

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

*Authentic assessment and the profile report --a drama  
communicator to student, parent, school administrator, and  
teacher*

by

David W. Normandale

A thesis  
submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree  
Master of Education

Curriculum: Humanities and Social Sciences

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**AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT AND THE PROFILE REPORT--  
A DRAMA COMMUNICATOR TO STUDENT, PARENT, SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR, AND TEACHER**

**BY**

**DAVID W. NORMANDALE**

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

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For enduring six years of part-time study, my thanks and my love to my family: Reena, Jason, and Robyn, and my two sets of parents -- Gerry and Verna Henry and Bill and Lilian Normandale.

Finally: to Company 305 -- the seventeen drama students at Transcona Collegiate Institute: you know who you are, even if your names have been changed. You are indeed:

*the determined, the dreamers,  
the leaders and the believers.*

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish a model for a system of reporting drama progress to students, parents, teachers, and administrators. This was done by using authentic assessment criteria such as observation of student behaviours by the teacher, the student, and peers, as well as interviews, performance samples, and work products to address the communication of skill development, progress, student strength and student weakness in drama.

One class of drama 305 students participated in this project as they worked toward the successful production of the play *Rehearsal for Murder*. During the rehearsal process, the students used personal assessment and peer assessment of the play's development to determine individual success. The teacher employed reflective reporting, assessment of activity, and other classroom techniques to contribute to the profile report, a compilation of assessments that was taken home every fifteen school days, and shared with the parents/guardians of the students.

Evaluation of the profile report was completed on five levels: the student, the teacher, the parent, and the school administration, present, and past. The response on all parts was highly favourable, with the students offering thoughts that the profile reports were welcomed highlights that assured them of things they were doing well, as well as pointing to

areas where additional work was needed. Students saw the possibility of transferring the profile report to subject areas other than drama, and wondered why the system could not be used there. Parental response was also positive, with parents appreciating the detailed feedback that the profile report provided.

The study indicated that a profile report for a course such as drama was not overly time-consuming, when compared to other paper-related work in courses such as English. The study also demonstrated that the profile report did assist in keeping the cast members on track, as well as bringing problems among the members of the Company to light before trouble could interfere with the production.

The evidence of the study suggests that the profile report was a strong motivator and supporter for the drama students, as well as providing insights for the teacher that would not have been shared in the more usual, common student/class assessment situations.

The results of this study suggest that the profile report holds a great deal of promise in arts-related programs -- drama, art, and music immediately come to mind. As well, there is reason to believe that the student, teacher, and parent would benefit from using the profile report in academic programming.



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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM

#### BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Whether it is a teaching tool, or a subject in its own right, drama is often misunderstood by the student, the parent, and the school administrator. It is often maligned by those "not in the trade" as an "easy credit", one that has little "real world" need. Part of that misunderstanding may come from the variety of assessment and reporting techniques used in drama programs.

Employment of drama as an instructional technique in a subject other than drama, or in the discipline itself, requires the establishment and use of fair and equitable assessment criteria. The catch, as Curwin (1976) suggests is that "...any one system of determining grades is biased because its goals and procedures are based upon the perceptual field of the teacher using it" (p. 141). No matter what the subject area, no matter who the teacher, there will be a degree of subjectivity that adheres to assessment and evaluation procedures.

Any form of assessment requires, therefore, a system of reporting that will provide information: to the student for reasons of continuous assessment; to the parent, for reasons of formative and summative reporting; to the administration of the school to meet the demands for "accountability", and to

the teacher, so that the program can be as effective as possible.

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is multi-faceted.

1. Can "authentic assessment" concepts, such as observation of student behaviours by the teacher, the student, and peers, as well as interviews, performance samples, and work products (Chittenden, 1990) address the communication of skill development, progress, student strength and student weakness in drama?
2. Can this system of assessment be drafted into a profile reporting system (Robinson, 1982, Brinson, 1982) which can be incorporated into a teacher's program?
3. What classroom procedures are necessary for profile reporting?
4. Will profile reporting based on authentic assessment techniques prove to be effective in a drama program?
5. What reaction will profile reporting generate among the people interested in the student's program?
6. Will authentic assessment and profile reporting prove to be too time-consuming for regular incorporation into a teacher's program?

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. *Assessment* refers to the system of determining grades for students "based on the goals and procedures founded on the perceptual field of the teacher using it" [Curwin, 1976]
2. *Authentic assessment* refers to concepts such as observation of student behaviours by the teacher, the student and peers, as well as interviews, performance samples, and work products [Chittenden, 1990], and includes negotiation between student and teacher [Bowers, 1987].
3. *Profile Report* refers to the instrument that allows for examining more than just the teacher perception of the student. A profile report ought to allow the teacher and the student the opportunity to discuss progress. It ought to allow the parent the opportunity of understanding what the program objectives are, and to what degree the student is meeting those objectives. It ought to provide the school administration with a profile, not only of the student, but also of the program. It ought to provide the teacher with a personal profile of each student's growth, so that the program can be evaluated and modified where necessary. This profile report must be based on authentic assessment evidence such as observation of student behaviours by the teacher, the student, and peers. It must be based on interviews, performance samples, and work products. The profile report must include explanations in as clear a form as possible for both the

both the student and the parent to understand the language and the intent of the report.

4. *Drama* refers to the program of studies identified as drama 105, drama 205, and drama 305 by the Manitoba Department of Education and Training, Curriculum Branch.

#### DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Although the profile report technique lends itself to the reporting of students' progress in many subject areas, this project was limited to drama.

2. One high school class at the drama 305 level was involved in the study. The class size was 17, made up of students in both grade eleven and twelve, but with the common factor that all had completed drama 105 and 205 in previous semesters. This could be a limitation on the ability to generalize the findings to other classes and grade levels.

3. The drama 305 class began its semester on February 01, 1993, and ended its semester work on June 14, 1993. That the class was semestered as opposed to being a year-long program could be a limitation.

4. Because the nature of the drama program at the grade XII level is highly active and performance-driven, no formal written tests were given.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The criterion of student anonymity as demanded by the University of Manitoba thesis study guidelines disallowed the use of video recording and audio recording tapes as part of the take home profile report. As a result, the use of audio recording was dropped, and video recording assessment occurred in a classroom situation where viewing time was often limited.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The profile report using authentic assessment may be the method that achieves the goals of continuous assessment for the student, formative and summative reporting for the parent, and "program accountability" for the administrator and for the teacher. The profile report at the high school level is not bound by the parameters of computer-based reporting, where a certain number generates a simple one sentence response, or where a simple number or letter grade is selected with little or no accompanying rationale.

This study will provide a model for teachers of drama for the introduction of an authentic assessment profile reporting system. As well, this study will provide a chart showing exactly how much time was used on the computer to create the parts of the profile report. My total time will be an estimate to others interested in implementation.



Finally, as I indicated in the abstract, I can see no reason why this authentic assessment profile report cannot be applied, either in whole or in part, in other subject areas, as well.

#### PLAN OF THE STUDY

This thesis is divided into six chapters. In Chapter II, an examination of literature pertaining to drama offers the historical perspective of the changing face of drama in the classroom: how it has been taught, and how it has been assessed. Chapter III provides an overview of the course used in the study -- drama 305, with emphasis on the goals and objectives of that course as outlined by the Manitoba Department of Education and Training. Chapter III augments this, providing a brief description of the methodology used in the classroom, and how the profile report data was collected. In Chapter IV, the component parts of the profile report are described, while Chapter V examines the evaluation of the procedures used in the study. Chapter VI draws conclusions and suggests implications.

## CHAPTER II

### RELATED LITERATURE

Although the drama curriculum in Manitoba *per se* dates from 1989<sup>1</sup>, much of what is presented as drama in Canadian schools is based on the work of British theorists and practitioners such as Brian Way, Dorothy Heathcote, and Gavin Bolton, all of whom were influenced by the theories of [Sir] Peter Slade, who published his first work in the early 1950's. Further, there is much to be learned from the English and drama classes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in various countries, for it is to this heritage that at least parts of the current Canadian dramatic arts programs owe their roots.

Mersand (1969) attempts to "...record historically the various ways in which the drama was taught in American secondary schools, as suggested in books of methodology" [p. iii]. It appears that during the late nineteenth century, 'drama' in American education was interpreted as a literary study of plays. Mersand identifies the work of Professor Brainerd Kellogg, who presented his "Plan of Study for 'Perfect Possession'" [1882] which said in part that "The

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<sup>1</sup> This is not to suggest that drama was not taught for credit in Manitoba schools prior to 1989, because it was. The course was designated as 205, with a content that leaned heavily to the theatrical side of drama, with the end product of the performance being paramount. The course was teacher-directed, in that "we did what we wanted to do, with activities and work leading to a production," as one high school teacher who remembers, says.

student ought, first of all, to read the play as pleasure; then read it over again, with his mind upon the characters and the plot; and lastly, to read it for meanings, grammar, etc." [p. 7].

Mersand summarizes Kellogg's 'Plan of Study' as being "...obviously for the student who reads. Nothing is said about the student as interpreter or as a member of an audience seeing a play" [p. 9].

The interpretation of what drama was did not, unfortunately, shift with the century. The definition of 'play study' appears in 1903, with Mersand's identification of "Franklin T. Baker, founder of the Department of Teaching of English at Teachers College, Columbia University" [p. 14] stating:

Free discussion, taking in all parts of the play, should be encouraged. It is essential that pupils should read carefully, know clearly the meanings of the sentences, and learn to bring the interpretation of one part of the play what they have found in another. In the drama as in other forms of poetry, the beauties of individual passages should be noted [p. 14].

However, one of the first hints of a new definition for drama comes from Chubb (1912), who recognized the importance of the imagination of the child:

And, in passing, the temperate encouragement of the dramatizing instinct of the children may be commended, as

tending to develop the imagination, the inventiveness, and the language of the child. Children love to act their fairy stories; to represent the town mouse and the country mouse, the Three Little Pigs, etc. These are the first attempts to convert indirect to direct quotation. It is needless to add that games, especially the old singing games, afford another indirect means of developing the linguistic, and especially the dramatic and mimetic, sense [p. 53].

It would appear that Chubb is suggesting to teachers of elementary schools that improvised presentations of children's stories be encouraged, not only for the speech benefits, but also for the recognition of the importance of the imaginary world that children bring to the class room. In fact, Chubb suggests that children live in two worlds:

...it must be borne in mind that the child is a denizen of two worlds, --the so-called real world of his prosaic elders, and the more vitally real world of fairy land, wonderland, make-believe, through-the-looking glass, or what you will. He is trying to find himself, and must be helped to find himself, in these two worlds; the imperious, unyielding, law-ridden, yet fascinating and wonderful world of fact; the ideal, play-world of art. He has both something of the curiosity and scepticism of the scientist, and the creative, imaginative impulse of the artist. He makes his own world of fairy; and

although he recognizes more and more that it is not a real, but a make-believe palace of pleasure, he remains in it because it allows him scope for his powers. These two worlds stand apart at first...In the end these two worlds of science and poetry of fact and imagination, must be reconciled; but at first they stand apart. In one sense the world of make-believe is as real, indeed more real, than its sister-world. Their world peopled by Jack, Crusoe, Alice, Mowgli, is as real as the world peopled for us grown-ups by Romeo and Juliet, Rosalind, Prospero, Miranda, Colombe. It must be used so as to develop the ethical and aesthetic content implied in the relations established between the people who inhabit it [p. 54-55].

Chubb goes further, telling his intended audience of English teachers in both elementary and secondary schools that:

It is a mistake, often made, to press one world upon the child at the expense of the other. The realists spend their energies almost exclusively upon the attempt to relate the child to the actual world about him. Undoubtedly...he is greatly interested in that world. Nevertheless it is, to begin with, a shadow world that pales before the dramatic reality his world of make-believe. His heart is not in it, his imagination is not in it, as they are in his world apart; he generally

concerns himself with it as the home of fairy powers, investing its objects, its animals, and living things with the humanized, fairy life of his creative, idealizing fancy. We may the better do justice to this world of make-believe if we recognize it as the art-world of his elders...Not therefore to cancel this real world of poetry, but to establish it in right and consistent relation to the other real world of science, must be our educational aim [p. 55-56].

Chubb even provides an, albeit brief, 'how-to-do-drama' section:

First, we shall call for an outline or synopsis of the scenes to reveal the plot. This must be done with utmost brevity in terms of what happens, of action. So we shall develop insight into the first essential of dramatic art: that it is concerned with what men do under the stress of temptation, struggle, [and] opportunity. And so we may bring out the differentiae of the drama as compared with the epic, the novel, the short story.

Our second reading, by the class, calling for the memorizing and presentation of selected scene by the students, will be an exercise in interpretation, and will involve the clearing up of such difficulties in metrics, in words, constructions, and allusions, as stand in the way of such oral rendering and interpretation. This

should be our practical test: Do we understand? [p. 289].

Although Chubb calls for the use of "memorizing and presentation", it is interesting that he identifies the process as an "exercise in interpretation". Despite this, Chubb also warns of the danger of drama interpretation:

The plot may be diagrammed, as we have already suggested, by means of the pyramidal figures employed by Freytag; and there may be a close study of the act and scene structure, the subtle, dramatic patterning of the play. The study in this respect, also in supreme interest, -- the character development of Lady Macbeth,--may easily lead the enthusiastic teacher into depths beyond the reaches of youthful souls. We must be on our guard against this, and feel our way with tact, suggesting rather than grappling with the ultimate ethical issues involved [pp. 312-313].

The reference to Freytag is interesting: this German author provided a guide to acting in the late nineteenth century. Enthusiastic teachers of the period were probably no different from enthusiastic teachers of today: if something new is working, if the children are learning, then it will be continued and explored further. Chubb is the earliest educator I have found so far who speaks of drama outside the play-reading style of learning, but unfortunately, he is also the first of a long line of drama writers who does not

indicate any particular method of assessing what students in drama had accomplished.

Mersand's [1969] exploration of the first two decades of the twentieth century brings to light the work of Charles Thomas, teaching at Harvard University in 1917 [pp. 27-31]. An examination of Thomas's work proved to be fruitful. A 1927 reprint of Thomas's 1917 work is aimed specifically at the English teacher in the secondary school, Thomas's recommendations pertaining to drama are found not in the methodology section, but in sections marked "Questions and Interpretative Comments". His first such reads:

The classroom dramatization of scenes from the books studied aids greatly in heightening appreciation of literature, especially in the earlier years of the high school. If possible, let the pupils arrange their own forms of dramatization, as they are well able to do in connection with books such as *Treasure Island*, *Silas Marner*, *Kidnapped*, *A Tale of Two Cities*--in fact, almost all of the novels usually read in the ninth and tenth grades [p. 278].

Of particular note in this section is Thomas's use of *...If possible, let the pupils arrange their own forms of dramatization*, as well as the recognition of the fact that *...they are well able to do such*. Thomas's next statement, however, suggests that interest in drama in America since the



days of Chubb had in fact, increased in its attractiveness to teachers:

If it does not seem feasible to depend on the initiative of the pupils, excellent forms of dramatization of scenes from the classics may be found in *Literature Dramatized*, by Mildred Allen Butler. Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1926 [p. 278].

That this statement occurs in the reprinted version is, I think, of critical importance. The reference to Butler's work, published in 1926, indicates that there has been a need for textual material pertaining to drama for the classroom, otherwise why would the book be published? It may be that this book is simply a collection of plays based on literature being studied at the time; it may also be that this book is more than that. It would also be of great interest to discover if the original statement about class room dramatization is found in the 1917 text. Further searches are imperative in these two areas.

Thomas continues with his recommendations in what is sounding suspiciously like creative dramatics:

If *The Tempest* is being read, scarcely anything could be better than to get three of the boys to act out the drunken scene of Stephano, Trinculo, and Caliban. Until it is pointed out by the teacher few realize the humour in the Stephano-Caliban head-by-foot arrangement under the gabardine. Dramatic presentation of that scene

before the class is an uproarious farce that cheers everybody [p. 296].

Thomas's suggestion is asking that students draw on experience, probably vicarious, but -- to act in a drunken manner. Although creative dramatics has been credited to Winnifred Ward for "its principles, techniques, and popularity" [Popovich, 1955, in Siks, 1961, p. 123] and defined [Rosenberg, 1987, and others] as being drama without the use of script, it is also based on experience: real or vicarious. Thomas's suggestion for dramatizing part of *The Tempest* obviously falls into part of that definition.

An interesting comment from Thomas pertaining to dramatization relates to both junior high and high school, where Thomas, possibly rhetorically, suggests that dramatization actually replace textual study:

In the junior high school the study of Shakespeare, according to Miss Sarah E. Simons (*English Problems in the Solving*, pp 212-21) is designed to create a love of the poet and arouse a desire to learn the lines, to act out the parts, and to see the play acted when possible. No text study should be made; obscure passages should be cleared up, and strange words and allusions explained by the teacher. The plays should be read aloud in class in character, the teacher often taking part. Much memorizing should be done and frequent classroom dramatizations should be given:

In the senior high school the pupils should dramatize the age of Shakespeare. A form of dramatization based on Alfred Noyes's *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern* and Louise B. Chancellor's *The Players of London* is suggested. Many classes will be interested in reading Clement Dane's drama, *Will Shakespeare*. Teachers should exert every effort to make the scenes and places in Shakespeare's life and plays living realities to the pupils. The textual study should be reduced to the minimum amount of almost nothing, and the time usually devoted to this spent on memorizing lines significant lines and reciting them in character [pp. 307-308].

At first glance, the suggestions seem to focus upon the memorization of lines, yet this is not exactly accurate. *Frequent classroom dramatizations* are recommended for junior high, while in senior high, it is suggested that *the age of Shakespeare* [emphasis mine: DWN] be dramatized. As well, Thomas suggests that "a form of dramatization be based on" works of authors other than Shakespeare. I suggest that this is a rhetorical proposal, one that Thomas probably wouldn't have expected to be attempted in high school, because he ends this section with the question: "How practical do you consider this method? [p.308]" Unfortunately, Thomas doesn't provide any suggested answer, nor does he address the assessment or evaluation of the dramatizations that he does recommend.

However, five years after Thomas' work of 1917, exciting things that must be classified as 'creative dramatics' appear in a book for teachers. Written by Sterling Andrus Leonard, the text speaks to intermediate and high school teachers on the importance of drama in the classroom.

Before examining Leonard's ideas, though, it is important to look at the period in a more general sense. The first twenty years of the twentieth century have become recognized as the period where the ideas of John Dewey came to the notice of American educators, and to the fore of American education. Dewey focused on the education of the whole child, that learning could be considered as an experience, because, as Kliebard notes as recently as 1986:

The child...lives in a world of immediate and direct experiences, and Dewey elaborated on what these basic factors implied when the course of study was considered... The key...is the concept of experience...Dewey was constructing a continuum of experience, and it was the function of the course of study to move along that line from one defining point, the immediate, the chaotic, but integral experience of the child, to the other defining point, theologically organized, abstract, and classified experience of the mature adult [p. 83-84].

Dewey's philosophy was adopted by a number of others, notably William Kilpatrick, who in 1917, released a paper:

...summarising the features of a recently developed educational method known as a project. It was an activity based on pupils' interests and undertaken with them with a firm purpose of broadening their experience and learning something seen by them to be worth the pursuit [Connell, 1980, p. 283].

The work of these two men [Dewey and Kilpatrick] grew into what became known as the 'progressive education movement', and it has been recognized as a time of child-centred education, a time where new ideas of methodology were developed and tried. Thomas's statements in 1927 about reduction of textual study would certainly be considered heretical in some circles, but not in the progressive camp, for progressive educators spoke out against endless drill and mindless study:

As to...drill, that of ordinary repetition of what one can already do, several things have to be said. First...repetition helps (within limits) to strengthen the learning. However it also appears that mere repetition...without knowledge of how well one is succeeding, will not teach. One must at least know how well one is succeeding, and, apparently, must have at least some will to learn. Second...the more one is concerned to learn...the quicker and stronger the learning...and...the less of drill is necessary. Third, ...the more one already knows about the matter being

learned,...the easier and quicker is the learning, the less of mere drill is necessary [Rugg, 1939, p. 374].

Thomas's ideas appear to have a progressive slant to them [No text study should be made...plays should be read aloud in class in character, the teacher often taking part...]; they also reflect Kilpatrick's project method, in that Thomas is calling for group activities within the class, and that these activities draw from a number of sources, including the student's own experiences.

Sterling Leonard's work comes five years after the publication of Kilpatrick's *The Project Method*: much of the material pertaining to dramatization of stories suggests a collective creation approach, an obvious 'project method', and, just as obviously, Leonard's ideas reflect the philosophy of John Dewey, with repeated references to "children's own expression". Leonard warns teachers not to impose their own standards upon the children's work, and to let the children provide the stimulus, and the criticism. Leonard begins his comments this way:

Naturally one of the best ways of seeing that children have...imaginative power, and of helping them develop it, is their dramatic reading or dramatization of good narrative conversation. This must in no case be a dramatization by the teacher, in which the pupils do as he directs, speak after his inflections, and arrange their groupings and gestures at his dictation.

*Dramatization that is real and valuable must be in every case the children's own expression of what they see and hear and feel in reading the story.* [emphasis mine: DWN] The crude and often absurd conception which a pupil expresses will be improved by the criticisms of other pupils who see the thing differently, and by that of the teacher, who may know better the purpose of the author and the life he presents [p. 289].

Leonard recognizes that a stage performance is often a part of a school's life; even at that, he places the importance of the children's interpretation ahead of all else:

...where a class is planning to give a dramatization for the whole school in assembly or for another class whom they entertain, they will certainly want to make it the best they are collectively capable of. *But the teacher here must take the greatest pains to see that his anxiety for a good appearance and for meeting the demands of supervisors and parents does not influence him to impose their standards or his own, to the cramping and distorting of the child's free expression of a story as they see it.* [emphasis mine: DWN] The teacher or director should not, I think, do more than question: "Is that the way Feathertop would say that? He was supposed to be very stupid, wasn't he?" or "How do you think he would walk?"...He can thus draw out the best interpretations the class are capable of making...and

help them to all available information on the subject [289-290].

This questioning technique suggested by Leonard to assist the children in character development of *Feathertop* is not only child-centred, but it is also similar to side coaching in the manner of Spolin [1963], or even the developmental drama technique of Way [1968], or Bolton's [1979] questioning technique.

Leonard's focus on the child's expression is for the educational benefit to the child, and he goes so far as to suggest which child ought to get which part in a story dramatization:

...we must also remember that the chief good of really "educational dramatics" is the development in interpretation and expression of individual children. We can make a genuine contribution to the social ideas of our pupils if we help them in choosing, not always the best person for a given part, but the one who promises most personal growth in his attempt to portray it adequately. Above all, the whole preparation and performance must represent, not the teacher's ideas--even of social organization or growth--but the pupil's best expression of the story and of themselves. Otherwise the dramatization loses educational significance and becomes merely an affair of marionettes upon jerked wires [p. 290].



Improvisation of story drama goes beyond, according to Leonard, just having the children become the characters, and speak the parts. He also is very strong in his support of puppets:

...the advantage of the puppet is in a greater unconsciousness of self when the attention of the spectators is presumably centred on the dolls and oblivious of their managers [p. 292].

and pantomime:

Most of the stories children read aloud can be thrown into some sort of dramatic form; perhaps one child may be the "The Book" and read whatever is not in quotation marks; better, the characters may supply by action and voice what the "book" tells. So soon as a story has been repeated a time or two in this way, it can be done independently of the text, and will of course gain in vivacity and spontaneity by this, provided its repetition is not a mere requirement, but a pleasure to the children themselves, and provided intelligent variations from the book wording are always encouraged [p. 294].

Here, Thomas is proposing that once the story is established, a form of story theatre be attempted: one student reads "whatever is not in quotation marks" while the others, no doubt, perform the actions, until it is time for them to speak. It is also interesting to note the encouragement of

changes in wording: memorization of script is not a requirement, nor is a dependency on the script.

For what may be the first time, an assessment technique of the dramatization is suggested: that it is now known as "reflection" (Bolton [1979], Linnell [1985], Rosenberg [1987], and others) and a key to creative dramatics, definitely provides even more suggestion that the root of creative dramatics is in the progressive movement. Leonard describes in detail a third grade class's:

...lesson in dramatization. It was carried out in June, 1916, at a public school in Milwaukee, under the direction of Miss Josephine Maloney, now of the Milwaukee State Normal training school. All but three or four pupils were of foreign parentage. They had not previously dramatized this story, but had read it. The specially commendable features of this play are: the method of choosing characters, so that each child voiced not his own qualifications, but those of someone else; the complete simplicity of setting--just what was on hand, with no costumes or properties save coats and hats and pointers; and the freedom from fixed wording, so that each actor interpolated or changed as he liked, subject, no doubt, to the criticism of the rest of the class. *The lesson would have been a more satisfactory illustration if it had shown more of the frank criticism and discussion of various opinions that occurred in the*

*same class at other times. The choices of characters and interpretations of the scenes were subject often of differences of opinion and considerable discussion.*  
[emphasis mine: DWN] Such a lesson does more literature teaching than any amount of study of words or constructions...[294]

At this point, Leonard shifts his attention from the "intermediate grades" to the high school. There is a definite change in tone, with the suggestion that:

...the limitations of this method [dramatization] must be clearly noted and respected. It should be obvious that only dramatic narrative can be thus presented. A clever satire on 'teaching devices' pictures one hobbyist as requiring a dramatization of Wordsworth's *Daffodils*; this reduces the idea to acute absurdity. But almost as false attempts have been made in real classrooms that I have known. Whatever has dramatic quality that children can in some fashion express is grist for this particular mill [p. 302].

However, he does not state that dramatization should not be attempted at the senior high, but that it ought to be done with careful attention to material.

Sterling Leonard saw the obvious educational benefits to the child in doing drama:

All children enjoy this dramatic expression. They find most delightful the opportunity to put into a living and

breathing shape stories they enjoy and have somewhat dimly seen in imagination [p. 331].

and

The values of such readings and of the assembly dramatizations do not need special emphasis. Of course much is gained in helping poor and dim enunciation and getting away from dull monotony of utterance. The continuing lack of self-consciousness, where pupils are caught early enough, is also most pleasing. The whole matter of oral reading becomes at once, and for good, a different, a real thing [pp. 331-332].

as well as "...Naturally the one gain that stands out as most important in the teaching of literature is the power of realizing what is read" [p. 332].

Leonard also goes further than that, saying that although the changes in diction, in enunciation, and comprehension of what is read is important, there is something else that has much more worth:

The most significant value of dramatization, however, is above and beyond these specific results, and perhaps beyond the achievement of significant experience which we have set as the benefit of all excellent literature: It is a freeing from the ordinary cramping and narrowing inhibitions which prevent or pervert our expression of the best that is in us. We grow out of the happy unconsciousness of the very little child into a miserably

constant awareness, in the period of youth, of forms and modes and patterns and restraints. Many children become so self-conscious that they often suffer grievously. It takes expert guidance to lead them out of this knot or tangle to such mastery of necessary conventions as makes unconsciousness again possible, along with real power of expression. Dramatic work of the sort we have been considering has, probably more than any other agency, the possibility of creating such interest in various modes of expression, and in various ideas and characteristics to express, that self-consciousness and the restraints of ordinary, painful social expression are forgotten...So soon as children get this interest and take part, even a very minor part, in such development, they have achieved a liberation which they need never surrender [p.333].

Leonard's final statement about the value of drama in the classroom places him, although some 32 years previous, squarely in the creative drama camp that is thought to have developed in Britain as a result of Slade's [1954] work in child's drama:

Dramatizations, too, furnish about the best situations for such living expression and confirmation of social ideals...such experiences...may be aided to grow into intelligent cooperation on more serious and mature problems in high school and after. They make advancement possible. Good constructive criticism without

personality and intrusiveness, ability to take criticism well, hearty sharing in working and reworking are essential in a well ordered society, and we have done little toward developing them in schools. Indeed, immense advances might be made in education or in democratic society if we should all adopt such an attitude and spirit in our adult committees and discussions [pp. 333-334].

The work of Sterling Andrus Leonard needs much further research and examination; this is a historical source for drama in today's classroom that has just been superficially tapped.

The 1930s, says Rosenberg (1987) was "... the official beginning of the field" [pp. 19-20] of creative dramatics, due to the work of "Winnifred Ward [who] had begun experimenting with creative drama in the 1920s" [p. 26]. Rosenberg adds the belief that the publication of Ward's text *Creative Dramatics* in 1930 was a creative dramatics 'landmark' [p. 26]. Ward's influence cannot be denied. Rosenberg suggests that she is now known as "the mother of creative drama in America... [because Ward] ...was the first to establish creative drama as a field apart from formal theatricals with children" [p. 26].

Because many teachers continued to use drama in the classroom, either formally or otherwise, Dakin (1937) offers beginning teachers of English a number of situations where drama can be incorporated often into the lesson of the day,

even if it be as mundane as a lesson on punctuation. Dakin recommends that clippings from newspapers be used as a source reference to which the students can readily relate:

Here, for instance, is one clipped a few days ago from a daily paper: 'A guardsman on duty along the San Francisco waterfront challenged a trespasser who attempted to seize his rifle'. What exactly is the situation here? If one were to dramatize this little bit of action, when would he have the trespasser attempt to seize the guardsman's rifle? Do this sort of thing often, so that the pupil uses or omits punctuation points advisedly [p. 108].

Dakin proposes that drama should be used often in the classroom, because of its nature, and what it reveals:

Real, living human beings, who, by their acts and words, portray a mood, reveal a crisis, re-create a period, vivify history, expound a thesis --that is drama, close indeed, as its history bears witness, to the life experiences of our race. Particularly significant should it be to your pupils in their quest for new experience and understanding; lead them gladly toward this interpretation of human emotion [p. 260].

Dakin also steps away from the traditional approach to plays as literature by suggesting that:

Any play that you select should always be taught from the *acting* point of view; that is, your students should

visualize it, trying to think of it as if it were before them on the stage, rather than regarding it as a piece of literature, to be read, or, worse, to be studied. Because visualizing the written word requires imagination on the part of the reader, drama presents certain difficulties. But because it is so alive, it may become the favourite reading with your group [p. 261].

As a methodology of introducing the play to be studied, Dakin claims that a dramatized scene has no equal:

Your first duty, then, is to arouse the imagination of your group. You should introduce the study of any Shakespearean play by reading with your students the first scene or two by a bit of dramatization. A few days before you plan to begin the reading of *Macbeth*, for example, call aside three girls with dramatic ability, and with your help, let them plan and present before the class the witches' scene, in which Shakespeare strikes the keynote of the play. After this introduction, your group will want to read the play [p. 261].

Not only does dramatization work as the 'hook' to get the students interested in the play, but so will improvised dramatization aid in comprehension:

Because visualization is so important in reading plays, class dramatizations have a definite place in your teaching procedure. Frequently, perhaps after each act, select a significant scene or scenes and assign parts in



them to your pupils. *These need not be memorized-- probably should not-- but they must be read aloud until the student can read his part easily. By an arrangement of chairs, some suggestion of stage setting may be made.* [emphasis mine: DWN] Action should be introduced, exits and entrances properly planned. A scarf, a handkerchief, an apron may suggest the grace of an Ophelia or the age of a Casca. This will be fun, but it should be more than that. In other words, you should try, by some means or other, to get your group to give it adequate preparation; otherwise, you will obtain a halting, stumbling performance far from being an aid to visualizing the scene. If you are employing the contract method, you may well include dramatization as a part of it [264].

A final recommendation from Dakin with regard to Shakespeare is to be careful if *Romeo and Juliet* is used as a text, and if a dramatic re-creation is employed:

...adolescents often turn from a representation of emotions which they themselves are experiencing. The tragic ending to romantic love as shown in this play fortunately lies beyond the knowledge of most high school boys and girls, but the emotion itself is one of which they are becoming conscious. Some groups (but certainly not all) may want to re-create this experience of romantic love. To such as these the lines from the famous balcony scene will give pure pleasure:...Pearls

indeed are these; take heed lest you cast them to be trampled on [p. 273].

As a short story study technique, Dakin offers the concept of re-writing the story into a "playlet", and having the students show the best in class [p. 294].

At no time, however, does Dakin [1937] offer her beginning teachers an idea on how to evaluate or assess the work that the students do in these dramatizations -- a classroom situation that becomes more and more common as the years tick by into the thirties and forties.

Rosenberg (1987) states that "[Winnifred] Ward's approach to drama became the model for the next two decades (1930-1950)" [pp. 19-20] with a program based heavily on story drama. By using material such as the tale of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* -- Ward could explore pantomimed movement in forests, animal behaviour, and so on, with the children responding to leading questions about what the forest is like, or how bears move [p. 26].

Rosenberg (1987) sums up Ward's approach:

Although personal experiences are part of the early work in the Ward approach, individuals turn aside their personal desires as they become part of a group enactment of a story, legend, or fable. While the Ward approach teaches specific drama skills, the overall thrust of the method is the affective and social growth of the participants [p. 27].

Such an approach would suggest that, if the main goal is "affective and social growth", then shortly after they performed each of the day's activities, assessment and evaluation would be immediate to the students: how the scenes looked and how the characters moved, are probable discussion points. It is possible that reflection from the children may have occurred; it is definite that there would be teacher reflection to the children. It would be interesting to discover if Ward, or any of her disciples and followers who used this style of drama in their schools, had to provide a report card mark to show progress to the parents of the children in the classes, or whether the drama was considered to be part of the English program, and included in the mark for that course.

The 1950s brought the work of Peter Slade from Britain to the shores of America, and then to its classrooms. Calling his work *child drama*, Slade based his theories on over 20 years of observation of children at play:

Play is an inborn and vital part of young life. It is not an activity of idleness, but is rather the child's way of thinking, proving, relaxing, working, remembering, daring, testing, creating, and absorbing. It is, in fact, life. The best child play takes place only where opportunity and encouragement are consciously given to it by an adult mind. This is the process of nurturing and is not the same as interfering [1958, p. 1].

Slade goes further, saying that "...in this child play, there are moments of such clear characterization and emotional situation that a further term has arisen: dramatic play" [1958, p. 2].

It would appear that Slade's theories being accepted in Britain as they were that led to some of the problems that later developed pertaining to assessment and evaluation, because Slade offers as criteria for drama, with children of all ages, such amorphous and difficult to spot gauges and standards as "...sincerity, absorption, surety, robust outflow of verbal expression, sensitivity, recognition and variation of mood, attunement to situation, conscious joy in movement and rhythm, believability" [1958, p. 75].

As do the American progressive educators of the 1920s and 1930s, Slade recognizes the benefits to the child in the manner in which speech occurs; unfortunately again, there is little suggested that can be equitably assessed or evaluated, as Slade offers "...clarity, sincerity, good flow of language, joy in the sound, contrast and mood" [1958, p. 75].

Slade adds to the difficulty in assessment with such flowery, philosophical statements as:

...suffice it to say that Child Drama aids young individuals to discover peace and confidence for themselves and share it with others, to become open and loyal, and to do a good job of work. Grown-ups find peace too, and discover new realms of expression. It is

necessary to aid them into confidence, for so many of us are ashamed of beauty. We seem to think it should be put away with other childish things. But it is an adult thing, too, only with adults, it is more conscious. It belongs to the deepest forms of civilization and imparts sincerity to our being. At least let us see that succeeding generations do not suffer from our own self-consciousness. We miss so much [1958, p. 81].

One of Slade's final comments to teachers is that they are actually not to teach, but to "...guide and nurture; ...too, [the teacher] has to be a creative artist, constantly ready to offer aid if needed" [1958, p. 84].

The year 1958 saw the arrival of Geraldine Brain Siks on the drama scene in America. Heavily influenced by the story-related methodology of Ward, her examination of creative dramatics as being an "art for children" provided teachers with all sorts of activities and ideas for inclusion in their classrooms. Assessment is not mentioned by Siks at this time, although it does show up in a fourth edition of the book, some 25 years later. Evaluation in the 1950s is composed primarily of reflection after the completion of an exercise:

After playing has been praised a leader guides children to evaluate playing. An evaluation looks at strong values and points out a specific way in which expression may be strengthened....after each playing the leader focuses evaluation on the specific drama goal the

children were striving for in their playing [1958, p. 231].

At no time does Siks suggest any form of evaluative system for parental information.

Another American drama educator of this period is Nellie McCaslin (1968) who identifies evaluation as being "an important aspect of creative dramatics, and leads into the re-playing, which should acquire new depth and richer detail" [p. 94]. Despite this emphasis, she provides no suggestion as to how to do it, nor does she make mention of going any further with evaluation as a means of reporting progress to parents.

The 1960s and 1970s resulted in a "British invasion" in the field of drama in education. Building on the work of Slade, Brian Way [1967] introduced his "developmental drama"; Dorothy Heathcote [1976] introduced drama as a learning medium, specifically *the mantle of the expert*; and Gavin Bolton [1979], built upon, and branched away from the work of all three: Slade, Way, and Heathcote.

Again, drama is focused on the development of the child, with little emphasis upon determining the educational benefit to the child in a manner which would explain to others outside the drama world just what was going on in the program.

It is in these two decades of the 1960s and 1970s that opponents of child drama, as part of the progressive school movement, become vocal, especially in Great Britain, where the Black Papers were released:

The Black Papers which appeared first in 1969 and then periodically during the 1970s expressed a growing unrest among some politicians and employers with the whole progressive movement. They argued that progressive teaching styles were contributing to a decline in 'basic' skills of literacy and numeracy, to a fall in academic standards, and to an apparent erosion of moral standards among young people. Academic rigour seemed to them to be being replaced with a general attitude of laissez-faire in schools. Through association with progressive teaching and 'self-expression', drama teaching was among the many activities to attract such criticisms [Robinson, 1983, p. 9].

The contributors of the Black Papers were brutal in their attacks upon the progressive educational system in Britain at the time, and particularly brutal in their attacks on the arts programs, of which drama was a key part.

...the conquest of the public imagination by the arts, by 'art as a way of life', has reinforced the natural resistance of the mind to ordinary logic, order, and precision, without replacing these with any strong dose of artistic logic, order and precision. The arts have simply given universal warrant for the offbeat, the unintelligible, the defiant without purpose. The schools have soaked up this heady brew. Anything new, obscure, implausible, self-willed is worth trying out, is an

educational experiment. As such it is validated by both science and art. Soon the pupil comes to think that anything unformed, obscure, slovenly he may do is validated by art's contempt for tradition, correctness, and sense [Barzun in Cox, 1971, p. 96].

It was also in the 1960s that the number of 'how-to-do-drama' books, begun by Slade in 1954, increased in quantity and availability. Representative of the messages presented is that of Pemberton-Billing and Clegg [1965]:

Child drama is a creative activity and, as such, fulfils the normal function of all creative activity; it provides a medium through which the individual can express his ideas -- his reactions to the impressions he receives--and, by expressing them, learn to evaluate them. By this process, vague impressions are brought into sharp focus, puzzling impressions are understood, fragmentary ones are completed and alarming ones are faced so that fear is overcome. This use of the creative arts makes us examine what we are thinking and feeling. Imaginative observation is stimulated and our understanding of ourselves and the world around us is extended and deepened [p. 17].

Evernden (1965) typically supports the creative dramatic approach:

In areas and schools where drama has had a fair trial, it has appeared that the subject has in fact helped children



to become articulate and self-reliant, more at peace with themselves and better adjusted to society [foreword in Pemberton-Billing and Clegg, 1965].

In a very typical way, Evernden couches his beliefs in careful terms: *...where drama has had a fair trial and ...it has appeared that the subject has in fact helped children.* It would be questionable if Evernden, or Clegg, or Pemberton-Billing could actually prove the claims of articulation, self-reliance, achieving greater inner peace, or becoming *better adjusted.* The key to the approach of Pemberton-Billing and Clegg is found in the discussion period after the drama activity: the period of reflection: *"...this use of the creative arts makes us examine what we are thinking and feeling"* [p. 17]. After describing a lesson in detail, the authors write:

Quietly and only gently breaking the spell, the teacher calls the class to him. In a very different mood from when they came in, the class is again clustered in a semi-circle round the gramophone at the foot of the steps. The children seem relaxed and satisfied. *Quiet discussion is taking place now, and it seems to draw naturally to a close* [emphasis mine: DWN] with a few of the class getting up and collecting their things, while the teacher returns to re-sort his records [p. 15].

Further on this idea of discussion, Pemberton-Billing and Clegg point out that:

...in drama, the child is able to express his feelings about various things, and with the help of the teacher, reconsider and adjust them. For example, in a scene in which he is a policeman he may feel he has to drag everyone off to prison. *By discussing the scene afterwards*, [emphasis mine: DWN] he can begin to form a more mature judgement [p. 22].

with the added benefit that:

the advantage of drama over many other media is that the child has the opportunity of using his imagination to the full, without being restricted by too many technicalities; *he can say what he feels about things without being hampered by, for instance, poor spelling or grammar*. [emphasis mine: DWN] Under these conditions the power to imagine has the opportunity to grow and develop, and will inevitably influence all other aspects of school work [p. 24].

Whether or not Pemberton-Billing and Clegg realized the dangers that drama teachers were facing is something of which I am unaware, but they provide two specific warnings that pertain to the 1960s version of 'accountability':

One of the dangers of drama teaching is to let lessons deteriorate into a series of enjoyable, but rather aimless, activities. The teacher must know where he is going [p. 39].

and

The teacher must guard against his lesson degenerating into a series of exercises. The real content of drama is *story*, in which mood, movement, character, speech, etc. all combine. The teacher must build towards story [p. 116].

During this late 1960s period in America, Benedict (1967) offers his guide to modern drama. Thirty years previously, Dakin (1937) had also mentioned the use of 'modern plays' as a source for study, but Benedict goes one step further: he also appears to be going back to the 'traditional' approach of content, memorization, and recitation. His entire text is devoted to topics and questions for discussion, study, composition, and testing. Indeed, Benedict prefaces one particular section with the comment:

These [topics] are intended primarily for oral discussion in class, but most of them will serve equally well if you wish to use them for tests or examinations or other written work [p. 8].

A page later, Benedict offers teachers a small section headed "special projects" which he introduces with:

Under this heading are grouped numerous activities, both for individuals and for the entire class, that are somewhat different from routine assignments and that should help enliven your class. They include readings, *acting* [emphasis mine: DWN], panels, research and reports, debates, etc.

Every teacher is only too well aware of the limitations imposed by necessity upon the time and effort that can be devoted to such activities. You will find that the suggested special projects have been kept within the range of what will usually be feasible [p. 9].

Benedict also reminds teachers who are examining his work of the benefit that students will receive "...from drilling even the simplest words," [p. 9] and also offers:

In each teaching unit there is a short objective test (matching, multiple choice, fill in the blanks, or true-false). Such a test affords a quick easy way to check reading before embarking on discussion [pp. 9-10].

Countering this very traditional approach is Matthews (1969) who points out that "Because drama is the most living and pulsating of the literary arts, I hate to see it treated in the classroom in too academic a fashion..." [p. 20].

Whether or not it was the impact of the Black Papers, or a factor of the recession that Britain went through at the end of the sixties, in 1973, D. W. Male, British drama educator and author writes:

The words 'drama' and 'education' are not happy bedfellows. The former conjures up ideas of acting and theatres, whilst the latter relates to the classroom and the learning situation. When we take a disciplined art form such as professional theatre and mix it with free, exploratory, experiential atmosphere of a good

educational drama lesson, the first may seem to be restrictive and confining. Thus it becomes essential to decide what form of drama is being attempted. Until this is settled, confusion will certainly arise [p. 9].

The issue of the teacher and assessment is hinted at yet again, but dodged in actually stating a task to be completed.

The job of the teacher, says Male is to:

...ensure an adequate provision of stimulating materials and allow ample opportunity for them to be used. Her most important job is that of observation; noticing (i) what objects attract particular attention and the imaginative use to which they are put; (ii) the responsiveness and involvement of the children at play... [p. 20].

However, it is possible to see the hint of the problems in assessing students in drama classes:

...in drama one is seldom expected to be oneself. Much more frequently an essentially different character has to be created. Personal responses, experiences, and skills must be projected into a pattern that creates another person...This duality of identity is inherent in any characterisation. The performer remains uniquely himself, yet utilizes all his imagination and skill to project another 'persona'. In developing work from personal improvisation, superficial mimicry and

stereotype must be avoided. Improvisation is not playing charades [32].

It would have been useful had Male provided some criteria by which others would recognize "superficial mimicry and stereotype", but he doesn't. He also identifies one of the frustrations of teaching drama, but again, offers no guidelines for the teacher as to procedure:

The partnership of word and action may become strained because of the uneven development of the two aspects. Some pupils achieve an extraordinary facility in language but remain very limited physically. Conversely, others though fluent physically, may become, because of self-consciousness, shyness, or hesitancy, remarkably limited vocally. All kinds of factors contribute to this limitation: lack of vocabulary, home situation, reading and listening habits, social pressures, accepted mores and registers of language. *Progress will be slow, and any improvement will show only after a long period of effort.* [emphasis mine: DWN] At every stage encouragement is needed. The improvisation session can supply an opportunity for experiment, not afforded in other situations, where the pupil, inescapably himself, can extend and enrich his experience [p. 36].

Male does provide one solid guideline for teachers: *know where you're going with your drama:*

How should a teacher prepare himself to undertake work in any of the areas...? He must decide as clearly as he can what he hopes the outcome will be. A vaguely held notion of 'something' emerging is not good enough. The expectation need not be rigidly adhered to if, as the project develops, alternative patterns suggest themselves. But the teacher must know if, on the one hand, he is working towards a conclusion or whether, on the other, the concern is solely for the process of discovery and examination [p. 103].

Yet another American dramatist, Heinig, teams up with Stillwell in 1974 to provide a 'how-to-do-creative-dramatics' book. Divided into sections according to category of activity -- narrative pantomime, involvement, story dramatization -- each category also is given an "evaluation" section. Fifty-two years after Leonard first suggested it, Heinig and Stillwell suggest the teacher-directed discussion as the best form of evaluation:

Perhaps the most important evaluation, however, is the children's own. Self-evaluation can be encouraged by asking:

What's the one thing you did that you liked the best?

What do you think was your best idea?

What was the hardest part for you?

What can we do about the hard parts? In what ways can we help one another with them? [p. 55-57]

Heinig and Stillwell do offer the first example that I have found of an attempt to be objective in evaluation. Recognizing the subjectivity of words such as "good", Heinig and Stillwell suggest in the place of non-specific terms such as "good":

...the leader [be] more specific, and say[s], for example, "Good, your puppets are walking very stiffly -- just as if you were made out of wood," then he is praising stiff movements. He is describing action that can be observed.

Believability of expression is also a key concept to consider in evaluation for involvement. Something about the dramatizing should have the look of being *real* [p. 96].

That Heinig and Stillwell appear to have given more thought to the assessment and evaluation than many other dramatists is very clear. Reinforcing the idea that evaluation ought to be as objective as possible, the concept of "simultaneous playing" (this is very similar to Way's [1967] group participation idea) is introduced. That Heinig and Stillwell suggest that members of an audience be asked to serve as evaluators is also interesting. Peer evaluation is usually 'tougher on the players' than the evaluation of the teacher/leader:



One helpful way to evaluate pantomime scenes as objectively as possible is to utilize simultaneous playing. For example, several individual children or pairs may enact a brief moment or a scene at the same time. Then the children in the audience can be asked to look for all the specific details they note that indicate believability...One leader chose this method for a serious scene in "The Legend of the Moor's Legacy"...The audience readily saw which actions were convincing, and no comment was necessary for the unconvincing ones [p. 233].

Further to the idea of objectivity in evaluation, Heinig and Stillwell suggest that:

...the points to consider in the evaluation center on whether or not the story is understandable. The action should be clear. The characters should be believable, both in their actions and in their dialogue.

When the evaluation is made, it is usually helpful to use the character's names rather than the children's names. This practice can be encouraged both in self-evaluation and in audience evaluation.

T: The King really seemed to care about his subjects.

C: I spoke the Captain's orders in a gruff voice, but I tried to show that he was a kind person by smiling just a little [pp. 233-234].

Witkin (1974) presents teachers with a philosophical basis to the arts with his theory of the intelligence of feeling. In this theory, which is complex, and complete with creation of terminology, Witkin identifies many of the problems that teachers of drama are faced with in assessment and evaluation of their students' progress. From the very first page, Witkin challenges the reader:

There is a world that exists beyond the individual, a world that exists whether or not he exists. This individual needs to know about this world, to move in it, and manage himself in it. The curricula of our secondary schools are filled with this world. Everywhere the child turns he encounters in it the brute facts of history, chemistry, mathematics, and so forth. There is another world, however, a world that exists only because the individual exists. It is the world of his own sensations and feelings. He shares the former world with others. He moves around it with them, for it is a world of facts, of public space, and 'objects'. He shares the second world with no one. It is the world of private space and of solitary subject. In order to move around the world of objects, to manage his relationships within it, the individual must be able to manage the disturbances, the sensations and feelings wrought within him by his encounters in the world...If the price of finding oneself in the world is that of the losing the world in

oneself, then the price is more than anyone can afford...In the case of the psychological system, it is the integrity of the world within the individual that is the source of his motivation, his enthusiasm, his feeling response to life. The more complex and object-ridden man's existence becomes, the greater is the threat to this world within him and the more insistent are the demands of the world as a consequence [p. 1].

Witkin's "world of his own sensations and feelings" is the source from which a student does dramatic activity. It is necessary for the teacher to conceptualize the subjectivity of the individual and the arts to the point where the teacher sees that subjectivity as an objective concept. Witkin states that:

only when the significance is grasped as objective fact will the means be at hand for generating new resources for the enrichment of arts curricula and for changing the entire status of the creative arts in schools [p. 2].

The difficulties and dangers of drama instruction are also spelled out by Witkin, as he points out that the drama student is in fact both the "agent" and the "medium of expression" [p. 39]. For the teacher, this means that:

"...the pupil's person and expressive form are one, and the teacher is obliged to confront the former in the latter and vice versa...there is a greater likelihood that the teacher will facilitate expression that is

illegitimate within the terms of his regulative social context, while inhibiting expression that is legitimate within that context" [pp. 39-40].

Witkin is saying to teachers that it is possible that what they get in drama classes, in a 'make-believe' world, may not be appropriate outside the drama room in the real world. It is also possible that a teacher may actually restrict or constrain behaviour that is very appropriate in the make-believe world.

It is easy to see the rationale here, and the difficulty into which it places the drama teacher. The rough, callous world of the street is often punctuated with obscenities and epithets that are not used in classrooms. To have such language in the drama situation may add legitimacy to the scene, but at what cost and at what result? Witkin pursues this concept into the area of assessment and evaluation, suggesting that "...progress is measured in terms of the complexity of sensate experience for the pupil constitutes his personal development in the most intimate sense possible" [p. 49].

Not only does the assessment look at the progress of the student, says Witkin, but it also must "monitor the effectiveness of the teaching function, of the organization and deployment of curricula. Teachers and pupils alike are dependent upon feedback to guide their participation in the educational encounter..." [p. 52]. In this sense, he is

supporting the work of Male (1973) in that the teacher should know where he is going in his program.

Witkin comes down firmly against the concept of examinations in drama as a means of assessment and evaluation, stating:

Examination grades are the most extreme and typical forms of assessment that are used in our educational system. The individual's behaviour is transmuted into a scale of value in which all its particularity is deliberately lost. Even when examinations are not used and summary descriptions are employed instead, the basic principle is the same. The individual is given a place relative to others in a structure. It is no wonder that the examination system is most efficient in assessing scientific or mathematical knowledge. Assessment is the process of knowing the individual as object in relation to other individuals as objects. It is therefore at its most efficient when it differentiates between individuals as objects in relation to their knowledge about objects. It becomes something else altogether when it attempts to differentiate between individuals as objects in relation to their knowledge of their subjectivity, when by such differentiation is meant the judgement that one individual is more himself than another [p. 52].

Witkin then counters the work of Heinig and Stillwell (1974) by saying that "...there are no objective and universal

criteria which enable" [p. 52] a teacher to make the assertion that "...one individual is more himself than another" [p. 52]. Witkin peers into a crystal ball, and clairvoyantly states "Nowhere is the problem of assessment and of examinations a more controversial subject than in...the arts curricula" [p. 56]. It is not possible to examine students' work which is based on emotional response because:

there is no recall involved in emotional responses, however. These are simply subject-reactive. They release themselves in the situation without recall. This is a very important distinction because feeling unlike gross emotional response is a form of reflexive abstraction [p. 78].

Much of what occurs in a drama program, Witkin suggests, is based on crisis situations: wars, disasters, fights -- and this means that the students, because of the nature of the response demanded --fight, flight or tears, are being asked to respond in ways that are out of their usual emotional responses [pp. 78-82].

What is necessary for self-expression, Witkin submits, is the subject-reflexive mode, rather than the subject-reactive. Subject-reflexive situations cause 'feeling', which takes all the sensations of the scene and ties them together into a theme that is coherent. This approach however, runs into difficulty when the teacher stops the drama, and calls for the

discussion to analyze what has occurred. This says Witkin, forces the teacher:

...to pull the pupil out of the immediate experience into the world of objective facts in which his own emotional responses figure as objective elements. He is encouraged to consider his own emotional responses and those of others as objective elements in an objective situation. In the end therefore, the teacher resorts to the logic of the objective situation as the frame of reference for the emotional experience of the pupil, and the pupil is once again to objectify feeling. Feelings are always 'acceptable' and 'understandable' given the circumstances but the pupil is encouraged to derive their logic by referring them to the situation and the part they play in it. The logic and the order that the teacher seeks to impose upon them is the logic of the objective situation. Intelligence on a subjective level does not enter into it.

It is this period of analysis, in which the objectification of feeling takes place, that many drama teachers consider to be the essential source of validation for what has taken place in the dramatic situation [p. 83].

At this point, it would appear that the drama teacher is damned if he does, and damned if he doesn't. Witkin appears to be saying that effective drama means that the sense of

feeling is of a subjective nature, it is critical to the drama, it belongs to the student, and it cannot be measured. On the other hand, the teacher is expected to perform some sort of assessment in a "...world without landmarks let alone criteria or standards" [p. 90]. Witkin chooses to quote a teacher from another subject area who says "...a lot of work done in the name of drama is so petty and shoddy...-- at least I get a chance to work with people who are interested in looking in this particular way at a text, *who are interested in standards, which is a change from the rather amorphous no-standards-allowed world of educational drama,*" to which Witkin responds, offering a glimmer of hope, with "...it is not really that educational drama itself lacks standards but it seems that the means for realizing them in the teaching situation are not readily available even to those teachers who are taught as specialists" [p. 90]. Witkin does not provide a list of what he sees these standards to be, but does suggest that the drama teacher needs to be more involved in the drama lesson as it progresses:

The teacher's task during this process should be to ensure that the pupil remains reflexively in control of the medium and this cannot be done unless there are built-in procedures in the design of the exercise for ensuring that the teacher can detect a breakdown in medium control and indeed can anticipate in advance where it is likely to occur in the exercise. Furthermore, he



must be able to intervene in the process and help the pupils restore this control [p. 96].

It's not the drama lesson that needs to be examined seems to be Witkin's message; it's the whole concept of education; a question incidentally, that is certainly not new. Rowntree (1987, 1977) quotes Kandel (1936):

The problem of examinations strikes at the very roots of the whole meaning and significance of education in society...The essence of the problem is the validity of education [p. 2].

Witkin creates an analogy between a child's education and person on vacation, where current practices are safe and boring: students are akin to a traveller being led by a guide, not being allowed to make explorations and discoveries on their own. When the opportunity is given students to explore, they can't, because they have had virtually no experience in thinking for themselves [p. 168]:

This is the dilemma of so many of our adolescents. They run from the irrelevance of the academic dogma which deny them the fruits of participation and discovery and yet they are forced by their very training to cling tenaciously to the rule book even when expressing themselves, otherwise they feel no respect for the validity of their own actions. The objective, the logical, the rational, all are experienced as ominously threatening to the adolescent, the more so because of

this great dependence upon them. He knows if he leans hard enough they will break, and he lacks the intelligence of feeling which alone can guarantee his survival when they do [p. 169].

That the teacher also leans heavily on the "objective, the logical, and the rational" is also true. It is also depressing to realize that the message of Witkin --the 'intelligence of feeling' is a core philosophy in education that has been ignored in our schools, in our educational process. Educators claim to be interested in the individual student, but in actual fact, the educational system is paying lip service to the premise. Witkin's work is convoluted, difficult to understand, yet full of what I have discovered in the years I have been teaching drama. A successful drama program is one where risk-taking, warmth, humour, enjoyment, and open communication occur on a regular basis because of a trust factor between students and students, and students and teacher. Witkin's work seems to lead to the intuitive assessment line; one that others in education cannot accept because it lacks 'objectivity'.

I believe it to be doubtful if Witkin's intelligence of feeling theory caused any ripples in the larger sea of education: it is so arts-focused, and it is so complex that it is unlikely educators in regular curriculum gave it much thought. Coming as it did at a time when educational drama was under stronger attack from new Black Papers in England,

from beginning worries of a public for accountability in education due to money expenditure, such a theoretical work as Witkin would be limited in its immediate appeal.

This is suggested by the work of McGregor (1976) who introduces her examination of developments in drama teaching with the phrase: "Although drama is becoming more popular in many schools, there is no general consensus or agreement on precisely what the subject entails" [p. ix]. That such a statement could be made in all honesty only seventeen years ago indicates not only the 'youth' of educational drama, but also one of the 'roots' of the problems with the subject: it is so new in education that the base is still being established as to what drama actually is.

McGregor addresses a number of issues, beginning with the "...debate over whether the educational value of drama is experiential and exploratory, or whether it is valid to work towards performance.", and then moving directly to the issue of "...the importance of discussion...as some teachers feel that discussion should not be a part of dramatic activity while for others it serves as a focal point for the lesson" [p. x]. Is drama a teaching methodology or is it an art form in its own right? [p. 2]. McGregor recognizes that most drama teachers do not use simply one method of drama in their classrooms, but draw from a number of drama theorists; this in turn, leads to assessment and evaluation, where McGregor

addresses the idea of the discussion as an evaluative technique:

It is common for teachers, when looking at children's work, to criticize the way the children look and sound rather than discuss the quality of the work that the children have created --i.e. in terms of whether or not the play approximates to what they are trying to say, and how they might improve the characters or situations they portray. It is probably better to have no discussions than irrelevant discussions [p. 26].

Of note is that McGregor does not dismiss the idea of the discussion altogether, just the 'irrelevant discussion'. Later, McGregor suggests, supporting in part the Witkin (1974) study, that "...because there are no simple, clearly defined criteria for judging work in drama, the main way that children will know whether the lesson has succeeded or not, apart from their own evaluations, will be in the way the teacher discusses or remarks on the work at the end of the lesson" [p. 85].

McGregor also supports Male (1973) with regard to the need for planning of lessons by teachers:

...evaluation cannot effectively take place unless teachers are clear about their intentions. That could only happen within the context of a theoretical framework which gives adequate grounds and criteria for the teaching of the subject... a rationale for drama teaching

needs to be devised before attempts are made to evaluate various dramatic activities [p. 90].

The question from non-drama teachers of whether drama is actually doing anything to further children's education is brought to light, along with the response from some drama teachers that because they believed "...teaching the subject must be good...[they wanted] to be more explicit about what they are achieving" [p. 93]. Other teachers of drama, however, says McGregor, feel that evaluation:

might detract from spontaneity - which is so vital in all creative activities. Others feel that the end products of drama, like any other art form, are open ended and unpredictable. They feel that because of this, there are no clearly defined criteria that could be used in assessing drama. There is a feeling that it is not possible to evaluate work in terms of aims, objectives, and end products and therefore attempts to assess drama might distort an appreciation of the complexity of the process [p. 93].

Commenting on assessment and evaluation techniques being employed at the time in Britain, McGregor states:

I have seen children assessed for CSE examinations on vastly different criteria, ranging from marks on effort and enthusiasm to strictly marked scales for theatrical skills, e.g. five ways of using the voice differently. Between these extremes are general criteria such as

'ability to characterize' or 'general ability to use communication skills on stage and in real life' [p. 93].

The issue of objectivity and subjectivity is addressed again, with a response similar to that of Witkin (1974):

...in small group improvisations, it could be argued that what is being judged is the children's personal statement of ideas in dramatic form, and, if they perform it, whether they are putting the statement across effectively. The problem here is how to sieve out an observer's subjective interpretation of the children's work, leaving only an objective assessment about the quality of the work. It is the same problem that theatre critics have about plays and performances. The question is whether it should be examined, i.e. given marks or not [p. 94].

McGregor ends her work with the comment:

...at present there is uncertainty about what is being assessed and how certain activities can be evaluated in practical terms. This is because in drama there seem to be few clearly defined criteria for evaluation and teachers have not studied what happens in the classroom in enough detail to be able to spot development when it comes. This is not to say that they do not have criteria, or do not make judgements about work in the classroom. They do, but often on unconscious, implicit levels which they find difficult to define [p. 95].

The following year, 1977, saw the release of yet another set of Black Papers, a collection that demonstrated quite clearly the "knee-jerk" reaction, the pendulum swing of public opinion:

Many writers now think of the 1960s as a disastrous period for the Western world, in which ill-thought out notions of spontaneity, self-realization, and equality invaded both education and the Arts. Professor Donald Davie, poet and critic, recently drew attention to the breakdown of order and proportion in the 1960s, 'that hideous decade'. In the 1970s, we are witnessing a slow return to common sense, to formal teaching, to a renewed awareness that the child's happiness and personal fulfilment depend on a secure environment under the control of adults [Cox, 1977, p. 13].

Similar rumblings of the public were beginning to be heard in Manitoba at that time. The provincial government changed from the New Democratic Party to the Progressive Conservative, led by Sterling Lyon. Government spending on education was a major issue, and one result of that change in government was an amputation of the arts support through the Department of Education. A large number of consultants hired two or three years previously to assist teachers in the implementation of new curricula, including the first drama curriculum for Manitoba, were dismissed. The following year, in 1978, the Manitoba Task Force on Arts and Education was

formed under the umbrella of the Canadian Conference of the Arts. The overall conclusion written by Davis and Hannibal (1979) stated:

After a year and half of hard work, after hearing a multitude of opinions, almost unexpectedly two strong opinions emerged. The first is a crying need for quality in arts education and the second is an equally pressing need for much better teacher training.

Our statistical survey demonstrated a considerable quantity of arts activity in schools, especially in music, drama, and visual arts...yet the quality of that exposure often seemed to be unacceptably low...Often the end product, the 'performance', superseded the learning and appreciation of the art. We urge a much greater attention to quality.

The quality of teaching is the ultimate responsibility of the individual teacher. While the administrative and financial structure may effect the broad thrust, we discovered that it is the specific teacher who decided whether the arts will be taught and in what manner. Many teachers are seriously hampered in their teaching of the arts because they lack sufficient background and training. In general, they have often only had superficial exposure to the arts and in particular teacher training skims or neglects training [p. 3].



Surprisingly, the drama component conclusion was much more 'upbeat'. Tessler and Utgaard write:

Manitoba is presently at a peak in terms of development of drama. There have never been so many programs in the schools, new theatre companies, and audience participation as there are today...

The provincial implementation of the credit system in the secondary school system plus enhanced teacher training have made it possible for many secondary school Drama programs to blossom. More and more elementary teachers feel comfortable using dramatic arts techniques in the classrooms [p. 28].

At the same time, Tessler and Utgaard warn that there are four areas of concern that threaten the viability of drama programs, beginning with declining enrolments:

Schools are finding it more difficult to maintain the wide diversity of courses now generally available. Provincial grants are based on enrolment tallies, thus there will be a corresponding decline in amount of dollars available to pay staff and to obtain learning resources in drama [p. 28].

This is followed by the warning of the "back-to-the-basics" movement, for when that call is heard, "all arts subjects become vulnerable when school programs are examined from the conventional point of view of what constitutes the basics" [p. 31]. Echoing a comment from one of the Black Papers of the

1960s, Tessler and Utgaard add that "pressure for job oriented training", due to, no doubt, demands from the workplace itself, has resulted in "students...beginning to gravitate towards subjects which might give them more opportunity of acceptance at some post-secondary institutions", [p. 31] most likely community colleges. The final warning in the drama conclusion is a question of whether or not "drama courses [are] reflecting the need of wishes of both parents and students" [p. 31].

Tessler and Utgaard place themselves squarely in the educational debate raging in England about whether or not drama actually teaches students "anything educational" by stating that the benefits of the dramatic arts in schools include helping students "deal more competently with life", develop "verbal fluency and confidence", that "problems solving skills, decision making skills expanding sensitivity, awareness of values (his and others) is measurable", and that the student achieves a "heightened awareness of his environment, both social and physical" [p. 31].

Richard Courtney, Canadian drama educator and theorist, adds more grist to the mill of drama assessment, beginning with the base that people bring to drama:

But the dramatic process is not uniform for everyone. There are great differences with maturation... [and] significant differences between cultures...Each person's

drama is unique to them. Thus in all education we must... 'start from where we are'. [1980, pp. 1-2]

Courtney hints at assessment difficulty when he addresses the success rate of British drama as compared to American:

Drama has infused British curricula more effectively than in North America because United States education is liable to be more objectified. The influence of the 'scientific method'...which quantifies and measures... which mechanically asks that in-puts (behavioral objectives) match out-puts (outcomes) and of pragmatism which asks that everything 'works' and, therefore, hinges upon 'skills', goes against human education [1980, p. 3].

Suggesting that "...drama is the total expression of the mind..." [1980, p. 13] Courtney unintentionally presents the assessment conundrum, by saying that:

It [drama] is the external representation of what takes place internally. it is not partial: it is inclusive of the cognitive, the affective, the aesthetic, the psychomotor, the moral--indeed all aspects of our inner life [p. 13].

Courtney's view of drama, and by extension, the difficulty of assessment of drama in the classroom, goes one step further, when he says:

...teachers need a different approach to the students' learning process than is normally used in schools. For

really effective learning, the student should watch it, do it, and only then think or talk about it. The doing part should be overtly acted by the young child. [1982, p. 10]

Courtney adds that:

Each student must be treated as unique. The 'system' of school--with large classes, mechanistic methods of learning where teachers provide in-put and students give back out-put--mitigates against this, and teachers must take risks to preserve uniqueness. [1982, p. 63]

However, the ubiquitous question of standards again reared its head in 1982, when Robinson raises the idea that issues of:

...course design, course location, assessment, teaching and resources, have in common a concern with the question of *standards*. What kinds of standards should be required at entry, and at completion, of courses in the arts in higher education? How are they to be established and sustained? [p. 7].

Although Robinson is speaking specifically about university education as the definition of the 'higher education' mentioned above, the questions are valid at whatever level drama courses are offered. Ball (1982) writes that it is the "pressures of public examinations" which force children to:

...specialize prematurely in some disciplines at the expense of others. They also promote forms of assessment

which are not appropriate in some disciplines including the arts...there is a tragic irony therefore to the common complaint among college and university staff that their first task is to broaden the outlook and experience of first-year students, due to their too narrow education at school -- a narrowness which mainly results from the downwards pressures on schools from tertiary, and especially university, education [in Robinson, 1982, pp. 15-16].

It is Ball who comes out and states that which has been hinted at by Witkin, McGregor, and others:

For innovation in course design to take root, there must be innovation in course assessment...if we want to know the truth about an educational system we must look at its assessment procedures. What student qualities and achievements are actively valued and rewarded by the system? [in Robinson, 1982, p. 22].

Using some pretty straightforward language, Ball concludes with a call for new assessment techniques that are "...more descriptive, less judgemental, more informative and less terse forms of assessment than the terminal examination" [p. 22]. These are essential, he adds, because:

...the wealth of a nation lies not in its coal or oil but in the imagination of its people, at all levels and in all occupations, not only in the arts. More than in any other disciplines, however, the arts have to do with

developing, stimulating and in some sense training the imagination directly.

Moreover, they do so in modes which question some conventional views of the nature of knowledge and the nature of human understanding...

'The arts are not only for communicating ideas. They are ways of having ideas, of creating ideas, of exploring experience in particular ways and fashioning our understanding of it into new forms...The arts are among the ways in which we move from merely enduring experience to understanding and controlling it' [in Robinson, 1982, p. 22].

Allen (1982) adds to the call for a new form of assessment in the arts: "The important thing is that we use it [assessment] to give the student an idea of his educational progress" [in Robinson, 1982, p. 70], adding that "...it is the teacher's comments, not the marks, that are (one hopes) valuable to a developing young artist" [p. 92]. Allen goes on to offer some criteria which he believes might be applicable to arts courses, including drama: "...range and scope of study; awareness (including historical); originality, invention, independence of mind; philosophical and critical grasp of work produced; sensitivity to the aesthetic means used or available; and skill in realization" [p. 93]. That some of these potential elements are highly subjective goes beyond question; that some are not applicable to all levels

is also true. However, there are suggested areas that can be analyzed as to how to assess a smaller part of a larger program. Asking *what parts are going to be assessed?* is a very key step in determining how progress can be assessed.

Wickham, (1982) chair of the drama study group of the Society for Research into Higher Education, painted the bleakest picture yet of public perception of drama education:

It is essential to recognize that an attack is being made on both education and the arts which parallels in its severity the dissolution of the monastic foundations in Britain in the sixteenth century (for better or for worse the repositories of medieval culture throughout the country) as the iconoclastic blasts of self-appointed reformers shattered glass, defaced sculpture, and burned playscripts in the name of doctrine. From that point in time dates the drift of virtually all cultural initiative, but most especially in drama, from the provinces to London, and within London itself from the city to the Court. And with that drift developed that distrust of and hostility to all the arts, and most especially the theatre, which has formed so pronounced a feature of British culture until this century [in Robinson, 1982, p. 191].

ending with that:

suspensions accumulate among the public at large that far too much money is being poured into drama -training for

ill-defined purposes and to self-defeating ends if no jobs exist for graduates without further subsidies to create artificial markets for their services [p. 197-198].

That year of 1982 must have been a difficult one for drama people in Britain, for as the higher education people were examining the position of the arts in their area, so Wooton (1982) was examining drama in the secondary school. Using case studies of actual drama lessons, and interviews with the teachers of the schools, Wooton tries to determine if teachers have found ways to "...reconcile abstract ideals [of drama] with the practical restrictions of time, space, and school curriculum" [p. 4]. The answer, unfortunately, appears to be "no". A typical comment from a drama instructor is:

In trying to evaluate these lessons, I am pleased with several aspects of them but not with others. On the whole the girls worked with commitment. They sustained their roles and developed ideas. Their use of language was rich, often poetic. They attempted to reflect upon their work through discussion within and outside the drama. There were moments of autonomy and individual pupils showed that they were working with greater confidence [p. 13].

In this particular instance, the teacher is looking at subjective issues: *worked with commitment* -- how does one assess that? *They sustained their roles* -- to what degree?



[They] developed ideas -- any idea, to any level? Their use of language was rich -- what specific use of language: diction, demonstration of emotion? and often poetic -- spoken in iambic pentameter? or use of figurative devices? They attempted to reflect upon their work through discussion within and outside the drama. --was the attempt a success, and how did the teacher determine if the attempt was successful, or was just the attempt worthwhile? There were moments of autonomy -- how many of these moments were necessary to achieve a successful dramatic presence? and individual pupils showed that they were working with greater confidence -- what criteria are used to measure confidence?

Another teacher in the study identifies "three general observations that I am aware of making in every lesson I have taught" with the first being to examine "...the involvement of each individual and their level of interest and participation" [p. 40]. Again, the question that must be asked is how the *involvement*, the *interest* and the *participation* are measured; it would also be reasonable to ask this teacher what the differences between *involvement* and *participation* are. The second assessment observation that this individual uses with every lesson is "examining the language exchange for smoothness and certainty" [p. 41]. Two terms -- *smoothness* and *certainty* -- are certainly highly subjective. The third observation deals with "...that which one can see being learned, i.e. the experiences and how the children are coping

with them" [p. 41]. This raises the same subjective concern.

America has not been left out of the uproar over evaluation in drama. McCaslin (1968), who made no mention of evaluation in her work, other than stating it to be "an important aspect of creative dramatics, and leads into the re-playing, which should acquire new depth and richer detail" [p. 94] releases the fourth edition of her how-to-do-creative-dramatics book, where she now adds a section specifically on the topic of evaluation. Calling this section "Evaluating Children's Responses", McCaslin states:

A question that always comes up is how to evaluate children's responses. This is difficult to answer, for progress varies from one child to the next. The teacher has different expectations for each child and what may be extraordinary growth for one is scarcely an adequate performance for another. (The word *performance* as used here means work, not theatre performance.) Let me explain. The shy child, described earlier, may be a long time coming out of his shell; therefore the slightest offering he makes to the group--idea, vocal or physical expression, ease in working with peers -- indicates growth. The overly aggressive child, who learns to harness her energy in deference to others, has also made progress. With the overcoming of individual problems, and every child has them, albeit less severe than the ones cited earlier, there has been progress. Beyond

that, each teacher has social, intellectual, and aesthetic goals he hopes will be met.

Have the children become a group, willing and able to work together? Is there easy give-and-take?

Is each child an integral part of the group, sharing without fear or need to impress?

Is there sincerity in the work?

Is physical movement becoming free, more expressive?

Have verbal skills improved -- speech, voice and diction, vocabulary, and the ability to express ideas orally?

Depending on the focus, have other goals been met? Use of resource materials, integration of learning, involvement in subject?

Is there vitality in the group? Eagerness to begin; reluctance to stop at the end of the period?

Does the noise level reflect activity, industry, enthusiasm? [p. 41]

It is true that McCaslin's work is aimed more specifically at the elementary child; that in itself though, is no reason to ignore specific assessment. McCaslin offers suggestions on how to collect data:

The teacher may want to make 'before and after' tapes of the class. These are often more revealing than the teacher's recollections, written notes or check sheets in

showing the progress made from the beginning to the end of the year [p. 42], but neglects to offer any suggestions on how to analyze the data collected by various means. She does add a concern that "no matter how valuable such records are --and there is value --there is also a danger of losing the spirit of creative drama in the quest for proof of its effectiveness" [p. 43]. McCaslin concludes her comments by returning again to the point made by Male (1973) and McGregor (1976) of the teacher and the class: "The purpose of the class however, determines the type and use of tests and measurements." [p. 43]

The release in 1985 of Linnell's work dealing with performance skills demonstrates that the drama community has indeed been attempting to answer the questions raised in the previous decade about what should be in drama and what should be assessed. Linnell (1985) starts immediately with the premise that:

...any syllabus will contain very much the same elements, whether it is designed for a class of six or sixteen year olds. A scheme of work should be devised that will encourage the individual to develop personal skills of self-expression that may be used in a variety of ways and often under pressure. Such a scheme should also encourage the individual to operate constructively as a member of a group, giving when it is beneficial to give, holding fast when it is important to stand by one's

opinions, learning to save face and to negotiate and to find effective language. There will be, above all, the time, ability, and patience to create an imaginative artistic whole by means of human resources, then, to communicate that art to others.

Any such syllabus will have to contain a certain amount of exercise of the methods of communication and a great deal of work on the material to be communicated [p. 23].

Picking up again on the Witkin (1974) intelligence of feeling theory, Linnell recognizes the subjectivity of the individual:

Responding to the feeling contained in a situation, a poem, a piece of music, or a play, is personal and individual. The common factor in all performance arts is recognizing the feeling in the work and wanting to share it. It is that sensitivity and enjoyment that needs to feature in any syllabus. It cannot always be legislated for at any moment, but a teacher who can begin a number of lessons and, as it were, follow the signs, can catch the interest and further it [p. 24].

There is no question that Linnell is recognizing the intuitiveness of the teacher who, must, as she says, "follow the signs" in order to further develop the "sensitivity and enjoyment" that is common in performing arts [p. 24].

Speaking against the concept of examinations in written form, Linnell claims that:

...it has always been possible to examine practical work. There are many experienced examiners capable of assessing performance, just as the teachers themselves can judge the value of the contribution made by one pupil working within a group [p. 83].

Adding to that, and reflecting the British examination system, Linnell states unequivocally that:

practical work can be as sensitive, articulate and thoughtful as any well-groomed written paper. If senior students have drama in the timetable, then in many schools it must carry examination status. Therefore the work must be contrived so that every means of communication is exploited, and the subject seen as an in-depth study of human skills in relationships and interpersonal communication [p. 84].

Linnell is adamant in her belief that it is the teacher who must be in control, not external examination boards:

The onus is firmly on teachers to ensure that performance skills are practised and not written about. To act is to do. To communicate is to make effective contact. To perform implies success [p. 84].

At first reading, Linnell sounds as if she is talking specifically about the student who wishes to make the stage a career: nothing could be farther from the truth. Linnell

argues that drama has a needed place in the education system today because of its ability to help with the dissemination of information -- communication in its simplest terms:

There are many areas of life where an inability to communicate can prove a serious liability: at work and especially at home. So long as young people remain at school it is important that they practise these skills. Performance is not playing, and is certainly not only for younger children. As well as providing artistic satisfaction in a piece of living fiction, there is the opportunity for discussion, role-reversal, movement, effective speech and work in a group: all perfectly adult pursuits. All this, together with sensitivity towards nuances of behaviour, plays a part in shaping our lives [p. 84].

Taking this concept of communication and information distribution one step further, Linnell neatly draws a parallel with life of 1000 years ago, and life today:

In the Middle Ages, rhetoric was an essential part of education. Then printing revolutionized the dissemination of information. Today, much power is vested in those who control means of communication other than the written word, in verbal and visual forms, in terms of the spoken word and the pictorial image. Maybe there should be a place for rhetoric on today's timetable, but more likely there will be an increase in

communication studies, including television, radio, film video, and the latest forms of electronic communication. What should concern those of who really care about the future is not, however a study of the already existing gadgetry. It is rather the ability to formulate ideas in images and words that is essential for our young people. The hardware will change, but the perception of ideas develops only slowly. If we can offer young people the opportunity to externalize and thereby express their thinking and feeling, neither in self-indulgence nor without control, but by making contact, finding vocabulary, understanding image, and symbol, projecting and imagining, selecting and refining the means of expression, until they can produce a work of art that communicates directly with others, we will have given them power in the future [p. 86].

1987 gives the drama world the work of three drama theorists: from Canada: the team of Morgan and Saxton, and from America: Rosenberg. The works of Morgan and Saxton and of Rosenberg can be classified and placed in the 'how-to-do-genre' of drama books; Rosenberg's goes so far as to provide lessons for a complete course beginning with activity descriptions labelled as "starters" and ending with "mastery". Both deal with assessment and evaluation to greater lengths, and in more specific detail, than any other drama text



examined to this point. That there is a great difference between them is also a fact.

Morgan and Saxton tie in with Witkin (1974) and others who recognize the inner feeling as integral to the drama, and mention it early in their work:

Drama operates in two frames: the expressive frame (the outer manifestation) and the meaning frame (the inner understanding). However, *both students and teacher can get caught up in the external aspects of an activity and scant attention may be paid to that which fuels the expression: the inner world of thought and feeling.*

[emphasis mine: DWN] The full power of the drama can only be realized when the inner world of meaning is harnessed to the outer world of expressive action. Both are, and must be seen as, interdependent...Any teacher of drama will recognize that there are different levels of student involvement in the dramatic experience. What are these levels and how can a teacher identify them so that she promotes the kind of work that will bring about a change of understanding which the student can also communicate to others? [p. 21]

At this point, Morgan and Saxton offer "categorized levels of personal engagement under headings" of *interest, engaging, committing, internalizing, interpreting, and evaluating* [p. 22]. A key concept that Morgan and Saxton offer, and to the best of my knowledge, the first time written, is that "since

meaning involves thought and feeling, before any learning can take place, there must be interest". This, says Morgan and Saxton, is identifiable by presence: "Are they there?" If they are, then "Are they watching? Are they listening? Are they responding?" [p. 23]

Teachers of drama need to examine the physical presence of the child: whether or not the student is in attendance, is truant, is late, or who is there, but doesn't take part. This concept can become a criteria that is fair and equitable for all in class.

The concept of reflection receives an important standing in the process of assessment from Morgan and Saxton, in that the child must be "...willing to operate in the reflective mode through spoken or written work, through graphics, physical action or inner reflection" [p. 26]. At this initial point, it is not *what* the child produces in reflection, but that the child *is willing* to reflect, to think back on what has been accomplished. Again, this has important ramifications for the teacher of drama who uses, for instance, a journal approach in asking for student reflection. A lack of entries may indicate the unwillingness to reflect. Morgan and Saxton are careful to point out that reflection is not evaluation, since this term refers to "...the testing out of meaning through consciously working in the art form, whether in class or in performance" [p. 27]. The difference between

*in class* and *performance* is deliberate: in both instances, there will be others who will be able to observe:

Evaluating is the testing out of private feelings in the public forum. The student must be able to express the feelings intrinsic to the role in such a way that the audience will retain them long enough to internalize them. He must deal with the emanations of feeling which the audience returns to him. He must then be able to control his personal response so as to maintain the integrity of the material. In other words, he must not be carried away by the response of the audience into over-acting or over-reacting [p. 27].

This level allows the teacher even more criteria that can be addressed for determination of progress; key among these is the *control of personal response*. This is an obvious trait in a public forum. *In class presenting* is not the same as *performance*, in that:

...the orientation is still process, for the product is itself an element of the process; a necessary learning step before performance. The focus for the teacher is the satisfaction of those involved in 'the making of the play'.

In performing, the orientation is to the product and the focus for the students and the teacher is the satisfaction of the audience [p. 34].

Morgan and Saxton present teachers more than one way to examine the progress of their students. The emphasis on reflection comes through very clearly with the suggestions offered as to how to have children reflect, both in and out of role. In the role of their characters, children can be encouraged to write in such forms as a logbook, a diary, a casebook, letters, an insert for a time capsule, a first person story, reports, forms, newspaper stories, or treaties or formal statements. Out of role writing can be encouraged in scripting and story telling. Listening in role is also possible, through such forms as prayers, taped messages, and specific scenes developed for the purpose, while out of role listening is suggested by narration about the drama experience, or even sitting in silence, and thinking about what happened in the drama. Depiction of the scene through a tableau, or a mural, or an insert for a time capsule are also possibilities for reflection [p. 134-135].

The discussion reflection at the end of the lesson condemned in the 1970s by Witkin (1974) and the "irrelevant discussion" condemned by McGregor (1976) is handled differently by Morgan and Saxton who suggest that:

reflection should not be employed only at the end of a drama experience (nor only at the end of the a lesson). Reflection during the drama can give the student an opportunity to synthesize the experience 'so far', giving him time, because he is held back from the plot action,

to sort out the relationship between himself and himself in role, and an opportunity to evaluate his commitment to drama [p. 135].

The importance of the teacher in determining what it is the drama will provide to the student is again a key issue. As has been stated by Male (1973), Witkin (1974), McGregor (1976), and others, so say Morgan and Saxton: *it is of critical importance that the teacher know where the lesson is going.* As well, *planning* answers all the questions administrators can throw at a teacher. "To the teacher who knows what she is doing and why, and who understands what expectations she can have of her students, evaluation and assessment of her students' learning is a natural and necessary accompaniment to the ongoing assessment of her own planning and practice" [p. 187]. Morgan and Saxton add to that, indicating that the teacher must consider the skills to be practised, as well as the "personal baggage" each student brings along. This ties in very neatly with Witkin and the feeling theory:

Personal luggage includes: knowledge of the subject; general knowledge; skills; health; values; experiences; and feelings. Successful teaching and learning is dependent upon the teacher's awareness that each student has a personal life which will have an effect upon his work and his relationships, and that every day it will be different [p. 165].

Morgan and Saxton also support the Witkin (1974) and Robinson, and others, [1982] position about objective evaluation, stating that:

No systematic approach to evaluation in drama has evolved because the subject itself operates in a curriculum model which is heuristic (the pupil is trained to find things out for himself) rather than technological (the student is trained to assimilate a defined body of knowledge). To validate their position, drama teachers are generally required to use closed objective evaluation procedures which restrict them to a partial evaluation of the student. To redress the balance, and in fairness to the student and the teacher, we must adopt a more realistic approach to evaluation [p. 190].

Evaluation suggestions provided by Morgan and Saxton include applying a "set of common standards to a product", among which are that the:

...evaluation occurs at, and is completed within, a specific time; the marking scheme is predetermined; there must have been an instructional learning time prior to the evaluation; in evaluation, the outcome must be predictable -- the teacher will know what outcomes she is expecting, and she should share these with her students. A predicted outcome can be part of or the only criteria for valuing [p. 191].

Of particular interest to the classroom teacher is Morgan and Saxton's suggestion of establishing separate "...areas of evaluation in which 'specific judgements' may be made... administrative, content, and skills... [p. 191]. Each of these areas is then sub-divided into specifics: for instance, under the term *Administrative*, a teacher can evaluate for attendance, punctuality, respect for space, respect for equipment, completion of class assignments, and following instructions. Under the term of *Content*, for instance, a student may be evaluated on knowledge of rules, good class discipline with criteria established by the teacher, knowledge of vocabulary, knowledge of history of theatre, and knowledge of the literature of theatre [p. 191]. *Skills* include:

the demonstration of 'knowledge about' through action, [such as] the students 'mimes' without talking; the student knows when to speak, when to remain silent, and when to listen; the student speaks from memory; the student improvises; the student uses the vocabulary of the theatre correctly; the student employs the media in the service of the drama (mask, costume, prop); the student maintains a role [p. 193].

For the first time to my knowledge, a teaching text book by a drama theorist suggests a numerical value for drama performance, albeit with a warning:

All of the above can be given a numerical value, but the teacher must consider carefully what it is she is

marking. For example, can she give a 10 out of 10 to a student who maintains his role, without being influenced by the quality of his contributions? If not, then this criteria belongs under assessment.

If the teacher evaluates objectively, then she must clarify the allocation of marks before the exercise or event, so that the student can share in the responsibility of controlling the outcome [p. 193].

Morgan and Saxton are the first to mention that slap of accountability to teachers -- report cards:

However, we must face reality. At report card time the teacher must systematically boil down the student's creativity into a numerical broth and measure it up against a percentage rank chart...But if objective evaluation criteria are used exclusively, we are ignoring the holistic nature of drama. We must be careful...of the myth that the only scientific method worth that name is quantitative measurement. To believe that...is to run the risk of losing Man in the process. Fortunately, enlightened educators now recognize that there is a qualitative dimension to learning which must be considered if the student's work is to be fairly judged [p. 194].

If we are going to be honest, and try to cover the spectrum of what drama is attempting to provide the students with, then it is necessary to look at the quality of the students' work.



This is the subjectivity issue of the 1970s, the 1960s, and even the 1950s. It can be done. However, qualitative assessments require yet another list of criteria, say Morgan and Saxton:

The criteria for assessment are descriptive, invitational and evocative. They encompass a diversity of experiences and are designed to reveal both significance in, and the uniqueness of, a variety of products [p. 195].

More specifically, "the criteria in assessment identify the task, situation, problem and potential learning outcomes that may be expected...[while]...some areas which may be assessed by the qualitative method are: the general development of the individual and the group; working in role; and reflection" [p. 195]. Morgan and Saxton provide criteria for assessment both in and out of role, as well as criteria for assessment in reflection. There is another recognition of the current educational situation by assigning alpha-value grade letters to such assessments, with the assurance that:

All of the above can be rated subjectively and reasonably accurately by a letter grade:

A for very good work

B for good work

C for adequate work

D for unsatisfactory work

E for unacceptable work [p.196].

Another very strong recommendation from Morgan and Saxton is the recognition that not all students have the desire to be in dramatic experience. Dakin (1937) also recognized this, and offered a written assignment in the place of a drama activity [p. 264]. Morgan and Saxton, two generations later, recommend withdrawal, "...but only after the teacher has analyzed her relationship with the student at both the personal and the work level" [pp. 196-197].

Morgan and Saxton then return to the lesson planning of the teacher one more time:

The teacher can be accused of unfairness. She and her students must grow to trust her subjective judgement, *based on careful planning* and a clear statement of the standards to be maintained. [p. 199]

and

Evaluation and assessment are not 'chores' to be undertaken at the mad whim of an insensitive school administrator. *They are integral components of the teacher's planning*, without which she cannot know where to go next. They tell the student where he stands so he can share responsibility for his own learning. Above all, evaluation and assessment reveal to the teacher both the value and the quality of her teaching [p. 212].

The work of Morgan and Saxton may come to be a landmark in drama teaching, as teachers apply the concepts this Canadian duo has presented.

An evaluation theory of a different nature is presented by Rosenberg, an American clinical and research psychologist with an interest in drama. Singer (1987), in the introduction to the book, recognizes the "intuitive efforts of the fine writers about the acting profession beginning with Stanislavski" and suggests that Rosenberg "has gone well beyond" those, "and [has] moved to the realm of solid clinical and scientific research" [p. v in Rosenberg, 1987]. The result of this research is RIM --the Rutgers Imagination Method:

...a three-part creative drama approach that focuses on the development of imagination and dramatic behaviour, as well as on the connection between the two. RIM was developed from the fields of theatre and mental imagery. RIM activities work towards participants' mastery of specific dramatic behaviour and on acquainting participants with a whole repertoire of imaginary acquisition and manipulation strategies. RIM stimulates the connection between the two and encourages participants to explore their own ideas, view the world dramatically, organize together with others, and express what's important to them. This approach helps participants master dramatic learning... [p. 109].

The concern I have with this statement is the focus on *mastery*. This term is one of definite assessment/evaluation association, and unless the behaviour is very specific,

mastery can only be subjective. Mastery of movement, of mime, of character, to mention but three components of drama are, I think, impossible to achieve, as improvement is still possible once additional information is brought into play.

Rosenberg addresses assessment and evaluation within the RIM program, stating that teachers must:

...stress the importance of freedom: freedom to fail, to learn, and to enjoy success. There must be time to share and think, to work alone, and with others, and to act and reflect. The environment must be relaxed, yet still have a sense of purpose. Creative drama requires that individuals take risks...facilitate this risk-taking by being encouraging and by believing that each participant can accomplish the goals... [p. 128].

RIM is designed and presented for the 'leader', Rosenberg's term for 'teacher'. [A 'student' is referred to as a 'participant'.] In each section there is an activity, in relation to which there is an outline of the theatre perspective. This is followed by the stimulus required to start the activity, and a list of suggested props. Next, Rosenberg provides a section which explains to the 'leader' the focus of the activity, the procedure for making the activity go, and then questions for the evaluation of the activity [pp. 225-278]. A comment about evaluation suggests using questions which:

...[guide] participants through their own reflection, and personal/group evaluation appear[s] under this category. For all activities, we include questions that help participants in self-evaluation. For some activities, we include additional questions to assist observers in their evaluation as audience members.

These are not obligatory questions of course, but merely models of questions you might ask. Their most important characteristic is that they focus on the specific, in order to counter such generalized responses as "He was bad". Specific questions encourage participants to explore alternatives and focus on positive aspects [p. 218].

As well, there are recommendations about using checklists, rating scales, and descriptive assessments; in fact, Rosenberg offers the drama teacher sixteen pages of checklists and rating scales descriptions [pp. 313-328].

What sounds like an assessor's dream come true has however, a major flaw. I am concerned with the Rosenberg/RIM assessment and evaluation criteria, in that, despite this method of drama being touted as clinically researched, and as being:

...tested in a variety of situations and with a variety of populations. Testing provides invaluable information on the activities themselves, on the format of each

activity, and on the scope of the method as a whole [p. 111]

Rosenberg, as a clinical psychologist, uses subjective terminology in all of her assessment descriptors. *Outstanding, Above Average, Average, Below Average, Far Below Average, Usually, Sometimes, Describes, Acknowledges, Rarely, Fails to, Retains some, Occasionally, Almost always, Almost never*, [pp. 313 - 328] are terms which every teacher and every student can interpret in different ways. So long as there is agreement between the student and the teacher as to what each term means, I would imagine the difference in interpretation can be handled; proper planning of the lesson, and negotiation of the assessment criteria should do that. However, that Rosenberg did not offer her criteria on determination of terms such as *average* or *sometimes* is unfortunate.

Rosenberg's discussion of the descriptive assessment and the modified descriptive assessment guide is interesting, and worthwhile. It addresses the subjectivity of the observer, the teacher, while allowing for a description of what is being done by the students. Rosenberg describes such assessment:

A descriptive assessment describes and interprets behaviors that are being demonstrated, processes that are going on, effects that are evident, or even trends that are developing. Your primary objective in using this measure is to describe the phenomenon of creative drama

as you see it. You may wish to collect your comments over time and provide a selected chronicle of the development of the individual/group/dramatic enactment over a semester's work. Or you may wish to develop a detailed narrative of one day's activities.

The major strength of this type of measure (as it exists ideally) is that it is *descriptive*, not prescriptive. The more specific the guide or measure is, the more value-laden it is, because the rater has been presented with a preconceived notion of what should occur. A descriptive assessment, in contrast to the checklist or rating scale, allows observers to describe a myriad of aspects within the phenomenon and enables them to capture unique creative drama situations...[p. 328].

Rosenberg suggests that comments should "avoid jargon and cliches", and that teachers ought to:

take care to be as objective and as accurate as possible. And once you have done a few assessments, you may wish to develop your own category systems. Your assessments can reflect your personal, program, and participant goals [p. 329].

Of paramount importance to the issue of drama assessment, indeed, to drama itself, is the examination of the arts in British schools that was funded by a group known as the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, under the chairmanship of

Peter Brinson in 1982. The report of that committee could have great impact on the teachers and students in Manitoba today, as the report addresses everything from the curriculum changes brought in by the government to assessment of arts programs in schools at various levels. It is worthy of closer examination, with parallels to Manitoba being drawn where appropriate, especially in the areas of assessment and evaluation.

To begin with, the report introduces the idea of government-introduced:

...curriculum guidelines which have little to say about the arts. It has become clear, too, that the continuing cuts are having effects on the quality and range of education as well as on its provision [p. 2].

The parallel in Manitoba began in the late 1980s with the call for a review of the high school education program. Meetings and recommendations followed, with the result that a document called *Answering the Challenge* was released by the Department of Education and Training in 1990. Couched in careful political language, this document calls for, among other things, an increase in English instruction by adding extra courses, as well as a return to province wide "unseen" examinations in the major subjects. New courses in health, English, physical education, and life skills mean that the options program time slot at the high school, where all of the arts programs, including drama are found, is in danger of



being reduced to make room for these new mandatory courses at a core level.

Brinson states that in "the widespread discussions which have been taking place about the school curriculum, the arts - dance, drama, music, visual arts, literature -- have been given little attention" [p. 3]. This is also true in the discussions occurring in Manitoba at the present time.

Brinson adds that in Britain, "existing levels of provision for the arts in education are actually being threatened due to: the effects of falling schools rolls; cuts in public expenditure; [and] some of the demands of educational accountability." Divisions in Winnipeg have closed schools, including St.Vital and St. James School Division.

Next, a focus on academic excellence by businesses is forcing the administration of the school system -- both provincial and local -- to try to answer the challenges thrown at the system of education by business. In Manitoba that means the re-introduction of final examinations for high school students. It is a political exercise, and as Brinson states:

...tighten[ing] the grip of examination courses on the curriculum...make[s] it resistant to change. Academic success is also often pursued at the expense of other equally important abilities in young people. The undervaluing of these other capabilities instills into

many pupils an undeserved sense of failure and wastes enormous reserves of talent and potential [pp.4-5].

Brinson points a finger at the examination system in Britain as being a restriction on the teaching of the arts. Examinations in the first place, suggests Brinson, force forms of assessment to occur which are inappropriate for the arts programs, and in the second place, only certain parts of arts courses lend themselves to examination [p. 63]. This often results in an over-emphasis of the more easily examined areas, no matter how important they really are. A third fallout from examinations is that British students are loathe to take courses which do not give them "usable qualifications" [p. 63] In Manitoba, we do not have, as yet, external examinations in the arts, including drama. What we do have is just as nefarious, however: the demand of the high school for a percentage mark in each course.

Brinson recommends that "...provision for the arts should be made throughout the secondary school independently of examination options' [p. 66]. Manitoba should consider the same thing. After all, percentage requirements were originally put in place by someone; they have been there for so long, reification has occurred. However, what one person has created, another can break.

In Britain in 1982, society called for accountability in education, and the same is happening in Manitoba in the 1990s. In both locations, the call has been to basic skills in

literacy and numeracy proven in written 'unseen' examinations. Brinson disagrees with that premise, suggesting that "the real issue [of] how to improve the overall quality and general balance of education is...the legitimate province of accountability" [p. 82]. This is not a new call. As has been shown elsewhere in this thesis, Kandel (1936) and Witkin (1974) have said virtually the same thing.

How to improve the overall quality and balance in education comes back to the issue of assessment and evaluation, because as Brinson points out:

the principal function of assessment in schools is to provide information about pupils' abilities and levels of attainment. This fulfils an important role in keeping parents, staff, and pupils alert to current levels of work [p. 82].

He adds a most telling statement, however, when stating that "every assessment of a pupil is also an assessment of the teachers and of the school" [p.82]. If teachers need to assess students, then teachers need to assess themselves and the system in which their programs work. "Teachers and pupils alike need information on each other's activities and perceptions if their work together is to advance." [p. 82-83]

The arts, drama included, and other subjects do not, as presently evaluated, allow for a sharing of assessment devices. This was mentioned by Witkin (1974) and also by Morgan and Saxton (1987). Most other courses of an academic

nature have quantitative aspects, as opposed to the qualitative aspects of drama. Witkin also offered the need for feeling and personal values in drama, two aspects which 'objective' assessment techniques cannot measure. Brinson also supports this, adding that intuition is a key to the arts. Rather than being a weakness, Brinson suggests such feeling and intuition are actually strengths:

The arts enable us to assert ideas and judgements which we may recognize collectively to be true but which cannot be proven in other ways, through empirical experiment for example. Intuitive judgement must be recognized as a legitimate element in evaluating this work in schools. Attempts to make the arts accountable by submitting them to forms of assessment which properly belong elsewhere may actually make them appear wanting by looking for inappropriate forms of 'proof' [p. 86].

Brinson is against examinations. I am against percentage marks and other forms of 'graded accountability' that I am expected to produce for the students in my classes, despite the fact that my classes in drama cannot be evaluated in the usual academic way. However, like Brinson, I can see the need for a manner of assessment which provides a satisfactory explanation of what the pupil has done, why it has been done, what the reasons were for doing it, and what has been got out of doing it. Brinson calls it a "profile report" -- a system that is a "...summative assessment which clarifies the

contribution of the arts to pupils' overall development and which indicates attainment in their work" [p. 89]. Rosenberg's descriptive assessment and the modified descriptive assessment guide seem to be modelled after the profile report, in that "...the intention is to provide more detailed and descriptive accounts of pupils' work and experience at school and of their personal qualities" [Brinson, p. 89]. Brinson goes further than Rosenberg in identifying the problems with profile reporting:

Three main difficulties are: first, consistency of reports --ensuring some form of comparability; second, the possible discouragement of those whose reports are unfavourable; third, the possibility of controversy between parents and teachers. Moreover, it is in precisely those areas where profiles might be of most value -- in describing personal and social qualities -- that there is most room for controversy.

The benefits however, are strong. Profile reports can be written by teachers, by students, or by teachers and students on a shared basis. In fact, it would appear that properly designed profile reports could "...provide frameworks within which pupils themselves can keep a personal record of interests, aptitudes, and abilities" [Brinson, p.89].

Brinson adds:

Profile reporting deserves serious consideration as a way of forging links between formative and summative assessment and of integrating both into the daily pattern of education. This can benefit parents, teachers, pupils, and employers by providing more comprehensive and vivid information while reflecting on the contribution of the various curriculum activities to pupils' general development [p. 90].

Indeed profile reporting is the way to go, and the first question that comes to mind is one of development. How does a teacher begin to create an assessment system that will fit into the daily pattern of education? To address that, it is necessary to examine the course content as described in the curriculum: the Manitoba high school drama program.

## CHAPTER III

### A DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAMA 305 COURSE

The high school drama 105 205 305 curriculum is based on the goals of promotion of "...awareness, foster[ing] development and encourag[ing the] use of: imagination, creativity, co-operation, self-discipline, analysis and synthesis, self-expression, self-confidence, responsibility, communication, [and] cultural heritage." [p. 1] The curriculum is organized around "...a set of drama elements which are developed at different levels of complexity over the three years" [p. 2] usually in grades 10, 11, and 12, [now in the process of changing to Senior 2, 3, and 4] but with the school proviso that scheduling on a semester basis can occur so that two credits are taken in one school year.

The drama curriculum is not a "recipe book" for teachers to follow slavishly, but rather is a guide that outlines elements of drama as "...essential components around which teachers may build programs for specific groups of students" [p. 2]. There are some included activities in the guide, but the final decision on drama implementation in each of the programs depends upon the teacher in the classroom. The structure of the curriculum is that of a continuum, with a suggested level of achievement for each of the grades in high school.

This continuum suggests that drama 305 be considered as a "Synthesis of Elements in Order to Create and Communicate a

Personal Statement" [p. 2]. Later in the document this is expanded to state:

The senior course (Drama 305) aims to increase students' control over artistic communication through synthesis of the elements. At this level, students will plan and perform sustained original creations using a variety of resources (research, interviews, newspapers, media) and formats (collectives, anthologies, docu-dramas, readers theatre) [p. 3].

The drama program at Transcona Collegiate Institute follows the curriculum quite closely, in that the broad goals of each level are followed quite purposefully. Drama 105 is planned as an improvisational course that "aims to develop student awareness of the drama elements to enable fuller participation in and greater understanding of the drama experience" [p. 3] while drama 205 "...continues to emphasize the elements and extends the experience to scripts and literature appropriate for dramatic interpretation" [p. 3]. However, in drama 305, the production of student-generated material is waived, as the students have been exposed to that in drama 205, in favour of synthesizing the drama elements by means of communicating the words of others to an audience -- in other words, *doing a play*. The record of play production in Transcona Collegiate's grade XII course since my arrival in the late 1980s has been at least one full length play each year.



At the drama 305 level, this means that the eleven drama elements stressed by the curriculum must be applied through student initiation: there must be synthesis and then application. Taking the elements in order as described in the document, this means that there must be "self-initiated preparation" in the *relaxing/energizing* element; "sustaining focus" in the *concentration* element, exploring the "history of drama" and using "playwriting/performance" in the *content* element, having a "visualization/realization of the drama" in the *seeing* element, creating an "imaginative response" in the *listening* element, developing "creative (aesthetic) expression and response" in the *movement* element, offering "expression and interpretation" in the *talk/voice/speech* element, using "collaboration" with *the group* element, "developing and conveying a character" in the *acting out* element, using "visual elements to interpret/support creativity" in the *design* element, and "arranging sound to support meaning and communication" in the *sound* element. [p. 5]

Of specific interest to the level of drama that TCI strives for in the drama 305 production course is *concentration* at a level which the curriculum suggests students should be

...able to accept and project themselves into almost any dramatic situation with ease and confidence. At this level, students should regard it as a personal goal and responsibility to maintain and extend concentration and to encourage others to do the same [p. 11].

Another goal presented by the curriculum is found under *content*, where the curriculum suggests "...students are expected to show mastery of all elements outlined in the curriculum within their presentations [p. 13].

In the *listening* element, the production course meets the objective of developing "...the ability to listen with the mind for subtext as well as text and for various nuances and emphases" [p. 17]. Related to this is the *talk/voice/speech* element, where the production course places emphasis on "...control of previously studied concepts --appropriateness, register, fluency, interpretation of script, aesthetic awareness of language" [p. 21].

Of critical importance to success in drama 305 is the *group cooperation*. Cooperative learning lives in a successful drama production, as described by the curriculum:

The group becomes more responsible for its own decisions and requires less guidance... its successes and failures depend on the development and management of its own resources. The successful group becomes increasingly self-sufficient, self-motivated, and self-sustaining. Peer evaluation is particularly useful as the individual recognizes and appreciates group skills [p. 23].

An important element in production is *design*, and in drama 305 "...the student may begin to use additional visual elements such as lighting, costume, make-up, [and] scenery... to demonstrate greater control of visual resources to support communication" [p. 27].

Finally, at TCI, the drama 305 program is a course that must be preceded by successful completion of drama 105 and drama 205, unless the instructor permits other drama programs such as those offered through the Manitoba Theatre Centre or Prairie Theatre Exchange Youth Acting Programs to substitute as equal experience. This three-year drama program at TCI has been in existence since 1987, the year that I was transferred to the collegiate, and initiated the program.

The methodology behind drama 305 is one that is student-driven, with the teachers as facilitator/guide. I see my role as allowing the students to form a theatrical company, and then producing their play, using their input and decision-making in areas ranging from the selection of the material to the technical production.

From the first day of class, when the students completed their expectations of the course sheet to the breaking of the set after the final curtain call, decisions were achieved by the Company. True, I was asked for input, and true, there were occasions when I told people that a scene would occur in a certain way, but these situations were actually few.

Each day began with a warm-up activity, segued into a group meeting time for reflection and planning, and then moved into a rehearsal period that lasted until virtually the end of the 80 minute period. Most of the time, the final five minutes was also spent in a group meeting, again reflecting on the success, or lack of success, of the day's events. At this

time, recommendations for home study would be offered, as well as an outline of what the next day's rehearsal would encompass.

To keep the Company on track, a complete production time line was drawn on large chart paper: 10 metres long by 1 metre high. Early in February, all critical dates: opening night, off book, costumes collected, all props collected, and advertising programs were placed on the chart. Days that the Company would be working without me if I were to be involved in professional development workshops, for example, were also identified. Information such as birthdays and parties also found their way onto the sheet: Company morale was considered important, and the countdown sheet was as good as a place to put special events as any.

Individual notes pertaining to roles being played were kept in the production book, and the script, because of the changes necessitated by the addition of new characters, was entirely retyped, and then photocopied on 8½ x 11 paper, one-side, providing space for hand-written notes. I used a daily reminder book, and sheets of foolscap for any notes or jottings that I wished to keep.

The Company began with a series of read-throughs, first as a Company, to get the "feel of the play", and then moved into French scene groups to re-read specific scenes with the cast members who would be with them in those scenes. Once the script was at a comfortable level, the blocking of the scenes

occurred. The rehearsals began on page one of the script, and moved sequentially through the play. Only when certain characters were absent due to illness did the Company not continue in the sequential order.

While the actual stage blocking occurred, those Company members who were not on stage worked elsewhere in the room, memorizing lines, developing character, practising with props, rehearsing movement, planning sets and lighting grids, or at times, watching, with an active eye, the rehearsals on stage. Watchers were asked to contribute their opinions about strengths and "take two's" --scenes with which they felt some discomfort. Cast members on stage also contributed to the analysis of the scene, and once a comfort level had been reached, added a description, often with arrows to show movement, to their production books.

The technical aspect of the program was the one for which it was most difficult for the Company to accept ownership. In past years, my input had been very high in this area, and for *Rehearsal for Murder*, I was determined that the Company would take more responsibility. As it developed, members of the Company did volunteer to provide a set design, set pieces, and a willingness to set up the lighting grid. The actual design of the lighting grid did fall on my shoulders, although this was due to budget rather than unwillingness on the part of the Company. TCI's drama program has 6 stage lights, and a partial grid as regular equipment. *Rehearsal for Murder*

called for 24 lights, and extra piping for the grid. At a cost of over \$350 a week, the Company could not afford the luxury of having this material available for experimentation and learning.

Advertising was handled the same way. The Company developed the idea that would be used, and then members of the Company became responsible for the "on-air" announcements that were performed live over the public-address system of the school. As well, members of the Company visited classrooms where they presented a sales pitch as to why tickets ought to be purchased. Posters were designed by me on the computer, enlarged on the school photocopier, and then a Company committee was responsible for their display. Ticket sales, the only source of revenue for the show, were also the responsibility of the Company. These sales occurred during the school day, and also after school hours.

The approach was successful. *Rehearsal for Murder* met all the expectations I had as director. The show played to just under 1000 people over an eight show run. Sell outs were achieved for all the matinée performances, as well as the final evening performance. Opening night, and the following two evenings achieved an audience between 65% and 80% of seating capacity.

The final judgement comes in two parts: audience response was very positive, even from the elementary students who were our special audience one afternoon, and *Rehearsal for*

*Murder* ended with its books in the black: a profit of some \$185 was achieved.

The assessment and evaluation of the students was done through the profile reports, while the methodology for collection of data for those profile reports came from past experience. Although McCaslin suggests that

the teacher may want to make 'before and after' tapes of the class. [because] these are often more revealing than the teacher's recollections, written notes or check sheets in showing the progress made from the beginning to the end of the year [p. 42].

previous classes had demonstrated that the time required for analysis of video and audio tape from the teacher's point of view was not reasonable. This is not to say that video tape was not used, because it was. The analysis of this tape, however, occurred within the parameters of the philosophy of the program: student direction wherever possible. Early video tape was watched by the group, and then discussed. I did use written notes a lot, and the profile comments were drafted from a reflective point of view, with the notes in front of the computer keyboard.

The other aspect that added to the idea of *progress made from the beginning to the end of the year* was that all of these drama students had been involved with TCI's drama program in previous terms, so their anecdotal reports were accessible to me by retrieving the drama 205 file on my computer.

## CHAPTER IV

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROFILE REPORT COMPONENTS

The profile report was originally designed to include videotapes of individual and group rehearsals, audio tapes of line readings, various written notations from me as the instructor/director, as well as student-noted comments about group activities and personal reflection. As noted in Chapter I, the criterion of student anonymity as demanded by the University of Manitoba thesis study guidelines disallowed the use of video recording and audio recording tapes as part of the take home profile report. As a result, the use of audio recording was dropped, and video recording assessment occurred in a classroom situation where viewing time was often limited. Rather than becoming a multi-media profile report, then, the take-home component was one that was strictly in print form, although the print had been generated by more than one hand.

The actual profile report holder was a black or blue vinyl plastic report cover, pierced for standard three-hole punched paper. The cover was a clear acetate, allowing the title page to be seen clearly.

The title page was created on my computer, using *PageMaker 4.0*, a desktop publishing program that was the



generator of all the material that went into the profile report. The actual writing design process was in two formats:

a] for longer documents, such as letters or comments to the students, I would use *WordPerfect 5.1*, a word-processing program, and then *place* the text into *PageMaker 4.0* for desktop design;

b] in cases where there was a minimum amount of text generation required, I would design the product directly in *PageMaker 4.0*.

As indicated in Chapter III, drama 305 is what I call the production program -- the intention is to create something in a dramatic form so that others in the form of an audience can be brought into the teaching space. The room is re-named *The Black Box Theatre*, and renovated by the addition of extra lighting equipment, raised flooring, and extra seating into a theatrical forum in either theatre-in-the-round or proscenium style.

The students who take drama 305 have taken two other prerequisite courses -- drama 105 and drama 205, and it can be said that all of these students have a love of drama, a love of the stage, and a desire to perform. The attrition rate from drama 105 to drama 305 is very high, with total numbers such as 65 or 70 in drama 105 resulting in a drama 305 class of 12 or 15.

The study group class, therefore, could be likened to survivors, but in this case, survivors from two separate incidents, in that the 1993 drama 305 program was allowed to continue only because there was the melding of two separate classes and years: the drama 205 class from February to June, 1992, and the drama 205 class from September through January, 1993. There was an age difference of a year between the members of the two groups, and more importantly, a mistrust of abilities.

For a successful class and therefore a successful production, it was necessary to achieve four things during the first week:

- a) all members of the performing company had to get to know each other personally;
- b) all members of the performing company had to see that the skills that each brought to the company were useful and appropriate to the class needs;
- c) a level of trust had to be developed among the members of the company;
- d) a common goal had to be established among the members of the company.

A good place to begin this process of class unification was to determine what each class member expected to achieve within the parameters of drama 305. Personal written statements in the form of expectations were sought.

#### THE DRAMA 305 EXPECTATIONS SHEET

Personally, I felt a need for a sense of expectation and direction from each of the company members. I also thought that sharing these expectations would be one of the steps in achieving the unification needed for success, so the first part of the profile report was the *drama 305 expectations* sheet. This sheet was distributed the first day of classes, after warm-up and get-to-know activities, with the request that it be completed before the class was over, and turned in to me for perusal and comment.

By design, the sheet is simple: a space is provided for the name of the student, and after the question: *What do you want this course to give you?*, space is provided for students to write. Provision was made for the use of the other side of the paper or looseleaf paper. The expectations sheet was then stored in the profile report binder, as the first student-generated sheet after the title page: a silent reminder to each reader of that portfolio binder as to the writer's personal expectations for the drama 305 program. [see page 113]



## THE DRAMA 305 REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

Once the class was under way, I decided that it was imperative that "a finger be held to the pulse of the group", so to speak, and introduced the reflective journal sheet. This is a single sheet of paper, again three-hole punched, with five specific sections:

1 The *Week ending and journal number* section where students would enter the last date of the week for classes, usually a Friday, and a number identifying the week in a chronological fashion.

2 The *Weekly summary* section where students would describe the focus of the week's activities, as well as the activities that were done. The suggested length of written entry was to be 25 words.

3 The *high point of the week* section where students would describe what they felt was their best moment or moments, and what made it so. The suggested length of written entry was to be 50 words.

4 The *low point of the week* where students would describe what they felt was their weakest moment or

moments, and what made it so. The suggested length of written entry was to be 50 words.

5 A *self-rating scale* numbered from 0 through 10 in unit increments where students could indicate their belief as to how hard they had worked over the week.

Students were given multiple copies of this sheet, and additional copies were available in the drama room. As part of the course requirements, students were to complete this sheet each weekend, and turn it in to me on the following Monday, or the next day back at school.

Those students who wished to write more than the space provided allowed were permitted either to use the reverse of the paper, or to use looseleaf paper. [see page 116]

drama 305 reflective journal

Week ending: \_\_\_\_\_ Journal Number: \_\_\_\_\_

In about 25 words, summarize the week's activities/focus:


In about 50 words, what would be the high point of the week, and what would make it so?


In about 50 words, what would be the low point of the week, and what would make it so?


Using your work and effort over the week as a base, where would you place yourself on this scale?



920202-2  
930201-1

## THE DRAMA DAILY LOG SHEET

As a means of keeping daily data in the form of notes, sketches, or jottings, students were given the choice of using daily log sheets, a three-hole punched sheet with two boxes, each taking up just less than one half of the page, or a journal section in each student's production book -- a 150 page hard cover notebook that is used as a storage base for changes and suggestions to the characters and play format.

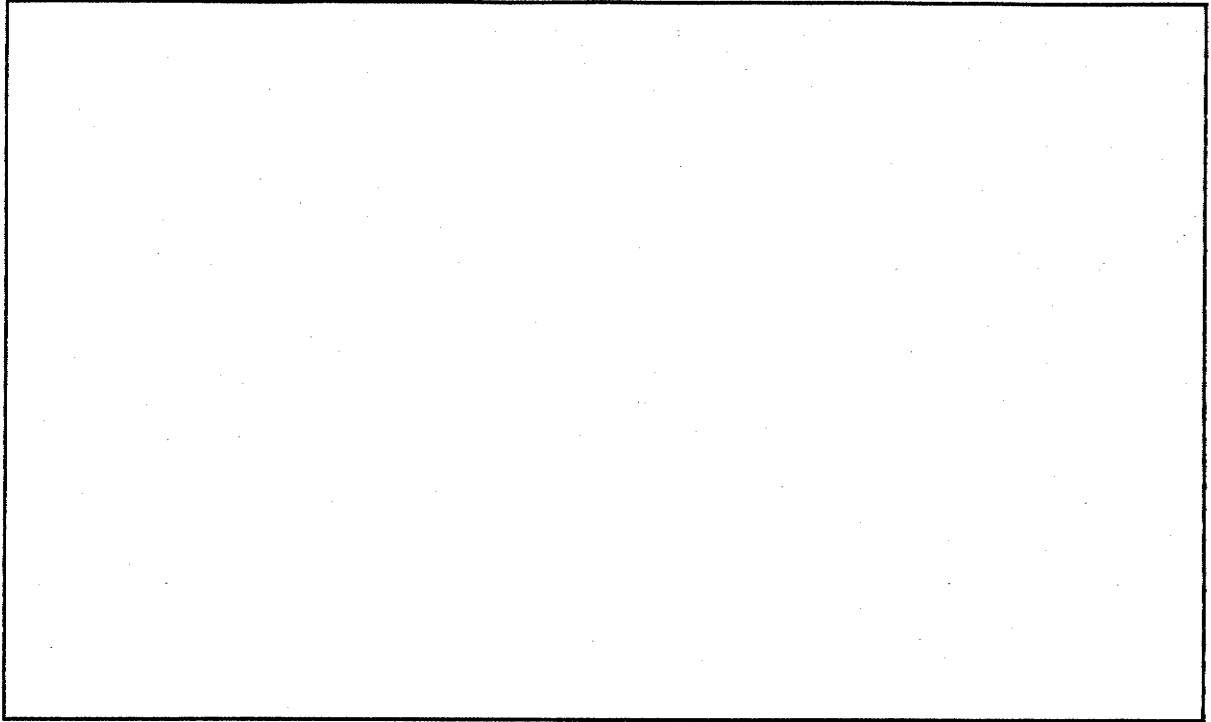
[see page 118]



drama 305 daily log

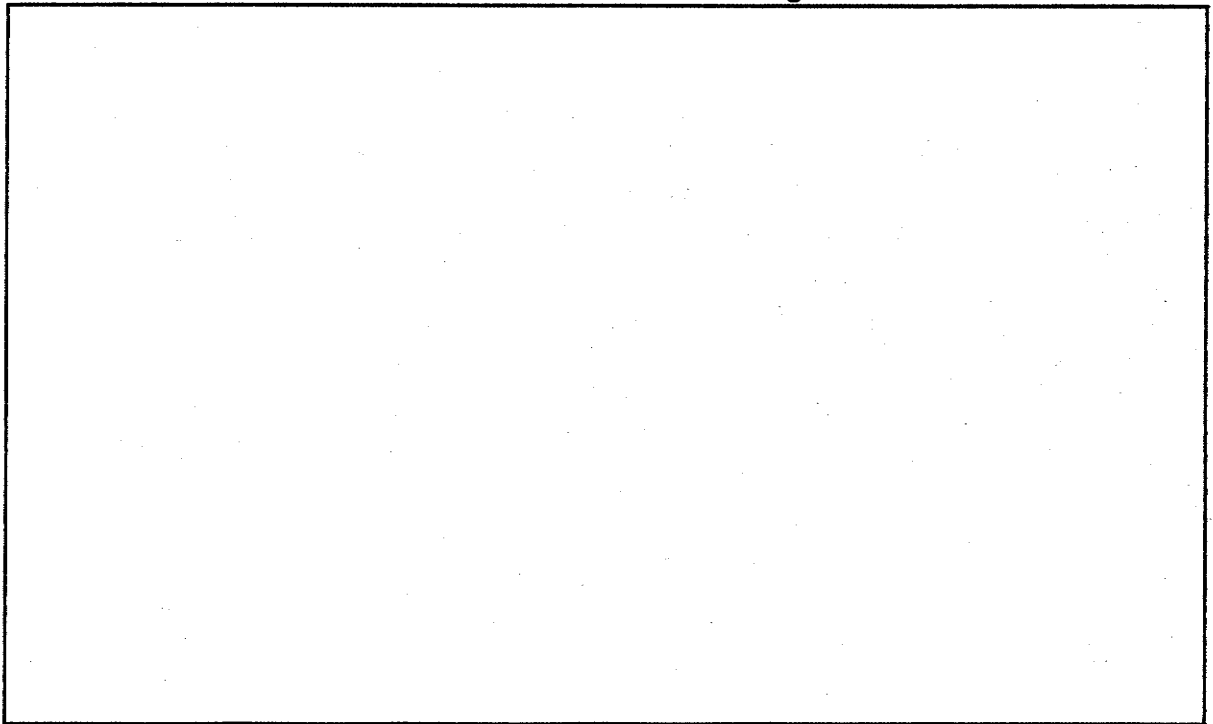
date: \_\_\_\_\_

log number: \_\_\_\_\_

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for writing notes or observations.

date: \_\_\_\_\_

log number: \_\_\_\_\_

A second large, empty rectangular box with a black border, identical to the one above, for additional notes.

## PERSONAL LETTER

At the end of the read-through period when the class individually read and then collectively discussed the merits and shortcomings of *Rehearsal for Murder* and *Drum Song*, I asked each member of the class to draft a personal letter to me outlining a personal recommendation of which play ought to be performed by Company 305. The instructions were given on a sheet that I distributed to each class member, titled *drama 305*. [see page 119]

The class members took the assignment very seriously, and turned in work that for the most part, supported the group consensus.

## Drama 305

It's reflection and decision time, You've read the two plays *Rehearsal for Murder* and *Drum Song*.

Put together a detailed reflective letter to me that explains the benefits of both, the shortcomings of both, and a recommendation.

You must take into account the needs of the groups, as well as your own.

Don't skimp on this. The more the detail, the more honesty you put into this, the better the next sixteen weeks or so will be.

Before I forget: PlayBlitz at PTE is April 3-May 2, if you're interested in auditions.

Your show dates will May 25 through May 29 inclusive, so book your time off early.

There will probably be evening rehearsals in May, so be ready for that, too.

## THE REHEARSAL FOR MURDER AUDITION SHEET

Once the class decision had been reached that the play to be produced would be *Rehearsal for Murder*, the focus of the group shifted into character definition and script read throughs, with the aim of getting ready for auditions. The idea of the audition is one that has always been used in the drama 305 production course, for two reasons. The first reason is that competition for a role is normal in theatre life, and the production course has been designed so that the students experience as many aspects of the real world of theatre as possible. Related to this is the second reason: the original script called for a cast as small as eight to stage successfully *Rehearsal*--Company 305 had 17 students in it. With *Rehearsal for Murder* being selected by the cast, either additional characters would have to be created, or double casting would have to occur. Double casting occurs when the same role is played by two cast members, who then alternate performances -- in effect, Company 305 had enough members to produce two versions of the same play. My desire was to have the Company work as one entity, so double casting was out of the question. Auditions played a key role in determining who was to be cast as the script's original characters.

The audition sheet is a one-sided sheet, beginning with a location for the hopeful's name, a location for the name of

the character awarded, followed by the list of characters from the play, including the new characters written in by company members. Students were to choose their top three choices in ranking order: 1, 2, 3. Immediately after that, each character's three most important characteristics are to be described in phrases or single words. This description came from the student's read throughs of the script, as well as personal interpretation. The final section of the audition sheet is the adjudicator's assessment section, where aspects of performance such as *voice, gesture, movement, character interpretation, and dependency on script* are rated. The final section is a space for comments from the adjudicators. [see page 123]

The audition process involved the selection of one of three prepared audition pieces, and presentation in the drama room in front of two adjudicators: the school librarian, who is also a performer in his own right, and me.

The audition sheets, once completed and cast assigned, were returned to the cast member for inclusion in the portfolio. [see page 123]

# Rehearsal for Murder: audition sheet

name \_\_\_\_\_

character awarded
-------------------

List your preferences for roles as 1, 2, and 3:

Alex	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ernie	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sally	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monica	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loretta	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lloyd	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bella	<input type="checkbox"/>	Karen	<input type="checkbox"/>	David	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leo	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Police 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	Santoro	<input type="checkbox"/>	Frank	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ashley	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dawn	<input type="checkbox"/>	McElroy	<input type="checkbox"/>						

In short phrases, or one word, describe the three most important characteristics, as you see them, of the character you'd like to play:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Adjudicator's use only

Voice:	enunciation	1	2	3	4	5	projection	1	2	3	4	5
	emotion	1	2	3	4	5	pausing	1	2	3	4	5
Gesture:	none	somewhat	potentially there	got it								
Movement:	none	somewhat	potentially there	got it								
Interpretation of character:	playing part	illusionary	reality									
Dependency on script:	100%	50%	25%	briefly	none							

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

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## FRENCH SCENE ANALYSIS SHEET

Once each company member had been assigned a role based on the auditions first, with personal choice of the three preferred characters as a secondary factor, read-throughs began in earnest. *French scene* is the term given to a mini-scene--a section of the play marked by the entrance or exit of a major character. In a class rehearsal situation, it is possible to have more than one scene being rehearsed at once, especially in a play such as *Rehearsal for Murder*, where character interaction is designed by entrance and exits.

The French scene analysis sheet is designed to assist the performers who are involved in such a scene to identify, first of all, the scenes they are in by scene number, and related pages. The characters who are in that French scene are then identified, as are the opening and closing lines as parameters of the French scene. The major part of the analysis sheet is the space for the performer's interpretation of the intention of the scene. Space is also provided for the date that the analysis was completed. [see page 125]



REHEARSAL FOR MURDER  
FRENCH SCENE ANALYSIS

SCENE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ PAGE START: \_\_\_\_\_ PAGE FINISH: \_\_\_\_\_

CHARACTERS IN SCENE: \_\_\_\_\_

OPENING LINE: \_\_\_\_\_

CLOSING LINE: \_\_\_\_\_

THE INTENTION OF THE SCENE IS TO:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
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 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE

\_\_\_\_\_

PERFORMER



## DRAMA PROFILE REPORT #1

The first profile report written by me is in two parts. The first is a general letter providing *background to the course, background to the class, a description of the reporting period, a list of assignments,* and a general statement covering the topic *What I've seen so far.* As well, the three telephone numbers where I can be reached were included. [See pages 127 and 128]



## Drama profile report #1

February 01 through to February 19

### Background to the course:

Drama 305 is the production course that is usually taken by grade 12 students, or students in their third semester of drama. Students must have taken drama 105 [improvisation] and drama 205 [script interpretation] in order to be in what becomes Company 305. The goal of this Company is to produce a full-length theatrical experience, usually done at the end of May.

Past productions include: My Dance in the Rain and Voices from the High School [1992] and The Creature Creeps [1991].

### Background to this class:

This class is made up of 17 students; ten of these are from the drama 205 class of semester one of this year, six are from the drama 205 class of last year, and Chris, the lead male in My Dance in the Rain, is taking the course again, because of a love of drama.

### This reporting period

This past three weeks has been spent on three primary objectives:

1. Getting the class members to know and understand each other.
2. Examining script possibilities.
3. Getting ready for audition of parts.

There have been five written assignments:

- 1 Course expectations
- 2 Script selection letter
- 3 three weekly summaries

Assigned now, and due next week, March 01 are what are called French scene analysis sheets, which are to be completed for the scenes that each performer is in.

What I've seen so far:

Pertaining to objective 1: Getting the class members to know and understand each other.

There has been some movement to acceptance on the part of the class members. I'm not completely satisfied yet, and this is something that must occur. Drama students often refer to their group as "family", and that sensation hasn't happened. If this show is going to work, then the class has to become a company, and that means that everyone has to be open enough to take risks, honest enough to give and accept criticism, and tough enough to take it. All of these students have the common denominator of "love of drama", or they wouldn't be here -- the bonding has to occur soon.

Pertaining to objective 2: Examining script possibilities.

Budget restraints meant that the number of script possibilities was limited. The cast read Act 1 of Rehearsal for Murder, and fell in love with it, to the point where virtually all of the cast wanted to do this show. Drum Song, another possibility, was the choice of one person. The problems with Rehearsal for Murder were glossed over, in fact, perhaps not even recognized until later, with the result that there has had to be substantial modification in order to get everyone on stage. No one was willing to look at behind the scenes work as a commitment to the course. That in itself is no problem, as now all of the company will be expected to assist in certain areas.

Pertaining to objective 3: Getting ready for audition of parts.

This has certainly been the highlight of the three weeks. The audition process resulted in the comment of "an embarrassment of riches" -- too many capable people for too few roles suitable for their talents. The script modifications will help, but there is no doubt that one of the lessons about play production will certainly be learned -- all parts are necessary, and that 50 lines or less do not make the role any less important to the success of the show that the 400 of the leading role.

The "I" must always come after the "we" -- the group comes first: it can be no other way.

The next sheet is a brief summary of attendance, as well as a "personal comment". There is also space for you to add your reflections on the course, the profile reports, the portfolio that this is found in, or anything else that strikes your fancy.

Speaking of the portfolio, Company 305 will be bringing this portfolio home every three weeks. There is also a production log book that will begin use this week -- we're waiting for these from Willson's.

Regards,

Dave Normandale

ps	school 'phone is	958-6440	Radisson 'phone is	222-3238
	my home office is	669-3591		128

The second part is one sided sheet made up of five distinct sections. The first is the name of the company member, the second is a section with spaces for the date received at home, parental initial, date received back at school, and my initial. The third section is a quasi-calendar form, covering the dates from February 01 through February 19, with space for the total number of absences and lates. Under this, are two boxes covering about one-third of the space, marked *My Comments* and *Your Comments*.

Comments generated by me were handwritten, as were the entries in the attendance record box. [see page 130]

date received at home \_\_\_\_\_ parental initial \_\_\_\_\_  
 date received back at school \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. N's initial \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY MEMBER

**attendance**

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Total this term
1	2	3	4	5	absent / late
8	9	10	11	12	
15	16	17	18	19	

MY COMMENTS

YOUR COMMENTS

## LINE MOTIVATION SHEET

This sheet is a one-sided page with 5 sections: page number, line identification, props needed, actions, and motivation for the line. The purpose of the sheet is to provide space for individual analysis of a line of script that the performer is having difficulty in presenting.

The sample provided to the cast included a model of use:

page 8

Line from: "ladies and ... to: ...half-hour."

props needed: none

actions: none

motivation for line:

*This line is the announcement to the cast -- the purpose is to let the cast know that time is ticking on, yet to do it in gentle way. The line is said with a pause after "ladies and gentlemen", even though the author hasn't put one in -- listeners to a p.a. need time to listen -- there is also a pause before the time of "half an hour". The tone must be calm -- no panic.*

*Q. Should the line be repeated for emphasis?*

[See page 132]



# REHEARSAL FOR MURDER LINE MOTIVATION ANALYSIS

PAGE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

LINE: FROM: \_\_\_\_\_ TO: \_\_\_\_\_

PROPS NEEDED: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

MOTIVATION FOR LINE: \_\_\_\_\_

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DATE

PERFORMER

## SELF-ASSESSMENT: END OF FIRST ACT

The need for reflective thought about progress is met at key points throughout a play -- natural breaks occur in scripts in the form of ends of scenes and acts. With *Rehearsal for Murder*, this natural break occurred at the end of Act One: there were no scene breaks provided, other than those the Company had identified as French scenes. The purpose of the self-assessment is simply to determine how each Company member viewed personal progress at this time.

This part of the profile report is a one-sided, 6 question sheet. The first five questions require written responses, while number six requires a *yes* or *no* answer indicated by a check mark. [see page 134]



Self-assessment  
end of first act

1. At this time, how well do you know your character? In your response, look to things that you are comfortable with, but also look to things that you are still questioning.

2. At this time, are you happy with your line memorization? Explain why, or why not.

3. At this time, are you happy with the blocking of the scenes that you are playing? Which scene gives you the most pleasure, and which gives you the least. [If your character hasn't been on stage yet, simply indicate that.]

4. Stepping outside yourself, would you be pleased with the way in which you have used your time this past month of rehearsal? Why, why not?

5. At this time, how would you describe the feeling you have of the group?

6. Simply check the boxes:

a) All French scene analyses are completed.      yes       no

b) I have done line motivation sheets for lines that are giving me trouble.      yes       no

c) I take my script home more regularly than not.      yes       no

d) I have started my production book notes on

i	costume	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii	props	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii	changes in scenes	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv	things to work on	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no	<input type="checkbox"/>

930318-1

DRAMA 305 VIDEO ASSESSMENT 921130-2

This sheet is a single-sided paper with two sections of 4 entry spots, designed to be used by an individual student analyzing personal work videotaped in the rehearsal space. The first section is space for four identification titles: the name of the student, the date of the video, the date of assessment, and the title of the activity. Part two is made up of four sub-sections requiring hand-written entries. The instructions for the first is for the students to *Write a brief description of the activity*, for the second is for the students to examine *From your perspective, describe what really worked well. Focus on yourself.* The third section is for the students to examine *From your perspective, what would you like to change, or have a "take two" at?* The last is a request for a numerical value: *Based on what you saw, and what you wrote above, your mark out of 10 is,* with space provided for the number. [see page 136]

## Drama 305 Video Assessment

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of video \_\_\_\_\_

Date of assessment \_\_\_\_\_

Title of the activity \_\_\_\_\_

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1. Write a brief description of the activity:

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2. From your perspective, describe what really worked well. Focus on yourself.

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3. From your perspective, what would you like to change, or have a "take two" at?

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4. Based on what you saw, and what you wrote above, your mark out of 10 is

921130-2

DRAMA 305 VIDEO ASSESSMENT 930201-3

This sheet is a modified individual sheet for group work. The changes include a box to the right of the name, date of video, date of assessment, and title of activity area for *members of the group by name/number*. The second part of the sheet is the four sections of description of the activity, a description of what worked well, with the request to *Use general terms to describe your group work*. The third request is to use general terms to describe what needs change, or a "take two". The final questions is *Based on what you saw, and what you wrote above, your group mark out of ten would be*, with space provided for the entry. [see page 138]

**Drama 305 Video Assessment**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Members of the group by name/number

Date of video \_\_\_\_\_

Date of assessment \_\_\_\_\_

Title of the activity \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Write a brief description of the activity:**

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**2. From your perspective, describe what really worked well. Use general terms to describe your group work.**

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**3. From your perspective, what would you like to change, or have a "take two" at? Again, use general terms to describe your group work.**

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**4. Based on what you saw, and what you wrote above, your group mark out of 10 would be**

## PROFILE REPORT NUMBER 2

Six weeks into the school term meant the creation and distribution of the second profile report summary. As with all of the material that went home, this letter was written in *WordPerfect 5.1*, and then placed into *PageMaker 4.0*. The desktop publishing program allows for a much more attractive look by selective font type and size, as well as by the addition of graphic material. This letter was single-sided, coupled with the attendance and personal comment sheet described in Profile Report #1. As with this first report, the contents of the letter focused on class and individual activity over the past three weeks, indicated one low point and one high point, offered some suggestions for homework, put out a call for set pieces, and a reminded parents about the official report card issue. [see page 140 and 141]



Drama elective  
Profile Report #2

March 23, 1993

Rehearsal has been chugging along this past three weeks. There have been days when it has not been a rehearsal, but more of a read-through. There have also been days when the scenes have clicked very nicely, and will probably be seen in May in virtually the same manner as they were this month. This is pretty standard fare at this time -- there is a heavy dependency on script, and when the head has to be bent to read, the feet tend to be nailed to the floor.

The goal is the completion of both acts by Spring Break, after which specific sections of the play will then be analyzed in much more detail.

If there has been one major disappointment to this time it would be the lack of intensity in lines. Every line has a reason for being, and a need to be said in just the right way. That motivation isn't there yet, and it's going to have to be found soon.

The greater the number of lines that a character has, the greater the need to spend more time at home on the script -- out loud. A play is meant to be heard, and reading it silently is not the way to get the feel for the character's intentions.

This is a call for all cast to be heard around the house -- mark sections of your lines with inflection cues, and let others in your family listen to you.

A great delight is the additional material that has been generated. The play has a series of minor characters, and what the cast has done is to create a number of additional entries and exits for both new characters and those existing in minor roles. These are being reworked as they are rehearsed, so that the naturalness of just being there is key.

Ideas for set and direction are coming from the cast -- I have had to step in and specifically direct more than once, but I am determined to follow my philosophy of having the student performers do as much of this as they can.

There is no question that they are more aware of the shortcomings of the play at this time than they were when the first readings had been completed in February. They are also aware of the problems with what I'm calling the *static nature of the play* -- there is a lot of sitting and talking, especially in Act 2, and both the cast and I are uncomfortable with the idea of "talking heads". How this will be resolved is the major thrust for the month of April.

Set pieces are coming in, too. We still need a table lamp, an easy chair suitable for a study, a couple of pictures, a small wall mirror, and a coffee table. If you've got anything that can be lent to the drama room for the next eight weeks, we'd appreciate a call.

The official TCI report will be out early next month. I'll be using code 11 -- no mark at this time for all my drama students. The profile reports will keep you up to date. We have also started using the production books -- a log entry sort of thing for all sorts of notes and jottings.

Regards,

Dave Normandale

--

date received at home _____
date received back at school _____

COMPANY MEMBER

**attendance: February 22 through March 24**

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Total this term
22	23	24	25	26	absent <input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	7	8	9	10	late <input type="checkbox"/>
14	15	16	17	18	
21	22	23	24		

MY COMMENTS
-------------

YOUR COMMENTS
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REHEARSAL FOR MURDER PROFILE REPORT #3

[APRIL 25, 1993: UPDATE]

The third profile report came three weeks into the month of April -- the school break at Easter fell at the end of March/first week of April. This report summarized three specific areas, with the first being the sense of satisfaction that was apparent on the part of Company 305 members at this time in the rehearsal process. Role definitions had become tighter, and therefore more realistic. Since the last report in March, there had been a most obvious sense of growth for everyone -- without exception. Characters had identifiable gestures, and the lines no longer sounded as if they were being read.

The Company had resolved its lack of cohesiveness, to the point where agreement had been reached about evening rehearsal scheduling. Three of the cast were heavily involved in sports --provincial level lacrosse and junior football, requiring frequent evening practice sessions, while the majority of the remainder of the cast had part-time employment after school. Discussion sessions about the importance of the evening rehearsal schedule were frank, honest, emotional, and successful, with two evening sessions of three hours each being scheduled for each week remaining until *Rehearsal for Murder* opened on May 25. [In actual fact, some of these rehearsals lasted longer than planned.]

Finally, this update touched on problems still facing the Company: off-book rehearsals, make up, publicity, and lighting. In some cases, as in off-book rehearsals, there is a request for parental assistance:

*Off-book means an even more concentrated rehearsal at home, with one other person serving as a prompter and reader of other lines.*

The summary statement is a simple one from me:

*The sense of satisfaction on the part of the cast also extends to the director -- I'm feeling good at this time.*

Accompanying the update sheet is the third profile report providing attendance summary and comments from me. The focus of my comments is the degree to which each cast member has developed the role being played. [see page 144 & 145]



## Rehearsal for Murder: update

April 25, 1993

It's now one month until opening night, and five days until 'off-book' rehearsals begin.

There is a sense of satisfaction on the part of many of the cast members, now, as role definitions have become tighter, and therefore more realistic. Since last report, there has been a most obvious sense of growth for everyone -- without exception. Characters have identifiable gestures, and the lines no longer sound as if they are being read. The illusion of reality is taking shape, and it's on schedule, too.

The sense of ownership is also more apparent, as cast members have taken on, and completed, the set design, and floor layout. Evening rehearsals have been scheduled, again with cast input. This was not an easy thing to do, with other commitments of importance occurring in the evenings, but I think the compromise reached is workable. Since each full cast rehearsal will be at 3:40 sharp, and end at 6:15, the sense of focus that each cast member brings to that rehearsal period is of critical importance.

Coming up are the tough parts:

1 Off-book rehearsal. The scripts are left to one side, and rehearsals are now from memory, yet with the natural sound that has become the norm. For many of the cast, scriptwork has become just a glance, almost as a 'refresher'. Off-book means an even more concentrated rehearsal at home, with one other person serving as a prompter and reader of other lines.

2 Make-up. In past shows at TCI, make-up has been either ignored, or it has been special effects. This is the first time that the entire cast is going to be aged by some fifteen or twenty years, or even more.

3 Publicity. Posters of a teasing nature have been up in TCI for the past month; they have generated some interest. Although TCI is our principal audience, we still need to reach into the community. We're planning four matinées, and four evening performances with a house size of 150-170.

4 Lighting grid. TCI has six stage lights that are part of the drama program. We need 24 for this show, as is the usual case for all our major performances. Eighteen additional lights, cables, and support struts come only one week before opening night, as the cost for a two week rental is some \$900.00. The grid has been sketched, but installation and then technical rehearsals must occur.

The sense of satisfaction on the part of the cast also extends to the director -- I'm feeling good at this time. [The fact that I have my Kawasaki on the road probably has something to do with this.]

Regards,

Dave Normandale

\_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY MEMBER

date received at home \_\_\_\_\_

date received back at school \_\_\_\_\_

**attendance: April 5 through April 23**

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Total this term
5	6	7	8	9	absent <input type="checkbox"/>
12	13	14	15	16	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	20	21	22	23	late <input type="checkbox"/>

MY COMMENTS

YOUR COMMENTS

CAST NOTE, MAY 17, 1993

One week before the opening of the show, each member of Company 305 received a letter that was made up in three parts. The first is a positive comment about the growth I have seen since the beginning of class, focusing on character development. The second paragraph deals with specific points I feel are necessary for that performer to remember in order to be as successful as possible on stage. The information included in this section comes from the constant rehearsal work of the past three months -- in some cases, I mention enunciation, while in others it is blocking tips. The third paragraph is a generic sort of writing that summarizes the *raison d'être* of the course:

*You'll never forget show week -- there is something magical about playing in front of people, and hearing the applause directed at you for your performance. You'll also not forget your other cast members, because these people have made it possible for you to play your role. Theatrical performances are very much a team thing, and this sense of cooperation is rarely found in other courses in school. There may not have been much content or rules for you to learn in drama 305, but the things you have learned will probably stay with you for the rest of your life.  
Good luck. [And stay healthy, at least until May 31.]*

The design work on this sheet was changed deliberately. I returned to the drama masks as the major focus, and placed the *Rehearsal for Murder* logo at bottom right, along with the

message: *You're part of a great Company!* [see pages 148, 149,  
and 150]



Company 305's  
**REHEARSAL FOR MURDER**  
profile report: Monday, May 17, 1993

Charles,

One week to go, and I guess you've felt the weight of the role of Alex Dennison on your shoulders for some time. I'm willing to bet that you never thought it would be this much work, right?

I'm really pleased with the way in which you have stuck to the role -- your character development has come along, and the way I see it, as in play-off hockey, you're going to be peaking at the right time. You've got your lines well established, and your gestures and movement are supportive. We'll be adding the final touches as the dress rehearsal draws near, and it's also not uncommon to make adjustments as the show progresses. Just remember -- what would Charles do in this situation, and then apply that to Alex Dennison, and you'll probably be closer to the mark than away.

Three things to remember: 1. your enunciation has to be crystal clear. Members of an audience come to see a play once, and they have to hear everything. 2. You are playing to the audience, not to your supporting characters. 3. Use the stage and its component parts, such as the stool. People sit when they are comfortable, and when they are in control.

You'll never forget show week -- there is something magical about playing in front of people, and hearing the applause directed at you for your performance. You'll also not forget your other cast members, because these people have made it possible for you to play your role. Theatrical performances are very much a team thing, and this sense of cooperation is rarely found in other courses in school. There may not have been much content or rules for you to learn in drama 305, but the things you have learned will probably stay with you for the rest of your life.

Good luck. [And stay healthy, at least until May 31.]

Regards,

PS In many ways, the drama room is the closest thing to real life that school can offer a student. There are people you may not care for, but must learn to work with; there is repetition and boredom, and there is long-term frustration for what is really a small moment of pleasure. If you can handle this sort of thing, then your education is that much broader, because you can't learn that from a book.



You're part of a great Company!



Company 305's  
**REHEARSAL FOR MURDER**  
profile report: Monday, May 17, 1993

Todd,

One week to show time, and it's looking like you did the right thing in choosing to do your 305 program at this time, as opposed to next year. How are you feeling about the first full run-through? If you're a little bit nervous, good -- you ought to be. Not that there's anything wrong with your role of David Mathews, it's just that it's normal that you ought to feel a sense of excitement and anticipation about bringing four months of pretty intensive work to fruition.

David's character is there -- any changes we make now will simply be fine-tuning for a specific scene. Costume and make-up are all that are needed now. Your line delivery and supporting gestures are both excellent. I just had a thought about the puppet line: if you turn half-way through the delivery, and let the audience see you fingers working the strings, it may have more of an impact. As well, you and Colleen ought to choreograph the slaps just a little more: you can't afford to have a glancing blow, or a miss, during a performance.

You'll never forget show week -- there is something magical about playing in front of people, and hearing the applause directed at you for your performance. I realize that you have experienced this to a small degree already, but there's a difference with a show of this style.

You'll also not forget your other cast members, because these people have made it possible for you to play your role. Theatrical performances are very much a team thing, and this sense of cooperation is rarely found in other courses in school. There may not have been much content or rules for you to learn in drama 305, but the things you have learned will probably stay with you for the rest of your life.

Good luck. [And stay healthy, at least until May 31.]

Regards,

PS In many ways, the drama room is the closest thing to real life that school can offer a student. There are people you may not care for, but must learn to work with; there is repetition and boredom, and there is long-term frustration for what is really a small moment of pleasure. If you can handle this sort of thing, then your education is that much broader, because you can't learn that from a book.



You're part of a great Company!





Company 305's  
**REHEARSAL FOR MURDER**  
profile report: Monday, May 17, 1993

Marie,

Well -- one week before Dawn becomes a reality. She ceased being an illusion on stage some time ago, but it always requires an audience to add that final touch to the character.

Have you given any thought to your hair? It's something that we should look at, and there may be some dollars in the kitty to help you get it done. Let's talk today.

Getting back to Dawn -- I'm really thrilled with the work you've done to create this character. The lines and the entrances this woman makes blend very well with the original material, and that's a compliment of the highest order. The motive for Dawn is excellent, and one that is very believable.

Technically, your delivery is virtually flawless. Your voice has excellent carry, the motions are certainly there, and the supportive movements are wonderful -- I think the shirt pull on *Let's kiss and make-up* is one of the best! Your emotion is real; there is no sense of forcing anything--congratulations on that.

You'll never forget show week -- there is something magical about playing in front of people, and hearing the applause directed at you for your performance. I realize that you have experienced this already, but there's a difference with a show of this style. You'll also not forget your other cast members, because these people have made it possible for you to play your role. Theatrical performances are very much a team thing, and this sense of cooperation is rarely found in other courses in school. There may not have been much content or rules for you to learn in drama 305, but the things you have learned will probably stay with you for the rest of your life.

It looks like there won't be a 305 program next year. There may never be another, who knows at this time? I'm glad you took the chance to come into **Rehearsal for Murder** -- you've helped make it a good show on which to end a tradition. Good luck. [And stay healthy, at least until May 31.]

Regards,

PS In many ways, the drama room is the closest thing to real life that school can offer a student. There are people you may not care for, but must learn to work with; there is repetition and boredom, and there is long-term frustration for what is really a small moment of pleasure. If you can handle this sort of thing, then your education is that much broader, because you can't learn that from a book.



FINAL ASSIGNMENT/DE-BRIEFING: MAY 31, 1993

Once the show is over, it is time for all Company members to reflect on the term in its entirety. This written assignment can be in the form of a personal letter, or in the form of a report. The expectation is that time will be spent on reflection, planning will occur through the writing process, and the final copy will be turned in no later than two weeks after assignment: in this case, June 14 was the deadline day. To stress the importance of this assignment, I informed the Company that 20% of their respective marks would come from this one summary, and that it would be assessed as if it were an English assignment in their respective grades. [See page 151]

Final assignment/de-briefing: May 31, 1993

Well gang:

It's over -- and time for reflection. What went well, what didn't -- the usual stuff -- but would you please consider the following as a guide?

Your character development and how it fit into the play. Your feelings about getting the play up and running [use your journals, here]. Trace the play's growth from February through to final curtain.

Show week -- how you felt, how you think the play was presented and received.

Anything else you'd like to throw in there is most welcome!

I'm gonna give you a couple of weeks for this: your final deadline -- it must be in my hands -- is June 14. This is important to me and to you -- so I'm putting a major mark on it -- 20% -- guaranteed.

drama 305

final report June 18, 1993

Each member of Company 305 received a final report at the end of the school term. The final profile report component was a letter form drafted for each individual. If the students were in grade twelve, these final comments were mailed to the students, since their final school reports had been distributed at the graduation ceremonies on June 28. For those students who were in grade eleven and who had to pick up their school reports on June 30 at the school, the drama 305 final comments were attached to those reports.

There was no pattern for each of the letters: I wrote them reflectively, mentioning both high and low points of the term of the course as I saw fit. The primary focus was on the dramatic growth demonstrated over the term. In some cases, where I have worked with the students for more than the three years of high school as a result of shared experiences in junior high, I looked back to those times as well. In many of the letters, I mentioned the benefits that drama brings to students outside of the theatre: the cooperation, the problem-solving, the meeting of deadlines, the public speaking and the development of a comfort level in front of large groups of people. [see pages 154, 155 and 156]



drama 305  
final report

June 18, 1993

Frank Brown

Frank's work in *Rehearsal for Murder* built on the obvious growth that he showed in his 205 program. I think it is safe to say that without Mr. Santoro, the play would not have been successful, and the addition of the new police detective added that little bit more reality to the play.

If anything, Frank's confidence levels have been the highlight of the year. It is obvious that he is much more comfortable than ever before in speaking in front of large numbers of people. [I would like to compliment Frank on his speech to the students when he was running for the office of vice-president: he showed presence, good speech, and excellent projection -- all characteristics of a successful drama student.]

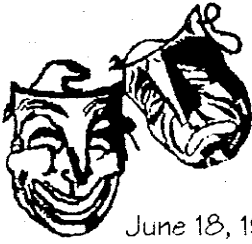
There were problems with attendance this term, and that may reflect Frank's disappointment with the size of the role. As you may recall, Frank missed the auditions because of illness, and as a result, was given the part that was left over. To compensate for this, we wrote in another character, and brought the role of Santoro to a higher level. Notwithstanding this, I still had feelings that Frank really felt that his talents were not being recognized.

Too bad! The play's success comes from the dedication and input of all cast members, and that whole team/family approach is known in the business world as cooperation: it's a learned skill. As of Friday, June 18, I still haven't received the final written report, which in itself is not that surprising, since Frank has had a problem handing in written assignments throughout all levels of his drama classes. He has not turned in the weekly summaries on a regular basis, and he has not attempted to start a new folder once the first went missing. Finally, I'm not sure if he wrote anything in his production book, because he never turned that in when I called for it.

In a nutshell, Frank is fortunate that the primary mark in this course comes from the stage play itself. Although other students have failed drama 305 in the past, I feel that Frank contributed enough to the success of the play that he can be given his passing grade.

Regards,

Dave Normandale  
drama instructor



drama 305  
final report

June 18, 1993

Colleen Crimson

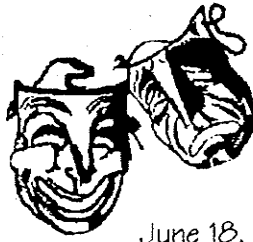
What a delight this term has been. Directors can develop "close rapports" with their leading ladies, too! I can still hear Colleen's line delivery -- of all my cast, I would have to say that she personified the term "projection". Every corner of the room was filled with the words, the emotion -- the passion of Monica Welles. And speaking of passion, I was amazed at how easily she accepted the stage closeness that was required by the role of Monica. It's not easy kissing someone in an intimate way as part of a play, something that was driven home time and time again last year by people who had a lot more stage experience than Colleen has. Yet, Monica and Alex were able to perform that scene within a week of the beginning of the first true rehearsals: impressive.

I have, in past reports, made mention of the Colleen of grade 10 and 11. The purpose of drama in high school is not to end up with a major production more fitting for Mainstage of MTC than a high school. Rather, I think the principal aim of the drama program is to develop confidence, increase speaking ability, and get rid of that phobia of public appearance. If there happens to be that successful stage production in there, then it's a bonus. [Many of my colleagues in their drama 305 classes do not stage a full length play, but rather do scenes and monologues, much as Colleen and her mates did in 205.] Taking this idea into mind, then I would have to say that Colleen has grown to an extent that even I did not think to be possible. Added into that is the understanding of what drama has done for her. How many times have I said that the journals would be priceless in years to come? With the move to Edmonton, they become even more important, simply because re-reading them will bring the Black Box theatre to that city, because "we all have, now, locked in our memories, the sound of applause and the taste of success." Well written, Miss Crimson, because you have indeed learned much about life in the past three years. That you can write it so well also makes me more than satisfied.

Good luck in whatever lies ahead. Success is guaranteed because life is drama, and drama is life -- you've already shown that you can handle one half of the equation with finesse. The other half will be a cake walk! [Oh, yeah, one more thing -- I didn't think you'd mind sharing the TCI high mark honour with your buddy --Ochre.]

Regards,

Dave Normandale  
drama instructor



drama 305  
final report

June 18, 1993

Robert Burgundy

Rob's work in *Rehearsal for Murder* has been worthy of the effort that he has put into it. I'm very aware of the interminability of the waiting when a character only has three or four lines in Act One, and the rehearsal schedule is set up so that Act One is done throughout the first two months! Rob's time wasn't wasted, however, as when the character of Frank was finally brought to life, his lines were already on the way to being natural sounding.

During the four day run, I thought that Rob's character was very consistent. Frank is a "slimeball", and this came across so well in Monica's apartment. Everything clicked, from the feet on the coffee table, to the nonchalant effort of trying to keep Monica away from the 'phone. If there was one scene I'd like to do again, it would be the one where Frank hits Monica, simply because I think that in reality, there would be more of a struggle. Perhaps not, but theatrically, it would have been much more effective. [Space limitations also played a part in this, of course.]

It's been an interesting few years since *The Boy Who Wouldn't Play Jesus*: Rob's input to the show reflects that passage of time, in that there was a sense of confidence that said "experience". Frank Heller was a fitting end role for Rob, and that he wanted the villain's role as first choice makes it even better.

Congratulations, Rob, on a fine performance, and a wonderful growth in theatrical skills and maturity on stage.

It's Friday, June 18, and I haven't seen the major assessment paper, but other than that, it's curtain call for his high school theatre career.

Now, if we can just get him away from Madonna and into some eclecticism about music, I'll feel the past five years have been worthwhile! I hope to see him in my Literature class in second term -- it promises to be a good one, complete with drama literature!

Regards,

Dave Normandale  
drama instructor

## CHAPTER V

### EVALUATION OF THE COMPONENT PARTS

#### THE EXPECTATION SHEET

The detail that the students put into their expectations was not unexpected, in that the detail simply reinforces the desire that each had to be in that class. Accompanying the desire was also a very clear indication of worry, even fear, over the make-up of the class.

- 1 *I've taken drama courses for 5 years. In these years, I have learned many techniques, and drama related activities. This year is not just another year. I am hoping to learn a great deal more, and also have a great time. I've done a great deal of plays. Weather [sic] they were school related, or not. From these plays I have learnt [sic] a new thing, and new techniques. However, this year I think the class will be different. Everyone has their own "group", who they have worked with for several years. I hope that we can make this class come together as one big group. That is one thing I would want this course to give to me. I don't know a few of the people, but in time, I am sure we'll all become great friends. Out of this course, I would also expect to have fun. Drama to me is very serious, but I also have a fun time in it. I am looking forward to having a play. I think it will be a fun and good experience to perform with different people. I also feel that this year will be one of the best. [Laura]*



2 I would like for ALL of us to get along first of all because there is a definite barrier between the other 205's and the 205's of this year and I don't like it. The old 205's act as if we're invading them, but if it weren't for us, they wouldn't even be having a class right now. They should accept us, we accept them. We ALL have to be a team. If we don't have a team, we can't expect to have a show. A show would be great, so would harmony as 1 group. Other expectations would be better drama skills. I need to be louder, & able to memorize better. I don't really like meeting new people or associating with people, or working in large groups, because I'm shy. And in this class, I'm forced to do that. I want to be able to talk openly with people, but I'm still really shy. This is my last year, so I'm going to try VERY hard to overcome my shyness. Of course, there is always the need to have FUN. I'm going to be openminded [sic] and listen to people. I shall do my best and enjoy myself. [Katherine]

Those two entries were from the younger group of students, those who had taken drama 205 in 1993. Interestingly, the same sort of tone came through in the words of the older group, those who had taken drama 205 in 1992.

3 I want this course to take me away from familiarity. With the new students in this class, I think I'll learn how to do this. Last year, I knew what to expect from each individual, but this year is different. When I found out that there were going to be other kids in "our" drama class, I felt threatened. I still fell a bit unsure of what I may be expecting, but it's only natural.

I want to learn about other people's abilities, if I don't already know them. I want to

be able to trust them and feel comfortable with them. I think I felt almost too secure last year in drama and that the reason why I feel threatened this year. In a sence [sic] I want to experiance [sic] the "getting to know you" episode all over. Just looking around, I knew it's definitely [sic] going to be different.

Finally, I want to be able to go as far as my abilities and talents will take me. I always gave my best before, but this year I want to do more. What... I'm not sure! I know I learned a lot from the guys last year and the year before, but this is all new territory. Human vs. innerself [sic] is what I'm looking for. Human vs. Human is good too. Truthfully, I'm not sure what to expect, but I think I just might like it. [Lynn]

4

When I think of this course, I expect a number of things. Firstly I expect to have a great last year working with the "group" for our last year. Also, I am expecting an interesting time working with new people. I expect that it will be different because we certainly have our own way of doing things. Our "family" is going to have new blood in it and I am not sure we are ready to accept it.

I want to put on a fantastic performance and leave TCI with a bang. Although I have not worked a lot with our new group, I am not sure that they are as serious as we are. I sincerely hope that everything will work out. I want Colleen, Nicole, Robin, Lynn, Cecile, Tracy, and myself to have the best drama class so far; that may not be so easy the last two years have been awesome. We have worked hard to get were [sic] we are and I don't want anything to ruin it.

Also, I expect us to feel less held back because we don't have to worry about the guys. Don't misunderstand, the guys were great and they gave us a lot of experience but now it is just us

and I don't think anything can hold us back! I want to have an unforgettable year and I want us to have a great time doing it.

P.S. A credit would be nice!! [Tammy]

These four comments -- two from grade 11 students and two from grade students, are indicative of the common feeling. Partial comments from the expectation sheets of others include:

...Aside from the production aspect, I am looking forward to getting to know others and working with new people. I noticed there seems to be a strange tension in the room between the two groups (last years drama 205 and last term's drama 205) and I hope that we can quickly overcome that. I hope that this course will be as enjoyable, if not more enjoyable than drama 205 and that everyone can pull together and make this term the best that we could possibly have... [Marie, a grade 11 student]

...I would also like the whole class to get along. There seems to be a wall between the other 205's and the 205's from last semester. Our Drama class became a family, but even though we were like that, we welcomed newcomers (ex: Brian!) I'm not saying this to be rude or mean, but the girls from last year act as if we are destroying their family instead of making it a bigger and better family. To me, getting on with the whole class is very important. To be able to work together, we first need to get along... [Kathleen, a grade 11 student]

## BENEFIT TO THOSE INVOLVED

The benefit to me as a teacher by reading this sort of early comment was the immediate confirmation of something that I had already sensed in class. The signals that I had observed: two obvious groups sitting together on the floor; no voluntary pairing of partners between the members of the two groups; and perfunctory greetings at the beginning of the class had been verified in writing by the majority of the class. The next step was to organize activities that would "break down the walls" and "release the tension", and allow the members of the two groups to mingle, work, and learn about each other.

The benefit to the students of course, was that the sharing of expectations showed that the feelings held by the majority of the group were not simply an individual thing, but in fact, belonged to the group. They were also the recipients of pencilled comments on their expectation sheets, and the recipients of the plan that I had developed for class unification -- the creation of Company 305.

## THE DRAMA 305 REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

As indicated in Chapter IV, I used the sheet as a "window into the daily life" of the class, expecting to be given clues and hints as to any potential problems that were lurking under

the surface of the production schedule. The second use of the reflective journal sheet was to allow the students the opportunity to learn how to think reflectively, and to summarize their thoughts as learning experiences for them.

Students were not expected to draft responses and then edit; I was hoping for the first impressions that are so often toned down in a rewrite situation.

Students used the reflective journal sheets in both of these ways from the very beginning of class.

## WEEK ONE

### Summary

The intention with this aspect of the reflective journal was to have the students understand what the week that was just over was all about: if students understand the reasons for doing something, it seems to me that the something will make sense to them. An example of this is *Wax Museum* -- the warm up game that actually doesn't physically warm any of the participants, simply because there is little in the way of movement occurring. However, the class regularly enjoyed the activity, and strove to beat the watchman [me] by moving so slowly that I was unable to notice the movements of characters. The focus of concentration, slow movement and awareness of surroundings was meant to be transferred to the stage, where sudden movements may have been distracting to the audience.

1 This week's activities and/or focus were to get acquainted with the new members in the drama 305 group and try to pick a play in which we will be doing in May 1993. [Lynn]

2 This weeks' activities and focus was mainly to get to know the two plays; "Rehearsal for Murder", Drum Song. While doing this we were also getting to know our other group members.! We realized we had a lot of potential problems within our selves [sic] & the group and with the scipts [sic] I think our focus was mainly to get back into the Drama swing of things. I also had a personal focus and that was to concentrate on bringing the new members into the group and realize them as a part of the group, not outsiders. [Tammy]

3 This week's activities/focus was to get used to the whole class. We need to get along before we can work well together. We read "Rehearsal for Murder" and "Drum Song". We discussed the downfalls and benefits of both. [Kathleen]

4 This weeks [sic] activities were focused mainly on preparing to deceide [sic] on which play would be

the next one to do. We had to make our decision according on which play we liked better. [Darlene]

5 The focus of this week was to basicly [sic] get the group together, read the two plays and weigh the pro's and con's of each play. I think the group did an excellent job. [Marie]

6 This week was focused mainly on the choosing of the play we will do. We had to read over the plays and decide which one is the best one to do. [Carla]

7 We've been trying to get know each other, and also trying to pick a script for us to perform. We've been having big discussions and I think a decision has finally been made about our script problem, but not the other problem. [Katherine]

8 This week, our activities consisted of getting to know the other members of our class. We also were given two plays to read over, and decide on one for a production. [Laura]

Week One

High Point

The underlying purpose in having the Company identify this from a personal viewpoint was simple: even in a day or a week where things seemed to go wrong, at least one thing ought to be a high point in some way. The *high point* was a deliberate attempt at positive identification, and therefore positive reinforcement.

1     *The high point of the week was meeting as a drama group for the first time this year. Also, deciding which play we, as a group, would rather do. It was great to see my 'drama' friends again. I knew it was time to have some fun when I walked into the room. Also, I was relieved when our group decided what they wanted because I didn't have to try to read anyone's mind because I knew what they were thinking. [Lynn]*

2     *The high point of the week was definitely Friday! As a whole group (not 2 separate) we discussed both plays and how we felt about them. We brought up good and bad points for them both and also looked how we as a group would react to both plays. We also talked about the fears we had toward both*



plays. This was the high point of the week mainly because we came together and acted as a team.  
[Tammy]

3 I don't think there was a high point this week. I love Drama, but this class has been tough this week because of the tension. I know the class will get better and I'm looking forward to it. [Kathleen]

4 The high point of the week would be that everyone agreed on the same play and that no one had to argue because we all thought that Rehearsal for Murder would be the best one to do. [Darlene]

5 I think the high point of the week was friday [sic] when we all got together and spoke our feelings about the plays and the group in general. I think we came to a good understanding and brought the group closer together. [Marie]

6 The high point of the week was that everyone in the class actually read over both of the plays and pointed out some good and bad things that made a lot of thinking to do when choosing the correct play. [Carla]

7    *No high point based on the classes themselves. It's actually been awful, except for Friday. That's when we started to talk about which play we want to do, and we're trying to have everyone on stage. [Katherine]*

8    *I think that the high point of the week would be on Friday, which was the fifth. Our whole class got together, and talked about the two plays. We had some arguements [sic]. However, in that 80 minutes, we really got to know each other, and actually enjoyed each others company. [Laura]*

Week One

Low Point

Just as the high point was an attempt to have the Company members recognize something positive, so was the low point an attempt to have them take a reflective look back at what we called "take-two's": things that were not satisfactory from a personal point of view. I saw this as important for two reasons: first, only the individual knows the potential found inside. It would be possible for me, as the producer, to be satisfied with an instance that the actual performer was not. A sign of maturity to me is the recognition of *I can do*

better. Secondly, each member of the Company was also a director: each was involved in scenes, and often, each sat and watched scenes. I wanted the input from a base level: an initial response of something being wrong with a scene, even if that response couldn't be fully explained was a sign that a paying audience may experience the same feeling. The low point was designed to provide me with the first warning.

1     *The low point of the week was meeting as a drama group for the first time this year. Also, deciding which play we, as a group, would rather do. It was scary seeing strange faces in 'my' drama class. I knew it was going to be hard work to try and work with one another. Also, it was difficult to sit around in a group with some people you don't even know and try to agree on the most important thing to everyone, "May's Play". [Lynn]*

2     *The low point of the week was Thursday. When I left on Thursday, I felt a lot like Lynn. I felt like just giving up. I don't really know why exactly. It was just that I felt like I was going and the group was doing the same thing. We still had a lot of segregation between us and it just didn't feel like Drama! [Tammy]*

- 3 I'm not sure if there was a definite low point. The class was very tense on the first day and a little during the week. I missed Friday's discussion class because I had a band rehearsal. [Kathleen]
- 4 The low point would be that Rehearsal for Murder is going to be a real challenge to add in our lines we need for everyone to be on stage. [Darlene]
- 5 The low point of the week was at the beginning of it when there was so much tension between certain groups of people. For the first time I was actually not looking forward to going to Drama. I'm glad we managed to get it resolved. [Marie]
- 6 The low point of the week would be that, on friday [sic] it looked like everyone choose [sic] to do the play Rehearsal for Murder and it will be a challenge to put in the extra roles. [Carla]
- 7 The low points are not being able to find the right script, so everybody can be on stage and the way the other 305's treat us as amateurs & we don't belong. [Katherine]

8     *The low point of the week would be the first few days of class. Everyone in the class was very hostile to one another, and there were a lot of arguements [sic]. A few people in the class had very negative attitudes, and I was one of them.*

[Laura]

#### Week One

#### Self-rating Scale

The self-rating scale was designed simply to nudge the Company members into assessing their efforts for the week. There was no pressure, no sharing of marks -- just the quiet reminder in their profile reports as to how each member perceived a personal contribution level.

Despite the tension so eloquently described in the first week's entries, all but one of the students above rated their week as being a 9, or better. Only one felt that an 8 was more appropriate.

#### BENEFIT TO THOSE INVOLVED

To me, these first journal entries were a number of things:

1. they were a signal that despite the get-to-know activities of the first week, there was still a sense of

distrust on the part of members of the two distinct groups. This meant that the warm-up activities of the next week would have to be based on trust generation, they would have to take up a longer period of the class than for what I had originally planned, and they would have to be organized in such a way as to keep the members of the groups well mixed.

2. they were also a signal that some degree of acceptance was developing. Friday's class was an obvious highlight, in that a lot of conversation and discussion took place, with what appeared to be a group consensus.

3. they were also a signal that the majority of the class identified problems that had to be solved between the disparate groups.

#### THE PERSONAL LETTER

Knowing from experience that the group consensus approach often has people who appear to agree, yet hold reservations about the decision the group believes it has made, I asked that each student write me a personal letter, indicating reasons for the choice of play selected. I also asked that students focus on each of the plays in question --*Rehearsal for Murder* and *Drum Song*, and to show both positives and

negatives with regard to production potential. This letter was inserted into the profile report, as well.

#### BENEFIT TO THOSE INVOLVED

My initial reason for providing this assignment was to allow the little-heard voices to be as loud as the others. It is a given in education that not all students are comfortable in speaking their minds in a group situation. I had already determined that there were two very distinct groups operating in drama 305. I wanted an equal representation of seventeen voices, and I wanted that representation in an organized manner, hence the written format.

Secondly, by giving the students the weekend for reflective thought about a topic that was of crucial importance to everyone, I expected that the pressures of the group, specifically peer pressure applied by friends, would not come into consideration. This came through very clearly when one of the students lucidly and thoughtfully explained the very much of a minority position of why Company 305 ought to perform *Drum Song*. However, the majority of the class chose *Rehearsal for Murder*, and offered logical and rational reasons for that choice.

Finally, I wanted each student to achieve some sense of ownership in the decision -- by putting that decision onto paper that could be referred to later if necessary forced the

issue where everyone in the fledgling company had equal shares in the script.

- 1 Both plays, Drum Song and Rehearsal for Murder, are very interesting and challenging. Both plays also have the high points and the low points. I have been searching my mind for answers and questions. However, I have found myself questioning my answers and answering my questions. This is what I have come up with.

The benefits of the Drum Song are that our group would be dealing with a controversial subject: Indian vs. White Man, therefore attracting the media. As a majority white class the majority of us would be learning about the feelings of a minority group. We would have to come face to face with the problems in and surrounding their society and not avoid it. This play would challenge our class as actors and actresses. We would not only be different characters, but also a different race of characters. Finally, everyone in the class would have an acting part on stage.

The benefits of Rehearsal for Murder are that our group would be dealing with a 'light topic', thus allowing the cast and the audience the opportunity to break away from reality. This play also allows the possibility for other characters to be written in, as well as making this a full student production. Because the characters aren't controversial, the class can have fun with the characters and it seems like an easy play to improvise with. Finally, this play would be appealing to an audience with a wide variety of ages.

The short comings of the Drum song are that the topic off [sic] the play is so common, and real that it seems tedious. The audience may have mixed emotions about such a 'real' play. the drama group feels uncomfortable [sic] with some of the lines. Finally, it's not a relaxed, fun topic, therefore



it makes it harder to have fun and laugh about the play.

The short comings of Rehearsal for Murder are that the stage will be hard to design and perhaps expensive. This is also a long play and a lot of pereration [sic] with lighting and staging will be needed.

My recommendation is Rehearsal for Murder. I can already see the great possibilities within our group for this particular play. [Lynn]

The messages from the students often tried to put the needs of the group ahead of personal preference, as in:

2 Well, I am not really sure how to right [sic] this. I am going to be very honest; I like "Rehearsal for Murder". I have since I first read it. Yet, I am also willing to look at both sides of both plays. Either play will take ALOT [sic] of work and we just can't base our decision on a gut feeling. I am also going to be honest that this past week I have felt horrible about how things were going. I felt a lot like Lynn in many ways; I just don't feel like dealing with it. Then I thought where would I get by giving up so I looked at both plays again. That is where the pro's and con's come in. When I right [sic] this I am going to say what comes and me and in that order.

Drumsong [sic] is an AWESOME play. It deals with a lot of emotions, Another thing, which to me is very important, is that it has more than enough parts. I know you say that that is only a minor detail but, looking at the needs of the group, I think if we had to tell someone that they can't act I think it will cause a lot of tension. And that is the last thing our group needs right now especially since we are just trying to become a group. But then, putting a totally student

production would be interesting too. I like the idea's [sic] that Drumsong tries to bring out. I am just afraid that we will be misunderstood and look racist. I know that may be hard for you to understand but you said to be honest. I know that the university cast wasn't native but they also had a lot of experience. I am not sure if our group could pull it off so that it passes the message we want. Now comes the part that is kind of wishy-washy. In on [sic] sense this play could cause a lot of intrest [sic] because of all the "native" tensions. It (meaning Drumsong) is written very well and it is very powerful. On the other hand, because of all the tensions, we may be beating a dead issue, maybe not dead but something which people want to escape and are bored of.

I like "Drumsong" I think it is a good play. Oh, one more thing; Thinking technical wise mainly set wouldn't the set for Drumsong be hard. [sic] In Maya you need a house, porch, fire, etc. In "Rehearsal for Murder" the main set is a theatre. Whata [sic] you know we have one of those! And the dressing room and apartment isn't very specific.

On to "Rehearsal for Murder". This play also has good and bad's. Well, the cast, you know my reasons I already said them. That however, can be overcome by some rewriting which Colleen and I have already started talking about. Another thing is "Rehearsal" is a play. The audience will watch it, hopefully enjoy it, and then go home. "Drumsong" might make them think a little, maybe get those old wheels turning. I know the old 205 group always liked to make people think and pull at the heart strings. But I am not sure about the other group. I also think that our group wants to have fun with it - make people happy and "rehearsal" will do that. There are so many things which can be done. Time is the only factor. I think we, as a group, could handle it though. Also, looking at the group, "Rehearsal" brings a smile to their faces and they get all excited with ideas. Drumsong just

doesn't have it; the flare [sic] isn't there. I think we need the flare [sic] to do what we want. Maybe if we got going on Drumsong it would turn up, but what if it doesn't? What will we have? Not much to work with. Also, if it turned out and we had to use people in acting parts I think EVENTUALLY it would work out and it would be a production to be proud of.

Finally, I think we need to make people happy! I admit "Drumsong" would be a challenge but I am not sure we are up to it. I think "Rehearsal for Murder" is the way to go. I am not sure if you have talked to Colleen about writing in those parts and doubling Monica and Alex but I think it could work. The rest of the group seemed pretty ok with it. "Rehearsal for Murder" just feels so right! I do understand however, that looking at both sides is important because until I wrote this I didn't realize all of the pro and cons for either play.  
[Tammy]

#### THE REHEARSAL FOR MURDER AUDITION SHEET

Each student auditioned for roles, adjudicated by two people -- my school librarian and me. The audition sheets were duplicated so that each student received two copies -- one completed by each of the adjudicators.

#### BENEFITS TO THOSE INVOLVED

Producing a school play always results in students who are dissatisfied with the roles they are awarded. Because this course is a school credit program, dissatisfaction must

be kept to a minimum, otherwise the remainder of the semester can become hell. *Rehearsal for Murder* provided additional difficulties that I try to stay away from, namely that there were two roles that were obviously major -- Alex Dennison and Monica Welles. There were five supporting characters in Bella, David, Leo, Lloyd, and Karen who had lines throughout the entire play. Frank, although limited to Act 2, is the villain, and that role is always desired by someone. Eight substantial roles with a given cast of seventeen equalled trouble in the "family" over and above that which had already been identified. Added into this scenario is the simple fact that I have always found performer/role matching the most difficult aspect of teaching high school drama. This Company was no different. There was a wealth of talent, but a shortage of places in which to spend it. As producer/director of the play, it was essential for me to have annotated references for all my cast members. Bringing in a second adjudicator allowed me the advantage of a second opinion, which quite simply, allowed me the opportunity to slip some of the "blame" from my shoulders.

For the student performers, the benefits of the two completed audition sheets were that they received the comments from two adjudicators, both of whom completed the forms independently. In some cases, the comments from the two adjudicators addressed the same things. There is a certain

amount of reinforcement behind two voices saying the same thing:

*Slow down! Good nervous energy, but control needed. [Darryl]*

*This was a good scene. The voice needs to slow down a bit, and the angle to the audience set right, but it's a good scene. [DWN]*

### DRAMA 305 REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

WEEK THREE, February 19, 1993

This week of the program was one fraught with danger for personal interaction and the development of group cohesiveness in that the sense of competition generated by the audition process meant that some members of the class were not going to be satisfied with the roles assigned. The only hope that I had was that the work of the previous days would have strengthened the belief of the class members as to the drama potential of all the students, and that there was enough of a sense of maturity about the audition process to minimize any hard feelings.

#### Week Three

#### Summary of activities

- 1 *This week the focus was on our auditions. We rehearsed the script for them. Then we found out our parts. Then we did a read-thru [sic] [Kathleen]*
- 2 *This week's activities/focus were rehearse [sic] for auditions, audition, and practice reading through the*

play as your character and to watch for the purpose of French scenes. [Lynn]

3 This week we had auditions and were given parts in the play. I got the part of a police man. [Laura]

4 The focus of this week was preparing for auditions and auditioning. I got the role of Dawn. [Marie]

5 Auditions were this week, so everybody picked a part to rehearse, they auditioned, and the next day we were cast. We're all just getting used to the characters and developing our own. [Katherine]

6 We mainly practised [sic] the lines and auditioned for our parts found out the cast. Finding out what parts we were playing as. [Darlene]

7 This week we worked on script again, we got our roles we will play and we started writting [sic] notes on each french [sic] scene. We also started reading the play with our specific parts and had to figure exactly what our character was like. [Carla]

8 We had auditions and were cast as a character. Also began read throughs. [Tammy]

### Week Three High Point

1 The only high point this week was doing my audition for the part of Sally. I once said that things were getting better--now I'm not so sure. [Kathleen]

2 The high point of this week was finally finding out which character I was going to play. Knowing which character I was allowed me the chance to realize that we were actually going to perform this play whether or not we liked it, loved it, or hated it. It is our baby to teach and nurture. [Lynn]

- 3 The high point of the week would be the auditions. I had a lot of fun doing the auditions. I also practiced [*sic*] a lot, and I think I did pretty good. [Laura]
- 4 The high point of the week was getting the role of Dawn. She is a good character and one that I think will be a very positive and challenging experience. I like the idea behind this character and I know it'll be alot [*sic*] of fun to work with. [Marie]
- 5 Thursday was mine because that's when I was cast, and I got one of my choices. "Ashley". Which is great because I know I can do an excellent job. Partly because I created her. Also Marie got "Dawn". I was hoping so because I feel only her and one other fit it perfectly. Also, Marie and I are working together to come up with more lines for our characters & it's going to be great! [Katherine]
- 6 High point was we had got through the auditions and everyone had showed for the lunch hour in which we had needed to get through the auditions. [Darlene]
- 7 The high point of the week is that everyone has settled down now because we don't have to worry about which part of the play we will get. [Carla]
- 8 High point of the week was choosing the character and myself getting "Sally". Her part was actually the part I first wanted when I read the play. [Tammy]

Week Three  
Low Point

High point and low points mean joy from some, and disappointment from others. The disappointments were often in the form of "anonymous" comments -- I knew who was saying them, but they were comments that wouldn't be said to my face.

It was obvious, however, that "weights had to be lifted off some chests..."

- 1 Nothing went well this week. I was disappointed that I didn't get the part of Sally, but the part of Erin (not Erma). But that's show biz. Friday's class was horrible. I was accused of doing something I hadn't done. I was talked about and I had a splitting headache. I'm still pissed off about Friday and I don't need to put up with this anymore. [Kathleen]
- 2 The low point of this week was to have the short amount of time we have pointed out to us. This means we've got to work hard (like always) in order to meet the deadlines. However, this also puts strain on the uncomfortable situations between cast members. Some people are a little too agitated with this whole thing than I like. [Lynn]
- 3 The low point of the week would be the part in the play I got. I know that Mr. Normandale can't cast everyone for major roles. I guess its only fair that everyone actually got parts. I'll try my best with the role I have. [Laura]
- 4 The low point of the week was when some people got roles that they weren't happy with. It's understandable that they'd be upset but it upset me when I heard someone say that maybe they should drop the course. It's not a good attitude. [Marie]
- 5 Friday because Lynn was really mean to Kathleen and I'm not sure why. Also, I was in a rush to re-copy what I'd written into the play, and the reading didn't go very well, and my friend had a miscarriage so everybody's having a bad day but me. I feel guilty. [Katherine]
- 6 Low point was we had to take up so much time for the auditions. [Darlene]



- 7     *The low point is that many of the kids are quite upset because they didn't get the parts they wanted and because we have under 10 lines which isn't even 1/3 of the play which is very unfair. [Carla]*

This entry 7 generated the following response from me:

1. *I asked you as a group to look at the problems with the play--you obviously missed this one [# of lines] and*
  2. *All of the characters are important when on stage--or they wouldn't be in the play. McElroy can be added to the script--get cracking and find the spot that's best.*
- 8     *Low point of the week Friday. Although we did a read through, we weren't focused and we didn't know what to do with the French scene sheets. It was a day of confusion [Tammy]*

Week Three  
Personal Rating Scale

Despite the disappointments and the sense of personal mistrust and confusion, the students felt that their work ethic was not reduced at all.

Kathleen 10  
Lynn 9  
Laura 9.5  
Marie 10  
Katherine 10  
Darlene 8  
Carla 9  
Tammy 8

## THE FRENCH SCENE ANALYSIS SHEET

The French scene analysis sheets are designed as the driving force behind rehearsals. Shortly after the roles were assigned, students were given class time and homework assignments to complete analysis of some of the scenes they were in, to force them to look for the purpose behind the scene. At the drama 305 level, the driving force is that the illusion of the play becomes the reality of the moment, and students work hard in order to achieve that. Determining the intention of the scene is a critical aspect to achieving that reality. The intention of a strongly focused look at some of the scenes was planned so that the intention of the scene would become an obvious search later in the play -- i.e. that when the performer moved into Act 2, for instance, the intention of the scene would be determined first, as a result of the ingrained work from Act 1. It was decided early that not all French scenes would be analyzed in written form, because the characters of Alex and Monica were involved in so many, but it was also decided that any French scene that wasn't "working" in rehearsal would be addressed in this form by all members of that French scene.

The benefits to me as producer/director were many. First of all, the drama 305 is a teaching program, and by using the French scene analysis sheets, the students were highly focused on their scenes, even if those scenes were not called for in that day's rehearsals. Student energy was directed and

focused, allowing me the opportunity to work closely with those performers who were on stage that day. Secondly, once the individual analysis was completed, it was necessary for the members of that French scene to get together in order to discuss the intention of the scene. The emphasis on group work of this nature obviously encouraged sharing and discussion, and with the written notes, all members of the smaller groups had references upon which they could draw. All voices were equal, at least at the beginning of the discussion. Thirdly, the discussion flowing from the analysis provided not only an understanding of all the roles in that scene, but also a group-ownership of the French scene. Satisfaction with how the French scene looked after initial rehearsal was there, leaving fine-tuning as the next step. This opposes the attempts to reconstruct the scene with either more read-throughs or walk-throughs on stage. A thorough understanding of the intention of the scene is basic to the success of everything related to production.

French Scene Analysis

page start 20/page finish 20

Characters in scene: Monica, Dawn, Ashley

Opening Line: *I'm so happy...*

Closing line: *Talk to Alex...later.*

The intention of this scene is to: *have Monica talk with her sister, Monica and Monica's best friend, Dawn. Establishes love among all, but tension between Dawn & Ashley. Also, Monica is very successful. Shows Ashley has great concern for Monica, and she is scared of Dawn. [Katherine]*

The intention of this scene is to: *introduce Dawn as Monica's best friend. Show the tension between Dawn and Ashley. Show that Dawn has no patience for either Ashley or Monica and she seems to think she's above both of them. Ashley thinks Monica is accusing her of telling the wedding news. To show some secretive side to Dawn specifically [sic] in the last line. Shows Ashley's sucky side. [Marie]*

French Scene Analysis

page start 22/page finish 22

Characters in scene: Monica, Dawn, Ashley

Opening Line: *Watch where you're going...*

Closing line: *I should get home. Bye.*

The intention of this scene is to: *Create more tension between Dawn and Ashley. Ashley leaves party. Shows her as inconsiderate and polite. [Katherine]*

The intention of this scene is to: *Exit the characters Dawn and Ashley from the party. Show more tension between Ashley and Dawn. Shows even more of Dawn's bitchy side and her temper. Showing that Ashley really tries not to pay any attention to Dawn.* [Marie]

#### French Scene Analysis

page start 34/page finish 34

Characters in scene: Alex, Dawn, Ashley

Opening Line: *Get some coffee...*

Closing line: *Great.*

The intention of this scene is to: *Show arrival of Dawn at the reading. Show Ashley's tension at being there when she doesn't know why she's there. Shows that Dawn wasn't expecting what she says when she arrived. To show that Dawn is agreeing to go along with this.* [Marie]

The intention of this scene is to: *Explain what Ashley is doing there. Shows her as whiny.* [Katherine]

From these three samples, the two performers have picked up the tension between characters as the key to interpretation of the first two French scenes, whereas in the third, although there is general agreement, I would expect some additional discussion on this scene in order to clarify the language used.

## DRAMA PROFILE REPORT #1

The benefits to those involved in drama 305 of this part of the report are many. To begin with, the course and class are outlined in brief fashion. This allows both the new administration of Transcona Collegiate to have a capsulated commentary of a course for which that administration is responsible, and the parents/guardians of the students to have a course description. Both parents/guardians and administration ought to have an idea of the class component parts -- hence the one sentence description of who the students are.

The description of the reporting period is of benefit to teacher, student, parent, and administration, in that the three objectives for the fifteen days are identified, the written assignments are summarized, and the upcoming assignment is described. For the parent and administration, this would be new information. For the teacher and student, having three weeks of work summarized helps in achieving the sense of completion necessary for the achievement of closure of part of the process of play production.

Side two provides general statements about my impressions of how the group has performed over the period of time since the beginning of the semester. This three paragraph comment was important to me in that it provided reflective thought about the process to date, identifying problems and what had

been done to correct them. It allowed me the opportunity to formulate the objectives for the next period, such as:

*There has been some movement to acceptance on the part of the class members. I'm not completely satisfied yet, and this is something that must occur. Drama students often refer to their group as "family", and that sensation hasn't happened. If this show is going to work, then the class has to become a company, and that means that everyone has to be open enough to take risks, honest enough to give and accept criticism, and tough enough to take it.*

and

*The problems with Rehearsal for Murder were glossed over, in fact, perhaps not even recognized until later, with the result that there has had to be substantial modification in order to get everyone on stage. No one was willing to look at behind the scenes work as a commitment to the course. That in itself is no problem, as now all of the company will be expected to assist in certain areas.*

and

*The script modifications will help, but there is no doubt that one of the lessons about play production will certainly be learned -- all parts are necessary, and that 50 lines or less do not make the role any less important to the success of the show than the 400 of the leading role.*

To the student, these general comments were designed as a starting point for discussions. Once the company members had been given their profile reports during the class, I called them together and went over each of the general

statements, encouraging input and sharing. By having the general statements in the portfolio, it was a silent reminder of the progress toward two of our principle objectives: getting everyone working together, and realization that everyone was important to the success of the play.

The second part of the first report is the attendance and comment page. The purpose behind this sheet is to be individual-specific, at least to the extent that I could be so early into the term. Attendance is a critical aspect in drama, as the absence of one person obviously has an effect on all the others who are involved in rehearsal with that person. As well, Transcona Collegiate has an attendance policy that requires teacher/home contact on regular intervals based on days missed by use of telephone and then mail. This profile report section is designed to replace that contact.

The *My Comments* section on profile report #1 was limited to individual generalities, such as:

*"That's show biz"--quite an entry in the journal. Kathleen's going to be challenged as the middle-aged Erma (Ernie), beginning with her voice work--it's going to have to slow down, and get deeper, if possible. I'm delighted with enthusiasm level, however, and her character will be expanded wherever possible.*

*My "embarrassment of riches" certainly includes Laura --I'm delighted with her growth over this past term. I'm interested in seeing her role, as it is very challenging--hard, yet sympathetic, ordered,. yet understanding.*



*I'm looking forward to seeing the process of character-finding. Her enthusiasm promises me a lot.*

*A strong rehearsal/audition stage-- Marie impressed and could have done Monica, as could others. However, Dawn is a challenge that Marie can handle well --there is a mixture of anger and envy in this character that will allow Marie the opportunity to cut loose -- I'm looking forward to this.*

*I'm glad that S's decided to stay on -- her commitment level and her enjoyment of this course really left her no choice.*

*As Karen, Lynn'll be challenged -- it's a demanding role, one with many faces. I'm looking forward to the process, and the product!*

This entry is interesting in that the student is one to whom drama is her life, yet who felt, based on the recommendations of the counselling department, that with the course load she was carrying, drama 305 would have to be dropped. We spent a number of conversations exploring options, as did her parents, and I encouraged her to rethink her initial decision of withdrawal.

From the parents' section on the report sheet:

*We agree that it's good Lynn decided to remain in this class and appreciate your interest.*

Other first report comments include:

*A good audition--I'm pleased with Tammy's interpretation of SALLY so far. Her enthusiasm levels and enjoyment of drama promise a lot of achievement, here --I've been delighted with all of*

her since Gr. X --there's no reason why this can't be even better!

C has to become more of the group -- she's on the edge, and can't stay there. As a company member, she's got to get involved 100%. That means jumping in, volunteering, making the first move. There's going to be expansion of lines and character for her, and L. McElroy is critical to this play.

## LINE MOTIVATION ANALYSIS SHEET

This sheet was not used by any of the cast members, as they preferred to write notes in their scripts. The cast did use the idea of motivation, and related actions and props in their discussions of the French scenes. During rehearsal, comments about "motivation and intention" were heard. Of some interest is that both expressions were written into the script for the character of Ashley, the sister of the leading lady, Monica Welles, in a scene where Ashley challenges the dramatic ability of her famous sibling.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT: END OF FIRST ACT

The self-assessment at the end of act one is designed for yet another reflective look at individual progress. The written questions are designed to focus on the major areas of concern to the production: character development, memory work, scene blocking, use of rehearsal time, and how the cast is working together. The check off boxes are designed to remind students of the daily work that is expected of them: scene analyses, line motivation analysis, reading script outside class time, production notes on costume, props, scene changes, and other incidentals that have developed. The responses were detailed, and thoughtful.

In response to:

1 At this time, how well do you know your character? In your response, look to things that you are comfortable with, but also look to things that you are still questioning.

the following comments are noteworthy:

*I know my character quite well now. I've noticed that in the last week, I've become much more comfortable with Karen. However, I'm still working on her: I'm having difficulty with the "innocent ingenue". I don't want her to look dumb but she has to be innocent and naive. I think I'll need a little bit of help with that one. [Lynn]*

*At this time I feel I know my character pretty well. Erma is a "New Yorker". She's stubborn, sort of quiet and a hard worker. She is bribed easily because it's extra money for her. And money is money. Erma slouches when she walks, she walks slowly, and shuffles. She's not lady-like at all. As a matter of fact, she is very tomboyish. [Kathleen]*

This comment generated a pencilled comment from me in that Erma had been identified as middle-aged, and that *tomboyish* was not appropriate, but that *mannish* would be more appropriate.

Not all responses were as detailed, as in:

*I know her perfectly! [Katherine]*

and in one case, there was no answer provided to the question.

In response to:

2 At this time, are you happy with your line memorization? Explain why, or why not.

most of the cast were dissatisfied with this:

*No, because I am still relying on it. I feel over spring break I'll have a lot more time to work on it then [sic] I have had lately. Work has been busy but I promise drama's going to be my first priority. [Lynn]*

*At this time I am comfortable with my lines. Besides the ones that I have to write in still, I know most of them. I'm lucky that I don't have long lines. The lines I have are mostly one liners. [Kathleen]*

*Because since I wrote it I know most of them. I have the first few pages done. [Katherine]*

One of the company admitted that little had been done with regard to line memorization.

*I don't know much of my lines. I have a little memorized. [Carla]*

In response to:

*3 At this time, are you happy with the blocking of the scenes that you are playing? Which scene gives you the most pleasure, and which gives you the least? [If your character hasn't been on stage yet, simply indicate that.]*

This question reflected the success of the French scene analysis sheet, as well as pointing out scenes that needed more analysis on the part of the cast in those French scenes.

*Pleasurable: Alex and Karen 1-26*

*I'm quite comfortable with Karen in this scene. She knows what she wants and is going for it. It's a scene kind of like Lynn.*

*Least pleasurable scene: Alex and Karen 1-26. I don't like how Charles is reacting towards Karen. Alex isn't reacting, it's Charles. It's harder to be Karen with Charles, it would be easier being Karen with Alex. [Lynn]*

*The scene that gives me the most pleasure is the opening scene. I've never been on stage from the very beginning, and it's exciting to be the first person to speak with Alex Dennison. [Kathleen]*

*I like the scenes that I get to fight with Marie/Dawn. I HATE my motive scene with Monica/Colleen. [Katherine]*

In response to:

*4 Stepping outside yourself, would you be pleased with the way in which you have used your time this past month of rehearsal? Why, why not?*

Although I have a high regard for Company 305's work ethic, I am interested in knowing whether or not they see the time spent in class as being profitable. There are days in production rehearsal where some cast members are not involved with the direction of the play, simply because their characters are not on stage at that time. If my attention is focused on a small group in rehearsal, it is my expectation that the others will work independently on play-related material, such as line memorization, scene analysis, and so on.

*I feel I have used my time well. I go over the scenes in my head while we're sitting on chairs and I go over my lines and movements in my mind also. I do my best to stay aware of Karen. However,*

today Tracy had a little more to say to me when she shouldn't have been. It was difficult for me not to respond. [Lynn]

Outside of myself, I'm pleased with the way I used my time this past month of rehearsal. Some people simply sat around, but I watched and learned from all the other actors. Seeing the angles the people stand in gives me ideas as to how I should stand when I'm on stage. I think of the tone of voice I should use and actions. [Kathleen]

Yes, I do my scenes. I learn, I watch. I think of extra lines I can put in for Dawn and me. [Katherine]

Interestingly, the student who admitted to doing little in the way of memorization offered a contradiction for this question on time usage:

Yes, I would but not with rehearsal because I haven't done anything other than look over my lines and help write a new scene. [Carla]

In response to:

5 At this time, how would you describe the feeling you have of the group?

This question is the result of the tension between the two groups. I wanted to know whether or not the trust and group activities that the class had been involved with, as well as the actual rehearsal, had brought the class members together into a company -- or whether or not there were still problems among the cast.

*My feelings of the group:*

*I'm becoming much more comfortable with the group. I don't feel we are segregated from one another as much as we were earlier on. However, I feel Carla and [name omitted] aren't pulling their weight with the group. Our group is becoming stronger but we all need to learn that 'constructive' criticism is good but put-down's aren't. [Lynn]*

*The feeling I have of the group varies. At times it is on the verge of becoming a family, but at other times it's a small battle. [Kathleen]*

This comment reads as if the goal of "family" has been achieved, since in a family there are always times when dissatisfaction raises its head, even to the point where blows are often struck, especially among siblings.

*It varies. [Katherine]*

When I pencilled in "not specific enough for me", the additional comment

*sometimes we're together, & mostly we're not*  
was added.

Interestingly, the one student who hadn't done much in the way of memorization was feeling quite comfortable with the group dynamics:

*I trust them now and I feel that if we all work together [sic] we can make a great show. [Carla]*

In summary, the self-assessment sheets allowed me as the teacher the opportunity to check responses from my students as



to how they were doing, and to revise my approaches with the Company as needed.

#### DRAMA VIDEO ASSESSMENT SHEETS

These sheets were not used in drama 305 as the need for anonymity of student subjects as expressed by the University of Manitoba meant that video tape shot in rehearsal could not be taken home for careful analysis over a period of time.

#### DRAMA 305 REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

WEEK SIX: MARCH 12, 1993

##### Week's summary

- 1 *Rehearsal again! Gee, you'd think that's all you did in Drama? Just kidding. [Tammy]*
- 2 *This week we continued to work the scenes. We also continued to work on our line motivation and added in another scene for characters not in it. [Carla]*
- 3 *We mainly worked on the play. Agreeing our motivation for the lines. Deciding on how to say lines and giving the lines feeling in them. [Darlene]*
- 4 *Working on script, of course I was also ignored & interrupted [sic] as usual. [Katherine]*
- 5 *This week we worked basicly [sic] through scene 1. We brought in furniture and things are starting to look good. People have a better idea of where things are positioned on stage. [Marie]*

6 We are gradually working our way through the first part of the play. The study has been moved in and the idea of where we are positioned on stage. [Laura]

7 This week's activities/focus was to get through scene 1 and brush up the rough spots. There are quite a few. [Lynn]

8 This week we tried to finish the entire first act. We got close -- but not quite. We worked the scenes until they were pretty reasonable. [Kathleen]

#### High Point of the Week

1 High point of the week was the beginning of it. We just started working on the end of Act 1. It was new and exciting. [Tammy]

2 The high point of the week was that we rewrote in a new scene [*sic*] between an attendant and a lieutenant and Alex. We copied out all the scenes and put it in the right words so it will fit. [Carla]

3 The high point was my lines are almost all memorized and that I am working on the end of the play. [Darlene]

4 Wednesday, 'cuz [*sic*] there was no class. We went to PTE. We saw "STONE ANGEL". It was really good. There was a standing ovation. Keiffer Sutherland's mother was the lead. [Katherine]

5 The high point of the week for me was doing my scene where I yell at Katherine. I love these scene's [*sic*] where I can just break loose. [Marie]

6 The high point of the week is that we have gotten the study set up. Everything looks great, and the attitude of the group is improving. [Laura]

7 The high point of the week was playing wax museum and you couldn't get us to melt! HA HA! We've improved! [Lynn]

8 The high point is definitely PTE. The play was the best I've seen. The rest of the week was ok. [Kathleen]

Low Point of the week

1 Low point...well it was Friday, we worked on the end of Act 1 again. It was nice finally getting things worked out though. One more thing: I have to get that chair thing right! [Tammy]

2 There was not a low point. [Carla]

3 The low point was that we can't get the lines out the way they are meant to be said. [Darlene]

4 Friday. All week tension builds up and I can't stand it anymore [sic]. Classmates are RUDE. Whenever I TRY to do a scene, people yak, or interupt [sic] me. Also, they don't listen to me. I'm ignored. Because of all this, during my crying scene, I was really crying. [Katherine]

5 The low point of the week was probably being absent on Friday. I hate missing Drama classes because you miss so much in one day, and it's sometimes hard to get back into it. [Marie]

6 The low point would be "script is hard". Its hard to memorize, but with the script in your hand, the movement is twice as hard. When we memorize the lines, everything will be a lot better. [Laura]

7 The low point of the week was...well...I didn't really have one. Perhaps I was a bit agitated that I still use my script. [Lynn]

8 My low point has nothing to do with school--but I do have one. [Kathleen]

## Self-assessment scale

Again, the cast members rated themselves very highly as far as work ethic. If there were personal or personnel problems, they didn't interfere with getting the job done. I have no record of any major argument or disagreement during this period.

Tammy 9  
Carla 9  
Katherine 9  
Marie 10  
Laura 9  
Lynn 10  
Kathleen 10

## PROFILE REPORT #2

March 23, 1993

This report was much more focused than the first, distributed on February 19. Six weeks of class time had provided me with specifics that needed attention. In some cases, the attention was positive --

- 1     *...There have also been days when the scenes have clicked very nicely...*
  
- 2     *...A great delight is the additional material that has been generated. The play has a series of minor characters, and what the cast has done is to create a number of additional entries and exits for both new characters and those existing in minor roles...*

3     ...Ideas for set and direction are coming from the  
cast...

while in other cases, the attention was needed because of a  
recognized need for focus and improvement --

1     ...there is a heavy dependency on script, and when  
the head has to be bent to read, the feet tend to  
be nailed to the floor...

2     ...If there has been one major disappointment to  
this time it would be the lack of intensity in  
lines...

As in the case of the first profile report letter of  
February 19, the intention here was to communicate on four  
levels: the student, the teacher, the parent, and the  
administration. For the student, this letter provides the  
general comments that affect the end product -- the play.  
Rehearsal schedule often runs right to the end of class bell,  
and group meetings aren't always attended by all cast members.  
This letter serves as a six week summary of both high and low  
points from my perspective.

For me, the reflective thought necessary in drafting this  
letter allowed me to create specific objectives for the next  
three week period, specifically:

1     ...The goal is the completion of both acts by  
Spring Break...

and

2     ...Every line has a reason for being, and a need to  
be said in just the right way. That motivation

*isn't there, yet, and it's going to have be found soon...*

A key objective is identified for the return after Spring Break:

*There is no question that they are more aware of the shortcomings of the play at this time than they were when the first readings had been completed in February. They are also aware of the problems with what I'm calling the static nature of the play -- there is a lot of sitting and talking, especially in Act 2, and both the cast and I are uncomfortable with the idea of "talking heads". How this will be resolved is the major thrust for the month of April.*

To the parent, the letter provides a summary of the work accomplished since last report, a sense of success and direction, as well as a request for assistance with set pieces. The administrator receives an update pertaining to the progress of one of the classes in the collegiate. To my knowledge, no class other than drama provides this sort of information at the present time.

The handwritten comments for members of the Company are now more specific to performance:

- 1 *Kathleen's character of Erma is developing -- she's not quite there, yet, and my role model examples are few and far between. We need to add some "stage business" over and above the broom -- or perhaps use the broom in different ways. Excellent line work -- the script is now a guide. The lines she's drafted for the party work, and fit into the existing play very naturally.*

- 2     *"Karen's" multiple personality is starting to show -- the character is beginning to "flesh out" -- the little moves, esp. in the "sultry" scenes, are great. L's voice has great carry -- no problem, there. The sense of "leadership" is still there, too -- even though she's not saying as much -- I think she should actually -- 'cause the show comes first. A really good month.*

This comment generated a response from the parents:

*Thanks for the ongoing comments.*

Other comments provided to parents and students include:

- 3     *Dawn is coming along well -- Marie's interpretation is on schedule. Voice and gestures are obvious -- the temper and emotion are very obvious! Marie's writing is super -- she's adding sections that fit smoothly. So far -- great!*
- 4     *Katherine's sense of belonging is stronger, now -- perhaps not as complete as it could be, but certainly better than it was even two weeks ago. The scenes she has developed for Ashley are excellent -- and her work in that character is also the same. Ashley is coming to life -- there's still some development needed, but we have eight weeks to go. Overall, I'm pleased.*

This entry generated the following student response:

*I prefer to be written as Katherine, please and thank you.*

Another entry states:

- 5     *There's been a good character development this past month -- Sally is coming into being. The voice and*

gestures are excellent, and once we've added costume and props, Sally Bean will be there. Excellent line work so far, and her production book is a work of art.  
Great.

## WEEKLY JOURNAL

WEEK 9

APRIL 9, 1993

### Summary of the week's activities

- 1 This week we got our copy of the complete script. Since we finished Act Two before Spring Break we started on page one of Act One. We started using the script as a guide instead of relying on it. [Kathleen]
- 2 This is the first week back in school. We have a newly written script with added lines which makes the play better. [Laura]
- 3 The week's activities/focus was to get through Act 1. Preferably without script. [Lynn]
- 4 We started working through Act 1 again. We got new scripts for one and we worked through it in more detail. [Marie]
- 5 Started working with the new script. We began on page 1 and we're working through it. We got Act one & Act 2 next week. [Katherine]
- 6 This week we got our whole act one script back and we took it from the beginning [*sic*]. I think it went pretty well and we worked very well. [Carla]

High point of the week

Week 9



April 9, 1993

- 1 The high point of the week was being able to be on stage. My character isn't on much and sometimes I'm someone else we haven't got to... [Kathleen]
- 2 I finally got to do my Police scene. It's coming [sic] along really well. I don't think I really suit the part, but I'll have to do my best with what I have. [Laura]
- 3 This week's high point would be noticing a change in 'Alex'. He is responding, "Alex wouldn't do or say that!" It shows he's taking responsibility of the character. I feel a little more comfortable knowing it's all getting worked on. [Lynn]
- 4 The high point of the week was getting new scripts. It made things so much easier not having to shuffle from script to script. [Marie]
- 5 Friday 'cuz [sic] no school, but drama wise Thursday 'cuz [sic] we got out early to get report cards. [Katherine]
- 6 The high point of the week would be that most of this week I was on stage and I at least had something different to do. I also understand now that what my scene has to do with and the things that I should do and the way I would say my line. [Carla]

Low point of the week

Week 9

April 1993

- 1 The only low point(s) of the week that I can think of are: 1: we missed most of Thursday's class because we got our report cards, and 2: didn't have class on Friday. [Kathleen]
- 2 The low point of the week would be Act 1. It's going really well, all except voice. We have to project our

voices, and put more enthusiasm into it. I hear a lot of monotone. [Laura]

3 This week's low point is trying to get "happy". I kinda [sic] lost my smile somewhere. It's really hard not being with Russ, & I sometimes wonder if I made the right decision. I'm trying to leave my face at the door, but it seems deeper than that. [Lynn]

4 The low point is that we need more work on Act One. There is nothing that really makes it interesting. The scene needs more because it seemed rather boring. [Marie]

5 Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday. This class makes me sick sometimes. Quite a few people are total hypocrits. [sic] Family? HA! Maybe half. The other half is ignored & neglected. Guess which half? [Katherine]

6 I did not find a low point this week. [Carla]

The Company now appears to be looking more at the show, although the comment about "family" indicates that there are still some rough edges, despite the fact that I have no recollection of any incidents worthy of note occurring. The group continues to work well, with high personal assessment ratings from all.

#### Self-assessment scale

Kathleen 10  
Laura 10  
Lynn 9  
Marie 8.5  
Katherine 8.5  
Carla 9

### PROFILE REPORT #3

APRIL 25, 1993

This profile report served as the "one month to go until the show" reminder to the cast, as well as the "off-book" reminder. The request to parents to assist in this latter issue of off-book rehearsal is necessary, in that "off-book" means exactly that: cast members are not allowed to rehearse with their scripts once the date for "off-book" has been established. Uncertainty over lines means the need for prompting by a second party, and individual rehearsal requires cue lines from another person.

The topics of make-up, publicity and lighting are included to continue the informational flow to parents and administration about what is necessary in the production of a play, as well as some of the costs involved.

*Eighteen additional lights, cables, and support struts come only one week before opening night, as the cost for a two week rental is some \$900.00.*

I believe that providing information of this type to people who are removed from the course is necessary to establish the complexity of the process of drama production.

The attendance report and personal comment sheet accompanying the update letter is completed in the same way as the previous two -- a summary of attendance to April 23, and a hand-written comment focused on character development.

1 *Tammy's got Sally pretty well down pat. There's that sense of reality, now, & she's been off-book*

for a while, so the gestures are really there. We still need to work on rope-pulling, but the rest of it is there. Good leadership & the written work still shines. Great 3 weeks! Bravo.

2 This past period of time has been spent learning some Spanish, and creating a new minor role. Although Kathleen's stage time has been limited, this will change over the next few days, as the tempo of rehearsal picks up. "Erma" needs costume and make-up, I'm pleased with the voice, the stage business with the broom, & Kathleen's line work. Bravo.

3 Very noteworthy 3 weeks -- the character of Dawn is very close to reality-- all that's needed is hairstyle, make-up, and costume. Sounds like a lot, but without voice & gesture, Dawn will never exist, & she certainly does. Marie's given Dawn lots of emotion & lots of supportive body language. I'm now hearing that "Dawn wouldn't say that", and that's a sign of illusion becoming reality. Great scene with Alex: "Kiss & make up" -- Bravo!

By the "off-book" date, character has to be established to the point of this is the character that the audience will see. The remaining time in rehearsal is devoted to line delivery and movement from cues so that a feeling of naturalness occurs on stage. This is what is meant by the comment about "illusion becoming reality". The illusion is the false world of the play, while the reality is the replacement of the knowledge that the world is false with the

acceptance by performer and viewer of the play world as the real thing during presentation.

## REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

WEEK 12

April 30, 1993

weekly summary

- 1 *This week we were focusing on off book and also in the perfecting touching on our parts as well as giving our opinions on other parts. [Carla]*
- 2 *Doing the play during class. We had an afterschool [sic] one too. Only one month (actually, less) away. Are we ready? [Katherine]*
- 3 *Well this was our first week off book and it wasn't so great. There is lots of line calling and forgetting. [Marie]*
- 4 *This week's activities/focus were to get through the whole script and eventually, by the end of the week, be off script. [Lynn]*
- 5 *We have been working a lot on act one and two. We need to rehearse [sic] more. We had our first night rehearsal [sic], and it went well. We are also off script. [Laura]*
- 6 *Our focus for this week was to be off script by today. I wasn't here from Wednesday on. [Kathleen]*

## High point of the week

As the opening night's performance drew closer, the Company's collective nerves began to show, either directly, or between the lines.

- 1 The high point would be that we are about two weeks to open night and that these two weeks are gonna [sic] be the best and the most rewarding towards the show. [Carla]
- 2 Good part is people were here this week & we got stuff done. [Katherine]
- 3 The high point of the week was just when the amount of stuff that people knew. Certain scene's [sic] went really well and the lines are almost coming naturally. Everyone is trying really hard with these lines. [Marie]
- 4 The high point of the week was actually feeling the feeling of accomplishment. As a whole we've got it! Fix me uppers for the next few performances (rehearsals) [sic] and we can do it. Actually getting to the last page of dialogue gave me a rush of excitement. [Lynn]
- 5 The high point of the week was our first night rehearsal [sic]. It went well, and we covered a lot of ground. We also have a [sic] understanding of act 2. It's been a great week. We (me, darlene, [sic] Nicole) also got fitted for our police outfits. [Laura]
- 6 The high point of the week was my band trip to Thunder Bay. It was fun and I felt free almost. I was with some of my friends that I enjoyed being with. [Kathleen]

low point of the week

If anything, the low points of the week are terser, more direct, and often reflect personal feelings, compared to past comments.

- 1 No low point. [Carla]
- 2 Bad things. People are still on each others [sic] nerves. [Katherine]
- 3 The low point of the week was that everyone is concentrating so hard on their lines that they are forgetting to get emphasis and motivation. [Marie]
- 4 The low point of the week was wanting to smack Tammy & Cecile out. Cecile is too busy making fun & putting down people that she can't concentrate on her own part. And Tammy feels "miss high & mighty" this year. I don't mind being told as a group, like we usually do, but she's pushing me and I don't like it a bit. I'm being patient because she'll get over her power rush sooner or later. I also don't mind criticism but snottiness is out of the question. [Lynn]
- 5 Act one needs help. We need some more touching up on it. A lot more. Its [sic] boring [sic] compared to act two. We need more night rehearsals [sic], and perhaps it will get better. [Laura]
- 6 I'm not sure if there was a low point for this week besides missing some important rehearsals. [Kathleen]

Self-assessment scale

Despite any personal feelings, the individual continues to work hard; individual effort shines.

Carla 9  
Katherine 9  
Marie 9  
Lynn 10  
Laura 10  
Kathleen 10

CAST NOTE, MAY 17, 1993

By this time in the process of play production, the Company is virtually at the "what-you-see-is-what-you-get" stage. The long Victoria Day weekend means that the cast is going to have a dress rehearsal Friday, May 21, with opening night some four days later, on the 25th of May: not a pleasant situation in which to be. The Company members are nervous, excited, worried -- all the possible ranges of emotion are being exhibited. The *cast note* is the final comment from me -- it allows for both the positive strokes and the reminders that I feel are still necessary for each and every one of the Company.

1           *One week to go, and I guess you've felt the weight of the role of Alex Dennison on your shoulders for some time. I'm willing to bet that you never thought it would be this much work, right?*



I'm really pleased with the way in which you have stuck to the role -- your character development has come along, and the way I see it, as in play-off hockey, you're going to be peaking at the right time. You've got your lines well established, and your gestures and movement are supportive. We'll be adding the final touches as the dress rehearsal draws near, and it's also not uncommon to make adjustments as the show progresses. Just remember -- what would Charles do in this situation, and then apply that to Alex Dennison, and you'll probably be closer to the mark than away.

Three things to remember: 1. your enunciation has to be crystal clear. Members of an audience come to see a play once, and they have to hear everything. 2. You are playing to the audience, not to your supporting characters. 3. Use the stage and its component parts, such as the stool. People sit when they are comfortable, and when they are in control.

2 One week to go before the biggest jump in your stage career. Feeling nervous at all? You shouldn't, simply because I think you have your characters nailed down pretty well. Erma is a very critical character to the play, simply because she is the first character to begin to provide background information to the audience. Remember, in a mystery play, the characters slowly reveal the plot, and Erma does this -- "That's where it all begins...with the words..." is a good example of that.

I'd like to see you in costume the remainder of this week. The broom is a good stage prop, and you'll get more ideas with coveralls, a small dustpan, a dusting cloth -- that sort of thing. We'll work that one scene with Alex Dennison a couple of times, as well, so remind me on that.

Just remember your enunciation, and the fact that the deaf man in the back row is the one who has to hear you. Your body positioning on stage is excellent, and you don't overdo the stage business, so really, it's that one thing to remember -- deliver all the syllables of the words.

3 So you've got one week to go before you become Sally Bean for a week -- unlike your past performances, this one is a little different in that the character and the lines are to be the same every night and every afternoon. Your improvisation skills are not required, unless someone forgets a line! I think you'll find the schedule to be different -- you'll "feed" off the audience's reaction, and they feed off you -- it's very necessary to be "up" for every show, and that's easier to say than to do, based on personal past experience.

However, I've got confidence in you, and so long as you remember that the tall guy with the big hat asked you for breakfast at 1:00 in the afternoon, you'll be fine. Your line delivery is clear, and your gestures are very supportive. Just remember that the audience is listening to this for the first time, and that means that the speed of delivery has to be considered.

Costume pieces this week would be a good idea -- I'm not sure if we talked about shoes for you, but Sally is a sort of sensible girl, even if she is a bit naive, so something in between runners and high heels would be fine.

Try a note book this week--I think Sally would be efficient, and that means not forgetting anything. It also adds a little to the scene about the printers -- you could flip your note pad open, and sort of reinforce the fact that you really had to be told about the directions. With the coffee scene, you could begin to write down the directions, and that would give Alex another thing

to do when he gently stops you, as the place is only half a block away.

4           This is where I wish I had your grade 10 journal in front of me. I was thinking of that first year on Thursday, as I listened to you from the back of the theatre. Your speech was clear, emotional, correctly paused, and I sort of got shivers down my back when you and Frank went at each other. At the risk of sounding both clichéd and chauvinistic--You've come a long way...

          So it's one week before Monica Welles comes to real life; you wanted this role, and you've worked hard at it. I can't see any problem that will stop you from getting the reaction you deserve: your lines, your movements, and your delivery have left the illusion behind. Monica Welles lives--too bad she has to die every night!

          If there could be one small suggestion reminder, simply because if I write it down, it may have more permanence -- remember that Monica is deeply in love with Alex, and that touching is part of that. [Dare I suggest that you think Jeff during those scenes?]

          In some cases, the cast note allowed me to offer a personal thank you to some of the cast who were given roles under their capabilities, and yet who never publicly complained. One such case was the performer who took on the role of Loretta, the stage manager, who in the original script, had one entrance, and eleven lines. The Company wrote Loretta in so there was more time on stage, but still...

          One week before Loretta springs to life... not really, because I have really appreciated your assistance as the real life stage manager this past

three weeks. Your focus on lines has allowed me the opportunity to look at the whole production, and that's been a real benefit. In professional theatre, the stage manager is never really appreciated by the audience, simply because of lack of understanding of the job, and the invisibility of the character. Stage managers are never seen, they never come out for a curtain call, and yet without them, the show collapses.

This is one member of the group who does appreciate your efforts. I know that the role was easy for you, and I wish that we could have expanded it even more. However, this course is reality, not a melodrama, and the wishes of the people in the script can't always come true. So-- my deepest thanks for the support.

I've made you some telegrams, and that will allow for some more ad lib delivery. Talk to me about that later on today. Oh -- one thing: remember that it's watching not washing...

As well, other company members were not delighted with their roles when the cast list was first published, and the cast note allows me the opportunity to compliment them on their attitude and growth.

I realize that the role of the police officer wasn't the ideal for you -- but this is so often the case in school productions. There are only so many characters to go around: I would like to thank you for the manner in which you have handled the roles you have been given. I can't pay you, but you have been very professional about all of this! Rehearsal for Murder is very much a team show -- without the police, there is no revelation as to how Monica died, and the addition of the arrest scene at the end is really looking powerful.

Apparently, US police officers carry what is called the Miranda card -- they read the prisoner's rights, so there is no chance of an error happening that will let the criminal go on a technicality. Put a recipe card in your shirt pocket, when you get your costume.

Remember--a play is story made up of parts. Take away one, and the story isn't there. You've helped bring the drama 305 story to a happy ending.

And for another company member who was disgruntled early:

I know that Santoro wasn't the role you wanted; if you hadn't got sick that week of auditions, who knows where you would have ended up? However, the Spanish additions help a lot, and so does your police captain role in the first act. Just remember to speak to the guy in the back row -- especially with your "Actresses" line. Have a pencil and a clip board for the floor plan of the apartment, so you can really check things off. Other than that, I think we have it nailed down pretty well.

One of the Company members had been in Company 305 the year before with the lead male role in *My Dance in the Rain* as well as playing guitar in the band, *The Blues Hounds*, in *Voices From the High School*, and was now performing in his third Company project in two years -- all because of a love of drama. There would be no credit for his four months of work. The class note addresses this contribution succinctly, as well as the leadership qualities that also were brought.

...I was pleased with your decision to come back to the drama program after last term. Your decision to be on stage as opposed to behind the

scenes may have rubbed some people the wrong way, but to my mind, that decision has made the play that much stronger. Lloyd is a powerful character, and he belongs where he is. The art gallery scene is really good, and I think I've told you that before.

Your input into the set design has been really appreciated a lot, as have the questions about the scenes as we worked through them. It showed a leadership role, as well as a constant thought process to the day-to-day happenings. Not everyone in the cast had this, as you are well aware.

Just a reminder that the audience will be listening to Lloyd for the first time, and that careful attention to the enunciation of each syllable will go along way to helping the members of the public pick up the words. That, plus the sense of focus you usually have...

I realize that you have experienced show week already, but the feelings will be just as exciting for this show as they were for "Dance in the Rain".

You'll also not forget your other cast members, because these people have made it possible for you to play your role. As you are very much aware, theatrical performances are very much a team thing, and this sense of cooperation is rarely found in other courses in school. There may not have been much content or rules for you to learn in drama 305, but the things you have learned will probably stay with you for the rest of your life.

Your role in the drama program has also changed others, as well, and that's something that you should really cherish. It's hard to see day-to-day change, which is why reflective thought is so important: think back to your classmates in drama 105, and look at them today -- two very separate groups, yet with one common denominator. The sense of confidence and presence is very much there. Your interaction with them, whether they were special needs or not, has helped shape who they are. Pretty impressive.

*I would imagine that this will be your final year. The extra term has really been a bonus for me. I've enjoyed watching the growth and the maturity develop. Good luck. [And stay healthy, at least until May 31.]*

The final paragraph was written for everyone who has an interest in the Company and its program -- the students, of course, but also for the parent and the school administrator. When the curtain falls on a school production, and the audience has enjoyed a two act play of some two hours and fifteen minutes in duration, it is natural that compliments and kudos be given to the teacher-in-charge, simply because the audience has the belief that without the teacher, the show wouldn't have been so successful. That may be true in the literal sense: without the teacher, there would be no show. However, the process of show development goes beyond the successful presentation of a script on stage. The philosophy that has driven drama 305 at Transcona Collegiate is one that focuses on student growth. The paragraphs at the end of the cast note are a poor attempt at summation:

*You'll never forget show week -- there is something magical about playing in front of people, and hearing the applause directed at you for your performance. You'll also not forget your other cast members, because these people have made it possible for you to play your role. Theatrical performances are very much a team thing, and this sense of cooperation is rarely found in other courses in school. There may not have been much content or rules for you to learn in drama 305, but*

*the things you have learned will probably stay with you for the rest of your life.*

For some company members who had already experienced this, there was the additional comment:

*In fact, I get the impression that drama over the past three years has changed your life already. Your role in the drama program has also changed others, as well, and that's something that you should really cherish. It's hard to see day-to-day change, which is why reflective thought is so important: think back to your classmates in drama 105, and look at them today -- two very separate groups, yet with one common denominator. The sense of confidence and presence is very much there. Your interaction with them, whether they were special needs or not, has helped shape who they are. Pretty impressive.*

*The past three years have gone by very quickly. You've done a lot to make them memorable in my mind, and the minds of others.*

#### FINAL DE-BRIEFING ASSIGNMENT

This was the one assignment that I was looking forward to reading more than any other, simply because this was the one that was going to tell me whether or not growth had occurred. The play had been successful, but then all the plays that have been done by Company 305's in past years have been successful. I was looking for proof that the goals of the drama curriculum such as promotion of "...awareness, foster development and encourage use of: imagination, creativity, co-operation, self-discipline, analysis and synthesis, self-expression,



self-confidence, responsibility, [and] communication..." (p. 1) had occurred. Judging from the responses received, the answer is an unequivocal yes to all of those.

Cooperation between the Company members was critical for success, and something about which many of the Company had expressed reservations during that first week or two of the course. Now, with the success of the play behind them, the message of cooperation range clearly through many voices, including this one, which speaks the same message three ways:

1        You know, looking back at day one, I wonder seriously how we ever got though it all. But then, I stop and think, and I wonder why I thought that.

          As a direct quote from my first piece of writing in Drama 305 "This year is 305, we have new people who have joined "US" and to be totally honest and truthful, I'm not really sure I want to work with them." Hello? Did I really write this? Was I really that close minded and stupid? When I reread [sic] that letter "statement", I felt so ashamed, and petty. I have always thought of myself as an open-minded, outgoing person. I always thought of myself as a caring, understanding human being. Obviously, I didn't know myself as well as I thought I did. [Cecile]

2        ...In the beginning, Marie and I were not exactly "friends" shall we say? But we somehow got over that! I haven't even got a clue how, but we did, and I'm glad! We turned out to be pretty good friends! So I definately [sic] think I've found that strength to accept people. I'm just glad they found the strenght [sic] to accept me back... [Cecile]

- 3 Many of us have overcome difficulties, problems, differences, and conflicts. So far, we have overcome them all. Some greater than others, but all of them equally important. Because of all of these problems helped us to come together, and become a very happy family. [Cecile]

This same message in different words, with a mix of self-discipline, came from others:

- 4 At the beginning of the year I was a little uncomfortable with our class. Some of the people were not pleased with us joining, but over the course of the semester, I feel like we improved our attitudes. I put up with a lot of the garbage that was thrown at me, but I didn't want any fights so I let it pass without complaints. [Kathleen]

- 5 So, the group did well and we did make a few mistakes but nobody's perfect. Thank goodness during it all everyone put aside their petty thoughts about each other and all got along with each other (sometimes). I think those 'drama parties' helped a lot. I hope in the future we'll still have some more get-togethers. [sic]  
[Katherine]

Related in some ways to the co-operation desire expressed above is the desire for responsibility and communication:

- 6 ...In my 305 expectations, my first was to find the strength to carry out actions outside of the class as well as in. I think I may have found that strength. I also wanted to find the strength to accept, and to adjust to the new people, and surroundings. I definitely [sic] believe I have found this... [Cecile]

Both of these goals come through with some excellent analysis and synthesis in the following revelation, which also

suggests an excellent use of imagination and creativity in the drama room, as well as honest communication:

7           ...When I found out what part I did get, I was definitely not pleased. I got the part of Erma, who was originally Ernie. Erma was the theatre's stagehand. Basically I got the part of a glorified janitor. I was really upset. Erma wasn't on the stage for a long period of time, and the whole part was in the first act.

          When we started doing read through's, I did it with not much energy. And when people would tell me to say it like I would on stage, I was not impressed, but I resaid [sic] my lines. It didn't take me long to get used to saying my lines as if I were performing and other people needed a little reminder.

          It didn't take long before we were trying to act out the play, while using scripts of course. My character started to build and I got used to her. When I thought about it, she was an interesting character to portray. She was different from everyone else in the play and the oldest. I actually started to like my character and started to have some fun with her. [Kathleen]

One of the students did a point form analysis of each and every cast member, offering analysis of not only the performer, but also the performance:

8   Darlene -- she was great. She definitely grew in this class. By the end she was really good. she got into that cop role great.

Carla -- she truly could have done better but what she finally did was better than in rehearsal.

Frank--he really has a bad attitude. he was absent too much and should've made the most of his situation, but chose not to which is really a shame.

Charles--He pulled it off. He put up with lots of peoples [sic] crap & memorized all 500 lines! Great work! A lot of people thought he couldn't do it but he proved them wrong. [Katherine]

drama 305

final report June 18, 1993

The final report comments were drafted with the intention of providing the student and the parent/guardian with an overview of the student's progress over the course of the term. Wherever possible, the comments were positive, as *Rehearsal for Murder* had been an unqualified success. Notwithstanding that, where I saw a need for comment on behaviour and/or attitude that had deleterious impact on the group over long term, or if there had not been a significant growth, I commented on that, too. For instance, for one student:

...There were problems with attendance this term, and that may reflect Frank's disappointment with the size of the role. As you may recall, Frank missed the auditions because of illness, and as a result, was given the part that was left over. To compensate for this, we wrote in another character, and brought the role of Santoro to a higher level. Notwithstanding this, I still had feelings that Frank really felt that his talents were not being recognized...

and

...As of Friday, June 18, I still haven't received the final written report, which in itself is not that surprising, since Frank has had a

problem handing in written assignments throughout all levels of his drama classes. He has not turned in the weekly summaries on a regular basis, and he has not attempted to start a new folder once the first went missing. Finally, I'm not sure if he wrote anything in his production book, because he never turned that in when I called for it...

For another:

...Production book work and weekly logs, as well as the final report [as of June 18] have been few and far between. I've always believed that drama cannot be just performance on stage, because the reflection on what is being done and the transfer of action to word play an important part in character development. If the mark is lower than what Charles's A+ performance indicated it should be, it reflects this missing material...

The remainder of the comments, however, reflected the effort, talent, and love of the stage that the Company members demonstrated. The success of the show was very much a Company effort: eight shows in four days meant that over 1000 people had seen and enjoyed *Rehearsal for Murder*. Since the original objective of the course is to take the words of others in the form of a script and perform those words for an audience, the comments were about the different forms of growth as seen through my eyes.

1           If anything, Frank's confidence levels have been the highlight of the year. It is obvious that he is much more comfortable than ever before in speaking in front of large numbers of people. [I would like to compliment Frank on his speech to the students when he was running for the office of

vice-president: he showed presence, good speech, and excellent projection -- all characteristics of a successful drama student.]

- 2 I can still hear Colleen's line delivery -- of all my cast, I would have to say that she personified the term "projection". Ever corner of the room was filled with the words, the emotion -- the passion of Monica Welles. And speaking of passion, I was amazed at how easily she accepted the stage closeness that was required by the role of Monica. It's not easy kissing someone in an intimate way as part of a play, something that was driven home time and time again last year by people who had a lot more stage experience than Colleen has. Yet, Monica and Alex were able to perform that scene within a week of the beginning of the first true rehearsals: impressive.

I have, in past reports, made mention of the Colleen of grade 10 and 11. The purpose of drama in high school is not to end up with a major production more fitting for Mainstage of MTC than a high school. Rather, I think the principal aim of the drama program is to develop confidence, increase speaking ability, and get rid of that phobia of public appearance. If there happens to be that successful stage production in there, then it's a bonus. [Many of my colleagues in their drama 305 classes do not stage a full length play, but rather do scenes and monologues, much as Colleen and her mates did in 205.] Taking this idea into mind, then I would have to say that Colleen has grown to an extent that even I did not think to be possible. Added into that is the understanding of what drama has done for her. How many times have I said that the journals would be priceless in years to come? With the move to Edmonton, they become even more important, simply because re-reading them will bring the Black Box theatre to that city, because "we all have, now,

locked in our memories, the sound of applause and the taste of success."

3           So what have we accomplished over the past three years? And I think that's the key to determining whether or not a drama student is successful -- a reflective look over a longer period of time, as opposed to the stuff that was completed this past term. To begin with, I see a much stronger, forceful Tammy, willing to go to the wall over her beliefs. I see a Tammy who took on the cast at times in order to get her point across, and I saw a Tammy who showed others, as opposed to just telling them.

A really great example of this was the detailing she did in her production book as to character definition and character movement. Exemplary is a word that comes to mind, and to be honest, if this course were to continue, I would use her prodbook as the best example I have seen.

I have seen a high level of commitment and dedication. We had some major problems this term, and it could have seriously impacted on the company to the point where the show could have been cancelled. Demonstration is always better than lots of talk, and this again was exemplary. Tammy had her lines down early, and the moves to go with them.

4           But the success of a drama program is one that is measured in years of growth, not the success of one play. How does one measure the growth that Tracy has demonstrated since her grade 10 year? Her name is known in the theatre circle of Winnipeg, now, and to have her first play published in a book that is in every school and library in Manitoba, as well as libraries across Canada, is something that most playwrights NEVER accomplish. Being able to work the stage of PTE, and then the

Fringe Festival is again something that few performers have accomplished by the age of 17.

In school, Tracy has the poise and the public speaking comfort that a very small minority of Canadians hold. I've got the feeling that no matter what Tracy wants to do, she'll do it. She has already proven that she can handle drama, and since drama is life, the other half of that equation should come easily: life is drama.

In conclusion, the past three years have shown a lot. There is that saying that drama is life, and life is drama. Tammy has succeeded in one-half of that, and should be able to handle the trials and tribulations of the other half with imagination and poise. That puts her into a small minority of people with skills that are in demand.

5           One of Katherine's first journal entries of the term expressed some fears about her shyness and the fact that she felt alone in the group. That slowly changed, until by the time that the rehearsals were well under way, there was an obvious camaraderie developing. The fact that Katherine was responsible for writing a good portion of this show may have had something to do with it. I was really impressed with this, too, because not only was the script completed quickly, it was also in the style of the existing dialogue. This isn't an easy thing to do!

On stage, Katherine's portrayal of Ashley generated response from the audience -- regularly. This is the sign that the reality has overtaken the illusion, and what more can occur? Ashley was played really well -- there were changes we made to the character throughout the last week of rehearsals, and the character of Ashley grew even more. Katherine did, too. I was aware of the tears during one of the final run throughs, and that sort of response is one that is usually indicative of the feeling that I've done everything



I can, now what does he want? I didn't say, but Katherine knew, and gave the cast her all, and Rehearsal for Murder is locked now into the memories of 17 people as being the best way that TCI could have ended its grade 12 drama program.

6           Technically, there was a lot here that simply wasn't apparent in the courses before: the constant rehearsal provided a sense of belonging in the space on the stage -- this sounds fuzzy, but I can't think of any other way of putting it -- too many student performers are rooted to certain spots, and they look uncomfortable. Charles had Alex Dennison's character down pat, and therefore could use the stage as Alex would. Charles's voice peaked at the right time. I've used that old cliché about hockey teams and playoffs, and this was the same thing. The line analysis done both at school and at home paid off, and there was never a question of any one in the audience not hearing the words. As well, the inflection and emotion was there, too. We were struggling with the police scene half an hour before the first show opened, but by the time the final curtain fell, the scene was working well.

I was also pleased with the manner in which Charles and the cast covered up dropped lines. This was some pretty quick thinking, and some excellent improvisation...

7           As Lloyd, Robin did a superb job. The accent, of course, was laudable, but it was the presence on stage that made the character come alive. The gestures, the control, the emotion -- all brought Lloyd to a level of reality that has not been seen on high school stages too often.

On a different tack, I was impressed with the manner in which Robin took leadership in the group -- the set work and stage design was all his, and

the number of times throughout rehearsal that I heard him ask: "Question?", which would lead to a discussion about the scene, usually terminating in a decision that improved the play. I think Robin is ready for some directing classes, seriously.

8           So, how does one write the last drama report without saying all that has been said before? I suppose a good place to start would be by acknowledging the fact that Lynn has reached a level higher than either she or I thought possible. The role of Karen was not a easy one to do, and the split, even triple, personality of Karen Daniels came through in most recognizable fashion. Lynn is probably right when she says that the role of Karen Daniels will be remembered for the cat suit, and I'm glad that she had to reach in order to do that. Sweaty palms and pounding heart are life's way of saying that there is another challenge ahead, and honestly, after wearing that costume for eight shows, I think you can handle just about anything!

          Technically, and speaking of Lynn's part in it, there's not much I would do differently with the show. Lynn's voice work was excellent: projection was never in question, as her voice rang clearly throughout the room. There was excellent use of gesture, pausing, and movement. The scenes clicked.

          In fact, the whole show reflected the effort of the cast. Lynn had input into it, and if there was not as much loud input during rehearsal as others had come to expect, well, that's the mark of another style of leadership -- as well as some pretty cool level-headedness. I know there were days when she had teeth marks on her tongue, but everything in life has a purpose, and being able to control herself with some of the moronic behaviour going on with the cast will be useful later in the

work force, when Lynn discovers that such behaviour is often the norm in education!

9           Technically, Marie's interpretation was stunning -- Dawn was a tough role, especially in light of the costume designer's preference for something vampish and revealing. Being able to wear the outfit that she did and still keep her cool with some of the audience response during the matinées, is a tribute to her concentration and her love of the stage. A phrase that directors like to use is a wide range of emotions -- and it's not until the audience sees someone like Dawn that they can appreciate exactly what that means. The shift from the almost successful seduction of Alex to the anger and emotion of the Ashley accusation was a show stopping highlight. As well, the use of gesture and body language was not bettered by any one on stage in this play. Marie's performance was gutsy, well-defined, and enjoyed by everyone.

10          ...Technically, her voice was great: projection is something that we have been stressing this term, and Kathleen responded beautifully. The stage business with the broom, and then the sniff, and the wiping of the nose, well -- any time there is audience response to a character, then the audience has been captivated. Kathleen got that response every performance. Even the little things such as becoming one of the Santoro Moving and Storage people made the play move smoothly.

I think that's the benefit, here. Move away from the success of the show, and look to the things that made the show successful. The cooperation, the learning to handle problems, and then the meeting of deadlines with all sorts of things that would be obvious to others, and then you've found the reason for being of high school drama. There's been a lot of growth in all the

performers, and Kathleen is no different. She has a sense of completion that few high school students can claim, and an ability to speak and perform in public with which even fewer adults can claim comfort.

- 11 Darlene took on the role of Police Officer Hayes with a real dose of enthusiasm, and was very, very strong in the role. I was delighted with the forcefulness and the vitality that she brought to the play. When Hayes accosted Alex Dennison in the hallway of the apartment in Act One, I saw a Darlene that I had not seen before. There was a complete understanding of voice projection, of showing the exasperation of the moment, and then the compassion to the fiance of the victim. The re-writing of the last act also allowed her to show another side, and one that, except for frequently saying "Hiller" instead of "Heller", she did with power and strength. Even the little "Si si, señor" as part of the Santoro Moving and Storage Company was noticeable in its volume and fatigue. That's the secret, of course, to a successful play. If the performer who is doing the minor role puts as much effort into her performance as the one with the most lines, then the play becomes a tight, organized, and effective group effort. Darlene has done with this honours -- she has learned about cooperative learning, public appearance and speaking, and the art of working to a common goal.

- 12 It's the reflective look that says how much growth has occurred, and that's the case with Carla. At the end of 205, she wrote that she didn't feel that she had really changed that much. I would question that statement, now. She had to change in order to survive this show. It was a tough role to do because of a number of factors. First, she, and I, have no life experience with

police lieutenants, other than what we have seen on television. Second, she was playing the part of an older male. Fourth, the role called for her to be onstage only in the second act. For all intents and purposes, that meant that she could have begun this course in April, and still managed to do the job. To meet some of these problems, we added in extra characters in the first act, which now meant that she had two different people to play. Did her speech pattern change? Yes, and no -- during rehearsal there was the tendency to rush through lines, spouting is the term I like to use -- the words are memorized, but the character isn't saying them. It sounds as if the performer is getting them out in order to get off stage, and that's totally incorrect. That's the reason for the cigarette -- it slowed Carla down in the major scene at the end of the play, and for that, I was happy.

Carla has learned never to say "I can't", because I wouldn't accept that. She has also appeared and spoken before almost 1000 people, and there aren't many high school students who can say that.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The students and parents were asked to comment on the profile reports at the end of the term. The idea of a questionnaire was considered, then dismissed. In its place, the following note was enclosed with the final report, along with a self-addressed stamped envelope so any comments could be returned to my home over the summer.

*...At this time, I'd like you to sit down, and reflect on the profile reports that you helped create. There were the reports that I wrote, the weekly summaries and reflections that you were to complete each weekend, as well as the self and other assessments that you completed.*

*Please write me a comment on each of the parts, telling me what you thought of each. Be honest! This is new ground I'm trying, and I'd like to be able to use what you really feel.*

*Please use the enclosed self-addressed envelope to return your comment sheets to my house as soon as possible.*

*Thanks for your help in all of this. I'll see to it that you find out the results.*

A similar note was enclosed for the parents/guardians:

*With this report comes the end of Company 305, and the end of the research that I have been doing on my Masters of Education degree. As you may recall, I promised that I would provide you with an anecdotal report every three weeks, pertaining to the work your son or daughter was doing in the course.*

*I have done that. This report is the fifth such, and with the end of the course on May 31, and the Easter break, that works out to one every three weeks.*

In addition to those reports, I have also encouraged your son or daughter to complete a weekly self-assessment reflective look, and have had peer and group assessments completed in class. These were to be kept in the black profile report binders.

At this time, I'd like you to sit down, and reflect on these profile reports. Did you see them? Did you find them useful? Informative? What could I have done to provide you with more information as to how your child was progressing in school? Were the reports necessary, or were the standard school reports of one at Easter and one at June sufficient to keep you informed? Would you have liked a mark on each report? There are about 1000 questions that could be asked about this process, but my study is not a statistical one, and it is not one that I wish to reduce to numbers.

Please write me a comment telling me what you thought of these reports -- the bits I wrote, the pieces that your son or daughter wrote, and the information provided by others. Be honest! This is new ground I'm trying, and I'd like to be able to use what you really feel.

Please use the enclosed self-addressed envelope to return your comment sheets to my house as soon as possible.

Thanks for your help in all of this. I'll see to it that you find out the results.

Responses did come in over the summer. The students were open and candid in their comments about the course, the play, my teaching style, and the reports that they received. The response from the parents was not as fruitful as I would have appreciated, but those who did respond, did so in a positive way. Here are some sample comments drawn from letters, prefaced by explanatory background notes, where necessary:

## PART 1: FROM THE STUDENTS

Students were given the option of using their log books or the daily log sheets as their source for an ongoing journal. The actual format was not important, in that the daily log sheets were not considered as part of the profile report. The production book was a part of the class, but not part of the profile report package.

There were a number of reasons for this decision. First, students need some private space, and in the log book, the "bitch and complain" section, as they referred to it, served that purpose well. This section of the log served as a *dumping ground*, and thoughts written in anger and haste are best left to private eyes. The content of this section would not have done anyone any good at all had it been read by parents -- the anger expressed, the language used [at times], and the sloppy hand-writing with grammatical errors often demonstrated was best kept within the Company. Other Company members did not read each other's "bitch and complain" section, either, although other parts of the logs were shared. Secondly, to ask students and parents to consider daily entries as part of the reporting process would be burying them in paper. The profile report is the summative report of a long period of activity, not each day's. There was also the concern of time to read all of the paper, had daily sheets been part of the profile. One package every three weeks is one thing; sheets



every day are another. Finally, there is the question of boredom on the part of the reader. Profile reports became a looked-forward-to kind of experience; something that happens every day pales quickly.

Samples from the Company show reflective thought, maturity, and appreciation.

1 I think that all the reports we either recieved [sic] or filled out ourselves helped to improve our acting ability and character. The ideas that were given to us by you and our castmates [sic] helped to motivate us and filled us with pleasure and the feeling of success started to overpower the feelings of unease. My daily log helped me to let go of my thoughts and emotions concerning wither my character or the play on the whole. Using the complaint section allowed me to get rid of my anger or frustration without getting on everyone's nerves. The weekly summaries forced us to remember important incidents that occured [sic] during the week and helped us stay focused on our character as well as the whole play. Assessing someone else's character allowed me to look at the character instead of the actor. I started to get to know the characters and the play seemed to flow on a nice steady rate. For me, and I'm sure everyone else involved in Rehearsal for Murder, the status reports given to us via you cheered us on when things were a little lower than they should have been. You saw how our characters were developing when we couldn't see. I know that because of those reports, I actually fell in love with my character. I started to enjoy taking on the role of Erma. [cory]

2 ...I've been out at the lake working since grad and I haven't thought alot [sic] about the city, but I was looking at pictures of grad a

little while ago and there was one of me up at the podium making a speech. You know I actually enjoyed standing in front of 400 some odd people and talking. That right there shows you how much your class has helped me. I remember in grade 10 when I used to dread improv games because I was actually scared you would pick me to go up in front of 30 people I didn't know. I was very intimidated by our grade 10 class and was very self conscious being in the same room as them, never mind acting in front of them. Then grade 11 came and we knew who would stick in the class and who the quitters were. We got to know each other better and become a little more personal and Boom! instead of me being intimidated, I think I began to "scare" others. I let my mouth get away from me once and awhile [*sic*] but over all it was a fun yet trying year. Grade 12 was awesome! I loved Drama, I loved the play, I loved being Monica. I found this confidence I didn't know I had. I was able to express my ideas and have people listen. Wow eh?

I don't know what made drama my favourite class. A lot of things I guess. It was something new, it was different than anything I've ever done and it allowed me to discover talents I never knew I had. Really, without Drama I'd be a totally different person. The way it was taught, the way you taught us was totally different too. When we walked into your room it wasn't

-Teacher-

-student-

it was teacher-student. We knew you were in charge but at the same time you weren't an unapproachable subject you were on our level willing to teach us as 2 friends would teach each other. It helps students to learn when their teacher doesn't force his "power" on them. Praise coming from alot [*sic*] of teachers sounds very condescending because of the different level between the teacher and the student. I very much enjoy hearing praise from you because I have built a lot of respect for you. Not

every teacher cares as much as you do. If they did I bet there would be a lot less high school dropouts. You watch our progress, make note of it and let us know how we are doing. I can imagine how many hours you put into writing our reports and it is appreciated. I've had teachers who get other students to mark our papers for them. By doing that they may be saving time for themselves but they rule out any chance of helping us considering they don't even know our strong and weak points. I looked forward to your 3 week reports showing and telling me what needed work and what I was doing well. The reports let me know you always knew where I was and even if you didn't have time in class for all of our questions or time to give us the attention we wanted we knew that you would make time. Your end of the semester/term reports are unlike any other.

Computer # Comment vs. written report hmmm. I wonder what would interest students more. When a student gets the report card back with a 50% mark and a comment that says needs improvement, it doesn't seem fair. They are not told what they are doing wrong and they are not given help. Teachers should realize that even a few comments to let us know they care and they're willing to help us would keep a lot of kids in school and help a lot of kids do better. Reports like yours should be used not only in drama but in Math and in English and in every subject. Outlines of weak and strong points should be shared with the student and a update or a weekly report should be given to let the student know if they are improving. Students learn better when they are having fun and they have the urge to want to learn when they know someone cares.

Throughout high school drama class meant more to me than any other class. It was the only class that remotely resembled [*sic*] LIFE, ...through the eyes of a teenager. And life does goes on and I guarantee you in 50 years when someone asks me about high school one of the only things I'll

*remember will be drama class and," that teacher, Dave Normandale I believe was his name, ...yup he was quite a character!"...*  
[Colleen]

From Lynn, the response was similar. She also mentions the importance of the daily log as in using the production log book. As in the previous two entries, there is mention of the use of the report in a personal sense: checking character development through my eyes.

In retrospect, I can agree with this student's opinion about the discontinuation of the daily sheets in 305. The production book is large enough [175+ Pages] to contain all of the play-required sheets, as well as "bitch and complain" and "praise" sections.

3    1. *The reports you wrote were very helpful. At times I wouldn't know where I stood in your eyes. Sometimes, I was unsure of what you thought of my performance and where you thought I was with the rest of the group. The reports you gave each and everyone of us helped me feel at ease. Truthfully, I have never felt more comfortable in a course because I knew what thought and expected. With that I was able to achieve to the best of my abilities and feel good about it and myself.*

2.    *The reports you sent home with me to give my parents were awesome. By taking the time to treat each of us as individuals and taking the time to fill in the gaps that I may have forgotten to share with my parents you not only impressed them and set yourself apart from other teachers, but you gave them more insight into a very large part of my life.*

3.    *Weekly summaries and reflections were great in 105 & 205, but in 305 they eventually seemed to be a waste of*

my time. Working on the play left me with two weeks with similar focuses. High & Low points ended up being my dumping grounds instead of using my journal to do that. I think that this may have occurred because of lack of interest on my part. I think the key focus in 305 should be journals because in those books we talk about high & low point and bitch and praise. We always looked forward to reading what you had to say. It was like waiting for money from the tooth fairy after losing a tooth. Using journals is much more concrete in 305. They don't get lost in the shuffle & not only a few end up doing it (like with the summaries)!

Overall, I have to thank you for making each and everyone of us feel like an important asset to our class & school. You're [sic] comments & compliments mean a whole lot to all of us. We know you didn't have the time to do all that you did do, but we appreciate all your effort.

I can say this now because I'm not your student anymore [sic]: We love you Mr N!  
Thank you for caring,  
[Lynn]

Of particular interest to me was the final letter from Katherine. She was the one student who not only kept her weekly summaries coming in like clockwork, but virtually every week had a negative comment about group dynamics. Even in the debriefing report at the end of the play, Katherine didn't really focus on the group dynamics. This changed very dramatically when I read

305, when everyone felt separated & stuff, we wrote about it, you read it and helped us to all come together and finally we did become a big family and so many of those people are really good friends of mine...

Katherine also focuses on the benefits of the reports from a personal viewpoint, the weekly and daily reports, "bitch and complain", and the various assessments completed.

#### 4 Reflections on reflections

##### Reports from you

These are a really good idea because it lets students know how they're doing. Instead of finding out too late if they've failed at report card time, with 3-week reports they have warning & a chance to improve. If they're doing good, they'll be told and everyone likes to know they're doing a good job even if its a little thank you for say ... I dunno --writing parts/new MAJOR characters to a play and saving the whole show? Just an example of course. But seriously, those mini-report cards are terrific. I always looked forward to getting them, and every time I read the last one, I cry, big surprise, the little cry baby I am. It only happened EVERY NIGHT we performed, backstage though. Sometimes when I cried in the scenes, I really was crying. So the reports are GREAT. It also shows students you care. I don't have anything negative to say about them because they're absolutely excellent to do.

##### Weekly/Daily summaries

First of all, weeklies & dailies were only done in 105 & 205 (for me) and 305 was only weeklies. I think dailies should be used with weeklies because it will be easier to summarize your week if you have all the info done day by day AND writing down thoughts & feelings actually makes people feel better, I think, because when we did log books (I have that) I had a bitch & complains section (I also had a praise section), and when I wrote down on paper how I felt, like all the bad feelings I always felt relieved because I expressed my feelings and did it in such a way that nobody's feelings were hurt. Weeklies are useful because we try to understand what we're doing in class and we can look back and have memories. (I have ALL my 105 & 205 stuff but my 305 is missing!!!) AND they help when assignments need to be

done. Some people thought the dailies were a drag but I don't care, I liked them. They helped me and I did them anyway in 305. Handing them in was a good idea too [sic] because it actually helped to motivate people into doing them.

### Assessments

Ugh, I've always had personal problems with these. I don't know how I feel about them. Love/hate thing I guess. Assessments by the teacher a must. [sic] Same reasons as the 3-week mini-report cards. Assessments by other students are good too because you find out many opinions. Self-assessments. Umm.... sometimes people can be too hard on themselves but maybe that's only because they know better than anyone what their potential is, so they know exactly how/what they're doing right & wrong. What sort of things they need to work on, etc.

Well these have all been basically general, so I could say a few personal things, I guess.

I really love the summaries, they helped me out so much. I was so shy to begin and I had LOTS of negative thoughts, so I wrote it all down and it made me feel better especially when you'd read them then comment/give advice. 305, when everyone felt separated & stuff, we wrote about it, you read it and helped us to all come together and finally we did become a big family and so many of those people are really good friends of mine. You never see/feel that in any other classes. Drama is so special, and its because of you, Mr. Normandale, you're great! Which is why I also love the 3-week/mini report cards. You tell us what's what, and I loved reading things about me writing parts of the play. Assessments, well I guess they're necessary. There's probably lots more I could say BUT I've probably said more than enough, or not have said the right things, and all because that little goblin/monster has a fetish [sic] for blue things.

I really hope this is what you wanted, and I guess you got my mom's half already (one word? 2 separate ones) so that's that.

Good luck with your research, I can't wait for the results. Thank you for the drama award. I deserved it 'cuz I earned it. Oh! Good luck with future plans/classes ie your present 105's. I know some of them, they're friends of my sister.  
Love, one of your many graduated students,  
Katherine

Over the years, I've found that drama enables people to reach out, and to reach inside -- providing the arena in getting to know more about others and more about themselves. This last student response was unsolicited, as the author, Colleen, had already submitted the requested assignment.

#### *A Final Reflection*

*It hasn't been one day and there is already a dull ache right above my stomach. It's a sad feeling. It reminds me of the heartache I feel when a close relationship ends. I imagine that's what it is. I feel as I've lost a friend, because these past five months, I've put love, dedication, and enthusiasm into words. Into these words, I have put emotion and action. As a result, this paper, useless without me, has come to life. I built Monica Welles just as Charles built Alex, and Lynn, Karen. This love for acting that we all share, took words on a piece a paper and brought them to life. It really is an amazing concept.*

*For five short months, I was two people, living two lives. Now that the play is over, I am not only reduced to one person, but to one family. Monica Welles was surrounded by people who cared about her and loved her and last night it all came to an end. Our characters voiced their final opinions, said their goodbyes, and then we wiped off their faces: faces we had so well come to know. I am comforted knowing that as our characters grew in strength, movement, and voice, so did the friendships among the cast. So even*



though "Rehearsal" is over, the bonds among the cast members will never break.

We are all now going to go our separate ways, but we all have something in common. We are part of a unique group called Company 305. We performed for 1000 people our play, and we did well -- something only 17 in a school of 700 can boast. We all have, now, locked in our memories, the sound of applause and the taste of success. It will remain with us for a very long time, encouraging us when we are discouraged, and driving us even further when in the midst of achieving our dreams.

I will never regret taking part in drama. It has changed my life, and I know others feel the same. We've had our differences, but we've shared the good times, guaranteed to bring a smile to our lips, any time. In three years I have learned so much about life, and so much about loving friends. It is so hard to say goodbye to people who make you laugh and who hold you when you cry: people who stand beside you and people who are behind you. Change is inevitable, and as we go our separate ways, we still take with us so many happy memories, and some "I feel good about myself". Drama has given us a confidence that allows us to be ourselves in this crazy world, which is a wonderful thing, because it takes all kinds. And we are all kinds! We are the determined, the dreamers, the leaders and the believers. And I love everyone of us.

[Colleen]

## PART TWO: FROM THE PARENTS

Parents were quietly encouraged to add comments to the profile report package every three weeks by the provision of a space for comments. Very few did. One parent who did simply wrote: *We agree that it is good Lynn decided to remain in this class and appreciate your interest.* Similarly, only two sets of parents responded to the request to comment after the end of term. One parent signed her name to what is possibly a dictation to her daughter:

*My mom would like to say that she thinks all the reports were beneficial to me and improved my character. She read almost all the reports and thinks that they are useful and informative. All teachers should inform the parents on their child's progress. [signed: Kathleen's mother]*

while the other response was more a thank you for the work I had completed with both of the young adults of that family with whom I had worked. There was however, a paragraph about the reports.

*The reports you supplied us helped us to feel a part of our childrens [sic] education and change. We will be forever in your debt for the extra work you took in making us part of this process. As far as we are concerned your system is perfect. [signed: Lynn's parents]*

### PART THREE: FROM THE ADMINISTRATORS

The two principals with whom I have worked since coming to high school were both asked to review the same profile reports. In one case, Mr. Errol Harris was familiar with my drama program because of the five years we had been together. In the other case, Mr. Fred Algera has been the principal of TCI since September, 1992, giving him one year of experience with the drama portion of our school.

In this latter case, one other aspect of the results of the profile report is the flow of information to the school administration. The principal of Transcona Collegiate who had hired me, and who had supported the drama program strongly, had been transferred, and replaced. As part of his "get-to-know-the-school" approach, the new administrator, Mr. Fred Algera, had requested copies of worksheets and mark statements as they were distributed by all members of the teaching staff. To meet this requirement for the drama program, I simply photocopied an extra copy of the letters, the assignment sheets, and the blank report sheets for his information. As a result, the principal was aware of the objectives of the program, the background to the students, the direction in which they were travelling, a description of the regular events necessary for the successful presentation of a complete play.

During the first term of the next school year, I simply gave them the same profile reports, and asked them for their comments from the point of view of their respective position: a high school principal.

The first observations are from Mr. Fred Algera, the current principal, who came to TCI in 1992. From his reading of the reports, as hoped, Mr. Algera understood the goals of the program [comment's #1, 4, 6, and 7], the direction in which they were travelling, [comment #'s 2, 3, and 5], a description of the regular events necessary for the successful presentation of a complete play [comment # 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14]. Comment #9 is a statement that reinforces what the group was attempting to do -- and one that I am delighted that someone outside the drama room was able to identify.

- 1 *Observations in regards to the Drama Profile Reports from an administrator's point of view.*
- 1 *Clarity of instructional goals in reference to Drama is very good.*
- 2 *Involvement of students and parents in the ongoing process of learning is very desirable.*
- 3 *Semi contractual basis creates commitment with parents and students and teacher.*
- 4 *Structure of overall program, well laid out, to the point, with ample opportunity for mid course corrections.*
- 5 *Ownership -- students are in charge of the portfolios -- frequent input at the technical and feelings level.*
- 6 *Reading, Writing, Speaking, Analyzing, Evaluating, Creating is practised by student.*
- 7 *Teaming and cooperating in getting better results*
- 8 *Students realize that being present is of utmost importance -- attendance reporting.*

- 9 Teacher comments, frequent, objective, encouraging, inviting -- students don't want to disappoint the group nor the instructor.
- 10 Teacher-student relationship very positive.
- 11 Climax -- the production -- everyone worked hard to the last minute.
- 12 P.R. and overall organization of major production "managed" by students.
- 13 Cost awareness shared with students.
- 14 Students seem to understand the responsibility of how to break even or to make a profit.
- 15 From the report I sense that the Drama Experience has been a "real life experience" for each student.
- 16 I encourage you Dave to carry on with this excellent approach.
- 17 You are an asset to the school and the community -- I think highly of your professional work.

[signed] F. Algera

Mr. Errol Harris, past principal of Transcona Collegiate, submitted the following points:

Re: Drama Profile Reporting

"...part of the learning process by which students learn includes a self-examination of their work" is a premise made in letter dated February 1993 to all TCI drama students and their parents.

I have perused the three Profile Reports that you passed to me for comment and I have noted comments as follows below:

1. Student goals

Each student has the opportunity to think out what they want from the course.

## 2. Teacher "Reporting"

This includes on-going instructions as well as the more important aspect of continuous feedback from the instructor. The feedback is given in several formats including: audition sheets, profile reports, updates and a final report. All feedback is in anecdotal form.

## 3. Student "Self-examination"

This takes the form of several thought provoking procedures that allows each individual to determine his/her growth. These are in the form of; journals, reflective letters, scene analyses, and self assessments.

## 4. Cooperative examinations

These are opportunities for students to interview other students as well as be interviewed to enhance personal growth.

My comments to the above are itemized below.

1. Students do need to have the opportunity to determine their needs for a course and to therefore have some input into many aspects of a course, especially one like Drama. Did the students in fact, have an opportunity at the end of the course to see if their expectations had been met?

2. The teacher's instructions are very clear. The reporting is very thorough. In fact, the reporting clearly reflects or parallels student reporting or self-examination. As an example, the profile reports are really two part formats, the first of which is a "teacher-reflection" act on the class as a whole, and the second of which is a student specific growth enhancing comment or series of comments.

3. Students have a great deal of opportunity to examine themselves through the vehicles provided by the teacher and from those I read are honest appraisals of their own growth and development.

4. The fellow performers interview is a risk-taking device that if handled well will be growth enhancing.

Generally, I have seen and have been involved with a reporting system that appraises the technical aspects of a student's growth but more importantly establishes and develops cooperative and problem solving skills, allows for skill development in speaking and performing in public, gives control to students or empowers them to be a partner in the learning process and does so in an atmosphere that is more mentoring than teaching.

I also feel that Drama is not the only place that needs this type of reporting. Perhaps our whole system for students and staff needs to reflect a "growth-oriented" experience.

[Signed, Errol Harris]

Of interest here are a number of things. To begin with, Harris recognizes the importance of the need for students to have "the opportunity to determine their needs". However, he goes further with the question: "Did the students in fact, have an opportunity at the end of the course to see if their expectations had been met?"

The response to this is that the opportunity had been presented in the final debriefing assignment, but instructions to return to the Expectations sheet were not given. In retrospect, there was an assumption on my part that the students would do this, but in reality, it is doubtful if that did occur. The text submitted does not show any specific relation to the personal comments made in Expectations.

Of real interest is Harris's second comment: "...the reporting clearly reflects or parallels student reporting or self-examination..." When the profile reports were constructed, I did not have the profile report binders at home: rather, I used my notes and reflective thought. That an observer who is removed from the scene could comment on a parallelism between my comments and those of the students whom I was assessing indicates a mutual recognition of areas that are working well, or are in need of further work.

More study is needed here, because if the student can recognize the same assessment levels as the teacher, then self-assessment may be more functional than common practice recognizes it as being.

Harris's last comment is revealing.

I also feel that Drama is not the only place that needs this type of reporting. Perhaps our whole system for students and staff needs to reflect a "growth-oriented" experience.

As I stated in Chapter I:

No matter what the subject area, no matter who the teacher, there will be a degree of subjectivity that adheres to assessment and evaluation procedures. Any form of assessment requires, therefore, a system of reporting that will provide information to the student for reasons of continuous assessment: to the parent, for reasons of formative and summative reporting, to the administration of the school to meet the demands for "accountability"; and to the teacher, so that the program can be as effective as possible.



Harris supports this premise, stating that the "growth-oriented experience" of the student is perhaps the focus upon which education reporting should be aimed. Logically, there is reason for support of this argument. Students in English, math, French -- any subject -- are supposed "to grow" over the year. They are expected to increase their understanding, their application of skills, and their knowledge of the subject. Harris appears to support the idea stated in Chapter I that in today's school system, "a simple number or letter grade is selected with little or no accompanying rationale..." and that the student, parent, teacher, and administrator can learn more about student progress through authentic assessment.

#### ANALYSIS OF TIME SPENT ON PROFILE REPORTS

The time spent on the profile reports can be divided into two categories: computer time, which included the development of the sheets designed for the profile report, the on-screen writing of the reports using *WordPerfect 5.1*, and the printing of the material.

The second time category is the time spent reading student material, as well as the time spent drafting handwritten responses for the profile report, including attendance entry.

The computer time was logged by user name and job identification name using a program called *Direct Access 5*. This program calculates the number of times the computer is used according to the project identification name, as well as the total hours and minutes of use under that project identification name. The hours spent on drama 305 were logged under the following project identification names: *thesis*, *drama305*, *thesis305*, and *murder*. [In retrospect, a more defined list of project names would have been more useful.]

The number of entries per month, including total time is as follows:

MONTH	project id	total entries	total time
Jan/93	thesis	7	1h 19m
Feb/93	drama305	3	28m
	thesis	5	1h 26m
	thesis305	4	58m
Mar/93	murder	3	1h 10m
	thesis305	5	36m
Apr/93	murder	48	11h 32m
	thesis	5	45m
May/93	murder	33	7h 27m
	thesis305	13	3h 35m
June/93	drama305	12	5h 30m
<u>totals:</u>		<u>138</u>	<u>34h 46m</u>

Obviously, this data cannot show that equal amounts of time were or were not given to each student, nor was there any attempt to equalize keyboard time for each. However, simple mathematical calculation of hours spent divided by the number of students in the course suggests that just over 2 hours over the entire term were given for each of the 17 students in Company 305 for computer generation/writing. The majority of this time was provided in April, May, and June -- April to coincide with the release of the school mid-term report, May with the cast note, and June with the final report.

Designing the profile report components occurred the year before the semester began. Time spent on these components are logged as followed:

MONTH	project id	total entries	total time
Feb/92	thesis	29	4h 10m
Mar/92	thesis	9	2h 38m
Aug/92	thesis3	23	9h 01m
Sep/92	thesis	3	18m
Oct/92	thesis	4	1h 10m
Nov/92	thesis	13	2h 21m
Dec/92	thesis	13	1h 35m
<u>totals</u>		<u>94</u>	<u>21h 38m</u>

Total computer time logged on the profile report project is therefore 34h 46m + 21h 38m = 56h 24m.

The second part of the time logged dealt with handwritten comments and attendance calculations. This time was calculated by using a clock, and entered on a grid form called *thesis study time record sheet*. The first profile report handwritten comments in February were completed at lunch time on February 23, 1993, beginning at 12:00 noon, and ending at 12:50, for a total time of 50 minutes. The second profile report handwritten comments were completed on March 23, during

a preparation period, from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm, for a total of 60 minutes. This sort of time requirement turned out to be representational for each of the handwritten sections.

The reading of the weekly summaries was completed primarily on Monday afternoons in the drama room, if the class ended at 2:05pm. The next period was my preparation period, and depending on the number of journals submitted, I spent anywhere from 10 through 15 minutes each afternoon, reading, and jotting small comments in the margins, or placing check marks or happy faces [☺] on points that I thought were pertinent. If time during the school day was not available, then the summaries went home as reading for that evening. Again, this amount of time was quite representational throughout the term.

The question is whether or not the time spent on these journals and reports is reasonable for a teacher. The first thing to keep in mind is that there was no daily teacher-markable homework for these students -- the course is an activity program that meant the students had to take their scripts home each evening for memorization purposes, but there was no assignment that came into me the following day to show how much they had learned. Each week's journals, therefore, were integral to both the students and to me as a progress comment. As a comparison, in my English classes at the core grade XII level, I had virtually double the number of students [33], and over the term, 15 written assignments, five of them over 1000 words in length, that were marked analytically.

Each of these papers usually consumed an average of 15 to 20 minutes of marking time. There is no question that the drama journal entries were easier to read because of their length and content, as well as having a smaller number of them to read.

With regard to the report writing, again it is necessary to look at the need to provide information to the student and the parent. In the English program, each student had been provided with detailed assessment of content, style, organization, sentence structure, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling for each assignment. Students were also given the opportunity to conference individually with me so that tutoring in weak areas could occur. In addition, assignments could be re-written, and re-marked. All of these assessments were stored in a writing portfolio binder for reference by the student, parent, and teacher. No such system was available in the drama program because of the performance nature of the course.

The reflective nature and the length of the general letters, combined with the hand-written comments found in the profile reports provided the students with a picture of their progress, a degree of encouragement, and if necessary, a recognition of problem or difficulty. This overall picture included a comment about the development of the group from someone on the periphery of the group itself.

## FROM THE TEACHER

As the teacher, I found that the reflective reports allowed me to focus more specifically on approaches to encourage success. The first major difficulty of group dynamics was monitored closely throughout the term, and warm-up activities were chosen that focused on developing trust and cooperation.

As well, cast members who had problems with aspects of drama such as character definition, lines learned, or even attendance were mentioned in journal accounts by others. This may or not have been a deliberate attempt to get me involved, but once the difficulty was brought to my attention, then follow-up could occur.

In an educational system where I am expected to use computer codes [see page 251] to report to parents the assessments of my drama students, the profile report holds much promise. It recognizes the individuality of each student, the feelings and intuition each student can bring to the drama program, the subjectivity of the teacher, and the aims and goals of the program. Because it recognizes the individual, including feelings, and therefore potentially culture as shown by the two together, a profile report also has the potential to meet part of the criteria demanded by our pluralistic society: to be accountable for all the students, no matter their background. A profile report insists on

careful planning, regular observation, and thoughtful reporting. It is an "accountable" system.

The proper use of the profile report, and all the background work that makes the profile report so potentially successful, will go a long way to show the reasons and the needs for, and the success and benefits of drama, and the arts, in the public education system.

#### IN CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the profile report based on authentic assessment such as observation of student behaviours as seen by the teacher, the student, and peers, as well as interviews, performance samples, and work products (Chittenden, 1990) can address the communication of skill development, progress, student strength and student weakness in drama.

As well, it also obvious that it is possible to draft this system of assessment into a profile reporting system (Robinson, 1982, Brinson, 1982) which can be incorporated into a teacher's program other than drama.

Next, although specific classroom procedures were followed in the production drama course, [note taking, conversation, group assessment, peer assessment] it is obvious that the use of audio and video recording would add a lot to profile reporting in dramatic arts.



There is no doubt that profile reporting based on authentic assessment techniques proved to be effective in a drama program, and generated positive reactions from those interested in a student's progress. Students, parents, administrators and the teacher all benefitted from the regular flow of information from more than one source.

Authentic assessment and profile reporting proved not to be too time-consuming for regular incorporation into a teacher's program. In fact, the actual amount of time spent on the profile report was considerably less than the time required for an equivalent academic marking load at the same grade level.

Finally -- authentic assessment and the profile report ought to cause teachers to address high school students as people -- not as numbers that are entered into a computer program in order to print numbers considered by some to be objectively descriptive. And perhaps that is the bottom line in all of this: a desire to return to what must be a basic tenet of education -- that students, no matter what their ages, are looked upon as individuals, are taught as individuals, and therefore must be assessed and reported as individuals.

## AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This examination of the profile report suggests the following areas for further study:

- 1 To what degree can a profile report be incorporated into a subject area other than drama?
- 2 If the teacher using the profile report were not an accomplished keyboardist, would there be enough of an increase in the time required so as to make the profile report a difficult assessment technique?
- 3 Could a profile report system be designed in such a way that other teachers could use the components "as is", or do the components of the profile report system have to be designed by individual teachers to meet their specific needs?
- 4 Could the profile report be compared to the standard computer-generated high school report through a statistically-based study/questionnaire?
- 5 Historically, is there a relationship between the work of Sterling Andrus Leonard and Winnifred Ward? Did these two educators work together at any time, or in close proximity to each other, so that ideas about drama in the classroom could be shared?
- 6 What would occur if Allen's [1982] beliefs of using assessment to give students "...an idea of educational progress..." along with the idea of it being "...the

- teacher's comments not the marks that are valuable..."
- were adopted and used in a school-wide reporting system?
- 7 Could the profile report's impact on students' self-esteem be measured?
- 8 How much more effective would the educational system be if more than just the teacher was involved in assessment and evaluation?
- 9 Is the profile report the means to report the classroom applications of Howard Gardner's [1983] work in multiple intelligences and David Lazear's [1991] seven ways of knowing?

## Appendix

Transcona Collegiate Institute's 1992-93 standard report card [see page 266] is computer-generated on an Apple computer system using a program called HARTTS. Comments in the right-hand column are generated by keystroke -- typing in *code 17*, for example, creates *One credit granted* on the report.

SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 12 (TRANSCONA-SPRINGFIELD)  
**TRANSCONA COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE**  
 1305 WINONA ST., WINNIPEG, MB R2C 2P9 PHONE 958-6440

DATE June 28, 1993	DIVISION 1	GRADE 12	STUDENT NUMBER 3183	ST NAME
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COURSE/TEACHER	NOV. MARK			JAN. MARK			APRIL MARK			JUNE MARK			EXAM MARK	FINAL MARK	COMMENTS
	W	T	F	W	T	F	W	T	F	W	T	F			
ENGLISH-CORE(0011) 301 NORMANDEALE, D.	44	S	3	55	N	15	---	---	---	---	---	---	73	62	Student has completed all requirements for credit in this subject. One credit granted.
ENG.-DRAMA(0012) 300 NORMANDEALE, D.	---	---	---	---	---	---	P	E	1	42	U	2	77	56	Student has completed all requirements for credit in this subject. One credit granted. Congratulations on a fine performance.
DRAMATIC ARTS(0322) 305 NORMANDEALE, D.	---	---	---	---	---	---	P	E	1	90	E	2	---	90	Student has completed all requirements for credit in this subject. One credit granted. Congratulations on a fine performance.
ENG.-TRANSACTIONAL(0012) 300 POVEY, R. (D.H.)	---	---	---	---	---	---	12	U	0	10	U	5	65	40	Final mark was lowered by failing to hand in all required term work.
HISTORY:WESTERN CIV.(1136) 300 GRIEVE, R.	51	S	3	43	N	15	---	---	---	---	---	---	39	43	Student must repeat a course in this subject at the same grade level. Recommend registration in this subject at the 01 Level.
MATHEMATICS(0080) 201 HOSEIN, A.	50	S	3	40	S	15	---	---	---	---	---	---	57	45	Student must repeat a course in this subject at the same grade level.
FRENCH(0403) 300 GERVAIS, Y.	---	---	---	---	---	---	57	N	4	61	S	11	74	65	I wish you continued success in your future endeavors. Student has completed all requirements for credit in this subject. One credit granted.
NO CLASS-FREE STUDY TIME ALGERA, F. (P)	33	N	3	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	

**TRANSCONA COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE**

Congratulations Graduates, Well Done!  
 We wish you continued success in the future. The Exam Mark determines up to 40% of your Final Mark in each course. If you desire to return to T.C.I. this September, you must register between Aug. 30 & 31. The first day of classes at T.C.I. is Wednesday Sept. 1, 1993.

To \_\_\_\_\_



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