

Descriptions of Successful Teachers Perspectives and
Practices for Integration at the Junior High Level

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A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

Department of Educational Psychology
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba

August, 1998



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**DESCRIPTIONS OF SUCCESSFUL TEACHERS PERSPECTIVES AND
PRACTICES FOR INTEGRATION AT THE JUNIOR HIGH LEVEL**

BY

LINDA S. McLEAN

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree
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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to provide a detailed description of teacher perspectives and the relationships between best teacher practices and inclusive classrooms. Qualitative research methods, including observations and interviews were appropriate in order to learn directly from teachers how their particular teaching styles, practices and perceptions impact on their ability to foster inclusive classrooms for all learners.

These methods allowed me to enter the world of the teachers daily life and produce descriptive data of the informants words and observable behaviour. The study looked at three Junior High Teachers who had been nominated by the Superintendents, Director of Special Education and Principals as being successful at integrating students with disabilities into their respective classrooms.

The interview and observational data was then organized, reduced, coded, systematically filed and placed on matrices. This method was used to explore emerging themes, consistencies and hypotheses. A picture of daily classroom experiences emerged.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I appreciate the support, guidance and professional dialogue provided by my thesis advisor, Dr. Zana Lutfiyya, who together with Dr. Richard Freeze and Dr. Ken McCluskey directed and encouraged me during my research study and thesis writing.

I am grateful to the teachers who welcomed me into their classrooms and shared with me their professional perspectives and daily educational experiences. I wish to acknowledge the advocacy and understanding of my Superintendents who encouraged my professional growth and supported my research. Also to my friends and colleagues, I want to express my gratitude for their caring, loyalty and support over this last year.

Finally, to my family for all the patience and understanding they have shown me. Especially my two daughters, Laura and Dawn, who with their love and encouragement gave me a time to grow. To Barrie, my soul mate, who supported me throughout my studies, a special thank you. Your love and faith provided the necessary sustenance that allowed me to achieve my goal.

DEDICATION

To my parents

Eileen Dorothy McLean

1924 - 1998

Donald George McLean

1922 - 1987

For their love

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Thesis Organization

In this chapter, education research relevant to the topic is introduced and background information is provided. The purpose of the study and the research question are stated. This is followed by Chapter II with a detailed review of the literature.

Chapter III, the research perspective and methods section, describes the qualitative methods used to explore the research question. This includes the methods used for data collection, procedures and data analysis.

Chapter IV, introduces the informants and their perceptions of successful integration through rich descriptive data obtained from initial meetings and interviews. Chapter V continues with a thick description of the classrooms and teaching practices obtained through observations which allow the reader to enter and experience the daily activities of these teachers. Chapter VI, contains the analysis of the data. Emerging themes surface as descriptions of teacher perspectives and practices are examined. Chapter VII follows with the summary and possible implications

this data may have on the enhancement of successful integration at the Junior High level.

Background Information

After a two day inservice on Inclusive Schools and New Dimension of Learning, I was feeling both excited and frustrated. The theory was all there and the enthusiasm from most teachers was present. However, as a special education teacher in an integrated school I could see that integration was working well in only some of the classes. Was it the student or the type of disability, the subject, the grade level or was it the unique style of a particular teacher?

Students with disabilities from Mr. A's science class look forward to going and continue to produce good quality work at their level. The same students from Mr. B's social class are being excluded from certain units and spending more and more time with their paraprofessionals in the special education room. What was the difference here?

Currently the educational field in Canada is experiencing a paradigm shift. The traditional paradigm is characterized by integration, a dual system of educational service delivery for regular and special education. This diverse model has resulted in student classification and categorization, segregated learning environments, fragmented programming and instruction, and 'top-down' decision making practices (Andrews & Lupart,

1993; Stainback & Stainback, 1996; Villa & Thousand, 1995).

The new paradigm is characterized by a unified system of educational service delivery, described by Andrews & Lupart (1993) as the merging of regular and special education into a unified educational system to meet the diverse needs of all students. This inclusive model is being adopted and implemented by an increasing number of schools, and has resulted in more community learning environments in the classroom, holistic programming and instruction, and collaborative-based decision-making practices.

The Division I am currently teaching in has undergone changes in special education similar to those outlined above. The Division is now going through a major change as Policy and Mission Statements emerge from the Divisions' new philosophy, 'Dimensions of Learning'. This restructuring of beliefs and practices will hopefully lead to inclusive schools. This idea is not limited to special education but intended for all learners, including gifted, those with personality behaviour disorders and other at risk students. The Division is committed to the idea of inclusive schools and is presently inservicing entire school staff for two and three days at a time.

This Division has a combination of programs for students with disabilities throughout K-12. Many schools are striving towards inclusion while others still have segregated classrooms for students with disabilities or special needs. Although the Division has inclusive education as their philosophy with training in place, most programs are still of the integrated nature. It will take time for this change to work its way through the system.

However, looking at the present system, the question still remains, 'What is it that allows integrations to be so successful in some schools? What is it that allows for successful integration (administrators, teachers, students and parents all very satisfied) to develop so naturally in some school? Is it the teachers, their practices and perspectives, the curriculum, the students?

In order to learn more about the development of successful integrated and inclusive programs, I plan to conduct interviews and observations in classrooms that have been nominated as successful. The emphasis of this research, however, is not on strategies for systematic change. An underlying premise of this research is that the Division is committed to educating all students together and has made an effort to support this philosophy using a variety of general inclusive strategies (e.g., development of an inclusive mission statement, school wide staff training). Accepting this premise allows me to focus on specific teaching strategies and unique curricular modifications and adaptations across the the Junior high populations that support effective educational programming for students with severe and multiple disabilities.

The main purpose of this research is to describe teachers' perspectives of successful practices and strategies which facilitate the integration of children with severe disabilities within the public school system.

The Research Question

Despite the obstacles and lack of concrete legislation, there is a definite shift toward inclusive schools and classrooms which facilitate integration in my Division. Therefore it is essential that concrete practical research be available that identifies the particular variables present in classroom where teachers are able to facilitate successful integration. Frost (1984) concluded that research dealing directly with the relationships among teaching practices and successful integration may be instrumental in developing training programs for teachers to implement successful integration in the regular classroom.

What circumstances encourage and foster inclusion? What strategies is the teacher using that fosters integration and makes for an inclusive classroom?

This study was designed to provide detailed descriptions of successful teaching practices for integration at the Junior High Level.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Transitions in Education: The Move Towards Inclusion

The Historical Context

In Canada, the historical progression of appropriate education for all students began with the total exclusion of handicapped individuals. From the 1800's to 1950 institutions, functioning as custodial care facilities and others more like residential schools, were the most common placement for people with disabilities (Andrews & Lupart, 1993; Villa & Thousand, 1990). During the 1950s and 1960s the public became more aware of the adverse effects of institutionalization and the inhumane condition found in the institution (Childs, 1975; Birch, 1974). There was a notable conceptual and attitudinal shift as children were now being placed in community based facilities. Parents and professionals began to lobby governments, and to organize their efforts and concerns through the establishment of local, provincial, and national groups (Lutfiyya, 1989).

High-profile advocacy groups that remain strong today, such as the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL), the

Canadian Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities (CCALD) and the Canadian branches of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) were formed.

Legal cases in the U. S., pertaining to the Civil Rights Movement (most notably *Brown vs. Board of Education*, 1954) set the stage for increased study of exclusionary policies for students with disabilities (Villa & Thousand, 1993). As a result, Federal governments in the U.S. demonstrated support for special education programs in the form of research, training and legislation (Kauffman, 1993).

During the 1960s more and more students with disabilities began attending public schools. The use of segregated or self-contained classes in public schools were now the preferred educational delivery system for most students with disabilities. Andrews & Lupart (1993) cites an example by Gittins (1980) in which B. C. public schools reported that between 1960 and 1970 the number of students in special classes rose from 3,592 to 10,247. The U.S. Bureau of the Census (1975) reported that between 1932 and 1969, general enrolments in public schools increased by 73% and enrolment in special programs in Public Education increased by 1,552 % (Stainback & Stainback, 1996).

The next step towards integration began in the late 1960's and early 1970's as research began to suggest that restrictions imposed by special placements and special classes may not be beneficial to

students with disabilities. "Special education leaders, including Dunn (1968) and Reynolds (1962), now advocated for the right of students with disabilities to learn in a more normalized school environment with their peers" (Stainback & Stainback, 1996).

In 1968 Dunn published literature which clearly moved directives away from special and segregated classes. He stated that:

- a) no available evidence suggested that the academic progress of mentally retarded children in special, separate classes was better than the academic progress of mentally retarded children in regular classrooms,
- b) labels accompanying special class placement were stigmatizing,
- c) regular education was capable of providing effective individual instruction to slow or mentally retarded pupils and
- d) self-contained classes for mentally retarded children also tend to segregate black children from white children, as black children were disproportionately enrolled as a result of virtually complete reliance on IQ testing for placement decisions.

As well, continued pressure by parents, courts, and legislators resulted in the Education for all Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (PL 94-142). This law, reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA) (PL 101-476) extended the right to a free public education to all children as the first choice or "default" position,

regardless of disability, in the least restrictive environment possible (Stainback & Stainback, 1996).

In 1979, The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps (TASH) adopted similar resolutions calling for the termination of segregated placements. However, it was not until the late 1980's that the dual system of general and special education was directly challenged (Andrews & Lupart, 1996).

Canadian educational history differs in that Canada has never had a federal mandate for education. Rather, it is the responsibility of each province and territory to determine policy in educational matters. All provincial and territorial educational ministries and departments have developed systems, based on a philosophy of integration, that offer a continuum of service. Provincial authority relies on the statutes enacted by the legislatures to provide the legal framework within which the education system is governed. Local school boards act as agents of the province, each within a particular geographically defined area. The fact that the law protects the rights of children with exceptional needs to an education does not automatically mean that the education provided is most appropriate to the individual's abilities and needs, or that it is necessarily provided in the least restrictive environment. Only three provinces - Quebec, Ontario, and Saskatchewan - have provincial education laws to ensure that the education provided will be appropriate

to the needs and abilities of the child with exceptional needs.

Provincial legislation began to change in response to U.S. initiatives typified by federal legislation of Public Law 94-142, 1975. As well, effort by our own advocacy groups and successful court challenges and litigation aided in the establishments of new legislation. One much publicized case in 1978, was that of Shelley Carriere, a 10 year old girl with cerebral palsy. When her local school refused to educate her, Shelley's parents took legal action against the existing legislation, which allowed for certain instances of student exclusion from school. In 1978, the Supreme Court of Alberta ruled that her local school district, the County of Lamont, had the responsibility to educate Shelley and that she had the right to obtain an appropriate education within the home community school (Andrews & Lupart, 1993).

Advocacy for the handicapped and lobbying by parents and educators, resulted in Bill C-141, amending the Canadian Human Rights Act, to enshrine the rights of the handicapped in human rights legislation. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms in the Canadian constitution of 1981, guaranteed equal protection and benefits of the law without discrimination, implying the right to equal educational opportunity for all children, including the disabled.

Kirk and Gallagher (1985) noted that the Canadian committee of CEC "completed two nationwide surveys, set standards for teacher training in special education and set out principles to guide the formulation of legislation" (p.18). By 1970 despite the lack of clear

legislation, all provinces had developed special education programs for more than one million exceptional Canadian children.

By the 1980s more and more students with disabilities were being integrated into the regular classrooms, on at least a part-time basis. Manitoba educators saw a positive step as the Public Schools Act, Sec. 41(4) now provided Policy and Procedural Guidelines for the education of students with special needs in the Public School System (1989). At the same time an innovative special education planning process, referred to as the Annual Division Action Plan (ADAP), was implemented throughout Manitoba, with the intent of ensuring that all school boards develop a planning and evaluation process, and put a delivery system in place (Manitoba Department of Education Training, 1989). However, one must be careful to note that this was only policy not law. As Henteleff (1993) states "policies without legislative foundation are the worst kind of deception; they are promises which suggest commitment, but cannot be legally enforced."

A current overview of provincial and territorial legislation reveals a generalized trend toward the provision of individually appropriate instruction-based programs for all students within the regular school system. Initially it was believed that "mainstreaming" or placing the student in the public schools should include a continuum of services which may or may not include segregated classes. However, the practice of categorizing students for funding purposes, led to an increase in

segregated classroom and programs. Funding and specific supports became dependent on clinicians and teacher ability to test, label and categorize students. A strong precedent of categorizing students with disabilities to provide service was established and remains entrenched in many school districts today. For example, statistics from the Alberta Department of Education, show an increase from three categories of service provision in 1950 to nine recognized categories by 1970.

This is evident today as funding for children with disabilities is contingent on their meeting the categorical criteria set up by the school system. In Manitoba some divisions have recently received block-funding. This procedure is based on the needs of a specific population and allows the allocation of special education dollars to be used for specific programs and services, not necessarily on individual student needs. This may provide more flexibility in programming but caution must be taken to ensure the monies reach the student population they were intended for.

Proponents of the Regular Education Initiative (1981) believe all students, without exception, can receive an appropriate public education in regular mainstream classrooms that are carefully redesigned and supported to enable inclusion of all students. Early efficacy reviews by Carlberg and Kaval (1980), Dunn (1968) and Madden and Slavin (1983) supporting this issue indicated that special classes were significantly inferior to regular class placements for students with below

average IQ's and that setting itself is not the primary variable affecting performance. Those who oppose the REI support the retention of separate special education classrooms and instructional programs for some students with severe disabilities requiring extensive modification of their education programming (Manitoba Education and Training, 1989, p. 3). The REI identified issues of concern for special educators which included, indefensible labelling of students, inappropriate funding system, development of miniature bureaucracies serving each of the various categories of students, adaptations of regular education learning environments, and extension of services to children who were not officially identified as handicapped. Nevertheless, there persists a preoccupation with the issues associated with categorical views of disabilities, and the continuance of a dual system of service delivery in the schools.

According to current educational leaders in the field, these matters constitute the primary barriers to the mainstreaming process, and will be of primary concern in the current decade (Biklen, 1985; Gartner & Lipsky, 1987; Stainback & Stainback, 1996).

Current Issues

This brings us to the 90s and the final thrust of the movement which has gone through exclusion, mainstreaming, integration and is now moving toward inclusion.

Up to this point general and special education had been developing along parallel rather than converging lines. The goal now is to move from separate special education and regular education systems to a continuum of services, in the least restrictive environment, or the most normal educational setting possible that would provide the maximum opportunity for the development of individual learning abilities (Bradley, King-Sears & Tessier-Switlick, 1997).

Andrews & Lupart (1993); Stainback & Stainback (1996); Downing (1996); & Bradley, et. al. (1997) all cite reports and research investigations which raised important questions about the efficacy of special education practice and led to major conceptual shifts in which students' individual learning needs was given priority over labelling and removal.

Inclusion

Inclusive classrooms start with a philosophy that all children can learn and belong in the mainstream of school and community life. Diversity is valued; It is believed that diversity strengthens the class and offers all of its members greater opportunities for learning. An inclusive school is a place where everyone belongs, is accepted, supports, and is supported by his or her peers and other members of the school community while having his or her educational needs met (Stainback & Stainback, 1996; Downing, 1996). This was the message that was clearly

articulated at the 1994 UNESCO World Conference on Special Education Needs (International League of Societies for Persons with Mental Handicap, 1994). Treffinger & Feldhusen (1996) state "that education should focus on the identification and development of talent in all youth, with appropriate attention to varied levels and domains." It is more powerful and more important to emphasize instructional programming, or efforts to nurture and develop students' strengths, talents and sustained interests, than it is simply to label and categorize students (Treffinger, Sortore & McCluskey, 1995).

To clarify the difference in philosophy as special education moved from segregation to inclusion I offer the following definition of inclusion as it relates to this thesis.

The terms 'inclusion' and 'inclusive school' have appeared in the literature to describe the instruction of students with disabilities within the general education program. Inclusive schools do not require that students be ready to fit into the established education programs as mainstreaming does, but instead develop classroom communities that support the educational and social needs of all students with or without disabilities (Bradley, King-Sears, & Tessier-Switlick, 1997).

Researchers and Educators are now advocating a unified, inclusive educational system that will foster lifelong learning, provide educational quality and equity, facilitate independent learning and

thinking, promote a school-home partnership, encourage living and learning in a community and develop academic and social competence (Downing, 1996; Nevin, Villa & Thousand, 1992). Placing students with disabilities into segregated schools or special classes prevents this beneficial socialization and sends a destructive message of intolerance. Inclusive schools must establish and pursue with energy a commitment to excellence and to finding and nurturing the strengths and talents of all students (Treffinger, Sortore & McCluskey, 1995). According to Villa & Thousand (1990) this can be accomplished in the home schools by providing for all students; i) an adaptive learning environment that provides equal access to instructional resources and opportunities to succeed ii) individualized instruction varying in time and amounts to meet all students' diversity iii) instructional provisions for special learning needs by regular and support staff iv) diverse adaptive instruction v) integration of services and responsibilities for all staff.

To summarize, the education of students with disabilities has progressed from neglect, to institutions, to residential schooling and other isolated schools and classes, to pullout programs, mainstreaming, integration and is continuing in the direction of full inclusion for all students with disabilities. Schools must now address the dynamic and ongoing process of challenging all students to become aware of their best potentials, and to fulfil those potentials as fully as possible through the opportunities and services we provide in our schools (Treffinger, Sortore, & McCluskey, 1995).

Best Teaching Practices

Best teaching practices are defined behaviours of a teacher which enhance the intensity or quality of instruction in a classroom (Kauffman, 1993). Bradley, King-Sears & Tessier-Switlick (1997) define a strategy as a set of resources organized to solve a problem.

While most teachers agree that meeting the individual learning needs of all students is a desirable and logical philosophy for educators, its actual implementation and practice are becoming increasingly problematic. Many general education teachers believe that they do not have the skills or expertise to successfully educate students with disabilities. The existence of two parallel educational systems, one labelled 'special education' and one labelled 'regular education', reinforced the myth that students with disabilities learn so differently as to require teaching methods distinct from those used with typical students. Now students previously taught by specially trained teachers, with specialized teaching materials, are part of the regular classroom.

Approaches used in typical learning environments which appear to be 'promising practices' for all learners include, cooperative learning, whole-language instruction, multi-age groupings, multiple intelligence theory, community-referenced instruction, peer mediated instruction and collaborative teaming among adults and students (Villa & Thousand, 1995; Madden & Slavin, 1983). By implementing these practices, educators may be better equipped to facilitate meaningful and effective

inclusive education for students perceived as disabled, at risk, or gifted, as well as those considered 'average'.

A dynamic school environment in which adults support each other and work together to create strategies to ensure student success can provide non threatening opportunities for teachers to learn about and try varied instructional approaches. Teachers can then incorporate approaches which they find successful into their teaching repertoires.

It is important that general education teachers feel comfortable with the techniques, and procedures used with these students. Giangreco et al. (1993) stated that successful integration is possible as teaching styles and attitudes change, as a result of successful use of new practices, and procedures that help teachers assimilate innovations into their existing belief system.

My division has used the term "Best Teaching Practices" in it's revised (1995) Mission Statement to promote a framework for accepting all students as equal members of a community of learners rather than as differentially positioned achievers on a hierarchical skill sequence.

In this section I have outlined strategies found in the literature that appear to be promising practices in creating an inclusive classroom. Although these strategies can be used by all learners, I am specifically looking at how they apply to students with disabilities in regular classrooms.

Downing (1996) reports that due to the still-infrequent cases of

learners with disabilities in general education classes, few efficacy studies have been conducted to determine teaching strategies that are successful with these learners. How then do some classroom teachers provide supportive learning communities that include and meet the needs of all students? What strategies and practices are workable? Although there is no magic formula for creating effective inclusive classrooms, the strategies cited here, although certainly not the only ones, are descriptions of promising educational practices for students with disabilities in the regular classroom. The underlying assumption is that all children can learn once we identify their special strengths and support them in their efforts to achieve desired outcomes (Bradley, King-Sears & Tessier-Switlick, 1997).

It is my intent to go into designated classrooms with a certain set of assumptions about good practices, and observe what these "Best Teaching Strategies" are and how they create a positive learning environment for students with disabilities.

Cooperative learning

Stainback & Stainback (1996) give the following definition of cooperative learning practices as it relates to teaching practices, "...the instructional component, relates to the creation of a classroom learning atmosphere in which students of varying abilities and interests can

achieve their potential." Cooperative learning has gained widespread acceptance as a promising practice in general education and studies have shown that cooperative learning activities can promote social acceptance and academic achievement of students with disabilities (Yager, Johnson, Johnson & Snider, 1985). Madden & Slavin (1983) reviewed cooperative learning methods, conducted over periods ranging from 2 weeks to 2 years. They found positive outcomes in achievement and self-esteem using cooperative learning strategies with academically handicapped students.

Cooperative learning operates under the principle that learning is social (Downing, 1996). This is a departure from traditional lecture and workbook approaches, in which students work independently. The cooperative learning model involves students actively assisting each other in the learning process. To facilitate positive interactions, teachers should ensure that cooperative groups are heterogeneous, with students mixed by culture, ethnicity, gender and ability. The possibilities for student to interact with each other are evident in the four components of cooperative learning described by Johnson & Pugach (1991), possible interdependence, individual accountability, small-group skill development and face-to face interactions.

Thematic teaching units

The "integrated thematic instruction model" was developed to represent what is known about brain research, curriculum development,

and teaching strategies in which curriculum and instruction correspond to the way children naturally learn (Bradley, King-Sears, Tessier-Switlick, 1997). Thematic teaching units ensure that content is integrated across several curricular areas, providing necessary repetition and highlighting natural linkages for students. For example, facts from social studies are transferred to essay format in a language arts lesson. This is important for students with disabilities, as they often have difficulty generalizing in other settings. Thematic teaching units tend to be very project based with students actively engaged in the learning process.

Multiple intelligences

Multiple intelligences were described by Gardner in 1983, refined by Armstrong in 1987, and again in 1994. Downing (1996) describes multiple intelligences as a theory that intelligence is not a single construct and cannot be quantified as an isolated unit of measure. According to this theory, individuals possess and demonstrate intelligence in various ways (i.e., spatially, interpersonally). When this theory is applied in practice, the curricular content moves beyond linguistic and logical mathematical areas to incorporate other facets such as the visual arts and interpersonal relationships. There are seven specific categories of intelligences: logical-mathematical, linguistic, musical, bodily kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. This individualized approach is very holistic and encourages children to get

the most out of their unique talents which they may bring to a task. The theory of multiple intelligences suggests using teaching approaches which tap each student's individual 'gifts' as well as the modality through which he or she best learns.

In terms of classroom practices, the theory of multiple intelligences places much less emphasis on passive learning (i.e. lecture) and more emphasis on alternative ways of learning, including movement, manipulation of objects, music and social interactions. Students are encouraged to develop their strengths and interest, with the teacher following their lead. Teachers are less 'directors of learning' or givers of knowledge and more facilitators of learning.

Whole Language Approach

In this approach, reading, writing, spelling, speaking and listening is taught simultaneously. The emphasis of whole-language instruction is on the language experiences of the child, rather than strict sound/symbol association (Cannon, Idol & West, 1992). This approach lends itself easily to the teaching of the student with disabilities because of the very nature of the individualized program. This perspective allows students with disabilities to use and develop the nonsymbolic or symbolic means of communication that is most appropriate. This approach also affords the learner numerous opportunities to develop social interaction skills within the instructional framework (Andrews & Lupart, 1993).

Direct Instruction

Direct instruction involves teaching specific concepts and skills in a systematic way through highly structured and carefully developed programs (Andrews & Lupart, 1993). Program design and instruction are carefully constructed and based on behavioural principles such as prompting, discrimination learning, shaping and reinforcement contingencies. The emphasis is on task analysis and involves breaking down targeted activities into small steps. Downing, 1996 states that the effectiveness of systematically instructing students with severe and multiple impairments is well documented. Ault, Wolery, Doyle & Gast, (1989) reviewed thirty-one efficacy studies on direct instruction with students who displayed moderate to severe handicaps. They concluded that, "of the strategies investigated, all were effective in teaching students new behaviours (academic and social) in at least some of the studies." Madden and Slavin (1983) examined four studies measuring the outcomes of individualized instruction on achievement and social acceptance of mildly academically handicapped elementary students in regular classes. They found marked improvements in social acceptance, dramatic improvements in behaviour and significantly greater academic achievement than those in traditional group paced programs. However, caution needs to be taken in that skills learned in a specific situation may not always transfer to enable students to practice the skills in situation relevant to their life experiences. Stainbach & Stainback, (1989) pose the question "can the complexity of learning

interactions be examined discretely and controlled entirely?" Education is social and we learn in context with people (Janney, Snell, Beers, & Raynes 1998). Direct instruction teaches very specific skills and should be used in conjunction with other holistic approaches.

Adaptations, Modifications and Accommodations

The purpose of a modification or adaptation is to enable an individual to compensate for intellectual, physical or behavioural challenges (Bradley et.al. 1997). The modification allows the individual to use existing skills to acquire new skills. As teachers become skilled at adapting the curriculum, they begin to see the multitude of possibilities, since modifications made for one student usually benefit several students in an inclusive classroom (Fuch et al., 1995; Leyser, 1988). Bradley et al. (1997) suggests the modification should FLOW: **F**it in the classroom environment, **L**end itself to meeting individual needs, **O**ptimize understanding for the student and **W**ork well with the activity planned for others in the class.

There has been considerable emphasis on how to include all students in the social life of the classroom but considerable less attention given to how all students can be involved in actively learning in inclusive classrooms. Adapting the curriculum to promote optimal and meaningful learning is crucial at the Jr. High (Gr. 7-9) level. Students are expected to obtain information more through a lecture and note-taking format,

supplemented by texts. These emphases can pose a considerable barrier to the inclusion of students with significant disabilities. A good teaching practice would be the ability to adapt the curriculum to individual needs and capitalize on the learning opportunities in a given classroom. These opportunities could be academic, communicative, social, or motoric (Villa, Udis, & Thousand, 1994).

Adaptation to the physical environment must also be in place for students with disabilities. A desk which does not fit or areas of the room which are not accessible, gives the student a feeling of not belonging.

Accommodation differs from adapting in that here you only modify the delivery of instruction or the method by which the student responds or performs the skill. An example of this is giving a test orally or allowing a student to type it out on the computer. Accommodations are usually made to help the student overcome physical barriers and does not significantly change the content or the cognitive difficulty. Teachers should be flexible enough to make these accommodations quickly throughout the lesson so as not to hamper the students learning.

Assessment Strategies

In the past, assessment was the responsibility of experts usually clinicians, who confirmed or established a diagnosis or label for a child having difficulty in the regular class. Tests were generally standardized

and/or developmental in nature and results indicated where a student was functioning as compared to an average same age peer (e.g., a 14-year old may be labelled as functioning at 2-3 years of age). It is difficult for a teacher to use this information to plan a program for a student.

The move to inclusive schools now requires the regular classroom teacher to be the primary professional, in collaboration with others, who assess the students progress and develops an appropriate program. Andrews & Lupart (1993) reports that an increased emphasis on process assessment and a greater emphasis on practical classroom-based assessment, has resulted in more useful information with respect to program planning and intervention. Portfolio assessments are one strategy for conducting assessments on a performance basis (Bradley, 1997). Samples of the child's work are kept throughout the year (s) and the student's progress is based on individual personal growth. Students with disabilities can then be marked and assessed on their own ability and performance (Sale & Carey, 1995).

Creating a community of learners

Stainback & Stainback (1996) suggest building a community of learners is critical to establishing inclusive schooling. Teachers play a major role as mediators and facilitators in creating a community of learners. "Both instructional and environmental factors interact with student characteristics to frame the students learning experiences

(Christenson, Ysseldyke & Thurlow, 1989). The quality and quantity of instruction and degree to which an environment is constructively active can substantially influence the educational experience of students with special needs.

Implicit in the meaning of inclusion is belonging (Kunc, 1992). All students should participate in setting rules (rules about how to relate to others in humane, respectful and caring ways), designing the room and being responsible for what goes on inside the classroom. Teachers need to provide a classroom which is safe and orderly and where everyone looks out for everyone else.

Truesdell (1988) looked at positive effects of school organization and climate on the mainstreaming experience of middle school students over a period of 3 years. He found in most mainstream classrooms, that students had equal status and pursued common goals.

One of the basic components for building connections and friendships is that people are in close proximity and have frequent opportunities to interact with each other. Unfortunately, frequent opportunities and close proximity are not always sufficient for children and adolescents to feel connected to each other and to build a network of friends.

Several tools have been used successfully to facilitate such connections and eventual friendships. These tools are designed to tap into the creative energy of students and educators. Circle of Friends, Making Action Plans (MAPs) and Planning Alternative Tomorrows with

Hope (PATH) are three person-centered tools which assume that everyone is valued (Pearpoint, Forest & O'Brien, 1993). It is a set of tools, which engage students, parents, and teachers in developing a shared understanding of a student. There is a common vision of that student, as an active learner who enjoys the benefits of class membership and contributes to the class. These tools begin with the assumption that all persons belong, all people can learn, everyone benefits from being together and diversity is one of our most critical strengths (Kearney & Guran, 1992).

Research suggests that Peer mediated learning is another approach frequently used in mainstream classrooms to include all students, regardless of the severity of their disability (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993). Students may be used in the capacity of peer tutors, cross-age tutors, data collectors, peer buddies or helpers (Downing, 1996). Peer tutoring is not one sided and there are many benefits for both (Deshler & Shumaker, 1986). At the Jr. High level students can help as lab partners in a science class, be in the same study group, or simply accompany the student from one class to the next.

Sometimes specific social skills need to be taught to all children in an inclusive classroom. Some areas to be addressed are positive interaction style, establishing areas of compatibility, taking the perspective of others, sharing and providing support, trustworthiness and loyalty, conflict resolution and specific friendship skills. Students with

disabilities need to learn the modes of communication used by a classmate so they will feel more comfortable in initiating interactions and remaining in these interactions for longer periods (Malouf & Schiller, 1995). Instruction to the whole class may be necessary for learning how to use another persons' augmentative system, teaching accommodation for physical disabilities, becoming aware of unique sensory loss in individuals and understanding unexpected and undesired behaviour.

Although friendships cannot be forced, their development can be encouraged, nurtured and facilitated in educational environments. A sense of community and belonging is possible with the leadership of a warm and caring individual, who puts forth the effort to involve all students in the classroom and school activities.

Friendships are treasured by children and adults everywhere. Although easily taken for granted, the importance of friendship is clearest to those who lack such relationships in their lives. The education of students with and without disabilities in shared environments has brought the need for meaningful relationships to the forefront.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH PERSPECTIVE AND METHODS

The purpose of this study is to learn about teacher perspectives of relationships between best teacher practices and inclusive classrooms. This includes how the teacher presents materials, develops expectations, evaluates progress and interacts with all the students in the class.

Qualitative research methods were appropriate in order to learn directly from teachers how their particular teaching styles, practices and beliefs' impact on their ability to foster inclusive classrooms for all learners. With qualitative methods the researcher enters the world of the people he or she plans to study, gets to know, be known and trusted by them, and systematically keeps a detailed written record of what is heard and observed. The qualitative study involves ongoing data collection analysis and modification of the research design. Qualitative methods produce descriptive data, that is, the words and observable behaviour of the informants. It involves intensive data collection on many variables over an extended period of time, in a naturalistic setting (Gay, 1987). The researcher can collect this information primarily through in depth interviews and participant observation sessions (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

Qualitative research relies on detailed, accurate and extensive field notes. They render a description of people, objects, places, events, activities and conversations. The research findings closely represent the

words and actions of the informants and are said to be “grounded” information (Gay, 1967).

What is learned is also not reducible to a set of variables or statistical relationships. It is the meaning of a particular situation to a person who is enmeshed in it (Bogdan & Bilken, 1982). In order to learn about the perspectives of others, the qualitative researcher uses a ‘naturalistic’ approach. Efforts are made to develop a rapport with the informant and to minimize the effect of the researcher upon the setting. Another adult in a classroom can be very obtrusive, and intimidating to other teachers and students. The researcher knows that she/he will somehow influence the informants and continually tries to account for this during the collection and analysis of the data. “If you treat people as ‘research subjects’ they will act as research subjects, which is different from how they usually are” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

Qualitative researchers try to suspend their own perspective and learn directly from the world view of the informant. The qualitative researcher must hold his/her own biases and beliefs in abeyance. Bogdan & Biklen (1982) call this procedure “bracketing”. In asking questions, a qualitative researcher aspires at times to an intellectual naivete (Lutfiyya, 1989).

Qualitative research methods are different from quantitative ones that collect data with specific questions in order to answer or test predetermined hypotheses. As qualitative research relies directly on the

words and actions of people, it emphasizes validity (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1996).

Design of the Study

A study using qualitative research methods begins with a broad outline and direction of approach rather than a specified study design. In using a qualitative approach, researchers do not begin with a working hypothesis or even a set of expectations to be proved or disproved. The researcher avoids going into a study with hypotheses to test or specific questions to answer, believing that finding the questions should be one of the products of data collection rather than assumed a priority. The researcher does start with a question or questions that he/she wants to learn about, in this case, the relationship between teaching practices and successful integration at the Junior High level. Thus, the study itself structures the research (Bodgan & Bilken, 1982).

Initial interviews and observations were meant to cover a broad range of topics and cast a wide net. Specific teacher practices and the ability to facilitate successful integration in the classroom form the broad questions of this study. To gain an understanding of this process, I tried to learn the perspective of teachers involved in integration in areas such as, how they view teaching students with disabilities, what strategies they use and what their thoughts and feelings are in this area. "There are many times when we wish to know not how many or how well, but simply how" (Jaeger, 1988, p.7).

The instruments for this study were designed to respond to this question. The purpose was to observe the environment and examine the educational perceptions and experiences of classroom teachers who had students with disabilities in their class.

The purpose of observational data is to describe the setting that was observed, the activities that took place in that setting, the people who participated in those activities, and the meanings of what was observed from the perspective of those observed (Peshkin, 1993). I attempted to continuously note the teachers behaviours and interactions with all students and support personnel as they occurred during the observation periods. Extensive field notes were produced from 4-45 minute observations in three separate integrated classrooms. These intervals were assigned in consultation with the classroom teacher and equally distributed during mornings and afternoons over five weeks of observations. Four observational periods, with each teacher, were used to minimize the effects of a "god" or a "bad" day. I tried to learn more about teacher practices by noting in brief, descriptive, non-evaluative terms: behaviour, activity and interactions the teacher had with everyone in the room.

One assumption made was that I would have an initial meeting with the classroom teachers before the taped interview and observations in order to develop a rapport with them. I would then arrange for a taped interview to collect descriptive data, narrative accounts in the

informants' words, that would outline their experiences. However, the first meeting with all three informants turned out to be very lengthy and contained good descriptive data of their personal history, views on teaching and on integration. I developed a good rapport with all informants at this first meeting which in all cases lasted over one hour. Therefore I immediately began my field notes after these meeting. This information also influenced the questions that I was going to ask at the taped interview. As a result, there was no easy and logical progression to the meetings, interviews and observations. I developed a list of questions and probes based on what I learned from the introductory interviews with each informant.

Establishing rapport did not seem to be an issue with the informants who proceeded to share intimate details of their past and present teaching experiences and personal life from the onset.

Identifying Informants

The informants for this study were drawn from a suburban school division in Winnipeg, Manitoba, which is an urban center of approximately 670,000. The division serves about 6000 students in 18 schools of which 6 are Junior High.

The division includes a diverse population. Residents vary across all socioeconomic groups. There is a rich cultural mix with a predominant German Mennonite population both in staff and students.

French, German and Ukrainian Immersion Programs are offered. The division offers a combination of mainstreaming in the home school, cluster programs and segregated settings for students with disabilities. There are 150 provincially designated Level 1, 2 and 3 students in the Division. This figure would include students with multiple handicaps and emotional /behaviour disorders.

The informants were selected by the Assistant Superintendent and the Director of Special Education from the six Junior High Schools in the Division. They nominated three teachers, who in their opinion, had successfully integrated students with disabilities (Level 2 & 3) into the classroom at the Junior High level. The criteria for 'successful' is based on the assumption that the principal, the teacher, the student and the parents all see integration as a positive experience.

Collecting data

The data for this study were collected primarily through informal meetings, taped interviews and observations. After the Superintendent and the Director identified potential informants, I contacted the Principals at the respective schools and set up a meeting. The two Principals (two teachers were from the same school) were extremely helpful and gave me background information on the school and the teachers I was to work with. This information was also put into my field notes. Once I gained permission from the Principals I contacted the three teachers by

telephone, briefly described my study, and set up initial meetings. They all agreed to meet with me that week. When I met with the first informant, Mr. Brough, I was prepared to describe the study and hoped to have him sign the permission form. As it turned out the Principal had already talked to him about the study and he was very excited at being nominated and began at once to share with me his philosophies and teaching experiences. When I contacted the other informants, Mrs. S. Cumming and Mr. C. Bradley, I experienced similar situations. At the conclusion of the initial meetings dates for the taped interviews had been set up and I had developed a positive rapport with all the teachers.

Interviews

An interview is a purposeful conversation, usually between two people that is directed by one in order to get information (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). The interview is used to gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world. The interview questions were adapted from sources in the literature (Giangreco et al., 1993; Bogdan & Biklen, 1982) and modified to meet the purpose of this study. An open ended interview format was used (Appendix A).

The informants were interviewed before the observations to help develop a rapport with them before entering their classrooms. I started

by asking each person the same question, "How did you come to choose teaching as a career?" However, after that the interviews were all different. The teachers had no problem with my taping the interviews and easily discussed their personal lives and careers. I intervened with some probing questions during the interview to allow for clarification or elaboration only when I felt one of my questions had not been addressed.

Initial meetings and interviews of the two teachers at the same school took place in their classrooms either before or after classes or when they had a prep. The teacher at the other school also held the role of acting vice-principal (due to the illness of the Principal that month) so the initial meeting and the interview were held in her office. Field notes were written up as soon as possible after these taped interviews.

All three agreed to allow me to come into their classrooms for 4 - 45 minute (one class) observational periods. These dates spanned a period of 6 weeks.

The observation

In ethnographies, the goal is to accurately and completely describe a setting or group of people (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). I was to observe in the following classrooms. Mrs. Cumming taught a Gr. 8 Language Arts class of 23 with 3, level 2 students with disabilities at Anderson Junior High. Mr. Brough taught a Gr. 7 Social Studies class of 21 with 2 level 2 students with disabilities at Pembina Junior High. Mr.

Bradly taught a Gr. 8 Social Studies class of 17 students with 4 level 2 students with disabilities at Pembina Junior High. The observations were scheduled so that I could observe these same classrooms for 4 periods of 45 minutes each. Despite the complexity of a Junior High timetable the observations went very well and only one had to be rescheduled.

No taping occurred during the participant observations sessions in the classrooms. Traditional field-notes were written up immediately following the sessions. I tried to continuously note the behaviours of the teachers, and their interactions with the environment and all students as they occurred during the observation period.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others. One of the hallmarks of qualitative research is the ongoing process of data analysis (Lutfiyya, 1989). It is done while data are being collected, although there is an intensive period of analysis towards the end of the study. Qualitative researchers must develop systematic ways to keep their collected data organized and specific data retrievable for the purposes of analysis.

In order to manage the data gathered in this study, I used Claris Works 4 (data base), a computer-based system designed to code and

manage text data. I also used a systematic hanging filing system as well as matrix charts.

My data consisted of a meeting with the Principals, Mr. Howie and Dr. Spencer, an initial meeting with each Teacher, three taped interviews with the Teachers and twelve, forty-five minute observations in the classrooms. The data was collected between April 2 and May 15th, 1998. Interview transcripts, field notes, and memos were submitted to my major advisor who read them and gave me feedback on my activities as a researcher.

All data from interviews, observations, audio tapes and miscellaneous field notes was analyzed and each line coded under 6 major headings and 23 sub headings (Appendix B). These headings were developed directly from the data and are said to be grounded in the data. Using this process of category creation I could refine, define and explore research ideas, find text relevant to complex ideas, pursue hunches in all directions, and formulate and test hypotheses.

A set of hanging files was set up for each teacher under each of these categories. Observational data was colour coded blue and data obtained from taped interviews, red. This allowed me to keep separate information based on what teachers said and what they were actually observed doing. Once the 300 pages of data was coded I began cutting it up and placing it in the files under the respective headings.

I then took out the matching files on each teacher and reviewed them to see if there were any similarities, consistencies or emerging

themes. For example, in the file under the heading of 'Structure of Day', sub heading, 'classroom management', I found several slips of paper describing teachers standing by their overheads saying things like, "Ladies and Gentleman your attention please". As I read and compared each file, similarities and consistent themes began to emerge. From here I was able to formulate some hypothesis.

Also, throughout the data it became apparent that teachers were using certain strategies over and over. I jotted these down and came up with a list of practices and behaviours that were reoccurring in each room and again are said to be grounded in the data (Appendix C). These practices and behaviour were then placed down the side of a large matrix with the headings, constant, often, occasionally and seldom across the top. I then reviewed the original data in the files and placed stickies with the respective teachers name on the appropriate matrix box whenever one of the teachers used the strategy. In order to provide examples of this matrix, I reduced the size and replaced stickies with numbers and was able to formulate statements reflecting the number of times the behaviour was reported.

Using the above methods, data was systematically examined and unfolded in a manner which enabled me to present a picture of the daily experiences of teachers facilitating integration in their rooms.

CHAPTER IV

INTRODUCING THE INFORMANTS

The subjects for this study were three Junior High classroom teachers nominated from two Junior High Schools. The Schools partly reflected the Divisions diversity. Anderson Junior High has a population of approximately 250 students and is located outside the city limits in a new upper to middle class neighbourhood. The houses are modern, mostly two story with two car garages. The landscaping is lush with strategically planted trees, shrubs and flowers.

The school itself is drab in comparison to the expensive houses. It is a long one story building with small windows and only one visible door. The dull brown brick and stucco is in need of a paint job and the windows and doors are dirty. There is a lot of graffiti on the outside walls and the sidewalk is strewn with litter. Beside the walk, a once grassed area is now full of weeds and bare dirt patches.

Pembina Junior High has a population of 550 and is located in a lower to middle class neighbourhood within the city. The housing consists of modest one story homes, side by sides, three visible sets of row housing and two high rise apartments. The yards are small but well kept.

Pembina School is larger but of the same architecturally design as Anderson School. However, the similarity ends there as this school has freshly painted trim and very white stucco. The windows are clean,

the walls and sidewalk free of graffiti and the well maintained lawn shows no signs of litter. The playground is very large and consists of two baseball diamonds and two large areas marked with white lines which could be used for football or soccer.

Each teacher has from two to four Level II students with disabilities integrated into at least one of their classes during the day. The students designated special education students by the Division receive Level II funding from the Province. Students must first meet the criteria of having a significant cognitive delay in order to have a special education status within this Division. Students with physical disabilities, emotional behavioural disorders or other learning disabilities without significant cognitive delays are referred to as students with special needs and are in the regular stream. They may or may not receive special programming.

The Division offers a variety of Special Education Programs at the Junior High level. In consultations with the Director of Special Education, and Principals, parents can choose to send their child to the home school or to one of three cluster programs. These programs range from segregated classrooms to partial and full integration.

The three students designated special education at Anderson School are attending their home school. There is no special education teacher and the principal determines which classes they will attend. These students each received two hours of paraprofessional support throughout the day. The resource teachers works with them on their basic skills in a program called ICBS (Individual Curriculum in Basic Skills).

In contrast, Pembina School has a large Special Education Program consisting of two special education teachers, twenty-one students and four paraprofessionals. The students are all enrolled in the Special Education Program and the principal, special education teacher, classroom teachers and parents decide which subjects the students will be integrated into. Special programming in basic Language Arts, Math, Work Experience, Community Referenced Instruction and Life Skills is provided by the special education teacher in a separate room or out in the community. These students receive continuous shared paraprofessional support throughout the day especially when they are in the regular classroom.

Within these Division and School Administration guidelines each of the nominated classroom teachers organized their integrated classrooms to fit their students and their individual needs.

In the form of brief descriptive narratives I will introduce the classroom teachers (all of the informants are referred to by pseudonyms) and attempt to convey their attitudes, beliefs and perceptions of their teaching experience in an integrated setting. The information that follows was derived primarily through initial meetings and interviews with the teachers. I conducted the interviews first as I wanted the teachers' perspective of what they thought they were doing to facilitate successful integration. By gaining some insight into their beliefs and attitudes I would be less likely to put my interpretation of what I would observe in the classroom. Observational data of actual events follows in chapter V.

SALLY CUMMING

Anderson Junior High

As I walked down the quite halls I noticed that the inside of the school did not reflect the same untidiness that was evident outside. The floors were sparkling clean with no signs of litter and students art work was tastefully framed and hanging in straight orderly rows along the hallway walls.

Sally was waiting for me by the office door and greeted me with an outstretched hand and a big smile. She was a heavy, well rounded lady in her forties. She wore no make up and her round smiling face had a bright fresh look to it. Her dark hair was cut short with full bangs and the sides brushed behind her ears. A large comfortable looking knitted sweater hung loosely over a pair of stretchie slacks. She wore low heeled shoes that were well worn and looked very comfortable. At the time it struck me that she was rather casually dressed for a Vice-Principal. She laughed nervously and said,

Hello, you must be Linda, come into my office. I can't quite get used to this new role ..having an office and all. Let's sit back here it's less formal.

I followed her to the corner of the room where we sat at a round table with two chairs. Her office was small but bright, because of a large window behind her desk. The office was very neat with only one file on

the desk and no signs of other paper work in the room. There were some neatly stacked books in a book case.

She explained that she likes the variety that administration offers, but misses the individual interactions with the kids. Also since it is only temporary and part time she didn't feel she was doing either job well at the moment.

I explained to her again what I was attempting to accomplish and how she had come to be nominated. She was genuinely surprised that the superintendent had nominated her to take part in this study. Her comment was,

Sometimes you think no one out there knows what or how you are teaching. It's nice they know who I am at least. I know they give me more than my share of EBD (her phrase) and special ed kids because as a principal once told me, 'You can really teach these kids and they are always happy in your room'. I don't think I do anything that special ...I just...well... like to teach.....all kids. It will be wonderful to have this opportunity to talk to someone about my students.

This initial statement, 'I don't think I do anything that special ...I just...well... like to teach.....all kids', turned out to be a reoccurring theme throughout this study. I also noted that right from the beginning she referred to the students as 'my students'. She went on to explain that she

didn't see herself as an expert and was not a special education teacher and in fact had never had any training whatsoever in special education. However, from her very first year of teaching she has had students with disabilities in her class. In her own words she clarified that the students were not physically disabled but had various mental disabilities, learning disabilities and/or behaviour problems.

I asked her how she came to choose teaching as a career and she talked openly about her early dreams of becoming a teacher and in the course of our conversation, shared many of her beliefs and attitudes about teaching.

She always knew she wanted to be a teacher and can remember admiring an older cousin who was a teacher. She had basically raised her brother and sister and admitted that she knew she was, 'good with kids'. She had been teaching for 23 years, 21 in her present Division and 2 years before that on a Mennonite Colony. Seventeen of those years were in elementary. She now teaches Language Arts and Social Studies to Gr. 7, 8's & 9's. She elaborated,

I enjoy teaching these two subject areas... my major at University was Geography and I have a real love of History. It's also nice to be able to integrate the L.A. with Social Studies. You can do projects and if you go to the Library to look up information and writeup reports, well there is your, L.A.

She shared a cute story with me about her early years in teaching. It went something like this,

I remember my first year, I had graduate with a B.A., attended normal school and immediately got a job on a Mennonite Colony. The Superintendent told me that he would be observing me on a weekly basis. He was a very stern looking man who never spoke or smiled, he just sat at the back of my room. Anyway when I walked into class, well there was my first exposure to a special ed student. I was teaching grade three and this poor boy had been held back. He was over 6 foot and about 14 years old. I was terrified, not because of his size but they told me he was labelled TMH. I thought what am I going to do with him and then the Superintendent walked in to observe. Well I just jumped in, it was drive and determination. I had to do a good job. So I began to gear things to him so he could participate in what the other kids were doing. I didn't have time or even know how to prepare separate activities for him. I treated him like everyone else and expected him to behave like everyone else and well, we had a great year. The Superintendent never said a word one way or the other but came in less and less and then in June gave me a contract for September. I guess since then I just expanded

on this theory and kept the kids basically doing what everyone else was doing.

She emphasized again that although she has always worked with students with disabilities she has had no special training and claims what she learned has all been on the job. She made the comment that the University should incorporate more student teaching since she believes you can learn a lot more about teaching while in a classroom than taking a course.

These early experiences seemed to have set the direction for Sally's teaching career and she finds it very rewarding working with students with disabilities. She explained,

I am able to do something for these kids that other teacher can't. That feels good, because maybe they (other teachers) don't have the patience..or they have a higher stress level...personality conflicts.

She is aware that some teachers never get students with disabilities but realizes that it wouldn't be fair to the students to put them in with certain teachers. She continued,

Administration looks at teachers personalities, if you are a yeller and a screamer you won't do well. If you are someone who is calm and enjoys working with special ed students then you will do well. It's really all attitude.

She wasn't sure she knew exactly what it was she was doing but she seemed to know what it was the other teachers were not doing,

I know some teachers who after 10-20 years get a special ed student... and think I can't do it I'm not trained. Well it's not the training...it's attitude.

She told me that she has had students with serious behaviour problems, in her class and described them as kids no one else could handle. She thought the non-violent crisis intervention strategy worked for her, but went on to say, it is not something you can teach people especially if teachers have confrontational attitudes.

I asked her what it was that she did different for the student with special needs.

I really don't know, I treat everyone the same....actually....my expectations may differ when it comes to actual assignments but this is true for all kids. Not everyone can give 100% all the time. So I accept and respect what they can give at a particular time.

She admits she really doesn't know what it is that makes her able to get through to the kids. She placed a strong emphasis on getting the students to feel successful. If the work seems too hard the students will shut down because they think or know that they can't do it. Just reducing the amount of work makes no sense to her.

Hey..if you can't do the work, like math then you can't do one question never mind ten.

While talking with me she realized that it must be her own particular style or philosophy of teaching that makes the difference but she agreed it was hard to define and she didn't know how to put it into words. She tried again to verbalize what she was doing. "I just treat all kids as if they can and will learn. Hey, we all need help".

She believes the first thing is making the student feel welcome and making the environment non threatening. Next you have to get them feeling good about themselves. She sometimes has to teach them skills to get along socially before she can teach curriculum.

I asked if she though the kids were benefiting and learning by being on a modified or adapted regular curriculum.

Oh, definitely, I am convinced that it is very important for all students to have expectations placed on them.

She began speaking quickly, put her hands in the air and went on,

They really surprise me sometimes. I will give them what I think they can handle and just by participating in the class they are able to take it further. No one believed or expected that they could handle the concepts of the regular classroom. So..... my answer to your question is yes, most definitely and teachers should just teach to everyone and go from there.

Sally spoke with pride as she told stories of students exceeding

her expectations. One such story was about Jordyn, a student with disabilities and her success with a Shakespearian novel study. She bragged to me that Jordyn had done the same test as everyone else, the only difference was that the para had helped her read the Novel. Then, Sally's eyes lit up and she seemed to sit taller in her chair and continued,

I was so very pleased for her and she was thrilled. In a special class she would never have been exposed to this level of literature. She would be stuck going over Gr. 2 and 3 material for ever. But she seemed to enjoy the way some of the strange words sounded and she really did understand the overall storyline. We helped bring her to her potential. Perhaps down the road this will help her to choose a vocation. It showed her strengths and gave her an appreciation for good literature.

The more we talked and the more she verbalized the more she was able to form concrete thoughts about what it was she was doing in the classroom. She realized this herself and thanked me more than once for allowing her to talk about what she did and analyse her own teaching style.

She had started out by describing herself as doing nothing special but as she talked you could see her ideas and perspectives coming out. She was partially right in that she did nothing special just for the students with disabilities. She in fact had such a solid, consistent philosophy of

teaching that it allowed her to develop a unique teaching style that was 'special' for all her students. She was beginning to get the idea of what it was that she was doing to create an environment for all learners.

I then asked her to define what skills she thought a teacher needed to be able to teach a child with a disability. She began,

First of all you have to do your best as a teacher. I think that is important...you need to be the type of person to go with the flow... to be flexible and yet keep the basic structure. I think personality has a lot to do with it....calmness in a person.... and not to get flustered.. and you do, you do get flustered at times...but I don't think you need to be a yeller and a screamer (this was a phase that she used a good deal). You keep trying you don't give up on yourself or the kids...because when you get something that works.. why it feels GREAT!!!! (the word started deep in her throat and came out slowly almost like a growl.

Then she brought her brows together and her voice became serious. The words came out clearly and she looked right at me while she spoke.

I think you take into consideration other peoples feelings and respect for that other person ...give respect and you get respect back..this is a big asset a real important thing. Also, you have to believe it yourself that it (integration) is going to work . I believe it is going to work.

I asked what she saw as the most important positive aspects of integration. She thought long and hard about this one. She was sitting still looking off to one side and then she said in almost a whisper,

It's very positive.....for everyone. Its good in the fact that they give to the others...they give acceptance... we have to have acceptance of others...we have to know that all of us are different. We all have limitations and we have to accept others' limitations...we are all unique...we are all very special people.

She went on to talk about how other students might think things aren't fair when some kids get preferential treatment. She would point out to her students, that everyone learns differently and everyone at some time will need special help. She also says she explains certain disabilities to everyone and others accept and see the difference.

I then started asking her questions about how her program was structured. She explained that since there was no special education teacher she was responsible for students programming when they were in her room. Twice a year she would meet with the principal, the resource teacher and other classroom teachers (Phys Ed and Applied Arts) and each subject teacher would submit their portion of the Individual Education Plan. The resource teacher would then collect these and compile the I.E.P. and fill out the funding form.

At the beginning of the year the principal would tell her who was

in special education and what level of funding they would receive. She was told they had to be on a modified program. She laughed and again threw her hands up in the air and said, "That's about all the direction I get". She went on to say that administration usually decided to integrate the students into Language Arts and Social Studies and then she laughed and added, "and.....guess who teaches L.A. and Social Studies!" She went on, "just kiddingreally.....I don't mindto me they are all just kids."

She had one class in mind that she wanted me to observe. It had 23 students, including 3 level II students designated special ed. The students did receive para support throughout the day but Sally found that she could manage without a para most of the time.

She described the students with disabilities to me and interestingly she didn't use any labels or technical terms. She thought they were reading at about a grade 3 level but with much higher comprehension. She didn't elaborate as to why she thought this. She described Jordyn as a sweet young lady with very low self esteem who was doing very well especially in her reading. Then, with a twinkle in her eye and a laugh in her voice she talked about Rob. It seemed he was a very,very, active student. He was hard to keep on task but really very well meaning. Then her voice dropped a few octaves and the smile vanished from her face as she described Evan.

Evan.....Evan is very quiet, actually withdrawn. I

worry about him. I have to make a special effort to include him and yet be sensitive to the fact he is a loner. If I didn't include him and question him directly, he would just let life go drifting by.

Then she perked up clasped her hands and took a deep breath and added,

But then I have others in the room ...gifted ones who can be hard to motivate or are all over the place. The special ed students don't have any unique problems that most of the others students don't have at one time or another.

Sally told me that she structured her class in such a way as to make sure that she incorporates everyone. She realizes that most kids at the Junior High level get off task very quickly,

...they have too many other things on their minds.....I really need to be on all of them all the time. The lesson has to be interesting and changed often to hold their interests.

She says she generally starts off with some whole class instruction, making sure the goals and instructions for the lesson are very clear. It's important that she have everyone's attention before giving instruction. She explained, "I just stand and wait ..if I have to ..but they generally get the message."

One of her strategies for everyone, is to break everything into small chunks of information and repeat it as often as necessary. Then she

allows students to work in groups or pairs. She feels they need this in order to get started. She makes sure there is always one or two in each group who might have a good idea and get everyone else going.

She was looking forward to my coming into her classroom but didn't know if I was going to get the data I needed. She didn't feel that she did anything out of the ordinary once the lesson started. Again she started to try and verbalize what it was she was or wasn't doing.

I just do what I think good teaching is all about and I have never had any of my superiors comment in any negative way and in fact I get a lot of support. So what you see may not be what you are looking for but it will be for the most part what I would do every day. I'm fairly consistent. I like the kids to know what to expect and get into routines.

She appears very confident in her teaching ability and reinforced this by telling me that it would not bother her my being in her class.

I do what I do. A lot of teachers are afraid or have a fear of special ed. They think they might fail these kids somehow and be embarrassed by not being able to teach them.

I asked her if there was anything she would like to see in her school to help her with integration. She said the only thing she misses is not having anyone else in the school to talk to about students with disabilities. Someone to share strategies with and someone who might

help put some humour back into the situation and she emphasized that you do need humour and some fun.

Sally had laughed and smiled a lot while we spoke. This gave her the appearance of being relaxed and easy going. She said she doesn't yell or get angry and after meeting her it was hard to imagine this soft spoken lady being angry.

Sally seemed genuinely interested in my research and the possibility that maybe it would help others. She immediately set up the four observational dates and said I was welcome in her room anytime.

DAVE BROUGH**Pembina Junior High**

The school seemed even bigger once I was inside and I was soon lost in a maze of hallways. The inside of the school was as well maintained as the building and grounds were outside. Students work was visible everywhere. On the office windows, framed and hanging on the wall or displayed thematically on bulletin boards. There were also numerous posters about including all learners. There were some depicting students with physical disabilities interacting in classes. It was very quiet with only the odd student or teacher quietly going about their business.

I arrived at the main office about five minutes before my appointment. Dave was standing just inside the office and I could see him pacing back and forth and rubbing his hands together. As I entered he said, "Hi, are you Mrs. McLean?"

"Yes I'm Linda" I replied, and only then did he smile and put his hand out to shake mine. Come down here and we will find an empty classroom. I followed him down one of the many halls.

He was about 5ft. 7in., of slight build and approximately 30 years old. He was extremely well groomed and neat. His hair had been recently cut and the edges were very straight at the neck and the sides were perfectly shaped and cut just above the ears. His cloths were immaculate and although it was almost noon, they still looked freshly

starched and ironed. He wore a designer pale green dress shirt, with a small band at the collar. His dress pants were pleated, cuffed at the bottom and hung as if they had been tailor made for him. There was a sharp edged crease down each leg. The colour of the shirt and pants were of the same hue and blended perfectly. His oxford shoes looked new and had a fresh shine to them. He was wearing small gold rimmed glasses. The only jewellery was a plain gold band on this left hand.

We went into an empty classroom with long tables where he pulled out a chair for me and then sat on the other. We talked for a few minutes about my study and like Sally he was surprized that administration suggested I observe in the class. I told him the Principal had a couple of names but recommended his class because as he put it, "Dave's classes are always interesting". He was not as surprized at this comment and was very aware that his Principal supported him fully.

I didn't elaborate to Dave at this point but the Principal, Mr. Howie had spoken very highly of Dave. He told me that it didn't matter what you put in front of him, he did a good job mainly because in his opinion, Dave loves teaching, he loves all kids and truly believes everyone can succeed. He added that Dave has very high expectation for everyone including himself.

Dave told me he had never really thought about his teaching strategies or mores specifically strategies that he uses directly for students with disabilities. He reflected for a moment, looking off to the

side, gathering his thoughts. He had his brows together and a serious look on his face when he continued,

I don't think its so much the strategies, becausewell.. I am changing them all the timeto keep interest up....what I do consciously think about though is my management style. I am the first to admit I am very structured and expect...or if you like....even demand high quality work at all times from all my students.

As with Sally, he did not talk about kids as being in separate categories. He referred to them as "all my students" and hadn't really considered using different strategies for students with disabilities until I brought it up.

I asked him how he came to choose teaching as a career. His body language began to show signs of becoming very tense. He sat up straight in his chair, and clasped his hands together tightly and placed them on the table. He cleared his throat twice and had his eyes fixed on his hands. He began speaking hesitantly almost as if this were a test and he wanted to be sure to give the correct answer.

I.....I.....recall back in Grade 8.....I really liked Phys Ed and my gym teacher called me a 'Gym Rat'.

He paused and looked up at me and there was a hint of a smile at the corners of his mouth. He continued,

I just remembered at a very early age that I wanted to teach

Phys Ed. Whether it was admiration that I had for my gym teacher coupled with the fact that I thought I would be very happy spending most of my life in the gymnasium.....this is..... is what probably made me think of teaching.

He sat back in his chair took a deep breath and released the grip on his hands slightly. He looked directly at me now and gave a full smile. It seems he was pleased with his answer and now maybe slightly more comfortable in this interview we were engaged in. I pushed on, "So did you go into education right from High School?"

Dave, sitting straight and stiff again in his chair and looking directly at me, "Yes".

Silence This was going to be a little more difficult than my last meeting with Sally where the information flowed smoothly.

I continued in a more interview type format, "and how long have you been teaching?"

Dave said, "This is my 12th, year."

"Have you been with the same division the whole time?" I asked.

He looked down at his hands and clasped them tighter,

Initially I had one month in St. Vital....a short term in June... when I first got out of University....a teacher had broke his leg..... it was at Glendale School.....but otherwise.....yes....I was in this Division.

Dave answered with short comments, never really finishing a

sentence. He is moving about in his chair, taking short little breaths, and clasping and unclasping his hands, looking down more than at me.

We continued in this manner for a few more minutes and most of his early teaching and background information came out. He had taught Phys Ed for 6 years and then started the transition into the classroom by teaching one subject, Social Studies. It was his decision to go into the classroom. He had been teaching Phys Ed for three years in a team teaching role and although he found it to have advantages he also found it stifling. Being fresh out of University he had his own ideas about what he wanted to do in the Gym. He needed and wanted a change and somewhere deep down he said he knew he always wanted to be a classroom teacher. Since then he has been in the classroom and has enjoyed it so much he would never go back to the Gym.

His breathing had become more relaxed and he had sat back in his chair and put his hands casually on his lap. He teaches Grade 8 Social studies to six classes which totals about 155 students. He majored in History at University and even after all these years he is still very passionate about the subject. He expressed this to me by saying

Every year I get really excited about some of the major projects we do...the students always surprise me and bring out a new angle or perception.

I asked him when did he first have students with disabilities in his classroom. He seemed to remember it very clearly.

It was my second year of teaching Phys Ed and we had a young lady with Spina Bifida. This situationhaving a severely handicapped student.....was very unique to our school. Up to this point we had not had physical or mentally handicapped students in the school. She was a delightful young lady and ...well we never had any difficulty incorporating her into activities. Her para was excellent and whatever we did, shooting basket, floor hockey etc. she participated in from her wheel chair. I do remember she enjoyed coming into the gym and I guess that's what really counts.

Until this time he had never really thought about integrating or teaching special education. He had never had any formal training in special ed. He did remember some course content at the University in adapting lessons and modifying expectation but he could not recall every using any of that knowledge. He felt the information was far too general and there was nothing he could pull from it to incorporate this young lady. He explained it this way.

I guess we learnt the theory, which isn't a bad thing, but nothing practical to incorporate on a daily basis. We just took each day as it came and tried to get her to participate in what everyone else in the gym was doing. Maybe it was easier in the gym, I don't know.....and the other kidswell

they all wanted to take turns playing with her. That was never a problem. Perhaps one doesn't need a degree in special ed.....just a high energy level.

After this comment he sat back and actually laughed. I then asked him if he had any recent inservicing at the Divisional level on integrating students with disabilities.

Yes, actually to the entire staff just last month a two day inservice on the New Dimensions of Learning, and Differentiated Instruction. For me it was very beneficial and they left us with some documents which was neat to see now prior to this one ...there has never been anything at this school like that. Of course we do have the large special ed program running here, and well..... those two teachersthey are excellent ...and they help us on an individual basis.

I asked him what it was that he did differently for the students with special needs in his classroom. He became very pensive again and his body stiffened, his hands were clasped tightly once more and he stared down at his hands trying to formulate an answer. Finally raising his head up slowly and looking at me he began by saying that he did not want to take too much credit for any success he might be having because to him it was the work of the excellent paraprofessionals in his room. He went on,

...at the same time if I feel that I'm having success with students with difficulties it's becauseI really treat them no different.....so anything I might be doing to motivate or persuade or appeal to the regular stream might be working for these kids as well..... I do tend to sit down with them individually early in the year just to get to know them and maybe preface the course for them. But then I do that with any student I see may need specific interventions. I do hope I can give you what you are looking for, but quite honestly I don't do anything differently for the special ed students. What I have been talking about here I do for everyone, they must tow the line too.

Since the special education program began in the school several years ago, he has always had students with varying degrees of physical and mental handicaps integrated into his classroom. He has also had a number of students with serious behaviour problems....students that that no one else could handle. He doesn't mind that him and maybe one or two others in the school tend to get students from the special education program.

He feels proud that the administration thinks he has the skills to offer very challenging students. He finds it very rewarding. He never thought of it in terms of more work. He believes the bigger the challenge the better the teacher has to be.

I then asked him what specific skills he thought people needed to successfully integrate students. He began to share with me some of his deeper personal philosophies on teaching. He told me he believes in kids and knows they all want and can learn. He admits he has very high standards for all his students both academically and socially but he states that his students have always risen to those expectations when given a fair chance. He also has very high standards for himself. He believes that when students see him giving 100% of himself and supporting them whenever possible they learn to trust and the stage is set for life long learning to take place.

When it comes to assignments he insists they take pride in their work and do the best they can. He also insists that all students behave in a respectful manner while in his classroom. In return he lets the student know he respects them. He says he tries to give them a piece of himself and what he is all about.

He then asked if he could talk for a moment about his father-in-law, since a number of his attitudes and beliefs have come from him. I said of course and the story that followed went some like this.

I model a lot of my teaching after my.....my father-in-law..... who is a man who grew up during the war.....he is a painter.....now.....he is the type of individual who takes pride in what he does and that is the theme of this course and that is very clear to the students and I guess I have

learned so much from him about doing a a good job whether you are a talented carpenter or just building a box.....it doesn't matter..... you learn to be very meticulous about your work and know that it is very important....I want my students to develop this work ethic, this respect for themselves. Kids today well..... I guess its to the point where if I brought him into the school.....I would be very uneasy and embarrassed I suppose....for him to see the behaviour of some of our young people in a place of respect and I guess that's why in this classroomrespect and pride are a big thing to me.

Dave was surprising calm as he shared this with me. He was confident talking about something that he obviously believed in. I then asked him what specific teaching strategies he uses that allowed for successful integration in his room. How was he able to establish this mutual respect?

Looking at me directly and smiled slightly. He said in a slow even voice, one which contained a hint of confidence and assurance.

Now I feel I can answer you with some confidence. I am very confident in my approach to teaching. It is consistent and structured but for me it works. First and foremost I feel it is my job to be the best teacher I can and motivate my students to learn. Once I do that then it is the students responsibility to do their share.

He told me that he still finds each day of teaching exciting. He has a little ritual that he carries out everyday in his car on the way to school. He thinks to himself, "What can I teach the kids today?" He looks for a real meaningful lesson. He listen to the news, picks a story and then tries to plan a mini lesson around it. Sometimes, he admits there is just no way that it fits into the days lesson from the curriculum so.....he says ...he just forgets the curriculum and goes with what he considers the more valuable news story. He laughed and says the kids love it because they think they are getting out of real work.

He says he wants kids to learn how to learn. He realizes they will forget a lot of the content in the curriculum but if he can give them a belief system to work by and show them that taking pride in their work is a worth while attribute then he feels he has done a good teaching job that day. He went on to clarify,

A good student isn't one who necessarily gets the high marks on a test. These kids have only learned how to memorize.....they may not be able to transfer this skill into everyday situations. Also answering questions is not a job related skill as such.

He says he plans his assignments and projects very carefully. He doesn't want his students projects marked and sitting on a shelf. He wants them to be able to use this information in everyday life.

As we talked his thoughts became clearer to him and he was able

to verbalize the following strategy which may be a clue as to why he is successful with students in special education. He continued,

More so than with the regular stream kids I feel I can give them skills they will need in the real world because I don't have to spend all my time on curriculum content with them.

This life long learning approach was very similar to Sally's philosophy as well. He believes in kids and knows they all want to and can learn. I then asked him what skills he thought a teacher needs to possess in order to work effectively with students with disabilities.

He began immediately by saying that teachers needed to take pride in their jobs and do the best they can. He felt it was his responsibility to make learning fun and exciting for students. If he is excited about teaching then this will spill over to the kids. He said,

You can't just teach to the ones who want to learn, that's easy. You must reach everyone, that's the hard part, the challenging part of being a teacher. It is my job to teach each and every student in the room so they can reach their maximum potential at whatever level that might be.

He wasn't sure if it was a strategy or not but he thought it was his responsibility to maintain complete classroom control at all times so that everyone had the opportunity to learn. He knows no one is learning when a teacher has to devote most of the lesson to discipline or dealing with one or two individuals. He says he will not tolerate students

behaviour getting in their way of others learning. He explained,

This is a big thing to me.....I am very sensitive... and the minute I sense that a student begins to give any kind of negative attitude.....it maybe a rolling of the eye, a shrug of the shoulder.....I stop it immediately. I do not let things escalate, I will give 100% of my attention immediately and stop the behaviour right away. It is their responsibility to do the very best they can and it is my job to help them get there.

He feels this method really works and if he deals with the little things he doesn't have to deal with big issues. He doesn't think kids have a problem with this and he stated that he never had a student who he had not developed a good relationship with, even the difficult ones. He said once he disciplines then its over and he looks for an indication that the student is back on track and then he will praise, praise, praise.

Again he asked if he could tell me a story that would reinforce what he had been talking about. It went something like this,

Now some people think I am too much of a disciplinarian and too demanding, but that's me. I have a process that is consistent and it doesn't take students long to figure out consequences in my room. At the first sign of a disruption I will stop the class immediately, especially at the beginning of the year and let the student know in no uncertain terms that his or her particular behaviour is not appropriate and

not allowed in my classroom. If they continue with another negative responses I ask them to step outside, because I really don't want to embarrass them in class.....if they don't calm down out in the hall, we go into my little back room (he laughed and rolled his eyes....

I joined in and said that sounds scary... 'The Room'....he continued,

At any rate I then give them a good talking to and set out my expectations of acceptable behaviour. Now this usually does it for all but the hardest (he laughed again). But every now and then I have to take the final step. I don't get mad or yell I simple restate that this behaviour is not acceptable in my classroom and explain that I will need to take him or her home and discuss with his parents the best possible way to get them back on track. I then ask the administration to please find coverage for my room, which they always do, and I take the student to his parent. Sometimes this is at home but I have also taken the student to their parents work place. I once had a parent tell me this was interfering with their work. I explained I could sympathize since his son's behaviour was also interfering with my work - which was to teach the student - therefore it would be in both our interests to find a solution. We then have a 10 - 15 minute chat, and I tell you I have never had

to repeat this process more than once with a student. Word gets out fast among kids and I have only had to get to the final stages 3 or 4 times in the last eight years. When I look at other teachers taking up most of their daily teaching time on disciplining, well its not fair to any of the kids. After the first month or so I can honestly say we spend 95% of our class time on task. So that's a skill I think all teachers need, good classroom management. This is the only way I can maximize my teaching time and provide a good learning environment for all kids every day.

He went on a little to tell me that he also feels some people get too caught up on all the research out there and are afraid a little discipline might mess up a students self esteem. They talk and talk rather than quick and swift discipline. He feels you aren't doing kids any favours by allowing them to remain in this negative learning state. He adds that you can't give disciplining without praise and caring. If he has to discipline he also makes sure that student receive double portions of praise and respect when he see even the smallest success. He wants the students to know that they can learn and are welcome in his class. He added, "yes that is the key....I get respect and I give it back".

I asked him if he had found any specific strategies a teacher might need to successfully integrate students. He has been to numerous workshops but he didn't think any one had been better than the other.

He teaches through whole class instruction, pairs, groups, direct instruction or on an individual basis as needed. He believes once you have control of your classroom you need to concentrate on good clear organized lessons. The presentation of which could vary. He doesn't think the Division offers enough inservices on developing organizational skills. He continued,

I don't mean to pat myself on the back, but my peers and administration have commented as well that I have good classroom management skills, also my lessons are well thought out and structured... I consider this my responsibility and like I said I believe in doing a good job.

For him the important part of teaching involves instructions and goals stated specifically at the beginning of each lesson with sufficient repetition that everyone clearly understands the expectation. These strategies should be used no matter what format you work in. Above all he is adamant about the necessity of rewarding kids for taking pride in their work. He believes students should then be evaluated and given marks which reflect the amount of effort and degree of pride they took in work.

Dave is surprisingly calm, his face is relaxed his hands unclashed and his breathing steady. He is confident and passionate about what he does and talking about his daily experiences as put him at ease. He finds it interesting that although he is known by students and peers as running

a very disciplined classroom he has a wonderful rapport with his students. He has kids coming everyday just to talk and kids come all the time to get help in other subjects. He also coaches basketball and the kids from the team and him have a great time. He summed it up this way.

I treat my own children the same way. (he has two young children 3 & 5). Lots of love, guidance and support but they must learn to tow the line. I tell my students I will treat you like a parent and mainly because I really care about you.

He says few kids have every let him down. He tries to be honest with the student and respectful. He believes you can't get what you don't give.

I asked him if there was anything he would like to see in the school to help facilitate integration. He said most definitely the whole staff needed more inservicing on differentiated instruction. Many teachers had never had students with disabilities in their class and he felt every classroom should have a good mix of students because everyone benefits.

We talked about the benefits of integration and Dave looks at it the other way. He could not imagine anyone having a reason why a student with a disability should not be in the regular classroom. He agreed that they do need special instruction sometimes and this is provided by the special education teachers. He then went on to say,

But how are kids going to learn about people and the rest of the world if they are off in segregated program somewhere

He posed the question,

What if you took a 'regular' kid and taught him separately all the time - he would end up with a lot of facts which he probably would know well but what good would they be to him.

Dave had a class of 21 including 2 students from the Special Education Program that he thinks I will find interesting to observe. The two students, Jill and John, have a para who accompanies them to class. Dave is responsible for what the students do in his room. He marks all their assignments and gives marks on the school report cards. The special education teachers write up the I.E.P. and funding forms. He meets formally twice a year with the special education teachers to outline his program and evaluate the students progress. The also meet informally all year as the need arises.

Dave described Jill as a students who has severe learning difficulties but is very willing and tries hard. His only concern was that she was very quite and did not interact much with the other students. She was very reliant on the para and choose to sit close to her. She did however, enjoy his class and was always attentive and on task. She did not actively participate in the classroom discussions but if he asked her a question directly she would always answer to the best of her ability.

John on the other hand was much more active in the classroom. He participates in class discussions and has made a good friend whom he does projects with and always sits with. Dave reports that his reading skills and comprehension are low. He also requires a good deal of redirecting to stay on task but always tries hard and is cooperative. Like Sally, Dave did not use labels or categories when describing the students in special education.

Dave said he structures the class so that he is always teaching to the whole class first. Once the parameters, goals, assignments etc. are in place then he may have different outcome expectation for certain students. He pointed out that this may not always be specific to students in special education, others in the room have difficulties from time to time as well. All he expects is they do their best and take pride in their work .

As our meeting drew to a close Dave stood up took off his glasses and rubbing his hands together said,

I do hope some of this information is useful, I am still concerned that I really don't do anything special or separate for the special ed students. I hope you can get the data you need.

His knit brows and pursed lips indicated that he was genuinely worried that all might be for naught. I assured him that our conversation had been very interesting and helpful and that I was looking forward to my observations. He then put his hand out to shake mine again and gave me a big smile and added,

Oh, I am so glad. No one has ever asked me what I do or how I do it. This is a very novel concept. I really worried over what I was going to say ... however, I am so glad I had this opportunity to talk to you about this. Everything is much clearer in my mind as well.

CLINT BRADLY
Pembina Junior High

Clint taught at the same school as Dave and both had told me that they were good friends. Mr. Howie had recommended that I observe in Clint's room because in his opinion Clint was able to include any type of child into his classroom and had been doing so for years. Mr. Howie also said Clint had an open door policy and there were paras, parents, special ed people and himself in the room all the time. He was sure it would not bother him to have me observing in his room. He added, "He has a wonderful way with kids."

My first meeting with Clint was in his room. He was sitting behind his desk, hunched over a pile of papers. He was dressed in a casual long sleeved cotton knit shirt. The three buttons at the neck were open and a white undershirt was visible. He wore baggy khaki pants and comfortable looking brown leather loafers. A large pair of horned rimmed glasses sat on his nose. He looked up over the top of his glasses, "Hi, you must be Linda, well come on in, where would you like to sit." He stood up and waved his arm in the direction of all the desks. He was a large big boned man in his forties, about five foot 10 inches and in what appeared to be fairly good shape. He had short dark hair and a round friendly smiling face.

He sat back down at his desk and I sat in a chair facing him. He

immediately began talking about 'his kids' as he referred to them. I didn't have to initiate the conversation at all. He said he just didn't know where to begin because the group of kids he has this year are just incredible. He obviously had a class in mind and continued to tell me how everyone in the class, not just the students with special needs, had done so far.

He talked quickly and in a loud voice. He used lots of body language, waving his hands about and moved about a great deal in his seat. He also laughed and smiled a good deal. In the very first few minutes I could tell Clint was very excited about teaching. He talked with enthusiasm in his voice about his job and the subject he teaches.

He opened a large day book and flipped to the back where there were rows and rows of marks. "Look here" he said, pointing to the last four names which were repeated page after page. "These are the special ed students". He went on to explain that they had completed every assignment that the rest of the class had done. "Now, isn't that just great." He stopped and took a breath and continued, "Oh, I'm sorry, I should let you talk, find out what it is you need to know."

I assured him I had no formal process in mind but there were a few things I would like to know about him. "Shoot" he said. So I asked him how he came to choose teaching as a career. He began, "I don't think I ever thought about it when I was younger as something I wanted to do for a long time." While he was at University he found himself interested in courses like sociology and psychology as well as history and physical

education. So after he graduated with his B.A. he felt it a natural progression to go into Education. He had done some coaching in basketball and hockey and really enjoyed working with kids. After his B.ED. he spent another three years in Physical Education. In all he spent a total of seven years at University before he started teaching. He remembers at the time thinking he probably wouldn't teach for too long. He went on to explain,

I thought I would do it for a little while before I found something else to do and....here I am 25 years later...(he laughed heartily)....and you know there is nothing I really would want to do that is as important and exiting to me..... still...as working here with these kids.

He continued talking about his career. He had began teaching in this Division part time as a substitute and was then hired at another school were he worked for 13 years. He has been at this school for 12 years. He has always taught Social Studies at the Junior High level. He has never had any special training or courses in special education. There has been some training recently at the school because of the New Dimensions of Learning and he found this useful. He went on to explain that he usually always has students with disabilities in his class.

All I know is that these kids come into the room at the beginning of every year with a label attached to them and this doesn't usually mean to much to me because without formal training I don't know what this means anyway.

He told me about a special education class that him and two other teacher ran once in the school. Mostly it was for kids with sever behaviour problems. It only ran for one year, he wasn't sure why it was disbanded. "Maybe money", he reflected. He really enjoyed that year and although it was demanding, he felt they made significant positive changes with these kids. "These kids were finally coming to school and they were learning." I asked him what he thought he did that really helped these kids and he said basically, "we gave them a place where they could feel safe and succeed."

I asked him what specific strategies he uses with the students with disabilities to integrate them successfully in his present class. He answered,

My first reaction would be to say I don't do anything special or different for these kids...I mean by that, nothing I wouldn't do for every kid in my class. I don't treat them any different and I don't use specific strategies with them.

The initial comments from Sally, Dave and Clint were almost identical. He further explained that he expects all kids to do the tests, assignments and project. He said with the help of the para all kids do turn in the assignment and write the test. He became very excited raised his voice and hit his fist on the desk saying to me,

These kids are doing it....they are succeeding in the classroom, and if you ask why I guess its because I expect

them to. I don't treat them any differently when it comes to how they should behave.

He though some teachers overlook bad behaviour because these kids have a label or are in special ed, but he thinks that is wrong. He believes all students can behave in a socially acceptable manner if expectations are placed on them and consequences in place. He firmly believes that these kids have been cheated in the past because teachers and parents didn't put high enough expectations on them. He continued,

I expect respect and positive attitudes and I in turn give respect. I come to work with a positive attitude and really geared up and I expect the same from all my students.

He says he continues to be amazed at what they can all do and the amount of work they do. He claims that with a little bit of praise and encouragement these kids just take off. He continued,

I think a lot of these kids have been told for a long time, you don't have to do this work its too hard for you or you won't be able to do the work so we will give you something else to do instead. This makes them feel really dumb. I've heard well meaning resource people say its not important if they hear that part of the lesson or not, they won't be able to do it anyway.

He feels when a child hears this enough he begins to believe it. When he challenges these kids they meet the challenge and are very

proud of themselves. He added with a twinkle in his eye and a big smile, "and so am I."

I asked him if he thought the students with disabilities really benefited and were learning from the regular curriculum. He started to laugh and then explained that he wondered how many regular students benefited by the curriculum. He felt the curriculum is good but cautioned that even before kids leave the course they will forget at least 60% of the facts and as adults we probably could only recall about 20%. He said what we need to do is teach kids how to learn, be life long learners. He explained,

If they need to do a job today what do they need to know and how will they go about it. I believes they need real life problems solving skills.

He always tries to make the curriculum fit a real life situation. He sees no point in memorizing facts and dates we may never use, but emphasizes the need to get the mind going and to know how to learn. He tries to relate his classes towards real life situations rather than jumping through the hoops of the curriculum. He went on to explain,

But seriously, yes, definitely the kids learn so much being in the regular class. They would not be exposed to all this information if they remained in special classes. Just because they can't read the material doesn't mean they don't understand it.

He was amazed over the years just how much these kids were getting out of the lesson. They didn't worry if theirs wasn't as good as the next person. They were just glad to have been able to try. He never saw the other kids in the class tease them about the outcome or quality of their work.

He started talking about how beneficial integration was for the rest of the class. He doesn't think the other kids worry that these guys might be getting more help they just accepted what is going on and realized these kids need help.

I have always had some lower end regular students and integration has helped because I can group kids together sometimes and they all work at the same level or I group the special ed students with very gifted kids who act as peer tutors. No matter how you group them there are advantages for everyone.

He said that this year the majority of his class was at the lower end of the academic scale and he was able to slow the lessons down a little and everyone benefited.

I asked him what skills he thought a teacher might need to possess to facilitate successful integration. Again he had a big smile and started to laugh.

You need to be able to pick a great para. (He laughed loudly) No, seriously this is important. I give so much credit

to the paras who work with the students and myself. They are the real teachers for these kids. They know them better than anyone else. I work very closely with the para and the special education teachers.

He thought another skill teachers need to have is a good knowledge of what they are teaching and they need to enjoy teaching the subject. He felt this was the key and added,

at the end of a term or late in the day after you have taught the same lesson four or five times you better really like the subject or your life will be....

Also, he thought if you are knowledgeable you have a wealth of information on the tip of your tongue and you remember lessons that really worked and you can always find a different perspective and make the lesson come alive for the kids. A good teacher should be able to take the kids beyond the curriculum. He went on,

On a personal note I think you have to be patient and flexible. However, you need a strong overall structure so all the kids know what to expect everyday.

He didn't feel that a good teacher should get angry at the kids because part of good teaching is to understand their behaviour and be able to turn all that energy into something positive. He doesn't believe in being confrontational with the kids.

He said you can't confront kids you have to gain their trust. He

thinks you can still have good control over the students without being the heavy. He says he does it by mutual respect not intimidation.

We have a lot of fun in my room and sometimes it appears to get out of hand, but I always demand respect and always make sure I give it to my students.

He thinks that a teacher has to really like what they do and be excited about it. They should model good behaviour so students will learn how to take pride in what they do and live up to their own expectations. He worries that if kids don't have this, what will they do when there is no teacher or parent to set the standard. He tries to get them to set their own standards and to take pride in themselves for their own rewards. To this end he lets the kids make up the classroom rules at the beginning of the school year.

I asked him if there were any specific things he has tried. He said over the years he has found many things that work but just as many that didn't and this is still true today. He feels these are individual things, you cannot put into neat packages. He elaborated,

It's a lot of different things for different kids. Some you can joke with, some you need to be straight with and others you just treat very gently. The big thing is that they all need to hear praise over and over. That's why I can't say for sure what it is that I do or don't do for special ed or regular students. I am still learning.

He does teach to the whole class and then reviews and reviews. He says he repeats instruction three or four times or as many times as is needed. He also breaks the information down into little pieces. He then goes around the room and gives additional help to everyone. His expectations of them is that they do their best. He doesn't think you can push too hard, you have to gently bring them back. As long as he doesn't give them something over their head or too much at once he is ok. He repeated once again that the only thing he knows he does do is treat everyone the same. He respects them all and believes they can all learn.

He gives them lots of praise for everything they do. He says he constantly tries to build self-esteem and self-respect. He appreciates their difference and limitation but expects them to work and be involved to some extent with everything that is going on in the regular class. He explained further,

I don't think of these kids as really different. They are just kids, kids first who have been given a label.

He told me he has a real passion for teaching, even after all these years, then he continued with his philosophy,

I see kids all kids as wanting to learn...of always questioning ...always wanting to know...what if..or what next. If they give up on learning they will give up on life. If they don't care about school chances are they won't care about too many other things later in life. So you need to keep that spark

alive you need to work at motivating kids and yes, some are more difficult to motivate than others but that's where our job becomes challenging and we must find a way.

Clint has a very interesting class that he would like me to observe in. There are 18 students including 4 special education students. A para is always in the room with these students, although he points out she really works the room and all the kids love her and fight to get to work with her.

He said at the beginning of the year the whole class seemed pretty low academically. Most of the students just weren't doing well because their behaviour was getting in the way. They had the lowest averages on test scores of all his classes. Then he suddenly opened up the day book and pointed to a row of names. He said,

Look at these scores. They have the highest average of all my classes now. Each and every student in this class has improved his or her average.

He laughed and said that might make for a good research study. When he first started with these students in September he geared everything way down because he thought maybe the students couldn't handle anything more. Soon he found that everyone started doing well on little tests he was giving. Before he knew it, the kids behaviour had settled down and everyone was on the way up. He added,

I still do a lot of repetition in this class and the activity level

is very high but I allow the kids the movement and the noise as long as work is produced and I tell you, it really is.

He went on to describe the four girls, Carol, Linda Tara and Laura, who were in the special education program. He said they all had varying degrees of learning disabilities. Carol is also physically disabled and uses crutches. Carol and Linda have become friends and Linda often helps her in the halls carrying her books. Laura and Tara get along well but also interact more with the other students in the room. He is responsible for all the programming while the kids are in his room. He marks all assignments and gives marks for the report card. He works closely with the two special education teachers and had nothing but positive statements to make about their excellent program. They all meets formally twice a year and in consultation with him, the special education teachers write up the I.E.P and funding form. They are also available any time to support and discuss the students. The students receive instruction from the special education teachers in basic L.A., Math, Work experience and Community Referenced Instruction.

He says his day to day classes are quite structured and although he varies the presentation and uses different strategies he tries to keep certain things consistent so the students get to know the routines. He always makes sure he has their full attention before he begins instruction. Once he is sure everyone knows the instructions and expectations of the lesson, he let them work independently or in groups.

As we summed up he again spoke with pride about his students.

Yes, its a very interesting room I hope you won't think they are too out of control. We have a lot of fun and I have a good rapport with them but you will be amazed when you see the work I actually get out of them. It's just they seems to need to be constantly talking and moving. I do believe that I can get them under control quickly whenever I want. They listen.

As I thanked him for giving me his time so freely he interrupted by saying,

No, it was really good for me. You don't often get a chance to talk to others about you philosophies. Actually it was good to talk and brainstorm, I never really thought about what it was I was really doing or not doing..with all the kids. No one has ever asked me before.

Summary of meetings and interviews

During our first meeting and informal interview the three teachers had openly shared much of their backgrounds, beliefs and attitudes about teaching all students. There were definite differences in personalities. Sally and Clint appeared relaxed, 'low key' as Sally put it, and Dave was more poised and reserved. Clint and Sally let little things go in theirs

classrooms where as Dave, stifle them immediately. They all loved teaching and believed it was their responsibility to reach all students. They all found it challenging and rewarding working with difficult students. The belief that all kids want to and can learn was very evident among all three. They were proud of the students and took ownership for all the students in their room.

Their backgrounds were slightly varied , Sally and Dave always knew they wanted to be teachers and Clint was not sure until much later. Sally had a B.A degree and then attended normal school, Dave had his B.ED and Clint had his B.A., B.ED and a degree in physical education. None of them had any training in special education. Dave and Clint had only worked at the Junior High level and Sally had split her years between Elementary and Junior High. Sally and Dave had taught for over 20 years and Dave about half that. All three were highly thought of by their peers and administration. They all displayed a high level of confidence in themselves and their ability to teach kids.

Common themes were now clearly emerging when it came to their belief systems and attitudes. At times they even expressed themselves with the same phrases. The most striking similarity was the phrase they used to describe what they did differently for students with disabilities.

“Nothing, I do nothing special for the students with disabilities that I wouldn’t do for everyone else in the room”

They included all students unconditionally.

Sally, "kids are kids"

Clint, "students are students"

Dave, "they are all my students"

The one perspective that came out over and over was that in order to get respect from all students you had to give respect to all students.

When asked to describe their particular strategies each teacher had major difficulty. None of them had every tried to verbalize what they did. They all expected every child to learn and believed they could learn. They did not think in terms of traditional instructional strategies such as cooperative teaching or whole language instructions but brought it back to a more philosophical outlooks they might have. They set the stage for learning, through mutual respect, fair expectations and exciting lessons, this was their teaching strategy.

They did all agree that they used a basic consistent structure to establish expectations and routines. First they made sure they had every ones attention, then they gave clear instructions and goals at the beginning of the lesson. One strategy they all mentioned was that they would repeat, repeat, repeat the instructions and goals as many times as necessary. They all allowed students to work in groups and then they gave individual support as needed.

During instructional time they used the same curriculum but all mentioned they often went beyond the curriculum and tried to teach skills

that all students could use everyday - life long learning and real life experiences they all called it. They each tried to instil the value of taking pride in your work and doing your best. They did this by evaluating all students on how hard they worked and the effort put forth rather than memorizing facts for tests.

They all set standards and expectations for behaviour and did not believe in spending time during the teaching day disciplining. They all took a straight forward simple approach that inappropriate behaviour was not acceptable in class, end of discussion. They all believed they had good classroom management and control .

The above information was collected from meetings and interview with the teachers to get their perspectives of how they viewed themselves.

CHAPTER V

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

The following chapter includes data which was obtained through observations in the three classrooms. It is hoped this information will give us a glimpse of what the teachers are actually doing to implement their beliefs and perspectives and facilitate successful integrating.

Sally Cumming

Sally had described her classroom as being in a state of confusion and disarray since trying to fill the role of Vice Principal and classroom teacher. I did not find this to be the case. The desks were arranged in six neat rows and her desk stood at the front, neatly piled with papers and files. There were five large cards with definitions of the characteristics of a play, prominently displayed on the blackboard. Twenty timetables were neatly tacked to the wall by the door. There was one filing cabinet with colourful artificial flowers sitting on the top. A long bare counter with cupboards above ran along one side. The back wall consisted of two small windows with a huge bulletin board between. There was various maps and posters in both English and French around the room. On the days I observed, Sally was casually dressed in either

shorts and runners or cotton shirts over stretchie pants.

It was evident from that first day to see why Sally had the perception that she didn't do anything special for the students with disabilities. In fact, Sally did do a number of very special things that the literature supports as being good teaching strategies as well as effective strategies that reflected her own personal perspectives and style. However, she did them for everyone. The following are brief glimpses, obtained from my observations of a typical day in her class.

The bell rang and within seconds the room was overflowing with students. They seemed in good spirits with much laughing, name calling, pushing and shoving. Each day whether or not Sally was in the room the students would come in and quickly take their seats.

This grade 8 Language Arts class consisted of twenty three students including Jordyn, Evan and Rob, three Level II funded special education students. All students sat in the same seats each day I was there. Jordyn, not talking to anyone took her seat quickly in the second row. She immediately started to get out her books. Rob was laughing and talking with a group of boys when he entered but then took a seat in row five away from this group. He immediately started talking to the two students beside him. Evan took a seat in row three, stretched his arm out across the desk and put his head down, not speaking to anyone.

Her daily routine was structured the same way on the four occasions I observed. Her presentation of material was highly organized

and her routines and classroom management well established.

She started the day promoting a positive climate by standing front and centre with her hands behind her back, smiling and looking out at the students. She would not say anything for about two minutes. Then she would begin with, "Ladies and Gentlemen" or "Good morning". She would pause and continue smiling and looking out over the class. On this cue the majority of students would turn in the seats and begin shuffling through their bags getting out texts, paper and pens. Her expectations of the students were clear and they followed the routines. She would wait about another thirty seconds and then begin the day. On only one occasion did she have to make a second comment. Still smiling and in a firm but caring voice she added, "I need your attention.....now". Some students were still getting out supplies but the talking ended.

Once Sally had their attention her routine continued. She would get as she called it "a few housekeeping items" out of the way. One morning she handed out notes to be signed by parents, another day she talked about the early dismissal. Her instructions were always straight forward, simple and repeated until she was sure everyone understood. For example: "I need these notes from you parents back.....I really need them." She paused and then said exactly the same thing again. She would always check by saying, "Is that clear." Sometimes she asked a student to repeat the instructions.

One morning during this time she handed back test papers. There

was much moaning and groaning from the students. She said with a laugh, "Don't worry you all did surprizingly well" and with that the students began calling out things like, "Yeah right, like I'm sure" and the class became noisy.

Evan sat up and smiled slightly. Jordyn was watching but did not change her expression. Rob joined right in and called out three times. The room had a comfortable atmosphere and Sally joked and laughed along with her students. When she wanted to continue she would gently bring the students back on track. Smiling, and placing her hands behind her back she leaned forward and softly said, "Ok, Ok".

The laughter died down and there was silence. Some were still getting organized, but no one was talking. Jordyn had her pen and binder out and with one leg under her, leaned over her desk looking directly at Sally. Rob had a binder on his desk but no pen, he was one of the last to stop talking. Evan had his binder out but his head down and looking off to the side. A boy at the back was playing with the blinds and two boys were looking at her but did not have their books or pens out of their bags.

Once they were quiet she stood at the front and called students up to get their assignment. There was much smiling and laughing as she made generally positive comments to all.

Excellent.....Very Good.....You can be proud of this

Jordyn, but you do have one more due remember?

Jordyn smiled and said, "Yes I know, it's coming." Sally continued,

Terrific...just keep on working... Kevin I'm impressed
nice try.....but Cory, what happened here, you just
seemed to quit?

He answered her with, "Yeah, I know - no time." She raised her eyes, "Oh really". They both laughed. Without being told most students including Jordyn and Evan put their papers in their binders. Rob stuffed his into his bag.

This part of the day only lasted about five minutes and then she would return to the middle of the room, hands behind her back and with her established phrase continue. "Ladies and Gentlemen".....and her head went from side to side scanning the room. She usually only paused from 3 to 5 seconds before students were quiet and all eyes were on her.

She was now ready to get into the instruction part of the lesson. She made especially sure everyone was listening and usually said, "Now I really do need everyone's attention". A couple of times she called out students names, some of whom were looking at her, some who were not. "Cory, John, Dustin are we ready? Good."

Her actions confirmed that she was low key and not a 'yeller and screamer'. She had very good control of the class and did so with only a few well chosen phrases and body language, that was easily read by her students.

Evan was always slouched in his chair or had his head resting on his arm so it was difficult to tell if he was paying attention. Every now and

then she would take two or three steps in his direction as she spoke. He always responded by either sitting straighter or giving her eye contact. She also used this technique on students who were talking or not paying attention.

When she started her lesson, instruction and goals were clearly stated. For example,

Today we are going to begin to write our plays and our goal will be to assign individual roles within each group. Each group will have rough character sketches to hand in to me by the end of the period. Is that clear? David, please tell me what I just said.

David then repeated what she said in a shorter version. On separate occasions she asked Rob and Evan to repeat instructions but I did not observe her asking Jordyn. She continued, "I am going to give you the due date for the entire play." She paused as all the students began getting out their agenda books. She continued, "I do not want excuses, it will be finished", she said raising her voice a little. "Is that clear? Now, I want to see every agenda book out."

She began to slowly move about the room looking down at each student. She never just assumed the kids were on task she always checked. Her eyes darted quickly from student to student. She stopped beside Rob, his was out but not opened. Sarcastically but with a smile she said to him, "It helps if you open it." He laughed as did a few others and he opened the book.

As I would come to observe the room was never serious or quiet for long. Either her or the students would interject with some humour. She seemed to have a wonderful rapport with the kids. Now it was her turn to have some fun.

Everyone turn to this Fridaythat's tomorrow, she scanned the room, write 'play due in two weeks'..... good..... her voice got louder.....now turn to the following Friday and write, she paused and rolled her arms out toward the class coaxing the response from them.....they said laughingly and in unison, 'play due in one week'good now turn to the following Thursday ...andwhat do we write in big.... bigletters, she was tracing a huge letter B in the air with exaggerate movements. The kids shouted 'play due tomorrow'.

She let her arms flop to the side and lowered her shoulders and gave out a big sigh. The kids were all laughing, she looked over at me and said with a twinkle in her eye, "I have to go through this every time I need them to remember something." She shook her head and continued laughing. It was interesting to see junior high kids who are usually trying to be so cool have so much fun out of this simply act.

She composed herself and went to the centre of the room and leaning forward slightly with her hands behind her back she continued.

'Ladies and Gentlemen', She spoke with an even tone and the smile was gone from her face. "Joking aside, I do mean it is due ...no excuses...do not ask if it can be handed in on Monday. I will say no". Her expectations were very clear.

The next major part of each lesson, was a whole class question and answer period which lasted about 15 to 20 minute. It was a fast paced lesson and she encouraged kids to yell out answers. Surprisingly they didn't get carried away and you could easily make out individual answers. Sometimes she would ask students who had their hands up, other times those sitting quietly or not paying attention. This strategy seemed to be effective in keeping students on task. She made every effort to include all students by asking everyone at least one question.

Rob volunteered many answers, some good, some silly, she acknowledged three of them and wrote them on the board. Evan never volunteered but was watching the others intensely. Standing close beside him she bent down and asked him a question. When he answered with only one word she prompted him and got more. He smiled as she put his answer on the board. Jordyn sat very tall looking back and forth across the room listening to the answers and following Sally with her eyes. She put her hand up once and Sally asked her on two other occasions.

She really worked at turning this into an exciting discussion. If an

answer was wrong she never said but would redirect the students' train of thought until they got the right answer. This often turned into a game of charades as she pulled information from a student while the rest of the class cheered them on. An example of this follows.

Sally asked Jordyn what she could remember from her trip to the Parliament Buildings. Jordyn's first answer was, "Nothing". Sally pushed, "Sure you can, just think big" and she raised her eyes way up to the ceiling in an exaggerated gesture. Jordyn just sat there. "Come on" Sally insisted, "think..... think.....think..... big.....big high..... in the sky." Other students immediately began jabbing the air with their hands, Sally put her finger to her lips cautioning the others not to call out. "Jordyn" she continued moving around quickly in front of her and waving her hands ... "big, shiny"and all of a sudden a big smile came across Jordyn's face and she actually jumped to her feet and shouted the "Golden Boy, The Golden Boy." Everyone laughed, Sally took a deep breath and sighed and Jordyn was just so pleased with herself she jumped on the spot twice before she sat down.

She often used real life analogies to make connections with the curriculum. While teaching how to critique a play using a Rubric she used movies like the Titanic to elicit ideas from the students. Another time a student called out Flubber and she took him up on it, much to his surprise. She laughed, "not my choice, but what the heck. Ok you are going to critique the play Flubber with me". He groaned and the class

edged him on as they went through it.

During the course of the day she would take opportunities to build on a student's self-esteem. For example, if they took the chance to answer she made sure it was a positive experience. One time Evan answered a question very quietly and in one word. She however, seemed to know what he meant and said,

Good, very good, we can all use that information. Class,
like Evan just said,

and she went on to paraphrase his answer more clearly. Evan sat up straight and smiling. He seemed proud to be giving an answer that was beneficial to all.

Sally talked often about having respect for students and demonstrated this by asking their opinion on things. For example, she asked the students for ideas on how she could make the field trip better for her students next year. She thanked them and said these suggestions would be invaluable to her next year.

She was sensitive to the needs of the class and when she saw them getting restless, yawning, arms in the air stretching or slouching in their seats she would switch gears. Taking her familiar place at the front of the class with hands behind her back she asked for everyone's attention. "Ladies and Gentlemenhow many have hit a brick wall and need to get into groups." Everyone perked up with a lot of stretching and smiles and then immediately started to settle back in their seats and the talking

subsided. They knew she was about to give a mini review before they got into groups. She very quickly reviewed the information and restated the goals. She explained where they could find help, pointing to the instructional cards, the answers on the board or in one case an answer booklet from the field trip.

Everyone in the class listened to the review intensely, there was no taking or shuffling paper or bodies. Rob had his head down for the most part, Jordyn was looking straight ahead at nothing in particular and Evan was sitting forward in his chair with his chin in his hand and looking at Sally. Everyone was quiet and all eyes were on her while she talked.

The class was now ready to begin working in groups. She had organized the day so that the students had visual clues and information in their heads before working independently in groups. The goals and expectations of work to be done in the groups was also clearly laid out beforehand. For example she pointed to the instructional cards when she told them they would be working on the plot. She then went into great detail to tell them how they would record their information.

The recorder will put the word character and underline it at the top of the sheet and leave 5 or 6 linesthen put setting and underline it and leave 5 or 6 lines....then theme and underline it and leave 5 or 6 lines ...

She continue this way with all 5 headings.

A quick view of the room showed two students looking down at

their binders; one looking off into space; the boy playing with the blind; Jordyn chewing on her pencils and watching Sally; Rob moving about in his chair a good deal but for the most part looking at Sally. Evan was slouched his chair, feet sticking into the aisle, arms folded across his chest looking at Sally.

She varied the organization of the groups each day. When they were doing the plays she prearranged the group with 5 people to a group. On another day she had kids turn and work in pairs and on another day they kids picked their own groups. Rob always interacted no matter what the set up .. Jordyn didn't say much in the groups but smiled a lot and watched the others, she always did a good deal of writing. Evan did better when he was with one other student or in a small group, he gave a lot of eye contact and did talk more than in class discussions. She never put Jordyn, Evan or Rob in the same group.

Her groups were highly structured and she made sure everyone contributed. She always assigned roles or instructed the students in how to assign roles. Her instructions were clear,

You will all have a role, you need a recorder, you will need a person on two to type, others to collect props and costumes, everyone should have a role... Dustin, Jen Jasmine, Chris.

She would call out names randomly, then ask,

Do I make myself clear, everyone must contribute. Jasmine what were my instructions?

Jasmine answered with, "Everyone must contribute."

Sally continued,

Good, now its clear ..the first thing you do is assign roles,
recorder, typist, props Ok, begin .

When working in pairs she suggest that one person look up the answer and read it out for the recorder to copy down and then switch this role after 5 questions. Sometimes Sally would change the role every 5 to 10 minutes, saying, "Today the tallest person in the groups will be the recorder or the person who has said the least." Over the four days I was there everyone got to be a recorder.

She never insisted that Evan be the recorder but one day she went to the group and said. "Evan, you will tell the recorder everything she is suppose to write down." Then she laughed and continued, "Now Teresa, don't write anything down until Evan tells you." Evan smiled and sat up a little straighter, he began repeating what the others were saying. This was a great strategy for Evan who did not usually contribute verbally in the group.

On only one occasion did I observe a student not wanting to take her turn as the recorder. Sally handled it very calmly. Karen said, "Just because I'm the tallest, I don't want to be the recorder first". She was frowning and had her arms crossed over her chest. Sally overheard the comment and walked over to the group and bending over said quietly, "that's Ok, Karen can decline...Jeff you be the recorder today" and without waiting for a response walked to another group. Karen quit frowning

and Jeff picked up his pen, no one seemed put out by this arrangement.

Getting into their in groups was another example of how routines and expectations had been established in her room. The students always moved quickly and efficiently into their groups. There would be about one minute of shuffling, talking and a rather high noise level and then quickly the dust would settle and there would be 4 or 5 little circles around room.

Once the groups were settled and working, Sally began working the room. She would give direct instruction when needed, lots of positive feedback and redirect often. For example:

Now I understand this is a comedy but you can't have none stop laughing, your audience would become weak.

She always commented on the positive content of their conversations. She visited each group about three times during the 15 or 20 minutes. When she was at one group she would raise her head up and scan the room. If a group was too noisy or too quiet that's where she would go next. This was a very productive time for students and consisted of complete time on task. If the conversation was going well she stood behind smiling down at them like a proud parent. Her statements were positive.

This is good, I like where you are going with this, why don't you try adding a bit more right here, this is a wonderful train of thought you have going.

She walked over to Jordyn's table. Perhaps she knew that Jordyn could not express herself as easily as the others so she said,

Jordyn your character looks a little weak. Why don't you give the recorder your information in point form just a description of your character and we can flush it out later.

Jordyn smiled and proceeded, "tall.. very tall, and funny." Sally walked on to another group. She never gave answers just prompted until she got what she was looking for. "This is good but do you really think it belongs under the theme?" The students gave various rational for it being under the theme. She continued, "Yes, Yes, I see your point but then what will you put under the plot? How will it be different?" One student responded with another point of view and she quickly added, "Yes, very good that is the difference between the plot and theme."

She always reminded them of the days goals as the class was coming to a close. She was always very clear about what came next.

Ladies and Gentlemen...pause....we are almost out of time remember you have to hand this rough draught in today. Evan what are we going to do now.?

Evan answered, "Hand in a rough draft." Sally commented, "Good". Each group seemed to have a student that also had the technique of redirecting or prompting. Sally said she always places one or two strong kids in each group but has never trained them as such to be peer tutors or mentors. "I think they just pick it up from me". A good example follows:

Kendra, who was the recorder said, "OK, what should I write next?" Rob gave a silly answer to which Kendra replied, "I can't put that down, lets do it without the swear words Ok." At another table Destiny said to a student, "No we won't have time for all that, how else could we say it?"

Discipline in her class did not seem to be a major problem. She seldom commented on a student's behaviour but dealt directly with the issue. For example she had ignored some gum cracking until it became very obvious then she simply said, "Those with gum, get rid of it" and continued working in a group. Three students got up and spit their gum in the garbage.

Another time Sally heard Paul say, "shut -up". She turned toward the group "Paul please change places with Bob" Bob immediately got up with a smile on his face but Paul was glaring at the girl next to him. "Why me" he asked. Sally continued, "Just humour me today Paul." With that Paul got up smiling and went to the other side of the group. She was not confrontational and was able to deescalate the situation before it got out of hand. However, she expected students to act respectful at all times. Another conversation was getting a little off track, "Lets have a really ugly wife"....."Yeh and you can play the part""Oh shut up"....

Sally, who was on the far side of the room looked up and took a few steps towards the group. "John, we don't talk like that." John did not comment. Sally in a very low tone and no smile continued, "Do we John?"

John said "no" and cast his eyes downward. With a smile and a much livelier tone Sally said, "Thank you." The group got back on task and John had a slight smile on his face.

Her lessons were timed perfectly and the end of the day was always the same. About 2-3 minutes before the bell was to ring she would go to the centre of the room and looking out over the class say, "Ladies and Gentlemen".....some students immediately started packing their bags while others were desperately trying to write down the last of their work, she continued, "please finish up." She would usually wait about one minute, and then say "Good, the homework assignment." The majority of students turned her way, there was still some shuffling but no talking. "Please pay attention, no excuses for not knowing" She lowered her voice and continued to explain the assignment. When she finished she asked a student to repeat the assignment. The bell rang but no one moved, she continued,

Ok, before you go I want the rough draft from each group handed in and the desks back in neat rows. Thank you have a good day.

The students exploded. Their voices loud and they all stood at once and for a moment it seemed like utter chaos, then almost as suddenly, students were leaving, the desks were miraculously back in six very straight rows and 5 students handed her a piece of paper as they left.

She was at the doorway smiling and talking to students as they left.

Within a minute the room was silent.

Each day was a reflection of the last and reinforced again that her class was highly structured and organized. However within that structure students had the opportunity to be active participants in their learning. I did not observe any down time and there was very little off task behaviour. Students handed work into her each day which included what they had done as a group and whatever individual homework assignment was due.

Within the class the three students with disabilities were all expected to listen to her instruction, display appropriate behaviour, participate in classroom discussion and work cooperatively and actively in their groups. Except for the time she allowed Evan to talk rather than record and Jordyn to give her answers in point form I saw no evidence of Sally adapting or modifying the work. Expectations were the same and Sally seemed to give them no more or no less attention than she gave to everyone else. The strategies Sally used like being highly organized, repeating, prompting, redirecting, humour and including everyone to be an active participant and remain on task worked for the whole class and was very effective with the students with special needs.

Dave Brough

Observation

Upon entering his room one could experience and reflect on the learning that had gone on over the years. Dave's room provided students with a wealth of visual information, it was an inviting room that cultivated learning. The same organization and attention to detail that he emulated in his personality and dress was evident in the physical layout of his class.

Every wall was covered from floor to ceiling with students work. Mostly there were projects on Egypt. Some were huge ten feet by six feet, others were typed essays neatly tacked to the wall. The work was organized and each art piece was lined up to be visually attractive and follow various themes.

He had stressed to me earlier that pride was the main theme throughout all his classes and it certainly was evident in his room. On the side wall a ten foot, red, white and black banner proclaimed, "The Most important Tool For Success Is The Belief That You Can Succeed". Next to this were black and red striped letters four feet high and spread out eight feet, forming the word PRIDE. Along the bottom of the wall another ten foot banner spelled out, 'TAKING PRIDE IN YOUR WORK SHOWS'.

The art work spilled out into the halls where a large Canadian flag with the word PRIDE provided the heading across the bulletin board.

Under this was an actual sweat shirt with the letters PRIDE, cut from fabric and sewn on. A large hand drawn poster titled 'New Dimension' depicted dimension one with teachers welcoming the students into classrooms and students hanging up their art work. There were commercial posters talking about how to succeed, at home at school and out in the community.

The door itself was a work of art. Painted in bright oil colours was a large Egyptian mummy with pyramids in the background. There was no part of the original door visible. The frame around the door had also been painted in various bright colours.

Rather than desks his room was set up with two rows of five long tables. There were four chairs behind each table. He had a small desk at the front with a filing cabinet beside. The filing cabinet was covered with students school photos. On top was a single photo of his two young children. Beside his desk was an overhead and a screen pulled down at the front. There were no windows in the room.

I observed three times in this classroom and once in the computer lab. He allowed the students to sit wherever they wanted as long as they were attentive. He respected their feelings and said sitting next to someone you didn't like was not conducive to learning. Most of the students sat in the same seats on the four occasions I was there. Their were two students, Jill and John from the special ed program who came with a Paraprofessional, Ms. Mark. Jill always sat by herself with and

empty chair between her and Ms. Mark. John always sat at a table next to Chris and two other boys. Dave had told me that Chris was a student in the E.S.L. program and that very early in the year had made friends with John. They always worked on projects and sat together. There was a group of six boys who always went right to the back and grouped their chairs together. The rest were scattered two or three at a table.

As students entered the room they all quickly took their seats and took out their supplies. Most were talking and smiling. John and Chris were talking and continued to talk with the others at their table. Jill did not speak to anyone but took her seat and got out a pen and a binder.

The presentation of Dave's lessons was more varied than Sally's. One was in the computer lab, two consisted of students presentation and one was whole class instruction. However, within these classes Dave's management style and teaching strategies were very similar to Sally's. He used daily routines, body language, repeated phrases and gave simple clear explanations. His students knew the expectations and met them each day I observed. He too, said that he treated everyone the same and had the same expectations for everyone, especially concerning behaviour and opportunity to learn. He evaluated everyone on their effort to do their best.

He started each day the same and surprisingly similar to Sally's. He would always, close the door, go to his desk, pick up his glasses, put them on then, stand beside the overhead and say, "Ladies and

Gentleman". When he reached the overhead, it was an indication that students should also be ready. He did this in his classroom and also in the computer lab. The group of boys at the back were quiet and looking at him, although they did not have their supplies out. Jill was organized, pen in hand, binder opened and looking at him. John and Chris were the last ones to stop talking but they had their binders out. The majority of the others had their supplies out and all were looking at him.

He would then briefly outline the day. One day introducing me, another reminding students of due dates and particular school or class events. He would then get right into the lesson and with clear instructions and goals. For example in the computer lab he began,

You will have the remainder of the period to work on your presentations. I have distributed 12 disks.. I want 12 back on my desk before you leave ...12...is that clear....on my desk...not left in the computer.

He said this in an even tone and straight face. He looked from student to student and when he repeated, '12 disks', many of the students nodded and smiled. He continued,

Second, you or your partner will come to me during the class for a number. This number will indicate when you will present in class next week. Please be prepared. He raised his voice, there will be no excuses, you will present.

Dave was much more sombre than Sally and did not smile when

giving direct instruction. At times his instructions sounded almost like commands. However, once he had explained he would usually interject with some humour. "If you are on your death bed...we may allow some leniency."

After these instructions all students turned to the computers and with their partners began working on their presentations. John and Chris were working together. John sometimes grabbed the mouse and hit keys apparently at random, this would be followed by a laugh. Chris would then simply say "no" or stop that" and John would stop. John did not do much typing but he did have control of the mouse most of the time. John read some text out of a book and Chris typed it into the computer. When putting in the sound effect they would play the loud or silly ones over and over. Dave helped the boys on two occasions and Ms. Mark once, other than this they worked independently. Dave gave the same amount of help to others in the room. Ms. Mark worked beside Jill most of the time. She was working on the key board and Jill was talking to her and looking intently at the screen. Dave said Ms. Mark always helped Jill directly when working on presentations.

The day of the presentations was very structured in comparison to the other lessons. He took them seriously and so did the rest of the class. He began,

There will be three presentation of 10 minutes each, then a break for everyone while I evaluate the presenters. You will

listen attentively, ask questions at the end and then be allowed a short break at which time you may talk quietly or get up and stretch. We will begin now.

His expectations of students was extremely high and he let them know often that he would not except anything less. Just before the presentation he told students that the quality of the last few presentation had been somewhat disappointing. He said they fell short of his expectations. He explained,

Now maybe my expectations are too high but I did not see what I had been looking for. Remember when you go to present look over the evaluation sheet...I am looking for more than just content.

Although this was a social studies project on ancient civilizations, he was looking for much more than just factual information. The emphasis was on taking pride in how the presentation was put together rather than what it contained. He set the stage for their performance by inventing an audience who supposedly paid \$65.00 a head to see the presentation. He talked about really being prepared for a large audience and how critical they could be. He continued,

Remember you have people in the audience who have paid \$65.00 to see a presentation and they deserve to see it. This is your responsibility. So I expect you here unless you have a very serious illness.

A student asked, "If one person of the team is away, do I still get a mark? Dave replied,

No absolutely not - everyone in the audience paid to see this dual presentation and it would not be fair if they only get to see one person ... and as professionals your reputation would be ruined...tarnished by one player... and you would not get other bookings.. so you can see why this must be a team effort.

During one class they got into a lengthy discussion on how they should dress. He emphasized that the audience may pass judgment on how they looked rather than on content. One interesting conversation started with Trevor saying, "Well, what should we wear?" Dave answered,

I think the main thing is you look neat and tidy as if you have put some thought in how you look..not just rolled out of bed. I think you all know what is appropriate, you all have clothes you wear for good, or special occasions. You have to think of the audience and what they might expect and then to be taken seriously you dress accordingly. Clean and neat is usually a good rule of thumb. Think of the clothes in your closet and how they make you feel.

Trevor added, " What if I want to roll my pant legs up and wear suspenders". Dave responded,

Well, it all depends on the point you are trying to get across with your audience. If you want them to take you seriously it may not be a good strategy. However, if you think your presentation can take a little humour then by all means, it is up to you and your good taste.

Dave never did give the student a direct answer but provided them with good advice and enough information to make a good decision. This was another example of how he expanded on the curriculum. Many life skills were taught during his lessons.

On another day he was to begin a new unit and again he gave clear expectation and instructions.

We will now begin Unit 5. Please have pen and paper ready as you will be required to take down key points... not everything, just key point to help you study and complete your presentations. Today I will present information, I am sorry but we must get through this.

Once the lesson began it depended on the day as to how much time he spent working directly with students. In the computer lab there was a major technological problem with one computer and he spend the majority of the day trying to fix this. However, the students worked very well and were on task for at least ninety percent of the time. He apologized later for being out of the room so much and me not being able to observe him teach. What I did observe was the self-discipline that he

had instilled in the students to be able to work so well independently.

There was also limited opportunity for any direct interaction during the presentations. He was very attentive and never took his eyes off the presenters. He and the class would ask questions and then he would write intensely for the entire five minutes. During John's presentation he worked the computer and Chris did all the talking. Chris typed in a command and the TV came alive with their title of the presentation on a beautiful background of pink and purple hues. Chris read in a very low voice and I don't think Dave could hear, but he didn't say anything. There was a slight pause in the presentation and the slide was not corresponding to what Chris was saying. Dave looked over at John, gave him a nod and a slight smile and John reached for the mouse and clicked and the presentation continued. They had great graphics and lots of sound effects. There was less text than the others and the facts were presented in simple straight forward sentences. They had about 10 slides altogether, and their presentation was just short of the ten minutes. When they finished John had a huge smile and a look of relief on his face. They both graciously accepted the applause and John answered one questions from Dave and four from the floor. The boys sat down laughing and reminiscing about their presentation.

Once the class had begun there was little need for him to remind students to stay on task or watch their behaviour. The students were

surprising quite and attentive to the others as they presented. They also handled the five minute breaks without too much noise. Only once while he was busy writing and evaluating did he have to speak to a student. The girl sitting two seats over from him was talking and laughing loudly. He paused, quietly called her name and then spoke briefly to her, then resumed his writing. I did not hear what he said but she gathered her things and went and sat at another table for the remainder of the day.

The day I observed him teaching the new Unit he used a number of effective strategies that were beneficial to everyone. Once again he got every one's attention while standing by the overhead saying "Ladies and Gentlemen, please." He would begin by reading the title and a few lines. He then stopped and rephrase and review what was just read. Sometimes he asked for volunteers to read. He asked those with their hands up other times he picked students at random. If a student started talking or looking like they were not paying attention he would simply move closer to them. Students would read brief paragraphs and then he would stop and rephrase and repeat what had been read.

The material all had to do with the next presentation. At every step he gave examples of what will produce a good or bad mark. He informed them of what he will not even consider or accept. Upon finishing this explanation he immediately repeated it again almost word for word. Everyone listened attentively. Jill never took her eyes off the overhead or Dave. John was smiling a good deal and would poke

Chris's arm in fun from time to time. He moved around in his seat but never spoke. When he did write he copied from Chris's binder.

Sometimes discussions would follow his explanations. He encouraged everyone to take part. He also allowed his discussion to get a little loud but he was not as animated as Sally and although some shouted out answer he mostly acknowledged the students with their hands up. He always offered a lot of praise and answers were followed by "good answer or very good thinking on your part." Like Sally, he never said an answer was wrong but would redirect or prompt until he got the right answer. On more than one occasion he would say, "that's a good answer, but what do you really think' or "yes that was true then, what would be an example of that today." He was constantly trying in the lessons with present day information.

Following this active class discussion he resumed his position at the overhead and said "Ladies and Gentleman". The noise level went down a little but many were still talking. He walked over and turned off the lights which made the room very dark except for the glow of the overhead. He said in a rather stern voice "we will continue". The class fell silent.

As he had said at he beginning this was a rather dry lesson and he had to get the instruction part out of the way. The students had been reading and taking notes for about 10 minutes when Dave went over and turned off the overhead and turned on one of the ceiling lights at the front.

The room was still dim and the light cast a glow around Dave at the front. He told everyone to relax and sit back and listen to a story he wanted to read them. You could hear the students all stretching and shifting in their seats and then they were silent. He read a very moving story titled 'My Dad', written by a severely abused child. It was very graphic and summarized the life of the child from birth to adulthood. It was hard not to feel both admiration and sympathy for this individual who had endured so much. Then very abruptly the story ended with, 'my name is Adolf Hitler'. The students seemed spellbound, the silence was deafening. He continued.

Now I am in now way condoning what this person did, but I found this a perfect example of always making sure before you pass judgment you have both sides to a story.

He had told me before that he sometimes starts each day with a thought for the day or breaks up a long lesson with one. He then went quickly to the door, flicked on the lights and began telling a story which he said he had heard on the news that morning. A referee was being challenged over what fans thought to be, a poorly called penalty. The students could relate to this and a discussion followed. John had numerous comments on this subject. Again he was trying to get them to look at both side of an issue. He then said, "OK, Ladies and gentleman take a few minutes to stretch and get ready to continue with our lesson." He paced back and forth across the room smiling out at the students

giving them a moment of freedom.

He walked over and turned on the overhead and the room grew silent once more as he continued with the lesson. After 15 minutes he turned off the overhead and began rubbing his hands together and a smile began to cross his face. The students knew exactly what was happening and even before he loudly announce "everyone, on your feet" the students were standing.

He then began a very fast paced game of 'Simon Says'. He was calling out very fast and students were responding by laughing and shouting. Surprisingly, when a student was caught, they sat down, groaning and laughing until only two boys were left. Dave said, noticeable out of breath, "do you want to go for it". "Yes", they responded and he continued even faster than before until he got one out. Both boys flopped to there seats and everyone was laughing. As in Sally's class it was interesting to observe Junior High students having so much fun with this simple game.

Almost as quickly as it had begun he walked over turned on the overhead and turned off the main lights. The students took only a few moments to get their concentration back and they began reading together as a class from the overhead.

He had a good rapport with his class. They had fun but he easily got them back on track. He had built in breaks to help them get through this more structured lesson.

This class was also an example of how he taught beyond the curriculum. Although this was social studies, he was not discussing facts or what they should be writing about in their next projects. He was going through the implication of 'learning through teaching'.

Apparently his last Unit was based on 'learning through doing' and therefore the students had done presentation. The students discussed how actively participating in something helps you to learn. Now he was going step by step through the benefits of learning through teaching. He explained,

This Unit is different...you still need to research the information and present it in an interesting format but..you must teach the information.

He went on to explain that they must get their audience to actively participate in the learning.

You have information, you present it, interestingly...you review...you let your audience practice...be active participants ...you review again...and you test. This is what I will be looking for when I evaluate.

He told them by going through these steps and teaching others they will also learn and remember the material.

He always ended every day the same. He would take off his glasses and walk over and open the door about 2 minutes before the end of class and say, "Thank you ladies and gentleman, have a good

day". The room would then come alive with students standing talking and packing up. After the students left, he would walk slowly around the room adjusting the desk and chairs until they were all perfectly aligned .

After each class a few students hung around to talk to him, some about assignments and some about basketball. He usually had to lead them out the door so they wouldn't be late for the next class. Students had a good rapport with him and seemed to feel comfortable with the structure he provided.

One big difference between Sally's room and Dave's was that Dave had a paraprofessional in his classroom when John and Jill were there. He told me during the interview that he had to give a lot of the credit to Ms. Mark because she modified and reviewed everything and helped students with their tests and projects outside of class time. I never did see any signs of Dave modifying assignments or expectations directly in the classrooms.

Ms. Mark only talked to John once and that was in the computer lab. She always sat beside Jill but rarely spoke to her. On one occasion Ms. Mark spoke to another students about her behaviour. Tammy had come into class talking loudly and announced, "Oh, I just hate Karen, she makes me sick" and she kicked a chair slightly as she walked past. Dave was not in the room at the time. Ms. Mark caught her eye and then directed her gaze in my direction. Tammy looked over at me and then back at Ms. Mark. She put her hand up to mouth and giggled and said to

Ms. Mark. "oops, I'm sorry". Ms. Mark apparently had the respect of the students and able to assert some control.

On one occasion Dave sent Ms. Mark out of the room to make overheads for him and on another occasion she left for twenty minutes. Only once did I observe her and Dave talking. Although she did not seem to play a significant role in the classroom, Dave acknowledged that her behind the scenes support was instrumental in the success John and Jill were having in the class.

Like Sally, Dave never did anything special for the students with disabilities. He presented the material clearly and had clear expectations for everyone. He broke information down and then rephrased and repeated it. He worked very hard to make sure that all students spent the majority of their time on task. He told me that he felt it was his responsibility that he spend the day teaching every minute not disciplining. He respected students and knew they need breaks and humour built into their day in order to meet his expectations. He felt it was up to him to motivate the kids and get them excited about learning. He smiled as he told me about his 'brain teasers'.

Sometimes at the beginning of the class, I will leave the lights off in my room and put a brain teaser on the overhead. I have kids who can hardly wait, you hear them coming down the hall saying 'I wonder what it will be' today. They rush in take their seat and try and solve it before I come in. Students are excited and in a good learning mode.

He believed that what he was doing for everyone was very beneficial to the students in the special education program. One day with pride in his voice he said,

The students really enjoyed working on the video presentations ...they learn so fast.....even John and Jill can produce professional presentations. Do you know how that must make them feel. They are a little shy but this gives them an opportunity to produce something. Something to be proud of. They are not just reading a piece of paper with a bunch of facts taken straight out of an encyclopaedia. You would be amazed at what I get and they really have a good time doing it.

He always respected his students when he talked with them and let them know that he believed in them and that they could do it. His strategies worked for everyone.

CLINT BRADLY

Observation

Clint's room, was stark in comparison to Dave's. It was set up with three neat rows of tables and four individual desks behind the overhead. His desk was in the corner by the window, neatly piled with papers and a day book. The focal point of his room was a professionally mounted ten by ten foot map of the world on the back wall.

Rather than art work around the room Clint drew amazing pictures on the blackboard each day to complement his lessons. One day he had a small but detailed map depicting jagged shorelines, territories, rivers, cities, mountains and other geographical information. Another day a large bar graph cleverly drawn in three dimensional skyscrapers appeared. Like Dave, he tried to capture students interest as they entered the room. The drawings always initiated comments from the students.

There were 18 students in the room including Carol, Linda, Laura and Tara, from the special education program and their para, Mrs. Park. Clint also, allowed all students to sit where they wanted. He told me that Carol was physically disabled and needed assistance walking, writing and carrying her books and had wanted to sit by Mrs. Park. Linda often

helped Carol and they had become friends so she also choose to sit at this table. Tara and Laura wanted to be near Mrs. Park and sat at the table directly behind. Three students sat at individual desks down the middle and the rest sat two or three to a table. A group of six boys sat at the back.

Like his colleagues, Clint didn't think he did anything different for the students in special education. His classroom management style was effective for all students and they participated fully in all class activities. The one difference in Clint's room was that the paraprofessional was more actively involved in assisting all students. She always helped Carol in and out of the room, opening doors, pulling out chairs, carrying her back pack and looking after her crutches. As well, Mrs. Park always had at least five or six students working with her in a group. On one occasion she took Peter out of the room to write a test he had missed.

Clint evaluated all students separately including the students from the special education program. For example he showed me Tara's mark of 50% and explained that she was absent a great deal and he thought she could improve on this. He wanted her to know that she had to work for her marks.

On one occasion he handed out some marked assignments. Everyone got one back and the remarks were all positive. He told Laura that she got one of the highest marks and commented on the amount of effort Tara had put in. His remarks were all personal and

appropriate for each student. He also went to great lengths to explain to me in front of the students how well they had done.

Clint took ownership for all the students in his room. When Mrs. Park, Linda and Carol were late getting back from an outing he left the room three times to look for them because he was concerned as to where they were. Clint was very sensitive to the needs of all his students. They were noticeably more talkative and active than students in Sally's or Dave's room. There was always a couple of students talking or out of their seat at any one time. For the most part they were on task, talking about the lesson or getting supplies such as pencils or texts from Clint's desk. The room had a definite buzz to it at all times. Clint seemed to allow a certain amount of noise and activity but he always had control and could bring the class back to attention when he needed.

The students entered the room running, talking loudly, swearing and sometimes knocking over chairs. Most were laughing but some were serious and angry. Students would remain standing or sitting on top of their desks chatting. Tara and Laura would sit on their desks or join in with others. Carol and Linda would usually take their seats because it was difficult for Carol to stand. It seemed there were always students standing around them talking. All this activity provided everyone, including the students from the special education program with ongoing opportunities for socialization. Mrs. Park was also extremely well liked by all students and they would cluster around her engulfing Carol and Linda at the same time. Tara and Laura got on exceptionally

well with the six boys from the back and found their antics enlightening. Of the three classes this one appeared outwardly to be truly an inclusive classroom.

Since Clint had hall duty he always arrived two or three minutes after the bell at which time the noise level would be extremely high. When he entered his physical presence had little or no effect on the students. Some days he walked directly back to me and we exchanged greetings and others days he went to his desk for a moment or two. He seemed oblivious to the noise and rough housing as he got organized for the lesson.

When he was ready to begin he would walk over and close the door. He rarely said anything directly to students, his body language and well chosen words were enough. He would proceed directly to the overhead place one arm on it, take off his glasses, and with a slight smile, stand quietly looking out at his students. Like his colleagues his management style consisted of established routines and expectations. Students immediately began taking their seats and the noise level went down noticeably.

He would begin with, "Good morning ladies and gentleman" or if it was extremely noisy he would add, "I see some books still closed" or "I better see your homework assignment open and done".

His routine continued as he would jump right into whole class instruction. His opening statements were geared to get everyone

listening and on track. For example,

Ok, today is a new unit. Everyone turn to page 132...132...

this is a new unit ..132. There it is...132.. everyone with me."

On another occasion he simply turned on the overhead and got right into the lesson saying, "This is where we left off last time...right? Then let's begin." Once he started the room became surprisingly quiet, and although not all the students had out their supplies everyone was watching him. He would stop and walk up and down the aisles making sure everyone had out books, texts and pens. He had to physically and verbally prompt many students. Carol, who had a physical disability sometimes had difficulty getting her supplies out if Mrs. Park wasn't right there. On one occasion he lifted the heavy text from the end of the table, put it down in front of her and opened it to the right page. Then pointing directly to the spot where they were to begin said gently, "Here, you go Carol". Linda and Laura always had their supplies out ready to participate. I did observe him pulling Tara's binder in front of her on two occasions so she would stop doodling on the desk.

He always used the blackboard and the overhead for his initial presentation of materials. Once he had everyone's attention he would pause again and get the students at the back to move up.

"Ok, all you at the back move up I need you close, you need to be able to see the overhead and the board clearly. It's OK, you can all move back once the instruction is over.

Students would jump up and race to the front dragging chairs and for a moment there was general chaos again. This time they were easily calmed as he would say, "Good, Good, now I have you" and everyone would laugh.

The four girls never had to move because they were already close to the front. However, sometimes the boys would move up and sit at their table and pull their chairs up close to Mrs. Park. Once he had everyone where he wanted them he would begin the lesson with much enthusiasm. He moved about the room quickly and constantly. He was at the board one moment, then the overhead and back to the screen. He used the map at the back every time he mentioned a city or country. It was visually impressive to watch him walking in front of this huge map with arms outstretched outlining areas in the world that related to the lesson.

He made sure that everyone wrote down relevant information. He would check binders, repeat important information and give them time to write. Sometimes he would go directly to a student's desk and open their binder and hand them a pencil. He needed to physically prompt many of them just to get started but he never made a big deal out of it. Sometimes he would read from the overhead or ask students to read. He would stop after every second sentence and repeat, explain and paraphrase the information. He would always end with, "Is that clear?, Do you remember that from before? Any questions?"

He made sure everyone was actively involved in learning. He

would check the girls binders as often as the others even when Mrs. Park was there.

This whole class instruction would only last about 10 minutes and then he would initiate a classroom discussion. Like Dave and Sally he always found an example that would fit the present day and get students actively discussing it. For example, one day he was talking about expropriation of land in the 1800's and Jennifer said, "It's a good thing they can't do that today". Clint then began telling the story of the Slau Rebchuk bridge and how a little old lady chained herself to her house when the city wanted to tear it down. This prompted a five minute discussion with the students visibly upset about this poor womans rights. At one point Carol called out rather loudly, "That's not fair". Like his colleagues he was able to teach beyond the curriculum and get the students thinking about real life implications.

Another day he asked Laura, "When you neighbours get a load of top soil dumped on their lawn, where do you think it comes from? Laura, whispered something to Mrs. Park, Mrs. Park smiled and Laura answered "strip mining". Clint immediately said "Right on".

His class discussion were loud and at first glance would appeared to be very unorganized. He would pose a question and students would initiate separate conversation amongst themselves, some shouting out answer and some with their hands up desperately trying to get Clint's attention. He seemed to be able to hear everyone at the same times. He

would walk over to a table and listen to what they had to say then turn quickly and answer someone with their hand up. He would then race to the back and prompt a student who was saying nothing. He seemed to be everywhere at once and actually worked at getting the students all talking at once. He would encourage a conversation anywhere he heard one, if it was on topic. He smiled and laughed as he jumped in and out of conversations. Occasionally when he got a really good answer he would rush up to the blackboard and write it down. He encouraged everyone to take a chance and answer and quickly praised anyone who did. He was able to get everyone talking about the lesson, even if it was amongst themselves. By keeping the pace fast, the lesson did not become boring. It was like watching someone really perform, he really had the kids involved in the lesson.

Carol was by nature quiet but Mrs. Park would talk and prompt her and Linda during these discussion. Laura and Tara were able to participate with the table behind but mostly they tried for Clint's individual attention and would wait until he came to their table to share their answers.

Clint's discussion were a lot like Sally in that he would also prompt and redirect until he got the answer he wanted. The class would be working at this fast and furious and when the answer came out they would all stop and you could hear the heavy breathing as if they had all just run laps. Some discussions would go on for fifteen minutes and

although it was noisy every eye would still be on Clint.

When he needed them to shift gears and work on the assignment he would simply stop asking questions or ignore the answers being given. He would go to the overhead and rest his arm on it, take off his glasses and usually put the arm of his glasses in his mouth and stand very still looking out over the room. This was an indication to the students that the discussion was over. Slowly the conversations in the room dimmed. When all was quiet, and he sometimes waited like this for over a minute he would give simple clear instructions.

The diagrams are taken from your text....page 132....page 132.... copy them as best as you can. You will need these for tests.

He would then give the students the opportunity to work in groups, pairs or by themselves as he put it, "However, will be most productive, but it must be productive." His organization of group work appeared to be as unorganized as his discussion. Students would jump up and rush over to the front two tables to be near Mrs. Park. They would cram in as many chairs as they could and Clint would finally say, "If the groups are too big... get out". Everyone was laughing or talking but if you looked closely students were attempting to get out text and pens to begin working.

Like Dave and Sally he worked the room constantly but casually. He went from group to group, sometimes sitting on the desk, sometimes pulling up a chair. He seen everyone at least two or three times. There

were two boys who always choose to work alone. Clint always made a point of going to them as often as everyone else. There was constant movement in the room as at least one student was out of their seat at any one time. Rather than schedule breaks like Dave he would allow the students to move about whenever they asked. Some would be asking for a pencil or a text or paper to write on. He provided materials and never asked where their's was. There was always someone asking to go to the washroom or for a drink. Sometimes he would go to a group and they would get into a discussion about sports or a local school event. He encouraged this and would talk to them three or four minutes before directing them back on task. He appeared very calm at all times within this active group. Mrs. Park was very instrumental with her group of six students. He joked with me that the students would rather work with her than him.

He did have to spend more time disciplining and redirecting than then the other two teachers. His students often erupted in some very negative behaviour. Again he handled it very calmly and the students responded. One such incident began with a boy wondering around the room looking for a pencil. He finally just grabbed one out of another students hand. The struggle was on and neither boy would give up their end of the pencil. Clint let it continue for a bit and then called out in a very low even tone, "Ken, please come here." Ken continued pulling on the pencil. Clint, a little louder "Ken". Ken let go of the pencil and

returned to his seat. Clint who was at the back of the room went on "Ken, I need you to come here please". Ken got out of his seat and went to stand in front of Clint. Surprisingly the rest of the room continued talking and working in their groups. Clint had a quiet conversation with Ken which included the possibility of writing out a behaviour management report. Clint asked Ken what he would write if it was up to him and Ken verbalized what he had done wrong. Clint seemed satisfied that he was aware of his negative behaviour, thanked him and sent him back to his seat. About five minutes later Clint walked over to Ken's desk and picked up the paper he was working on and said. "Look at the 3 D effect Ken got by using different colours, well done Ken." He had made a point of reinforcing Ken positively as soon as he could.

The less serious problems were handled with humour or sarcasm. When two boys were very loud at the back he asked the one to come to the front. The student was not going to comply and Clint just laughed and continued, "Yes, you'll move, you need a jump start today". The boy started to move up but was saying "no, no". Clint, smiling broadly, put his hand on the boys shoulder and in a very patronizing tone said, "My boy, you need more guidance today". Everyone including the student laughed. Clint was able to get students to do what he wanted by using humour and not being confrontational.

One time the boys sitting with Tara were making very strange noises with their mouth to which Tara was laughing loudly. Clint went

over and placed his hands together as if begging and said to Tara, "Oh, please, please, don't encourage them". The boys and Tara laughed and then calmed down.

He seemed to have the same policy on gum chewing as Sally and the only reference he made to it was when loud cracking noises could be heard. He smiled and said, "Now who do you suppose that is?" A boy at the back called out, "Mrs. Park", and everyone including Mrs. Park laughed. Nothing more was said but there were no more cracking of gum. He never directly challenged individuals or commented on their negative behaviour. He always gave them a respectable way out. I never saw him yell or get angry. He always dealt calmly and was in complete control.

He allowed a good deal of slang and off the cuff remarks to go unattended. Comments like, shut-up, take a hike, were heard often. However, only once did I hear a student swear. Clint immediately reacted by going down the aisle and looking the student right in the eye and said, "We don't talk like that in this room." The student responded with "OK, I'm sorry" and the class went on.

On the few occasions when Clint left the room the students were immediately off task. During one incident three students began throwing eraser very hard at each other. Swear words were very evident and four students were out of their desks. Mrs. Park was also out of the room and my presence did not seem to have any effect on them. Tara got up and

sat on her desk and talked with Laura. Carol and Linda were not in the room. He never left for more than a few minutes.

The end of the day was always the same. While still in groups Clint would go back to the overhead and with his glasses in his mouth stand looking out at the room. "Ladies and Gentlemen, homework assignment" and he pointed towards the board where it was always written very clearly. "Land use test Friday, May 1, 20 marks, please be prepared". Another day he said,

The definitions for your five vocabulary words must be done for tomorrow, that is all. Thank you everyone...have a good day.

Most students would write this down and he would go around and check to make sure. Tara and Laura always opened their day books themselves and wrote in them. Mrs Park would assist Carol and Linda.

He would then walk over and open the door which indicated to the students that the bell was about to go. Students jumped to their feet, moving chairs and desk, and packing up. The noise was incredible, but Clint never said anything, he just walked over to his desk and sat down smiling. Students started to approach his desk and within minutes there were at least eight students gathered around. They were talking about everything from basketball that night to the test on Friday. As in the class discussion, he calmly tried to answer each one, ignoring the others that were yelling questions at him. One by one they got their answers and left. Tara and Laura usually joined this group at the end of class.

Carol and Mrs. Park usually left class early to avoid the rush in the halls. Clint always said, "Goodbye Carol, have a good day", even if he was in the middle of something. The day the two girls came in late he also stopped and quietly greeted them.

As he walked the students to the door David, a frail looking lad was standing quietly to one side. Clint ushered the others through the door and came back to David and stood very close to him. David simply said, "The same thing happened to my grandfatherin his country." Clint looked puzzled and then said, "you, mean expropriation?" The boy nodded. Clint then put his arm across David's shoulders and together they talked and walked down the hall. He had a wonderful rapport with the kids.

Like Dave and Sally he made it his responsibility to keep the students on task for almost the entire period. Except when he left the room I did not observe any down time.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

This study examined teaching practices and perceptions of three classroom teachers who were successful in integrating students with disabilities in their classrooms. In this chapter, I briefly summarize the major findings from this study and explore the implications for integrating students with disabilities into the classroom.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

From my analysis of the data, six major findings emerged. First, the data showed that successful integration may not be entrenched in specific teaching practices but in teachers perspectives of students with disabilities. Second, creating a community for learners built on mutual respect enhanced the educational experiences of all students. Third, good classroom management and organizational skills provide a positive learning environment for all students. Fourth, Active learning was the common strategy used by all teachers to promote optimal time on task for all students and facilitated successful integration. Fifth, all teachers taught beyond the curriculum and believed critical thinking, problem solving and the ability to transfer skills learned to everyday situations were as or more important than content. Sixth, classroom teachers

indicated that school supports such as paraprofessionals and special education/resource teachers were instrumental to the success of integration.

Teachers Perspectives of Students With Disabilities

The underlying assumption is that all children can learn once we identify their special strengths and support them in their efforts to achieve desired outcomes (Badley, et al, 1997). Although the three teachers had no specific training in special education, they each articulated clearly the current thinking of advocates for students with disabilities. Each one of them saw the child first, not the disability.

Their comments throughout the meetings, interviews and observations were consistent and reflected the above statement. For example: Sally, " Kids are Kids"; Dave, "Everyone can learn and I believe I have something to teach everyone"; Clint, " All kids are special, all kids need help, show me one that doesn't".

The teachers never used medical diagnosis, labels or categories when talking about their students. Sally described one student this way, "He doesn't read to well but his comprehension is much higher." Dave commented, "I don't worry about the disability, I just try to get everyone to do their best and take pride in what they do at whatever level." Clint expressed it his way, "I get kids every year with labels, I don't pay any

attention because I never had the training and don't know what those labels mean anyway." All the teachers accepted the students as individuals and considered them their students.

They did not see integration as more work or more stressful. They all found it challenging and rewarding. They took pride in the fact that they could help students with disabilities when other teacher could not. They truly believed that students with disabilities were learning and benefiting by being in the regular classroom.

All three teachers took ownership for the students while they were in their classroom and did so unconditionally. Although these students were all supported by resource or special education teachers, they did not expect or want anyone else to program for the students while in their respective rooms. They took pride in the students accomplishments and more than once bragged to me about their work. Clint, "I am so amazed at what I get out of them!" Sally, "Jordyn would never have gone this far in a segregated class." Dave, "Look at the professional presentation John was able to give, how do you think that must make him feel!"

They expected their students to learn and they did. All three teachers agreed that the best thing they every did for the students with disabilities was put expectations on them. Clint, "They have lived up to my expectations every time"; Dave, "There is no free ride in my class, everyone must tow the line, and they do!"; Sally, "I think it (integration) will work because I believe it will work."

When I first talked to the three nominated teachers each one of them expressed concern that I would not be able to find good teaching strategies in their classroom for students with disabilities because none of them felt they did anything special for these students. Dave, "I don't do anything special for students from the special education program. I teach to the whole class and expect everyone to participate in all assignments." Sally, "I never single them out, I teach to the whole class, at whatever level." Clint, "What do I do different, nothing, what you will see is what I do for everyone."

This philosophy is supported in the literature specifically by (Giangreco, Edelman, & Dennis 1991) who found that an important factor in successfully integrating students was that they have equal status and pursue common goals. This was very evident in all three classrooms.

Creating a Community of Learners

Creating a community of learners was a natural outcome for these teachers based on their perceptions stated above. Each teachers took his or her job seriously in creating a safe learning environment. They all said they felt it was their responsibility to come to work and give 100 % of their attention to teaching the students. They all indicated to me that they were still excited about teaching and looked forward to the challenges each new year brought. They all had confidence in their abilities as a teacher and in their particular subject areas. This excitement and confidence was

in turn passed on to the students.

Sally ensured students felt safe and secure before attempting to teach curriculum. She said, "Children can't learn when they are in a negative state of mind". Dave, used 'brain teasers' and 'thoughts of the day' to excite students the moment they came in the room. He went to great lengths to provide a physical environment that was welcoming and stimulating to the students. Clint spent time talking to the students about a variety of topics to build a good rapport with them. He made sure he built in success right from September.

Each teacher spent time ensuring success for the students and getting them to believe in themselves. All students enjoyed coming to these classes because they knew they were going to be successful. The teachers were non-confrontational and never humiliated or intimidated a student. They all used positive reinforcement rather than discipline. Through attention to individual differences they created a community for learning built on mutual respect. "Implicit to the meaning of inclusion is belonging" (Kunc, 1992). All the students participated in setting rules. Many of these rules included how to relate to others in the room in respectful and caring ways. The students with disabilities were treated no differently and had a real sense of belonging in the room. All classrooms provide a safe caring environment for all students.

Friendships and socialization were encouraged within these active classrooms. Students were allowed to sit where they wanted and work

with whom they wanted. All three teachers were aware that sometimes simple proximity did not automatically promote friendships. When Sally organized her groups she would often specify who was to be in which group and assigned roles in the hope of including all students in positive interactions.

Dave was sensitive to the needs of his students and nurtured the friendship between John and Chris by allowing them to work on projects together. He was also concerned about Jill who was much more of a loner, but he respected this individual difference and took direction from her. She was always attentive and smiled a great deal and appeared content to be in the class. Her needs were being met and he was not pressured into putting his ideals of friendships and socialization on her. Clint allowed his class the freedom of socialization throughout the lesson. This extra activity allowed everyone many opportunities to interact with others.

A sense of community and belonging was possible with the leadership of these caring teachers who put forth continually effort to include all students in the classroom activities.

Classroom management and organizational skills

I will start by restating the teachers perceptions that "They did not do anything special for students with disabilities". A more accurate

account would be that the good classroom management and organizational skills I observed, provide a positive learning environment for all students.

All three teachers told me that they perceived their management style to be based on mutual respect. Once that was established, discipline did not seem to be an issue for them. Through established routines the students knew what to expect and precisely how to react at every point in the lessons.

All three classrooms were highly structured and organized to provide optimal student participation through active learning and maximize time on task. All instructional activity was organized to actively engage all students in the lesson's objectives.

It was remarkable how similar their individual styles were. They all used the the initial phrase "ladies and gentleman", then Sally with her hands behind her back, Dave standing tall and straight and putting on his glasses and Clint, resting on the overhead with glasses in hand, would wait for silence. These established routines worked again and again in each of the classrooms.

Not only were their management styles alike but within the organization of their day a striking similarity emerged. It began with polite greetings and an outline of the day. Next the expectations and goals of the day were clearly laid out and repeated. Next came whole class instructional with students actively taking part in questions and

discussions. The teachers would then review the lesson in point form and make sure students had enough information to proceed to their groups. The teachers would then go from group to group redirecting, prompting and giving lots of praise.

The teachers always wrapped up the lesson two or three minutes before the bell so that the homework assignment could be reviewed. There was always time for polite goodbyes and informal conversation. This format of a clear beginning, middle and end never varied on the days I observed.

Another quality that was displayed by all three teachers was a great sense of humour. Sally sometimes used gross exaggerations and encouraged laughter in her classes. Dave, was reserved and used dry humour which the students enjoyed and picked up on. Also it was not beneath him to have some fun with his students which was evident by his game of 'Simon Says'. Clint was easy going and used a good deal of gentle sarcasm which was thoroughly enjoyed by his students. They always laughed right along with him. The students all appreciated the teachers playfulness and attempts to connect.

Although their personalities were different they all managed their room with an underlying feeling of calmness. I never observed any of them getting flustered, angry or upset. The characteristic that marked all these management strategies was high awareness. No matter how relaxed they appeared to be, these teachers were making decisions every

minute. Who needed to be prompted? Who was falling behind? Is the pace too fast or slow? Is it time for eye contact, some humour, a break? The classes appeared well managed because the teachers were constantly evaluating student behaviours and making decisions based on them. This provided the flexibility within each class as the teachers responded to the students needs.

Active learning

Christenson, et al, (1998) suggested that quality and quantity of instruction and the degree to which an environment is constructively active can influence the educational experience of students with special needs.

The teachers all used a combination of traditional teaching practices sighted in the literature as being effect in integrating students with disabilities. However, each teacher built in an active learning component within each strategy they used. Each lesson was organized so that students were actively engaged in the lesson's objectives. Thus even a somewhat formal lecture, typically the least active of strategies, became examples of active learning. The teachers artfully built bridges between abstractions and students actual experiences. There is no way to codify these strategies, except to say that when each teacher used a traditional strategy they actively engaged the class by finding or creating connections between the student's own lives and the aims of the lesson.

Once again, although the teachers thought they were doing nothing special, they were engaging in best teaching practice that current research supported.

Teaching Beyond the Curriculum

Another view that was shared by all the teachers was that all students needed to be able to problem solve and deal with real life situations. They all devoted a good part of their lesson looking critically at everyday situations.

Dave, believed that taking pride in your work was the greatest skill he could teach his students. He spent considerable time explaining to his students that the amount of effort and the feeling of accomplishment were more important than the factual content of an assignment. He told students he evaluated on effort and personal growth.

Clint worked on social skills and getting the students to take an interest in themselves, to feel good about themselves. He tried to get them to take responsibility for their own behaviour and guided rather than directed. As well, Sally, spent a good deal of her class discussion on the socialization and getting along with people. She constantly worked on students self-esteem and encouraged students to take chances and answer questions. She encouraged problem solving and never gave direct answers but prompted and redirected until students found answers for themselves.

Their teaching style was very conducive to facilitating students with disabilities. Factual information from the curriculum might be beyond them but they could relate to the majority of what went on in these classrooms because it involved everyday situation. Clint once said, "I enjoy the students from the special education program so much because I can throw away the curriculum and not feel guilty. I think all students need problem solving skill to get along in the real world." Because so much of each teachers day was spent on teaching beyond the curriculum the students with disability benefited immensely.

School supports

Although the support varied considerable in each classroom the teachers all agreed that support was necessary for the students to be successfully integrated. They all spoke highly of the paraprofessional and the resource/special education teachers. They saw the support as being vital to the students but did not see it as a support to them. Nor did they feel they needed help in programming or evaluating .

Sally did not have a para in her room and did not see it as a problem. The three students in her room received para support outside of her classroom for one to one instruction and review. She was aware that the resource teacher programed for the students in life skills areas and saw this as positive step in providing the students with a well rounded education.

Dave spoke very highly of his para and said, "I can not take all the credit for the success my students are having, the para is essential." Although the para was not an active participant in his room, she was available to the students for review and completing assignments outside of the regular classroom.

Clint worked actively with the para in his room who was an integral part of his room. He appreciated what she did, not only for students in special education but for all the students. One day he laughed and said, "Look at those kids, everyone would rather work with her than me!"

Both Dave and Clint had a high regard for the special education program in the school and said it was run efficiently by excellent teachers. They realized that the students needed community reference instruction and life skills which was offered by the special education program.

Implications

What was gathered from this study was that it was not so much what the teachers did (strategies) but what they thought (perceptions) that provided the successful integrations of students with disabilities. The teachers who had been nominated as being successful in integrating students with disabilities may not be practising state-of-the-art instructional techniques as defined by current research. The teachers in this study did not have any training in special education. There was also no indication that teachers modified or adapt lessons specifically for students with disabilities and yet their classrooms were active learning environments for all students.

Implications for future research should include more ethnographic studies, with researchers going into the field (the classroom) and observing first hand teachers successfully integrating students with disabilities in their classrooms. Studies should include more than one observer in more classrooms and over a longer period of time.

The implications then for future inservicing of classroom teacher is problematic. How does one go about teaching perceptions. Perhaps by breaking down the barriers set up by the teaching profession that special education students need special education teachers. The myth that specialty teachers have certain "tricks" or strategies that can be taught and that without these, classroom teachers cannot teach students with disabilities. Teaching specific strategies for specific students is not the

way to go. Differentiated instruction, which can span the continuum of all learners and meet individual needs may be an answer. Classroom teachers need to view their classrooms as learning environment that will provide equal access to instructional resources and allow opportunities for everyone to succeed. Teachers must be educated to think along the lines of the teachers observed in this study. "Kids are Kids", "Everyone can learn". We must break down the walls that surround students with disabilities that special education has so painstakingly built up.

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APPENDIX A**QUESTIONS FOR THE IN DEPTH INTERVIEW WITH CLASSROOM TEACHERS****Introduction**

As you are aware, your classroom has been nominated as a designated site to collect data from a teacher's perspective on Best Teaching Practices. This is meant to be an informal interview and additional comments are encouraged.

Personal Issues

- 1) How did you come to choose teaching as a career?
- 2) How long have you been teaching?
prompts - in what grades/subjects

Classroom Organization

- 1) Your room has been nominated as one which successfully integrates students with disabilities. Why do you think others have this perception?
prompt:
 - Why do you think integration is working successfully in your room?
 - What strategies do you find particularly useful in programming for your students with disabilities?
- 2) Can you give a specific example of how you might include a student with a disability in a particular lesson/assignment .

School Related

- 1) How does the planning process work for a student with disabilities in your school?

prompts:

Who is responsible for the I.E.P. (writing, implementing, evaluating)?

What supports are available to you and the students ?

General questions on integration

- 1) What skills do teachers need to teach a child with a disability?
- 2) What do you feel are the most important positive aspects of integration?

Additional Comments?

APPENDIX B

Headings used to sort data

Description of Schools.

- surrounding area
- organization of school day
- climate and culture of school
- School Administrators

Description of Teachers Classrooms

- physical description of Teachers
- physical description of classrooms
- program structure
- organization of materials
- climate and culture of room

Attitudes and Beliefs of Teachers

- on their profession
- on integration
- on discipline
- personality
- teaching style

Appendix B (con't)

Structure of Day

- expectations of students
- classroom management
- presentation of materials
- lesson organization and format

Students

- description of all students
- description of students with special needs
- behaviour and interactions of all students

Paraprofessional

- role in the classroom
- role with individual students

APPENDIX C

Classroom ecology coding used to develop a matrix:

1. sense of positiveness/climate
2. clearly stated learning goals
3. organization of instructional content
4. time allowed
5. instructional support
6. monitoring by teacher
7. monitoring by paraprofessional
8. time on task
9. routines establish
10. teacher feedback
11. student self-esteem
12. understanding of instruction
13. students' expectations and accountability
14. active teaching
15. direct instruction
16. whole class instruction
17. groups
18. clearly stated objectives
19. modification of instruction
20. responses to inappropriate behaviour
21. time for practice and review
22. redirection
23. critical thinking
24. praise

Appendix D 1

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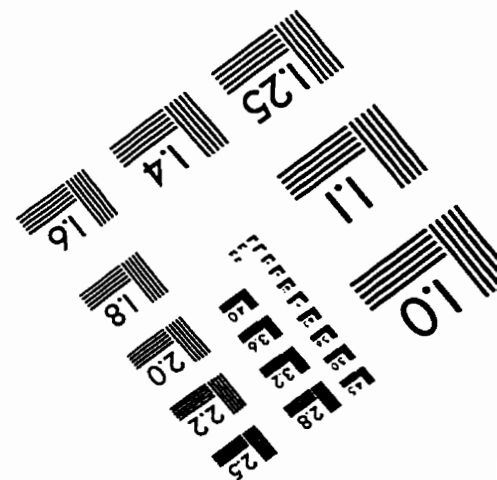
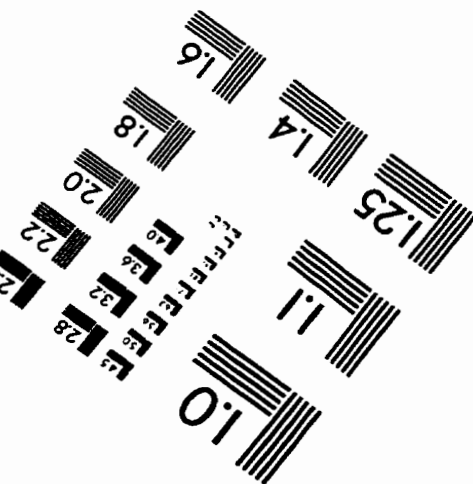
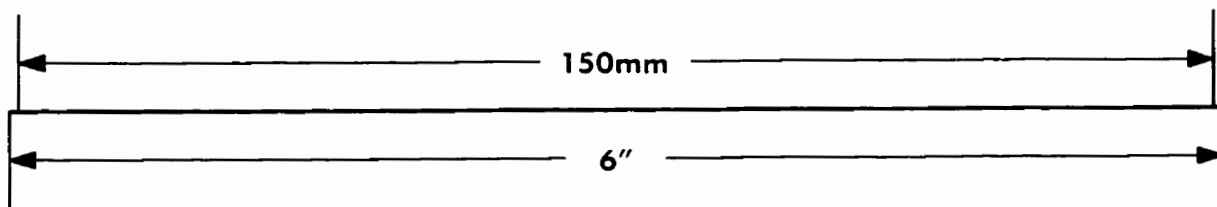
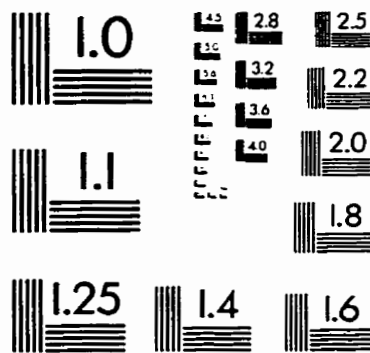
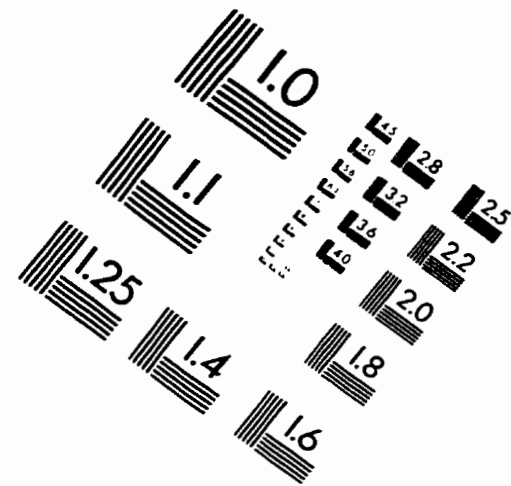
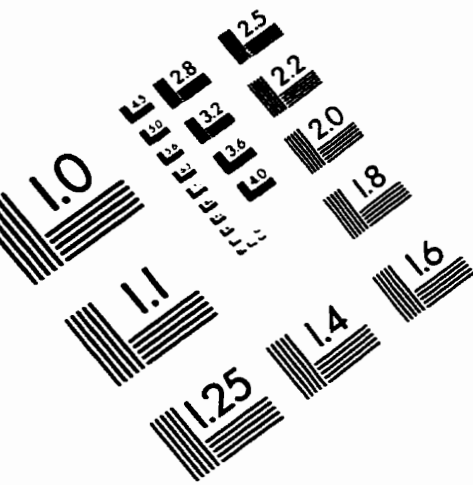
	constant 15x a day	often 10 x	occasionally 5 x	seldom 1x
Positive Climate	SC DB CB			
Clear Goals	SC DB CB			
Org Instruct	SC DB	CB		
Time Allowed	SC CB	DB		
Inst. Support	SC DB CB			
Monitoring T	SC CB	DB		
Monitoring P	CB			DB
Time on task	SC DB CB			
Routines	SC DB CB			
Feedback	SC CB	DB		
Self-esteem	SC DB CB			
Repeat	SC CB	DB		

Appendix D 2

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	constant 15+	often 10 +	occasionally 5 +	seldom 1+
Expectations	SC DB CB			
Active Teaching	SC DB CB			
Direct Instruct		CB	SC	DB
Whole Class	SC CB DB			
Groups	SC DB CB			
Objectives	SC CB DB			
Modifications				DB SC DB
Inappropriate B				SC DB CB
Practice	SC DB CB			
Redirection	SC CB DB			
Critical Thinking	SC DB CB			
Praise	SC CB DB			

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



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