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LITERACY CHOICE IN A FIRST GRADE CLASSROOM

by

Lisa Maletta

A Thesis

Submitted to the
Department of Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Education
College of Education

In partial fulfillment of the requirement

For the degree of

Master of Arts in Reading Education

at

Rowan University

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Thesis Chair: Dr. Stephanie Abraham

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this manuscript to my husband, Anthony, and my family.

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Stephanie Abraham whose guidance and support allowed me to complete this research study and thesis. She has also opened up new avenues for research study topics in the future.

Abstract

Lisa Maletta

LITERACY CHOICE IN A FIRST GRADE CLASSROOM

2015-2016

Dr. Stephanie Abraham

Master of Arts in Reading Education

The purpose of this research was to observe and note student performance on choice literacy activities. Students were given choice pertaining to writing assignments and publishing preferences as well as guided reading material. Students completed an interest inventory at the start of the research to better understand the types of literacy activities that may interest them. The students were allowed to exercise choice in their literacy activities when choosing a guided reading book from appropriately leveled choices and choosing their writing topic as well as publishing option such as a big book, a little book, or a step book. Student work as well as student interviews were used to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of student choice in literacy learning. When students were able to exercise choice in their writing assignments, their individual strengths and weaknesses became more apparent. Struggling writers were able to showcase their creative side and their storytelling abilities through choice activities while adept writers struggled to invent their own writing topics.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

I started implementing choice into each independent literacy center in my classroom several years ago. It started out by adding differentiated skill level activities and leaving the decision making up to the students. They were expected to choose the activities that would be a good fit for them. I kept reading and hearing about how student choice is so beneficial to student learning and leads students to feeling they have a say in their education. This made sense to me, but as I started to incorporate choice activities I was surprised to find myself doubting these theories. What if the children continuously choose activities which are too easy or too hard for them? Do literacy stations then become a waste of time? As I continued to read more on this subject I found some teachers were allowing their young students to choose which literacy center would be most beneficial for them to go to that day. I truly want my students to feel a part of their education and our classroom, but that seemed like too much responsibility to leave up to five and six year olds. What if everyone thought that computer center would be most beneficial? Everyday? I started to then focus my reading and research on literacy choice in reading and writing activities as motivating factors for all students. I was curious and anxious to see how allowing my first grade students to have choice in their reading and writing activities affected their learning, motivation, and on-task behavior.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the results of student learning and engagement when first grade students are given choice in their literacy activities. This study hopes to uncover the role that choice plays in the literacy development of first

graders. Student work and student opinions of choice activities will help to determine the effect the ability to exercise choice may have in the classroom.

There is much research dedicated to student choice as a motivating factor both in and outside of the classroom. When students have the ability to choose their own reading materials in school, teachers are validating the students' reading material choices.

Students can feel that their opinions are valuable. This has been shown to not only help students learn to read in school but also to foster an appreciation of reading for pleasure outside of school. Many educational theorists believe that students need to exercise their ability to make choices in the classroom. This leads to students feeling as though they have control over their education. When students take ownership, there is less likelihood of student burnout, when students stop caring and stop trying in school (Sanacore, 1999). When students make literacy personal, they are better equipped to make connections to the literature and therefore comprehend text more deeply. Student engagement, participation, and achievement improve when students are allowed to make choices about their learning in the classroom.

Research has also shown that student choice does not lead to less challenging work. On the contrary, students tend to choose reading material that is personally interesting and at a slightly higher level than their assigned work (Stahl & Heubach, 2005). Furthermore, when allowed to choose a reading partner, students tended to choose someone with a similar working style, allowing for more time on task (Stahl & Heubach, 2005). Choice does mean the classroom turns into a free for all, but teaches students that they play a major role in their own education.

Studies have shown that when students are allowed to make decisions about their literacy learning, they often make the correct one. First grade students overwhelmingly chose nonfiction text over fiction and fantasy books (Mohr, 2003). First graders in a different study chose more challenging literacy center work than the teacher would have chosen for them, and completed it successfully (Stout, 2009).

When students are allowed choice in writing topics and activities, teachers eliminate the chance of keeping students from “heartfelt expression” (Behizadeh, 2014, p. 294). Lower level writers have proved that they can write for a higher purpose when the writing assignment is meaningful to them.

Intrinsic motivation, or motivation from within a person, was determined the greatest factor in predicting student long term reading. Allowing student choice in the classroom allows the intrinsic motivation of each student to be activated, pushing the student beyond what they may produce when only extrinsically motivated.

Research Question

What happens when first grade students are allowed to choose their guided reading lesson text from an array of appropriately leveled text aligned with their interests? What happens when first grade students are afforded freedom in their writing topic choices as well as their publishing choices? I am interested to find if/ how choice in literacy activities will impact my first grade students. I am curious to see if choosing books and/or writing topics that personally interest my students will allow them to perform at a higher level or motivate them to challenge themselves more frequently with higher level reading or writing topics.

Story of the Question

I heard so much praise for the sister teacher/researcher team of Gail Boushey and Joan Moser that I knew I had to read their books *The Daily Five* (2006) and *The Café Book* (2011). I am not sure where or how I first heard about “the sisters,” but I know hearing about them became more and more frequent. Then a friend read their books and told me how brilliant they were. She said they helped her to redesign her first grade classroom and English Language Arts period. It’s ironic that I heard about *The Daily Five* so frequently, but I had trouble locating it. Finally, I downloaded it to my Kindle. While reading *The Daily Five*, I became intrigued with their methods. The students were allowed to choose many things throughout their day yet the teacher remained in control. Together, students and teacher made decisions based on agreed upon learning goals, and yet the students were only six and seven years old. Some of Boushey and Moser’s methods were so new to me that I began to wonder if it was actually possible to do what they were saying. Can a first grade student truly plan their own literacy activities based on five questions? Do first graders have the ability, the self control and the knowledge to appropriately choose literacy activities that will help them reach their own personal goals? Are they able to make appropriate literacy goals for themselves? I quickly went from being doubtful to being intrigued. I began to wonder what these practices would look like in my own classroom. I could not escape my curiosity about students having more choice and taking control of their education. So I decided I needed to try it. While I could not follow Boushey and Moser’s suggestions exactly because of certain demands of my school district, I knew I wanted to explore the effects of student choice in literacy.

Organization

Chapter two of this research paper discusses research pertaining to student choice in school and in literacy learning. Chapter three explains the context of the study, the research design and methods and the demographics of my first grade class that participated in the study. Chapter four will take a closer look at the data and its analysis. It will also discuss the findings of the study. Chapter five will discuss the implications for teaching as well as suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

I cannot remember a time when I felt I had much choice in the matter of my education. When I was in high school I could choose one or two elective classes over a four year period but not much more. However, much research is dedicated to the importance choice plays in the academic and social success of students. An integral part of this research is dedicated to choice as a motivating factor in learning to read in school and continuing to read for pleasure outside of the classroom.

Chapter two synthesizes existing literature and research that focuses on student choice in literacy learning. The first section will discuss the benefits of choice and student control. The second section presents new findings about student outcomes when students are able to exercise control in the classroom. The third section explores motivating factors for literacy learners, contrasting intrinsic with extrinsic factors. This chapter concludes with a summary of the impact student choice can have on literacy learning success.

Student Choice in Learning

Lisa Delpit (1991), along with many other educational theorists, believes that “students need the opportunity to make choices” (p. 546). This allows students to feel as though they have control over some part of their education and helps them to become invested in their learning and therefore their future. Student choice is believed to have a direct impact on student self-determination while student burnout is most likely caused by the students’ lack of choice and the implication that they must follow rules and demands put in place by others (Sanacore, 1999). Sanacore states that one of the quickest

and easiest ways for teachers to afford choice to their students is to let the students choose their reading material. Choosing appropriately leveled reading material can easily be taught through teacher modeling and student observation (Sanacore, 1999). Not allowing students choice in literary material sends the message that their choices or opinions are inferior, when in actuality their choices are more likely to evoke text-to-text and text-to-self responses, thereby aiding comprehension (Gordon, 2012).

Stahl and Heubach (2005) found that even when students were taught to make appropriately leveled choices in reading, students often chose books that fit their interests at a slightly higher reading level but were still able to read the text. They also found through the same study that children could more appropriately choose a reading partner for themselves. When students chose a reading partner, based primarily on friendship, they chose someone with the “same working style as their own” (p. 50). Interestingly, off-task behaviors were more frequent and were more likely to interrupt the reading when students were not allowed to choose their reading partner. Even in second grade students, demonstrated the ability to choose a productive partner as well as an appropriately challenging reading level for themselves.

Intrinsic motivation as well as having choice in and control over educational decisions has been linked with academic success in the upper elementary grades. The secret to engaging older, disinterested students seems simple: allow them to have choice in their reading material. It is, of course, easier said than done. Disinterested, older readers are more likely to fall behind, leaving the teacher to answer the question, *Do I catch them up or take a chance trying to instill an appreciation for reading?* It can also be quite a challenge teaching twenty-some students about a novel when they are all

reading different ones. Gordon (2012) suggests that such a shift needs to be school wide for this type of learning to be put into place and the school librarian must be sought out to work closely with the English Language Arts teachers in order for the students to succeed. Involving the whole school, or at least the English Language Arts department, and the librarian will not only assist in helping to support the students' reading choices but it will assist the teachers as well. The teachers may want to combine classes or switch certain students according to their reading choices. That way teachers can teach the same amount of students who are concentrating on a smaller number of novels, which allows the teachers to spend more small group time with each group of students. One eighth grade ELA teacher stated, "Instead of selecting one text, I identify a group of texts that all enable me to meet my instructional goals, and I allow the students to select which text they will read from those limited options" (Rose, 2011, p. 19). This method allows the teacher to give choices to their students even if they do not have school wide support.

Student Outcomes When Students Employ Choice

Kathryn Au (1998) believes that ownership is the overarching goal of literacy. She believes it must be made personally meaningful so that the students can draw on their interests and experiences in order to achieve comprehension. She believes this is true for all students, not just students from diverse backgrounds. "By making literacy activities rewarding in an immediate sense, they provide students with the situational rationales for staying in school and engaging in literacy learning" (Au, 1998, p. 309). Allowing students to be exposed to personally relevant literature has the potential to make them more interested and more invested in their education.

Au's statement focused on high school students, but it is pertinent that students feel they play a part in their education at any age. A study of preschool students who chose to complete literacy activities during free choice time were more successful academically than their classmates who did not choose literacy activities (Haag, 2015). Showing students how their choices affect their learning outcomes is another way to instill ownership in education. This will allow students to see their learning as knowledge gained and their grades as reflections of their learning and not their teacher's opinion of their learning.

In a study comparing book preferences of Hispanic and non-Hispanic first graders, researchers found that the most favorable choice overall was actually informational text. The students, without regard to gender or race, preferred the informational text about poisonous animals (Mohr, 2003). It was widely believed that students of such a young age would prefer a narrative text rather than an informational one. By allowing students to choose their preferred text rather than assigning one, researchers found surprising results. This study is an example of students having choice and choosing to learn. By allowing students to choose their own reading material, the students ended up reading informational text. At one time, nonfiction reading material was thought to be inappropriate for first grade students; however, it is now a focal point in the Common Core State Standards. A misconception about teachers giving control over to their students is that students, of any age, will stray from educational materials and/or the literary objectives. However, this study illustrates that first grade students have the ability to choose books that will further their education.

Rebecca Stout (2009) found that student choice of activity as well as of students' center partner led to success for her students. By allowing her 17 first grade students to choose their own partner, she was pleasantly surprised to find that her students had the ability to choose a partner that would assist them without doing the work for them. She also discovered that by offering tiered activities in the literacy centers, her students were able to decide for themselves when they were ready to move up to the next level rather than continuing to complete the easiest level of work. She conducted her study in her first grade classroom in a Title 1 school which is part of a large urban district located in the American Southwest.

In a classroom study of Kindergarteners and choice time, researcher Daniel Meier (1994) found that the classroom routines as well as the teacher's ability to clearly frame new center activities allowed the students to enjoy maximum amounts of choice time for both social play and literacy learning. The large amounts of choice activities proved to be successful for all students while allowing them to have control of their education (Meier, 1994). Providing an organized and structured environment permits the teacher to remain in control of student behavior and engagement while allowing the students to participate in activities of their own choosing. Similarly, Nolen's (2001) study showed that an activity that was implemented at the spur of the moment with the assistance of student ideas was a favorite until the following week when it was an assigned activity. The activity, a letter hunt, quickly moved from exciting adventure to mundane task when the students no longer felt they had control. The previous week the students watched as their teacher listened to their ideas and implemented an activity on the spur of the moment. Student engagement during that activity can be credited to the students'

involvement in the design of the activity. When the choice was taken out of their hands and assigned by the teacher, the students' impression of the activity may be that it is no longer theirs, and the teacher is now taking credit for it.

Behizadeh (2014) studied what authentic writing meant to eighth grade student Xavier in an effort to determine its importance in the classroom. Her findings show that, "because of its subjective nature, students are the only ones who can determine the authenticity of writing, and an examination of factors of authentic writing demands co-investigation with students" (p. 290). This particular student felt that authentic writing allowed him to express himself, allowed him to impact others around him and really "touches his heart" (p. 292). He feels that some topics that are authentic to him may be seen as inappropriate by the teacher, and therefore he shies away from those topics. The study concluded that "by limiting topics too severely, teachers may block students from choices that would result in heartfelt expression" (p. 294). Even lower level writers could write for a higher purpose if they felt the writing topic was authentic. They would need proper assistance and guidance in choice of topic and audience. However, studies have shown that student control and student choice allow students to perform at higher levels than they normally would, so students should not be held back from reaching a little higher in their writing assignments.

Wilson (2015) found in her study of preschool aged children enrolled in a university-based childhood center in East Texas that high ability preschoolers possessed the ability to choose activities that would either expand their existing knowledge or present a new challenge to them. Students actively chose centers for those reasons rather than for social reasons, even if that meant working or playing in a center alone. She also

discovered that high ability children chose literacy-based centers or arts-based centers more often than their peers. These centers were designed to develop the fine-motor and language skills of the preschool students. The high ability preschoolers that consistently chose those centers had higher verbal abilities at the end of the study when compared to their peers.

Motivation and Literacy Learning

Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) have researched children's motivation to read and compared and contrasted intrinsic motivation versus extrinsic motivation. While they found motivational differences in the age and gender of their subjects, they concluded that intrinsic motivation was the greatest determining factor in predicting students' long term reading participation. However, researchers Unrau and Quirk (2014) have noted differences in definitions among researchers focusing on motivation and engagement of readers. They state that the commingling of aspects of motivation measurement on engagement scales and vice versa could lead to the misidentification of the actual issue the student is experiencing or the issue going undetected. Unrau and Quirk (2014) cite Skinner (2009) in their work, crediting him for pointing out that "maladaptive disaffection and work avoidance may result from unsupportive family, community, and school conditions that undermine students' self-perceptions, self-appraisal, and self-cognitions" (p. 268). He notes that these "debilitators" can affect students before engagement becomes manifested and often go undetected by teachers. Allowing students choice in their learning or learning activities might counteract student work avoidance. It may instill a feeling of importance or relevance to students when their thoughts and opinions are valued and used to further their own education.

Coddington and Guthrie (2009) examined teachers' perceptions of students' motivation and self-efficacy and contrasted them with the students' own perceptions. They found that teacher and student perception were similar except in the case of teacher perception of female student self-efficacy and teacher and student perception of reading orientation, or the student's ability to focus on a given reading task. In the case of reading orientation, teachers perceived students to be more motivated than the students reported themselves to be on a particular reading assignment. This is an interesting finding which may perpetuate the reason student choice is not implemented in classrooms more often. If teachers believe their students are motivated by their assignments, it is not likely that they will look for new ways to motivate their students or to teach those particular lessons, as they are thought to be successful.

Conclusion

Much of the research focuses on upper elementary and high school students being afforded more choice in their literacy activities such as reading and writing. Researchers have found that motivation wanes as student choice declines and teacher control increases in the upper grades (Gordon, 2012). Therefore, research has found success when choice was implemented into upper elementary and high school coursework. There is also a body of research surrounding choice in literacy activity choices as well as social play centers in preschool students. However, there is less research pertaining to lower elementary students, first graders in particular. This is perhaps a combination of events such as first grade students are still learning to read and write they are just coming from Kindergarten, a school year known for its breadth and depth of choices. Therefore, first graders might be thought to not need or not be ready for choice in their literacy learning.

It might be interesting to examine the effects choice-filled literacy programs might have on young readers' academic success. Perhaps an interest in reading and writing can be instilled at an early age through choice, which leads to a higher self-efficacy.

Chapter 3

Research Design/ Methodology

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact that student choice may have on literacy learning, engagement and success. There are two types of research designs: qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative research design is the framework of this study. Qualitative research explores broad, general topics and invites questions from the study participants because participant views are important to the research. The analysis of qualitative research data is non-numerical and the research advocates for change for the better (Browne & Madden, Lecture 1, 2015). The qualitative approach was chosen as the design for this study because teacher observation and notes will be used as a main source of data. Also, the data will be summarized, not calculated. I am researching children's reactions to being able to choose certain literacy activities as well as the work produced during the choice activities. This will be done in the natural setting of our classroom. Student surveys, questionnaires, and interviews will be used to determine students' enjoyment and engagement of choice activities. Quantitative research, on the other hand, collects numbered data and uses statistics to analyze the data. It usually involves a specific question about a variable. The purpose of quantitative research is to describe, to compare, or to attribute causality (Browne & Madden, Lecture 1, 2015). For these reasons, quantitative research would not be appropriate for this study.

Teacher research is research done by a classroom teacher using her own students and classroom routines to discover new and better ways to educate students. Teacher research refers to teachers and prospective teachers that collaborate with an inquiry community and often a university to ensure educational equity for their students

(Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). It is based upon “close observation of students at work” (Shagoury & Power, 2012, p. 5). This research project is considered teacher research because I will be conducting the research in my classroom with my own students. This is the best method for this project because my students and I have an existing rapport. We have already established trust as well as classroom routines. In this way students will know what to expect from me and should also be comfortable answering survey or interview questions with me. This is important because surveys and interviews are major sources of data for my research. Teacher research is also best in this situation as it eliminates distractions. My students should not be able to tell that I am doing research and learning should continue as normal as there will be no outside visitors coming in and interview students or taking notes on behavior.

Data Sources

Data will be collected by observing students as well as speaking with them. Before the choice activities began in my classroom, the students were asked to fill out interest surveys. One survey asked students to circle pictures of things they liked and another asked the students to circle pictures of things they would like to read about. I then interviewed the students to get a better sense of other topics the students might like to read about. The interview questions asked students about their favorite game, websites they like, magazines they read and what they would like to learn in first grade. I will consider these answers when selecting books for the students to choose from or to have as writing topics that the students can choose as writing prompts. Students will also be offered several different types of publishing options (little book, step book, big book, lined paper) on which to do their writing. After the students complete an activity in

which they could exercise choice, they will again be interviewed by me in order to get a sense of their enjoyment of and engagement in the activity. Therefore data sources for this project include observation of students as well as surveys, questionnaires and interviews of the students.

To investigate the impact that having free choice in writing activities may have on students, I will introduce what I will call a “little book” to the students. This will be done in the first week of the study. The little book will consist of blank pages. I will model how to use the little books to write a story and illustrate it. I will then read the story aloud to the class, demonstrating that they will have the opportunity to share their work with the class. I will keep notes and student samples of the little books. I will also attempt to interview the students upon completion of their books in order to gain insight on what they enjoyed about this kind of writing assignment and how likely they are to continue writing in this way. During the second week, I will introduce a new type of book called the “step book.” During the third week of the study I will introduce the “big book” and during the fourth and final week of the study I will introduce lined paper with a small space for illustrating. This paper will be double sided and will be copied directly from the students’ Writer’s Workshop journals. I chose this as a form of publishing the students’ free writing choices because when the students are writing in their Writer’s Workshop journals, they are completing a required assignment. I am interested to see how this form of publishing fares against the more ‘free’ and creative versions of the big, little, and step books.

The data will be used to determine whether or not first grade students were more engaged in activities in which they were able to exercise some choice. I will look closely

at the students' writing, illustrating, speed and consistency of work, as well as their writing topics. These observations will be noted in my teacher research notebook. I will also interview the students about their work upon completion of a book, whether read or written.

Context

I will be conducting my research in my own first grade classroom in the H. Ashton Marsh Elementary School located in Absecon, New Jersey. The Marsh School is the sole elementary school for the city of Absecon. It is located on a shared campus with the Emma C. Attales Middle School as well as the Board of Education office. The Absecon Public School District is a Pre-K through 8th grade district that is in a sending/receiving relationship with nearby Pleasantville High School. Students graduating from 8th grade in Absecon also have the choice to attend the Atlantic County Institute of Technology (ACIT), ChARTer Tech High School, or other nearby public high schools with open enrollment to certain tracks of study such as law enforcement or engineering.

Community. In the Absecon Public School District, approximately 48% of the 860 students receive free or reduced lunch. Over 500 of those students are enrolled in the elementary school. Marsh School includes two full-day inclusion Pre-K classes, five Kindergarten classes, five first grade classes, five second grade classes, and four classes each of third and fourth grade. There are two MD classrooms in the school this year. Fifteen percent of Absecon students are considered students with disabilities, 8.6% are considered limited English proficient, and 42.8% are economically disadvantaged according to the New Jersey Department of Education website. Also according to that website, 81.5% of the students speak English at home while 7.8% speak Spanish, 2.4%

speak Bengali (the language of Bangladesh), 2% speak Gujarati (a language spoken in India), 1.8% speak Urdu (a language spoken in Pakistan) and 4.6% speak another language.

The city of Absecon is 5.4 square miles with 1,558.7 people per square mile equaling an estimated population of 8,376 according to the U. S. Census Bureau. In 2010, the U. S. Census reported that 76.4% of the population of Absecon was white, 9.9% was black or African American, 7.9% was Asian, 2.4% were a mix of two or more races, and 7.5% were Hispanic. 12.3% of the population are foreign born and 18% speak a language other than English at home. The median household income is \$61,633 and 8.2% of the city's residents are living below the poverty line.

Classroom. In my first grade classroom I have 17 students, eight of which are boys. The ages range from five to seven years old. Ten students are white, two are mixed race, three are Hispanic, one student is black and one student is Chinese. Four students speak a language other than English at home. Two students are new to the district, moving into Absecon just before the start of school in September. Of my 17 students, 10 are reading below grade level and receive Basic Skills Instruction for reading. A Basic Skills teacher pushes into my classroom for forty-five minutes a day every day in order to assist those 10 children. A math Basic Skills teacher also pushes into my classroom twice a week during our math period to assist students performing below grade level. Only one of my students is currently enrolled in our English Language Learner program, as two of my students were discharged for mastery at the end of last year. One student is a select mute, though she does not yet have an IEP or a 504 Plan in place. Her native language is Spanish and she is said to be very talkative with her

family and close family friends that also speak Spanish. Her receptive English language is high but her oral language abilities in English are low, which helps her to comply and follow along in class without having to speak. She only speaks to adults in a quiet, one-on-one situation when no eye contact is made. A second student had an Individualized Education Plan the previous year because she was also classified as a selective mute. Her native language is English. She spent six months of her Kindergarten year talking to no one in her school. She began to speak in school again in May and she continues to speak in our classroom, though she is quiet and shy. Interestingly, she too is quite outspoken with family and close friends outside of school to the point of being described as “bossy and sassy” by her mother. For these reasons, her parents opted out of her IEP. At this time, no student in my classroom has an IEP or a 504 Plan in place and no student receives speech services.

This particular class as a whole feels young but not necessarily immature. Their collective innocence and wonder make the days enjoyable and exciting for me as well as their Basic Skills and specials teachers, who confide in me that mine is their favorite class to work with this year. We had a student teacher in our classroom this fall and they grew very attached to her to the point where they ask me not to talk about her, even to share good news, because she is no longer there and it “makes them miss her too much.”

The students encourage their classmate with selective mutism to whisper their names to them and they cheer on another classmate who was born with only one hand. They marvel at the things he can do by himself and understand that he is capable of everything they are. They are understanding and encouraging of one another. They

rarely tattle on each other and are learning to work out those minor infractions amongst themselves.

They love to use markers and constantly ask to use them. They do not consider inside recess a 'real' recess and they love Go Noodle (www.gonoodle.com) brain and body breaks. They enjoy Spanish class, which is once every five weeks, and try to use it in class whenever they can, asking our native Spanish speakers for assistance. Around Halloween, one classmate told the class she was a witch and they still excitedly look for things that she cast a spell on, such as a misplaced classroom item or a lost eraser.

Overall they are a sweet group that enjoys being in school.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis

Over the past four weeks I have been collecting data in hopes of finding out more about what happens when first graders have choice in their literacy activities. The students have been allowed to choose their own guided reading books and their writing topics and publishing materials. I also collected data using interest inventories (Appendix B: Reading Subject Interest Survey), my notes about what was happening in my classroom, reading interest surveys and post choice activity surveys (Appendix A: Reading Subject Interest Survey and Appendix C: Post Choice Activity Survey) along with student work. In looking more closely at the data, I have found that there are differences in the students' required work compared with their choice work. For some students, their choice work was more creative and they took more risks in their choice activities, such as writing recipes or using dialogue in their narratives. However, for other students there seemed to be a higher quality of work put into their required assignments. I have chosen three students' work to highlight in this chapter of data analysis. The students were chosen based on parental permission to be included in this study and their ability to represent the class as a whole in a smaller sample. I found that almost all of my students fell into one of three categories which will be represented below by three different students.

This chapter will discuss the different writing options available to the students and the results that were derived from the study. The students fell into one of three categories defined below by three specific students: Mia, Abby, and Alexis. Chapter five

summarizes and concludes the study and addresses the limitations of this teacher research as well as the implications for the field.

Choice in Writing

In the first week of my study, I introduced my students to a new form of publishing which I called a “little book.” Up until this time, my students were doing required writing assignments in their writing journals. Sometimes the students were given free choice pertaining to the topic of their writing; however they were still required to write in their journals. The little book consisted of two plain white pieces of 8 ½ x 11” computer paper folded in half width-wise and stapled on the fold. The students were shown how the book could be used with the staples at the top or with the staples on the left side. An example was shown and read to the class. This was all done in a whole group setting. The students were offered this choice of writing activity during their literacy center time. The students were instructed that they could write about whatever topic they would like and the choice of illustration was also up to them. This particular class loves to use markers, and I limit their marker use, so I suspected that would pique their interest. I did not track how many students chose each writing option during each particular week, but in hindsight I believe that would be pertinent information.

During the second week of my study, I introduced the “step book” to the students as a second option for writing and publishing. The step book also uses two plain white 8 ½ x 11” pieces of computer paper folded width-wise and stapled on the fold, but the step book is not folded equally in half. The two pieces of paper are staggered approximately an inch and a half so that when the paper is folded about three inches from the top of the

bottom page, each page of the book is visible. In a whole group setting, I read an example step book to the students and then I modeled how the writing could be made visible while the illustrations are hidden beneath the previous page. My example step book was called How I Walk My Dog. Page one said, "First I get his leash" and when the flap was lifted the illustration matched. Page two read, "Next I call my dog." Page three said, "I put his leash on and we go for a walk." I instructed the students that this was a second option during literacy center time. I reminded them that the topic as well as the illustrations were completely up to them. During this lesson, the students seemed intrigued by the step book saying things like, "Wow," "Cool," and "Awesome" during the presentation.

During the third week of my study I introduced the "big book." The big book is two pieces of plain white 8 ½ x 11" computer paper stapled together. Again in whole group I introduced the big book and explained how it could be written in holding it vertically or horizontally. The students again seemed to like the big book but suspecting an air of apprehension, I told the students the pages do not have to be filled with writing. They can write and illustrate on one page. A student did ask, "Well, can we write on the whole page? You know, to make a book like a chapter book without any pictures?" I assured this student that it would be perfectly fine to make a book like that. A few days into the third week one student complained that they did not like the big book because there was not enough room for them to do their writing. They said the book was finished before their story was finished. I instructed this student and all others that they can always ask for more papers to be stapled into their book to give them adequate writing space.

During the fourth and final week of my study, I introduced my students to lined paper that I copied from their writing journals. I again added this to the writing center as a choice during literacy center time. I showed the students how both sides of the paper were lined just like their writing journal and that there was space for their illustrations as well. This only gave the students one week to choose this type of writing and publishing which could be why its use was quite minimal.

Results

I chose three different students whose work I will outline and analyze here as they are a fair representation of the class' work as a whole. All student work seemed to fall into one of three categories and the students highlighted below represent students whose work was similar.

Mia. Mia represents a small group of struggling writers who proved to be very creative in their choice writing activities while keeping words (or writing) to a minimum. These students sometimes did not use any words at all in their published work, but could still tell a story from their illustrations.

Mia is a six year old White American who lives with her mom and dad (not married, not planning to get married) and her younger brother who attends the Pre-K program in our school. She enjoys seeing her little brother in the hallways of school, even when their encounters are a little rough like hugging so hard it hurts or knocks the other sibling on the ground. Her maternal grandmother lives next door to her. Her maternal grandfather passed away last May, something Mia still struggles with both at home and at school because he was such an important part of her life. Mia's cousin

recently moved to Absecon from a neighboring town and is also in our class. Mia loves her family and can sometimes get on her cousin's nerves, even in school, for "hugging too much." Her favorite color is gold and her favorite animal is the alligator.

Mia is a student who struggles in school. Math comes slightly more easily to her than reading and writing however she often requires assistance, reminders, and scaffolding in all subject areas. She has a depth of background knowledge and is often able to connect that with what is happening in our classroom, though sometimes she struggles to clearly explain her connections. When it comes to writing, Mia has a tendency to shut down. Her fine motor skills are not as developed as they should be, making the act of writing difficult. Her letters are either much too big, much too small, or a combination of both and she rarely leaves spaces between her words. She also has trouble making the correct letter-sound correlation and therefore avoids 'kid spelling,' or sounding out a word and writing down the letters that she hears. Mia receives Basic Skills Instruction in reading five days a week and in math two days a week. The school's Intervention and Referral Services team is planning to take a closer look at her in an effort to offer her more appropriate supports. Mia is a highly creative six year old with a fantastic imagination. She often offers silly sentences to add to our shared writing, making her classmates laugh. She also possess mature story telling skills such as being able to retell a movie in sequence, using only key events and characters that clearly explain the storyline. I was curious as to how she would respond to the choice writing because on the one hand she is a natural storyteller but on the other hand she often becomes frustrated when writing.

Appendix D: My Toys List shows Mia's work on a required Writer's Workshop assignment in the first week of the study. The students were taught what a list was, why they are important and how to write them. Then they were instructed to make a list in their writing journals titled My Toys. They were then to list 2-5 toys they have at home. Mia did not write the title of her list, so I added that for her. When I asked her to read her list to me, she was unable. She said she could not remember what she wrote though she tried to sound out her words. The words were unrecognizable to me. A required journal entry from the second week of the study might have piqued Mia's interest as she wrote more than she ever has. Her journal page said: *Iam laFo the LeaF in the Thesi Becus the tee Be I for us* meaning "I am thankful for the leaves on the trees because the trees breathe for us" (Appendix E: Thankful Piece). Appendix F: Vet Story shows another of Mia's required writing journal entries from the third week of the study. The students were to respond to the question: What do humans do to take care of animals? Her work shows: *I toc am bog to the vit* which she read as "I take my dog to the vet." Her writing improved very much in two weeks, however, I am wondering if she was more interested in writing about nature and her dog than she was about her toys. It is also interesting because I wrote a My Toys list on the chalkboard using student suggestions but I did not do an example for the other two writing prompts. A fourth entry from the fourth week of the study states: *I wan to Be a nos win I gov p* meaning "I want to be a nurse when I grow up" which was a response to a writing prompt (Appendix G: When I Grow Up). Another writing journal entry also from the fourth week shows: *I wat a cat Bekus lareaFvFeini like lmm* meaning "I want a cat because I really like them" (Appendix H: Cat Story).

Mia's first choice writing activity was a step book which she used to write a nonfiction book. She titled her book I Like to Plant Seeds (*I plt a se set wus*). Her story reads like this "I dug a hole and watered it and it got sunshine. It turned into a flower. It turned into a rose." This was the most writing, and the most sequential writing, that Mia had ever done in class (Appendix I: Seeds Step Book). After writing the book she said she liked writing it and she wanted to write more about it like, "how did it turn into a rose." She also said she would like to write about other similar topics "like trees, I guess." She continued the conversation saying that she would write "about trees and how they...I don't know." This is where I suspect that either Mia's confidence dropped or she was finding it difficult to explain what she was thinking, both of which may be factors to her shutting down during Writer's Workshop. She often puts her head down and refuses to continue with her work, repeatedly saying, "I don't know, I don't know."

During conferences when I spoke to Mia's mother about her struggles in writing, she said that Mia loves to tell stories and she asked me to send the appropriately lined writing paper home so they could work on writing stories together. Mia has brought back stories from home that she asks to read to the class however the handwriting is not hers but an adult's. The illustrations are hers, and I suspect the story line as well. During the last week of the study, Mia started making picture books with no words. She always asks to read them to the class and she does use her illustrations to tell a story. An example of one of her picture books is shown in Appendix J: Weather Step Book.

Mia enjoys writing or "writing with pictures" which was not evident at the beginning of the school year. She allows her creative side to show in her choice writing more so than she does during Writer's Workshop. Though Mia sometimes struggles to

relay her thoughts, her oral language is much stronger than her written language which was made more evident through her picture storytelling. Without this teacher research study, I may not have seen just how brilliant and creative Mia is, which is frightening. Because she does not fit into the typical school style of learning and producing work, she runs the risk of being labeled instead of being able to use her strengths to fortify her weaknesses.

While the class is writing in Writer's Workshop, they are constantly being reminded to kid spell words, to use uppercase letters when necessary, use end punctuation, spell sight words correctly or properly space their words depending on the particular skill focus that week. When the students are working on their choice writing activities, none of these reminders are given and the students are free to be with their writing without teacher interference. This could be another reason that students feel comfortable to be imaginative and creative. There are less guidelines to be met and less is required of their writing.

Abby. Abby represents a group of students who are capable yet do not seem to be intrigued during Writer's Workshop. These reluctant writers used their choice writing activities to make many books, at first making many similar books. They then branched out and surprised me with their writing topics as the study progressed.

Abby is new to our school district this year. She attended a neighboring district for Kindergarten and joined our class just a few days after the start of the new school year. She started the year as a very shy and quiet student but has slowly and steadily been emerging from her shell. When she first started becoming more vocal she often

complained that what we were doing was “boring,” even if it was an activity that she requested or that she showed interest in previously. Abby is quite adept at math and shows no signs of struggling in writing; however, she is reading below first grade reading level. Because of her reading level, she receives basic skills instruction. Abby’s handwriting is neat and appropriately sized and spaced. Her kid spelling is such that it can be read, for the most part, without her translation. However, Abby’s journal entries during Writer’s Workshop are often short and are sometimes missing parts. For example, one Monday when instructed to write about her weekend she wrote, “we don’t have school.” Around the Thanksgiving holiday, one writing prompt asked the students what they would name a pet turkey and why to which she wrote, “I would name it Abby because I don’t no.” She wrote only one longer piece, which was about Christmas (see Appendix K: Christmas Story).

Abby is a Black American child who recently lost her guardian, her maternal grandmother. Abby was then given a new guardian, her paternal grandmother, with whom she lives now. She also lives with her father and their small dog named Emma. Previously she lived with her mother and her maternal grandmother and a baby half sister. After her grandmother’s death, Abby had to move to a different house in a different town and attend a different school. Luckily, Abby knew some of her new classmates from Sunday school class or church. Abby can be standoffish to children and adults alike until she gets to know them. When she knows and trusts someone, she will slowly let more of herself show. Abby plays soccer and I am learning that she likes it; before she let herself admit that she liked it she would complain that it was “boring.” Abby likes her dog Emma and the time, though limited, she gets to spend with her mother

and baby sister. She likes cheerleading, though she is not on a team, and she often talks about her cousins that she plays with on the weekends.

Abby often visited the writing center choosing step books to illustrate first and then add words later such as the book “Dezin” which reads, “It is a star. It is a triangle. It is a Hrte” (Appendix L: Designs Step Book). She wrote several books about friends and several more about designs. It was not until she started writing a book during choice activity time (she chose a big book) about Olympic gymnast Gabby Douglas that her writing started to expand, and she showed a genuine interest in writing to convey a message. She worked for several days on the story, updating me every day. She filled two and a half pages with writing (she wrote in colorful marker) and her only illustration was on the cover (Appendix M: The Gabby Douglas Story). At the end of each day, she would give me the book to hold for her. One day, I misplaced the book and instead of getting upset, she took out her writing journal and re-wrote the whole story (Appendix N: Gabby Douglas Journal Story). She asked to read the story aloud to the class, which she did. She seemed very proud of her work.

When working on her choice writing activities, Abby took her time and often showed me her work before, during, and after completion. She took an interest in what she was doing. On the contrary, she often rushed through her Writer’s Workshop assignments and would cover up her writing as I circulated the room. It seems as though having choice and freedom in her writing is very important to Abby. Before introducing the free choice activities I assumed that Abby just did not like writing.

The gymnast Gabby Douglas' life was clearly important to Abby, but she would not have had the opportunity to share that with her classmates if she did not have an outlet for her to write about it. This was an unexpected outcome of the choice writing activities. Students can share what they know or what is near and dear to them in an academic way. This brings show and tell to a new level.

Looking at Abby's choice writing compared with that of her required writing led me to the conclusion that freedom, choice and creativity allowed her to produce work that was meaningful to her. She was clearly proud of her choice writing, often showing me her work and updating me along the way. Before the choice writing began, I assumed Abby did not like to share as she often tried to hide her writing from me and her classmates. It seems as though Abby does enjoy writing and sharing her work when it is something that speaks to her. I cringe to imagine what this year would have been like for Abby if the choice writing had not been introduced.

Alexis. Alexis represents a small group of very capable readers and writers who often produce high quality required work. This group of students works carefully on their assignments, often checking them upon completion.

Alexis is six years old and lives with her mother, her half brother, and her great aunt in her aunt's house. She lives next door to another aunt, uncle (a teacher at our school) and her three cousins. Alexis' father was in jail at the start of the school year but was recently released. Her aunt refused to let him live in her house again, but Alexis does see him occasionally as her parents are married. Her brother, also a first grader in our school though in a different class, demands more attention at school and at home due

to learning and behavioral issues. Alexis is often left to complete her homework and her reading assignments by herself, sometimes even writing in her mom's initials in her reading folder. Homework and school work are areas where Alexis excels, and at home they are also a refuge from chaos.

She is a high performing first grader who loves school and all of the work that goes along with it. She often asks for more challenging homework and work to do over the weekends. She diligently works on any assignment given to her. Upon completing her work, she then checks it and pulls her green folder out of her desk to continue with other work while she waits for the class to catch up. Her Writer's Workshop journal is filled with neat handwriting, covering every topic she has been asked to write about. For example, one of her very first writing prompts was the question: How can people help pets? She not only wrote the question but responded to it saying, "They take them to the vet. They can give them a bath. Give them food and water. Give them love and a home" (Appendix O: People Help). The handwriting was nicely formed; the words were properly spaced and spelled correctly and she answered the question completely.

When it was time for choice writing, Alexis often chose a little book or a step book. She has written about topics such as history, the world, our class elf on a shelf, and things she likes. But, surprisingly, her stories often do not have much to them. For example, her little book called "History" reads: "History is the past. Do you know history? I do. I thigh (think) history is cool!" (Appendix P: History Little Book). Her only illustration is a clock on the front cover. While this is a perfectly acceptable writing piece for a first grader, I found I was expecting more from Alexis. Another of her little books was titled "Cool!" It went like this: "to day is cool! Sunday tomarow is cool!"

Monday I am cool” (Appendix Q: Cool Little Book). Her writing had spelling mistakes, though minor, and she lacked a story line. At first I was surprised. However, after thinking about it I came upon several conclusions that could be drawn from Alexis’ work. First, because she is such a dutiful student she may tend to be more of a “people pleaser” and therefore may be struggling with her own sense of self. This may make it hard for her to generate ideas of her own, especially because the teacher’s expectations are not clear. She appears to be a typical “girled” student, acting in ways that are sure to get approval. Her behavior is opposite her brother’s and is therefore lauded for making life easier for others (especially the adults in her life). Secondly, because this freedom to write seems new to Alexis, it is perfectly fine for her to explore it in such a way. I needed to remind myself that not everything she does needs to be high level work, and she does not have to have all of the correct answers in order to write these books.

Conclusion

Overall my students fell into three categories. The struggling writers who still chose writing activities but they kept the writing to a minimum, the reluctant writers who flourished in their choice writing activities, and adept writers who struggled with free choice, generating their own ideas, or completing less structured assignments. The students did not, however, limit their topic choices. The topics ranged far and wide and included fiction as well as nonfiction. An interesting piece of data I collected was that every student wrote at least one nonfiction story. I wondered about their motivation for doing this. Did they want to share their knowledge? Show all that they knew? Were the nonfiction selections in our new reading series having an effect on the students? Do young students naturally favor nonfiction?

I enjoyed observing my students complete their choice writing activities. I learned many things from limiting my instructions and letting the students decide. My observations were funny, intriguing, and mind boggling. Though I collected many notes and artifacts over the four week period, I find I still have many questions about this topic.

Chapter 5

Summary

I was overwhelmed by how much my first grade students enjoyed having free choice in their writing topics and publishing options. Having the freedom to decide things on their own motivated them to try new kinds of writing that they would not have otherwise been introduced to this early in the school year. The free choice allowed them to explore new writing styles and topics on their own. It also gave me pre-writing assessments that I can refer to later in the year when it is time to instruct the students on how to do expository writing, opinion pieces, and recipes.

But, even more surprising is that my students want to write all the time now. Instead of reading or working in their 'green folder' when they finish early or have extra time, they want to choose a blank book and write. I even had a student ask to write a book during social centers on Friday, a time when students are playing games with each other. When I said yes, two more students abandoned their game and sat at their desks to write. Though this was a short study done in the beginning of the school year making it difficult to draw conclusions about student writing, I feel I have exposed my students to something great. They love to write and see it as a way to create something new all on their own.

Conclusions

I found it interesting that each student chose to write at least one nonfiction piece. Often times, adults feel nonfiction is inappropriate for young children. So it surprised me that every one of my students wrote an informational text. Many wrote about Earth,

nature, animals, or holidays. A few students wrote recipes, something that we have yet to discuss in class. Allowing the students to choose their own writing topics allowed me to see their interests in a more genuine way than asking them to take an interest inventory. I got a glimpse of some of their real life experiences that I might not otherwise have known about.

I also found that overall; the students fell into one of three categories: struggling writers who still chose writing activities but kept the writing to a minimum, reluctant writers who flourished in their choice writing activities, and adept writers who struggled with free choice, generating their own ideas, or completing less structured assignments. At the inception of my study, I was particularly curious as to how Alexis's writing would grow now that there were no limits. So I was surprised to find that she had difficulty writing more than a few words, one sentence at the most, on each page of her books. I was equally surprised to see my struggling writers take book after book after book. Not only were they choosing to write, but they were generating ideas at an incredible pace. Previously, these students would sit at their desks with their heads down claiming to be brainstorming until they were all but forced to write. Now they were reaching to fill the blank pages with their own words and images and then read them to their classmates.

This leads me to another possibility for the choice writing popularity. The students were allowed to 'share' their book with their classmates upon its completion. They first had to read it to me, and then they could read it to the whole class. This was very motivating to many students, shy and outgoing students alike. If I approved a student's book to be read aloud to the class, that student constantly reminded me that I granted them permission to share their book from the time permission was granted to the

time the student was able to share. Sometimes the two events were days apart. Interestingly enough, the students were not just excited about sharing their books, but they looked forward to hearing their friends read as well. I wonder if students ‘stole’ ideas from presenters or if another classmate’s shared story led them to a new writing topic or idea.

After looking closely at the students’ choice writing activities and their required writing, I began to question the traditional nature of school. This reminded me of the much disputed quote: “Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.” Though I cannot say I completely agree with the quote, it does bring up a point that I noticed in my research. Mia was quite adept at telling and illustrating a great story but struggled to actually write one. Alexis was fantastic at writing a story, if she knew what you wanted her to write but she struggled to come up with a story on her own. This research has shown that what is produced by students in the traditional school fashion may not be a clear or true picture of a student’s ability. This makes the case for including and increasing choice activities in the classroom.

Limitations

This study was limited due to its short time line of only four weeks. In first grade, participating in any new activity for only four weeks and hoping to draw conclusions from it can be difficult because even at the end of that time, the activity can still seem quite new. Also, having the four weeks fall so close to the beginning of the year does not allow the students’ writing abilities to improve very much. I was hoping to get a look at

the students' growth as writers (and readers) when choice activities were involved. Unfortunately, that growth seems to happen in small doses at this time of the school year.

Another limitation was the amount of time available to do guided reading and to fit in the choice reading activities. The short amount of time for guided reading in one school day did not allow me to meet with every student at least twice a week, a school requirement, when they were choosing their own guided reading books. When the students were choosing their own guided reading books, a group of students would often each choose a different book. This turned small group reading into one-on-one reading, allowing me to meet with only a handful of students per day rather than multiple groups. This, unfortunately, left me no choice but to abandon this part of my study. If this part of the study could have continued for four weeks it would have been interesting to compare the results of the choice writing activities with those of the choice reading activities.

I was surprised by the low response of parental permission allowing the students to participate in the study. I had expected almost the whole class to be granted permission, but actually only a fraction of the class returned signed permission slips. This limits the amount of data analysis I can talk about here, which is why I chose the three particular students to represent the class as a whole.

Implications for the Field

To further study the impact that choice literacy activities may have on first grade students, more time is needed. It would be interesting to see the results of this study done over the course of one school year. Combining the writing choice with the reading choice would also be insightful research.

Also, gathering more information from the study would be interesting. Tracking each student's choice writing activity type and when they chose it and why they chose it might reveal helpful information. Did students choose their publishing option based on when it was introduced because it was 'new'? Did they choose something their friend chose? Did they choose it because it was their best option for what they wanted to write about?

Gathering information about how the books were introduced may also reveal pertinent information about student choice. For example, the big books consisted of only two pages stapled together. If I had explained during the big book introduction that more pages could be added as needed, would more students have chosen that option? How many pages was the longest book in the class? The shortest book? Did every student make their step book with the words visible and the illustrations hidden? Was that because the prototype looked like that?

Keeping a close log of the words on the word wall each particular week as well as the examples given might give a glimpse into the improvements of student writing from week to week. Also keeping track of prompts given to particular students might shed some light on their writing or brainstorming abilities. For instance, if students struggling to generate ideas were given books or shown videos to help them come up with ideas to write about, those students and those books, videos, etc should also be recorded each week.

While this study reinforces what research states about student choice, that it is pertinent for student success in school and long term literacy, there is still much left to explore in this area.

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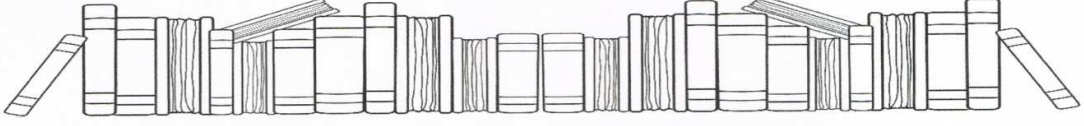
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Appendix A

Reading Interest Survey

Reading Interest Survey



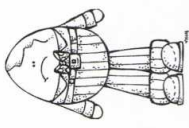
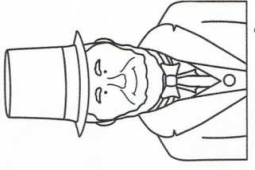
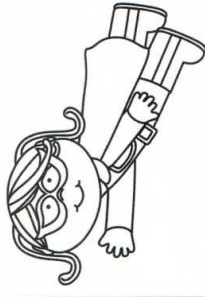
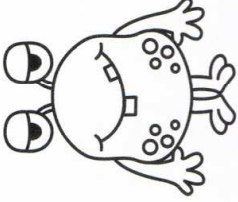
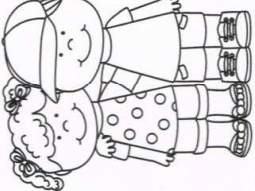
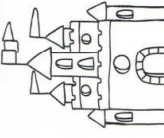
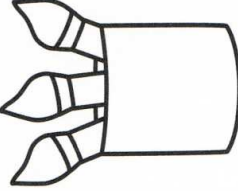
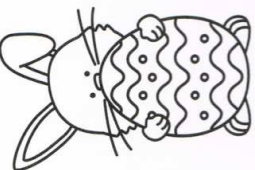
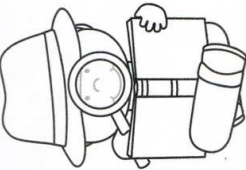
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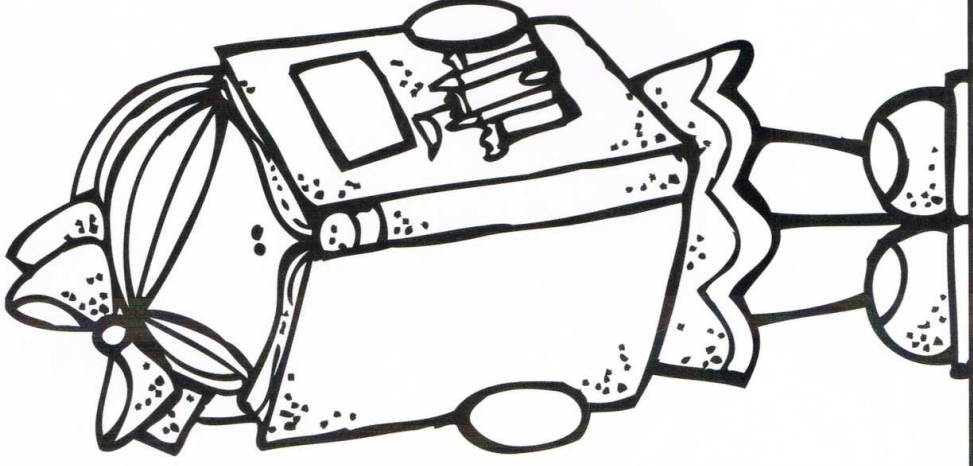
1. What kind of books do you like to read?
2. What is your favorite magazine or web site?
3. What type of TV programs do you watch?
4. What is your favorite part of school?
5. What is your least favorite part of school?

6. What do you like to learn about?
7. What is your favorite toy or game to play?
8. What are your hobbies?
9. What do you like to do at home?
10. Do you collect anything? What do you collect?
11. What is something you do well?

Appendix B

Reading Subject Interest Survey

 <p>poems & rhymes</p>	 <p>people</p>	 <p>superheroes</p>
 <p>fantasy</p>	 <p>friends</p>	 <p>fairy tales</p>
 <p>art</p>	 <p>holidays</p>	 <p>mystery</p>

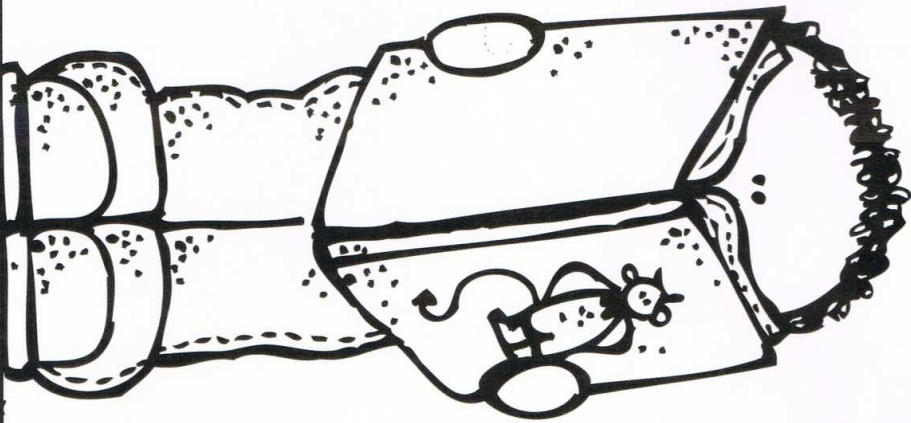



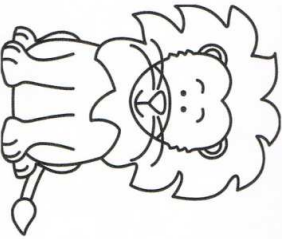
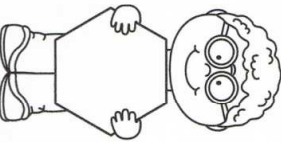
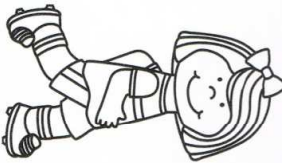
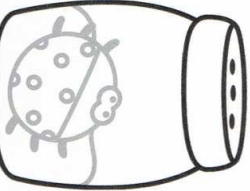
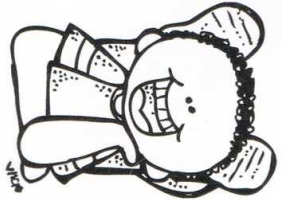
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What do you like to **read** about?

name _____

Circle your favorites.



 information	 animals
 math	 sports
 science	 fun

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Appendix C

Post Choice Activity Survey

Post Choice Activity Survey
(make a written and/or audio record)

Did you like this (circle one) story? writing activity?

What did you like about it?

What didn't you like about it?

Would you want to (circle one) read about/ write about this topic more?

Would you want to (circle one) read about/ write about other topics like this?

What other topics interest you?

Did this activity introduce a new interest to you?

Did it make you wonder something?

Appendix D

My Toys List

✱

MY TOYS

MESOFRIEFT

MILY+155

Appendix E

Thankful Piece



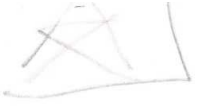
I am thankful for the LEAF
In the trees
BEEVS
the tree be ifan
VS

Appendix F

Vet Story



Appendix G
When I Grow Up



I want to be a doctor

30/1/18

Appendix H

Cat Story



Appendix I

Seeds Step Book

11/3 — #13

I dug a hole
I like to Plant seeds
By tea

I dug a hole and watered it and it got sunshine.

It turned into a flower.

It turned into a flower.

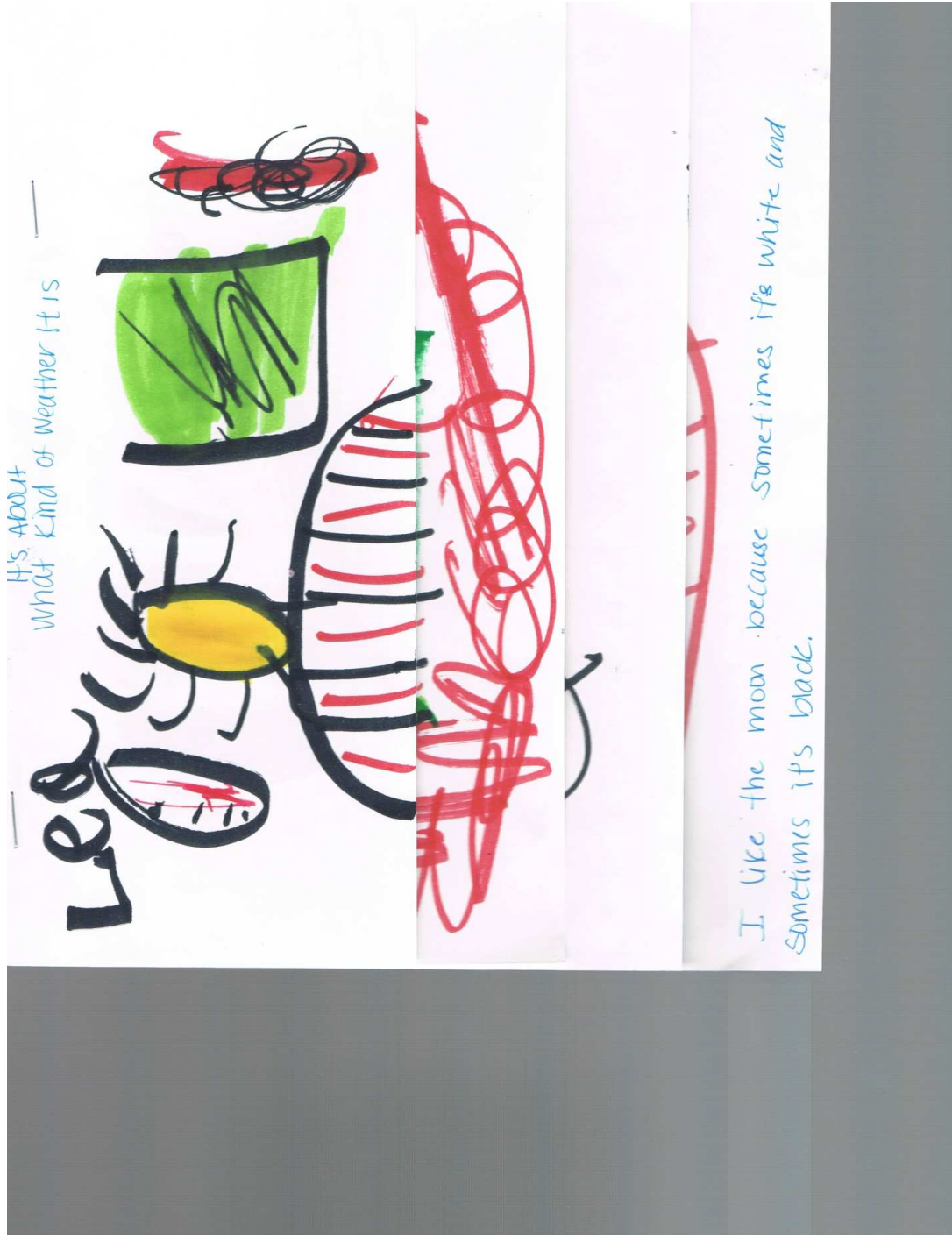
It turned into a flower.

It turned into a rose.

It was a rose.

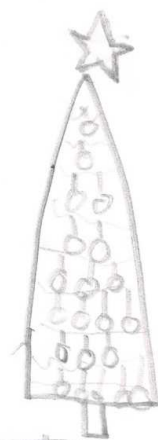
Appendix J

Weather Step Book



Appendix K
Christmas Story

11/30



I put my Christmas
tree up and I put
present under the
Christmas tree and
decorated it. My dad help
me put the star on there.

Appendix L

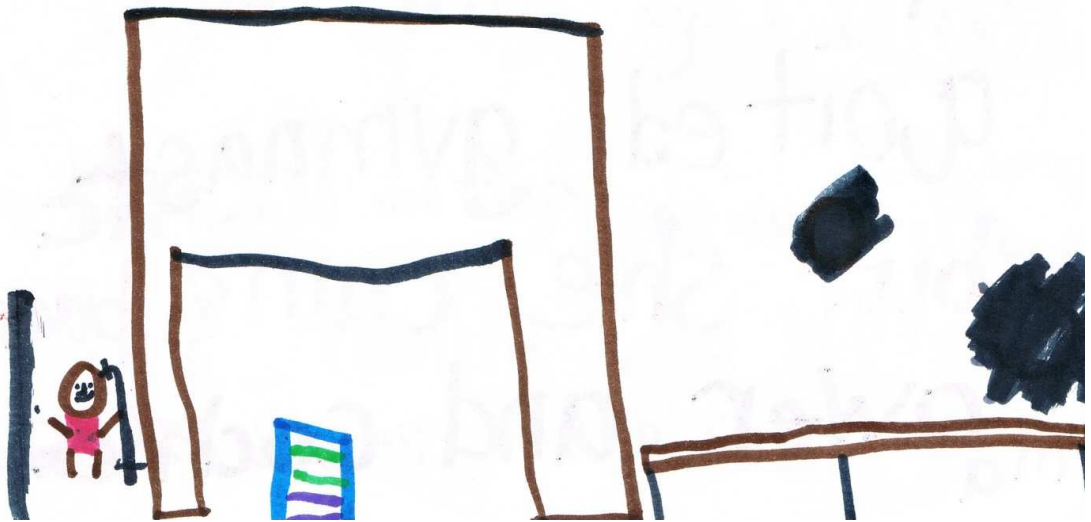
Designs Step Book



Appendix M

The Gabby Douglas Story

the Gabby Douglas Story



Gabby Douglas's Story

Gabby became a gymnast and she was so happy when she got started up and then she quit gymnastics but she came back as a coach and

and she worked hard
so she wanted to
go to the olympics
and then she be-
came a vllu gymnast
and she got a gold
medal for doing her best
her family was vllly happy
was so happy when she came back

too and she came to
be Shon Jense I Love
Shon Jense . but they be
cam friend

Appendix N

Gabby Douglas Journal Story

Gabby Puoglis Story

Gabby be came in gymnis
and she was so happy
when she got sid up
and then she qoited gym
but she came back in a
over and roch chow was so hap

fantastic story!!

and she would hred so she
want to go to the olimpi
and then she be came
a viltu gymmins and she got
a goodly medall and then
her family was villy happy
and she was happy too 😊😊
and she came to be shon
Jonse : I Love shon Jonse

Appendix O

People Help

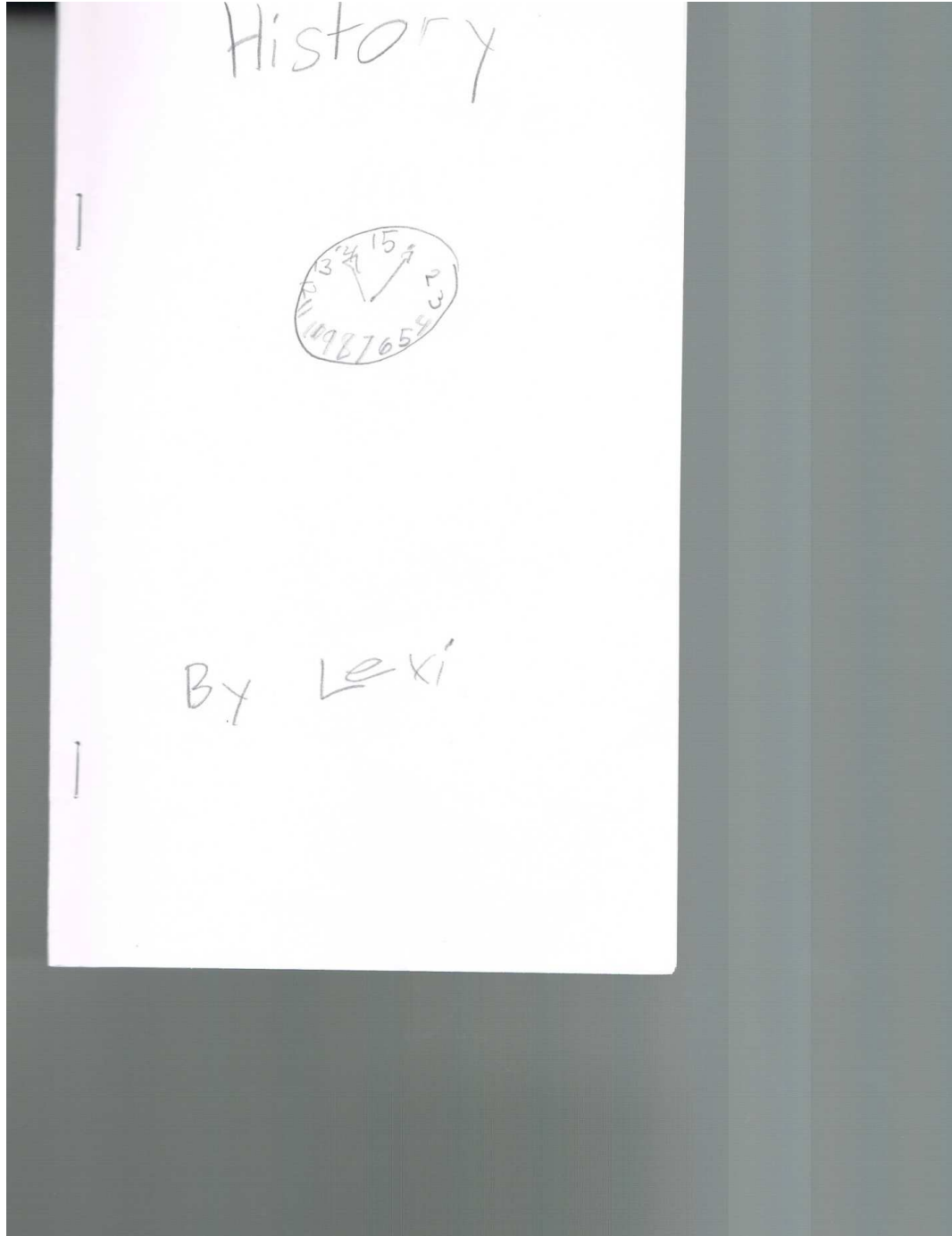
How can people help?



They take them to the
vet. They can give them
a bath. Give them food
and water. Give them
love and a home.

Appendix P

History Little Book



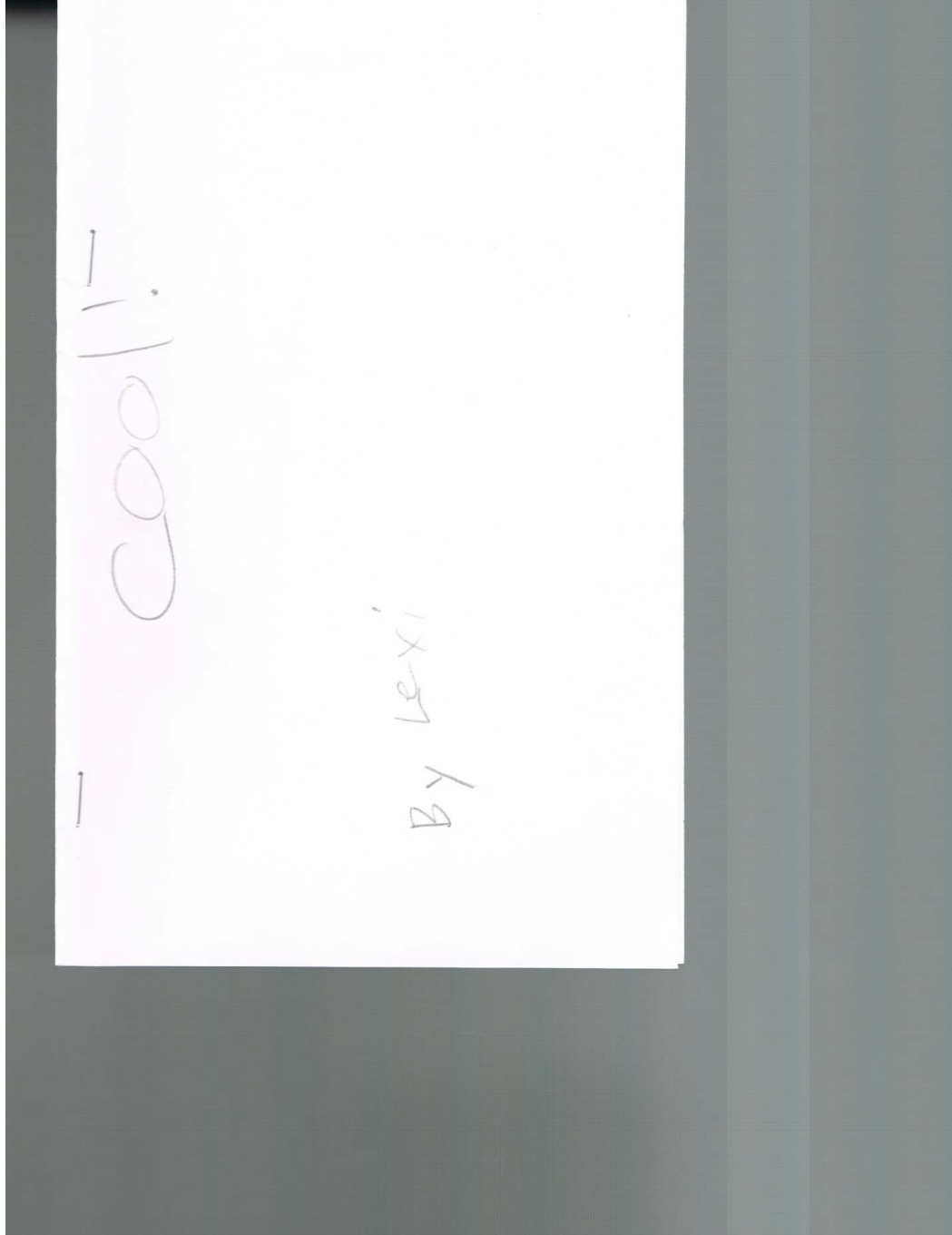
History
is the
past.

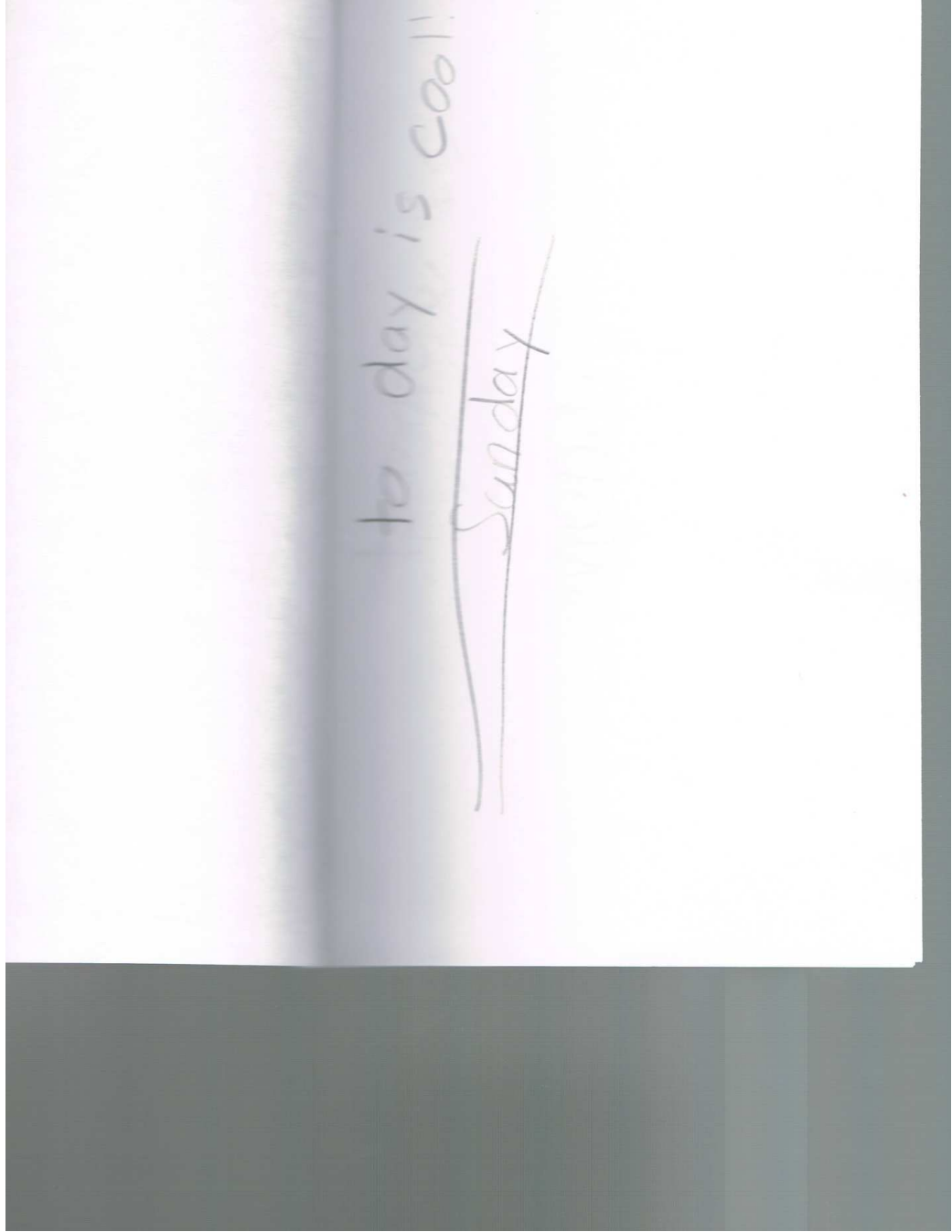
I do.

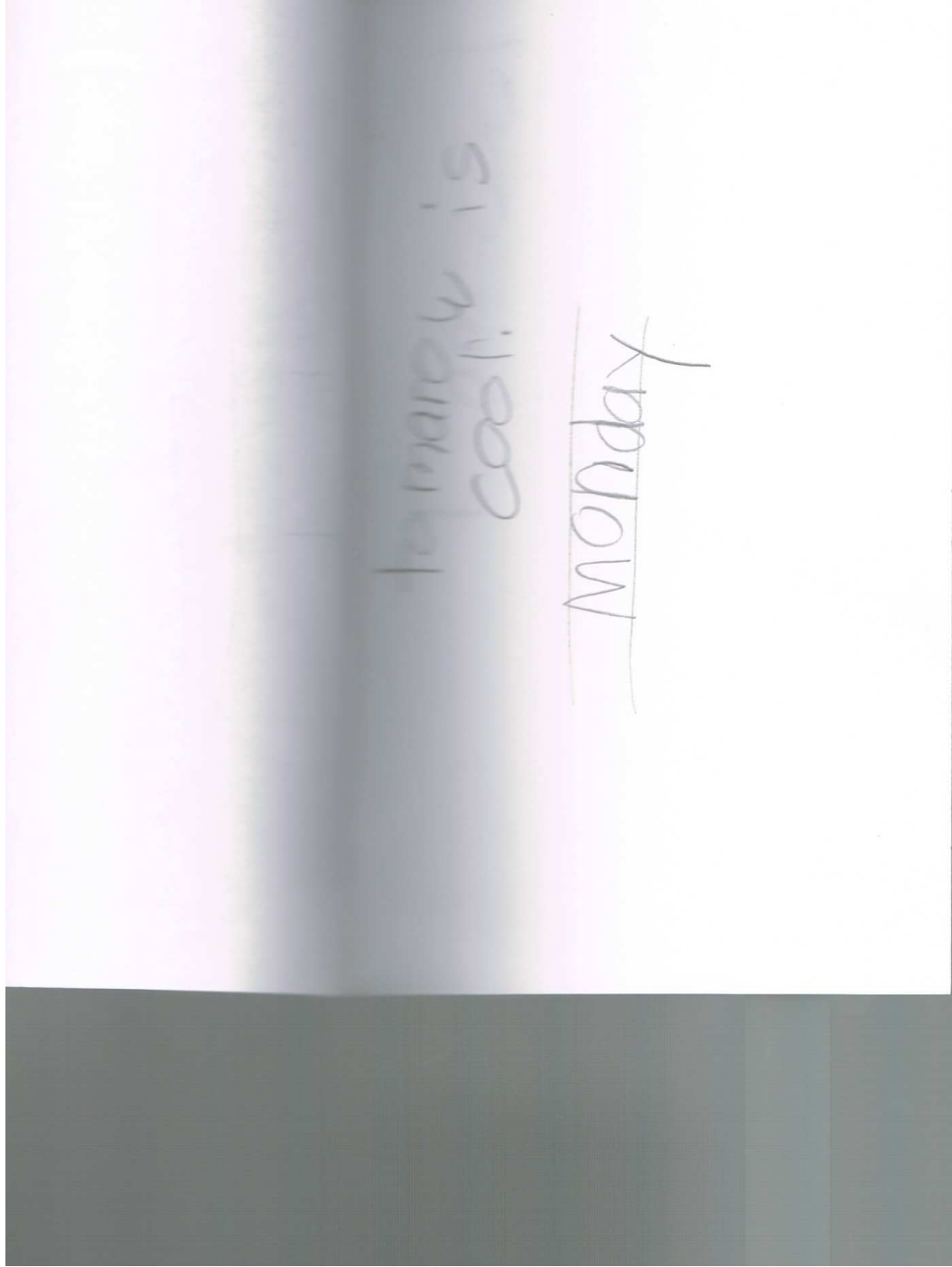
Do you
know history?

I think
history is
cool!

Appendix Q
Cool Little Book







I am cool.