicates the primary focus of this article

general hesitance to take risks in story reading.

At specific points over the course of the semester-long study—points that varied widely among the preservice teachers—the majority experienced what we call the “Aha!” effect. They realized that their expectations for response—whether in their questions or elsewhere—were limiting what children could say and do with literature. Although it might be useful to try to pinpoint the exact moment of shift, we found this virtually impossible to do. The Aha! effect is perhaps best described as a series of revelations: Insights into particular analytic categories (such as intertextuality or drama) came at different points in the study for each teacher.

Teachers also wrote extensively about their growth in particular areas, but not in others. This moment or series of moments is influenced and supported by guidance and response from both the university professor and the case-study child. The word *guidance* takes precedence for the impact of the course professor, for I took a proactive and often explicit role in leading the preservice teachers toward broader understandings of literature.

Still, the word *response* is important, for input from the preservice teachers led me to rethink my instruction as well as respond to the teachers in individual ways. The word response takes precedence for the impact of the case-study children, for they were less likely to be explicit, at least in verbal ways, about their preferred ways of response. Still, their response did serve to guide the preservice teachers to make shifts in their own instruction—rethinking how to engage the child in literature.

After coming to terms with the implications of their insights, the teachers began to change the way they interacted with both literature and their case-study children. Thus, in the bottom half of the Figure, the bands begin to expand, demonstrating recognition of the uses of drama for engaging children in text, the power of the illustration for interpretation and expression, and increased risk taking in their own story reading. The widening bands also emphasize a balance of comprehension questions with more interpretive queries as well as an enhanced understanding of critical importance of intertextual links between children's lives and literature, which we will

address in more detail later. Most important, the last and ever-widening band indicates higher expectations for children's capacity to interpret text, their own increased understanding of their critical role as teachers of literature, as well as newfound respect for the project.

In the following sections we will describe the instructional context of the course and provide more specific findings regarding how the preservice teachers shifted in their expectations as well as in their understandings of the role of intertextuality in literary response.

Instructional context

The growth of the preservice teachers' understandings of response was supported by a strong university class focus on the need to engage children in literature. I encouraged the teachers to have high expectations for children's abilities to participate in literary conversation and activity if given substantive opportunities to make connections between the text on the page and the text of their lives. I encouraged the teachers to move beyond comprehension-based discussions and activities to broader interpretive possibilities. Throughout the project, I suggested that the preservice teachers' chief challenge would be to think of children as their teachers and informants—to listen to the voices of children as well as closely observe their actions. The class syllabus outlined the central themes of the course and began with the importance of learning from students:

Learning from students is critical to excellent teaching because of its emphasis on what children know. A teacher is not the sole purveyor of knowledge and information, pouring facts and figures into children's minds. Our students come to school with their own "ways with words" [Heath, 1983]—languages, ideas, and understandings.... Through careful analysis of children's understandings, teachers learn to evaluate not only where children are, but where they can go next.

While generally encouraging the preservice teachers to see children as experts, I also tried to break a number of specific perceptions—that picture books were for "babies" and that chapter books were for older students. A class on censorship, in particular, provided the teachers with an opportunity to think about the expectations behind book selection. I talked about the kinds of books that were typically censored, and the handout that I distributed listed many "banned books" as well as the following quote from Nodelman (1992):

The more we believe that children are limited in various ways, the more we deprive them of experiences that might make them less limited. If we believe that children have short attention spans, we won't expose them to long books; if we believe they cannot understand complicated

language, we will give them only books with limited vocabularies; if we believe they are susceptible, we will keep them away from interesting books that may contain potentially dangerous ideas or attitudes; and if we believe they like only certain kinds of books, we will not give them access to other kinds. Deprived of the experience of anything more than the little we believe them capable of, children often do learn to be inflexible, intolerant of the complex and the unconventional. (pp. 35-36)

I asked the preservice teachers to write about and then discuss the following question: "When, if ever, is there cause for censorship?" The result was a passionate debate on individual values as teachers discussed the books they wanted to teach or avoid. They ultimately suggested that there are critical differences between censorship and choice and that while they may not choose to teach a particular book, they would never attempt to make the book unavailable to children. Most teachers were adamant in vocalizing their faith in children to make their own decisions. As one teacher argued, "The idea is not to get children to think like us, but to think for themselves."

In encouraging the preservice teachers to think for themselves, I placed them in a number of hypothetical situations that challenged them to reflect on their role as teachers of literature. Early in the course, I asked the teachers to imagine themselves in a book club of friends. "What would you think," I asked, "if one of your friends began the discussion by asking you to provide the author's name, list the major characters, and point out the theme?" The consensus of the preservice teachers was that this kind of questioning was "demeaning," "naive," and "a waste of time." One teacher summed up the response of others to such a discussion leader: "I'd think she was nuts!"

In the ensuing discussion, I asked the teachers to consider children's reactions to similar "quiz-like" questions. The point was that children can often see through these queries to the limited, comprehension-based expectations behind them. Instead, I suggested that comprehension often emerges within high-level interpretive discussions (Enciso, 1994) and activities such as art and drama (Leland & Harste, 1994; Wolf & Enciso, 1994).

Although much of the emphasis on literary engagement occurred within the context of the university class discussions, I also emphasized these issues with individual teachers in my commentary on their field notes. This was especially true when I felt that the preservice teachers had misinterpreted the purpose of the case study or had a tendency to be too didactic in their interaction with children. One teacher, for example, was working with a 3-year-old boy and felt he should take the case-study opportunity to teach the child how to decode. He continual-

ly quizzed the child, asking him to label objects and read small words through memorization and repetition. In my response to his first set of field notes, I wrote:

I appreciate how seriously you have taken on the task. You've been able to establish rapport with a 3-year-old (not always an easy task) and you've got some consistency going with reading so much Dr. Seuss. However, I do think you're too strongly focused on straightforward comprehension questions and demands: "Point to this" and "Point to that." You do not need to worry about his ability to recite the alphabet or read simple words. You want to get a discussion going!

Now you could continue to focus on Seuss, but ask more substantive questions—and you might choose some Seuss stories with a stronger plot or theme like *The Cat in the Hat* [1957] ("What would you do if your mother went away and this character showed up?") or *Horton Hears a Who* [1954] ("Would you try to save the Who? Why?").

Call me if this doesn't make sense, because I don't want you to feel lost and you're right—the paper is fast approaching. One possibility is that if you try to up the ante on your questions from "What's that?" to "What would you do?" and "What do you think?"—you may have a paper in how different the responses can be (BNQ, 2/28/93, age 3).

In my remarks, I provided the preservice teacher with specific examples in order to scaffold his growth as a teacher. I asked him not only to raise the level of the kinds of books he was reading but to heighten the kinds of questions he asked. Even more important than my observations, however, was the preservice teacher's ultimate observation of the child's frustration. As the teacher read, he continually pointed to words on the page, hoping the child would learn to track. But his hand covered the pictures, which forced the child to try to peek at the illustrations under his hand, and finally to move the interfering hand altogether. Through the child's actions, the teacher ultimately abandoned his pointing and began to ask more substantive questions.

Throughout the project I counseled preservice teachers to raise their expectations for the children as well as for themselves as teachers of literature. When the preservice teachers struggled with their projects—particularly as they tried to sort out the topics for their final papers—they often came to me for advice. I would respond, "I can't tell you what your paper topic will be, but your case-study child can tell you." The teachers usually responded to this remark with puzzled looks or even expressions of sympathy for a professor who had clearly lost her mind. As one teacher later told me, "I thought, 'What is she talking about? What could the child teach me? I'm the teacher.'" Yet, the method in my madness was to position the child in the role of expert.

In my oral and written advice to teachers, I encouraged them to look across the patterns of the child's response in their field notes to determine their paper topics. I also provided insight into the patterns I saw as well as specific advice on where they could go in the research literature to extend their understandings of particular issues:

You have a very detailed journal. Bravo. The details you have captured from your conversations with [the child] will serve you well when it comes to writing your final paper. However, I would like a little more context—you're reading to her in the classroom, right? Is this where you always read? Is she a first grader? What do you know about her as far as her experience with books? You might also be more reflective in each session. After presenting the session, talk a bit more about what you think are some key ideas from the session. What are you learning? What patterns do you see emerging? I was struck by a couple of things:

I am quite impressed with your questions. Note the predominance of phrases like "What do you think?" (with strong emphasis on the word *think*) and how you ask [the child] to justify the statements she makes. You might want to note what kinds of questions seem to lead to interesting responses. Note too that you have a wonderful tendency to do "follow-up" questions. When [the child] says something you often follow up with "Why?" If you decide to go in this direction you might refer to the hand-out I used in class on the day we discussed the four data segments between adults and children. There are some references and ideas there that could be useful to you [e.g., Cochran-Smith, 1984; Heath, 1982; Ninio & Bruner, 1976].

Another interesting possibility would be to follow the pattern you established in your last sessions. Read the "classic" version of a tale and then go to the "fractured tale." Other examples include:

The Three Little Pigs and *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* (Scieszka, 1989)

Goldilocks and the Three Bears and *Somebody and the Three Blairs* (Tolhurst, 1990)

The Frog Prince and *The Frog Prince Continued* (Scieszka, 1991)

Then you could see where [the child] makes comments, laughs at the insider jokes, etc. A marvelous reference for this is *How Texts Teach What Readers Learn* [Meek, 1988] [Excerpt from commentary to CLQ, 10/7/93, age 7]

In this example, I made explicit intertextual connections between the teacher's present and future written texts suggesting that detailed field notes would ultimately "serve [her final paper] well." I used this advice frequently with the preservice teachers, reiterating the fact that good papers usually emerged from abundantly described field notes. In addition, in reflecting on the patterns I saw in her field notes, I advised her to connect

her findings to both academic and literary texts. I provided her with explicit text-to-text connections by referring to class handouts, articles she could locate in the library, and pieces of literature that might follow a pattern she had already established with her young reader. Throughout the project I counseled teachers to connect their findings to library research that would help them support their central themes and arguments.

The emphasis on connections, however, did not limit intertextuality to links between written texts. University class discussions also emphasized the power of personal connections as teachers worked in groups weaving their experiences together with the text at hand. For example, for one class the teachers were asked to read a chapter by Sloan (1991) on building connections as well as the story *Tuck Everlasting* (Babbitt, 1975). In this story, a young girl, Winnie Foster, is faced with a choice of living life eternal. She discovers the secret of the amazing Tuck family—a family of four who inadvertently drink from the water of life. During the story, Winnie must decide whether she too will live forever.

I began the class by reading the myth of King Midas (D'Aulaire & D'Aulaire, 1962), who asks that everything he touch turn to gold and later regrets his foolish choice when his own daughter is transformed. I then wrote the following quote on the board, "When the gods want to punish you, they answer your prayers." I asked teachers to "talk about *Tuck Everlasting* in relation to Midas and this quote. How does this question fit with Sloan's notion of building connections?" The resulting discussions were a kaleidoscope of connections—ranging from explicit connections between written texts ("Well, Winnie didn't really wish for eternal life like Midas wished for gold. But she got to see the consequences of her wish before deciding against it.") to connections between the text quote on the board and their own lives ("Yeah. I remember I once wanted a particular boyfriend, but once I got him...Well..." [Nods and laughter from the group]).

Following Bloome and Egan-Robertson's (1993) criteria for intertextual connections, the instructional context of the university course emphasized a number of central themes that were proposed (the interpretive questions for the class; assignment expectations), interactionally recognized (through group discussion as well as reflective field notes and my own response), and had social significance (from how to reflect on old boyfriends to increased understanding of how to think about teaching).

The emphasis on high expectations for literary engagement through interpretive, intertextual discussions and activities was continually emphasized in the university class. More important, however, as we shall see in the next section, the case-study project itself ensured that

the preservice teachers moved out of the hypothetical university world of imagining possibilities and into the real world of talking about books with children. Although the university class served as a continual foundation for the preservice teachers' understandings, it was the children who taught them how to construct literary engagement.

Broader expectations for literary response

Over the course of the semester, one preservice teacher followed a young child's response to *Tuck Everlasting* (Babbitt, 1975). The story is rich in figurative language with many metaphors and similes. While reading the story to her case-study child, the teacher stopped to admire Babbitt's use of language:

The other day when we started *Tuck*, I read over a few similes and said, "What a great simile!" I asked [the child] if he knew what similes and metaphors were and he said, "No." I said, "Oh, well, you'll probably learn about them next year." But today when we read, I did it again. Page 45 says, "The sweet earth opened out its wide four corners to her like the petals of a flower ready to be picked." I said, "Another great simile." Then I said, "Oh, I'm sorry—you'll learn about those next year." [The child] said, "What are similes?" I explained they were a way to describe something better—to make it clearer. I had the [university textbook—Lukens, 1990] out and...looked up simile and read to him about them. Then I said, "You try to pick some out if you hear any."

...I was amazed—he picked out almost every one—even ones that I didn't notice. He picked out "the meadows like foam on a painted sea" and "three armchairs and a rocker stood about aimlessly, like strangers at a party, ignoring each other" [as well as many others]. I learned a lesson from this—children are smart and can and want to learn things. I could've told him the other day what similes were, but for some reason I didn't. He totally caught on. It was great! (LLE, 4/5/93, age 8).

This teacher's initial assumption was that similes were too complex for a child so young. Yet, when the child challenged her to reveal how the language was crafted for effect, she was "amazed" with how easily the child grasped the concept and was able to recognize quite different comparisons.

This particular case is unique in its emphasis on similes, but not in its shift in expectations. Ninety-three percent of the preservice teachers showed broader expectations for children's capacity to interpret text; only 3 of the 43 teachers did not comment on possible shifts either in their field notes or final papers. Shifts in expectations were marked by mental state verbs that demonstrated their surprise. Their notes were filled with comments like "I was intrigued..." "I couldn't believe..." and

"I learned...." Across the case studies, three different shifts in preservice teachers' expectations were evident as they moved (a) from doubt to belief in the case-study project itself, (b) from a view of children as passive learners to a perception of children as active teachers, and (c) from novices with relatively traditional views to reflective teachers of literature.

The categories are interconnected, for what one expects of a project and the child involved in that project has strong implications for how one responds as a teacher. The interdependence of the categories is also critical in understanding the preservice teachers' expectational shifts over time. When a teacher's view of one category shifted, the other two categories were affected as well.

From doubt to belief in the case-study project. As we mentioned in the introduction, preservice teachers began the case-study project with some skepticism. While only 37% of the teachers actually wrote about their uncertainty for the project, when they did they were often vehement in their displeasure:

Aaaaaaugh! This is so frustrating! [The child] just doesn't talk!...See, Shelby, this is what I think is difficult—I don't have all the contact that someone reading with their own children gets for this project. I can't see if [the child] is carrying anything over into other areas of his life.... All I get is that half hour of reading, and a short period of time with him. One thing that I *am* learning, is that to do *any* rich, meaningful research on students, you need to spend a great deal of time in the field gathering related information from the subjects! (SJE, 11/2/93, age 9).

Comments like this usually occurred in the field notes, especially in the beginning of the case studies, as teachers expected literary revelations to come as easily as those that are often described in the research literature on response (Roller & Beed, 1994). Instead, when children looked bored or responded with "I don't know" in answer to queries or even when they dared to pursue their own issues and questions, the teachers blamed the children and the project.

In response to these complaints, I often advised them to try different strategies for response. For example, for this particular case study, the child was keenly interested in the media—video games and television focused on action figures. In my written commentary, I suggested that the teacher compare and contrast the child's literary understandings with those from the media and recommended several sources of research on children's contact with television. I counseled the student: "While some of this project is painful—because it's always easier when you have a child literally dropping story references out his/her mouth like so many diamonds—you'll probably

have more children in your class engaged in media than literature" (SJE, 11/4/93, age 9).

Like the fairy tale, when children did not deliver literary diamonds and pearls, the teachers tended to ascribe toad-like characteristics to what the children *did* say. This teacher, for example, wrote, "I would think that he would have a vivid imagination from all the different graphics he's seen in video games. But maybe he doesn't have the imaginative skills because he doesn't have a rich background with literature" (SJE, 11/2/93, age 9). Instead of focusing on what the child had, she concentrated on what she perceived as missing and placed the blame squarely on the child.

Through the research literature they read for the university class as well as their experiences with their children, the teachers ultimately came to realize the benefits of the long-term case-study project. With time and experience, they began to see the interaction between a child's response and their own assumptions and expectations. One teacher who was particularly dissatisfied with the project in the beginning of the semester wrote:

In looking back to the beginning of the semester, I can remember thinking that the case study of a child sounded like a tedious and somewhat useless idea. I even called my sister, the elementary teacher, to verify my doubts, and see how some of my courses and assignments compared with hers at [this university] 4 years ago. She, too, thought the idea seemed strange, unheard of, and perhaps a bit irrelevant. She said that her class had studied books, books, and more books. She told me I would be unprepared if I didn't know tons of books, authors and illustrators to use in my classroom. Well, ... I can hardly wait to tell her what I have discovered. Through the case study, and the research I have done, I feel as if I have found an entire new perspective on children's literature. I know that in all of my years of reading children's literature, I had never once given a thought to children's reactions. Children's response is an idea that I had never heard of and through this case study, I finally opened my ears for the first time, and began to listen to the voices of children (SJD, 11/24/93, age 5).

A chief tenet of the course was that while learning about "books, books, and more books" was needed, more important issues addressed what to *do* with these books. Ultimately, the only way to ensure that preservice teachers learned how to engage children in literature was to emphasize the important role of children as teachers, an issue we will explore in the next section.

From children as passive learners to active teachers. In their field notes and final papers, 93% of the preservice teachers reflected on their increasing respect for children as teachers. As with their expectations for the project, their initial views of the child often underesti-

mated what children could understand and do with literature. They defined children as relatively passive learners, instead of the active teachers that they ultimately turned out to be. The following examples illustrate some of the preservice teachers' beginning perceptions and how these changed over time and experience:

- I was a little hesitant at first when I decided to read *Charlotte's Web* [White, 1952] because [the child] just began third grade so I wasn't sure if she had a developed attention span needed for this book, although she assured me in our first meeting that she was interested in reading a chapter book (AMI, 9/9/93, age 9).

- To be honest, I wondered when I preread the story [*There's Something in My Attic*, Mayer, 1988] if it would be too scary for [the child]. Actually, she didn't seem frightened at all. This reminded me of our class discussion about what should and shouldn't be read to kids. Again, this activity shows me that I think it's best to bring all kinds of literature into a child's world (MDT, 3/14/93, age 4).

- Maybe instead of reading a lot of versions of the same story all at once, I'll spread them out. I would still read four or five versions, but say two at a time. I'm afraid to do that because it will be harder for her to see similarities and differences across the versions if they're all spread out over different days. I'm torn on this one! (MED, 3/13/93, age 6).

- I have learned a great deal about him including his preferences for reading, his overall ability to comprehend what has been read to him, his ability to express himself and open up, and his ability to ask questions and respond to them freely. But initially, it wasn't this easy (MCQ, 4/21/93, age 6).

Learning to think of children as teachers isn't easy, especially if preservice teachers have relatively traditional notions of what children can and cannot handle. In the first example, the teacher wrote of a somewhat debilitating link between age and attention span—assuming that the child was too young for chapter books. Yet, she was not alone, for even mothers with their own children shared these assumptions. As one mother wrote about her daughter: "I thought she would lose interest quickly [in chapter books]. On the contrary, she loved them. I don't know who was more enlightened, her or me" (UAT, 6/12//93, age 5).

In the second example, the teacher debates the frightening aspects of a book, yet the child does not share her worries. After observing the child's calm reaction, the teacher reflects on a class discussion that occurred after reading Sendak's (1988) Caldecott speech in which he defends the so-called frightening aspects of his text *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963) and explains that frightening things are a part of children's everyday lives.

The third example demonstrates a preservice teacher's worry about a child's ability to hold texts in memory. Yet, her worries were put to rest by the child who was able to connect texts across a period of weeks and even months.

Finally, the fourth example summarizes how much can be learned from a case-study child. While this learning does not come easy, it is available to teachers who reflect on what children have to say about literature.

Positioning children as teachers was often made more difficult by the children they selected or those who were selected for them. For example, several preservice teachers purposely selected children who they felt were in trouble academically and whom they thought they could "help." All three of the parents in the study with more than one child chose younger siblings who they felt needed more individual reading time and attention.

One parent wrote: "When [my older daughter] is reading with us, she tends to dominate the discussion with her interpretations and opinions. When [my youngest] and I read alone, [she] is free to take the discussion in any direction that she chooses" (CVQ, 4/21/93, age 8).

Others, who were involved in practicum experiences in local elementary schools, asked classroom teachers for help in selecting children, and their advice often centered on children who were at risk for school failure: "When I asked the first-grade teachers to guide me in the direction of a student I could read to, they both said '[the child's name]' at the same time. They thought that of all the students in the class, he needed the experience of being read to most" (DDE, #1, age 8).

Many of the case-study children came with either specific labels such as learning disabled or Chapter I or less specific designations of needing help. These labels and generalized designations served to up the ante on the pedagogical responsibilities the preservice teachers felt they should assume. Thus, many began the study ready to save children but ended having been converted by the children themselves. As one teacher wrote, "I started my reader response case study with the sincere hope of enlightening [my child] to an exciting world of literature.... I must say, if anyone was enlightened by the experience, it was me" (VGI, 4/21/93, age 5).

The word *enlightened* is only one of the many mental state verbs the preservice teachers used to linguistically mark their shift in thinking. And the pivotal point of enlightenment consistently centered on children's intelligence—how much their case-study children knew and understood as well as how they chose to express their understandings.

For example, one preservice teacher began the project with some skepticism in the power of literature

to hold children's attention: "I can't believe [children] really want to do this—sit still and have some adult read to them when they could be out playing!" (SKE, 9/29/93). As her case study progressed, she discovered that she was disallowing her case-study children's personal interpretation in favor of her own expectations. She read to two brothers, who insisted on opportunities to tell their own stories:

I had expectations of the types of responses [the children] would make to the literature we read. Of the myriad types of my anticipated responses, I assumed all of them would center around the books. Thoroughly entrenched in this paradigm, I structured our time together to elicit these responses and indeed my notes focus on those kinds of responses. Therefore, the real learning for me of this project required an "Aha!": "The Having of a Wonderful Idea" as coined by Eleanor Duckworth [1987], indeed a paradigm shift. The richness of [their] responses came not from those centered on the text but *inspired* by the text. Based on the themes or details in the books, they told their own stories. And this was a response I had not expected! (SKE, 11/24/93, ages 4 & 7).

This particular preservice teacher's Aha! centers on the power of intertextuality (an issue we will discuss in more detail later). Midway through the case study, her children pushed through her established expectations that the talk would center only on the written text to tell stories about the text of their lives. The teacher was stunned to realize that the children's persistence in telling their own stories was not an annoying distraction, but rather a key insight into how children respond to literature. Typically, her comments were connected to newfound respect for what her children could teach her about response: "Kids know a lot. Where do we get off protecting kids; assuming they just play and learn and know nothing. Crazy!" (SKE, 10/13/93).

The key implication here is that children are consistently placed in positions of "learn[ers]" who "know nothing." For this teacher, the Aha! moment of having a wonderful idea came when she realized that, instead, children know a great deal. And if given an opportunity to voice their ideas, they place themselves in the position of teaching their teachers.

Across cases, the preservice teachers held a number of assumptions that were ultimately upended by their children. They assumed that chapter books were too complex for younger children and denied older children access to illustrations because "picture books are for babies!" They presumed that the art of story reading was a simple affair and that children would automatically be eager to listen to them. On the other hand, they assumed that if children were too quiet during a story reading, they must not be listening. Many teachers, in

fact, remarked with some dissatisfaction on how quiet their children were.

However, because the teachers had the opportunity to work with children over the course of a semester, they realized that children may need time and opportunity for reflection. One preservice teacher called this reflection time "percolating...[the child] hasn't boiled over yet for me to see what's inside." Although the teacher originally dismissed the child's silence as "not attending, not really understanding," she later felt that her child needed "a lot of quiet time to process. I frequently do not see her reactions to something until much later" (MCE, 10/26/93, age 7).

For most teachers the point at which they developed eyes to see children's reactions consistently came when children taught them something they did not know. One teacher, for example, worked with a child who was highly uninterested in reading:

His parents had told me earlier that he's had some trouble in school and...I could tell it was true. I asked him if he ever reads out loud in class and he said that he did once in a while but hated it and tries to get out of it whenever he can. He also said that he doesn't like to read at all, even to himself. His mother had also told me that she did not think that he had ever read a "real" book before (WBE, 2/3/93, age 11).

After struggling through several books, the teacher finally asked the child about the kinds of books *he* might enjoy. The child responded that he was keenly interested in sports. They went to the library and picked out *Hoosiers* (Hoose, 1986). The child's immediate reaction was one of high enthusiasm, causing the teacher to remark, "Had anyone ever set something interesting to read in front of this kid?" Together they read the title chapter of the book, and the teacher wrote:

His change in attitude and expression was amazing and it was all due to his newly found interest in what was being read! How simple! Our conversations were ten times better than previous reading periods and I did not need to question him at all because all he wanted to do was expand on things and ask *me* questions. It was a total turnaround and his enthusiasm was definitely there. He then took the book home and in a week he read the rest of the 292-page book.... When he came over the next week it was like he had just discovered reading and in a sense, I think he had. He went through each chapter telling me all about the book and was clearly really proud of himself.... What I learned from this experience is something very valuable to me but something that has been in front of me all along.... In order to be successful in teaching kids to read and enjoy it, we must match the text with the child (WBE, 4/21/93, age 11).

Across cases, the Aha! experience often occurred with issues that were "in front of [the preservice teachers] all along." And this turnaround point often came when they realized that children, when given the opportunity, have preferences for the books they read as well as much to say about text and its relationship to their lives.

Providing children with opportunities to talk was a critical revelation for most of the preservice teachers. As one teacher wrote: "I decided since my last session with [the child] was so successful it may have something to do with the fact that I read one book versus many in one session. By reading one book, it gave us the opportunity to really examine it and I did not lose his attention" (CRS, 2/27/93, age 3). Similarly, many preservice teachers discovered the value of rereading: "As many times as we've read these books, the amount of new observations that she makes is incredible" (GCD, 3/18/93, age 6).

The preservice teachers also learned that response is not always bound by what children *say* about literature, but can, instead, evolve in what they *do* with literature. Teachers who expected discussion to be the epitome of the literary experience were often surprised by how children's interpretive understandings were heightened through art and drama. For example, when one teacher provided her case-study child with an opportunity to sketch her response, she gained new insight into alternative modes of meaning making:

Wow! What a revelation. I knew she was a very attentive listener, but I was truly impressed with the amount of detail and over all schema she had developed thus far about the characters in this book. At this point, I realized the importance of illustration for this little girl in not only understanding what was being read to her but, also, in helping her to express her comprehension of literary material (MAI, 11/24/93, age 9).

Art provided children with opportunities not only to analyze the illustrations in picture books, but to express more than they could say in words through their own illustrations.

Similarly, symbol making occurred when children took the stage to enact their literary understandings. For example, one preservice teacher originally looked with some dismay on her young child's active engagement in text. He stroked and tried to feed animals on the page and once literally hopped on top of the book to ride a horse therein. Yet, over time the teacher learned to appreciate this kind of active engagement:

This tendency for [the child] to activate his books, both in the moment of reading and even into his daily activities, is significant in his development as a reader.... He listens and then enacts and extends the book, especially certain

illustrations, into his everyday life. Books take on a three dimensional reality for him, and he often interacts with characters or items on the page as though they shared his physical world.... For [this child], meaning in books is not completely dependent on language, but also on movement, sounds, and playing (GBD, 4/21/93, age 2).

In essence, the preservice teachers learned that children—no matter how young, no matter how much they read or were read to in the past, no matter what their labels—had much to teach them about how children respond to literature.

From novices to reflective teachers of literature.

Although the most critical revelation across cases was the pedagogical potential in children, the preservice teachers themselves also learned to reflect on their own responsibilities as teachers of literature. Sixty-five percent of the teachers wrote about their new understandings, and typical examples of their reflections follow:

- The assignments the [child's classroom] teacher gave were interesting, but I feel that they were too narrow for the students to write a lot about what they read. [My case-study child] had so many amazing things to say about the books we read and these worksheets don't seem to allow him to write much down at all about the books. He is capable of much more than what is asked. As a teacher, I will remember this when giving book report assignments (LLE, 4/21/93, age 8).
- It is easy to assume that [the child] is a low-level learner. He does not stay on task. His responses to literature lack depth and understanding. He does not enjoy learning. He was obviously considered to be below the accepted reading level for his grade as this is a requirement for admittance into the Chapter I program. However, it is important to examine why he is having these problems. Do his teachers expect less of him because he is a low level learner or is he only performing to his teachers' expectations? I did not expect him to detest reading, nor did I expect the responses he provided.... In retrospect this experience taught me a lot about teacher expectations, ability grouping, and the importance of adapting to suit student's needs and strengths (MME, 4/21/93, age 6).
- When we first began, I had this dream of teaching her how to read so her parents would be proud. I soon discovered that neither she nor I were ready to tackle such a complicated task. So my next goal became establishing that friendship between her and books so that when it became time for her to begin learning, she would feel comfortable and have fun. This is essential to create a lifelong reader (MJE, 4/21/93, age 4).

In the first example, the preservice teacher reflects on a classroom teacher's practice and compares it with what she has learned from her case-study child. She feels the worksheets provided do not meet the child's

capabilities and vows to prepare more engaging assignments in her own future classroom. Yet, the underestimation of the student was not just the domain of his classroom teacher, for the preservice teacher who wrote this was the same teacher who had originally felt that her child was incapable of understanding similes. The child's quick capacity to understand and recognize these stylistic devices caused the preservice teacher to change her expectations.

The second example shows the debilitating effects of low expectations on children. Here, the preservice teacher reflects on the relationship between the child's labels, his assignment to a certain ability group, and his actual behavior. Over the course of the case study, she was able to find books to which he readily responded, and she ultimately came to the following conclusion: "Tracking students and providing them with uninspiring educational activities does not permit students to achieve to their highest capabilities, use their own existing strengths, and provides more opportunities for behavior problems" (MME, 4/21/93, age 6).

Just as children's capacity for response was often underestimated by the preservice teachers, overestimation was also a common phenomenon. In the third example, the teacher sets out with high ambitions for teaching her 4-year-old child how to decode, and as earlier examples indicate, she was not alone in this goal. However, she came to realize that her expectations were inappropriate to the needs of the child, and ultimately took on a more critical as well as developmentally appropriate aspiration—to establish a friendship between the child and books.

As the preservice teachers reflected on their own role as teachers of literature, their comments often centered on their newfound appreciation for explicit instruction. Just as the teacher who learned that she could directly teach a young child about similes, the other teachers in our study learned that a little clear instruction goes a long way:

Before I began this project I had certain expectations. I thought [the child] would have no trouble understanding this book because I did not have any trouble. However, he is much younger than me and he has not been exposed to literature as often as I have, so he did have some troubles. I have learned from this experience that children will not always know what I think they do, and they may not always learn what I expect them to learn.... Young children need guidance through literature so they can learn to understand different types of writing (STE, 4/21/93, age 9).

The kinds of guidance the preservice teachers offered varied widely. They taught children the definitions of specific vocabulary. They explored stylistic choices au-

thors made and how these choices accomplished mood, rhythm, humor, etc. They discussed the artistic devices illustrators use in picture books, covering concepts of foreshadowing, color, and movement. In their questioning, they learned to challenge the children's thinking without shutting it down—asking children for further explanation or to consider the implications of their opinions.

At times, however, the Aha! revelations of their own role as teachers of literature came late in their case studies. One preservice teacher had a relatively unsuccessful experience. The child seemed little interested in their reading, and it was only at the very end of the sessions that the teacher learned that the child had real difficulties with understanding and interpreting text:

How could I have been so ignorant? I think the answer may lie partly in that both of us viewed the reading time strictly as an assignment. I'd go there, I'd read, he'd listen, and I'd go home and take some notes on what did or didn't happen. I was concentrating more on what I was doing, and trying to find a paper topic, instead of what was really happening—or *not* happening, as the case may be.... When I first realized the mistakes I had made, I was upset and disappointed with myself that I realized all of this too late. Now, however, I realize that it's not too late—it is just in time. Pearson and Fielding (1991) suggest that "reading is not a passive activity; it demands that readers engage in an active search for meaning" (p. 836). I believe that the same can be said for teaching (SJE, 11/24/93, age 9).

On my recommendation, the teacher read several articles on the strategies that teachers can use to help children understand and interpret text. Although her initial reaction was one of intense personal disappointment, through her reading she realized that her revelations came not "too late," but "just in time." While the case-study child did not benefit from her newfound understandings, she had high hopes that future children in her classroom would.

The pain of new revelations was not limited to preservice teachers. Even preservice teachers who were mothers and fathers working with their own children realized that the pedagogical patterns they had established with their children were in much need of reflection and revision. Over the course of the case study, one mother realized that even though she had read to her child for years, the patterns of their storybook interaction served to silence her daughter. When she began to shift in her behavior by asking more questions and looking for patterns across texts, the child reminded her mother "Let's read. I don't want to talk" (MCE, 9/24/93, age 7). Gradually, through the mother's persistence, the child was brought into the conversation: "When [my daughter] was unable to answer, I learned to rephrase my ques-

tions. If she could not imagine how a character was feeling, I would ask her how she might feel if this were happening to her" (MCE, 11/24/93). The resulting conversation blossomed into an exchange of ideas, dramatic enactments, and most important, revelations about what it means to be a teacher of literature:

In this study I had the opportunity to witness my daughter's transformation from a silent observer to an active participant. I have heard her silent voice and I have had the privilege of witnessing her ability to make connections. While I am seeing my daughter in a new light, I am keenly aware that I too, and perhaps more so, have changed. I now view reading time as an opportunity to connect. We connected with character, situations, books, authors and illustrators but most important, we connected with each other.... I consistently praised her for sharing her thoughts. I let her know that while she was learning to read, I was learning how to talk to children about books (MCE, 11/24/93).

Throughout their case studies, teachers came to new understandings about their role in talking with children about books. They learned that a teacher's role was one of balance—knowing when to listen and knowing when to talk. Most important, their "talk" focused on questions, comments, and activities that engaged their children in expressing connections between literature and their lives—an issue that we turn to in the next section.

Enhanced insight into the role of intertextuality

Over the course of the semester, one preservice teacher followed her daughter's intertextual connections between books read and life experienced. Her daughter loved to be read to and at the onset of the case study had exclaimed, "Read to me, Mom. Read and read and read and read. Wouldn't it be great if we could climb into the book and run around the story?" (UAT, 6/15/94). At age 5, her daughter was particularly interested in witches—their physical characteristics, their motivations, and most important, how they could be defeated. She weighed the deaths of three witches—being pushed in the oven as in *Hansel and Gretel* (Grimm Brothers, 1988), jumping into water as in *Heckedy Peg* (Wood, 1987), and being doused with water as in *The Wizard of Oz* (Baum, 1900)—and ultimately was able to make use of this information:

One Saturday morning we had to wait for quite some time for the doors to open at the downtown post office. When both the east and south doors opened at once, people streamed in and merged to form one line in front of the counter. One particularly stressed-out woman loudly and shrewishly began complaining that people had jumped in front of her in line. She then shoved her way in front of several shocked patrons. [My daughter] pulled

me down so she could whisper in my ear. "Mom, we should throw some water on her." It took me a second to make the connection—melt the witch! We laughed so hard we had tears flooding our eyes. Other people in line must have thought we'd taken leave of our senses.

...The trail of this case study has taken [my daughter] and me through worlds of imagination, animal homes and witches' lairs, word games, problem solving and the neutralization of real-life shrews. Besides bringing us closer as parent and child, I believe our shared reading has enabled her to gain a greater ability to merge literature, language and thought, and to some small degree helped her see that literature brings with it the tools she will need to empower her in life. I feel that just as she requested, we did indeed "climb into the book and run around the story," and we have both climbed out a little stronger and a little wiser (UAT, 11/23/93, age 5).

A central part of climbing into a book and running around the story is the ability to make connections among texts on and off the page. In this section, we will look at the kinds of intertextual connections teachers and their case-study children made. More important than the connections themselves is the emphasis on what the act of making connections actually does.

Across the 43 case studies, preservice teachers learned to value three different kinds of intertextual connections: (a) text-to-life connections which weave between the book being read in the present and a real life theme, character, or event; (b) life-to-text connections which compare a real life theme, character, or event in the present to a text that has been read in the past; and (c) text-to-text connections which occur between written texts—comparing authors, genres, or interpretations made in different written texts or repeated readings as well as connections with media.

Although these categories blur, for connections have a tendency to move in multiple directions, they are separated here to provide a complete description of each kind of intertextuality. Within each category, however, we also discuss how these connections are interactionally recognized as well as significant in their social context.

The value of understanding literature through life. Text-to-life connections were the most common kinds of juxtapositions made, accounting for 54% of the coded references to intertextuality. Across cases, only two preservice teachers made no mention of these connections whatsoever. The majority (95%) of preservice teachers, however, made repeated reference to text-to-life connections during the course of their case studies. Typical examples reveal that something on the page—an image, an action, a character's personality or responsibilities—caused the child to make a comparison to an event in real life:

- [In reading the book *Five Minutes Peace*, Murphy, 1986, the child] said his mom sometimes wants some peace, however, it's usually for a lot longer than 5 minutes (PHT, 10/19/94, age 6).

- At the end of the book [Cleary, 1990], Maggie gave Curly a boy in her class a note written in cursive. It told him to stop pushing the desk into her stomach. [The child] said it sounded like the boys in her class (CCE, 2/22/94, age 8).

- After reading a couple of pages [in *Charlotte's Web*, White, 1952] about Fern and her mothering nature with Wilbur, I asked [the child] if she's been around any babies, human or animal. She talked for awhile about her cousin who is 4 months old and the responsibilities she sometimes has with looking after him. She mentioned that sometimes her grandma leaves and she has to care for him by herself. She empathized with Fern and understood the responsibilities such as feeding, walking, and changing diapers. Amazing for a 7-year-old! (JCI, 9/21/94, age 7).

More amazing still was the preservice teachers' recognition of the value of text-to-life connections. Teacher after teacher commented on how surprised they were that children, even very young children, were able to learn through constant comparison. This comparison allowed them to reflect on their own lives—the level of their mother's tolerance, the stereotypical qualities of third-grade boys, and the responsibilities that are a part of living in a family.

Thus the text on the page became a jumping off point for conversations with children about their lives, their feelings, and their sense of fair play. The preservice teachers who initially began their sessions barreling through multiple books ("For next time, more books. Lots of extra books! They go so quickly," MED, 2/13/94, age 6), slowed down to allow more room for talk:

Much more frequently [the child] responded to our readings by telling his own stories. As stated, I never realized that this was a documented, important way for children to respond to literature [She talks about an article by Heath, Branscombe, & Thomas (1986) which I had recommended she read]. At the summary of the article [the authors state], "The story on the page becomes the prop for stories about life," the wheels in my head began to spin.... A book's ability to inspire its reader to tell stories is what makes it a good book! (SKE, 11/24/94, ages 4 & 7).

Teachers began to judge books not only for medals won and expert recommendations, but for the ability to engage their children in discussion ("The more he was able to relate his life to the story, the more talkative he was, thus, the more he enjoyed a particular book," PHT, 11/24/94, age 6).

The resulting discussions provided the preservice teachers with insights into the emotional lives of their

children. One teacher read to a young girl who had recently experienced her parents' divorce and the arrival of a new stepmother. While reading *The Great Gilly Hopkins* (Paterson, 1978), she identified with the isolation and rebellion of the main character, Gilly:

[The child] has expressed to me many times that sometimes she feels as if she comes second in her father's life—after her soon-to-be stepmother. She is very tuned into her feelings, and acknowledges the fact that because she is having a hard time dealing with the changes in her life, she sometimes acts "mean" and "rude" to fellow students and her teacher. It is apparent that she is directly connecting to Gilly and understands why Gilly is trying to come across as a mean and tough person (WDT, 10/7/94, age 10).

[Later, the child] mentioned that if Gilly were as tough as she thought she was, then she would say all of those mean thoughts out loud. Once again she made the connection between Gilly's life and her own. She expressed how she knows that her life is not as hard as Gilly's, but that she still wishes that she could act on her negative feelings the way that Gilly does. At a place in the book where Gilly accidentally comes across some hidden money at Mr. Randolph's house, she said, "If my life were screwed up, I'd steal something too" (10/19/94).

Insights into their children's emotional lives allowed the preservice teachers to make careful book selections, not only for topics in which children had expressed interest, but in the themes the teachers wanted to discuss ("I wanted to read these books because the families depicted are not often read about. One book was about a mixed racial family," ALE, 2/12/94, age 5).

Because the preservice teachers tried to align stories with their children's emotional states and interests, the text-to-life connections made by the children were often predictable. The death of a cat in a story [*The Tenth Good Thing About Barney*, Viorst, 1971] might lead to a discussion on the death of pets ("Sleepy, my fish, just died. My dad flushed Sleepy down the toilet because Sleepy likes the water," MAT, 3/2/94, age 6). However, the connections made by children also veered from those the preservice teachers might predict and led to unexpected turns in the talk ("I am learning a lot from [the child]. I see connections in texts or pictures through her eyes, which are frequently different from the ones I am making," MCE, 10/31/94, age 7).

One preservice teacher read *Tuck Everlasting* (Babbitt, 1975) to her case-study child and was continually surprised by the connections the boy made to football:

Every time we talked about the meaning of a word [the child] would turn it around and use it in a way that applied to him. For example, he asked what *received* meant. I told him it meant getting something and having it in

your possession. He said excitedly, "You mean like when a wide receiver gets a ball? Would I be receiving the ball?!" "Yes," I answered.

...One of the next words he asked about was *poised*. I told him it meant to stand in position, ready for something. Again he excitedly asked, "You mean like when I'm poised, waiting for a play to happen during my football games?"

Another word he asked me about was *peered*. I told him it meant to stare at something. All of a sudden he was in a stare and he asked, "Like me, right now?"

I asked him what he was staring at and he confidently replied, "I'm *peering* at my football uniform across the room."

[The child] has two older brothers who are very large and began playing varsity football in high school when they were freshmen. His father played semi-pro football and now is a P.E. teacher and football coach. I think he makes all these connections from the text to football because football is so important in his life. He has told me many times that he can't wait to grow up so he can be in the NFL (ACT, 10/24/94, age 8).

The teacher later reflected on the meaning of these football connections in her final paper:

It was amazing to me how many connections [the child] could make from the text to football, because I never once thought of football when I first read the text. It just goes to show how every reader brings their own background and experience with them when they read a book. Reading is an experience which is different for every individual—everyone makes their own meaning. [We] had different experiences reading the same book. That doesn't make either one right or wrong—they're just different (ACT, 11/24/94, age 8).

Through predictable paths and/or unexpected turns, the preservice teachers learned that one of the things children *do* with written text is to connect it thoughtfully to their own lives.

The value of understanding life through literature.

Life-to-text connections were rare, accounting for only 6% of the coded references to intertextuality. Of the 11 teachers who noted life-to-text connections, *all* were either parents or long-term baby-sitters of their case-study children. Because of the nature of the interactions, it is clear that for these connections to be witnessed, there must be extended time spent with the child beyond the moment of actual storybook reading. Typical examples occurred between several hours after the storybook reading event to several days, or even weeks later:

- As [the child] excitedly trotted through the mall he ran into two twin babies in a stroller. Never before had he noticed babies like he did. He stopped dead in his excited tracks and opened his mouth in awe as he whispered "babies." Just that morning we had read *Baby's Words*

[Slier, 1988] and identified a baby (EST, 11/24/94, age 20 months).

- Later that night [after reading *There's a Nightmare in My Closet* (Mayer, 1968), the child] and I were sitting at the kitchen table of her house when her Grandpa started drilling the wall. [The child] was very curious about the noise, "That's a scary noise! What is it?!" I explained that her Grandpa was working on her closet and drilling a hole in the wall. "I'm scared!" she said. I suggested she go see what he was doing and what was making the funny noise. She went downstairs to investigate and when she came back upstairs, I asked her what was making the noise and if it was still scary. She looked right at me with her big eyes, put her hand up to her head with a "Hey, I know" kind of expression and said, "That drill sounds just like a nightmare!" Here, [she] made the connection of scary noises, a closet, and a nightmare (MDT, 3/7/94, age 4).

- That night [after beginning *Little House in the Big Woods* (Wilder, 1932)] when [my daughter] went to bed, she said that she was imagining that her sister was snuggling up with her, just like Laura and Mary in their trundle bed. She dreamed about our family living like Laura's family, that we were hickory-smoking our meat, and that she had helped her dad make the smoke-house, and that she and her sisters were playing house in the attic, and she was helping her little sister to make stew in a hard pumpkin-shell stew pot (CVQ, 1/25/94, age 8).

Thus, life-to-text connections allow children to try out new vocabulary, explain ordinary or even mysterious events, and enter the fantasy world of story through imaginative play.

Although life-to-text connections were rarely observed across the total cases, those who did spend more time with (or lived with) their case-study children made extensive note of these occurrences: "I have also found that [the child] quite often uses book references in other activities. Often, if we read a book in the morning, he will make reference to it later on that day" (GBD, #1, age 2). These kinds of connections were usually made early in the case studies for the preservice teachers already had an established reading relationship with their children. Still, there were moments of surprise, as the preservice teachers learned to what lengths children would go to use text to explain or defend their behavior:

On Saturday evening I baby-sat [the child] again. That evening, he and I went to Pizza Palace for dinner. While we were waiting for our pizza, he played video games. While he was playing the Kung Fu video game, he started to say "Sucker, mucker, pucker," and then...f_ _ _ _ ! I could not believe my ears, neither could [the child]! As soon as I said something to him, he said he was only rhyming just like Dr. Seuss! So that's somewhat good?!! (MCQ, 2/4/94, age 6).

In this case, the child was not experimenting with vocabulary learned in texts (at least in the *written* texts available to him!), but he used written text as a diversionary tactic to avoid trouble, calling on a famous author's style to defend his slip of the tongue. Through the reading she did to support her case study (Heath, 1982; Wolf & Heath, 1992), this preservice teacher knew that using text to extricate themselves from trouble is a common event in the lives of young readers.

Far more important than getting out of trouble (though its efficacy is not to be diminished) is the child's ability to perceive relationships between written text and his or her social world. Comments on life that bring in the power of written text have the tendency to embellish the moment and to stretch the everyday into epiphanies of the ordinary. Thus, the opening data segment of a young child's recognition of a witch bursting into the local post office line and her mother's recognition of the sophisticated connections the child made transform a rather ordinary moment into an extraordinary occurrence—a moment where text helps to explain life.

The value of understanding written text connections. Text-to-text connections were relatively common, accounting for 40% of the coded references to intertextuality. These references also increased over time: In the first third of the total sessions, 17% of the coded text-to-text connections occurred, in the second third of the sessions, this number more than doubled, with 37% of the total; and in the final third of the sessions the numbers continued to rise, accounting for 46% of the total text-to-text connections. In the early sessions, the children often referred to written texts read in the past with parents or teachers or movies they saw with friends and family. But over time, the text-to-text connections shifted to specific references about written texts the preservice teachers had shared with their case-study children either through rereading or through the build up of reading a longer book or a series of thematically linked texts. Typical examples of text-to-text connections follow:

- [In reading *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick* (Van Allsburg, 1984)], she didn't really respond until I told her it was a nun that was in the chair—she laughed. She said it reminded her of *Sister Act* (CAQ, 10/19/94, age 6).
- When we got to the part about the trees being cut down by lumber men [the child's] eyes lit up and he said, "That's from *Song of the Trees* [Taylor, 1975] and Papa and Stacey were going to blow up the forest, themselves, and the white men." ...[The child] is doing a good job of remembering old characters and parts of old stories. He really is enjoying making the ties with the other stories we've read (PJT, 3/30/94, age 11).
- [While reading "Barbie," a short story in Soto's (1990) collection, *Baseball in April*] I asked him, knowing this

author, would the girl ever find the doll's head? "No way!" [the child] snapped. "Their stories all have weird endings, man!" he added. So sure enough, the doll's head was never found. At this point, he was getting more amused than discouraged at the stories, a feeling I was starting to share (WBE, 2/17/94, age 11).

- [After reading about the rescue of Little Red Riding Hood by the woodcutter]
- Child: Is Red Riding Hood going to marry [the woodcutter] now?
- Mom: Red Riding Hood is a child. I don't think she can marry the woodcutter because he's a grown-up. Why do you think they'd get married?
- Child: Because after they rescue you, you get married (UAT, 7/13/94, age 5).

Thus, an image, an event, an author's style, or a predictable marker of genre can boost the child into connections. In the first example, the black and white of a nun's habit transfers across texts and time, but the improbability of a nun flying upward in a chair in the Van Allsburg (1984) text links in comical ways to the improbable antics of nuns singing rock n' roll in a popular film.

In the second example, an intertextual understanding occurs as the child recognizes the connection between an event in the current story with what occurred in a past story. The critical importance of land in Taylor's (e.g., 1975; 1976) many books about the Logan family is demonstrated not just in one scene, but in the build up of multiple events.

The third example shows a child's recognition of an author's style, for Soto's (1990) stories are well known for veering from happily-ever-after endings. The stories are often startling when first read, but with increased experience, the humor of the author's take on realism comes through. The last example demonstrates a child's expectations for a particular genre. Fairy tales often end with a young female marrying her rescuer—so stretching the nuptial rule to a different situation is eminently logical.

At times the connections were direct lines from one text to another. However, insights into genre often led to a more complicated web of connections. For example, Erikka Mieras, one of the preservice teachers and a coauthor of this piece, worked with a child who was fascinated with fairy tales. Erikka, however, began the project with some skepticism toward the genre, feeling that the tales portrayed women in "passive and demeaning" ways. Over time the child showed Erikka the value of the genre—not in its stance towards women, but in the array of connections within the language and events of the tales. In reading the story of *Snow White* (Grimm Brothers, 1972) the child used key events, phrases, and emotional reactions to knit multiple fairy tale texts together:

Erikka: [Reading] "The king took another wife. She was a beautiful woman, but she was proud and haughty (same word as stepmother in Cinderella, but I kept my mouth shut) and could..."

Child: Uhhh-ohhh! This is called Cinderella (in her fancy voice)

Erikka: This does sound like Cinderella, the mom died and the dad got a new wife, and she was haughty, just like in Cinderella.

Child: It is Cinderella.

Erikka: [Later reading] "Take the child out into the forest..." What book does that sound like?

Child: Ummm, *Hansel and Gretel!* There's something of each book.

Erikka: [Later commenting on the page] (This next page mimics the story of *Goldilocks*, but I didn't say anything.) [Then reading] "The owners of the house came back."

Child: Hi ho, hi ho, hi ho. (She hummed the song throughout the rest of the page.)

Erikka: [Reading] "But the seventh looked in his bed, saw *Snow White*, who was lying fast asleep."

Child: Oh my God! This is *The Three Bears!* (MED, 3/13/94, age 6).

In this reading event, a single text pulls in myriad other tales—other written texts as well as film text (the "Hi Ho" comes from Disney's film *Snow White*). The child's comment, "There's something of each book," reminds us that fairy tales in particular are magnets, pulling in phrases, motifs, archetypes, and stereotypes. Another critical part of this interaction is not only the child's ability to make these connections, but Erikka's recognition of their significance. Several times she notices the connection prior to the child's comment, but she holds off in making the connection ("I kept my mouth shut") to allow room for the child. By opening up rather than occupying spaces for talk, Erikka came to value intertextual talk ("My growth as a reader throughout this project has grown most in that I now realize what kind of amazing responses children are truly capable of. I would never have dreamed of such rich responses," MED, 11/24/94, age 6).

Children use text-to-text connections to build knowledge, not only to predict what might happen next, but to understand past events. Over the semester, one preservice teacher read five books by Mildred Taylor (1975, 1976, 1981, 1987, & 1990) to his case-study child. In the beginning of the study the child "didn't understand...the extent to which the racial injustices occurred" (PJT, 11/24/94, age 11). When they first read that a man could be killed for his skin color or the fact that he owned much-coveted land, the child was incredulous. But over time and experience with multiple stories, the child began to hear what the author was trying to tell

him: "Through Taylor's stories, he was able to develop an understanding of racial injustice, the struggle for pride and respect among Black people, [and] the role of the strong Black family" (PJT, 4/21/94, age 11).

This growth in understanding was particularly striking to the preservice teacher, because the child was labeled a "Special Ed student (LD) [who] had a hard time processing language." Although the child did have difficulties with decoding, he had little trouble making connections between texts, and ultimately made a class presentation on the books, which was well received by both his teacher and his peers, prompting the preservice teacher to write: "This was a big step and I'm proud of him" (3/5/94). His pride stems from the child's ability to make connections between written texts, an ability highly touted in school. Yet, this is not to diminish the power of these connections, for they are very effective not only in helping children achieve status in school, but in understanding more about life.

For small children life can involve elements of the fantastic. Giants, dragons, and witches appear in multiple stories, and children soon learn to recognize their evil ways. But recognition often brings fear unless a child is able to sort through the evidence and come to terms with how to effectively dismiss or defeat these creatures. For example, this section on intertextuality began with a small child's conclusions about witches and how they could be destroyed by water. But her solution was not a quick decision; rather it emerged through the cumulative effect of multiple texts over time. While reading *Heckedy Peg* (Wood, 1987), the story of a one-legged witch who kidnaps children in order to eat them, the child began to build her hypothesis:

Mom: How do you think she lost her leg?

Child: The wheelbarrow could have run it over. She could have been sitting in it and her leg kind of got out and just got run over and then cut off—squish! No, no, maybe the ...bridge had a hole and the water was really high up. And then she was stepping in it (the hole) and it got her in the foot and her leg melted.

Mom: (She probably was making a connection with water melting the witch in *The Wizard of Oz* [Baum, 1900]). So the water melted her foot. How could it do that?

Child: Witches get killed by water. They don't like anything good to get on them.

Mom: How about if something nasty gets on them? Will it hurt them or are they OK?

Child: Like mud, or bugs, or dirt—that's okay. Or slimy, smelly, poopie, stinky stuff. They like that okay.

Mom: So if good things get on them it hurts them?

Child: Yeah, like water or milk or potato juice or something, it really melts them.

- Mom: So for sure Heckedy Peg can get killed by water. Is that how she died?
- Child: Yeah, she fell off the bridge and she was never seen again.
- Mom: Do we know any other witches who got killed by water? ...I think you know a witch who got melted when water was thrown on her. Think about it a little.
- Child: Right, Dorothy. I mean the witch in Dorothy (*The Wizard of Oz*). "I'm melting. I'm melting" (she says this in the witch's voice) and she really melted up.
- Mom: Let's see if we can think of any other witches that were killed with water. (She jumps out of bed and squats over the mountain of books piled in front of her book bin and starts sorting through them.... She climbed back in bed and handed me *The Tall Book of Fairy Tales Retold* [Vance, 1947]).
- Child: You tell me the names (story titles) and I'll tell you (UAT, 10/15/94, age 5).

The child first explains the loss of the witch's leg as an accident—a wheelbarrow rolling over and squishing it—but this is something that could happen to anybody, and is not a particular characteristic of witches. Her second explanation takes us out of the ordinary world and into the extraordinary. Water and other "good things" like "milk or potato juice" have the potential to melt witches. As soon as she reaches her conclusion, she is off to prove it, sorting through numerous texts to provide evidence for her hypothesis.

As her mother reads through the table of contents, the child stops her at *Hansel and Gretel*. Her mother challenges her by suggesting that "Gretel killed her with fire." Nonplused, the child retorts, "I know, but it's like the same thing. You can kill them with water or you can kill them with fire. They don't like either one." Although her mother could have protested, reminding her that the witch in *The Wizard of Oz* played with fire to frighten the scarecrow, she does not. But with the next suggestion, she does push her daughter to justify her assumptions before agreeing:

- Mom: She selects "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" next. In this version the wicked queen dies when, "...she went to the (wedding) feast, and when she recognized Snow White she choked up with such rage that she fell down dead." (I read this section aloud.) In this version she doesn't die in water.
- Child: Yeah, but in the movie she fell off the cliff into the water and died.
- Mom: What do you think killed the queen in the book?
- Child: I think she choked. Just started to throw up (she dramatically mimics choking) and then choked to death. (She is quiet for a minute and turns the pages back and forth as though looking for some-

thing.) But she could have been crying. I think she was crying. And her tear water killed her (UAT, 10/15/94, age 5).

When faced with disjunctions to her hypothesis, the child looked for possible signs in text or experience to account for these anomalies (Short, 1992b). She immediately brings in a film text, suggesting that the water, not the fall, was responsible for the witch's demise. But the book text is not so easily resolved. As the child moves the text into her body, imitating the witch, she realizes that choking is often accompanied by tears. In her eureka moment she decides that tears equal water, and thus bolsters her hypothesis with new and exciting evidence. Throughout this dialogue, the child is working hard to solve the problem of witches—what are their defining characteristics and how can you use these features to get rid of them. As her mother explained in her final paper, "As she grew to understand the nature of witches, and how they were dealt with in literature, she gained an inner control over her own fear of witches" (11/24/94).

Text-to-text connections, especially when earlier interpretations are cycled into more recent thoughts—offer children critical opportunities to build their own understandings. Through this constant linking and re-linking, children offer hypotheses, search for evidence, transform their theories to accommodate alternative perspectives, and come to conclusions that will ultimately aid them in their life experience. These kinds of connections also carry *text authority* or a kind of cultural coinage that is particularly useful in school (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993).

But what happens to children who do not make the literary connections that some written texts and some teachers assume children should be making? For example, certain texts explicitly call on other texts, not simply in form, but to create what Bakhtin (1986) calls "parodic-ironic re-accentuation" (p. 80). Fractured fairy tales are exquisite examples, for they often break the rules of a familiar fairy tale or retell it from another's point of view. Some of the most famous examples have recently come from John Scieszka. In *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs!* (1989), he tells the tale from the wolf's point of view, who tries to proclaim his innocence, and in *The Frog Prince Continued* (1991), he picks up the story where the happily-ever-after ending left off. These tales imply a reader who is quite knowledgeable of the original tale.

Yet, extensive literary knowledge is not the case for all children. For example, Angela Carey, a preservice teacher in the study and a coauthor of this article, worked with two small boys. Even though one child was younger, he had more experience in literature—he had been read

to extensively and had his own library. The older child had few books in his home and little experience with the bedtime story. The differences in how the boys responded to stories appeared early in the case study when they met texts that explicitly implied other texts:

[The 5-year-old] had a vast knowledge of fairy tales, whereas [the 7-year-old] did not have much prior knowledge.... I first noticed his lack of fairy tale knowledge when I began reading *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs!* [Scieszka, 1989] to him. I had asked him what the three pigs had built their houses out of when we were looking at the book cover. Even though the three houses were clearly displayed on the back cover, he did not pick up on the visual cues, and tried very hard, but was unable to remember. At first I overlooked this as trivial information until I read him *The Frog Prince Continued* [Scieszka, 1991]. In this particular book, the frog is confronted by many witches borrowed from other fairy tales.... The interesting part of this reading to me was that [the child] didn't relate any of the witches to any of the fairy tales that they belonged to. I had gone through the same procedure as I had for [the 5-year-old] when I came upon a new witch. Before I turned the page I would ask him which fairy tale the witch belonged to. The only one that he was close to was "The one with the little boy and little girl" (Hansel and Gretel).... [On the other hand, the 5-year-old] was able to tell me in great detail the events that took place.... He loved the witches that were along the Prince's path, and had no problems recognizing them (CAE, 4/21/93, ages 7 and 5).

The irony and humor of multiple fairy tale characters appearing in the same place, but using props, words, and insinuations from other times and places, falls flat without experience with the original stories. As Angela later wrote, "Without the wealth of background knowledge, the language play—with sarcasm and humor a part—is not recognized by the child with little reading experience, but it is relished by the other" (4/21/93). However, what was relished by the younger child was also treated in a rather casual manner: "He enjoyed it once we got started, but some days he simply did not want to participate." On the other hand, the child with less experience in reading "loved to be read to as long as possible." Ultimately, Angela came to realize that children who begin school without the "1,000 to 1,700 hours of one-to-one literacy activities" (McGill-Franzen, 1993, p. 1) that others enjoy are not already lost to the system. Instead, a substantial part of her job as a future teacher of literature would be to follow the challenge of the child who opened this section. She would need to "Read and read and read and read [to help children] climb into the book and run around the story." More important, she and the other preservice teachers learned that through multiple readings and extended conversations they could

help children build connections among texts both on and off the page.

Discussion

So, what is this literachurch stuff anyway? It is a young child's question that has intriguing parallels to preservice teachers' initial understandings of reader response as well as their growth in learning to become teachers of literature. We take a child's question as both title and central metaphor of our research because it reiterates the role of children as teachers—children who can demonstrate critical issues in response to literature. Harste, Woodward, and Burke (1984) would call this question a language story and explain that its central purpose is not one of the charm of childhood. Instead, "its virtue as a life vignette is that it accents some important aspects of language and language learning, and therefore helps us understand how language works" (p. xv).

The literacy lessons that emerge from the language stories in this article are multiple, but here we will address two themes of critical importance throughout our data: *situated learning*, in which preservice teachers learn about response to literature through case studies of young children, and *guided participation*, which supports teachers' understandings through explicit modeling, assigned readings, class activities, and written commentary (Rogoff, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978). These themes necessarily blur at the edges and flow into one another, yet both are exemplified in the following quote from one preservice teacher's final paper:

I am thankful that I at least had the sense to note the times when the children told me stories and what they were about, even if I did not write details. I was focused on the responses that were centered on the books, and when they gave their responses that were inspired by the books, I listened to them, but kept waiting "to get to the good stuff." I assumed that I would have to force the children to respond. In reality, what I needed to do was not create ways for them to respond but leave *space* for them to. Doris Lessing, (cited in McIntosh, 1986) an English writer, stated, "That is what learning is. You suddenly understand something you've understood all of your life, but in a new way" (p. 15). This sums up my experience with this project. I always knew that children knew things and had things to say about literature. What I learned is that children have a "new way" of responding to literature, by telling their own stories (SKE, 11/24/93, ages 4 & 7).

The theme of situated cognition plays out in this teacher's comments and notes on the stories her case-study children told her. Although she did not initially recognize the value of the children's storytelling in her response, she dutifully wrote down their words while

“waiting ‘to get the good stuff.’” At this point, the quote from Borko and Putnam (in press) bears repeating; they suggest that “for knowledge to be useful for teaching, it must be integrally linked to, or situated in, the contexts in which it is to be used” (p. 38). Thus the case studies, with their involvement with living, breathing, thinking children as well as the requirements to pay close attention to children’s talk and activity around literature, set up a context for learning that is quite different from what usually occurs in university classes in children’s literature (Walmsley, 1992).

Rather than emphasize numerous books that preservice teachers should read *on their own*, the case-study assignment asked teachers to read books *with children*—to observe their reactions and to try out their own strategies for discussion and activity. The requirement for detailed field notes and a final paper also upped the ante on reflection—asking teachers to spend time writing up and thinking about their observations.

The interaction between teachers and children as well as the required written reflection were supported by the second theme of guided participation. I purposefully tried to break more passive comprehension-based patterns of teaching literature that the preservice teachers might have experienced in their own educations (Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975) and move them towards interpretation. In this effort, I tried to raise the level of their subject matter knowledge through the class readings and subsequent lectures and the potential of their pedagogical content knowledge through my own modeling and specific university class activities that would allow them to test out current research theories in their own case-study practice (Shulman, 1987).

Yet, the best of my own teaching came from my role as cointerpreter of the preservice teachers’ field notes—a role that included the confirmation of patterns noted by the teachers, the revelation of new insights, and explicit guidance in the research literature that might serve to support and extend the teachers’ understandings. Thus, the guidance I offered was strongest at the intersection of three voices—the children’s, the preservice teachers’, and my own—as our reflective talk and writings met in conversation.

The class lectures and activities also served as an opportunity to emphasize themes in literary response, particularly the importance of high expectations for children’s interpretive powers and the social significance of intertextuality, thus setting the stage for the Aha! experience to occur.

For the preservice teacher who began the Discussion section, the Aha! came when she realized that her job was not to “force” children to respond, but to leave “space” for them to do so. Her words represent the

majority of the preservice teachers as they learned to make room for children’s active and engaged response. Although the turning point varied widely, most teachers in our study self-reported a single moment of revelation or a series of experiences that helped them transform past understandings.

Rather than look upon children’s comments and questions as interruptions to the real work of the story, the preservice teachers learned to listen to the voices of children to learn their thinking and feelings. Rather than dismiss children’s need to draw or dramatize story, the teachers learned to set up circumstances that would engage children even more in these highly visual, verbal, and nonverbal explorations.

The preservice teacher captured the Aha! moment by connecting it to Lessing’s (cited in McIntosh, 1986) description of sudden understandings of new ways of thinking and learning. She simultaneously used an intertextual connection between her experience and Lessing’s writing to accentuate the importance of intertextuality in children’s response to literature. The multiplicity of connections that the teachers and their children proposed, recognized, and acknowledged highlight the *social significance* of intertextuality (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993). Through their children, the teachers learned to make use of the intertextuality available in literary conversations to compare, contrast, and connect texts both on and off the page.

This preservice teacher was not alone in her recognition of the value of intertextuality; instead, the comments, questions, and activities of children engaged in literature caused most preservice teachers to learn about the creativity of connections. For example, the teacher whose case-study child first called literature *literachurch* discussed the value of intertextuality in her own growth as a teacher:

As our reading...progressed over the course of the semester, I was surprised to find a distinct pattern emerging in [the child’s] response to literature. She was consistently making textual comparisons between the written texts and her own life experiences. I began to research this topic and found that it is very common for children to relate the events in stories to certain events that have occurred, are occurring now, or will occur in their own lives.... By observing [the child’s] growth in her own literacy as well as her developing ability to reflect on her own experiences and relate them to the stories we read, I feel that I have gotten the first bite out of the understanding of power that literature brings into a child’s world.... I learned a lot about questioning strategies, reader response, and some of the overall benefits of exposing children to a world of literature, or *literachurch* as [the child] would say. Hopefully, throughout my teaching career, I

will keep this philosophy of the power of literature in mind (MDT, 4/21/93, age 4).

In thinking about our original research questions, this quote exemplifies the close relationship between preservice teachers' expectations and the role of intertextuality in literary response. When teachers work from an entity comprehension-based model, they leave little space for children's intertextual connections. Teachers' expectations send signals that what matters exists in texts, not in children. Meaning is set in the pages of the book, and it is the children's job to ferret it out and hold it up for teacher evaluation.

On the other hand, when teachers work from an incremental interpretive model, they *expect* multiple meanings that stem from children's interactions with texts. Meaning is created, negotiated, and challenged, and most important, personally compelling. From the imaginative defeat of witches, to a self-reflective analysis of one's relationship to a new stepmother, to painful insights into the racial inequality in our nation, children engaged in literature learn to create connections that will help them live their lives.

Shifting preservice teachers from an emphasis on comprehension to one of interpretation requires both guided practice and situated cognition. Thus, the model we advocate in this article is one of side-by-side scaffolding. As the Figure indicates, I stood on one side of the preservice teachers and the case-study children stood on the other, with all of us guiding and responding to the other in a rich developmental and dialogic process.

Thus, the preservice teachers' growth in understanding the nature of literary response was supported by both the more distanced insights of current research theory and the day-to-day reflections of real children who made the theory come alive. Knowledge did not pass in a unidirectional fashion from me to the preservice teachers to the children; instead, it wove through us all, emphasizing the dialogic nature of what it means to be a teacher of literature.

Certainly, this model has its limitations. The preservice teachers may have been prone to exaggerate their growth, knowing it would probably serve them well in their final grades, since I was their professor and primary evaluator of their case-study work. What teacher, after all, would be honest or daring enough to end the semester lambasting the case-study assignment as a waste of time? Still, the teachers' early field notes did contain such frustration and criticism that shifted over time, leading us to think that their expressions of growth were indeed authentic.

Another limitation was that many teachers concentrated on specific areas of growth, leaving others unex-

plored. For example, a teacher who concentrated on the intertextual nature of response may not have spent any time reflecting on the dramatic or artistic aspects of response. A teacher who focused on her own story reading abilities might not have reflected thoughtfully on her own questioning strategies.

The growth in the preservice teachers was highly individual and much dependent on the teacher and the case-study child. Thus, while the case study assignment allowed teachers to deeply explore specific issues in response, in no way did the time allotment of one semester or the limitation of working with one child allow the teachers to complete an exploration of all the available angles of response, particularly with a *classroom* of children. If anything, the case study served to open the teachers' eyes to possibilities, but their learning has just begun. How their newfound insights will play out in their own future classrooms is a question that remains to be answered.

Still, over the course of the case-study assignment, the preservice teachers grew in their understandings of response. The power of literature was revealed not as gospel, frozen in form, to be literally interpreted in limited ways, but instead as a power for understanding others' lives as well as our own. The meaning in literature was not an object for translation—something held in the minds of authors or experts, but was instead available for interpretation through children's discussion and artistic symbolism.

Although these insights may not seem particularly startling for those of us who spend considerable time in literacy research and teaching, they were revelatory to the preservice teachers in this study, for the case study revealed the close interweaving of children's lives with literature. Thus, children's comments, questions, actions, and reflections served to help preservice teachers learn at least a part of what it means to be a teacher of literature. And to paraphrase Lessing (cited in McIntosh, 1986), this is, in essence, what literacy teaching and learning is all about.

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APPENDIX

Analysis categories for preservice teachers' growth in understanding children's literary response

Expectations*

1. *Expectations for the project (EPR)*: The preservice teacher comments on the case-study project itself with an analysis of what is and is not working.
2. *Expectations for children as teachers (ECT)*: The preservice teacher comments on what the case study child teaches him or her about response to literature.
3. *Expectations for preservice teacher as teacher (EPT)*: The preservice teacher comments on his or her own role as a teacher of literature.

Intertextual connections*

4. *Text-to-life (TL)*: The child makes connections between the book being read and a real life theme, character, or event.
5. *Life-to-text (LT)*: The child makes connections between a real life theme, character, or event in the present to a text that has been read in the past.
6. *Text-to-text (TT)*: The child makes connections between books—comparing authors, genres, or interpretations made in different written texts or repeated readings. Connections could also be made to TV or film text.

Questions and answers

7. *Known information question (QKI) and Known information answer (AKI) or Unknown information answer (AIDK)*: The preservice teacher asks, "What's that?" and the child says, "I know." and offers an elaboration of the response or says, "I don't know."**
8. *Opinion question (QOP) and Opinion answer (AOP)*: The preservice teacher asks, "Why?" or "What do you think about that?" and the child responds with "Because...." or "I think...."
9. *Conditional question (QCO) and Conditional answer (ACO)*: The preservice teacher asks, "If you were in the story, what would you do?" and the child responds with "If I were in the story, I would...."

10. *Connection question (QCON) and Connection answer (ACON)*: The preservice teacher asks, "Does that remind you of something in your life or in other texts we've read or discussed?" and the child responds with "Yes, it reminds me of...."

Dramatic interpretation

11. *Imitation (IM)*: The child dramatizes the text imitating phrases, gestures, and/or facial expressions.
12. *Interaction (INT)*: The child interacts with the characters in the story—waving or talking to them—often making direct physical contact with the book.
13. *Extension (EXT)*: The child recreates the text adding new dialogue, characters, or original scenes, playing with language, props, or both.

Illustrative interpretation

14. *Reading illustrations (RI)*: The child uses the details, color, media, and/or mood of the illustrations to interpret the story.
15. *Child illustrates story (CI)*: The child draws, paints, or sculpts his/her interpretation of the text.

Story reading

16. *Planning (PLA)*: The preservice teacher plans for the session in advance—selecting specific books, writing out questions, and using expert sources that stem from past interactions with the case-study child.
17. *Vocal expression (VEX)*: The preservice teacher purposefully stresses certain words, speeds up, slows down, or alters the voice to match a certain rhythm.
18. *Characterization (CHA)*: The preservice teacher alters the voice to establish and distinguish characters in the story, using accent and emotion.
19. *Nonverbal cues (NVER)*: The preservice teacher uses body movement, props, eye contact, facial expression, and/or gesture to accompany and enhance the vocal choices.

* The codes for Expectations and Intertextual Connections are particularly relevant for this article.

** "I don't know" is an answer that could be applied to any of the question types.