Identifying Ekvall's creative climate dimensions in
gifted and talented/enrichment programs

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Buffalo State College
The International Center for Studies in Creativity

Identifying Ekvall's Creative Climate Dimensions in Gifted and Talented /
Enrichment Programs.

A Master's Project in
Creative Studies

By
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Dates of Approval:

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"It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative
expression and knowledge."
- Albert Einstein

Confusion is the welcome mat at the door of creativity."
- Michael J. Gelb

"Happiness...it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of
creative effort.
-- Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Abstract

This project uses Goran Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions in the business setting as a baseline for identification of creative climate dimensions in a gifted and talented classroom. Socioeconomic background and age of the participating schools and classrooms are given. Data from eight gifted and talented classroom observations display the connection of behaviors indicating Ekvall's ten climate dimensions along with "other" behaviors that may indicate new dimensions appropriate for a classroom setting. Included are interviews with gifted and talented teachers reflecting their thoughts on creative classroom dimensions. Recommendations for further exploration are also included.

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

This section consists of two sub-sections entitled "Rationale and Significance" and "Purpose". The first sub-section highlights the need for this project in the educational and creativity fields. The second sub-section is to assist teachers in recognizing behaviors in their classroom that are indicative of a creative climate.

Rationale and Significance

The purpose of this project is to examine Goran Ekvall's ten climate dimensions as they appear in gifted and talented/ enrichment programs.   The project will contain various classroom observations and teacher interviews to identify the similarities and differences using Ekvall's ten organizational dimensions in a classroom setting. This project has a direct fit into Theme One of the International Center for Studies in Creativity's four major research, develop and dissemination themes in regard to interactions and instrumentation.

The business and organizational environment has been a "hot spot" for creative climate research for many years. With a growing need and demand for creativity and alternative methods of instruction in the classroom, "Educational researchers have taken interest in the way the school system and it's ideologies, structures and pedagogies affect the creative motivations and development of pupils" (Ekvall,1999, p.403),   research on the creative classroom climate is paramount in the identification of creative classroom climate dimensions.

Once the dimensions can be identified in the classroom, teachers will have the guidelines needed to be deliberate in their use of creativity; "There is much that we as educators can do to arrange the conditions so that the occasional failure at tasks is not permitted to threaten or inhibit creativity". (Torrance, 1968, p. 22) The education field is awakening to the essential need for climate research: As a result of this project, we hope to establish baseline rubrics and activities indicative of a creative classroom climate.

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to assist teachers in recognizing behaviors in their classroom that are indicative of a creative climate. This project will lay the groundwork for further research ultimately leading to a checklist for teachers entitled the Creative Climate Checklist about School Settings (CLASS).   Using Ekvall's ten Creative Climate dimensions for the business workplace as a guide and researching current creativity literature and trends, I will answer the following questions in this project:

> 1.   How do Ekvall's climate dimensions manifest themselves in
>   classroom settings
> *-what is similar?*
> *-what is different?*

> 2. What observed behaviors by both students and teachers may be
>   indicative of   creative climate in the classroom?

3. What literature already exists that examines or describes creative

climate in the classroom

The business and organizational environment has been a "hot spot" for creative

climate research for many years. With a growing need and demand for creativity and

alternative methods of instruction in the classroom, "Educational researchers have taken

interest in the way the school system and it's ideologies, structures and pedagogies affect

the creative motivations and development of pupils" (Ekvall,1999, p.403),   research on

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permitted to threaten or inhibit creativity". (Torrance, 1968, p. 22) The education field is

awakening to the essential need for climate research: As a result of this project, we hope

to establish baseline rubrics and activities indicative of a creative classroom climate.

SECTION TWO: COLLECTING AND ORGANIZING INFORMATION

This section contains two sub-sections, "Related Research and Literature" and "Definitions for Dimensions A-J". The first sub-section displays the literature used to prepare for and enrich the development of this project. The second section shows the definitions of Goran Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions, adapted by Lauer (1994).

Related Research and Literature

This project is a small piece of the pie composed of an entire research team initiative at The International Center for Studies in Creativity at Buffalo State College.   This research team has been termed the "Classroom Climate Team". All of the participants are part of an ongoing study directed by Dr. Mary Murdock at the Center for Studies in Creativity which is determining if and how Goran Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions actually manifest themselves in the classroom. As you will see, various classroom age levels and subjects have been and are being researched. References are included below with a brief annotation.

Aurigima, M. Identifying Ekvall's climate dimensions in an elementary classroom. (In progress) Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo State College, Buffalo, New York.

Annotation: Using observation protocols (Gordon, 2000; Miloshevski, 2000), data was collected in two third grade classrooms. The two classrooms consisted of different

socioeconomic backgrounds and were observed for a period of seven months. Research is

supporting the finding of Ekvall's dimensions in the more affluent of the two classrooms

and is slower to develop, but apparent in the lesser affluent classroom.

Ekvall, G. (1999). Creative Climate. Encyclopedia of Creativity, Volume I, 403-413.

Annotation: A review of organizational climate and how creativity influence workplace

climate A brief explanation of how climate is influenced by the creative press or

environment of the four "P's" of creativity The impact of creativity on organizational

results and its employees, objectives for achieving a creative climate, and how creativity

influences overall organizational development are explored.

Getzels, J & Jackson, P. (1962). Creativity and Intelligence- Explorations with

Gifted Students. John Wiley and Sons, Inc. New York, NY.

Annotation: A book written on the connection between a child's Intelligence quotient,

versus a child's creative thinking ability. Many tables comparing the two types of "high

creatives" and "high IQ's" In many different educational aspects. Of particular Interest Is

the connection between some home and classroom climates and the fostering of creativity.

Gordon, T. (2000). Identifying Ekvall's creative climate dimensions in an elementary

school setting. Unpublished Master's Project, Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo

State College, Buffalo, New York.

Annotation: This project identified related references from databases in the field of creative climate and categorized each into one of the five following topics; gender, creating a positive climate, special education, self esteem / self concept, and student perception of classroom climate. Seven authors were reviewed. Gordon created and used an observation protocol that the next leg of the project would also use for collecting raw data during observations.

Jesberger, T. (2001). Identifying EkvallÌs climate dimensions in an enrichment program classroom setting. Unpublished masterÌs project, Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo State College, Buffalo, New York

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Annotation: This project identifies Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions in a unique enrichment classroom. Research indicated that all ten dimensions were present in the classroom and there are photos and interviews with the teacher and students that depict the climate very vividly. The classroom was in a modular unit and would soon be torn down, so Jesberger took the opportunity to do the case study and give suggestions for further research.

Lauer, K. (1994). The assessment of creative climate: an investigation of EkvallÌs Creative Climate Questionnaire. Unpublished masterÌs thesis, Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo State College, Buffalo, New York.

Annotation: Ekvall's Creative Climate Questionnaire (CCQ) was studied in depth and was found to be both valid and reliable. The project includes a review of the literature stating information on the measure, suggestions for further research is also included.

Miles, M. B. & Huberman, M.A. (1984). "Qualitative Data Analysis: a sourcebook of new methods". Sage Publicactions, Thousand Oaks, Ca.

Annotation: The book offers a plethora of ways that qualitative data can be analyzed. Miles and Huberman walk you through a qualitative data analysis process that has a variety of "tools" to be used along the way. From the anticipatory preparation of data collection, to coding and sorting, to cross- site data analysis, Miles and Huberman offer a truly "user friendly" way to conduct qualitative data analysis.

Also included are twelve specific tactics for drawing and verifying conclusions to your data.

Miloshevski, K. (2000). Identifying Ekvall̀s creative climate dimensions in a middle school classroom setting. Published Master̀s project, Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo State College, Buffalo, New York.

Annotation: This project identified dimensions of the creative climate in a middle school classroom using Ekvall̀s work. Using the Wilson Select Plus Index, Miloshevski

identifies literature related to creative climate. Observations were taken using protocols that included Ekvallìs creative climate dimensions. Further research was also discussed.

Peebles, R. Identifying Ekvallìs creative climate dimensions in a middle school classroom setting. (In progress) Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo State College. Buffalo, New York.

Annotation: The focus of this master's project is the art classroom and how the creative climate dimensions manifest themselves in an art classroom setting. Primarily one teacher was used for observation at the middle school level. The same protocol from Miloshevski and Gordon was used in the observations.

Creative Climate Definitions for Dimensions A-J

Because Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions in a business setting were used in this project as a baseline of data to compare to classroom settings, an understanding of Ekvall's definitions is critical to this study. Evidence of the ten dimensions listed below were scribed from classroom observations on an observation protocol originally created from Miloshevski (2000) and Gordon (2000) for their work in identifying Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions in an elementary classroom and a middle school classroom.

These dimensions originated from Goran Ekvall (1999) and were altered by Lauer (1994). Each of the team members on the creative climate research team were using these definitions as a baseline for collecting observational data.

Dimension A

Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.

Dimension B

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.

Dimension C

Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backstabbing occurs.

Dimension D

Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive.

Richards, T. " Identifying Ekvall's Ten Creative Climate Dimensions in an Enrichment Classroom" 2-02

Dimension E

Involves encounters, exchanges often clashes among viewpoints, ideas and differing experiences and 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.

Dimension F

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.

Dimension G

Dynamism and liveliness is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occurs. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy.

Dimension H

Trust and 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 straight forward.

Dimension I

Idea time is 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 assignment.

Dimension J

Playfulness and humor refers to the spontaneity and ease that is displayed. A

relaxed atmosphere with jokes and laughter characterizes the organization which is high in

this dimension.

SECTION THREE: PROJECT PLANNING

This section consists of six subsections that outline the process in completing the project. A short overview and examples of each subsection of the process are given. The subsections are in order as follows; "Project preparation", "The schools involved", "Collecting the data", "Organizing and analyzing the data", "Synthesizing the data", and "Reporting the data".

Project Preparation

The climate research team at Buffalo State College is in the process of studying various classroom climates from kindergarten through high school for identification of Goran Ekvall's Ten Creative Climate Dimensions. This project's roots stemmed from the need for gifted and talented classrooms to be compared to these other classrooms. The teaching population that received their Master's Degree in creativity at Buffalo State College seemed to be "top heavy" in the gifted and talented or enrichment programs. It is of particular interest to the climate research team at Buffalo State College that these teachers may be teaching Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions deliberately.

A meeting was arranged with the climate research team (already in their finishing stages of the first leg of the climate project) regarding this project and it's involvement with the climate research team's endeavor (Gordon, 2000), (Miloshevski , 2000) and (Peebles in progress). The team shared their observation protocol used in their observations to identify Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions in their particular

classrooms. The best way to handle the observations and how to create concise data on the protocol sheets was discussed. The data would be handled using qualitative research methods, data collection in the form of observations, interviews and extracts from documents. The data would then be brought through a process similar to Miles & Huberman's three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing (1984).

Networking was done to find the names and schools of all of the master's graduates of the Center for Studies in Creativity who were currently teaching in an enrichment or gifted and talented program. Schools were avoided that possessed seemingly similar socioeconomic backgrounds. Elementary programs were chosen as result of an abundance of programs at that level, unlike middle or high school. A need for a variety of ages within the observable classrooms was also a priority, in an attempt to observe any difference developmental stages may contribute. Phone calls to schools were made in an effort to set up appointments to discuss research wishes. Four appointments with four teachers in three schools were made that fit perfectly into the research needs for socioeconomic diversity.

The four teachers agreed to participate in the study and appointments were made to visit each of the teachers two different times in hopes to get an observation with two different grade levels. The more flexibility to view different grade levels, the more possibilities to view if the dimensions existed in some age groups and disappeared for others.

The Schools Involved

This project was made possible through observations based in two school districts of the Western New York region.   The districts were chosen because of the thriving enrichment programs each possessed and the differences in student demographics. One school district is urban, one suburban, within both, only the elementary programs were observed from kindergarten through fourth grade.

The first district is a large urban district. The student population consists of 34% Caucasian students, 53% African- American students , 10% Hispanic and 2.6% other. Three of the eight classroom observations were taken from this district in the kindergarten, first and fourth grades. One teacher was used for these observations. The gifted and talented program at this particular school is a 15 year-old program based on creativity and the use of Creative Problem Solving to assist in the learning process. Each student at the school gets to attend this program, used on a rotating basis, like an exploratory class. The average time to visit the program is 30 minutes per week.

The second district is a large suburban district. The student population consists of 92% Caucasian students, 2.5% African- American students, .7% Hispanic students and 4.9% other. Five of the eight classroom observations were taken from this district in the second, third and fourth grade. Three teachers were used to make these five observations. The gifted and talented program in this district is well developed throughout the district, is present at each elementary school and middle school within the district. Each student at the elementary level will participate in the program on a rotating

basis for an average of 30 minutes per week. Like the first district, this district focuses

it's program on creativity and the use of Creative Problem Solving to assist in the learning

process.

Collecting the Data

Listed below are the steps used for collecting the data and a summary describing this

process.

1. Preparing the teachers whose classrooms I would visit.

2. Adapting to each classroom's climate

3. Scribing behavioral data as fitting under a climate dimension on protocol sheets.

4. What happens when behavioral data doesn't fit under a climate dimension?

The four teachers who allowed the observations in their classrooms were extremely

cooperative and flexible. The teachers were provided with copies of the protocol (see

appendix B) to be used for observing their classroom climates prior to observations being

made. They were also refreshed on Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions, and any

questions they may have regarding the observations.

Each classroom was observed from a discrete spot in the classroom, attempting to

blend in with the climate without effecting it. The idea was for the observer to have no

effect on the climate that was to be observed. The teacher would quickly introduce the

observer: "This is a student from Buffalo State College who is spending some time with

us to learn about gifted and talented classrooms." The student's usual response was

minimal and the classroom would continue about their daily business. Actions,

interactions, feelings or vibes that seemed to fit one of Ekvall's ten creative climate

dimensions were scribed on the protocol sheet(see appendix B). As the observation

progressed, actions, interactions, feelings (observable behavior) that did not fit into a

certain dimension were scribed as "other". These interactions or vibes were a noticeable

piece of the climate, yet did not belong to any certain dimension. This "new data" was

classified under "different' or "other" on the observation protocol sheets.

Each classroom situation that was visited in the eight observations was quite different.

See "Figure 1" to observe the differences.

Figure 1

School type	Grade level	Classroom lesson
Urban	kindergarten	Stations acting out the 6 step Creative Problem Solving Process
Urban	1	Presenting of student- created inventions
Suburban	2	A Medieval stations activity-learn about different Medieval times culture
Suburban	2	Classroom creation of a program for the principal
Suburban	3	Using Creative Problem Solving to build a structure
Suburban	3	Math Problem Solving
Suburban	4	Creative Problem Solving "hands-on" stations
Urban	4	Lesson on animal emotions

Organizing and Analyzing the Data

Listed below are the steps used for organizing and analyzing the data and a summary

describing this process.

1. Discovering the job of organizing and analyzing data.

2. How to go about organizing the data?

3. The difficulties of analyzing climate dimension data.

4. How to display each dimension with observable behaviors.

In order for such a large amount of data to be organized, many appointments with the

climate research team and advisor, Dr. Mary Murdock at Buffalo State College, were

desperately needed. Dr. Murdock suggested color coding and organizing, in an effort to

make the data more easily accessible and readable by others. The difference in classroom

levels and teacher styles that may interfere with lumping the data as a whole was

discussed at these meetings also. Presenting the data separately, with hopes of seeing the

dimensions change a bit as the ages of the students changed, was also an extremely

pertinent decision made in data organization. With so many factors, different schools,

different socioeconomic backgrounds, different teachers, different ages of students; there

would need to be some data reduction (doing summaries, coding, teasing out themes,

making clusters, making partitions, writing memos) (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

In the end, the data were separated for each individual observation. All ten

dimensions were displayed for each observation, whether the indications of that

dimension were present in that particular observation or not, each observation had them

listed. The behaviors or interactions that failed to fit into a particular dimension are listed

at the end of each set of data and described in summary as "other".

   Each of the ten dimensions under each observation contains the behaviors or events

that seemed to characterize that particular dimension. Along with the observed behaviors

is the definition of each dimension and a summary of how the observations are connected

to that particular dimension. For example, take this observation of the dimension of

"Freedom" in a kindergarten classroom:

Freedom

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.

Similar:

• *Students exhibited independence by creating different scenarios and role playing.*

• *Students displayed autonomy by speaking freely and openly at each station.*

Summary:

I view the above listed observations as freedom, but I also wanted to enter these

under observations for trust and openness. There was definite autonomy among the

students, but I also felt that it was due to the trust they felt in the safe classroom

environment.

As you see from the above observation, some of the dimensions seemingly overlap. A real context, a theoretical separating of dimension concepts is not always clean. There can be overlap in the verbatim that real people use. The "overlapping of dimensions" is discussed in some of the summaries for each dimension. There was difficulty at times in choosing which dimension certain behaviors fell under, thus is where meetings with the climate research team and Dr. Murdock came in handy. Dr. Murdock assisted in categorizing the behaviors and questioning about their belonging to certain categories.

Synthesizing the data

Listed below are the steps used for synthesizing the data and a summary describing this process.

1. Sorting the observed behaviors by category (Dimension)

2. Scribing the behaviors as similar or different from that category (Dimensions)

3. Summarizing the observed behaviors by connecting them to the dimension's definition or describing why they are different from the definition.

4. How to handle the data that did not seem to "fit" into other dimensions?

The data were sorted by age group and teacher, keeping each observation separate. The observed behaviors were sorted according to the creative climate dimension that the behavior was similar to or different from (taking away from the occurrence of that dimension).

The meanings emerging from the data needed to be tested for plausibility, their sturdiness and their "confirmability" (Miles& Huberman 1984). Because of this need, a narrative began to develop connecting behaviors to creative climate dimension definitions, thus separating those behaviors that noticeably did not have a dimension to "belong to". These behaviors that do not seem to fit under any dimension are of particular interest to this project and the entire Creative Climate Classroom Team.

Reporting the Data

Listed below are the steps used for synthesizing the data and a summary describing this process.

1. Listing all ten dimensions for each classroom observation.

2. Scribing a list of behaviors for each dimension that seemed similar to or different than the dimension.

3. Listing a summary under each dimension connecting the observable behaviors to the definitions for each dimension.

4. The listing of "Other" behaviors that did not seem to fit into any dimension, titled by theme at the end of each observation in summary form.

5. Interviewing the classroom teachers on what they felt the ten dimensions looked like, sounded like, felt like.

The data were reported in list or "bullet point" formation. The lists were first split up by classroom observation and then observed behaviors were connected to creative climate dimension definitions. The "leftover" behaviors that did not fit into dimensions were considered as "other" behaviors and set off to the side to see if the "other" behavior would surface as a significant force in another classroom observation. Sure enough, many "other" behaviors were duplicated and presented as a significant force in many of the observations, regardless of age or teacher.

Included in the reporting of data are interviews from the classroom teachers and how they thought each of the dimensions manifested themselves in their classrooms and other classrooms. The participating teachers were asked how each dimension looked, sounded or felt like. They also gave any suggestions as to what might be another "dimension" in the classroom.

SECTION FOUR: RESULTS AND SUMMARIES

This section contains both the climate dimension results and summaries from observations and conversations with both students and teachers in enrichment classrooms The first sub-section titled "Results for Dimensions A-J", contains three types of results. The first set of results is the product of the classroom observations made using the Creative Climate Dimensions protocol. Each dimension is listed for each observation. Along with the definition for each dimension (Lauer, 1994) are the observable behaviors listed as "similar" that validate the belonging of the behavior to that particular dimension. The observable behaviors that don't seem to fit in any of Ekvall's Ten Dimensions are listed under "other". In addition, there is a summary of each observable dimension present during that observation.

The second sub-section includes conversations with each of the classroom teachers whose classrooms were observed for recognition of climate dimensions. They give their opinions on what each of the ten dimensions looks, feels, sounds like in their classrooms. They also give any insight into dimensions that may exist in the classroom, but not in the business setting.

Results and Summaries for Dimensions A-J

Kindergarten
6-9-00, 11:30 am
Children working on centers that deal with role playing 6 steps of the CPS process

1.Challenge
Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.
Similar:
❑ Students exhibited interest because they had a job to be done.
❑ Students had to figure out their "roles" at each station, collaborating with other students.
Summary:
I'm not sure I saw much reference to long-term goals here, but the students definitely found joy and spent much time and energy on the job to be done at each station.

2.Freedom
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.
Similar:
❑ Students exhibited independence by creating different scenarios and role playing.
❑   Students showed autonomy by speaking freely and openly at each station.
Summary:
I view the above listed observations as freedom, but I also wanted to enter these under observations for trust and openness. There was definite autonomy, but I also feel that it was due to the trust that the students felt in the safe environment.

3. Conflicts
Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backstabbing occurs.
Similar:
❑ Interpersonal tensions rose when students began correcting other students about their "roles at each station. Such words were said :"You're not supposed to be there"and "You didn't tell him he could go there."
Summary:
Students felt the need to tell others where they should be and what they should be doing. This created tensions or anger amongst the students.

4. Idea Support

Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive.

Similar:

❑ Comments from the teacher to the students that seemed to exhibit constructiveness:

"Very Good, I like your idea"

"This is very clean"

" I love how you organized this, you should come to my house."

Summary:

Loving, praising and nurturing all seemed to be a form of idea support during this observation . The students seem to be thriving on any sort of praise and acceptance, leading to dynamism and liveliness (atmosphere being lively and full of positive energy.**)**. Much of their support may feed their need for acceptance.

5. Debates

Involves encounters, exchanges, often clashes among viewpoints, ideas and differing experiences and 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.

Similar:

❑ These debates focused on ideas of "how" the role playing should take place, such phrases as:"Our job is this, no, our job is this" were overheard.

Summary:

 Debates at this age seem to be minimized to a literal tug of war. There does not seem to be much reasoning – it's either "this" or "that", in this observation the debates seemed to end in conflict, not much reasoning was occurring.

6. 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.

Similar:

❑ The energy in the room was revolving around students offering quick ideas at each station where the ideas may be "shot down".

❑ Students "took a gamble" by breaking time rules per station to finish out their role plays.

Different:

❑ Children reminding other children about classroom rules before a student decides to "go out on a limb".

Summary*:*

Risk in this class seemed to be restricted to rule breaking. Students were given the freedom to role play however they chose, but some students were "going out on a limb" to create a role that may have broken an underlying "classroom rule" (selling money) or was not accepted by the student norm of the role playing group.

7. Dynamism and Liveliness

Dynamism and liveliness is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occurs. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy.

Similar

❑ Children exhibited this Dynamism by the extreme "busy energy" going on amongst the stations.
❑ Smile and cooperation were also a sign of positive energy
❑ Moving from station to station allowed for the students to experience new things at a quick pace.

Summary:

This was probably the most prevalent dimension in the observation, the amount of positive energy and liveliness seemed to outweigh other dimensions. The lesson seemed to be built with the dimension in mind.

8. Trust and openness

Trust and 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 straight forward.

Similar

❑ I observed students helping each other to understand roles, exhibiting straight forward communication.
❑ I observed many students striving to ask or tell the teacher anything, exhibiting high comfort levels.

Differences

❑ Students not rusting each other's work unless it was validated by a teacher

Summary:

It was refreshing and a bit surprising to observe the trust level of these children toward adults. Most students seemed to trust the answers to the questions they asked me, however, they did not trust each other's answers unless made valid by an adult.

9. Idea Time

Idea time is the amount of time people can use and do use for elaborating on new ideas. In the high idea-time situation, the possibilties exist to discuss and test impulses and fresh suggestions that are not planned or included in the task assignment.

Similar

❑ Each station having about ten minutes to fill out their short role seemed to match with the exact attention span, students becoming restless toward the end of time limit.

Differences

❑ Students not sharing their ideas will not allow for others to support it.

Summary:

I observed kids with lots of great ideas to solve the problem at each station. As a group at each station these students were to be collaborating on how to solve each task at hand, many students wanted to solve it on their own and would not share the ideas that they came up with.

10. Playfulness and humor

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

Similar

❑ Costumes fit student personalities and enhanced their humorous side
❑ Students giggling and pointing at each other as they are getting dressed exhibited the ligheartedness of the activity.
❑ Playing generally resulted in the laughter and smiles of all students.

Summary:

A definite relaxed and laughter-filled environment was being displayed. I feel that this dimension was tied in much with dynamism and liveliness, I guess I had a difficult time separating the two dimensions when observing the student's actions.

OTHER (Anything that was different):

• Acceptance

Summary:

Acceptance in this classroom seemed to be a dimension, or at least a very strong force. Students seemed to want to be accepted by the teacher and other students whether it be because they wanted to be part of a group or their ideas to be accepted. Acceptance seemed to be scattered among many dimensions. For example: Trust and openness, Debate, Idea support and Idea time.

First Grade
11:30 am- 6-15-00
Centers and invention presentations

1. Challenge

Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.
Similar
❑ Comparing complexity of projects exhibited the amount of energy and work investd in the project.
❑ Having a classroom goal to reach by the end of class allows all students to be part of the classroom's daily operations.
Summary:
The fact that these students have to set goals and reach/monitor them by the end of class within a busy schedule emphasizes this dimension. The projects being presented allowed a glimpse into who was more challenged than others.

2. Freedom

 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.
Similar
❑ Quotes from the teacher exhibited the autonomy she wished the students to use: " You have created any invention for ANY need!"
Summary
The students really took the ability to create their own invention and really run with it. The students were creating their inventions out of their own need, not really worried about the needs of the public.

3. Conflict

Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backstabbing occurs.
Similar:
❑ Students giving each other dirty looks after a "put down" is said about a project, resulting in interpersonal tensions.
❑ Crossed arms and withdrawl from the group after rude peer comments regarding projects represents more interpersonal tensions.
❑ Comments such as "I think you had an adult help you build that" represent more tensions.

Richards, T. " Identifying Ekvall's Ten Creative Climate Dimensions in an Enrichment Classroom" 2-02

Summary: A handful of students displayed dislike for many different student inventions, I'm not sure if there were prior conflicts or tensions between these students, causing this conflict.

4. Idea Support

Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive

Similar

The following behaviors were observed during student presentations representing a supportive climate:

- ❑ Clapping
- ❑ Nodding in agreement
- ❑ Smiling

Differences:

The following quotes from students to students exhibit the opposite of support among students regarding other projects.

- ❑ "Eww- that won't work"
- ❑ "Nasty!"

"That's not a real invention"

Summary:

The teacher was instrumental in leading the students to show respect toward each other's inventions and to ask positive not negative questions about each other's projects.

5. Debates

Involves encounters, exchanges offer clashes among viewpoints, ideas and differing experiences and 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.

Similar:

Students were exhibiting a bit of exchange among viewpoints when questioning the other's invention projects, some recorded questions:

- ❑ "How does it run when it's all weighted down?"

Summary:

The time limits on each presenter limited debates focused on each invention. Most of the debates that began ended in conflict and were listed in the conflict dimension.

6. 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.

Similar:

❑ Standing up and speaking in front of others to present inventions exhibited the taking on of bold new initiatives for many shy students.

Summary:

If the student was much too shy, `the teacher did not force them to get up, however, each student rose to the occasion and presented.

7. **Dynamism and Liveliness**

Dynamism and liveliness is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occurs. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy

Similar

The following observations exhibited liveliness and positive energy:

❑ Moving and wiggling

❑ Hands being raised excitedly "Eww, me next"

❑ Door being shut to the outside world to avoid disturbance to other classes.

Differences:

Children who squirmed in their seat and waited til the end to present hinders how randomly "new things occur". The atmosphere is a bit less lively with their nervousness.

Summary:

The fact that there were 20 inventions displayed in one class period was extremely eventful and kept the atmosphere definitely lively and fresh.

8. **Trust and Openness**

Trust and 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 straight forward.

Similar:

The following observations illustrated why initiatives could be taken without fear of reprisals and ridicule in case of failure.

❑ Clapping for each other

❑ Heads nodding

Different:

Child stealing another piece of a child's project

Child speaking very timidly when asked to speak loudly

Summary:

Some students were definitely shy about speaking in front of other students, they didn't seem to want to elaborate on their project. Some students needed to be "cut off" when there presentation time was up.

9. **Idea Time**

Idea time is 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 assignment.

Similar

❑ "Question and answer time" for each project allowed the possibilities to discuss and test fresh impulses and suggestions.

Summary:

Many students were extremely interested in other student's inventions. They were allowed to ask questions and observe inventions on display. Many students commented on how "I should've thought of that!"

10. **Playfulness and humor**

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

Similar

❑ Use of imagination and encouraging silly inventions such as a "Bad hair day" hat allowed for jokes and laughter

Summary:

The students seemed to have a really good sense of humor, most of these inventions seemed to comically inspired.

2ⁿᵈ grade
5-12-00, 10:00 am
Medieval- themed Gathering
2 classrooms combined

1.**Challenge**

Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.

Similar

❑ Students exhibited intrinsic motivation as a result of parents accompanying them to this classroom "festival"

❑ Each classroom having a booth that they "sponsored" contributed to their involvement of students preparing for this long- term goal.

Summary:

The students played a large part in creating and setting up for the medieval festival. Their parents were to come visit the festival, so most students seemed very motivated and investing in a lot of energy.

2.Freedom

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

Similar

- ❑ Autonomy was exhibited by the use of medieval "stations", moving from one to next, keep busy.
- ❑ Children were exercising discretion in being able to choose partners for certain activities.

Summary:

Students could move on their own from station to station. Students asking any student they would lime to be their partner was both fun to watch and scary for the shy students who didn't like to have that freedom.

Some students could help themselves by asking another student at appropriate times when seeing that a teacher was busy, this made the student a quick adapter and very productive at each of the stations where there was a little problem to solve.

3. Conflict

Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backstabbing occurs.

Similar

- ❑ Children "shhhing" each other and students blocking other student's sight saying "I can't see!" exhibited interpersonal tensions.

Summary:

The free atmosphere of the festival allowed for socializing more than usual, friction occurred more from students being forced to partner or be too close with students they did not choose to be with.

4. Idea Support

Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive.

Similar

- ❑ Parents come to watch the children work / assist and praise for small accomplishments at each station allowed for encouragement of initiatives.

Summary:

The parents were extremely positive and supportive of all the festival had to offer.

5. <u>Debates</u>
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 forward their ideas. Where debates are missing, people follow authoritarian patterns without questioning. Debate focuses on issues and ideas.
Similar
❑ Clashes among viewpoints were evident at the Medieval snack booth, some liked the snack, some didn't.
❑ Taking sides on favorite snack.
Summary:
Students were sitting around Medieval "Round Tables" waiting for the traditional food to be served they offered their ideas about what they thought it would taste like and discussed it after they tried it. Everyone commented and discussed whether they thought the Medieval children would have actually had this snack or not.

6. <u>Risk taking</u>
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
Similar
❑ Students encouraged to perform in front of others at the "Joust Booth" exhibited "going out on a limb" and putting ideas forward.
Summary:
Some of the students were encouraged to perform some Medieval games to be a "display" for parents. Also volunteering to dress and act certain medieval characters.

6. <u>Dynamism and Liveliness</u>
Dynamism and liveliness is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occurs. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy
Similar
The following observations exhibited new things occurring often:
❑ Moving from station to station- movement in general
❑ Change in lighting (Pink cellophane wrap on lights)
The following observations exhibited positive energy and liveliness:
❑ Costumes, colors
❑ Medieval dress encouraged
Summary:
This was the ultimate place to be for this dimension! Extremely lively atmosphere, all 5 senses were alerted upon entering. You could choose a variety of 10 stations to visit.

7. Trust and Openness
Trust and 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 straight-forward.
Similar:
Emotional safety among the relationships in the room was exhibited by the following:
❑   Coming up to teachers to ask for approval
❑   Children touching and hugging each other.
Different:
Students who have parents that will not attend school functions.
Summary:
Some students seemed to be more inhibited due to a parent's presence, while others seemed to have the opposite effect.

8. **Idea Time**
Idea time is 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.
Similar:
The following observations exhibited the possibilities to discuss and test fresh impulses.
❑   Children allowed to sit back and observe
❑   Not forced to participate
Different:
Moving too quickly for some students to focus on any one thing
Summary: The students used this dimension if they needed too. Some of the students seemed to be taking "breathers" and sitting back, appearing to observe. The teachers did a lot of idea time on coming up with the stations with the kids.

9. Playfulness and humor
Playfulness and humor refers to the spontaneity and ease that is displayed. A relaxed atmosphere with jokes and laughter characterizes the organization which is high in this dimension.
Similar:
❑   Games that model the use of tools exhibited a relaxed atmosphere.
❑   Magic tricks and popcorn as a "weapon" received much laughter.
Summary:
This dimension was extremely noticeable the minute you walked in the main classroom, laughter and relaxed atmosphere were instrumental.

OTHER:
- Initiating help
- Showing ownership in the classroom
- Acceptance
- Camaraderie

Summary:

In a less structured playful atmosphere (Medieval Festival) I observed some situations that I couldn't place in one dimension or another. I noticed a sort of "social hierarchy" that seemed to be a very strong presence in how many of the students interacted with each other. It seemed as though many of the students wanted to be accepted by a few "alpha" students. Most of the student wanted to be accepted by the teachers and parents in the room. Camaraderie was strong not only among students, but seemed to be very powerful when teachers joined in on   This also allowed for the student to feel ownership in the classroom setting- feeling "part of something".

2ⁿᵈ grade
6-6-00, 11:30 am
Presentation practice

1.Challenge
Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.
Similar:
- Each student had a part they were practicing for a presentation to the entire school exhibiting the individual involvement of the entire school operation.

Different
- Children who were not "presenting the gifts" felt less involved
Summary:
The students were creating a presentation for the tribute to their retiring principal. All were participating in a dance for him, more challenging for some who are not as physically coordinated as others.

2.Freedom
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.
Similar:
- Students standing or sitting when introducing a lesson exhibits student discretion in everyday activities.

Summary:

3. Conflict

Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backstabbing occurs.

Similar:
- Statements such as " He keeps looking at me" demonstrate interpersonal tensions.
- A child saying :"He's picking on me" to another child exhibits interpersonal tensions.

Summary:

One student in particular was creating conflict in the room. He would quietly antagonize other students (pinching, humming, tapping) and then tell on them when they would tell him to stop it.

4. Idea Support

Idea Support involves the ways new ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive

Similar:
- Statements such as:"That's very nice" and "Raise your hand if you agree" exhibit the fact that people are listening to each other and encouraging initiatives.
- Statements such as: "that's a great idea but…" exhibit constructive criticism.

Summary:

The teacher made sure that the students voted on how they felt about decisions being made in class. She would also not allow any judging of ideas.

5. Debates

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 forward their ideas. Where debates are missing, people follow authoritarian patterns without questioning. Debate focuses on issues and ideas.

Similar:

Statements such as: "Mrs.teacher , can three of us carry the gift up to Mr. principal rather than just one of us? " Exhibits differences in viewpoints.

Summary:

The teacher would try to be fair and think of a way the class gift would be presented to the principal without letting anyone feel left out.

6.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
Similar:
Students asking the teacher extraneous questions about the presentation demonstrated student's feeling that they could "take a gamble" on some of their ideas.
Summary:

7. Dynamism and Liveliness
Dynamism and liveliness is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occurs. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy
Similar:
Students practicing their musical acts for the presentation and children smiling, nodding and tapping their feet exhibited an atmosphere that is lively and full of positive energy.
Summary:
One of their classmates is a classical pianist and offered to play for the principal's presentation.

8. Trust and Openness
Trust and 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 straight forward
Similar:
 Teacher statement such as "Please wear your glasses they look great on you" , demonstrates straight- forward communication and a dare to put forth opinions comfortably.
❑   Statements such as "How do we come up with a fair system to present in?" given by the teacher lets me know that she trusts the student's judgement.
Summary:

9. Idea Time
Idea time is 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 assignment.
Similar:
Making sure it's quiet so students can think of a new idea exhibits time for elaboration of new ideas..
Summary:
This teacher actually speaks about "idea time" with her students and alots them time for this.

10. Playfulness and humor
Playfulness and humor refers to the spontaneity and ease that is displayed. A relaxed atmosphere with jokes and laughter characterizes the organization which is high in this dimension
Similar:
Hand motions that go with vocabulary of the lesson.
Summary:
The hand motions that go with the vocabulary "dance" for the principal were very funny and clever, created by the students.

OTHER:
❑ *ACCEPTANCE*
Summary:
Students feeling that others are making fun of them
Distracts the entire class that one student does not "fit in"
Being "part" of a group.

3ʳᵈ grade
6/6/00- 1 pm
Using Creative Problem Solving to build a structure (small lion cages)

1.Challenge
Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.
Similar:
❑ Open ended questions given by the teacher generated quite a bit of positive energy in the classroom.
❑ Many ways to solve the same problem correctly "Using this small amount of materials, make a lion cage…(teacher to student), showed how each group member could contribute differently to a problem.
❑ Calling out of ideas exhibited all the positive energy in the room.
Summary:
These children seemed to be intrinsically motivated because the "lion cages" were built in very small groups, giving students more ownership in the process.

2.Freedom
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.

Similar:
❑ Using materials given in any fashion needed allowed for lots of autonomy for students to define their own work.

Different:
❑ The teacher stating "This is how I would do it guys" may take away from some of the independence in behavior.

Summary:
A teacher telling students the best way to approach a project may hinder their freedom.

3. <u>Conflict</u>

Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backstabbing occurs.

Similar:
❑ Students making comments to one another such as**: "**Your idea won't work" illustrates interpersonal tensions among group members.

Summary:
The groups that were creating the cages were randomly chosen. If the group had a couple different "leaders" , a heightened tendency for conflict was noticed.

4.<u>Idea Support</u>

Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive.

Similar
❑ The teacher making such comments as "All the cages are correct" to students exhibits an encouragement of initiatives.

Summary:
The teacher was sure to point out that there were many ways to do something correctly.

5. <u>Debates</u>

Involves encounters, exchanges of clashes among viewpoints, ideas and differing experiences and 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.

Similar:
 Students among the group discussing how they felt about their own project**: "**I don't like our project." "No, it's not that bad" exhibits many voices being heard.

Summary:

6. 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.

Similar:

Teacher's comments such as:

❑ "The cage can be made anyway possible"

❑ "All student's ideas should be considered" (Teacher to Students)

These comments allowed students to "take gambles" in creating their cages.

Summary:

This teacher really enforced this dimension so that all students would feel comfortable with taking a risk. I feel that the *trust and openness* with the teacher really becomes important in allowing for the risk taking to occur.

7. Dynamism and Liveliness

Dynamism and liveliness is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occurs. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy

Similar:

❑ All students on task, talking, enthralled, excited exhibits the positive energy from the classroom.

❑ Working beyond the time given illustrates the eventfulness and involvement of the students.

Summary:

This activity really made this dimension jump right out at me. The energy that came from the timing of this "lion cage" creation was outstanding. New ideas and exchanges of these ideas was a constant.

8. Trust and Openness

Trust and 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 straight forward.

Similar:

❑ Fairness in decision making illustrates the reason why students will dare to put forward ideas.

❑ The teacher making such statemets as: "I love all the ideas given" illustrates the emotional safety the students feel in her classroom.

❑ Students explaining their "building of a cage" process with pride also illustrates the emotional safety they feel in the classroom.

Richards, T. " Identifying Ekvall's Ten Creative Climate Dimensions in an Enrichment Classroom" 2-02

Summary:
To tie in what was already mentioned, I feel that the presence of this dimension really lead to the prevalence of the risk- taking dimension, emotional safety will often bring on a comfort level that leaves room for risk taking.

9. Idea Time
Idea time is 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 assignment.
Similar:
❑ Ample time to create the lion cage an ample time at each station allowed for sufficient time for students to discuss and test fresh suggestions.
Summary:
I feel that the structuring of the idea time really heightened this dimension in making the students productive in their ideas.

10. Playfulness and humor
Playfulness and humor refers to the spontaneity and ease that is displayed. A relaxed atmosphere with jokes and laughter characterizes the organization which is high in this dimension.
Similar:
❑ Teacher acceptance of appropriate humor allows for the jokes and spontaneity in the classroom.
Summary:
Students seemed to have a handle on appropriate joking without getting carried away, something a little different from the younger grade levels, the teacher can actually "share a laugh with a more sophisticated sense of humor at this age.

OTHER:
• Positive Reinforcement
• Acceptance
• Classroom Harmony

Summary:
With respect to "positive reinforcement", this seemed to be a very important factor for these children, a type of praise was needed before heading to further parts of their project.
"Classroom Harmony" was my way in saying that the classroom understood what was expected of them and went about their tasks without a glitch.

3ʳᵈ grade
6-6-00- 10:30 am
Accelerated level math

1.Challenge
Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.
Similar
❑ Children giving reasons or ideas for solving something exhibits their intrinsic motivation
❑ Children being guest teachers exhibits the high degree to which the students are involved in the daily activities.
Summary:
This teacher really made the children part of the operations and long term goals of the classroom- the children learned how to teach themselves and others to be life-long learners.

2. Freedom
Summary: 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.
Similar:
The following behaviors exhibit independence in behavior and autonomy:
❑ Children crawling under tables / chairs
❑ Seats arranged as they wish
❑ Allowed to sit or stand anywhere, some sitting at the teacher's desk
❑ Moving freely and asking questions
❑ Children choosing other children for next response
Summary:
This classroom had a small enough student population that it worked very well to allow the children to be quite autonomous, there was more space for them.

3. Conflict:
Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backstabbing occurs.
Similar
❑ Student telling another student to "I told you the way I did it was right" exhibited dislike between two students.

Summary:
With the amount of autonomy given, the students were able to interact quite a bit, which also led to interpersonal tensions.

4. Idea Support

Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive.

Similar:
The following behaviors exhibited people listening to each other and encouraging initiatives:

❑ Students describing other student's problem solving process
❑ Needing to understand each other

Summary:
This teacher seemed like a master at getting her students to discuss and support each others point of view, rather than creating conflict.

5. Debates

Involves encounters, exchanges of clashes among viewpoints, ideas and differing experiences and 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.

Similar:
The following behaviors exhibited the sharing / discussing of ideas and issues:

❑ Students discussing the right and wrong way to solve the math problem
❑ Exploring different ways that they can approach the problem

Summary:
These children really enjoyed debating the math problems they were given. The teacher made sure they were very challenging with many steps to them, where students could choose different ways to solve them.

6. 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.

Similar:
The following behaviors exhibited bold new initiative undertaking, without the known consequences:

❑ Students able to come up front and work on the problem they got wrong
❑ Encouraged to "take on" their difficulties and conquer them in front of others.

Summary:

These students seemed delighted and challenged to go up front to solve the problems they got wrong. Again, what I think aided in this process was the *trust and openness* that the students felt in this classroom.

7. Dynamism and Liveliness

Dynamism and liveliness is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occurs. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy.

Similar:

The following events exhibit new things occurring often and the positive energy exuded from the class:

❑ Voices getting louder but on task

❑ "I know, I've got an idea!!" (student to student)

❑ Not being able to wait for their hand to be called on in order to speak.

Summary:

The whole atmosphere of this class just was bursting with dynamism..A lot of new things occurring and a lot of questioning by the teacher such as "What if I changed this part of the math problem?"

8. Trust and 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.

Similar:

The following behaviors exhibited the emotional safety that the students felt with one another and the teacher:

❑ Kids helping kids with more difficult problems

❑ Kids asking other kids for directions

Summary:

These children seem to display this dimension in a very strong way. The teacher seems to create camaraderie in her classroom, the students are not inhibited at all, leading to much *risk taking* without hesitation.

9. Idea Time

Idea time is 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 assignment.

Similar:

❑ Working out together the problems that gave the students the most trouble exhibited the time given to elaborate on new ideas.

Richards, T. " Identifying Ekvall's Ten Creative Climate Dimensions in an Enrichment Classroom" 2-02

Different:
- Too much activity or noise when quiet
- Students can't concentrate

Summary: This classroom seems very difficult for the average student to concentrate in. These children were used to the teacher's structure and were able to handle it, there were one or two students who seemed annoyed with the noise level and needed less noise and activity to concentrate.

10.<u>Playfulness and humor</u>

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

Similar:

The following events displayed the jokes, laughter and ease in which the students and teacher felt comfortable displaying:
- Teacher sitting with kids and joking about their work
- Cutting off the joking when appropriate
- All kids smiling
- Two students working together sitting backwards in their chairs
- Teacher joining in on student joking- Camaraderie

Different

Eyelids being flipped inside out to distract others from the lesson

Summary:

At times I felt that the students could get "carried away" and distract others with almost too much "side-tracking".

OTHER:
- Camaraderie with teachers and students – a bond
- Class clap (feeling part of a group)

Summary:
Once again, the total feeling of the classroom "clicking" at that moment was a powerful feeling of progression, Everyone in this class seemed to feel confident in their role as being "part of something" where everyone is accepted and able to feel a certain amount of comfort. There was a definite high comfort level in the classroom.

4th grade
4-23-00- 1 pm
Problem Solving Stations- grouped students

1. Challenge

Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.
Similar:
When the students are asked to do better than the previous class, this demonstrates the teacher's need for intrinsic motivation and students needing to contribute.
Different:
Students making comments such as "Hurry so we can finish and get on the computer" inhibit the intrinsic motivation to the task at hand.
Summary:
Many of these students didn't seem intrinsically motivated by the task at hand, but externally motivated, finishing to get on the computer for example.

2. Freedom

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
Similar:
The following choices demonstrate student discretion in day- to -day activities.
❑   Ability to go to the bathroom when needed
❑   Find comfortable spot in the room to work
❑   Various types of media to work with.
❑   Allowed to freely converse when working
Different:
❑   Students who can't work when others are speaking will find it hard to have the freedom to do there own work.
Summary:
The freedom felt by the students in group work was evident. However, a few members who wanted to socialize instead of discuss the tasks at hand may have infringed upon that freedom.

3. Conflict

Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backstabbing occurs.

Similar:
❑ Being part of a cooperative group when you are not fond of one member exhibits interpersonal tensions.

Certain comments from one student to the next (listed below) exhibited individuals dislike for each other**:**
❑ "Stop copying my paper"
❑ "You can't use that, I got it first"
❑ Students judging each other's work "that won't work"

Summary:
Students seemed to be unhappy with the inability to choose the members of the cooperative groups that they were to work in.

4. Idea Support

Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive

Similar:
❑ Agreement with student suggestions on how to run the lesson demonstrated the encouragement of initiatives by the teacher

Summary:
This class appeared to have a certain familiarity with supporting each other's ideas and looking for support from each other.

5. Debate

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 forward their ideas. Where debates are missing, people follow authoritarian patterns without questioning. Debate focuses on issues and ideas.

Similar:
The following occurrences demonstrate students being keen on putting forward new ideas:
❑ Students discussing the plusses and minuses of their ideas
❑ Discussing how to share class materials

Summary:
These students have had some practice from the teacher on how to stay focused on issues and not people.

6. 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

Similar:
- Crazy ideas given at the station that brainstormed inventions exhibited a bold new initiative to be taken.

Summary:
Most students seemed to use their imagination in thinking up inventions- I was impressed with how much students would "take a gamble" with.

7. <u>Dynamism and liveliness</u>

Dynamism and liveliness is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occurs. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy.

Similar:
- Ability to communicate freely during group work exhibits a lively atmosphere with positive energy
- Constant feedback from teacher, keep the progress moving and helps fuel the eventfulness of the classroom.

Different:
- Evaluating work as they move along may also hinder the forward motion of things if students need to go back and re-visit old stations

Summary:
This classroom felt high in this dimension because of the moving from station to station..eventfulness!!

8. <u>Trust and openness</u>

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.

Similar:
Ability to use the bathroom without asking exhibits a strong level of trust between the teacher and the students.
Name tags for me entering the room as a guest exhibited a need for physical safety in the school.

Different:
The following 2 occurrences hindered some student's trust and openness toward one another:
- Making fun of each other
- Judging each other's ideas

Summary:
There was an interesting mix of trust and openness displayed toward the teacher and some taken away due to students who felt the need to show social dominance.

9. **Idea Time**

Idea time is 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 assignment

Similar:

❑ Students who don't have enough time will get time exhibits the insurance of enough time for elaborating on new ideas.

Different:

❑ Noise level may be too much for them to concentrate

Summary:.

Once again, the time was very limited for the students at each of these problem solving stations. Plenty of time was given after school if needed.

10. **Playfulness and Humor**

Playfulness and humor refers to the spontaneity and ease that is displayed. A relaxed atmosphere with jokes and laughter characterizes the organization, which is high in this dimension.

Similar:

The following occurrences demonstrated a relaxed atmosphere:

❑ Ability to work in cooperative groups

❑ Finding a spot in the room to sit (of your choice)

❑ Being able to work with some friends

Summary:

There were definite smiles and controlled laughter throughout the lesson.

OTHER:

• **Uncertainty**

• **taking initiative**

Summary:

I noticed some uncertainty in students for offering ideas or giving opinions, even when they had a vey good idea. When I asked a student why they wouldn't give their idea to the group, the student stated how "nobody ever listens to what I say".

Some students seemed very comfortable in taking the initiative and leading each group at their problem solving stations. Inevitably, one of these "leaders" would emerge with each of the groups.

4th grade- 1:30 pm
5-30-00
Lesson: Choosing emotions of orangutans by facial expressions

1. Challenge
Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.
Similar:
- ❑ The children eager to know exactly what the directions were exhibited much investment and energy in the lesson.
- ❑ Working right up to the bell and not watching the clock also demonstrated intrinsic motivation and investment of much time and energy.

Summary:
These students were so incredibly intrinsically motivated to finish this lesson, that they were not paying attention to time!

2. Freedom
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.
Similar:
The following privileges given to students exhibited the autonomy that the students had to define much of their own work:
- ❑ Don't need to ask to move about the room or put things away
- ❑ Tables instead of desks- ample work area
- ❑ Lots of supplies for each student
- ❑ Allowed to work at their own pace

Summary:
The teacher allows the children to take on lots of freedoms, but also makes sure that they do not abuse them.

3. Conflict
Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backstabbing occurs.
Similar:
- ❑ A student telling another student ;"That's not how she said to do it!" demonstrates targeted interpersonal tensions.

Summary:
This particular lesson, students did more debating than conflicting.

4. Idea Support
Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive.
Similar:
Comments from the teacher to the students demonstrated the encouragement of initiatives and good example setting for students to support each other:
- ❏ "Why don't you help that student?"
- ❏ "Excellent idea"
- ❏ "What's good about your report?"

Summary:
This teacher not only gives the children a ton of idea support but sets great examples for them to do the same to each other.

5. Debate
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 forward their ideas. Where debates are missing, people follow authoritarian patterns without questioning. Debate focuses on issues and ideas.
Similar:
Children speaking back and forth about which orangutan expression meant which emotion demonstrated the debate focusing on issues and ideas rather that a person.
Summary:
The children were directed by the teacher not to use conflict, but to use debate. Never pointing a finger but sticking to issues.

6. 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.
Similar:
Different:
- ❏ All ideas being accepted or considered
- ❏ Children don't feel like they are taking risks because they are so comfortable

Summary:
Students in this classroom were so freely taking of what I would consider risk, that they did not feel as if they were risk taking. Does that mean that there is no risk if a student doesn't feel the risk?

7. Dynamism and liveliness

Dynamism and liveliness is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occurs. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy.

Similar:

❑ Students wanting to teach others how the lesson manifests itself demonstrates alternations between ways of thinking.

❑ Not watching the clock demonstrates the eventfulness of life in the organization.

Summary:

This classroom was so engaged in the lesson, you could literally feel the energy when walking into the classroom.

8. Trust and 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.

Similar:

The following observations exhibited the emotional safety in relationships with the teacher:

❑ Feeling free to walk up to teacher anytime

❑ Teacher sits with them

❑ Having the same G&T teacher each year

Summary:

The students have the same teacher each year for G&T, you can feel the comfort level of the students when you walk into the classroom.

9. Idea Time

Idea time is 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 assignment.

Similar:

The following observations demonstrated the possibilities to discuss and test fresh impulses.

❑ Plenty of space to be away from each other

❑ Plenty of work time that is segmented with time updates

Summary:

The classroom is well structured for idea time, the teacher was well versed in Creative Problem Solving, so *Idea time* is part of her teaching process and it shows in her teaching style.

10. Playfulness and Humor
Playfulness and humor refers to the spontaneity and ease that is displayed. A relaxed atmosphere with jokes and laughter characterizes the organization which is high in this dimension.
Similar:
❑ An ape game to get students warmed up exhibits the importance of playfulness
Summary:
This teacher really enjoys laughing and joking with her students, yet keeping it under control.

Participating Teacher Generated Ideals on the 10 Climate Dimensions

The following subsection offers three gifted and talented teacher's perspectives on how

Ekvall's ten dimensions manifest themselves in their classrooms. The teachers were asked

to describe each dimension according to what it "looked like", "sounded like" and "felt

like" in their classroom. Also included are the teacher's views on any new emerging

dimensions in the classroom. All of the dimension definitions originate from Goran Ekvall

and have been adapted by Lauer (1994).

Gifted and talented teacher
Urban school
Grades K-4

Challenge
Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.
High Challenge=intrinsic motivation
What does it look like in the classroom?
don't know where the teacher is
engaged students
busy
Sound Like?
Noisy
on-task discussion
Feel Like?
Exhausting yet invigorating
Summary:

Freedom

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.

High Freedom= students taking initiative, also depends on the task

Look Like?

choice making

decision making

flexible seating arrangement when allowed

smaller the group

Sound like?

Noisy

discipline to win freedom

Feel like?

chaotic at times

Summary:

Idea Support

Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive.

Look like?

sharing

Sound like?

positive comments

supportive gestures

Feel like?

Summary:

Trust and Openness

Refers to the emotional safety in relationships. When therer 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.

Look Like?

Grouping together

sharing

kids building on other ideas

Sound like?

"That's ok"

"Terrific!"

"Tell us about it"
Asking each other to share
Feel Like?
You can close your eyes
 comfortable
Summary:

Debates

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 forward their ideas. Where debates are missing, people follow authoritarian patterns without questioning. Debate focuses on issues and ideas.
Look like?
Grouped at a table
standing
jumping up and down
Sound like
Back and Forth of ideas
"what about this!"
"No, No, try this!"
Feel like?
Excitement
Summary:

Conflicts

Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backsabbing occurs.
Look like?
Physical pushing
negative body language
fronting, arms crossed
Sound like?
"He did this.."
She did that..
snide comments
"someone else's fault"
Coming to the teacher to complain
Feel like?
tension
Summary:

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.
High Risk taking= people feel as though they can take a gamble on new ideas
Look like
standing up and talking
nervous
no risk= quiet
off task
Sound like
"I'm bored"
Feel like
Summary:

Idea Time
Idea time is the amount of time people can use and do use for elaborating on new ideas. In
the high idea-time situation, the possibilties exist to discuss and test impulses and fresh
suggestions that are not planned or included in the task assignment.
Look like?
Sitting wherever they choose
Focused students (on faces)
engaged
Sound like?
dull hum
Feel like?
Productive when challenge is high and task is focused
The younger the child- harder productive
Summary:

Gifted and talented teacher
Suburban school
Grades K-4

Challenge
Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily
operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make
contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.
Hi challenge= intrinsic motivation (not frustrated)
Look like?
eyes everywhere(thought)
kids talking to each other

movement
Sound like?
noisy at times
building of noise
talking out of turn
Feel like?
energy in room changes-explosive
exhilarating
Summary:

Freedom

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.
High Freedom= students taking initiative
Look like?
Rearrange furniture
leave the room
Sound Like?
building on ideas
triggering of ideas
encouragement of movement
Feels like?
Relaxed and like yourself
Comfortable with intellectual ability
Summary:

Idea Support

Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and
(Medium support= somewhere between disinterest of new ideas and ideas being received in an attentive and kind way by classmates and teachers
Look like?
Everyone has their own jobs
Equality of people in the group
Sound like?
Positive first then bring about new ideas
Support system- "I like that, but.."
Feel like?
Orderly, organized

Summary:

Trust and 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.
Hi trust=willingness to share new ideas without fear
Look like?
Cautious first
Sound Like?
Respect each other
Feel like?
comfortable
relaxed

Debates
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 forward their ideas. Where debates are missing, people follow authoritarian patterns without questioning. Debate focuses on issues and ideas
Hi Debate=many voices are heard, people eager to share ideas
Look like?
Children questioning each other
Sound like?
"I like that, but.."
loud OR quiet, new kids= loud
Feel like?
Eager

Conflicts
Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backstabbing occurs.
Look like?
Boy vs. Girl
nationality
repositioning of room
picking of sides
not loud necessarily
Feel like?

Sound like?
Smug

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
Look like?
Sound like?
stating their mind
say anything in reason
metacognition (correcting themselves)
Feel like?
Putting yourself out so you won't get harmed
comfort
Summary:

Idea Time
Idea time is 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 assignment.
Hi Idea time= possibility exists to discuss and test impulses and fresh suggestions
Look like?
Hands-on experiential
Sound like?
"LET'S SET GOALS"
"what will the outcome be"
Feel like?
Organized for resource purposes
Summary:

Dynamism and Liveliness
Dynamism and liveliness is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occurs. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy.
Highly Dynamic=New things and ideas occur often
Summary:

Playfulness and Humor
Playfulness and humor refers to the spontaneity and ease that is displayed. A relaxed
atmosphere with jokes and laughter characterizes the organization which is high in this
dimension.
Hi Playful=relaxed atmosphere with jokes and humor
What Else:
Social hierarchy
Compare who's smarter, competition
Summary:

Gifted and talented teacher
Suburban school
Grade K-4

Challenge
Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily
operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make
contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.
Look like?
Quiet and looking off in thought (metacognition)
Sound like?
Ask questions for clarification
Ask teacher questions
Agree or disagree and tell why
Turn to a partner for clarification
Feel like?
Feels rewarding
Goal accomplished of children thinking
Energizing / Mutual
Productive
Summary:

Freedom
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.
Look like?
Engaged and responsible
Noise- talking
moving
Sound Like?
asking of questions

Challenge and disagreement with you
sharing perspectives
Feel like?
richness
Summary:

Idea Support

Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive.
Look like?
Focusing on each other
cooperative groups
engaged
smiles
relaxed
enthused
Sound like?
no judging
quiet for listening
Feel like?
excited
self confident
absorbed
Summary:

Trust and 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.
Look like?
Relaxed
Comforted
Sound like?
Feel Like?
Being themselves
Respecting themselves
Summary:

Debates
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 forward their ideas. Where debates are missing, people follow authoritarian patterns without questioning. Debate focuses on issues and ideas.
Look Like?
Anger at times
Negative Body language
Children facing one another
Sound like?
"Your idea is different"
"what's the point?"
"Disagreement is good" (T to S)
"Calm down and think before you answer"(count to 10)
Feel Like?
Summary:

Conflicts
Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backsabbing occurs
(Try to keep Low)
Look Like ?
One child speaking at a time without interruption
Brainstorm solution
Sound Like?
"Calm down and think before you react"
initially loud, then quiet and focused
Feel Like?
Initial tension
Plan of action- security blanket
Summary:

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.
Hi Risk taking- people feel as though they can take a gamble on new ideas
Look like?
A lot of hand raising
Pride

Sound Like?
Feel Like?
Consequences
What is calculated risk?
Summary:

<u>Idea Time</u>

Idea time is 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 assignment.

Hi Idea Time- possibility exists to discuss and test fresh impulses and suggestions

Look Like?
Pictures, colors
Meaningful
Project work
Singing
Engaged
Sound Like?
A little noisy
Music
Invigorating
Feel like?
Exciting if hi productivity
Contagious

SECTION FIVE: KEY LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section contains two types of key learnings. I will first discuss process learning and my personal goals and second, content learning displayed as insights from the dimensions. Also included are recommendations for further research endeavors.

Process Learning: Personal goals

This section contains goals that are both personal and professional. These goals were attained throughout the process of this project. My original goals were as follows and will be discussed separately:

- To develop a richer understanding of creative classroom climate and how to nurture my own;

- To be able to identify climate dimensions in my own classroom setting;

- To improve upon my current research skills;

- To become very familiar with different teaching methods in gifted and talented or enrichment programs; and

- To be able to communicate my results in a logical and organized manner.

Goal one

I wanted to develop a richer understanding of creative classroom climate and how to nurture my own in my science classroom. This goal was attained through not only my observations (see content learnings in this section) and conversations within classrooms

which I felt were high in creativity, but sharing in the data gathered by the Creative

Climate Research Team (Murdock, 1999). We collaborated on projects under the

direction of Dr. Mary Murdock at the International Center for Studies in Creativity at

Buffalo State College from 1999- present. The projects complimented each other and

became a collective product to pass on to the people completing the next "leg" of research

being done for the Creative Classroom Climate endeavor at the International Center for

Studies in Creativity. The members of this team were teachers, who not only observed

climate in other classrooms, but focused on their own classroom climate as well.

   After enough observing of other classrooms, I began to naturally identify the climate

dimensions in my own classroom. There are certain dimensions that I naturally include in

my classroom without a deliberate nurturing. Certain dimensions, however, I need to

deliberately nurture in my classroom.   For instance, "risk taking" and "challenge" are

dimensions I feel all teachers need to nurture more than they presently are. I would like

to allow students to take more educational risks. The students who need to take risks

(risk taking) and feel intrinsically motivated (challenge) are the students who suffer at

school. In my classroom, I feel that the students who display this need are the highly

intelligent students (gifted / creative) who suffer as a result of crowded public classrooms

with a curriculum watered down to levels accommodating "all learners." I have a large

spectrum of learners in each class, never knowing who to gear each lesson to.   Often

times, it is easier to accommodate the slower learners first, pairing them with faster

learners for peer assistance. I now look for more extra credit or extra- curricular activities

for these students to engage in, attempting to nurture the dimensions for the students who lack them.

Goal two

As a seventh grade science teacher, I believe I can distinctly identify each of the ten Creative Climate Dimensions in my classroom. I often find myself in a state of observation within my classroom. I have dissected my climate and have noticed each dimension's presence. The most prominent dimension in my classroom seems to be *dynamism and liveliness.* This is evident from the liveliness and positive energy I receive from the students during our daily activities (laboratory / hands-on experiments). I also allow students to differ in their ways of approaching assignments, resulting in alternations between ways of thinking about and handling situations (Lauer, 1994).

I also noticed the presence of extra "forces" or dimensions in a classroom climate. The feeling of acceptance, for instance, is something I have to struggle with as a learning inhibitor on a daily basis. For example, I currently teach a student who is extremely popular and disruptive. I see the desperate attempts of other students to impress him by being disruptive in a manner that he would find acceptable.   These students enjoy getting "in trouble" with him because they feel as though they have been accepted as "cool" in his eyes. This student's presence in the classroom changes the entire climate. These daily occurrences allow me to personally validate my project outcomes each day.

In the classrooms I observed, acceptance seemed to be focused around group work or pairing. The students would be upset or distracted if they felt they were paired with an "unpopular" student, leaving the "unpopular" student to be visibly embarrassed or isolated. Other times, students would have a dispute over who would be partners with whom, and why. Such comments could be heard such as: "She always gets to be partners with Jennie", or "Jennie, Jennie, come be in our group". It is also of utmost importance for these students to feel accepted by the teacher. Students who constantly bombard teachers with questions they already know the answers to are looking for affirmation. Their need affirm correctly done work displays the need for acceptance from the teacher, or positive affirmation, supporting acceptance.

Goal three

I also wanted to improve upon my research skills. I did improve, yet I have a long way to go until I feel confident with my skills. My key learning is that I needed to shift my writing style from that of writing for my professor to writing for a general research population. The general population may not be as well versed in the discipline of creativity as you or I. A reader may need to thumb to one part of the project and find a very clear, succinct answer to a question without reading the entire project. I learned to repeat and reinforce things that were already mentioned in the project to make clear a point or reinforce the direction that the project was heading in. Making distinct the difference between quantitative and qualitative data was quite enlightening. I had become

accustomed to using quantitative data in my prior research endeavors. Having to pull

away from my comfort zone, I switched my research angle from that which is based on

numbers, graphs and convergent- based thinking (quantitative) to that which is more

divergent in nature, asking and answering questions; words description, observation

(qualitative). The answers in qualitative analysis are not always as definitive as in

quantitative analysis. This shift in research approach forced me to widen my scope of

research possibilities.

Goal four

Along with practicing research skills in my Master's project, I put them to the test in

my very own classroom. When I began this project, I didn't have a teaching job and was

applying for both science education (my undergraduate degree) and creativity- based

enrichment or gifted and talented education. As a result of my interest in a job in the field

of gifted and talented education, I was extremely interested in the personal teaching

approaches of the teachers in these classrooms. I wanted to know if the skills and tools

that I learned in my Master's in creativity could be put to use in these young classrooms.

In completing this project, in the classes that I observed, I viewed a wide variety of

approaches to teaching the same material.   All the teachers in this study used many

creativity tools to teach subject matter, yet it was interesting to see how they adapted

these tools for different age groups. For instance, older children could brainstorm by

writing quickly, while younger children's ideas would be slower as a result of writing.

Therefore, the teacher scribed their thoughts on chart paper or a blackboard. I also

realized after getting a job in a science classroom last year, that all children are gifted in

their own way and that creativity education should not be limited to an enrichment

program, as my students are very receptive to creativity tools in the science class.

Goal five

My final learning goal was to communicate my thoughts in a logical and organized

manner. This goal has been my most difficult endeavor. I have improved with the help of

my advisor.   I think large projects begin to overwhelm me, resulting in the isolation of

thoughts instead of tying them back to previous sections. In a shorter project, I am

successful with communicating my thoughts clearly.   Time is also a concern with work

on a large project. I have also learned that you should not allow too much time to lapse

between project working sessions, this will slow down momentum and force you to

review more than push forward. The flow of this project took plenty of work and

meetings with my advisor, I guess Rome was not built in a day...

Content learning: Insights from the Dimensions

This sub- section will contain insights into the individuality of each of the dimensions

across all of the grade levels. Each of the classrooms participating in the project were

observed for identification of Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions. Each of the

dimensions, with few exceptions, were identified in these participating classrooms. This

might or might not be due to the fact that all the teachers were quite familiar with Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions, and might have incorporated these dimensions into the classroom deliberately. The data were taken from the participating teacher's classrooms and what was similar or supportive of Ekvall's creative climate dimensions was scribed as "similar" to each particular dimension. What was hurting or hindering the emergence of a certain dimension was recorded under "different" for a particular dimension.   A summary for each observable dimension was given at the end of the observation. For example, below is an observation of "freedom" in a kindergarten classroom:

Freedom

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. (Lauer, 1994).

Similar:

- *Students exhibited independence by creating different scenarios and role playing.*
- *Students displayed autonomy by speaking freely and openly at each station.*

Different:

- *Student telling another student "you are doing it the wrong way" stopped a child from having the autonomy to define their own work.*

Summary:

I view the above listed observations as freedom, but I also wanted to enter these under observations for trust and openness. There was definite autonomy among most students, but I also felt that it was due to the trust they felt in the safe classroom environment.

I found that most dimensions exist in each classroom and that there are possibilities of new dimensions emerging as I observed the classrooms. Some dimensions may even be combined or re-named for a classroom setting. Still, other classroom environments may display dimensions besides Ekvall's ten dimensions for business settings.

Each Dimension had a way of manifesting itself in classroom environments and appeared relatively distinct from other dimensions. Below, you can take a look at a total summary of the individual insights received from the observations of each dimension.

1. Challenge

Definition:

Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy (Lauer, 1994).

Insights:

Challenge according to the definition was present in each of the observations. Regardless of age group or teacher, challenge existed. The most common observation displaying challenge was that of helping children to be intrinsically motivated. As a result of the intrinsic motivation, many students became involved in the daily "operations" of the classroom. For example, students created inventions based on their personal needs,

fueling intrinsic motivation. As a result, they wanted to be involved in the classroom to share their pride and excitement generated from their personal invention.

This dimension also worked with other dimensions creating a "layering effect." In practice, the theoretical dimensions seemed to overlap. For example, many observable behaviors could have started out as a "challenge" but were observable as "dynamism and liveliness", because of the intrinsic motivation a student feels (challenge), it may cause the atmosphere to be "lively and full of positive energy" (dynamism and liveliness) (Lauer, 1994). I had to be sure I was assigning the correct dimension to the observable behavior.

2. Freedom

Definition:

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 (Lauer, 1994).

Insights:

A certain amount of control was observable by the teacher in each classroom. Freedom was given to students within parameters. Much of what the students were free to do, was set up by the teachers as a series of "choices" that were appropriate. Maybe "guided freedom" may be a more appropriate title for this dimension in the classroom. More "freedom" could be earned with good behavior and some could be restricted due to insubordinate behavior. The students seemed to feel that there was more freedom in their

gifted and talented classroom than the regular classroom. This feeling was displayed by their delighted reactions to the choices the students had in going through "creativity stations" or working on a project, or simply being able to sit anywhere they wished to work on projects. The children felt very free in the gifted and talented classroom and it was clear that the teachers were deliberate about this.

3. Conflict

Definition:

Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backstabbing occurs (Lauer, 1994).

Insights:

Conflicts occur in any classroom or situation where humans interact with each other. The ability to handle a conflict, recognize that it exists and try to change the situation, was a strong point of these classroom I observed. For example, one of the teachers I was observing asked two students who were personally attacking each other (name-calling), how could they turn this into a debate? The fact that these teachers are so savvy with Creative Problem Solving and have knowledge of Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions has been fascinating to see at work in the classroom. Since the only negative

dimension of the ten creative climate dimensions was *conflict*, it was interesting to see how these teachers would escape and minimize the use of this dimension.

4. Idea Support

Definition:

Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive (Lauer, 1994).

Insights:

Idea support was strongly displayed in the classroom as praise from the classroom teachers. Students seemed to thrive or search for support and acceptance from their teachers or other students whom they admired. The strong presence of this dimension seemed to feed into a certain amount of "trust and openness" among the students and teacher in the classroom.

5. Debate

Definition:

Debates involve 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 forward their ideas. Where debates are missing, people follow authoritarian patterns without questioning. Debate focuses on issues and ideas (Lauer, 1994).

Insights:

This dimension was difficult to separate from conflict. There must be a distinction made regarding whether the clash of view points were personally attacking (conflict) or stuck to the issue at hand (debate). For the most part, the younger children seemed to stick to conflict as a way of expressing a clash in point of view. Sticking to the issue seemed to be more difficult to these younger students. Resorting to name-calling became a way to express their feelings.

As students got older, approximately third grade, I noticed a difference in the communication. Students were starting to stop and think about what they were angry about, starting to solve a problem, rather than create one, terms could be heard such as "Let's make a plan.." or the use of "I" messages so the finger is not pointing at others. Students were getting educated on how to keep things at a debate level and not a conflict. I overheard a teacher asking how the students could solve a problem without conflicting.

6. Risk taking

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).

Insights:

A major pattern that occurred was the connection between "trust and openness" and *risk taking*. As the amount of *trust and openness* increased, the amount of *risk taking* appeared to increase as well. It seemed that once the students felt trusted and trusted others, they were comfortable in taking risks. The question also arose, if the student feels extra comfortable in taking risks, is it still considered a risk?

I wonder if students in a traditional classroom would take the risks that students in an enrichment program take? It seems that these teachers somewhat encourage the risks with *idea support* and *trust and openness.*

7. Dynamism and Liveliness

Definition:

Dynamism and liveliness is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occurs. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy (Lauer, 1994).

Insights:

This dimension was extremely evident in my observations. "Eventfulness" and "positive energy" could be felt as you walked into these classrooms. There were constant alternations of thinking occurring, as each lesson would be flexible enough to "go with the flow" (Lauer, 1994).

Students demonstrated this dimension by teaching each other the process that they followed in figuring out difficult problems. I observed a math lesson where the students worked on three very difficult multi-step problems. I watched them trying to calculate the problems on their own. After awhile, students were allowed to pick a partner and tell them about the process or approach that they were taking in figuring out the problem.. You heard alot of "Ohhh" and "let me try it that way," according to Lauer (1994), alternations in ways of thinking really brought the dynamism out in these students.

8. Trust and Openness

Definition:

Trust and 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 straight forward (Lauer, 1994).

Insights:

The participating classrooms were observed in the end of the school year. As a result of the time these classes have had to "gel," this dimension was displayed prominently. If I had stepped in to observe during the first month of school, I might not have observed as much evidence for this dimension. The trust that these students had for each other and the teacher was very evident.

Communication in these classrooms was an integral part of the operations. The classrooms were run with student opinion taken into consideration, resulting in students displaying open communication. The teachers encouraged and supported the maintenance of trust in the classroom so that everyone felt comfortable in their surroundings. Never did I observe a snide comment among students to be dismissed by the teacher. Negative comments were not tolerated, therefore students built trust in the teacher.

9. Idea Time

Definition:

Idea time is 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 assignment (Lauer, 1994).

Insights:

Teachers in general seem to be extremely familiar with "idea time", in the words of countless education professors, this is also known as "wait time". In order for all students to absorb what is being taught, when a question is asked, you need to "wait" for students who may not process as fast.

I noticed the use of words such as "incubate" being used by the participating teachers. Phrases similar to; "I'm going to let you incubate over this for awhile" could be heard in these classrooms. "Idea time" was not only given for responding to questioning, but was given in working at stations and working on projects. One of my observations

centered around a project in which students were working for a couple days, and were allowed to come in and ask questions pertaining to the project each day. This not only seemed to fulfill a need for those students, but spurred ideas for other students regarding their own projects.

10. Playfulness and Humor

Definition:

Playfulness and humor refers to the spontaneity and ease that is displayed. A relaxed atmosphere with jokes and laughter characterizes the organization which is high in this dimension (Lauer, 1994).

Insights:

"Playfulness and humor" was a visible dimension in all observations. However, it did seem to appear in different amounts depending on teacher or class size. In one class, I noticed that the class size was extremely small (7 children), this seemed to spur a more relaxed atmosphere that lead to some joking and spontaneity, different from the large class sizes. Students seemed to feel more comfortable in the small setting in both joking with each other and the teacher.

Some teachers also show that laughter and joking is more acceptable in their classroom. I noticed certain teachers with larger class sizes seemed to be less apt to let the playfulness get carried away. It seemed that laughter and joking could escalate much quicker in larger groups. Because of this, teachers allowed only a certain amount of

"joking" and playfulness" before they would ask the class to move onto a more serious subject.

Other Possible Classroom Dimensions :

While fitting classroom actions and interactions into Ekvall's dimensions, I noticed certain forces in the classroom that seemed to combine other dimensions, stand alone or rename a dimension more appropriate for a classroom setting. The following list of "forces" appeared present in every observation and seemed to have a very strong influence in certain instances. They are as follows:

- ❑ **Acceptance**

- ❑ **Leadership**

- ❑ **Camaraderie**

- ❑ **Ownership**

Acceptance:

The fact that a social hierarchy existed in each of the participating classrooms, prompted the thought of "acceptance" as a strong classroom force. I would often observe and scribe these "acceptance" behaviors under idea support, yet it seemed that there was much more to the observable behaviors. Most of the students seemed to be "governed" by this hierarchy. If a student was not socially accepted by a person that they looked up to, they would not be able to focus on academics. As a result, I wanted to start scribing the force of "acceptance" under "conflict" or even "trust and openness", negatively impacting dimensions.

The students who did not feel accepted by a group (avoided, picked on, name-called) would not show signs of "trust and openness" in other students. The person in the room that these "non- accepted" students may trust is often the teacher. This acceptance by the teacher and no other is demonstrated as the "tattle-tail" or "teacher's pet". The lack of acceptance by anyone is displayed as a lonely, isolated child. For example, I observed a child who would beg the teacher to work by herself during group work as to avoid the rejection in group acceptance.

Leadership:

Some students inevitably become classroom leaders. Whether they put themselves in that position or the teacher or even the kids do, some students begin taking initiative, and others will follow. In each of the cooperative groups I observed that a leader would emerge. I noticed "alpha" leaders in each classroom. Often times these alpha leaders consist of one boy and one girl. I also noticed "sub- leaders" in small group activities, also relating to the social hierarchy mentioned above with "acceptance". These leaders usually belong to the "top of the hierarchy" students, who often times are not smarter than others, but rather have a social advantage. Many factors may contribute to the "social advantage," possibilities include: polite conversation, nice clothing, material values, good looks, funny and witty behavior, etc.

Camaraderie:

When a classroom seemed to "click" with everyone making their specific contributions and seeming to get along, including the teacher, I noticed a sense of

camaraderie. Students all sharing or pitching in for one cause or joining together to plan

something seemed to exemplify this force. For example, the planning of a party thrown

for a retiring principal was observed and demonstrated as "classroom camaraderie". The

sharing in success as a classroom unit in one way or another was a very powerful force to

observe in the classrooms.

I observed a particular participating classroom that epitomized "camaraderie" as a

force. The students were working and joking with each other and the teacher at the same

time. The teacher was joking back and teaching them all while staying on task. Each child

was "part" of this classroom and joined in on the controlled joking and friendship, not one

student was excluded.   A large amount of mutual respect and trust amongst the members

of the classroom could be felt upon entering the room. There is a possibility that this

"force" is a result of the presence of all ten creative climate dimensions in place and

working. However, it seemed to surface as a separate force as well.

Ownership:

Each member of the classroom setting seemed as though they wanted to make his /

her own contributions to the classroom. As a result of contributions being made (ideas

given, work displayed, caring for a classroom pet) I felt that a sense of ownership was

needed for each student to feel good about themselves or successful. This force may tie

into "challenge" in which members contribute to the daily operations of the organization

(Lauer, 1994).

I noticed how good the students felt about themselves when something they made (inventions) was used by the teacher or displayed for the school to observe. When students were allowed to bring items from home to display at school, there was a sense of classroom ownership due to a connection with the student's home life and their contributions to the classroom.

Recommendations: Where Do We Go from Here?

Our research team (the Creative Climate Research Team at Buffalo State College) has been working in "layers" or legs. My project was the second "leg" of the endeavor to identify Goran Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions in a classroom setting. There are four things I recommend for further research after this project:

1. When all the climate data are completed, examine it across all projects for further similarities and differences;

2. Explore the idea that creative climate dimensions may change due to developmental age;

3. Determine if any of Ekvall's ten creative climate dimensions could be combined, eliminated or re-named for a classroom setting; and

4. Implement the Creative Climate Checklist about School Settings (CLASS) when the research is complete.

Recommendation one

In regard to the first recommendation, "exploring the similarities in findings between this project and other Creative Climate Team Projects", I like the idea of observing both what is similar and what is different from Ekvall's Ten Dimensions on a large scale. I think this is a crucial next step to validate the findings from one classroom to the next. What is similar amongst projects can be further researched with Creative Climate Research Team students in the next "legs" of the endeavor. What seems to be isolated data (not similar to other projects) may be saved, anticipating similarities to arise later in the endeavor.

Recommendation two

Along with validating and comparing to other projects, the subject of student age is a valid consideration after reviewing my data descriptions. Do the climate dimensions change according to developmental age? The age of the students that I observed varied, but remained contained to the elementary level. My observations with kindergarten classes versus fourth grade classes varied quite a bit according to dimensions. Some dimensions seemed stronger as students were younger; some more evident if students were older. These differences may not have been due to age, but I feel strongly that the matter should be researched further. You can examine other data on high school students and middle school students through some of the Master's projects from the Creative Climate Research Team (McDonagh, in progress), (Miloshevski, 2000) , (Peebles, in progress). However, at this time there is a concentration of research on the creative classroom

climate in the elementary setting (Aurigema, 2001),(Gordon, 2000), (Jesberger, 2001). In the future I would like to see all age groups, even college, to progress in the identification of creative classroom climate indicators.

Recommendation three

In addition, developmental differences emerged as a further research interest. Also, it may be possible for classroom use to combine some of the dimensions in a different way. While attempting to fit behaviors and interactions into certain dimensions, I often debated which dimension the behavior fit into. Some dimensions seemed to be much more definitive than others. For example, when a classroom had a busy "hum" to it, yet everyone was diligently working on the task at hand, did the dimension "dynamism and liveliness" describe this behavior? Or was it freedom that the students felt, which enabled them to talk aloud and work in cooperative groups? On the other hand, children may have stayed so busily "on task" due to the "challenge" they faced. In real life situations, the climate dimensions do not always present themselves as discrete units, some of the dimensions "morphed" into others depending on the situation. Perhaps some of the dimensions should be combined for the classrooms, allowing new dimensions to be created, or simply change the name of a dimension to better fit a classroom setting. For example, "idea support" could be renamed "positive reinforcement."

Recommendation four

In the end, the goal of this research endeavor was to create a Creative Climate Checklist about School Settings or C.L.A.S.S. With the checklist, teachers will be able to

ensure the presence or lack of creativity in their own classrooms. With the scope of

education shifting toward creative thinking and thinking out of the box, the need for a

nurturing creative climate in the classroom is greater than ever. I look forward to the day

when I have a checklist as a guide in creating a more creative classroom environment.

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Appendix A: Concept Paper

Theme: **Understanding multifaceted interactions among person, process, product and press/ environment** Initiative: **Develop reliable and valid instrumentation to operationalize profiling**

Project/Thesis Title: Identifying Ekvall's Creative Climate Dimensions in Gifted and Talented / Enrichment Programs.

- **Rationale and Questions:** The purpose of this project is to examine Ekvall's ten climate dimensions as they appear in gifted and talented/ enrichment programs. The project will contain various classroom observations and teacher interviews to identify the similarities and differences using Ekvall's ten organizational dimensions in a classroom setting. This project has a direct fit into Theme One of the Center for Studies in Creativity's four major research, develop and dissemination themes in regard to interactions and instrumentation. The following questions will guide the project:

  - How do Ekvall's climate dimensions manifest themselves in classroom settings
    - -what is similar?
    - -what is different?
  - What observed behaviors by both students and teachers may be indicative of creative climate in the classroom?

  - What literature already exists that examines or describes creative climate in the classroom

Statement of Significance: The business and organizational environment has been a "hot spot" for creative climate research for many years. With a growing need and demand for creativity and alternative methods of instruction in the classroom, "Educational researchers have taken interest in the way the school system and it's ideologies, structures and pedagogies affect the creative motivations and development of pupils" (Ekvall,1999, p.403), research on the creative classroom climate is paramount in the identification of creative classroom climate dimensions.

Once the dimensions can be identified in the classroom, teachers will have the guidelines needed to be deliberate in their use of creativity; "There is much that we as educators can do to arrange the conditions so that the occasional failure at tasks is not permitted to threaten or inhibit creativity". (Torrance, 1968, p. 22) The education field is

awakening to the essential need for climate research: As a result of this project, we hope to establish baseline rubrics and activities indicative of a creative classroom climate.

Description of the Method or Process:
- Review and analyze current creative classroom climate literature or media..
- Network and prepare teachers for the upcoming observations.
- Conduct classroom observations using the established protocol.
- Conduct interviews or structured discussions with the teachers of the classrooms in which I have observed. Gather qualitative data on their observations and experiences pertinent to the study.
- Examine and record data of interactions/ conversations between teacher and student, and student and student.
- Discuss, observe and collaborate with other members on the climate research team.
- Final report of results and findings.

Learning Goals:
- To develop a richer understanding of creative classroom climate and how to nurture my own;
- To able to identify dimensions in my own classroom setting;
- To improve upon my current research skills;
- To become very familiar with different teaching methods in gifted and talented and enrichment programs; and
- To be able to communicate my results in a logical and organized manner.

Outcomes:
- The identification of rubrics for the Creative Climate Checklist About School Settings (CLASS).
- Actual project report of findings, executive summary for the web.
- Adjust identified baseline pool of behavior indicators and rubrics for further piloting.
- 10-20 CBIR annotations relevant to the topic.
- Identification of different types of gifted and talented and enrichment programs.

Timeline:

February, 2000   Begin literature review

Identify classrooms to observe / Network with these teachers

Meet with climate research team
Drafting of concept paper

March, 2000	Send human subjects proposal
	Completion of concept paper
	Continue literature review
	Set up possible observation times
	Work on CBIR annotations

April, 2000	Meet with climate team to identify baseline indicators of a creative climate
	Begin classroom observations
	Set up interviews and discussions with classroom teachers

May, 2000	Continue classroom observations
	Collaborate with climate team members to begin early correlations.
	Continue teacher discussions
	Begin to compile and data.

June, 2000	Continue classroom observations
	Identification of rubrics for the Creative Climate Checklist School Settings (CLASS)
	Begin drafting of final paper
	Continue CBIR annotations

July, 2000	Continue draft of final paper
Adjust identified baseline for further piloting	
	Draft revisions

August, 2000	More revising of final draft
	Final draft complete
	Complete executive summary for the web

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Related Literature:

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Appendix B: Observation and self- reflection protocol

Observation Protocol

Date_____ Time_____

Class_____

Age_____

Challenge

> Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily operations and long-term goals. High- challenge 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:

Freedom

> 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

Conflicts

> Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backstabbing occurs.

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Other, what else, how else:

Idea Support

> Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive.

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Other, what else, how else:

Debates

> Involves encounters, exchanges often clashes among viewpoints, ideas and differing experiences and 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:

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:

Dynamism and Liveliness

> Dynamism and liveliness is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occurs. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy.

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Other, what else, how else:

Trust and Openness

> Trust and 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 straight forward.

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Other, what else, how else:

Idea Time

> Idea time is 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 assignment.

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Other, what else, how else:

Dimension J

> Playfulness and humor refers to 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:

Appendix C: Guided Conversation Protocol

Grade Level_____

Subject Area_____

Challenge

Challenge is the degree to which members of the organization are involved in it's daily operations and long-term goals. High- challenge people are intrinsically motivated to make contributions, they find joy and meaningfulness in their work and invest much energy.

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

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.

What does challenge in the classroom look like?

What does challenge in the classroom sound like?

What does challenge in the classroom feel like?

Definitions taken from Lauer, 1994. Protocol format adapted from Kim Liloshevski, 2000.

Richards, T. " Identifying Ekvall's Ten Creative Climate Dimensions in an Enrichment Classroom" 2-02

Conflicts

Conflicts refer to the presence of personal, interpersonal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates 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 and backstabbing occurs.

What does challenge in the classroom look like?

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What does challenge in the classroom feel like?

Idea Support

Idea Support involves the new ways ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, ideas and suggestions are received in an alternative and kind way by bosses and workmates. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new areas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive.

What does challenge in the classroom look like?

What does challenge in the classroom sound like?

What does challenge in the classroom feel like?

Debates:

Involves encounters, exchanges often clashes among viewpoints, ideas and differing experiences and 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.

What does challenge in the classroom look like?

What does challenge in the classroom sound like?

What does challenge in the classroom feel like?

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.

What does challenge in the classroom look like?

What does challenge in the classroom sound like?

What does challenge in the classroom feel like?

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Dynamism and liveliness is the eventfulness of the life of the organization. In a highly dynamic situation, new things occur often and alternations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occurs. The atmosphere is lively and full of positive energy.

What does challenge in the classroom look like?

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What does challenge in the classroom feel like?

Trust and Openness

Trust and 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 straight forward.

What does challenge in the classroom look like?

What does challenge in the classroom sound like?

What does challenge in the classroom feel like?

Idea Time

Idea time is 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 assignment.

What does challenge in the classroom look like?

What does challenge in the classroom sound like?

What does challenge in the classroom feel like?

Playfulness and Humor

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

What does challenge in the classroom look like?

What does challenge in the classroom sound like?

What does challenge in the classroom feel like?