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Date May 23, 1970
SELECTED CREATIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES OF HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH LITERATURE

by

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This study was made to research creative teaching strategies used in English literature in high school classrooms. The hypothesis of this study was that selected creative teaching strategies represent methodology which has pertinent use in the teaching of English literature in high school.

The principle method of research was a review of the current literature with an emphasis on writings in recent professional journals. An opinionnaire was conducted with 61 Education 100 students at Montana State University during spring quarter 1969 and again with 50 Education 100 students during spring quarter 1970.

Indications from the survey of the literature and the opinionnaire were that creative strategies in the classroom have pertinence. Teaching methodology is less stereotyped and student response is improved. Creative teaching strategies emphasize the personal involvement of the students in their own learning process and help to individualize instruction.

Conclusions based on the results of the review of literature and the opinionnaire were that the teachers felt creative teaching strategies in the classroom maintained an atmosphere which was conducive to better student response and participation. The students felt that creative teaching strategies had made their own learning experience more meaningful and relevant to their own lives.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In recent years interest has been shown in employing creative teaching strategies in the classroom. Creative teaching strategies are directed toward allowing a greater participation on the part of the individual student in his own learning process. The traditional teaching methods such as the lecture method no longer seem adequate to accomplish contemporary goals of learning. Torrance (29:3) states that:

It now seems possible that many things can be learned in creative ways more economically and effectively than by authority. It appears that children can be taught in such a way that their creative thinking abilities are useful in acquiring even the traditional educational skills...Many educational leaders are seeing in these findings a demand for truly revolutionary changes in educational objectives, curriculums...instructional procedures:

Traditional methods find the teacher spending the better part of the class period talking to the students. Minimal time is allotted to student discussion or participation in the learning process. The little discussion that is held is limited to students giving expected answers to questions asked by the teacher. Even the examinations stressed rote memorization rather than original thinking.

Richard Lord (17:72), addressing the conference on education and careers opportunities organized by the Career Research and Advisory Centre (London) noted:

Too much talk (exposition) from the teachers tended to conflict with the learning theory which showed that we worked
better by discovering things for ourselves rather than by passive listening.

He went on to say that talk should be replaced by group discussions, individual student work and theatricals. The lecturer could become the linkman between the multi-media presentations and the theatricals.

Investigation on the subject of using creative strategies in the classroom indicates that certain creative strategies are effective in the teaching of English literature. When these strategies are employed better learning, understanding and appreciation of English literature takes place (Fader, 7:15-77).

In terms of educational semantics creative strategies relate to educational methodology by involving the student in classroom activities that represent interaction and reaction. Implied in creative strategies is a thorough understanding of creativity and its relation to the learning process.

Creative persons seem to have stumbled onto powerful methods of programming their knowledge in the form of mentally manipulative, vivid analogs. This permits them to explore quickly many combinations of things and to evaluate the worth of such combinations in a way that seems to be at the core of the creative process. (Walkup 30:20-23).

Kneller (16:84), in discussing the creative learning process, said that "since creativity calls for a receptiveness to new ideas the student should learn to consider, indeed often to seek out, ideas that challenge his present beliefs." He further stated that "to learn creatively is above all to learn on one's own initiative." (Kneller 16:86). The
creative strategies to be dealt with in this paper will be those which
stress individual challenge, initiative and involvement in his own
learning process.

Among the strategies that this study represents are: (1) The
Taba (27) system of employing open-ended questions in class discussion
to give the students a chance to respond with original rather than pre-
determined answers; (2) using multi-media devices as tools in teaching
(Bruner, 3:81); (3) relating literary situations to real life situations
such as comparing contemporary social and political situations with
similar situations in literary settings (Mayers, 18:990-991); and (4)
using creative dramatics to act out literary situations (8). A fuller
and more extensive description of these and other strategies will be
dealt with in Chapter II.

There is a need in the teaching of English literature at
secondary level for methodology which will stimulate the students to
become more involved personally with their own learning. The lecture
method does not promote a high degree of personal involvement except
on the part of the teacher. Creative teaching strategies seem to be
the answer for the need of better teaching techniques (Fader, 7:15-17).
It will be the purpose of this paper to describe selectively actual
creative teaching strategies in the teaching of high school English
literature.
Statement of The Problem

This study will describe actual creative strategies in the teaching of English literature at the secondary level. The research will be done through a review of current literature. To further reinforce the conclusions of this study and opinionnaire administered to 111 Education 100 students (beginning education) at Montana State University will be quoted from. Students surveyed represented all undergraduate classes and first year graduate classes. The results of this study will attempt to prove the hypothesis that creative teaching strategies represent methodology which has pertinent use in the teaching of English literature in high school.

Importance of The Study

With the constantly increasing volume of the world's accumulation of knowledge it is no longer possible in teaching to concentrate on the content aspect of a subject. One must begin to teach in such a way that the students will be able to learn on their own. Teachers must find systems to keep the creative impulses in the students viable.

According to Bruner (3:73)

What this amounts to is developing in the child an interest in what he is learning...If teaching is done well...there are forces at work in our contemporary society that will provide the external prod that will get children more involved in the process of learning...

Each child is born with a certain amount of native creativity and curiosity. By the time he enters school he has learned on his own
how to cope with his environment, how to communicate in a spoken lan-
guage and how to acquire knowledge of what is important to him. He has
accomplished this through the application of his innate curiosity and
through his discovery processes (Holt, 14:12-15). If, when he enters
school he encounters only teaching strategies which stress rote memori-
ization, he is soon conditioned to let his curiosity and creative
impulses become dormant (Torrance, 28:74).

In order to keep these creative impulses awake and active in the
student the teacher must utilize every possible creative strategy avail-
able in teaching and be aware of the innovations which can adapt to
teaching situations. In the teaching of English literature where the
tendency to lecture is so great, one must be even more attentive to the
needs of the students to involve themselves in their own learning pro-
cess. Creative strategies can offer an alternative to the time-honored
lecture method (Wolfe, 33:135).

Procedure

The specific method of research to be employed in developing
this paper will be descriptive and nominative in nature involving a
review of the literature. Creative strategies which emphasize the per-
sonal involvement of the student in his own learning process will be
stressed.

To further strengthen the findings of this study an opinionnaire
involving 111 Education 100 (beginning education) students at Montana
State University will be used. This opinionnaire was designed to question students on the aspects of their own high school English literature study which were for them either meaningful or unmeaningful, and why. No attempt was made to find out how many of these college students had taken their high school course work in Montana. The opinionnaire was meant to be a random sampling of what the students felt were the strengths and weaknesses of the English literature instruction they had received.

Limitations

This paper is limited to a review of the literature from 1959 to the present. There will also be references to an opinionnaire conducted with 111 Education 100 (beginning education) students at Montana State University on the topic of meaningful and unmeaningful learning experiences in their study of high school English literature.

Definitions of the Terms

Creativity. Creativity is a quality thought to be composed of broad continua upon which all members of the population may be placed in different degrees; the factors of creativity are tentatively described as associative and ideational fluency, originality, adaptive and spontaneous flexibility and ability to make logical evaluation (Good, 12-145).

Strategy. Strategy is a deliberate pattern of actions aimed at
achieving a specific goal. A strategy comes after we determine the goal and understand fully the nature of the activities to be performed (Hyman, 15:389).

**Creative teaching strategy.** For purposes of this study creative teaching strategy will be defined as a plan employed in teaching whereby the emphasis is placed on innovative response on the part of the student, i.e., seeing new possibilities for old combinations and encouraging original thinking by the students which will bring about a greater personal involvement in their own learning process.

**Lecture method.** The lecture method is an instructional procedure by which the lecturer seeks to create interest, to influence, to stimulate or mold opinion, to promote activity, to impart information, or to develop critical thinking largely by the use of the verbal message with a minimum of class participation (Good, 12:315).

**English literature.** For purposes of this study, English literature will be defined as that body of literature which is written in or translated into the English language and is taught as a part of the normal high school curriculum.

**Summary**

Creative teaching methods seem to promote more personal involvement on the part of the student in his own learning process. This paper will attempt to prove this hypothesis through a review of the literature and through an opinion survey of 111 college students. The creative
strategies which will be discussed will be those pertaining to the teaching of English literature at secondary level.

Chapter II will contain a review of the current literature pertaining to creative teaching strategies in general and specific references will be made to creative teaching strategies used in the teaching of high school English literature. Chapter III will discuss the results of the student survey and refer to some of the quotations made by these students. In Chapter IV the findings in the opinionnaire will be compared to the findings in the review of literature. Chapter V will summarize these findings and contain some recommendations and conclusions based on the research.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE: CREATIVITY IN TEACHING STRATEGIES

In the past few years an increasing amount of literature has been written on the subject of creativity and its implication in education. This paper will deal with that aspect of creativity which applies to the teaching of English literature at secondary level. In this chapter a review of the literature pertaining to the creative teaching of English literature will be discussed. The topics to be explored and expanded upon are: (1) Preparing the teacher for creative teaching; (2) The Taba higher level thinking tasks as a creative strategy; (3) Some selected creative strategies applied directly in the teaching of English literature in high school.

Creative teaching strategies can develop from an understanding of the meaning and function of creativity. In order for a teacher to be able to teach creatively, she must develop an atmosphere conducive to the promotion of creativity in teaching and learning. According to Zirbes (34:76),

"Living, learning, and becoming are continuous and they should be integratively related. What does this say about the significance of school living for education and development?"

"It is in the continuities of developmental experiences and interactions that the child matures, realizing his personal and social satisfaction and getting his orientations for further living and learning."

"Creative teaching finds its spur in the aspiring concern for the quality of school living which is integrative and developmental."
She goes on to say that creative teachers realize that the very conditions and processes of school living must respect human values, human personalities and human potentialities, and must be liberating and liberalizing as well as heartening and enspiriting.

Taken together these three points, considered in relation to each other, give focus and perspective to a creative teacher's outlook. Whereas they do not include direct references to curricular content, subject matter, or skills, the three points are nevertheless basic. (Zirbes, 34:76)

Concern for the individual and his ability to function productively and creatively in the classroom is a vital facet of creative teaching. A relaxed atmosphere in the classroom enables the individual to release his own creativity in learning. A teacher should be able to maintain an atmosphere of relaxation in a classroom which will encourage the students to apply their intuitive powers to learn. The teacher can ask open-ended questions and not demand a standard, pre-determined answer. Students should be encouraged to ask question, also. Traits to develop in students to help them become creative are: (1) Searching; (2) Open-mindedness; and (3) Individualism (Steinberg, 26:125-126).

To call human problem solving creative the following conditions need to be met: (1) The product of the thinking is novel and has value for society; (2) The thinking is unconventional in the sense that it requires modification or rejection of previously accepted ideas; (3) The thinking requires high motivation and persistence taking place at high intensity or over a considerable period of time; and (4) The thinking
deals with or solves a problem which was vague or ill-defined (Simon, 22:44). Creativity deals with students' rationale.

Green (13:162-163) states that:

The teacher's concern must be for the way in which each student chooses his relationship with the various situations which arise; for, if knowing is conceived as a relationship with a variety of concrete situations the student will not be likely to take refuge in the proposition of 'pure reason' and disembodied intellect. As seeker, as knower, he will be participant. He will construct orders and define meanings as he chooses to do so, as he sets upon and challenges his world.

The student must be free to act and react creatively. He must feel that his efforts to solve a problem will be accepted by the teacher. The teacher must continue to maintain a classroom climate that will encourage the student to apply his intuition toward problem solving.

Zirbes (34:77) notes that there are creative inquirers who are "deeply concerned with the lack of insight into vital problems of human living, learning and becoming" and that these problems seem to fit the hypothesis that "human behavior which is responsive to aspirations, values, and their extension in dynamic, integrative self-involvement is distinctively developmental, productive and vitalizing or regenerating."

This behavior is, according to this hypothesis, "creative" in several ways:

1. It contributes to the release, channeling and development of individual potentialities.
2. It has distinctively original or unique formative impact, whatever the medium.
3. It has dynamic aesthetic form and quality which are communicated and extended in process and in product (or outcomes).
4. It is a freely initiated integrative involvement in which dynamic self-extensions carry feeling and forming forward to closure and resist interference.

5. It is contingent on openness to experience and sensitive perceptive responsiveness to meanings and their formative bearings.

6. It is regenerative, vitalizing, and intrinsically satisfying. (Zirbes, 34:77).

According to Davis (6:162—166), in order to promote creativity in the classroom, a teacher should:

1. Provide a creative atmosphere.
2. Stimulate thinking ("what would happen if...?")
3. Encourage original thinking (wild, free association)
4. Use a discovery method of teaching and learning.
5. Change the curriculum in the direction of more creative course work (art, music, etc.)
6. Teach problem solving methods (scientific method)
7. Teach systematic methods of generating new and creative combination of ideas.

To extend this further Zirbes (34:47) points out that:

Creative 'seeing' is necessary—perceptively clear, vivid awareness which deals with images and conceptions insightfully and dynamically. To aid and encourage creative self perception and self transformation requires a non-threatening approach—an approach which is not antagonistic or coercive. It also requires exceedingly creative empathy and rapport.

Williams (32:88) makes some further suggestions of strategies for teaching creatively:

1. Use paradoxes (as in old saw or maxims)
2. Use analogies (liken something to animals, etc.)
3. Sense deficiencies (gaps in information)
4. Think about possibilities and form hypotheses (Ask: "What if...?")
5. Ask provocative questions ("How would you...?")
6. Encourage original behavior.
7. Capitalize on failures and mistakes (serendipity)
8. Encourage new thinking based on stored knowledge.
In applying these strategies the teacher should assume the role of moderator rather than lecturer.

Teachers of literature should not be afraid to interpolate and even paraphrase in their teaching of literature in order to give a more creative interpretation of the meaning of the literary work (Simonson, 24:177-184). Students usually become totally involved in the learning process when the teacher employs such varied devices as multi-media teaching, manipulative materials, buzz sessions and guided observation while keeping the learning atmosphere relaxed (Anzalone, 1:15-26).

Creative teaching develops opportunities for lifelong learning. Creative teaching fits all curricular concern but sometimes, in order to achieve it, one must depart from the "rules". One must be willing to become a creative person in order to teach creatively (Smith 25:134).

Even in group discussions with older students creative techniques can be applied. "Let the student see...how well he has grasped the material by encouraging him to question himself...let him learn from others the various techniques of stimulating the discussion presented," states Sister Anne Marie Weinreis (31:153-155). This is meant to encourage individual responsibility for learning which is one of the goals of creative teaching.

Since class discussion is a technique which is considered to be of great value as a creative teaching strategy, Fotos (9:1036-1038) makes the following suggestions for promoting class discussions. The
method presupposes adequate teacher preparation and a sound, judicial questioning procedure. It also presupposes that students will not all participate as volunteers in an oral project. Here the suggestions:

1. Before class, prepare a seating chart of the class on a ditto master and run off sufficient numbers of copies for the entire class.

2. At the first class, announce to the students that a significant part of their evaluation (grade) will rest on their oral participation in class.

3. State strongly that you are not so much interested in the rightness or wrongness of their oral work but that you are tallying how frequently they respond in class.

4. Give one of the dittoes to a student and instruct the class that each day one of them will be required to tally the responses of the class members.

5. Prepare some kind of symbol which will differentiate between volunteer answers (students raising hand) and teacher-directed answers (teaching calling on student). This will help you to see your students better.

6. Examine the sheets each day after class to ascertain if you have missed anyone on a given day. Obviously you will have to call on certain students, while others will volunteer information. Don't miss the reluctant people the next day. Don't call on the eager beavers too frequently.

7. Have students tally up total responses for a given period. (I keep a cumulative weekly total.) It is your responsibility to even out class discussion as much as possible but judiciously. (Don't expect too much of a reluctant participator. Be satisfied with a little progress.)

8. Never abuse a pupil who answers "wrongly". To indicate "I don't know" is a valid answer to any question. If a student "doesn't know" too often take him aside and help him, but keep calling on him in subsequent oral discussions. In this regard you can ask such students questions you feel they can handle.

9. Evaluate the students fairly in the light of their abilities. The more verbal respond more. Make allowances for the
quiet ones. (Potos, 9:1036-1038)

Creative teaching can best be done by creative teachers (Rowen, 21:47-53). Creative teachers are those who respect above all else the sovereign rights of each individual to develop his inborn potentials and his individuality. Creative teachers encourage uniqueness and innovation in student responses. Just as Socrates evolved a system of questions for teaching a student to rely on his inborn potential for learning so educators today, such as Oliver and Shaver (19:15), apply a modification of the Socratean inquiry method to a classroom situation in which a political discussion of a controversial nature was taking place. Students, instead of agreeing with the teacher or parroting his point of view, took their own position on the issue and defended it. The students, by applying background facts given previously by the teacher, arrived at a position by a process they themselves had devised. They weighed all possible alternatives before coming to any conclusion. Creativity stemmed from the process by which the conclusion was reached, a combination of well-phrased questions to the students and intuitive thinking by the students.

Teacher Preparation For Creative Teaching

A teacher can train herself to be creative and intuitive. Rowen (21:47-52) cites an interesting experiment using the Stanislavski acting method to train teachers to be creative. She believes that certain techniques used by actors to get into character and stay in
character can help a teacher to develop a creative state of mind:

1. Teachers must develop a creative state of mind.

2. Teachers must be able to involve themselves, be sensitive to a child's needs, sense the right moment to present an idea, in short, be an artist.

3. The Stanislavski (acting) method teaches actors to develop a creative state of mind, sharpen perception, observe, develop sensory awareness and use these facets to convey a characterization to the audience.

4. Teachers can be trained to develop qualities of perception and insight which will help them to break (down) old walls of inhibition. The result will be a more relaxed atmosphere in the classroom.

Recently an interesting experiment in developing creativity in the teacher was held at a Chicago Creativity Project workshop. This project is designed to give educators some on-the-spot exercises in creative problem solving.

The problem presented was: There is a balloon on the ceiling with a $100.00 bill inside. The room is empty except for two windows, a door, a bag of popcorn and a boxing glove. Using only the resources at hand, how can one get the $100.00 bill out of the balloon. The solution is to break a window while wearing the boxing glove. Then throw a piece of glass at the balloon.

By experiments such as these teachers learn to teach inductively and help students become independent thinkers and learners. Inductive teacher behavior was defined in terms of identifiable, recurring teacher roles. The following behavioral patterns appeared to be basic to an inductive style:
1. Encourage each student to contribute his own thoughts to the group effort.

2. Condoning what a child is trying to do even if his effort results in failure—immediate, sole objective is not "right answer" dissemination in class.

3. Attempting to incorporate the child's own interest, goals and expectations into class discussions.

4. Encouraging individual convictions and defense of ideas.

5. Encouraging students to listen critically to what their peers and teachers are saying, and to pass judgment on others' remarks.

6. Encouraging students to persevere in a self-directed course of action in the face of group uncertainty.

7. Asking questions for which there are not specific answers already obvious to the class (2:22).

Once the teacher has become a creative person he can utilize the following processes to promote creativity in learning. These are moves devised by Coombs (5:420-427) which a teacher can make to develop creative responses. Some of the moves are:

1. Criterion description.
2. Classification.
3. Analysis.
4. Analogy.
5. Differentiation.
6. Positive instance (swallowing: a concept of simple reflex)
7. Negative instance ("Dreaming is thinking during sleeping.")
   Response: "No, it is not."
8. Enumeration.

The moves cited are but some of the several techniques which make up creative teaching strategy.

The Taba Thinking Tasks As a Creative Teaching Strategy

A workshop for experienced teachers was held during the summer
quarter 1969 at Montana State University. This workshop was an extension of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory located in Portland, Oregon, and featured the Taba (27) Higher Level Thinking Tasks.

Hilda Taba and associates in the development of higher level thinking processes used a technique of developing concepts through a listing of specific facts. The facts are then subjected to a sub-listing or grouping process according to how the students themselves feel the facts fit together. Grouping is usually made by generic similarities. The teacher does not impose her opinion or ideas on how the facts should be grouped together; she merely guides the discussion. The final step of this task is to analyze and synthesize the groupings to make one general statement which applied to all the data presented. This general statement is formed of the many concepts brought out during the grouping process. Again, the teacher only guides; she does not direct the formation of the general statement. Her role is that of accepting what the students offer by way of information (facts).

A second thinking task devised by Taba involves forming generalizations from an informational retrieval chart. The students look at the information compiled on the chart by the teacher and form inferences and generalizations from what they see there. These inferences and generalizations are recorded on the chalkboard for all the students to evaluate. Differences and similarities are noted and a discussion strategy is used in determining these facets. The teacher
is merely a kind of recording secretary who directs the students toward forming higher level abstractions in their conclusions.

A third thinking task is predictive in nature. The teacher asks an open-ended question such as, "What might happen if...?" The students make a series of predictions based on the knowledge they have acquired from their studies. These predictions are guided by the teacher in the direction of higher and higher levels of abstraction until the students are able to achieve the high level of thinking desired.

By these thinking tasks Taba encourages higher level thinking on the part of the students and greater personal involvement in their own learning. It follows that the interest level in the classroom is high and the atmosphere is conducive to creative teaching and creative learning.

Zirbes (34:39) supports such an atmosphere with the following statement:

Whenever we have opportunities to observe teaching, we can analyze it, searching for the creative components and the conditions that constitute the flow of it, and the interaction of those who participate. Doing this consistently and responsibly is a research process from which conclusions could be drawn and validated for application. From such 'studies' it can even now be concluded that openness to impressions, possibilities and ideas enable the individual to consider alternatives freely and to project them into exploratory formative action; to order them and select those which can be fitted integratively into expression in some medium or into communication, or both. It is possible to note degrees of personal involvement and self-directive commitment in creative teaching-learning situations, in contrast to responses to directive instruction—to note the differences in distractiability and sustained endeavor.
This high level of thinking is achieved by "...the more careful planning of sequences in the development of thought, such as providing for accumulative sequence in the development of abstract ideas, in the rigor used in applying generalizations, or in the development of the facility to follow a logical sequence of thought. A sequential development is possible only if there is a clear enough understanding of both the specific behaviors that compose thinking and of the necessary steps in their development. In such a sequence concrete experiences with pertinent examples must precede the development of perception of abstractions." (Taba, 27:220-221)

Some Selected Creative Strategies For the Teaching of High School English Literature

There are many strategies which inventive teachers have devised to use in the teaching of English literature at high school level. Creative strategies can become mere gimmicks if the end in view is not to make the study of literature more meaningful to the student and to allow for a greater individual involvement in the learning process. The strategies discussed in this chapter will represent only a selected few.

Role playing is an interesting strategy for giving students a chance to understand the feelings of the main characters in a narrative. Mayers (18:990-991) cited that she "cast" the students in the roles of the characters in Dickens' *Great Expectations* in order to help them to
relate to the emotional climate of the story and to identify with the characters in it.

The students read four or five chapters each night. Those who were assigned the roles had to be particularly well read because on the next day the other members of the class, the non-players, would interview the characters as to what they did or felt. Students had to be reading in order to interview the characters or to play the roles. Gradually, Mayers reported, good class participation resulted. The students became involved with the psychological problems of each character and even continued to "play" their roles long after the *Great Expectations* unit of study was over.

Teaching Shakespeare creatively requires great inventiveness on the part of teachers. So often the study of Shakespeare is a long, arduous and exceedingly boring experience for the students and most educators recognize this fact. The following creative strategies have been tried with success by various teachers of English literature.

Regarding the teaching of Shakespeare, French (11:350-355) states that a teacher should "teach with a passion for the poetry and interpretation of the philosophy. Omit scholarly details and address oneself to the motivation of the character, the timelessness of the underlying themes and the matchless poetry." This is a more creative way to teach Shakespeare. It will make the study meaningful to the students, bridge the language gap and give the students and the teacher
greater pleasure in the presentation. Here are four ways French offers
to improve the teaching of Shakespeare:

1. Through discussion.
2. Through motivation.
3. Through reading the view of critics of Shakespeare, both his contemporaries and later critics.
4. By letting the students formulate their own conclusions. (French, 11:352)

When seeking greater class participation Rosinger (20:1032-1035) suggests the "class answer" on an examination. This device is an excellent way to give the students the fullest measure of participation. It is, in essence, the pooling of the knowledge of all the students in the class. A discussion type (open-ended) question is asked on an examination and after all the tests are corrected the teacher pools the knowledge which was gained from every answer on the examination. For example, when asked to list the ideas, images and themes suggested by the following quotation from Hamlet, Act I, 1:

Francisco: For this relief much thanks. 'Tis bitter cold and I am sick at heart.

the following list was compiled from all the answers the students gave:

1. Relief from guard duty, relief from fear.
2. Foreshadows a cold, odd kind of night.
3. The coldness in Gertrude's hasty remarriage.
4. Introduction of the theme of sickness, shakiness and rottenness.
5. Character foreshadows the troubles and worries to come in the course of the play.

The author of this article found that the students responded well to
this technique. He wanted to expand it to be used in entire units of study.

The poetry in Shakespeare's plays could be discussed in class along lines which W. H. Auden (quoted in *Freedom and Discipline in English* (10:69) suggests. He states that the teacher should be interested in two aspects of the poem; (1) The technical, "Here is a verbal contraption. How does it work?"; (2) The moral, "What kind of a guy inhabits this poem? What is his notion of the good life or the good place? His notion of the Evil One? What does he conceal from the reader? What does he conceal even from himself?"

Acting out the story of a Shakespeare play or segment of a play can be meaningful. According to Fitzgerald (8:2-3), in order to act the story one needs to provide: (1) A story to act; (2) A happy achievement; and (3) A leader who knows how to guide the students. Select a play appropriate to the age level of the students, one with strong characters and a strong story line. Tell the story (or read it) positively and enthusiastically, or let the students tell the story in their own words, allowing them to paraphrase. Have a planning period and an evaluation period when the play has been acted. The leader's job in all this is to keep the enthusiasm high during the planning, performance and evaluation of the play.

One can also write his own version or an updated version of the Shakespeare play being studied. Creative play writing can help a
student to develop his creativity in the following ways:

1. It frees his imagination.
2. It enlarges his vision.
3. It stimulates his powers of observation.
4. It teaches him to make use of his knowledge and past experiences.
5. It helps him to discover that he is capable of producing ideas which are both imaginative and useful. (Byers, 4:95)

These results have valuable application in all creative teaching for the primary aim is to encourage the student to use his imagination and individuality in all learning.

Another suggestion for making Shakespeare more enjoyable for students who lack exposure to television, motion pictures and legitimate theatre productions of Shakespearean drama was offered by Simmons (23: 972-976). He stated that two phases were needed to present the plays:

I. Readiness
   A. Preliminary study of Early Modern English, noting syntax, vocabulary and metaphore.
   B. Introduction to matter of reading the dramatic form of literature. (Use schematic model of Shakespearean theatre and stage.)
   C. Discussion of events and ideas in students' own language.

II. Reinforcement
   A. Consistent attention to difficult, archaic and unusual words.
   B. Oral readings should be prepared whenever possible.
   C. Frequent interruptions should be made during oral readings to explain difficult passages or obscure images.
   D. Summary statements of long and important speeches should be assigned.
   E. Use tapes, records, videotapes, films, filmstrips,
etc., whenever possible.

F. Progressive consideration of acts and scenes can be used. After each scene ask:
   1. What has happened?
   2. Whom has this action affected and how?
   3. What will happen next?

These two phases, Simmons felt, when carefully followed, would make Shakespeare understandable and enjoyable for even the most rural high school student.

If, in discussion, students are allowed to relate the characters in Shakespeare's plays to their own lives and times the play takes on added meaning. The students can interpret the play and form their own conclusions. This follows the same line of study which Mayers (18:990-991) suggested in the study of a novel.

Summary

Creative teaching strategies come from an understanding of creativity and how it functions in a teaching-learning situation. Creativity deals with developing the student's rationale. Implied in creativity is the development of the student's inner potentiality, the power to search within himself for answers to problems which require solutions.

The teacher's concern should be for the way in which each student chooses his relationship with the various situations which arise. To teach creatively is to provide a classroom atmosphere which
is relaxed and open-ended enough to allow the students to function freely. The teacher must provide an atmosphere conducive to creative response.

The specific strategies which the teacher can use to bring about creative responses from the students are many and varied. The creative teacher will adapt the strategies to fit the needs of the students in a given situation and will display the needed measure of flexibility to fit each different occasion and challenge.

Chapter III will analyze an opinionnaire which was conducted with beginning education students at Montana State University. Chapter IV will summarize the student opinions and reactions as compared with the findings in the literature.
CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF STUDENT OPINIONNAIRE

This chapter will give a detailed account of the pertinent information collected from the student opinionnaire. It will attempt to analyze the comments and opinions stated by selected individuals among the 111 students of Education 100 (beginning education) surveyed at Montana State University. Reference is made to Appendix A, page 51, for a description of the opinionnaire.

The opinionnaire requested that the students tell what specific experiences in their study of high school English literature were meaningful for them and what had little value for them. This opinionnaire was presented as a written class assignment. The students did not know that the administrator was looking for some mention of specific teaching strategies used in the classroom. It was hoped that the students themselves would accidentally point out the creative strategies which made their study meaningful (or the reverse—the lack of creativity in teaching which made the study less meaningful).

In 1969 Education 100, a beginning course in education which is given to orient students who think they may be interested in a teaching career, gave weekly written assignments which were a regular part of the course work. Usually the written assignment covered some aspect of the student's educational experience. The class was held once a week and the assignments given were due the following week during the class
Since the opinionnaire was presented as a class assignment the students had no idea of how the information was to be used. They were given an open-ended, question-type written assignment by this investigator. Students in this class ranged from freshmen in their third quarter of college to one graduate student (male, veteran, age about 25). Most of the students were sophomores or juniors who had attended Montana state public or parochial schools.

In 1970 Education 100 had a different procedure of class activity. There were no written assignments given on a weekly basis. In order to approximate the conditions under which the first opinionnaire was administered this investigator asked the students to treat the opinionnaire as a regular class assignment to be handed in according to proper procedure.

The purpose of the opinionnaire, in both cases, was to determine what the students felt were the weaknesses and strengths of their educational experiences with regard to high school English literature. No indication of what the investigator expected as an answer was given.

This investigator hoped to find out if creative strategies had been used in the English literature teaching which these students had experience, and if the students would mention strategies which this researcher had discovered in the literature cited in Chapter II. Unfortunately the response to the opinionnaire in the 1970 Education
100 class was not representative as the students were reluctant to do extra work which was not a part of a specific assignment. Only nine of the some fifty students registered handed in the requested paper. Therefore the graph breakdowns which follow will only be comprised of the student response in the 1969 class. The graph analysis indicates the frequency of mention of certain identifiable creative strategies.

**Quotations From the Opinionnaires**

From this survey students indicated that they got more out of their study of English literature when creative strategies were used. The following quotations from the students' papers indicate support for this viewpoint. One student stated:

> I think I got more out of the discussion than any of the lectures. I realize that it is more difficult to direct a discussion...than...to tell the poem's meaning, but the student who finds the meaning for himself or through fellow students is more likely to retain what he has found.

Another student remarked:

> Give them a chance to view each other's ideas and impressions, and to exchange values. The literature they study should really be of interest to them, and live for them. If this is so they will learn it well and remember it. They will also enjoy literature, and carry their enjoyment outside of the classroom.

Here is the opinion of another student regarding the value of discussion in the classroom:

> Without the instructor even telling us what she thought we discussed what we got out of it and backed our reasons up with instances from the story, poem, or whatever. They even told us that any interpretation would be correct that we could
support from passages in the piece. This approach has numerous advantages over the other (lecture method) in that it allows the student to become involved and also be creative.

A girl made this comment with regard to acting out a play in class:

...acting out a play in class...got the kids involved and interested in the play.

These opinions were selected to present a sampling of some of the specific comments students made in the opinionnaire regarding the value that selected creative strategies had on their learning and personal involvement in and enjoyment of their study of English literature. Since the students had no idea that the investigator was interested in evaluating creative strategies it would lend even greater suppose to their comments that they named specific creative strategies as having value complete "on their own," as it were.

Negative comments on what had little value for the students ran the gamut from "dull analysis of poetry" to "insufficient background on the part of the teacher." One student who identified himself as "not an avid literature person," stated:

I feel the reader should be able to interpret a work in the way that it makes him feel good and what he thinks the author is trying to say to him. My literature teacher had an interpretation for everything. His interpretation seemed to be the only one there was...I felt he should have let the student voice his opinions and then tell what he as the teacher thought the author to mean.

A girl commented:

Some of the works we studied didn't mean much to me, always seeming to be involved with ancient and unrealistic plots and
settings—so far removed from today's fast-moving and changing world.

Another girl described poor teaching of English literature as

...one in which the class reads the stories at home, the teacher lectures and the students memorize the teacher's ideas and interpretation.

A student from a large public high school criticized the minimal standards which all students must come up to in order to graduate from high school:

The drawback of this system (maintaining minimal standard structure) is that the students strive to meet only these standards and have no further motivation to excel in a course. Assuming this structure was eliminated, the motivating factor would have to be 'in' the student and not in the structure.

Regarding the teaching of Shakespeare a boy wrote:

To begin with, the approach to the subject and the reasoning for its study seemed flimsy and poorly constructed. It ran something like this: Shakespeare wrote this play and the author of your textbook says that it's a good play so you're going to read it, then I'm going to talk about it, and then we'll have a test over it...! I can't think of any way to introduce a subject that will have greater success in 'turning off' the students.

Students indicated that the study of English literature was most meaningful when they themselves were personally involved, either in their personal interpretation or in a discussion situation where their opinions were respected.

The following table gives a breakdown of the results of the opinionnaire with regard to the most valuable strategy or aspect of the teaching which the students surveyed had experienced. The numbers
represent the number of students who mentioned as "having value" a specific teaching strategy or device identifiable as creative. The total number of students submitting opinions was 60 out of the 61 enrolled in this class.
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With regard to the negative aspect or strategies of teaching mentioned by the individuals surveyed, Table II will give a breakdown of those strategies which the students cited as being "least valuable." The numbers represent the number of students mentioning this specific strategy in the opinionnaire. Since the questions on the opinionnaire asked for comments on what aspect of their experience learning English literature had the most value and what aspect had the least value this table represents actual comments which the students offered in evaluation of their high school English literature programs.

Students tended to be more vocal on what they found to be of least value in their English literature classes. There was also more general agreement on what specific aspects of their learning experience they found meaningless. Of the 61 students surveyed at least 56 percent indicated in their response the presence of or the lack of some of the specific creative strategies which have been described in Chapter II of this study. The quotations which were cited earlier in this chapter come from the students' papers and are presented to add support to the conclusions reached in the research.
Table 2

Least Valuable Strategy or Aspect of Teaching

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<td>Teacher's interpretation stressed</td>
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<td>Poetry poorly taught</td>
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<td>Literature selections boring</td>
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<td>Only motivation: College preparation</td>
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<td>No allowance for student expression</td>
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<td>Teacher ill-prepared; not enough background</td>
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<td>Memorization for tests</td>
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<td>Details stressed too much</td>
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<td>Required reading limited to teacher's choice</td>
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Summary

There is strong indication, both from the review of the literature and from the surveys conducted with the Education 100 students that creative teaching strategies in English literature have instructional value. They seem to achieve the goals of getting the student more personally involved in his learning thus giving him greater enjoyment and retention of what he has learned. Chapter IV will summarize the student reaction and compare it with the findings in the current literature on creative teaching strategies.
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY OF STUDENT REACTION AS COMPARED
WITH THE FINDINGS IN THE LITERATURE

As stated in the Importance of this Study, Chapter I, the principle aim of creative teaching is to help the student to become more personally involved in his own learning. This will mean that the student will find his study of English literature more meaningful. The lecture method, which is often used by English literature teacher, is neither the most effective method of teaching nor is it particularly creative. It usually reduces the students to a state of passiveness. Unless the lecturer is extremely dynamic students rarely become personally involved in their own learning when this method is the only one used in the classroom.

Creative teaching strategies, as described in Chapter II, have been used effectively by many teachers. Indications in the literature were that (1) Creative teaching is done best by the teacher who understands the function of creativity in the learning process; (2) Creative teaching is done best by creative teachers; (3) Teachers can be trained to be creative by selected methods; and (4) Creative teaching produces the following desirable results: Individualized instruction, greater stimulation and motivation in the students, reduced boredom and disciplinary problems stemming from boredom, and students finding ways to effect their own acquisition of knowledge through the discovery
approach.

As was evidenced in Chapter III, the student reaction to creative teaching strategies was extremely favorable. Many of those surveyed had high praise for the group discussion technique. Group discussion, carefully guided by the creative teacher, seems to be a very popular creative teaching strategy. As Sister Anne Marie Weinreis (31:153-155) pointed out, through group discussion the student could see how well he grasped the material. The student should be encouraged to question himself.

Students in the opinionnaire expressed enthusiasm for the discussion strategy. One stated that through discussion he found "meaning for himself" and was "more likely to retain what he had found." Another found value in sharing ideas with the other students through discussion. He said that the enjoyment gained from this sharing would be carried outside the classroom.

Fotos (9:1036-1038) in defending the freedom of expression in a classroom discussion stresses that the student who answers "wrongly" should not be abused. A student commenting in the opinionnaire also defended the value of free expression. "They told us any interpretation would be correct that we could support from passages in the piece (of literature)...(this) allowed the student to become more involved and also be creative."

Fitzgerald (8:2) and Mayers (18:990-991) enjoyed the
enthusiastic response of students to acting out part of a work of literature. In the opinionnaire a student praised this strategy by saying that it helped the students get involved and interested in the play.

In order to ready the students for the study of a Shakespearean work Simmons (23:972-976) felt that the teacher should explain the background of the language as well as the dramatic form of the literature and discuss the events and ideas of the work in the students' own language. A student in the 1970 Education 100 class felt that what made his study of literature was the fact that the "teacher explained the background of the type of writing and the controlled forces of the writer's style."

Negative comments from the students reinforced the feeling of this writer than when creative teaching strategies are not employed student interest lags. Students are, in their own language "turned off" to learning and do not feel a part of classroom proceedings. One expressed it this way, "One teacher...showed no enthusiasm for her literature teaching and thus made a very boring class." This same student said that the teacher told the students their interpretations were wrong and he would then express his own ideas and interpretations as being the only correct ones. This counters what Rosinger (20:1032-1035) felt was gained by the pooling of knowledge of all the students. He was interested in the many diverse ways a literary quotation could
could be interpreted and kept a listing of the many responses given by each student in an open-ended, discussion-type, written examination. He indicated that there is no set interpretation of any given work of literature and that different people can read different meanings into a quotation taken out of context. "We came to realize that stories have an underlying meaning unique to each student's interpretation," noted a member of the 1970 Education 100 class.

Many students stated that in addition to a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom and an open-ended approach to all questions, as advocated by Taba (27), they most appreciated the contagious enthusiasm of the teacher for the subject he taught. Several stated that when the teacher was well prepared and had a good background in what he was teaching he reflected it in his classroom strategy and student response was high. The converse of this was expressed by students who felt that their own enthusiasm was killed by teachers who seemed indifferent to the subject matter and to the students themselves.

Bruner (3:73) stated that students want to get involved in their own learning and several students supported his ideas in the opinionnaires. They felt that they learned more and retained it longer when they were allowed the freedom of self-expression and were encouraged to become more personally involved in their own learning. Zirbes (34:76) said that "a creative teacher realizes that...the processes of school living must respect human personalities and human potentialities."
Students reported that when their potentialities and personal contributions were received with respect they felt that they had made a presentation of worth to the class in general. When the students were allowed to discover for themselves the underlying meanings of the literature they were studying they were confident that English literature would remain a part of their lives even after formal education had ended. One student even expressed it this way, "The instructor took care to demonstrate to us how literature can relate to our lives...his classes were free and comfortable—thoughts were expressed spontaneously...Literature can teach one to know himself, and his surrounding world—this should be the purpose behind any literature course." Another student said that "developing the creativity of the mind is a lot more important...than developing the memory process."

A creative approach coupled with enthusiasm on the part of the teacher can leave a student with "a special love for literature for his entire lifetime." This quote was taken from one of the opinionnaires, also. In the classroom students should, as another student expressed it, "be encouraged to think...for themselves and learn to express themselves."

**Summary**

There is a strong indication, both from the review of the literature and from the opinionnaire conducted with college students that creative teaching strategies in English literature at high school
level have value. They do achieve the goals of getting the student more personally involved in his learning and enhancing his enjoyment and retention of what he has learned.
CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A study of this type, with only limited empirical evidence, must be evaluated on the basis of what the experts have to say on the subject of using selected creative teaching strategies in the classroom. Creativity, \textit{per se}, is a very nebulous quantity and means something different to each individual. It is, however, generally conceded that when strategies which can be identified and classed as creative are employed in the classroom a better job of teaching is done and a better quality of learning takes place. Students feel that they have a stake in their own learning because they are able to see the value of what they are being taught. This value relates to what they, the students, feel is relevant to their lives.

The hypothesis of this study was that selected creative strategies in the teaching of English literature in high school have value in terms of what the individual student is able to get out of his study. It is felt that research shows creative teaching strategies in English literature to be effective in getting the students more involved in their own learning. Creative teaching strategies also serve to individualize instruction as well as to show the student ways in which he can learn on his own, trusting his own intuition to show him the answers to the problems he must solve both in and out of the classroom.

The strategies described in Chapter II of this study were the
creative aspects of classroom discussion including the discussion technique of the Taba (27) higher level thinking strategies; role playing; the class answer as a pooling of interpretation of literary quotations; writing of updated versions of literary classics; and preparing rural students to understand and appreciate their study of Shakespeare.

Findings

Based on the results of the survey of literature and the student opinionnaire conducted with beginning education students this investigator feels that creative strategies in the teaching of English literature in high school have value in the classroom. Teachers of English literature would do well to familiarize themselves with the creative strategies which have been devised and reported by other teachers. These strategies along with some new ones which the individual teacher could experiment with would greatly expand their teaching methodology and would help them to avoid the overuse of the lecture method. While creative strategies do require more preparation on the part of the teacher and are more difficult to perform than the lecture method, they do benefit the student greatly by giving him a chance to express his own opinion and use heuristic means to acquire knowledge.

From the evidence shown in the research and in the opinionnaire this investigator concludes that creative teaching strategies can be used effectively in the teaching of English literature. The teacher
should not be afraid to experiment and to innovate. Creative teaching strategies can help him to do this. Students have indicated that they enjoy being challenged by the creative strategies used by their teachers. They enjoy discussion which permits them to express their own opinions instead of being required to parrot the teacher's opinions and interpretations.

Creative teaching strategies help to prevent boredom in the classroom. Students who are involved and challenged in their own learning have no time for boredom. When the students learn through creative teaching strategies they can apply creative thinking to problem solving. In this way they find the key to lifelong learning. They have discovered the joy of finding something out by and for themselves. Their creative impulses are alive and functioning and they are excited by what they can and do learn.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were reached as a result of this study:

1. Creative thinking in students is desirable because it stimulates the student's natural curiosity and capacity for discovery.

2. Creative teaching provides an atmosphere for creative thinking by giving the student the responsibility for bringing innovations into literary interpretation.

3. The teacher stresses flexibility and tolerance for the innovated and unique by example as well as by what he says. He keeps the atmosphere of the classroom open-ended.

4. The students learn more and are motivated more highly by the creative approach because it is more adaptable to
the individual's capacity to learn and to assimilate knowledge.

5. The creative approach is more personal as it involves each individual and helps him to relate his learning to that which has value for him. He thus learns better and retains more.

Recommendations

Because creative teaching strategies are of such great recent interest and because the volume of literature on this topic is being added to continuously this study will not attempt to give some kind of final word on the subject. The recommendations of this investigator are those which could be applied personally: As new material is being written and more research is being done on the creative teaching strategies which have pertinence to the teaching of high school English literature, teachers should avail themselves of these innovative ideas. They should find those strategies which they can adapt to their own style of teaching and apply them. As noted in the literature no two authorities agree upon a single specific strategy as being the "best". Creative teaching strategies are unique to each individual.

As the students indicated repeatedly, they profited most from teaching strategies which enable them to feel that their instruction was personalized. They most benefited from strategies of teaching which stressed individual application in learning. Creative teaching strategies both individualized and personalized instruction.

Creative strategies can, however, become gimmicky. The teacher
who desires to teach creatively must determine that what he is doing is truly creative and not just "change for change sake". Not all innovation is creative but creativity usually implies innovation. It also produces a new dimension in pedagogical practice which rewards both the student and the teacher.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE ON HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH LITERATURE CLASSES ADMINISTERED TO BEGINNING EDUCATION STUDENTS, MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

The following questionnaire was administered to 61 Education 100 students in the spring quarter of the academic year 1969 and to some 50 students in Education 100 in the spring quarter of the academic year 1970. It was requested that the answers be given in essay form.

Regarding your high school English literature instruction,

1. Describe what was good about it, or what was meaningful to you and why.

2. Describe what had little value for you and why.

3. Offer some suggestions on improving the English instruction in high school.