Identifying Ekvall's creative climate dimensions
in elementary through high school settings.

Identifying Ekvall's creative climate dimensions in elementary through high school settings

by

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A Project for Studies in Creativity

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of

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Abstract

This project examined Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions of an organizational setting and described how they appeared in classroom settings. Classroom observations were conducted at the elementary, middle school and high school levels. Notes were made on a standard protocol of occurrences that fit into each of Ekvall's dimensions. Observations that pertained to student conversations in the classroom were separated and examined for their similarities and differences to Ekvall's definitions of the ten dimensions (Lauer, 1994). Teacher interviews at the high school and elementary school settings, were also conducted and sorted for similarities and differences to Ekvall's definitions. These data were summarized under each dimension heading according to findings that were similar to Ekvall's definition of that dimension; findings that were different from his definition; and a list of questions or ideas that deserve further consideration. The project contains literature on 15 general climate topics sorted by category from the Wilson Select Plus Index, and the ERIC database.

Findings indicate that each of the ten creative climate dimensions as defined by Ekvall were present and observable in elementary through high school settings. Both teachers and students demonstrated behavior indicative of creative classroom climate. The literature that existed prior to this study was heavily unrelated to the topic of creative classroom environment, thus validating the need for this project. While the observations support the consistent presence of Ekvall's dimensions in classroom settings, further research is recommended to elaborate and develop the educational implications.

Buffalo State College

The International Center for Studies in Creativity

The Impact of Climate in the Classroom:

Reporting Baseline Data for the Development of CLASS

A Project in Creative Studies

by

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Rebecca G. Peters, Candidate

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Dr. Mary Murdock, Advisor

International Center for Studies in Creativity

Acknowledgments

I know that this project has been long in coming, and all too often took the back burner as my life changed dramatically. Now that it is complete, I can look back on the work that was put into it and feel a great sense of accomplishment. I see evidence of this work in my daily life as an educator, and although it is complete, I still feel the urge to report observations from my classroom.

I owe this to many people. To my loving family who sacrificed to put me through college so that I could earn a career that I enjoy and we all can be proud of. To Rob- in becoming my husband while I was working on this project you greatly improved my motivation and dedication to its completion. To all those who helped me with pieces of this project by allowing me into their classrooms. To Dr. Mary Murdock- I thank you for your time, patience and infinite wisdom on so many subjects. You were a great help to me and I truly appreciate it.

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SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

This study was developed as a result of my CRS 690/795 course with Dr. Mary Murdock. Before we chose our topics for study, we made a divergent list of our areas of interest. We were then given "menu" topics for both Dr. Murdock and Dr. Gerard Puccio. After reading through the topics and comparing them with our interests, we chose topics. The topic I chose was creative climate (Murdock, 1999). I was to work as part of a climate team including; Dr. Mary Murdock, Kim Miloshevski, Tammy Gordon, and myself. Our guiding research question was "How do Ekvall's climate dimensions manifest themselves in classroom settings? What is similar? What is different?". Those on the research team needed to have interest in classroom climate and access to a classroom for observations. Miloshevski (2000) stated "As a middle school teacher…I certainly have a vested interest in the outcome of this project" (p. 3). Once briefed on the project's goal by Dr. Murdock, the research team began work.

Rationale and Significance

This study examined Ekvall's ten climate dimensions as they appeared in classroom settings. This fits within The International Center for Studies in Creativity's major research theme of "Understanding Multifaceted Interactions through Developing Instrumentation" (Murdock, 1999). The project, through use of classroom observations and teacher interviews, identified the similarities and differences in Ekvall's dimensions and classroom settings.

While a significant amount of literature existed concerning the creative climate in businesses and organizations, there was a notable lack of research with regard to the

educational climate (Miloshevski, 2000). I believe it is equally important to focus on the creative environment in the classroom. Lauer felt that "Although Elliot (1991) does not discuss education, it can also be viewed as one of the factors leading to the present climate in the US and its importance should not be overlooked" (p. 96). This study will identify a preliminary list of rubrics and activities indicative of a creative classroom climate.

Questions that Organized the Study

The following questions guided this project:

1. How do Ekvall's creative climate dimensions manifest themselves in classroom settings?
    -What is similar?
    -What is different?
2. What observed student and teacher behaviors may be indicative of creative climate in the classroom?
3. What descriptions of creative climate in the classroom already exist in literature?

My Learning Goals

At the start of this project, I had only taught art for one year and was a full time student. Things have changed dramatically in my life, and I find that I not only have, but also continue to meet the goals that I had set for myself. As a middle school art teacher, I

am now using the results of this project to assess my own classroom. The goals I set for this project were;

1. I will be able to refine my teamwork skills.
2. I will have a deeper understanding of how climate in a classroom affects creativity.
3. I will improve my current research skills.
4. I will apply my research to a real life situation (interviewing and observing).

Elaboration of My Learning Goals

I'd like to take a minute to look back at my goals and reflect. Goal one, to refine my teamwork skills, was met early on in this project. I met several times with my team members as well as Dr. Murdock. Since them, I have allowed distance and decreased frequency of contact to fade my relationship with this research team. I am disappointed in myself for this. I have, however utilized the teamwork skills I gained here, in several other aspects of my life. I am now a part of several new teams; a marriage, professional teams, an Odyssey of the Mind team, and others. I can say that I am not at all disappointed in myself for my teamwork skills in these areas.

Goal two was to have a deeper understanding of how climate in a classroom affects creativity. This goal was met on the surface level through my classroom observations conducted as part of this project. Today, I meet it on a much deeper and more personal level. As an art teacher, I observe daily how the environment affects my students. I am proud to say that I now have used the tools I gained to create a classroom climate in which creativity flourishes- the results show in the artwork my students create.

Goal three was to improve my current research skills. This goal was definitely reached by this project- I had never done so much research into one topic in my life! I

learned how to go about beginning a research project, from choosing a topic to reporting data. I learned where on the internet to look for existing material on the topic, and how to weed out what results do not fit. I learned how to record and then sort my data in relation to different climate dimensions. I learned how to cite information and construct a reference list.

Finally, goal four was to apply my research in a real life situation by interviewing and observing. I have far surpassed this goal. I made this goal under the assumption that I would finish this project the same year I began it- while I was a full-time student. The only benefit to my tardiness with this project is that I have now applied, and continue to apply, this project in a much more real situation- my own classroom! I not only teach, but also coach an Odyssey of the Mind team and have worked on constructing a giant mural in the cafeteria of our school with a team of students. In all of these aspects, I have found myself continually evaluating the climate, looking for ways to improve. Ekvall and his dimensions are always closer in my mind than I would have previously assumed.

SECTION TWO: COLLECTING AND ORGANIZING INFORMATION

Review of Related Literature

To learn about what research had already been done in the area of classroom environment, my research team conducted a literature search. Miloshevski (2000) searched the Wilson Select Plus database between 1996 and 2000. She stated that "In performing the search, the following domains were utilized: creative classroom climate, creative classroom environment, and classroom climate." (p.10). Gordon (2000) searched the ERIC database and organized her findings into five major interest areas and several major authors. Her review is located on page 7 in her 2000 book "Identifying Ekvall's creative climate dimensions in an elementary school classroom setting". After they had pulled the articles that did relate to Ekvall, I was given the unrelated literature to review.

The unrelated literature may have popped up in the searches due to one or two words that matched the search domains. The following 15 categories that frequently appeared in our literature search, but do not relate to Ekvall: Diversity in the classroom; Articles geared toward a specific population; Grade level; Articles geared toward improving a specific subject area; Programs; Assessment instruments; Intervention strategies; Violence; Instruction; Stress; Studies and relationships; Role of adults in the classroom; Student characteristics; Physical environment; Discipline.

Diversity in the classroom

These article topics primarily focus on ethnic or gender diversity. This diversity could be on the part of teachers or students in a variety of classroom settings.

- Special education in the multicultural context
- Faculty development program on diversity
- Gender/Ethnic expectations
- Gender related problems in speech communication classroom
- Under representation of minorities in gifted education
- Barriers to recruitment and retention of African American students in gifted education programs
- Teaching multicultural education
- Impact of gender equity on both teachers and students in the classroom
- Impact of cultural and linguistic diversity on students with disabilities or giftedness
- Creating engineering classrooms that are friendlier to women
- Implementing national standards to create positive learning environments for diverse students
- African American students in a predominantly white teacher education classroom

Articles geared towards a specific population

This group deals with homogeneous groups of ability level, background or location.

- Learning disabilities
- Emotional and behavioral disorders
- American Indians
- Rural students
- Children with disabilities in a typical preschool program

- Including students with autism
- Gifted students- teaching creative dramatics

Grade level

These article topics relate to a specific grade level.

- College of Education professors
- Elementary- teaching as decision making
- Effective preschool program
- Cozy nursery school programs
- Safety in a nursery school program
- College courses on program evaluation
- Useful advice for college and university teachers
- Seminar on college teaching
- College instructional communication classroom
- Community college efforts to support special populations
- College level interactive video class
- Humanities in higher education
- Teaching adolescents how to achieve their goals
- Men's college classroom environments
- Creating structure in the elementary classroom
- Students with disabilities in higher education classrooms

Articles geared toward improving a specific subject area

This category encompasses a variety of articles, all of which provided data on one subject area. Findings in this material do not translate to any other domain.

- English- curriculum based instructional materials
- English- teaching creatively
- English- teaching language composition to Lutheran students
- Science and Engineering- gender issues
- Social Studies classroom research
- Social Studies- Maryland's "project better"
- "History comes Alive"
- Social Studies- "the living newspaper"
- Effective instruction in 30 program areas
- Science- perceptions of classroom structure and attitude
- Science- multicultural classrooms
- Science- teaching force and motion
- Science- using role playing
- Course in independent living
- Business communication
- Quantitative Gatekeeper courses
- Literacy- role of play
- Mathematically powerful program implementation

Programs

This group includes both trial and permanent programs that have been implemented in a variety of instructional environments.

- Successful inclusion programs
- Multi- age, multi-ability classrooms
- Orientation process for Catholic school teachers

- Program improving the quality of student writing
- Missouri's Framework for Curriculum Development in Mathematics K-12
- Resolving Conflict Creatively program
- Montessori environments
- Benefits to adults of Montessori teaching methods
- Speech activities engaged in by less experienced speakers of English (in a Punjabi Sikh classroom)
- Literacy programs for young children

Assessment Instruments

- Mississippi Teacher Assessment Instruments
- Continuous portfolio assessment
- Portfolio as a tool to assess professional performance in teachers

Intervention Strategies

- Teen outreach program

Violence

- Violence in the schools
- Gang problem
- Bully-proofing your school
- Teachers must create a peaceful environment

- Search for roots of adolescent aggression
- Child abuse- effects of victimizing behavior

Instruction

- Drama-based instruction
- Teaching constitutionalism as part of core curriculum
- Enhancing democratic values in Isreal's classrooms
- Students developing a better sense of number and symbol meaning
- Interaction in a distance education program
- Music instruction by non specialists
- Tips for using distance education

Stress

- Issues contributing to childhood stress
- Teacher burnout
- High level of teacher stress associated with external constraints

Studies and Relationships

This category includes case studies, associations and relationship studies. They have been conducted in relation to educational environment, but do not relate to the dimensions of creative climate set forth by Ekvall.

- Case study in gifted underachievement
- Case study of Sarah, a student science teacher

- Effects of pleasant fragrances on student behavior
- Teachers and parents beliefs on classroom learning environment
- Water consumption and learning
- Relationship between teachers beliefs and practices
- Relationship between motivation and psychological constructs
- Associations between conceptions of learning and approaches to learning
- Relationship between emotional skills and academic success

Role of Adults in the Classroom

These article topics mention principals, school counselors and teachers in regard to their role in the educational, not creative, process.

- Principal stressed effective teaching elements
- Principals focus during daily classroom visits
- School counselors- in service training
- Concept of teacher creativity
- Effect of professionalism on job attitudes of teachers
- Factors that determine if teachers will or will not stay in the special education field
- Do teacher behaviors match expected student behaviors
- Role of teachers in creating a sociomoral atmosphere

Student characteristics

These articles mention the characteristics students possess that affect their education, yet they are not specific to Ekvall's dimensions.

- Citizenship in the classroom
- Absenteeism
- Friendship issues
- Building community

Physical environment

- Organization of space effects learning
- Teachers perceptions of impact of computers in their classroom
- Pets in the classroom

Discipline

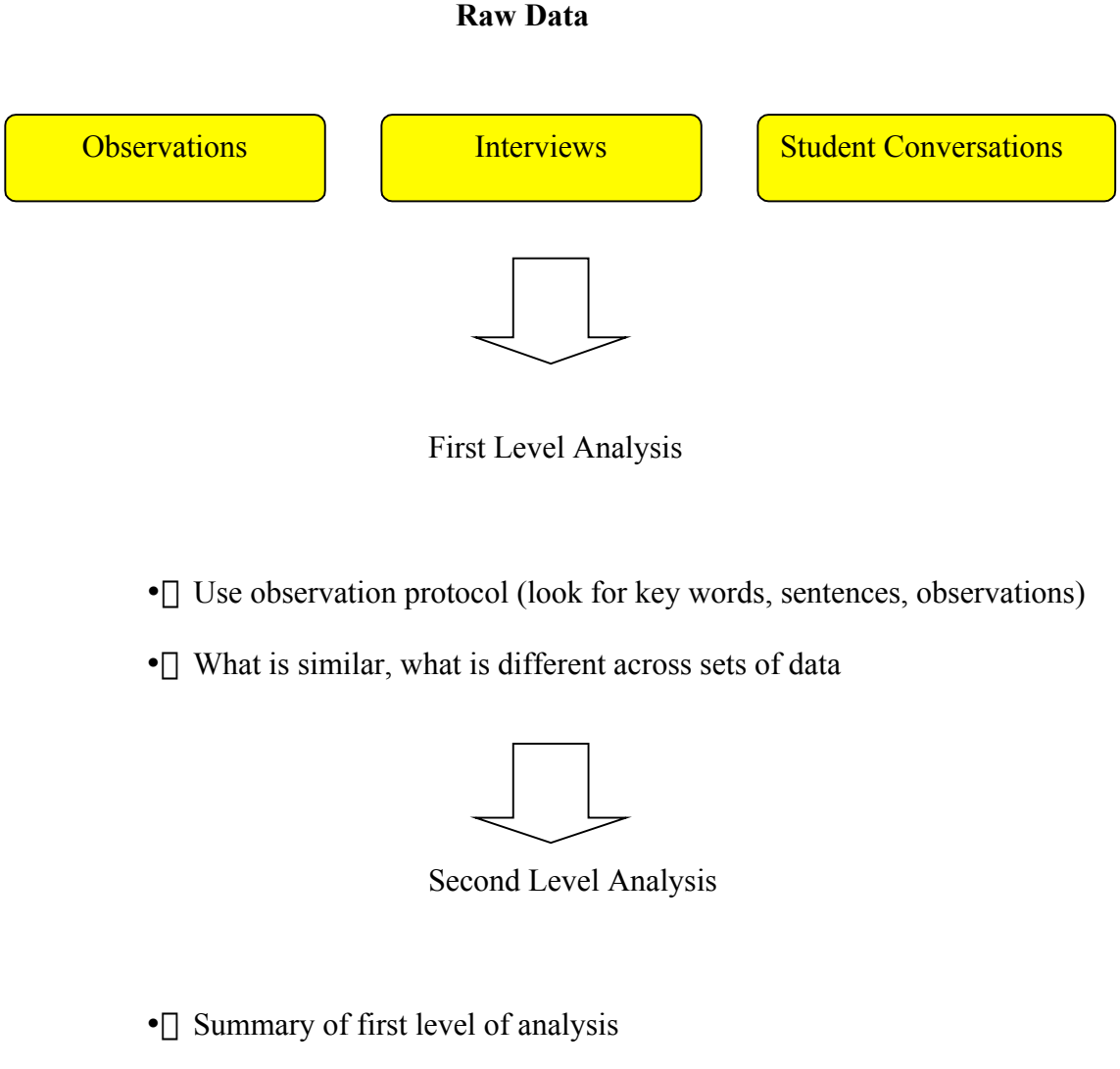
- Total school discipline
- Social justice in the classroom

SECTION THREE: PROJECT PLANNING

This section describes the method and process that I used in this study from collection of data through reporting data. Figure 1.1 provides an overview of the entire process.

Figure 1-1

Process Map



Preparation

In preparation for this project, the first step was to become acquainted with the literature. Initially I read Ekvall (1987), a book called "Open schools, healthy schools" (Hoy, W. K., Tarter, C. S. & Kottkamp, R. B., 1991), and two Master's projects; Lauer (1994), and Sobiek (1996).

Next, Dr. Mary Murdock, Kim Miloshevski, Tammy Gordon and I met as a team and determined which age level each member would observe. I was assigned high school at the onset, because the other two team members were currently teaching at the other grade levels. This did change as our project developed. The change expanded my observations to the elementary and middle school levels, where I visited and conducted observations in the classrooms of my team members as well.

We also determined as a team the process we would use for collecting our observations and teacher interviews. A standard observation sheet (Gordon,2000), as well as a teacher interview sheet (Miloshevski, 2000) were created. The observation sheet (Appendix A) was used to take notes on during the classroom portion of the project. It had each of the ten dimensions listed on it and space to record what we saw that related to each dimension. It also had a place under each dimension to record any questions or thoughts that came to us while we were in the classroom. The teacher interview sheet (Appendix B) also listed each dimension and a general definition of that dimension for the teacher. Under each dimension we looked for what that dimension looked like, sounded like, and felt like in the classroom.

Once we decided upon our grade levels, and in my case the classrooms I would visit, we were ready to seek approval from the building principal and move in temporarily with our observation and interview sheets in hand.

Collecting Data

For this project I observed four art classes at the high school level for 40 minutes each. I also observed one seventh grade French lesson for 40 minutes, and two third grade lessons (science and math). Teacher interviews were conducted at the high school and elementary levels. Each grade level provided me with a wealth of information.

I found myself mentally and physically drained at the end of each observation session. It was not easy to record things quickly in an active classroom, and I didn't want to miss out on any helpful information. I found that I really had to be familiar with Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions and their definitions, as well as the observation sheets I was using in order to be an effective observer.

Organizing and Analyzing Data

Organizing the data was a challenging task. I had three categories to sort the information into: observations (general), teacher interviews, and student conversations. I sorted the information into three folders, and color-coded them using a folder, Post-its® and stickers of the same color. Using Ekvall's definitions as a guide, I read through each observation making notes on Post-its® of the similarities to Ekvall, the differences and a list of some thoughts or questions that came to me as I read through the sheets. I found that some observations fit into more than one category, and others were hard to place.

This information then needed to be sorted into similarities, differences, and things to consider or ponder under each dimension and in each category (observations, teacher interviews and student conversations) and entered into the computer.

Synthesizing Data

As I analyzed the similarities and differences in my observations to Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions, two new sets of data began to emerge. These were:

1. elements of environment that teachers were responsible for creating in order to allow the dimensions to occur in the classroom; and
2. characteristics that the students in that classroom possessed as a result of the environment created by the teacher.

I additionally broke the information into things teachers must do that were similar to Ekvall, and things they must do that differed from Ekvall, as well as things that occurred to me as I read the observations that I believed deserve further investigation. The same order was used for student characteristics. The summaries for each dimension were written according to these new sets of data because I believed they were a worthwhile way to organize the dimensions in the educational realm.

Reporting the Data

As data analysis progressed, our research group met again to share insights on organization of data as well as what we saw emerge from the data. This opened a valuable discussion on how well Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions related to a classroom versus an organizational setting and what we thought might need to be adapted

in the future to better represent the classroom. This discussion led to a literature search of two major databases, ERIC and Wilson Select Plus, to determine exactly what was currently out there in regard to classroom environment and creativity. The results of this search were summarized by Miloshevski (2000), Gordon (2000), and myself in section two of this study.

SECTION FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

This section is organized by dimension. It contains the definitions of each dimension as stated by Ekvall in Lauer's (1994) work. The definitions are followed by a list of similarities and differences between my observations and Ekvall's ten organizational climate dimensions. A list of things that deserve further consideration is next. At the end is a summary of things teachers do similarly to Ekvall that create a creative environment and things teachers do differently from Ekvall in the same attempt. Characteristics students possess as a result of teacher efforts follows.

Dimension A- Dynamism and Liveliness

Ekvall's definition: The eventfulness of the life of the organization. A highly dynamic situation is when new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occur. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy. "Full speed," "Go" (Lauer, 1994, p.189).

Similarities in student conversations…

- Students helped students (alterations between ways of handling issues)
- Students put directions of teacher into their own words
- Students decided how to conduct their group
- Students handled issues according to their preferences
- New things occurred/discoveries were made
- Excitement, positive energy

Similarities in classroom observations…

- Positive energy-students wanted to return to the art room during study hall to help out
- Activity/movement helped create liveliness
- Students moved around the room to work
- Sometimes students got to help the teacher make decisions
- Games = new ways of learning
- Students made discoveries and announced them excitedly
- Different ways of thinking

Similarities in teacher interviews…

- Experimental

Differences in student conversations…

- Confidence
- Compliments
- Repetition- kills dynamism and liveliness but is often necessary
- Leadership emerged
- Group agreement
- Discovery is there and motivating

Differences in classroom observations…

- Engaged students
- Intrinsic motivation
- Student engagement/dedication to the work they are doing
- Can be calm but still dynamic

Differences in teacher interviews…

- Taking it forward

- Interactive
- Uninhibited
- Experimental
- Motivating

Things to ponder/consider…

- Could discovery be incorporated by doing the same activity with different materials, or by using the same materials to do a different activity?
- How does group agreement regarding how to handle issues affect dynamism?
- Age group should be considered in all dimensions.
- Is a calm environment a negative thing?
- Role of music as calming or energizing
- Is learning new things and how to handle new situations in the classroom equivalent to handling issues?
- Are different ways of thinking like using a variety of teaching techniques to keep students interested?

Summary of Dynamism and Liveliness…

Teacher Similarities:

The similarities to Ekvall that I observed as teacher actions in attempt to create an environment that fosters this dimension were as follows:

- Allowed students to conduct their own groups and assist one another when facing difficulty
- Encouraged student discovery by not giving all the answers at the start and by sharing their excitement about the discovery
- Kept lessons active or interactive in order to have a lively environment

- Allowed students to assist the teacher in making decisions so that they were active participants in the environment, resulting in positive feelings among the students
- Incorporated games and tried to think of new and different ways of having the students learn the information at hand
- Created an experiment friendly environment in which both the teacher and the students are not afraid to try a different way of going about an assignment or activity

Teacher Differences

The teacher actions that I observed as different from Ekvall's definitions were:

- Complimented students to raise their confidence level…increased confidence can help students stay positive and experiment with different ways of doing things
- Awareness of the detrimental role an emerging leader may have on group agreement and productivity
- Did not underestimate the importance of discovery in the classroom, and the motivating effect it can have on students intrinsically
- Awareness of student engagement and dedication to the work they were doing because the environment will stay lively and positive if students are engaged in the tasks

Student Similarities

The similarities to Ekvall in student characteristics and actions in the classroom in the dimension of dynamism and liveliness were:

- Students were helping other students, and even more impressive, putting the instruction of the teacher into their own words while assisting another student

- I found students who were deciding for themselves how to conduct the group and were doing so according to their own preferences
- Students wanted to return to the lesson during their free time, and did
- Students were moving around the room to work, but were not getting off task because they were too engaged in the work to allow movement to distract them
- Students were heard excitedly announcing discoveries as they made them, and were receiving support from other students

Student Differences

- An observed difference in student characteristics was confidence level

Dimension B- Trust and Openness

Ekvall's definition: Refers to the emotional safety in relationships. When there is a strong level of trust, everyone in the organization dares to put forward ideas and opinions. Initiatives can be taken without fear of reprisals and ridicule in case of failure. The communication is open and straightforward (Lauer, 1994, p. 225).

Similarities in student conversations…

- Open communication
- Holding up/sharing work with others shows emotional safety and trust
- Communication
- Not afraid to state and opinion that is different from that of others
- Open communication
- Students shared ideas/solutions to problems
- How opinions and ideas were received was important

Similarities in classroom observations…

- Teacher received all questions well, students are in class because they don't already know all the answers
- If you called on a student who didn't know the answer, they may no longer have trust
- Students were not afraid to say that they were having trouble/difficulty with something
- Students trusted information/were open with the teacher
- Students were open/trusted one another

Similarities in teacher interviews…

- Safe
- Honesty

Differences in student conversations…

- Sought out advice
- Asked advice (asking opinions shows they valued each other's ideas)
- Seeking advice is different than offering
- Inquiry/desire to inquire
- Received suggestions well
- Age group (being school aged is much different than being "organizational aged")

Differences in classroom observations…

- Should still wait for student's okay before holding up their work as an example
- Trusted students with objects/projects as well as ideas (projects on display, and a variety of art materials used)
- Volunteering versus being asked to answer

- How does the teacher knowing about the students' lives outside of the class (sports, other classes, etc) affect the trust they hold in that person?
- What is the role of self-confidence?
- What is the role of acceptance?

Differences in teacher interviews…

- Can I try?

Things to ponder/consider…

- Does the environment have trust/openness if some students trust and other do not? How many students must possess this for the environment to have it?
- When compliments are too abundant or too encouraged by the teacher, does communication seem superficial rather than straightforward?
- How to set students up to inquire (only give part of the instructions/rules)?
- Age group should be considered in all dimensions.
- Must be careful not to judge the trust/openness of a child only in one situation or group
- How influential is teacher reception to questions versus other students' acceptance after they ask a question?
- Calling on a student who does not volunteer can kill trust, but as a teacher you cannot allow them to just sit there, can you?
- Do those students who are accepted by others become more daring and open?
- What is the role of self-confidence- can it be built, or do they have to have it before they can trust?

Summary of Trust and Openness…

Teacher Similarities

I observed the following similarities between teacher actions to create an environment with trust and openness and Ekvall's definition of this dimension:

- Promoted open communication by not shooting down ideas or scolding students for expressing dislike of the activities or materials
- Respected all opinions and used them as jumping off points for debates
- Were open and honest with the students as well as had the students be open and honest with them
- Allowed time for students to share their work and accomplishments with others as well as get ideas from others
- Treated all relevant questions as important and worth time and attention
- Waited for students to volunteer answers even if it took a bit longer

Teacher Differences

The following teacher actions differ from the definition of Ekvall:

- Sought the advice of the students on assignments and ways of doing lessons Took an interest in the lives of their students outside of the classroom.
- Tried to encourage the acceptance of everyone in the class as an equal and important voice.

Student similarities

The similarities to Ekvall's definition in student actions and characteristics are as follows:

- Students voluntarily shared ideas with others or held up their work so that others could make suggestions for how to improve it

- Students were not afraid to express an opinion that was different than that of the others in the class
- Students respected the opinions of others and while they may not have agreed, they did not ridicule them
- Students were not afraid to admit they had difficulty with something and asked for help from others

Student Differences

Things that students did that differ from Ekvall's definition of trust and openness were:

- Actively sought out advice
- Received suggestions well
- Had the desire to inquire further

Dimension C- Idea Time

Ekvall's definition: The amount of time people can use (and do use) for elaborating on new ideas. In the high idea time situation, the possibilities exist to discuss and test impulses and fresh suggestions that are not planned or included in the task assigned (Lauer, 1994, p. 241).

Similarities in student conversations…

(none noted)

Similarities in classroom observations…

- Students were not rushed into ideas, but were given encouragement to come up with ideas
- Students were not told what needed work on their projects; they were given time to figure it out for themselves

- Students had the option of taking time to research, or diving right in
- If students got the answer wrong, and the teacher moved on to someone else, they were not allowing for testing of impulses without losing their turn

Similarities in teacher interviews…

(none noted)

Differences in student conversations…

(none noted)

Differences in classroom observations…

- Sketchbook/drafting (a different form of idea time)
- Using brainstorming to "jump start" the process
- Resources have an impact on idea time

Differences in teacher interviews…

- Practice copies
- Talkative with some complaint
- Gratifying
- Achieve uniqueness
- Relaxed, relief
- Pride, because given time they can do it

Thing to ponder/consider…

- What to do when class time does not allow for idea time?
- Personal differences/preferences regarding idea time: how much is too much, what is lazy versus what is thoughtful? Also, not all students need idea time, how important is using the allotted time?

- If called on, and the student does not know the answer, he/she now controls the situation- they can now call on someone else for help- students in one class did not lose their turn for not knowing an answer
- Would slow music help to illustrate idea time?
- How to reward hard work without inadvertently creating a race?
- Not everyone wants to move beyond the first idea that pops into their head

Summary of Idea Time…

Teacher Similarities

The things teachers did to encourage an environment with high idea time that are in keeping with Ekvall's definition are as follows:

- Student mistakes were not pointed out by the teacher, students were given time to realize their mistakes for themselves
- Gave students the option of either researching the assignment first and then beginning or diving right in to work
- Teachers did not move immediately on to the next student when one got an answer wrong, but allowed them a second chance (this way students could first test an impulse if they wanted without losing their chance)

Teacher Differences

Things that teachers did that were different from Ekvall's definition were:

- Encouraged students to carry and use a sketchbook for experimenting and trying out/recording new ideas in
- Taught and incorporated brainstorming into the lessons to "jump start" the idea process
- Provided or had available a variety of resources for students to choose from when given an assignment

Student Similarities

Student characteristics that imply the use of idea time that are similar to Ekvall's definition were:

- Students used time and sketchbooks or practice copies to come up with a different or improved idea
- Took the opportunity to research an idea before moving on to the final copy

Student Differences

Some differences in student actions compared with Ekvall were:

- Students brainstormed on their own or with a friend or two on how to solve the problem or assignment
- Took advantage of the variety of materials available to them by experimenting with using them
- Students were proud

Dimension D- Playfulness and Humor

Ekvall's definition: The spontaneity and ease that is displayed. A relaxed atmosphere with jokes and laughter characterizes the organization that is high in this dimension (Lauer, 1994, p. 192).

Similarities in student conversations…

- Playful
- Harmless jokes and laughter
- Ease, relaxed

Similarities in classroom observations…

- Joked about commonalties
- Teacher tried to make things fun by joking and laughing too

- Students were relaxed with the teacher

Similarities in teacher interviews…

(none noted)

Differences in student conversations…

- How to distinguish in minds of the students good, playful jokes versus mean, hurtful ones
- How to distinguish playful versus disruptive
- This assists Dynamism and Liveliness
- Joking about objects/situations versus about others in the class
- Joking together versus one about the other
- Dancing around, incorporating movement

Differences in classroom observations…

- Eating and drinking, comfortable chairs, etc. also created a relaxed atmosphere
- Joking about commonalties and yourself, telling funny stories and dancing

Differences in teacher interviews…

- Companionship
- Uninhibited

Things to ponder/consider…

- Mocking the teacher- okay if in good humor or if teacher has a good sense of humor?
- Laughing at their own work versus each other's work, and what if others join in and laugh with them at their work?
- Need to make distinction between harmless and harmful humor
- The atmosphere can be relaxed in ways other than playfulness and humor (eating, yoga, etc.)
- How to distinguish mocking versus humor?

- Need to add cases like in the debate definition (joking about objects or views versus others personally or their work)

Summary of Playfulness and Humor…

Teacher Similarities

Things I observed teachers doing that were similar to Ekvall's definition and will create this dimension in their classroom include:

- Allowed harmless jokes, laughter and non-disruptive playfulness in the classroom so that students enjoyed their class time together
- The teachers kept lessons fun by laughing and joking so that the students felt they could relax and feel comfortable in the teacher's presence

Teacher Differences

There are a number of things that the classroom teachers did that are not made explicit by Ekvall's definition, such as:

- To integrate humor into the classroom, the teachers first made clear, in the minds of the students, a distinction between good, playful jokes and mean, hurtful jokes
- Joked about commonalties and objects or situations, which were less hurtful to others than personal jokes or jokes about the work another has done
- Teachers also made a distinction with playfulness- there are appropriate times and places for playfulness, and there are inappropriate times and places where playfulness causes a disruption to the class learning
- Allowed the students to dance (incorporating movement)
- Allowed eating or drinking

Student Similarities

Some characteristics that are in keeping with Ekvall's definition of playfulness and humor in the actions of the students were:

- Students accepted harmless jokes and laughter as a comfortable aspect of the classroom environment
- Acted relaxed and at ease while in the classroom and in the presence of the teacher

Student Differences

Students displayed the following characteristics that are not listed in Ekvall's definition:

- Students knew when and what was appropriate in the classroom as far as playfulness and humor
- They did not hurt the feelings of others or disrupt the class
- Used humor along with common sense and responsibility in the classroom
- Students showed signs of companionship and commorodarie
- Felt comfortable in the classroom, like they were a member of a team

Dimension E- Debate

Ekvall's definition: Involves encounters, exchanges, or clashes among viewpoints, ideas, and differing experiences and knowledge. In the debating organizations many voices are heard and people are keen on putting their ideas forward. Where debates are missing, people follow authoritarian patterns without questioning. Debate focuses on issues and ideas (Lauer, 1994, p. 201).

Similarities in student conversations…

- Exchanged different viewpoints, different experiences with the same material
- No authoritarian pattern

Similarities in classroom observations…

- Different answers, often both are right
- Teacher accepted/used different ideas and student wording

Similarities in teacher interviews…

- Discussion
- Explaining options

Differences in student conversations…

- Role of leadership

Differences in classroom observations…

- Preferences
- Debating knowledge can help them learn

Differences in teacher interviews…

- Debated on a more personal level (with themselves)
- Weighed options against to criteria

Things ponder/consider…

- Does leadership assist or kill debate?
- Debates should be fair
- Debates only work when there is no right answer

Summary of Debate…

Teacher Similarities

Things that teachers were observed as doing that relate to the definition of Ekvall are as follows:

- Teachers avoided setting patterns and rules that must, without question, be followed by the students
- Allowed students to feel they had a say in the rules that were set
- Encouraged all students to speak up and share their opinion
- Welcomed those opinions that were different than the majority of the students
- Allowed debates to occur
- Accepted and used the wording or ideas of the students whenever possible without compromising the lesson objectives
- Tried to give options in assignments or ways of accomplishing the assignment so that students felt they had a choice or a say in what they did for class

Teacher Differences

One thing I saw teachers do that is not mentioned in Ekvall's definition of debate is:

- Debated internally, showing students they do not always need to debate out loud with others, they can debate on a personal level by weighing their options against the criteria of the assignment

Student Similarities

Students that followed along with Ekvall's definition:

- Exchanged different views on assignments or different experiences (good or bad) with the same material

- Discussion was part of their routine and occurred often and without invitation Offered answers to the question posed that were correct, but yet different than the answer a student gave previously

Student Differences

Things students did that differ from Ekvall were:

- Shared their preferences and took actions to accomplish the task that met these preferences, even when it meant taking a different road to get there
- Students also debated within themselves on how to best meet the project criteria while incorporating their preferences

Dimension F- Risk Taking

Ekvall's definition: Tolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity exposed in the workplace constitutes risk-taking. In the high risk-taking climate, bold new initiatives can be taken even when the outcomes are unknown. People feel as though they can "take a gamble" on some of their ideas. People will often "go out on a limb" to put ideas forward (Lauer, 1994, p. 232).

Similarities in student conversations…

- Put forth new ideas
- Built on the ideas of others

Similarities in classroom observations…

- Practice copies are the classroom equivalent
- Students worked at a risk together
- Rewarded/complimented for trying, not just for succeeding

Similarities in teacher interviews…

(none noted)

Differences in student conversations…

- Doubt = distrust
- Strengthening and agreeing, being supportive
- Deduction/speculation, basing the risk on something you know, versus a "shot in the dark"

Differences in classroom observations…

- Role-playing in risky situations to lessen the personal element of failure
- Risk taking together so no one fails alone (support)
- Practice copies
- Students will risk for a great outcome (bring examples), their own reward
- Maybe they are just shy, private, humble, afraid to open up… consider personalities
- Success breeds risk

Differences in teacher interviews…

- Experimental
- Going above and beyond

Things to ponder/consider…

- Must you have trust and openness before taking risks?
- Is it more risky to answer a question posed by another student or by the teacher?
- Silly guesses are not useful, educated guesses/hypotheses are useful
- Being told to try/take risks… beneficial or loss of freedom?
- If something is risky, are students more careful/thoughtful in doing it?

Summary of Risk Taking…

Teacher Similarities

Teachers supported Ekvall's definition of risk-taking by doing the following:

- Put forth new ideas to the students and tried out several new techniques and lessons to see how they would go
- Served as a model for students to follow on how risk-taking looks, feels, and sounds like so that they could take risks as well
- Teachers rewarded the effort rather than the success of their students
- Made known that they supported risk-taking and would not punish or discourage it in their students

Teacher Differences

There are several things that teachers did to create an environment with risk-taking than differed from Ekvall, such as:

- Used words like deduction and speculation
- Incorporated role playing into the classroom to lessen the personal element of failure for students
- Teachers incorporated groups into risky situations so that no one would fail alone when a risk is taken that doesn't work

Student Similarities

Students who possessed characteristics similar to those that Ekvall describes were found doing the following:

- Confidently put forward new and different ideas for consideration
- Built on and strengthened the new ideas of others in the classroom
- They made several practice copies or sketches trying out impulses before they settled on a final way of accomplishing the assignment

- Worked with others on new ideas they had in order to receive feedback and approval
- Complimented each others risky efforts (both successes and failures)

Student Differences

Students that strayed from Ekvall's definition of risk-taking were found:

- Strengthening, agreeing with and being supportive of each others risks or new ideas
- They took risks knowing that other students would support them
- Students supported their own risks by citing knowledge that they learned previously
- Students were very experimental and went, without guidance from the teacher, above and beyond the call of the assignment in order to incorporate something they thought of or just wanted to try out

Dimension G- Conflict

Ekvall's definition: Refers to the presence of personal, interpersonal or emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debate dimension) in the organization. When a level of conflict is high, groups and individuals dislike or hate each other and the climate can be characterized by "warfare." Plots and traps are common, gossip and backstabbing occur (Lauer, 1994).

Similarities in student conversations…

- Invasion of personal space, belongings, or preferences

Similarities in classroom observations…

(none noted)

Similarities in teacher interviews…

(none noted)

Differences in student conversations…

- More conflict in groups
- Tension grew and affected all in the group
- Invasion of personal space
- Tension grew as others supported the complainant
- Not dislike of the person but of their action (betrayal of trust)

Differences in classroom observations…

- Authoritarian: Is student/teacher conflict higher when teachers are authoritarian?
- Different approach for education- we know what conflict is and what it looks like, we need to know how to get past it
- Conflict affected all, not just those involved

Differences in teacher interviews…

- Non-acceptance

Things to ponder/consider…

- The more students involved or paying attention, the harder conflict is to resolve or ignore
- How to quell/punish/discourage conflict without taking something they enjoy as a punishment?
- Some conflicts are resolved best without intervention
- How to decide what battles are worth fighting, and what to let go to preserve the peace?

Summary of Conflict…

Teacher Similarities

The things that I got from my data that teachers did that allowed for conflict as Ekvall has defined it were:

- Did not stress the importance of respecting others in the classroom
- Tolerated the smallest invasion, on the part of one student regarding another, of personal space, belongings or preferences

Teacher Differences

I did not observe any instances when teachers did something to create conflict that differed from Ekvall in my observations.

Student Similarities

The similarities to Ekvall in student actions and characteristics were again few in my observations, but included:

- Students did not respect each others personal space or belongings
- Did not respect different preferences or ways of doing things
- Students used humor to mock each other, or to deliberately hurt others

Student Differences

The things that were observed on the part of the students that differed from Ekvall are listed here:

- Students were heard agreeing with one of those in conflict, and therefore contributed to the conflict rather than helping to dissolve it
- Students all felt the tension in the room- tension was not felt by just those in the conflict, but by others as well (even I, as an outside observer, felt the tension between two girls as one would not let the other share her materials)

- Another characteristic that students possessed was non-acceptance for one of those in conflict either personally or idea wise

Dimension H- Idea Support

Ekvall's definition: Involves the way new ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an attentive and kind way by bosses and work-mates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new ideas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive (Lauer, 1994, p.182).

Similarities in student conversations…

- Compliments
- The questions students asked each other were taken as seriously as those asked by the teacher
- Students took each others' advice, followed suggestions

Similarities in classroom observations…

- Initiatives encouraged

Similarities in teacher interviews…

- Deferred judgement
- Helpful advice
- Safe expression

Differences in student conversations…

- Encouragement
- Advocate, promoter, ally, protect and defend
- Respected
- Helping each other is a form of support

Differences in classroom observations…

- Teacher modeled the correct behavior/language
- Paid attention, listened, were heard
- Building on others' ideas is a form of support
- Respected
- Supporting student interests outside of the classroom (How big an impact)?
- Expression of doubt- seeking out idea support?

Differences in teacher interviews…

- Cohesion
- Acceptance
- Confidence

Things to ponder/consider…

- How is this different from trust, maybe encouragement is a better word for it.
- Which means more, student to student or teacher to student compliments; must both be present?
- Support when right versus support/encouragement when they are wrong or the idea or solution needs work.
- Not just ideas, but other things too

Summary of Idea Support…

Teacher Similarities

The similarities to Ekvall's definition that I observed in the teacher actions to create this dimension are as follows:

- Teachers complimented students often and encouraged students to not only compliment each other as well, but to take their questions and opinions seriously and respect them

- Taught students to defer judgement
- Made the classroom environment feel idea and expression safe
- Did not discourage students from offering advice to other students
- Left it up to the student whether or not to take the advice of another

Teacher Differences

Things that I observed teachers doing that differed from the definition of Ekvall were:

- Teachers modeled the correct behavior and language to be used in support of others (listening, allowing the students to be heard, building on others ideas, acceptance)
- Responded to student expressions of doubt with idea support
- Showed support of students by taking an active interest in the students activities and hobbies outside of class

Student Similarities

Students, in keeping with Ekvall's definition, were found:

- Complimenting each other often
- Respecting the questions other pose and their differing opinions
- Taking each others advice (or at least considering it with care)
- Expressing themselves freely

Student Differences

Students were observed doing the following that differ from Ekvall's definition:

- Advocated for one another
- Protected and defended one another
- Paid attention and listened to each other and felt that they could also be heard
- Gave a feeling of cohesion and acceptance among themselves

- Helped one another to show support
- Expressed self doubt as a way of gaining or seeking out idea support from the others around them

Dimension I- Challenge

Ekvall's definition: Is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in its daily operations and long term goals. In a high challenge climate, people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, and find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy (Lauer, 1994, p. 162).

Similarities in student conversations…

(none noted)

Similarities in classroom observations…

- Student involvement
- Challenging questions/problems
- Involvement
- Improved on things during a second chance
- Students invested energy by offering answers and actively participating

Similarities in teacher interviews…

- Students chose their seat locations and some of the activities
- Students were given a problem to solve, a means to solve it, and incubation time on how to solve it
- Independent working
- Sat in a new place to get new ideas

Differences in classroom observations…

- Role-play- students took on a role related to the class

- Incubation model? Wondering about the next step keeps anticipation/motivation and involvement
- Breaking routines to keep them on their toes
- Importance of knowing clearly what the long term goals are and trying to meet them
- Goal setting

Differences in teacher interviews…

- Confidence
- Self-esteem

Things to ponder/consider…

(none noted)

Summary of Challenge…

Teacher Similarities

Teachers did the following things that were similar to Ekvall's definition of challenge:

- Encouraged student involvement in every aspect of the class, from designing rules and picking seats to choosing and making assignments
- Posed challenging or difficult questions and assignments with no apparent right answer
- Allowed students more than one try at answering the challenge
- Gave students a problem to solve, different means to solve it, and incubation time to come up with a plan

Teacher Differences

Teachers did the following things that were different than the definition of Ekvall:

- Chose to break routine on purpose to keep students thinking on their toes
- Made long term goals set, known, and strove for

Student Similarities

Students who possessed the characteristics mentioned or implied in Ekvall's definition of challenge were noticed doing the following:

- Students were highly involved in all daily activities and expected to be such
- Accepted and welcomed challenging questions and problems
- Sought out a second chance on which to improve
- Were energetic in their pursuit for improvement
- Leapt out of their seats to offer answers or make suggestions
- Worked diligently on their own

Student Differences

Students were observed doing the following, which differed from Ekvall:

- Students took on other roles that were pertinent to the class work and helped them to arrive at solutions
- Were constantly anticipating and wondering what the next step or next lesson would bring
- They were aware of the goals they were striving for, and strove with confidence and self-esteem

Dimension J- Freedom

Ekvall's definition: The independence of behavior exerted by the people in an organization. In a climate with much freedom, people are given autonomy to define much of their own work. People are able to exercise discretion in their day- to- day activities, and people take the initiative to acquire and share information (Lauer, 1994, p. 175).

Similarities in student conversations…

- Students decided when else to work on art, and were allowed to do so in the art room even if another class is taking place
- If they could work with music and talking, they were welcome to
- Independence- students walked around to see the work from others, to get ideas, and were free to observe others working
- Students defined their own work for book club
- Students quieted each other, this suggests group independence from the teacher
- Student independence from the teacher- helped each other with work, following rules, deciding how to run groups, etc.
- Students decided who got rewarded for correct answers
- Students were welcome to study together if they chose

Similarities in classroom observations…

- Options given, and progressive tests
- Students took initiative to help teacher clean-up and reward others
- Students told the teacher when they were ready to go
- Students helped each other without prompting
- Students defined how to get work accomplished together without teacher instruction
- Defining their own way/method of getting assignments done
- Examples given of how to act with freedom
- Freedom given with conditions
- Self starting
- Freedom within an assignment

Similarities in teacher interviews…

- Movement

- Expression (safety to express themselves without fear of judgement)
- High student involvement
- Students decided how to allot their time
- Student voices were heard
- Independence

Differences in student conversations…

- Interdependence, not independence
- Discretion was used

Differences in classroom observations…

- Freedom with conditions/restrictions
- Norming

Differences in teacher interviews…

- Relaxed
- Motivated
- Confidence
- Responsible
- Risk taking

Things to ponder/consider…

- With clear projects, goals and steps, students can move freely and independently yet still stay on task and complete projects
- Freedom for students must be different than freedom for adults (not less, but in different ways)
- Student products and ideas are seen and used

Summary of Freedom…

Teacher Similarities

I observed many things in the classroom on the part of the teachers that were similar to Ekvall, such as:

- Teachers allowed students to work on their assignments in their room during another class period
- Students were welcome to work while listening to music and talking as long as it did not interfere with their work or the work of others
- Students were not only allowed, but encouraged to get out of their seat and walk around to observe the work of others and to seek advice and more ideas for their own work
- Teachers gave assignments and allowed the students to decide their own process to reach the goal, options were also regularly given
- Students were encouraged to help each other out whenever possible (before coming to the teacher), and to work and study in groups if they liked
- Independence within groups or individually was rewarded
- All student voices were heard by the teacher
- The teacher modeled the correct way to act with freedom for the students

Teacher Differences

Differing from Ekvall were the following teacher actions to encourage student freedom:

- Teachers allowed freedom with restrictions
- Student responsibility was stressed

Student Similarities

Student actions and characteristics that were similar to Ekvall were also abundant in the freedom dimension, they included:

- Students were responsible in deciding when, what, and how to do (movement, on a timely basis, etc.) assignments
- Students knew their limits as far as noise from talking (shown by students quieting each other down), and music volume, as well as movement within the room
- The students were self-starters and got out their materials and began working without prompting
- Students showed independence from the teacher by helping each other and following rules

Student Differences

Some things that students did in regard to freedom that were not mentioned in the definition of Ekvall were:

- Students rewarded each other and took the initiative to clean up the room after a class
- Displayed a sense of interdependence along with independence
- Began norming once they knew how they were expected to act with freedom
- Students were relaxed, motivated, confident and felt free to take a risk

The key question for this study was "How do Ekvall's ten dimensions manifest themselves in an educational setting?". Based on these observations Ekvall's creative climate dimensions could be observed and identified in all cases.

SECTION FIVE: SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES, KEY LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Project Outcomes

Overall, I feel good about the outcomes of this project. We set out to report our findings, and to create and adjust rubrics based on an observation protocol for further study of the creative climate in classrooms. The following are outcomes resulting from completion of this study:

1. Report of observation and interview results.

   Section four contains the results from my observations and interviews in an organized and logical manner.

2. The identification of rubric criteria for the Creative Climate Checklist About School Settings (CLASS).

   Rubric criteria can be obtained by pulling key observed behaviors from the lists for each dimension (Peebles-Fish, in preparation).

3. The development of a climate observation protocol.

   The first drafts of climate observation forms were used for this project, and are located in the appendices of this book.

4. Adjusted baseline behavioral indicators for further piloting in the classroom setting.

   New rubric criteria for piloting can be obtained from the "things to ponder/consider" portion of each dimension in section four.

Key Content and Process Learnings

As a result of this project, I have learned many things relating to my own abilities as a researcher and an educator.

- Through each project I tackle, I take away new skills and knowledge. While these things may not prove useful immediately, they will be stored in my memory and will undoubtedly serve me at some point in my life. Perhaps one day I will be as wise as those I depend on who are more experienced than I.
- I now have in depth knowledge of the creative classroom climate that I will be able and willing to share with colleagues and friends. This knowledge is marketable and I believe it has already helped me to land more than one job.
- I feel confident that I can create a project from its inception and see it through to the end. I believe this will help me write grants and implement new lessons and programs in my school.
- I now have protocol to use in the observation of my own classroom on the topic of creative environment. I will use this to keep my classroom moving in the right direction. Observation and self-evaluation skills are essential for any educator.
- Working as part of a team is exciting and beneficial. Teammates can keep you moving in the right direction and be sounding boards.
- I have the ability to make my classroom a creative, safe and positive place to learn and have fun!

Recommendations for Further Learning

Further research in this field is essential because classroom environment affects the effectiveness of the teacher and is an inescapable factor in the experience both teacher and student have. While a baseline pool of behavior indicators was identified and an

observation protocol developed, there is more work to be done. These are projects that I believe would benefit this study if conducted in the future:

1. The "things to ponder/consider" heading under each dimension in section four must be read and used to better translate Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions as observed in an organizational setting into an educational setting. These things should be used to create a new observation checklist for piloting in the classroom.
2. Tools should be developed or adapted to help teachers incorporate each dimension in their classroom (such as tools have been used to help teachers with the Creative Problem Solving process).
3. A program should be implemented to inform teachers of the presence of these dimensions in their classroom. The pilot school should first be observed prior to teacher training and then after so that a difference may be observed.

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Appendix A: Observation Protocol

Date_____ Time_____
Class_____
Age

Dynamism and Liveliness

Is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alterations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occur. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy. "full speed", "Go"

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Other, What else, How else:

Trust & Openness

Refers to the emotional safety in relationships. When there is a strong level of trust, everyone in the organization dares to put forward ideas and opinions. Initiatives can be taken without fear of reprisals and ridicule in case of failure. The communication is open and straightforward.

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Other, What else, How else:

Idea Time

Is the amount of time people can use (and do use) for elaborating new ideas. In the high idea time situation, the possibilities exist to discuss and test impulses and fresh suggestions that are not planned or included in the task assignment.

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Other, What else, How else:

Playfulness and Humor

Means the spontaneity and ease that is displayed. A relaxed atmosphere with jokes and laughter characterizes the organization which is high in this dimension.

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Other, What else, How else:

Created by Tammy Gordon for CRS690 Spring 2000

Debates

Involves encounters, exchanges, or clashes among viev
knowledge. In the debating organizations many voices are heard and people are keen on putting forward their ideas. Where debates are missing, people follow authoritarian patterns without questioning. Debate focuses on issues and ideas.

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Other, What else, How else:

Freedom

Is described as the independence in behavior exerted by the people in the organization. In a climate with much freedom, people are given autonomy to define much of their own work. People are able to exercise discretion in their day-to-day activities. People take the initiative to acquire and share information.

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Other, What else, How else:

Created by Tammy Gordon for CRS690 Spring 2000

Risk Taking

Tolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity exposed in the workplace constitutes risk-taking. In the high risk-taking climate, bold new initiatives can be taken even when the outcomes are unknown. People feel as though they can "take a gamble" on some of their ideas. People will often "go out on a limb" to put ideas forward.

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Other, What else, How else:

Conflicts

Refers to the presence of personal, interpersonal or emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debate dimension) in the organization. When a level of conflict is high, groups and single individuals dislike or hate each other and the climate can be characterized by "warfare". Plots and traps are common, gossip and backstabbing occur.

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Other, What else, How else:

Created by Tammy Gordon for CRS690 Spring 2000

Idea Support

Involves the way new ideas are treated. In the s
received in an attentive and kind way by bosses and work-mates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities exist for trying out new ideas. The atmosphere is constructive and positive.

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Other, What else, How else:

Challenge

Is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in its daily operations and long term goals. In a high challenge climate people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.

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Other, What else, How else:

Created by Tammy Gordon for CRS690 Spring 2000

Appendix B: Teacher Interview

Name (optional) _____ Grade Level_____

Subject area_____

Challenge: This is the degree to which the students of a classroom are involved in its daily operations and long term goals.
High challenge = intrinsic motivation Low challenge = feelings of indifference

What does challenge in the classroom look like?

What does challenge in the classroom sound like?

What does challenge in the classroom feel like?

Freedom: The independence in behavior exerted by the students in the classroom.
High freedom = students take initiative Low freedom = work tasks are prescribed

What does freedom in the classroom look like?

What does freedom in the classroom sound like?

What does freedom in the classroom feel like?

Definitions adapted from *Creative Approaches to Problem Solving.* Isaksen, Dorval & Treffinger, 1994.
Prepared by Kim Miloshevski CRS 690 February 2000

Idea Support: Involves the way new ideas are treated.

High support = ideas and suggestions are received in an attentive and kind way by classmates and instructors.
Low support = disinterest and criticism of new ideas.

What does idea support in the classroom look like?

What does idea support in the classroom sound like?

What does idea support in the classroom feel like?

Trust & Openness: This refers to the emotional safety (trust) in relationships.
High trust = willingness to share new ideas without fear.
Low trust = workers are afraid of being exploited and robbed of good ideas.

What does trust and openness in the classroom look like?

What does trust and openness in the classroom sound like?

What does trust and openness in the classroom feel like?

Definitions adapted from *Creative Approaches to Problem Solving.* Isaksen, Dorval & Treffinger, 1994.Prepared by Kim Miloshevski CRS 690 February 2000

Dynamism & Liveliness: This refers to the eventfulness of the life of the classroom.

Highly dynamic = new things and ideas occur often
Low dynamics = everything remains status quo.

What does dynamism and liveliness in the classroom look like?

What does dynamism and liveliness in the classroom sound like?

What does dynamism and liveliness in the classroom feel like?

Playfulness & Humor: Refers to the spontaneity and ease that is displayed within the classroom.
High playfulness = relaxed atmosphere with jokes and laughter.
Low playfulness = atmosphere of gravity and seriousness.

What does playfulness and humor in the classroom look like?

What does playfulness and humor in the classroom sound like?

What does playfulness and humor in the classroom feel like?

Debates: Refers to encounters, exchanges, or clashes among viewpoints, ideas, and differing experiences and knowledge.
High debate = many voices are heard, people eager to share ideas.
Low debate = people follow authoritarian patterns without questioning.

What does debate in the classroom look like?

What does debate in the classroom sound like?

What does debate in the classroom feel like?

Conflicts: Refers to the presence of personal, interpersonal or emotional tensions in the classroom.
High conflict = groups and individuals dislike or hate each other.
Low conflict = people behave in a more mature manner and exercise control over impulses and emotions.

What does conflict in the classroom look like?

What does conflict in the classroom sound like?

What does conflict in the classroom feel like?

Risk- taking: This is the tolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity exposed in the classroom.
High risk-taking = people feel as though they can take a gamble on new ideas.
Low risk-taking = people are cautious and hesitant, they try to be on the safe side.

What does risk-taking in the classroom look like?

What does risk-taking in the classroom sound like?

What does risk-taking in the classroom feel like?

Idea time: Refers to the amount of time students can use (and do use) for elaborating on new ideas.
High idea time = possibilities exist to discuss and test impulses and fresh suggestions.
Low idea time = every minute is booked and specified creating pressure.

What does idea time in the classroom look like?

What does idea time in the classroom sound like?

What does idea time in the classroom feel like?

Appendix C: Concept Paper

1.

Theme:
Understanding multifaceted interactions among person, process, product and press/environment.

Initiative:
Develop reliable and valid instrumentation to operationalize profiling

2. **Title of Project:**

Identifying Ekvall's Creative Climate Dimensions in a High School Classroom Setting.

3. **Rationale and Questions:**

This project will examine Ekvall's ten climate dimensions as they appear in classroom settings. This fits directly into Theme One of the Center for Studies in Creativity's four major research, development, and dissemination theme as; "Understanding Multifaceted Interactions through Developing Instrumentation". The project will use classroom observations and interviews to identify the similarities and differences in Ekvall's dimensions and classroom settings.

The study will be guided by the following questions:

- How do Ekvall's climate dimensions manifest themselves in classroom settings?
  - What is similar?
  - What is different?
- What observed teacher and student behaviors may be indicative of creative climate in the classroom?

- What descriptions of creative climate in the classroom already exist in literature?

4. Statement of Significance:

A significant amount of research exists regarding the creative climate in business and organizations, but there is a lack of research regarding educational climate. It is just as important to focus on creative environment as it is in business. "Although…does not discuss education, it can also be viewed as one of the factors leading to the present climate in the U.S. and its importance should not be overlooked" (Lauer, p.96). A few notable studies regarding the educational climate have been done; Galluzzi, Kirby and Zucker (1980) suggest a relationship exists between personality and perceptions of classroom environment, Davidman (1981) studied the impact of computers on classroom climate, and Torrance (1987) studied how classroom environment can be made to facilitate the ability of students to invent. However, none have created a list of behaviors that may be indicative of a creative climate in the classroom.

This study will identify a preliminary list of rubrics and activities indicative of a creative classroom climate through making observations, interviewing, and reporting teacher/student conversations.

5. Description of the Method or Process:

- Review and analysis of current literature on creative climate.
- Identify a baseline pool of behavioral indicators of creative climate in the classroom to pilot.
- Conduct classroom observations of a high school teacher and students.
- Interview a high school classroom teacher.

- Examine conversations; between students and teacher, and student to student.
- Interview and observe other members of the climate research team.
- Report results of findings.

6. Learning Goals:

- I will be able to refine my teamwork skills.
- I will have a deeper understanding of how climate in a classroom affects creativity.
- I will improve my current research skills.
- I will apply my research to a real life situation (interviewing and observing).

7. **Outcomes:**

- Report of observation and interview results.
- The identification of rubrics for the Creative Climate Checklist About School Settings (CLASS).
- The development of a climate observation protocol.
- Adjust identified baseline pool of rubrics and behavioral indicators for further piloting.

8. Timeline:

November, 1999	Begin literature review
	Meet with climate team
	Drafting of concept paper
	Check about possible approval to conduct the study

December, 1999	Continue literature review
	Meet with the climate team about concept papers
	Completion of concept paper
	Compile human subject report
February, 2000	Meet with climate team to identify some baseline indicators of a creative climate
	Secure a classroom to conduct my study in
March, 2000	Conduct classroom observations
	Set up observations and teacher interviews outside my placement
	Meet with climate team to get updates on others' studies
April, 2000	Reporting and collaboration of data
	Drafting of final paper
	Meet with climate team about final papers
May, 2000	Final project paper and rubrics list due

9. Principal Investigators:

Faculty advisor:	Dr. Mary Murdock
Student team:	Rebecca Peebles
	Tammy Gordon
	Kim Miloshevski

10. Related Literature:

Ekvall, G. (1987). The climate metaphor in organizational theory. In Bass, B.M. and Drenth, P. (Eds). Advances in organizational psychology: An international review (pp. 177-190). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Hoy, W.K., Tarter, C.S., & Kottkamp, R.B. (1991). Open schools/ healthy schools: Measuring organizational climate. London, Newbury Park, Sage Publications.

Lauer, K. (1994). The assessment of creative climate: An investigation of Ekvall's creative climate questionnaire. Unpublished masters thesis, Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo State College, Buffalo, NY.

Sobieck, M. (1996). Examinations of cross-site narrative responses on the CIQ and SOQ: Organizational climate for creativity and change research and applications. Unpublished masters project, Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo State College, Buffalo, NY.

Appendix D: Related Literature

This appendix section includes reference information for each of the abstract listed in section two, review of related literature for this project. The abstracts are listed in the order they appear in the text of section two in APA abstract form.

Diversity in the classroom

Winzer, M. A. & Mazurek, K. (1998). Special education in multicultural contexts. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED414716

Schmitz, B. et al. (1992). Creating multicultural classrooms: An experience-derived faculty development program. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ443235

Grayson, D. A. (1992). Classroom and site-based leadership development: Increasing achievement and participation for all students with an emphasis on underserved populations. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED347654

Pifer, R. D. (1995). Gender in interpersonal communication. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED385870

Bigelow, R-A. Z. (1993). Developing and implementing a program to improve school success for minority students. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED365007

Ford, D. Y. (1994). The recruitment and retention of African-American students in gifted education programs: Implications and recommendations. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED388012

Vaughn, B. E. (1994). Harnessing the multicultural debate. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ493228

Watkins, R. M. et al. (1996). The university community where equity can happen: Getting past the rhetoric. Abstract from: ERIC database Item:ED393827

Taylor, J. A. (1997). Warming a chilly classroom. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI97004932

Heartel, G. D. (1997). Creating school and classroom cultures that value learning: The role of national standards. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI97010029

Kornfeld, J. (1999). Sharing stories: A study of African American students in a predominantly white teacher education program. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI99032221

Articles geared towards a specific population:

Guerin, G. & Denti, L. (1999). Teaching youth with disabilities in alternative and correctional settings. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ592603

Staurowsky, E. J. (1999). American Indian imagery and the miseducation of America. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ598299

Bloodsworth, G. & Fitzgerald, D. (1993). Preparing teachers for the rural world. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED366588

McFaul, J. (1992). Support for parents of rural students. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED351172

Clark, D. M. & Smith, S. W. (1999). Facilitating friendships: Including students with autism in the early elementary classroom. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI99008314

Rockwell, S. (1993). Tough to reach, tough to teach: Students with behavior problems. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED355672

Johnson, A. P. (2000). Creative dramatics: The perfect tools for gifted students. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI 00011149

Trump, G. C. & Hange, J. E. (1996). Concerns about and effective strategies for inclusion: Focus group interview findings from Tennessee teachers. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED397576

Grade level:

Villar, L. M. (1994). Reflections on action by university teacher trainers. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED376127

Pasch, M. et al. (1995). Teaching as decision making: Successful practices for the elementary teacher. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED380464

Kentucky State Department of Education, (1991). Professional development: Growing and interacting as a teacher. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED379105

Creating a cozy classroom. (1999). Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI99023607

Perry, B. D. (2000). Creating an emotionally safe classroom. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI00021745

Lurie, E. E. & Ovrebo, B. (1995). Using a cooperative classroom climate and experiential learning in teaching evaluation research. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ510892

DeNeef, A. L, ed. & Goodwin, C. D, ed. (1995). The academic's handbook. Second Edition. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED391450

Chang, G. C. et al. (1996). Focus group report: Seminar in college teaching. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED398815

Tillson, L-D. (1996). The case method as reflective and projective practice in the instructional communication classroom. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED400565

Community college programs and services for special populations and underrepresented groups, fiscal year 1996. (1997). Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED405066

Glenn, R. J. (1996). Using video to enhance content and delivery skills in the basic oral communication course: Summarizing the uses and benefits. Abstract from: ERIC database

Kernan, A, ed. (1997). What's happened to the humanities? Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED418638

Field, S. & Hoffman, A. (1996). Steps to self-determination: A curriculum to help adolescents learn to achieve their goals. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED425549

Trice, A. D., Nandu, A. & Lowe, M. (1996). Men's college classroom environments. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI96022167

Dodge, D. T. & Bickart, T. S. (1996). Creating structure in the elementary classroom. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI96022237

Beilke, J. R. & Yssel, N. (1999). The chilly climate for students with disabilities in higher education. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI99033010

Articles geared toward improving a specific subject area

Brumfit, A. & Hikmany, H. R. H. (1997). Secondary English language orientation project: Ministry of education, Zanzibar. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED426619

Bushman, J. H. & Bushman, K. P. (1994). Teaching English creatively. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED371386

Geisler, R. (1996). Growing up writing: Nurturing classroom authors. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI96028281

Lyon, B. (1997). Working to encourage women in science. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ566807

Harwood, A. M. (1992). Classroom climate and civic education in secondary social studies research: Antecedents and findings. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ450764

Osborn, C., et al. (1990). Better social studies: Building effective teaching through educational research. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED380333

Shultz, G. (1995). History comes alive. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED398025

Chilcoat, G. W. (1996). Living newspaper puppet theater: An inquiry process for exploring historical social issues in high-school social studies. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI96033157

Maryland State Department of Education. (1990). Better thinking and learning: Building effective teaching through educational research. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED353561

Sidlik, L. P.& Pilburn, M. D. (1993). Enablement, alienation, and attitude toward science in middle school classrooms. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED361217

Johnson, J. & Kean, E. (1992). Improving science teaching in multicultural settings: A qualitative study. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ473585

Hewson, P. W. & Beeth, M. E. (1993). Teaching for conceptual change: Examples from force and motion. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED407272

Burton, L. D. (1997). Hitting the issues head on: Using role play in science education. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED411162

Manitoba Department of Education and Training. (1993). Skills for independent living. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED364779

Shue, L. L. (1993). Introducing gender communication into the basic business communication course. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED367037

Gainen, J. (1995). Barriers to success in quantitative gatekeeper courses. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ499609

McCallister, C. A. (1996). Learning within social worlds: The role of play in literacy learning. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI96013165

Flint, A. S. & Karlsson, M. R. (1996). Math standards in action: Professional's guide. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED401140

Programs

Lyman, L. (1993). Group building for successful inclusion programs. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED366138

Bridge, C. A. et al. (1993). Primary thoughts: Implementing Kentucky's primary program. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED370678

Brennan, J. (1995). The road to success: An orientation process for Catholic school teachers. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED382617

Accomando, K. et al. (1996). The development of writing: A social experience among primary students. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED399542

Coutts, L. et al. (1996). Missouri's framework for curriculum development in mathematics K-12. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED408175

Lantieri, L. & Patti, J. (1996). The road to peace in our schools. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI96023048

Nelson, G. (1999). The "other" prepared environment. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI99024257

Hamilton, P. (1999). Perceptual learning and lifelong Montessori. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI99034445

Toohey, K, Waterstone, B. & Jule-Lemke, A. (2000). Community of learners, carnival and preparation in a Punjabi Sikh classroom. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI00012732

Reutzel, D. R. & Wolfersberger, M. (1996). An environmental impact statement: Designing supportive literacy classrooms for young children. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI96007063

Assessment Instruments:

Amos, N. & Cheesman, R. H. (1992). Provisional teachers failing the Mississippi teacher assessment instruments for certification: An evaluation for 1991-92. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED353311

Orenstein, R. (1993). Using a continuous assessment approach to enhance third grade children's writing abilities. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED369079

Osterman, D. M. & Krug, D. A. (1995). Put the professional portfolio into focus for individual and special education applications. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED385023

Intervention Strategies

Allen, J. P., & Philliber, S. (1991). Evaluating why and how the teen outreach program works. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED361463

Violence:

Litke, C. D. (1996). When violence came to our rural school. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI96023077

Arthur, R. & Erickson, E. (1992). Gangs and schools. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED358204

Garrity, C. B., Jens, K. & Porter, W. W. (1997). Bully proofing your school: creating a positive climate. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI97008026

Walker, H. M., & Gresham, F. M. (1997). Making schools safer and violence free. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI97008018

Lederhouse, J. N. (1998). You will be safe here. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI98024933

Sylwester, R. (1999). In search of the roots of adolescent aggression. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI99024152

Lowenthal, B. (1996). Educational implications of child abuse. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI96024079

Instruction:

Danielson, T. R. (1992). Evaluating the ability of drama based instruction to influence the socialization of tenth grade English students labeled as "low ability." Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED367000

Patrick, J. J. (1993). Constitutionalism in education for democracy: The continuing relevance of arguments on constitutional government of the American founding era. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED359118

Shechtman, Z. (1993). Education for democracy: Assessment of an intervention that integrates political and psychosocial aims. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ472008

Sowder, J. & Schappelle, B. (1994). Research into practice: Number sense-making. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ482274

McHenry, L. & Bozik, M. (1995). Communicating at a distance: A study of interaction in a distance education classroom. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED387849

Bresler, L. (1994). Music in a double bind: Instruction by non-specialists in elementary schools. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BRDG94045994

Hamza, M. K.& Alhalabi, B. (1999). Touching students' minds in cyberspace: Creative tips for using distance education. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI99008247

Stress

Gerlach, K. (1992). Stress in children bibliography. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED367622

Byrne, B. M. (1992). Investigating casual links to burnout for elementary, intermediate, and secondary teachers. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED344886

Lam, Y. L. J. (1996). Adapting to external environmental constraints: Classroom teachers' strategies. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database

Studies and Relationships

Puckett, S. (1996). Mark: A case study in gifted underachievement. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ527615

Roychoudhury, A. & Finley, F. (1997). Changing existing practice: Sarah's story. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI97014477

Gabriel, A. E. (1999). Brani-based learning: The scent of the trail. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI99016773

Scott, B. N. & Hannafin, R. D. (2000). How teachers and parents view classroom learning environments: An exploratory study. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI00010224

Fahey, J. A. (2000). Water, water everywhere. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI00007728

Nelson, R. F. (2000). Personal and environmental factors that influence early childhood teachers' practices. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI00019909

McCombs, B. L. & Pope, J. E. (1994). Motivating hard to reach students. Psychology in the classroom: A series on applied educational psychology. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED378167

Dart, B. C., Burnett, P. C. & Purdie, N. M. (2000). Students' conceptions of learning, the classroom environment, and approaches to learning. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI00010741

O'Neil, J. (1996). On emotional intelligence: A conversation with Daniel Goleman. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI96023035

Role of Adults in the Classroom

Hudgins, J. M. & Cone, W. H. (1992). Principals should stress effective teaching elements in classroom instruction. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ441152

Huntington, F. (1995). Management by mingling revisited. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: EJ511685

Rye, D. R. & Sparks, R. (1991). Strengthening K-12 school counseling programs. A support system approach. Abstract from: ERIC database Item: ED345149

Simplicio, J. S. C. (2000). Teaching classroom educators how to be more effective and creative teachers. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI00019971

Cheng, Y. C. (1996). Relation between teachers' professionalism and job attitudes, educational outcomes, and organizational factors. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI96011080

Miller, M. D., Brownell, M. T. & Smith, S. W. (1999). Factors that predict teachers staying in, leaving, or transferring from the special education classroom. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI99002347

Wiest, L. R. (1999). Practicing what they teach: Should teachers "do as they say"? Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI99016760

DeVries, R. & Zan, B. (2000). The teacher's role in establishing a constructivist sociomoral atmosphere. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI00009485

Student Characteristics

Lewis, C. C., Schaps, E. & Watson, M. S. (1996). The caring classroom's academic edge. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI96023041

Haslinger, J., Kelly, P. A. & O'Lare, L. (1996). Countering absenteeism, anonymity, and apathy. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI96023055

Sapon-Shevin, M., Dobbelaerre, A. & Corrigan, C. (1998). Everyone here can play. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI98024930

Sterling, M. (1998). Building a community week by week. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI98024941

Physical Environment

Herbert, E. A. (1998). Design matters: how school environment affects children. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI98024944

Sexter, S. L., Anderson, R. E. & Becker, H. J. (1999). Teachers' views of computers as catalysts for changes in their teaching practice. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI99011359

Owens, R. F. & Williams, N. (1995). A new breed of teachers' pet. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI95024120

Discipline

Alderman, T. (2000). Total school discipline includes us all. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI00012793

Ropers-Huilman, B. (1999). Social justice in the classroom: Understanding the implications of interlocking oppressions. Abstract from: Wilson Select Plus database Item: BEDI99022082