

Chapter Five

THE STUDY: PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Introduction

As reported in Chapter Four (4.5.1), three JACs were randomly assigned to a music program, a story-telling program, and a combination of a music program and a story-telling program; the fourth JAC was the control group. A contrast group located in NSW was also included in the study. This chapter involves a discussion of the programs implemented in these five locations, namely:

- the Music Program in School A.
- the Story Program in School B.
- the Music and Story Programs in School C.
- the Control group in School D.
- the Contrast group in School E.

The information to be reported in this chapter was acquired by weekly interviews with the teachers in the four JACs, weekly lesson ratings by these teachers, observations of lessons in the program/s, and the daily program diary completed by the three teachers implementing the programs. The music programs implemented at Schools A and C will be discussed first followed by a discussion of the story-telling programs at Schools B and C. The roles of the control JAC, School D, and the contrast group, School E, then will be described.

5.2 School A - music only program

School A was located in the central south of the ACT. As noted in the previous chapter (4.3.2.1), it was one of the older established schools involved in the study. The layout of the JAC was that of a traditional style classroom. The room was well lit by natural light from large windows and with access to the room from the school corridor and from the school playground. The room was carpeted and arranged such that a large open area to the front of the room existed where the students could gather. A female full-time assistant provided aid to the teacher and to the students of the JAC. A change in assistants took place in Week 6, when the permanent assistant left to travel overseas. The new assistant (a female) arrived in Week 8 and remained until the end of the school year.

5.2.1 Teacher A

The female teacher in the JAC had qualified with a Graduate Diploma in Special Education. She had been teaching for ten years; six of these were in special education settings such as a rural special education consultant, and as a teacher in a Learning Centre (LC) and in a JAC. Teacher A had been with the JAC in School A for one year. When approached to participate in the study, Teacher A had been apprehensive about implementing the music program as she had had little experience in teaching music. She had agreed however, to undertake the music program or the story-telling program in the JAC if it was assigned to School A. In the random assignment, School A was allocated the music program.

In the final week of Term One, the researcher met with Teacher A at the school and provided her with an amended copy of the music program and with copies of the daily program diary sheets. Teacher A was aware that the responsibility rested with her as to how, when and where the music program was to be implemented. Arrangements were made regarding a weekly interview in Term Two, and it was agreed to meet on a Friday during the teacher's lunch break in an office away from the JAC. This arrangement remained unchanged throughout the intervention period.

5.2.2 Students A

During the pretest period in the second-to-last week of Term One in March, ten students (6 males and 4 females), with an average age of 7.8 years (see Chapter Four, Table 4.1) were administered the test battery (see Chapter Three, Table 3.1).

During the period of the study, some changes took place in the composition of the class. In Term Two, two students, one male and one female left because their families had moved away from the area served by the school. In Week 16, a more competent male student (IQ 130), who was experiencing problems in language, joined the class. Although this student participated in the music program, he was not tested in the posttest or postposttest periods.

Thus, in the September posttest period (second-to-last week of Term Three), eight students (5 males and 3 females) were assessed. The same eight students were re-tested during the November postposttest period in Term Four.

5.2.3 Implementing the music program

The music program was commenced by the JAC teacher in School A in the first week of Term Two. At the end of Week 1, the researcher interviewed Teacher A at the school and collected five completed program diaries from the week's lessons. A total of 105 out of a possible 113 (93%) completed program diaries were returned by Teacher A during the intervention period (see Appendix D, Table 5.1). Teacher A reported that apart from a change to the timetable on one day there appeared to be no problems in the implementation of the music program. A music table had been set up in the JAC room upon which were placed various percussion instruments such as triangles, rhythm sticks, castanets, bells, tambourines and a drum. The students played the instruments during music sessions and also had played the instruments one lunchtime during the week when it had been raining. According to Teacher A, the response of the JAC students to the music sessions during the week had been "very enthusiastic":

Teacher A. "The children enjoy doing something new. They also enjoy doing something they know and remember. Some of the children knew the song "Bananas in Pyjamas". This was a good start" (Week 1 interview tape).

The week was rated "good", a 6 on the 7 point rating scale.

The teacher's average weekly lesson rating during Term Two, was 5 (above average) and for Term Three, 6 (good) (see Appendix D, Table 5.2). Most (75%), of the music sessions took place after morning recess in the JAC room, the length varying from 10 to more than 30 minutes with the highest percentage (37%), lasting for 20 minutes (Appendix D, Tables 5.3 & 5.4).

By the end of Week 2 a typical daily lesson pattern appeared to have evolved in the JAC of School A. The lessons were seen by Teacher A to have the following format:

Teacher A. "We perhaps play a familiar song and move to it or keep the beat. Then I introduce a new topic, and then do a little revision at the end, or get them (the children) to choose one of the songs they like. Again in the new and the revision sections, I get them to use the instruments. I try to have a lot of variety in the sessions." (Week 2 interview tape).

It became apparent to Teacher A by Week 3, that the children enjoyed music sessions with "action" such as singing, moving and playing musical instruments. During Weeks 1 and 2, Teacher A and her assistant had continuously modelled the music component of beat through various musical activities. In Week 3, the emphasis in the music program changed to learning the concepts of long, short, heavy and light associated with beat through the musical activities. One of the activities associated with learning these concepts was a rhyme activity. This involved the children moving to the spoken rhyme recorded on the tape. The children could pat and clap the rhyme but experienced difficulties in walking to it. The concepts of heavy and light were understood more readily by the children than those of long and short. The children knew that the concepts of long and short were associated with length but had trouble in applying this knowledge to walking to the rhyme. Eventually, through daily modelling by the teacher and the assistant and practising to music and the rhyme, most children appeared to grasp the concepts. This was substantiated in Week 5 when the children created their own beat patterns and played these to the other children in the JAC. Again in Week 21, the children demonstrated their understanding of the concepts by responding to requests from the teacher to use

long and short steps to music and to play long and short beats on the xylophone.

Another pair of sound concepts that most of the students had difficulty in understanding was distinguishing between high and low. Through different musical activities these concepts were presented to the children in various ways such as listening and moving to high and low sounds, the playing of high and low sounds on tuned percussion instruments, and singing songs using high and low body positions. Thus, the children came to know high and low sounds and patterns of high and low sounds. The children gradually built up from listening to and identifying a pattern of two high and low sounds to listening to a pattern of four sounds, for example, three high sounds followed by a low sound. The teacher reported that most of the children eventually could distinguish high and low while listening to these sounds and could apply the concepts while using musical materials, though they were unable to relate them to excerpts of music.

In Week 5 the students were presented with opportunities to create their own music. The teacher introduced an activity associated with beat, a beat circle. This consisted of a circle of any number of dots representing a beat of music, which were drawn on the chalkboard by the teacher. The children initially clapped the dots as the teacher pointed to them in a steady rhythmic movement. A sign used to signify a rest in a beat circle was soon introduced to the students along with the playing of the beat circles with percussion instruments. The children quickly progressed to drawing their own beat circles and to playing these to a partner or to the class group.

With the introduction in Week 5 of the sound concepts of high, low, up, down, same and different associated with the pitch

component, further possibilities were offered to the children to extend their creative music-making. Teacher A involved the children as a group to tell a story through playing these concepts on percussion instruments. This group activity was extended by the children drawing pictures of the shapes of the sounds they were playing. The children then began to create and play their own patterns of soundshapes, which were essentially simple music scores, to tell a story through music. The teacher commented that the children were more motivated in Week 5:

Teacher A. "They (the children) had the opportunity to do their own thing and invent or create some patterns to tell a story on their own or with another child" (Week 5 interview tape).

Further opportunities for the children to extend their creative musical score writing and reading were provided by the teacher who left materials readily available in the classroom for the children to use in their free activity time.

The creative musical activities of beat circles and sound-pictures were expanded upon throughout the intervention period as other sound concepts such as step, leap, fast, slow, loud and soft were introduced. Variations to the beat circle with the introduction of the concepts of loud and soft, for example, were made by the children drawing large dots to represent the loud sounds and smaller dots to represent the soft sounds.

The culmination of the children demonstrating their understanding of all the sound concepts introduced during the intervention period occurred in Week 21 with the creation of a sound-story about spring. Following a class discussion about spring, Teacher A drew a large picture of things associated with spring mentioned by the children such as blossom, gentle breezes, light

rain, butterflies, baby birds and so on. The children discussed, experimented with various sound concepts, negotiated together and reached conclusions in matching instrumental sounds to these spring associations. The children then chose what association with spring they would like to have and which matching instrument/s to play in producing a musical narration of the drawings in the Springtime Sound-Picture Story. After practising their individual parts and having a few rehearsal sessions, the children talked and played their parts through the Springtime Sound-Picture Story with a finale during which everyone played their springtime associations together. During the week a child had suggested that they could each draw and play their own Springtime Sound-Picture Stories in their free class time. The children created these in Week 22, deciding the orchestration of their picture and the variety of percussion instruments to be played when performing their Springtime Sound-Pictures to the class group. Examples and work materials produced by the students during these sessions and other music lessons are appended (Appendix D).

Listening permeated all of the musical activities and experiences that the children participated in, from listening to the teacher, to music, and to each other. Many of the activities in the music program provided novel active and interactive listening opportunities. An example of such an activity, Musical Bingo, is appended (see Appendix D). A continual emphasis on "action" and "active activities" by Teacher A from Week 3 of the music sessions, was evident in many of the weekly interviews:

Teacher A. "As I've said before, the active sessions seem to be the ones they (the children) get the most out of" (Week 16 interview tape).

Teacher A. "As has been shown before, if they (the children) are not actually taking part actively they don't tend to respond as well" (Week 20 interview tape).

Lessons wherein there was not such an active emphasis were apparent in the teacher's weekly ratings such as in Weeks 19 and 20 where both weeks received a 4 (average) rating, the lowest rating given by Teacher A. The musical activities for these two weeks, which mainly centered around passive listening, are appended (see Appendix D).

The children appeared to enjoy most of the music activities and experiences associated with a regular school music program such as singing, listening, playing percussion instruments, movement and creating. By Term Three the children had acquired a reasonable repertoire of songs and Teacher A usually allowed time for the children to sing a favourite song during the music session:

Teacher A. "They (the children) are always asking for a song but we can't always fit it in so we've made a special day just for favourites. They each choose their favourite song that we all know and use instruments or movement or whatever's appropriate to the song" (Week 16 interview tape).

These special days of singing continued periodically throughout the remainder of the term and amongst the many favourites were rhyming songs (see Appendix D).

Through participating in musical activities such as the beat circle, soundshapes, sound-picture stories, and singing songs, other non-musical benefits for the children became apparent to Teacher A. The children were experiencing autonomy and independence in these musical activities such as being in control of the orchestration of their sound-picture story, deciding whether to work by themselves or with a partner, and choosing what instruments to

use, and how to play these to or with partners and to the class group. Opportunities for leadership arose when individual children directed a musical activity, led the group's movement while singing a song, or were in charge of questioning the listening skills of the other children. The performing of musical activities both in the class and at the school assembly also provided new opportunities for individual and co-operative activity. An example of a school assembly performance is appended (see Appendix D).

Evaluations of the student's understanding of beat and related concepts to pitch such as high and low sounds, to tempo, and to dynamics were included in the music sessions. Copies of student's responses are appended (see Appendix E).

Throughout the intervention period Teacher A was asked to compare the progress made between different weeks of the music sessions, and to comment on issues such as the teachers' rolling strikes. These comparisons and comments are appended (see Appendix D).

Teacher A raised the issue at the beginning of Term Three in Week 13, of the music program being withdrawn at the end of the term. She did not feel that she could stop taking the music sessions at the end of the term because of the positive effects it was having on the children:

Teacher A. "Given a bit of instruction at the start and an idea of where to go and what to do (in a lesson) the children are becoming more capable of going off with a partner and working in other parts of the room without teacher-direction all the time. They are much more independent and able to function with peers, or on their own. They are developing independent skills to think about what they have to do themselves" (Week 13 interview tape).

This issue was raised again in Week 21 when Teacher A was asked to respond to the music program ending in Week 23. The

response of Teacher A was that she would like to continue the music and to revise and extend the concepts and skills the children had developed. She also felt that she could not stop the music sessions as the children enjoyed them so much. The one thing Teacher A had found time-consuming about the intervention period though, was writing up the daily program diary and she was looking forward to not doing this in the future. A final comment by Teacher A was:

Teacher A. "I have really enjoyed the music and I've probably got as much out of it as the children have . . .I'm doing the music program for what it offers not just for the sake of your [the researcher's] study" (Week 21 interview tape).

5.3 School C - music program (alternating with story-telling program)

School C was located in the central ACT area. It was the oldest established school involved in the study and, as noted in the previous chapter (4.3.2.1), was considered to be located in a "tough area". The school recently had been re-decorated and painted giving it a bright and fresh appearance. The JAC was a traditional-style classroom with large windows, a carpeted area and a play wet-area. The childrens' desks were grouped on one side of the room allowing for a clear carpeted area where the children could gather as a group on the floor. Access to the room was from the school corridor and from the school playground. A full-time female assistant provided aid to the teacher and to the children of the JAC throughout the school year; she had been with the JAC for several years.

5.3.1 Teacher C

The female JAC teacher had qualifications of a Bachelor of Education degree majoring in Special Education and a Reading Recovery Certificate. Teacher C had been teaching for 17 years; 13 of these had been in special education settings involving remedial reading, English as a Second Language (ESL), and JACs. She had been with the JAC at School C for one year and had a particular interest in children with reading problems. Teacher C had expressed interest in both the music program and the story telling program when approached to participate in the study, but also had expressed concern about her lack of musical knowledge and experience. This concern lingered throughout the intervention period (Week 23 interview tape). The JAC was randomly assigned the music program and the story-telling program for the intervention period.

In the final week of Term One, the researcher met with Teacher C at the school and provided her with an amended copy of the music program, a copy of the story-telling program, and copies of the program diaries. Teacher C had decided that the programs would alternate each week of the intervention period, that is, in one week the JA children would participate in the music program and in the next week in the story-telling program. Arrangements were made regarding a weekly interview, and it was agreed to meet before school on a Friday morning in the parents' room. This arrangement remained unchanged throughout the intervention period.

5.3.2 Students C

During the pretest period in the second-to-last week of Term One in March, ten students (5 males and 5 females) with an average age of 7.4 years (see Chapter Four, Table 4.1), were administered with the test battery (see Chapter Three, Table 3.1).

During the period of the study, some changes took place in the composition of the class. In Term Two, two students (female) left the JAC; one to attend another JAC in the ACT because her family moved house, and the other to attend a school interstate for five weeks. During Terms Two and Three, two students were involved in different incidents; one was informally suspended from the school for several weeks because of behaviour problems, and the other (who was in foster care) was involved in a legal custody case due to child-abuse.

In the September posttest period (second-to-last week of Term Three), nine students were tested (5 were males and 4 females). The same nine students were tested in the November postposttest period in Term Four.

5.3.3 Implementing the music program and the story-telling program

As stated previously (5.3.1), Teacher C decided to alternate the music program with the story-telling program throughout the twenty-three week intervention period. Teacher C began the intervention period with the music program as she said this had appealed to her more than the story-telling program when preparing for the programs over the school holidays. Part of the story-telling program (a recorded tape) also had not arrived before

the holidays. For the purposes of reporting the implementation of the programs in the JAC at School C, each program will be discussed separately from the other and as consecutive weeks, for example, Week 1, Week 2 and so on. Issues such as a child's behaviour, however, need to be considered in association with each program and as a continuous problem in the JAC throughout specific weeks of the intervention period.

The total number of weeks involving the music program during the intervention period was 11 weeks and for the story-telling program 12 weeks.

5.3.3.1 Implementing the music program

The music program was commenced by the JAC teacher in School C in the first week of Term Two. As noted in the previous section (5.2.3), the teacher was interviewed at the end of the week and had completed five program diaries. A total of 51 out of a possible 54 (94%) completed program diaries for the music sessions were returned by Teacher C over the intervention period (see Appendix D, Table 5.1). Teacher C reported at the interview that she had prepared well for the music sessions as "I was unsure of myself. I'm not a great musician and I'm not confident singing" (Week 1 interview tape). A music table had been arranged in the JAC room and the children were playing percussion instruments such as tambourines, castanets, triangles and a xylophone during the music sessions and in their free class time. Teacher C had made a class work book from parts of the student book of the music program which she was using as a reading activity with the children. The children had access to this book and were colouring in

the pictures in their free time. Teacher C reported that the response of the children had been "quite enthusiastic" during Week 1:

Teacher C. "The children have responded with general enthusiasm to the music and the songs. The catchy tunes turned out well. I think the novelty of using the instruments was something they simply adored. It was new and different and they felt they were being successful" (Week 1 interview tape).

The week was rated "above average", a 5 on the 7 point rating scale.

The teacher's weekly lesson rating for both Terms Two and Three was 5 (above average) (see Appendix D, Table 5.2). Most (86%), of the music sessions took place immediately after the lunch break in the JAC room, the length varying from 10 to more than 30 minutes with the highest percentage (45%), lasting for 20 minutes (see Appendix D, Tables 5.3 & 5.4).

Teacher C's interest in childrens' reading was related to musical activities such as singing. Charts were made of the words of each new song and hung in various places about the JAC room to provide accessible reading activities (see Appendix D). Reading associations also were incorporated into the activity of beat circles by one of the students when this was introduced. The student wrote the dots in lines, with big size dots for loud music, middle size dots for medium music and small dots for soft music and colours were used to indicate where different instruments would play. Teacher C reported the child as saying - "There are just too many dots in that circle. It's a stupid way of doing it. Can't I do it in lines like reading?" (Week 3 interview tape).

During Week 2 of the music program, Teacher C introduced many sound concepts through the music component of beat such as heavy, light, long, short, fast, slow, high and low, by singing songs, doing actions and playing tuned and untuned percussion

instruments. The children "enjoyed using the instruments" and, although no music program was undertaken in the alternate weeks of the intervention period, the children were "playing the percussion instruments whenever possible" (Week 2 interview tape). By Week 3 the children were playing the percussion instruments in groups, with partners or on their own to accompany songs and were utilising their free class time to write and play their own music either on their own or with a partner. These activities sometimes expanded into a whole-class activity initiated by individual students. Teacher C reported that during free activities, on the Friday of Week 9, two children had written music notation on the chalkboard in the classroom, most of the children had then responded by playing this on their percussion instruments. Details of this activity are appended (see Appendix D).

Many of the students experienced difficulties with pitch similar to those experienced by the students participating in the music program at School A; for example distinguishing between same and different, high and low sounds, and the relating of these to excerpts of music. Various activities involving singing, listening, movement, playing tuned percussion instruments and creating were introduced by Teacher C to help the children understand these concepts. These activities are appended (see Appendix D).

The children's repertoire of songs increased during Term Three and, as in the JAC at School A, Teacher C introduced revision sessions wherein the children could choose favourite songs to sing. In Week 9, the children chose to sing "Alison's Camel" for a special school assembly. The children already had performed this song impromptu at a school assembly in the week following the first week of the music program taking Teacher C "by surprise. They asked in the junior assembly if they could do it" (Week 2 interview

tape). This early display of self-confidence in their ability to perform was later reported by Teacher C to become apparent also in the classroom:

Teacher C. "We have noticed an improvement in the children's self-confidence throughout the six months. The children could be moving and using their imaginations to mime something to music, and all would be participating. They have lost their self-consciousness in the classroom. As well they have been so keen and confident to perform in assembly. Usually the children in the JAC lack so much confidence. They don't like standing up in front of other children and doing things. This year at every assembly they want to do something" (Week 23 interview tape).

Evaluations of the student's understanding of concepts related to pitch such as high and low sounds, and to tempo were included in the music sessions. Copies of student's responses are appended (see Appendix E).

Throughout the intervention period Teacher C was asked to compare the progress made between different weeks of the music program, and to comment on such issues as the teachers' rolling strikes. Teacher C had two major concerns affecting the general class atmosphere and childrens' learning during the intervention period (see 5.3.3). One concern was over a student's behaviour which manifested in Week 2 of the music program (Week 3 of the intervention period), and the other was a legal case over the custody of a student. The comparisons between weeks and comments made by Teacher C are appended (see Appendix D).

The issue of continuing the music program after Term Three was raised by Teacher C in Week 14 of the intervention period (Week 7 of the music program). Teacher C reported at this time that she could not discontinue the music program at the end of the intervention period. When Teacher C was asked in Week 21 to

respond to the music program ending in Week 23, her response was that she would be continuing it after Term Three:

Teacher C. "The children often ask if they can have some music. To the children music is fun. They learn in a very natural way. They're listening without realising it's a lesson. It's a fun way of learning" (Week 21 interview tape).

5.4 School B - story-telling only program

School B was located in the south of the ACT. As noted in Chapter Four (4.3.2.1), it was one of the more recently established schools involved in the study. The school's design featured clusters of rooms. The JAC and Learning Centre (LC) were housed in a room in one of these clusters which opened into a central area shared by several classes. To alleviate distracting movement from this central area, screens had been placed to partially block the entrance to the JAC/LC room. One side of the JAC/LC room had full length windows and a door providing access to the school's play areas. The room was carpeted and desks were arranged in groups about the room. Students could gather as a group with the teacher in a small area in the centre of the room. A full-time female assistant provided aid to the teacher and the students both in the JAC/LC room and in the ordinary school classrooms on occasions when the students were integrated. The assistant was appointed on a casual basis to the JAC at the beginning of Term Two and became permanently employed in Term Three; she remained with the JAC until the end of the school year.

5.4.1 Teacher B

The female teacher in the JAC had qualified with a Graduate Diploma in Deaf Education and had been teaching for 13 years; ten of these had been spent in a variety of special education settings involving children with intellectual and physical disabilities. Teacher B was a new arrival to the school and the JAC, and was interested in the integration of children with learning difficulties into the mainstream of the school and in improving the self-management skills of these children. She considered that a program aimed at developing the listening skills of children would assist these interests and at the initial meeting with the researcher, indicated a willingness to undertake either of the programs concerned with developing listening skills. Teacher B expressed pleasure when informed later of the random assignment of the story-telling program to School B.

In the final week of Term One, the researcher met with Teacher B at the school and provided her with a copy of the story-telling program and copies of the program diaries. At this meeting, Teacher B appeared somewhat concerned with the appointment of a new assistant, and the daily allocation of time for the story-telling program in Term Two. Arrangements were made regarding a weekly interview in Term Two and it was agreed to meet on a Friday in the staffroom after the teacher's lunch break. The interview-time was changed in Term Three due to alterations to the class timetable, and took place after morning recess during the time-off Teacher B had from classroom teaching in a small withdrawal room off the central class area by the JAC room.

5.4.2 Students B

During the pretest period in the second-to-last week of Term One, in March, six students (4 males and 2 females) with an average age of 7.5 years (see Chapter Four, Table 4.1) were administered with the test battery (see Chapter Three, Table 3.1). These six students remained in the JAC throughout the study and were assessed in the September posttests (second-to-last week of Term Three) and in the November postposttests in Term Four.

5.4.3 Implementing the story-telling program

The story-telling program was commenced by the JAC teacher in School B in the first week of Term Two. As with the previous schools visited, the researcher interviewed Teacher B at the school at the end of Week 1 and collected five completed program diaries from that week's lessons. A total of 85 out of a possible 113 (75%) completed program diaries were returned by Teacher B during the intervention period (see Appendix D, Table 5.1). Teacher B reported that the only problem in implementing the program appeared to be one associated with the time logistics of assembling all of the JAC students by 9 a.m. (a time when only the JAC students were in the JAC/LC room) to commence the program. The teacher reported the children had had some initial difficulties in the daily recitation of the motto of the story-telling program, "Remember to listen; listen to remember", but at the end of the week they were reminding her to say it:

Teacher B. "The children reminded me of the motto today. They are keen and they really like the program. It's different" (Week 1 interview tape).

The week was rated "good", a 6 on the 7 point rating scale.

The teacher's average weekly rating during Term Two, was 5 (above average) and for Term Three, 4 (average) (see Appendix D, Table 5.2). Most (99%) of the story-telling sessions took place before morning recess and, apart from five weeks in Term Three, the sessions took place in the JAC/LC room. The length of the story-telling sessions varied from 10 to 25 minutes with the highest percentage of sessions (65%), lasting for 15 minutes (see Appendix D, Tables 5.3 & 5.4).

For the first six weeks of the story-telling program, Teacher B and her assistant were concerned with teaching the children to use their literal recall skills while participating in specific activities. In this stage of the program, the children were taught to listen for, and to remember six facts during an activity associated with questions beginning with - what, how, which, where, when and who.

The first such activity the students participated in was "The Hiding Story". In "The Hiding Story" the teacher used a basic story script, with several different versions, related to the hiding of various objects. The students were asked questions such as what was hidden, how was it hidden, where was it hidden and so on. During Weeks 1 and 2, the students took turns in producing their own versions of "The Hiding Story". A further activity using sets of picture cards to make a story sequence was introduced in Week 2. Altogether, ten sets of story sequences each with four picture cards and an additional picture card, were available for the students to use in varying and changing a story sequence. During a typical lesson, a story sequence was first talked about by the teacher or the assistant with the students. The picture cards were then laid out on the floor and the story told by the teacher or assistant embellished

with a few extra facts. This was followed by questioning the students about facts in the story:

Teacher B. "The children loved listening to a story made up. They tend though to ride along on their own experience, like in bowling [one of the picture story sequencing stories], rather than listen to the facts that I was giving them. They had a lot of other things to listen for. I threw in different names and things and they switched off. They've got to learn a whole different way of listening" (Week 2 interview tape).

The class group was divided into two groups in Week 3, with the teacher taking one group and the assistant the other, and listening was emphasised more than remembering in a story sequence. The teacher and assistant would re-tell the story sequence in detail giving names, times, places and so on, and then question the children who were encouraged to think about what came next in the story. Teacher B reported that the children used the picture cards to aid their memory if they could not remember a fact - "They looked back at the cards and thought through the sequence to get the fact", and she noticed, "they hadn't a clue" (Week 3 interview tape) if a question was asked in isolation to the sequence. During this week the children began working in pairs with a set of cards, telling each other stories and asking questions. By the end of the week, Teacher B reported that the children were becoming restless:

Teacher B. "The children know the sequences and what's going to happen. They're too familiar with the cards but still need more practice in literal recall. There is a gap between the children's listening skills and their general ability. They are bored with the materials but don't have the skills to recall facts" (Week 3 interview tape).

This boredom led the teacher and assistant to vary the activities in the following weeks such as the children telling their own story sequences to the group, and the teacher or assistant reading favourite class books such as "Each Peach, Pear, Plum" (Ahlberg & Ahlberg, 1978), to the children and relating the six fact-finding questions to these stories. Teacher B reported in Week 5, that the children were beginning to listen for details, to know when to listen for something they were going to have to remember, and were starting to realise that there was a "pattern" to a story (Week 5 interview tape).

Although Teacher B was aware that some of the children required more practice in recalling facts, she decided it was time to move into the next stage of the story-telling program - "The children were becoming a little disinterested. Sometimes they are on-task and sometimes they're not" (Week 5 interview tape). This next stage involved an evaluation of each child's listening. A total of five stories was read by Teacher B or the assistant, to each child at separate times throughout the week and the child answered six questions concerning the what, how, which, where, when and who facts in each story:

Teacher B. "I was astounded. The children couldn't recall the facts. They were not listening and were only "tuning in". In some of the evaluation stories, the experiences were not what the children have had experience in, like going horse riding. So it had no meaning as they couldn't visualise it. It [evaluation] was a good way to know if a child was actually literally recalling what you were saying" (Week 6 interview tape).

In Week 13, Teacher B commented on the relevance of experience for a child's memory:

Teacher B. "Remembering is so linked to what's relevant or within the child's realm of experience. In Story No. 20, nobody could remember the name of Aunty, not because they weren't listening but because of the name "Pearl". Another problem was with "chook pen". Most children in Canberra haven't got fowls or chooks in their backyards" (Week 13 interview tape).

Other examples were provided by Teacher B such as calling a monkey a clown, a food trough for pigs, and a zookeeper to look after injured animals (the children knew what a vet was). In a story read later in the intervention period about sailing boats, the teacher also reported the children had difficulties in describing what a sailing boat looked like. This was only partially rectified by the teacher bringing pictures of sailing boats to the lessons.

Teacher B made some interesting observations about the children's attention during the evaluation. One such observation was that most of the children were "just gearing-up to listen" (Week 6 interview tape) in the first two sentences of a story. As Evaluation Story No. 1 only consisted of two sentences, this story received a poor response from the children. In the longer stories, because more facts were found in the middle of the stories, the children tended to recall these but were unable to recall the beginning or end facts. Copies of children's responses to the evaluation stories are appended (Appendix E).

In Week 7, the students were introduced to listening to short stories without pictures, and to answering questions about facts in these stories. It soon became apparent to Teacher B that each new story presented difficulties for the children and would have to be periodically revised. All stories were revised at least twice throughout the intervention period with more revision for stories causing specific problems:

Teacher B. "One story [Busy Bee], was read twice this week before asking any questions. I thought I'd try that and see if something different came out of it. We got a lot greater accuracy. It showed me how much extra they [the children] needed. They actually were getting a lot more of the facts. Many of the children are not remembering and that's why it's valuable to do the story again because it's like a new story to them. And some of the children are remembering and that's good because that's recall for them as well" (Week 8 interview tape).

Along with the revision of stories, other activities were introduced into the story-telling sessions which Teacher B reported the students enjoyed, such as utilising student's news for the literal recall of facts, and making charts of fact-questions causing difficulties for the students such as "who" questions. Details of these activities are appended (see Appendix D).

Due to different integration arrangements being trialled in Term Three at School B, the location for the story-telling program moved to a withdrawal room off another cluster of rooms wherein a majority of the children in the JAC were integrated; the 9 a.m. time-slot remained the same. The children attended the JAC/LC room on a minimal basis with Teacher B and her assistant mostly helping the JAC children in their mainstream classes. Five weeks (Week 17 of the intervention period) after the start of Term Three, the JAC/LC reverted to the previous unit system, as some ordinary class teachers were experiencing problems with the new integration arrangements, and the JAC children returned to the Term Two schedule. Although there were a few problems of re-organisation as children forgot in which room they were supposed to be, Teacher B reported in Week 19 that "the old/new model was back and working" (Week 19 interview tape).

The same story-telling lesson format continued in Term Three with a news segment, listening to a new story and a revised

story/ies and answering questions about the facts in these stories. The students experienced similar difficulties as in Term Two when the stories became longer, they had to recall more facts, or the usual story format changed. For Teacher B, progress in the children's listening was mainly her degree of acceptance of what constituted listening:

Teacher B. "The story goes well if I accept that the children got the meaning, but didn't go well if I'm looking for exactly what the story said" (Week 15 interview tape).

Details relating to some of the stories presenting difficulties are appended (see Appendix D).

Throughout the intervention period, Teacher B was asked to compare the progress made between different weeks of the story-telling sessions, and to comment on issues such as the teachers' rolling strikes. These comparisons and comments are appended (see Appendix D).

In Week 21 Teacher B was asked to respond to the story-telling program ending in Week 23. The response of Teacher B was that she would continue the story-telling program as "listening and auditory skills are so vital to the children" but "I may well be a little more relaxed and have it three times a week" (Week 21 interview tape). A final comment by Teacher B was:

Teacher B. "I like the consistency of the program and that I can see something happening with the kids. I can't think of anything else I could do that consistently or that regularly that would make some impact on them".

5.5 School C - story-telling program (alternating with music program)

The story-telling program was commenced by Teacher C in the JAC in School C in the second week of Term Two. As in the previous week, the researcher interviewed Teacher C at the school and collected five completed program diaries. A total of 49 out of a possible 59 (83%) completed program diaries for the story-telling sessions were returned by Teacher C for the intervention period (see Appendix D, Table 5.1). Teacher C reported that the story-telling sessions for the week had "gone well":

Teacher C. "The children listened and were quiet and settled" (Week 2 interview tape).

The week was rated "good", a 6 on the 7 point rating scale.

The teacher's average weekly rating during Term Two, was 4 (average) and for Term Three, 5 (above average) (see Appendix D, Table 5.2). Most (88%) of the story-telling sessions took place immediately after the lunch break in the JAC room and the length of the sessions varied from 10 minutes to 30 minutes with the highest percentage (45%), lasting for 10 minutes (see Appendix D, Tables 5.3 & 5.4).

The story-telling sessions for the first week had involved "The Hiding Story", described in the previous section (5.4.3), and various versions of this; these sessions had revealed the childrens' lack of short-term memory and poor language skills to Teacher C. In Week 1, she expressed reservations concerning the story-telling program:

Teacher C. "There are too many words and too much detail. My initial feeling is that this is off-putting. It's like an American program. There is no lee-way in between" (Week 1 interview tape).

In Week 2 of the story-telling program the picture sequencing cards (5.4.3) were introduced into the sessions by Teacher C with an emphasis on remembering the six facts - what, how, which, where, when and who. These cards were used throughout the next two weeks of the program by the students either working with them individually, or with partners to tell a story sequence. Teacher C reported she had to revise the six facts with the students at the beginning of each story-telling program week as they forgot them in the week away from the program. To help the children remember, Teacher C introduced drama into the session at the end of Week 3. The children worked with a partner, developing and acting out their own stories, under the guidance of Teacher C and the assistant:

Teacher C. "The children were really interested. They enjoyed making up their own stories and were accepting of other children's different ideas" (Week 3 interview tape).

The children's continuing lack of recall skills in re-telling a story was discussed with the speech pathologist for the JACs in the ACT by Teacher C in Week 4. At the suggestion of the speech pathologist, instructional type gross motor activities were introduced to help improve their memory skills. Examples of these activities are appended (see Appendix D). During the week, Teacher C also used fact-finding questions to ask the children to re-tell various class incidents such as an excursion to a neighbouring school. She often substituted wrong statements into these re-tell sessions or wrong characters into the stories:

Teacher C. "The children enjoyed this and were quick to pick me up. Their attention span improved a lot during the week" (Week 4 interview tape).

Other improvements were reported in the following weeks when the use of drama in the story-telling sessions was also applied to familiar class stories such as "Billy Goat's Gruff". The school librarian was involved in one of these sessions and Teacher C reported that she "was amazed at the behaviour change of the children, their self-control, organisation, and the expressions used during the dramatisation" (Week 5 interview tape). The success of these sessions in the JAC eventually had implications for other classes in the Junior school. Details of these are appended (see Appendix D). Teacher C reported that the children were highly motivated in these drama sessions and enjoying themselves:

Teacher C. "They [the children] were not just listening. They could act out, take part, re-tell and all were actively participating" (Week 5 interview tape).

The story-telling program was undertaken in the last week of Term Two. However, due to interruptions to the program in that week such as parent interviews and a school excursion, Teacher C decided to repeat the program in the first week of Term Three. During that week the progress of each individual child in listening was evaluated by the assistant through the program's evaluation stories (5.4.3). Copies of children's responses to the evaluation stories are appended (Appendix E).

Teacher C began Term Three with the model story from the story-telling program, "The bear who hated counting". The story was presented as "a game and I frequently stopped to ask questions to see who was listening" (Week 13 interview tape). The story was

read twice to the children in the same way. The same procedure was applied to other stories in the story-telling program, and while reading class story books; it was continued until Week 9 of the story-telling program when two stories from the program were read completely through without interruptions. The children were told by Teacher C that she would read the story right through to try and trick them:

Teacher C. "The children were superb. All participated and they got all the answers. They are trying to concentrate and to listen for information. This is a major breakthrough" (Week 17 interview tape).

The 'breakthrough' with the story-telling program continued for the remaining three weeks of the intervention period.

Throughout the intervention period, Teacher C was asked to compare the progress made between different weeks of the story-telling program. Similar responses to the same question asked in relation to the music program for those weeks were given by Teacher C, that is, in Weeks 2 and 4 of the story-telling program, a student's behaviour had disrupted many of the class lessons and in Weeks 8 and 9, besides Teacher C being on standby for the custody court case, a significant proportion of the children were absent from the JAC with an influenza virus. Further comments on the sessions are appended (see Appendix D).

In Week 21, Teacher C was asked to respond to the story-telling program ending in Week 23. The response of Teacher C was that she wanted to continue the story-telling program alternating it with the music program as she had done for the past two terms - "I think the skills the story-telling program are trying to develop need to be developed. I like the ideas in the program and it is a challenge

to the children (Week 21 interview tape). A final comment by Teacher C was:

Teacher C. "I was quite dubious about the story-telling program in the beginning. I realised the importance of listening skills but a major concern was teaching listening skills in isolation to a literacy or other program. The program was just so formal. I'm sure if I didn't have to use it I wouldn't have used it. However, to my surprise the children really enjoyed the first few weeks . . . it has brought back to me the importance of telling a story not just reading a book which can be a passive participation" (Week 23 interview tape).

5.5.1 A final comment on the music program and story-telling program

Teacher C was asked at the end of the intervention period to respond to undertaking both the music program and the story-telling program:

Teacher C. "It was all right. I think we have coped reasonably well. I have given roughly equal lessons for each program [11 weeks to the music program and 12 weeks to the story-telling program]. On the whole, less lesson-time has been spent on the story-telling program. I felt the children couldn't cope concentrating and sitting still for too long. With the music, because the children could move around and do different things, the lessons tended to be longer" (Week 23 interview tape).

5.6. School D - control JAC

School D was situated in the north of the ACT. As noted in Chapter Four (4.3.2.1), it was one of the more recently established schools involved in the study. Although School D was designed as an open-plan school, the JAC room was located in a section of the school away from the rest of the classrooms. The room was small

and funnel-shaped. In the narrow end of the room were full-length windows and a door with access to the front of the school. There were two other doors into the JAC, one with access to the school hall area and the other to the canteen area. The room was carpeted with the students' desks grouped by the windows. A clear floor space between the two internal entrance doors was used as an activity area by the students. A full-time female assistant had provided aid to the teachers and to the students of the JAC for several years. In Week 16 of the intervention period, she took leave for eight weeks and another female assistant provided relief until her return in Term Four. In Week 14 a female resource teacher was appointed to School D. She undertook several programs with the JAC students both as a class group and with individual students, and assisted with their integration into the mainstream classes of the school.

5.6.1 Teacher D

The male teacher in the JAC had qualified with a Master of Arts degree majoring in Special Education. He had been teaching for nine years; eight of these had been in special education settings involving early intervention and a JAC. Teacher D was a new arrival to the school and to the JAC. At the initial meeting with the researcher, he expressed an interest in the listening skills of the children in the JAC, and indicated a willingness to undertake either the music program or the story-telling program. School D was randomly assigned the role of control school for the intervention period.

In the final week of Term One, arrangements were made with Teacher D regarding a suitable time for the weekly interviews in Term Two and it was agreed to meet in the JAC room on a Friday

morning before recess in Teacher D's time-off from classroom teaching. This arrangement was changed in Term Three to the teacher's time-off period after morning recess.

5.6.2 Students D

During the pretest period in the second-to-last week of Term One, in March, seven children (six males and 1 female) with an average age of 7.8 years (see Chapter Four, Table 4.1) were administered with the test battery (see Chapter Three, Table 3.1).

During the period of the study, some changes took place in the composition of the class. In Term Two, one male student was enrolled for four days of the school week at a Special Centre in the ACT for children with behavioural problems; he attended the JAC on the remaining school day. The student was pretested and postposttested at School D and posttested at the Special Centre with permission from the counsellor in charge. In Week 8, a male student from New Zealand joined the class but was not tested in the posttest or postposttest periods. In Week 22, a male student suddenly left the JAC and School D without prior notice. There was no word of his whereabouts before the end of the intervention period.

Thus, in the September posttest period (second-to-last week of Term Three), six students (5 males and 1 female), were assessed. The same six students were re-tested during the November postposttest period in Term Four.

5.6.3 The role of the control JAC

Information concerning the role of the control JAC was gathered mostly from weekly interviews with Teacher D and

through observations of lessons. As noted in Chapter Four (4.4.1), he did not participate in completing a daily program diary. No interview was conducted in the first week of the intervention period in Term Two as Teacher D was absent from School D. At the interview in Week 2, Teacher D discussed a program he was using to develop the listening skills of the JAC students, which he had begun to use half-way through Term One. During Term One, Teacher D said he also had used a taped music program with the students to develop their listening skills. This music program was not undertaken with the students during the intervention period.

The program to develop listening skills used by Teacher D during the intervention period focussed on developing listening in conjunction with understanding. It was a taped program wherein the students could progress at their own level through a sequence of themes associated with different conceptual levels such as position, meaning, comparison and so on. The students listened to recorded instructions which gradually became more complex and they responded to these on paper. If a student did not hear or understand the instruction the first time, the tape was rewound and the instruction repeated until the student understood. The program was undertaken once a week (occasionally twice weekly) by Teacher D throughout the intervention period on a day when the student exhibiting problems with behaviour was absent from the JAC. Initially the program was organised as a class group, but in Week 3 the group was divided into two groups of three students. As the program became more difficult the grouping varied. By Week 5 one student no longer was involved in the session and worked separately on other activities with the assistant. Occasionally, a student experiencing difficulties with the program in the group situation would undertake the program alone with Teacher D. From

Week 8 until the end of the intervention period, the program was mostly undertaken by the teacher with a group of five children.

The teacher's average weekly lesson rating during Terms Two and Three, was 5 (above average) (see Appendix D, Table 5.1).

Throughout the intervention period, Teacher D was asked to make comparisons between different weeks and to comment on issues such as the teachers' rolling strikes. These comparisons and comments are appended (see Appendix D).

As with the teachers in the other JACs, Teacher D was asked in Week 21 to respond to the intervention period ending in Week 23. His response was - "I will probably continue with the program in Term Four anyway, as I think the children are getting something out of it. It's at least spending time on a Friday where they are sitting concentrating and listening to something specific" (Week 21 interview tape). A similar comment was made by Teacher D in Week 23, although he added he found it "hard to judge if the children's listening skills have actually developed" (Week 23 interview tape). A final comment by Teacher D:

Teacher D. "The fact you've come every Friday has motivated me to make sure I've done the program. If there wasn't that thing there that somebody was going to come and talk, maybe, I wouldn't have done it as regularly. Other things would have taken over easily" (Week 23 interview tape).

5.7 School E - contrast group

School E was a special school attached to the Special Education Centre at Macquarie University located in NSW (see Chapter Four, 4.3.2.1). The classroom, where the students spent three days of their school week, was arranged so that the children could undertake various activities within the room. There were large

windows on two sides of the room and access to outside play areas. The students' desks were grouped to the front of the room alongside a clear carpeted floor space where the students could gather. A full-time female assistant provided aid to the teacher and to the students in the class until the end of the school year.

5.7.1 Teacher E

The female teacher of the contrast group had qualified with a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Special Education. As noted in Chapter Four (4.3.2.2), she had been teaching for approximately 20 years; eight of these were in the special class.

It had been decided in discussions with research advisors (see Chapter Three, 3.5.2), that a group of younger children could provide further information on the development of children's listening skills in a special education setting. In Term One, Teacher E agreed to participate in the study with her class acting as a contrast group. No special intervention treatment was accorded Teacher E such as weekly interviews and weekly ratings, apart from a written request to complete a questionnaire (see Appendix C), and a interview about the childrens' backgrounds (see Chapter Four, 4.2.2.1).

5.7.2 Students E

During the pretest period in the second week of Term Two in April, ten students (6 males and 4 females) with an average age of 4.8 years (see Chapter Four, 4.2.2) were administered with the test battery (see Chapter Three, Table 3.1).

During the period of study, some changes took place in the composition of the class. In Term Two, two students (male) left to attend other schools. Thus, in the September posttest period (second-to-last week of Term Three), eight students were tested (4 males and 4 females). The same eight students were re-tested in the November postposttest period in Term Four.

5.7.3 Questionnaire

The questionnaire addressed specific information concerning specific programs used to develop the students' listening in the class. Teacher E was asked whether she used any specific program, if she did use one when did she use it, for how long, and what the children's response was to the program.

Teacher E replied to the questionnaire that she used a specific group listening game with the children daily, both in the morning and in the afternoon, for approximately 10-15 minutes each session. The program involved the children listening to instructions and directions and responding with a verbal sentence. The class story-time also was considered a specific time for listening by Teacher E. The children were asked questions, or to re-tell a story after it was read, to help them remember the sequence of the story. Teacher E added that the children generally were encouraged throughout the school day to listen to each other and to adults.

5.8 Post-intervention period

It became apparent early in Term Three from interviews with both Teacher A (5.2.3) and Teacher C (5.3.3.1), that these teachers wanted to continue with the music program after the conclusion of

the intervention period. Following discussions with research advisors, it was decided to revise the original study plan of discontinuing the music and story-telling program at the end of the intervention period if the teachers wanted to continue with the programs. It was decided to ask the teachers to respond to the impending conclusion of their commitment to the intervention period. The teachers of the four JACs in the ACT were asked to respond to this question in Week 21. All of the teachers indicated that they would be continuing with the programs they were currently undertaking during Term Four.

In the final week of the intervention period, the four teachers were told by the researcher to continue the listening programs if they wanted to. The weekly interviews, weekly lesson rating, and program diaries would be discontinued, however, by the researcher in Term Four. Apart from a letter to each of the four teachers confirming the date of the posttest week, and a phone call regarding a suitable day for testing the children during that week prior to the posttest period, there was no further contact with the schools or with the teachers until after the posttest period in November.

5.8.1 Final interviews

Following the posttest period in November, a final interview was conducted by the researcher with each of the four JAC teachers in the ACT. The teachers were asked whether they had continued using a listening program since the end of the intervention period, if they had continued with a program how often had they used it, the response of the students, and their

response to taking the program without the weekly interview. A copy of the final interview questions is appended (see Appendix C).

Each of the four teachers had continued using listening programs during Term Four. Teacher A was undertaking the music program for 30 minutes three times a week at the usual time after morning recess. The "favourites" had continued as one of the sessions each week and in the other sessions previously-learnt concepts had been revised and extended through different musical activities. The students' response was "still enthusiastic" especially for the "favourites" session which the students now organised themselves. Teacher A reported that the ability of the students to organise had spread to other lessons especially language activities, and that many of the students were "more confident academically and socially". The fact that some of the children were more confident also had been noted by some of the children's caregivers. Teacher A commented she also had more confidence in teaching music which was "not as difficult as I'd first thought". She had missed the weekly interviews but had not missed filling in the program diaries although brief notes had been made by Teacher A in her day-book. Because the program had not been undertaken as intensely since the intervention period, Teacher A commented - "There hasn't been that continual increase in the children's knowledge perhaps of introduced concepts, but there has been consolidation of ones already done" (Week 31 interview tape).

Teacher C had continued with both the music program and the story-telling program three times a week on alternate weeks during Term Four at the usual time after lunch. The music sessions had lasted approximately 15-20 minutes and the story-telling sessions for 10 minutes. Most of the music sessions had involved the children singing a favourite song as well as learning new songs and

activities in the music program which "they love". New stories also were read to the children from the story-telling program. Teacher C had continued to read the stories straight through to the children but had repeated any stories the children had difficulties with. The children were continuing to "listen and respond well in remembering facts and details". Teacher C had missed the weekly interviews. For four weeks of Term Four she had continued to write program diaries, but due to continual interruptions had stopped. Since then Teacher C felt she had not spent the same time in preparation - "There is no doubt that daily outlines help to keep you "on-task" (Week 31 interview tape).

The story-telling program was undertaken two to three times a week by Teacher B for approximately 10-15 minutes at the usual time of 9 a.m. Since the intervention period, there had been constant revision of stories. Not all of the stories had been read in the program, however, as "some are too long". Teacher B reported that the children had continued to respond well during the story-telling sessions. Without the weekly interviews, lesson rating and program diaries, she found she had used the program "more as a resource and reinforcer over the term, picking it up when I want to" (Week 31, interview tape).

Teacher D continued to use the recorded listening program at least once a week with the whole class group during Term Four. He reported that the children had continued to respond "quite well" to the sessions with fewer repeats and better scores. Teacher D had kept the program going without the researcher's weekly visits which was "the main thing, I guess" (Week 31 interview tape).

All of the teachers indicated that they would use the programs in the future with other students. Adaptations of the story-telling program to the student's level of learning and understanding such

as substituting names, extension sequencing activities, or applying the program's structure to other stories were suggested by Teacher B and Teacher C. Apart from a comment by Teacher C (Week 7 interview tape) regarding the taped music used in an evaluation exercise on pitch (see Appendix D), no other alternatives or adaptations to the music program were suggested by Teacher A or Teacher C.

5.9 Summary

The implementation of the programs in the three JACs, namely the music program, story-telling program, and both the music and story-telling programs, have been discussed in this chapter, along with the role of the control and contrast groups. The teachers participating in the intervention period undertook sole responsibility for the conditions of implementing the programs. The deviation from the original research study, whereby the teachers would cease taking the programs at the end of twenty three weeks, to the teachers continuing the programs after that period, came about through consideration of the student's apparent positive response and enjoyment from participation in the programs. The research advisors and the researcher felt that the students were not experimental "guinea pigs" and should not be deprived of participating in learning activities that were enjoyable.

The response of students, who were identified as case studies, to the music program and the story-telling program will be described in the following chapter.