Teaching More than Writing

A writing and Community Building Project for Liceo Internacional

Quito, Ecuador

Lucia Jarrin A.

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Author’s Name: Lucia Jarrin A.

Author’s signature: ____________________________
In loving memory to my dad's wisdom and courage
Lucia
This paper presents a proposal for a writing program for the Elementary School at Liceo Internacional a school a k-12 school in Quito- Ecuador.
This proposal is the result of the process that the writer underwent during the second summer at the School for International Training in the Summer Master of Arts in Teaching Program (SMAT) and her assessment of the needs at Liceo Internacional School.
It includes a brief description of the mission that the writer has in teaching, then, an account of the context in which the program will be applied and the rationale behind this proposal. It also includes a description of the teachers’ tasks when carrying out the program as well as the program, objectives and procedures for each grade.
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1. My Mission as Teacher

“We teach who we are”
(Parker Palmer).

Undertaking the task of completing this Independent Personal Project (IPP) has been one of the most enriching professional and personal projects I have undertaken so far. Professionally, I have gained new knowledge and perspectives about my teaching practice, beliefs. Personally, I have learned that life has its own pace and that it offers wonders when one patiently allows it to happen.

Recognizing how crucial is in my practice my history as a human being made me decide to begin this paper with the description of the way the way I perceive my mission as teacher at this point of my life. Danny McLaughlin, a former student of the School for International Training (SIT) in Toward the Pathway of a True Human Being his Commencement talk at a graduation ceremony on campus on May 31, 1997 quoting a Navajo medicine-man said: “Often we forget to step back from our running around to think about the important things… What’s most important is to remember what it is to be a True Human Being”. (McLaughlin, 1997, 1). There must be as many conceptions of what a true human being is but I agree with Mr. McLaughlin when he said “...the pathway to becoming a True Human Being does not center around the pursuit of personal happiness, prestige, or gain;” (McLaughlin, 1997, 1). I believe that to discover the
mission one has in life and to become an agent of construction of the internal world and the world around constitutes the mission a true human being. My mission as an educator consists of becoming such a human being and helping others to do so. This mission will be valid if I walk the path of self exploration, if I open a dialogue between heart and mind. As Palmer said “Implicit in this exploration of how we know is an image of truth...truth is an eternal conversation about things that matter, conducted with passion and discipline.” (Palmer, 1998, 104). Thus, my mission is not only to instruct but to help my students become the best human beings they can be by first working on myself in search of truth and of a balance between heart and mind. Many children have not heard the voice within, which from my perspective is the capacity they have to find out truth, because the adults around do not listen to them. I have decided to embark on the mission that others such as the Brazilian Paulo Freire or other anonymous people have it is to give a voice to the voiceless, to construct the human being each person will become in order to build a better world. The only way to construct is to explore, to listen to the voice inside, and to trust the inner medicine-man we all have inside. Since the classroom can be the best place to build up humanity starting from the earliest years, to provide a space in which children can listen to their voices is the deepest goal of my practice.

As a consequence of the new perspectives and the new eyes I have to see my surroundings after the two summers at SIT, an initiative to address a need in the context of my present job emerged. I wanted to find a creative, positive and student-friendly way to introduce writing in the primary school curriculum of Liceo Internacional, the school for which I work.
With 22 years of teaching experience in my country I think I am able to name certain common practices in the field here. One of the most outstanding, which unfortunately is a negative one, is that a fair number of teachers tend to teach from a negative point of view. They do this by paying attention mainly to mistakes, by punishing, or by threatening their students. Many leaders in the field have even compromised with this kind of “education” saying that as Latinos we need to act in these punitive ways due to our undisciplined nature. I know that just like any culture we may have pitfalls but we also have talents. I also know that there are many people like me who feel that we teachers need to renew our perspectives by broadening our minds and horizons through education, by learning to be humble and by acknowledging reality as it is. This means keeping our eyes open to the thousand possible positive sides our reality has and the huge potential it holds. I do not want to compromise with this negative perspective in teaching. This is why I have decided to propose a writing program to teach writing to children from a positive stance.

By no means this paper is intended to be an autobiography, or a journal entry of how life has shaped me. This is to be my IPP project, a professional paper that will give an account of the academic work I carried out with the children in this small school in this small country in this…small world. My thoughts are part of this paper because the project is the fruit of a personal journey that took place as it was being developed. I am glad to be able to share my teaching principles in a program that will hopefully bring about a time for growth for the children and teachers involved in it.
2. About Liceo Internacional School

“School is not a place”
(Greg Henry Quinn).

I am going to present a brief overview of Liceo Internacional, the school which inspired this writing program and for which it was developed. I have included the information I consider relevant to this paper. A detailed description of the school is available in the appendix part.

Liceo Internacional is a private experimental school in Quito, Ecuador, South America. As many schools in Ecuador, Liceo Internacional is a unidad educativa, which means that it is comprised of a pre-school, an elementary school and a high school all in one institution. Here students are admitted at the age of four and leave as high school graduates to pursue university studies at the age of eighteen. There are 730 students at present. Most of them are upper middle class children and teenagers who live in Quito or the surrounding valleys. Liceo Internacional is a branch of the Liceo Internacional Foundation which comprises the school Liceo Internacional, Macarena, a day care center for economically disadvantaged children named after a former student, a little girl who died in an unfortunate accident, and Colegio Fernando Ortiz Crespo a school for poor children in a small town next to Quito’s dump. Liceo Internacional was founded in 1980 by its administrator and owner, Dr. Adriena Varhola, a person who has made Liceo, as we all familiarly refer to our school, the most prestigious school in Quito. One can
attribute this to the school’s high educational standards as well as the careful, personalized humanistic education it provides its students. Liceo has produced successful alumni, who have graduated from universities in Ecuador and abroad, including Yale and the Sorbonne.

Students attend school from seven thirty in the morning to two fifteen in the afternoon. There are eight forty-five minute periods and two recesses during the day: one from ten thirty until eleven and a short one from twelve thirty to twelve forty five. Students who wish to participate in extracurricular activities such as sports or the United Nations Model Simulation. For them school is over at four p.m.

Classrooms in the primary school have 25 students. Pupils at Liceo have English classes twelve times a week in forty-five minute periods. English is included into two subjects: Grammar, which teaches the most formal aspects of the language and Grammar in Context, which reinforces communicative oral skills. Each class is taught by a different teacher, but both of them are asked to try to integrate the four language skills in their lessons so as to make the language acquisition process as real as possible. Teachers and students must communicate only in the target language.

All the teachers have majored in teaching and are bilingual, if not native English speakers. Teachers meet once a week in order to share experiences, receive instructions from the school and to exchange and discuss updated information about teaching. We also come together two periods a month for teacher training sessions in areas specific to language teachers for workshops or conferences of common interest with the other teachers at Liceo.
The school holds eleven values that are to be transmitted and held in our daily routines by all teachers, staff and students. They are:

- Honesty
- Sobriety
- Independence and critical thinking
- Dialogue and Communication
- Ecuadorian identity
- Diligence
- Non-violence
- Responsibility
- Solidarity
- Tolerance and respect
- Having a mission

The last value means that the community members must strive to be better people and prepare themselves to make the world a better place in which to live. I believe this value is very important for I have held it as a personal one since I was a child. The writing project I am proposing is to encourage and promote the value of having a mission as well as the other nine in the children at Liceo.
3. Rationale behind this Writing Project

“Writers are more in the habit of finding significance in their lives”
(Vicky Ointon).

The proposed writing project, which is described in detail in part four, is based on my understanding of the book *The Art of Teaching Writing* by Lucy Calkins. Calkins presents writing as a process of finding relevance and significance, a means of finding meaning in every day life. My original idea for this Independent Personal Project was to write a response to the book because of the significant impact it had on me, but the urgent need to start a writing program at Liceo was a task I wanted to take on.

I have worked for Liceo International since 1998 as a primary and high school teacher. I have served as the Director of the Language Department since 2002. Being part of this community is a big responsibility, but it also gives me a lot of joy because it is the path I decided to walk to contribute to the construction of this world. Teaching has offered me an open fertile field to keep renewing myself as a human being and as a professional. Part of my job is to make sure the standards set at school are maintained and improved whenever possible. In addition, the position I now have at the school enabled me to begin and carry out
this writing project with a team of professional teachers who are willing to start new projects and to do whatever it takes to benefit the children.

Undertaking my SMAT studies was a decision that I made in order to be better prepared for my position. The writing module of the Teaching the Four Skills class in my second summer was revealing because it allowed me to discover myself as a writer. It made me become aware of the importance of seeing writing as a process that begins in the core of our own humanity. That experience made me eager to give the children at Liceo the same opportunity I had had by designing a program to teach writing.

I discuss next the three central ideas for this program. The first and most important is raising awareness. The other two are finding relevance in writing to maintain motivation and connecting the writing program with Philosophy for Children (p4c) which is a teaching approach that I will discuss later here.

3.1 Raising Awareness

Awareness has been acknowledged as the basic first step to any learning process. To gain consciousness of one's talents, drawbacks, interests...is to know where one is and to know where one wants to go. (Millman1999, 19). Says, “Trying to gain a skill without total awareness is like trying to apply a stamp without adhesive- it just won’t stick”. I believe that to gain awareness about anything in life is to enable oneself to profit or enjoy that something at its maximum. I feel I can say this about writing because I have experienced it. This is why the idea of raising students’ awareness is the fundamental idea behind this writing project.
This all started when I read a chapter from Calkins’ book. In the first chapter, the author says that people write to find the meaning of their reality. Vinton in Calkins says “…writers are more in the habit of finding the significance that is there in their lives” (Calkins, 1994, 7). This quote was eye-opening for me as it described what writing had always done for me. I made the connection between writing as a tool to communicate with myself and writing as an academic tool during my second summer at SIT.

I never associated writing with school but rather with life itself because I have always used my journal as a space to speak my mind. I was never able to connect the academic writing with what I had practiced as an innate tool to make sense of my world. It was only after the summer of 2005 that I saw the connection between the two processes.

After the readings, discussions and reflection on them and my experience, I discovered the importance that free writing has in the process of gaining academic writing skills. Calkins says that it allows the person to become familiar with skills such as penmanship, fluency and organization. She says that it enriches vocabulary repertoire and promotes reflection by using material that is relevant to the writer. I believe that once a person has the capacity to write about familiar objects, people or events, she can approach academic writing in a more efficient way than approaching academic writing directly simply, because she has become familiar with the skills I already mentioned.

From the experience I have had in the contexts in which I have taught (primary, secondary school and university in Quito), I can say that most of the time, writing is misunderstood. In the early stages, its teaching is focused only on
the mechanics of the skill, on spelling accuracy and on proper essay writing later on. I would dare say that very few pay attention to the understanding and appreciation of the wonder this skill represents in human life.

My wish when working on this writing project was to give the children at Liceo the possibility of experiencing the joy of learning by being the protagonists in that learning process. They can only have this role if they become aware of their talents and discover the big possibilities they have, once they work on developing their writing skills and their talents too.

During September 2005, after my experience with writing at SIT, I decided to teach a class in which I was going to test my ideas for the writing project to see if they were appropriate. I selected a fifth grade class since it had been considered a difficult one since primary school. By difficult I mean students had been reluctant to participate in the activities their teachers proposed in class and their English language skills were not the best. I thought that if my project worked with them, I might succeed with the rest of the children at school.

When I started this class, my first objective was to give my students the opportunity to appreciate and value the skill they possessed. During our first class, when I asked their opinion about writing I received comments like: “Writing is boring!” or “Teachers love to keep us writing because that way we are quiet”. They deeply disliked writing and thought it was a torture. After the first meeting, in order to have them get in touch with their hands movements, I had them draw lines on a piece of paper to the rhythm of different types of music, from salsa to classical. I had them do this once with their right hand and once with their left hand, so that they could feel how important laterality is and how much we take for granted the
fact that we have our hands do what we want. Then I asked them to follow my
directions of where to draw lines or different shapes. After that first session I asked
them to tell me how they had felt or what they had thought. One of the girls said,
“My cousin is sick. She had an accident and she cannot do what we are doing. We
should be thankful to God for this”. Many of them nodded and some others were
shocked and recognized that they had never thought of that.

In order to achieve my goal of raising awareness, the next class I invited the
first grade teacher to my class to remind the children of the process they had gone
through in first grade when they were learning to write. Marianita, our guest, had
been their first grade teacher. Very vividly, she explained how she had taught
them. It was very moving to witness the children’s reactions. They laughed at the
beginning. Then they said things like, “That is too easy!” to which Marianita
responded, ,“Once it was a big challenge to you. Do you remember dears how
hard it was to write a perfect letter ‘a’ or ‘o’? Do you remember the many times you
had to erase and repeat? Of course now writing is easy for you, but five years ago
it was the biggest challenge you had.”

After that class, with the purpose of reinforcing their awareness of the
process the process, the children were exposed to different words written in other
systems such as Egyptian hieroglyphs and numbers in Thai language (See
Appendix A, p. 47.) and they were asked to reproduce them. Many responses,
comments and jokes came along as we carried out the activity, all of them about
how crazy “drawing” those symbols was. We held a conversation about the fact
that humans have had different writing systems and that mastering them was a
very important achievement. I made reference to what Marianita had told them.
We had a few other classes with different activities after this. In one class I took in a model of the human brain and showed them the areas in which control writing and reading, all of them directed toward the same goal. The children responded and commented openly. The quotes tell us the students’ voices “Why don’t teachers tell us these things? What happens with sick people?” Did we learn all this in first grade? Can we see a real brain? When are we finally going to write? This last question was absolutely motivating for me because all the activities I had carried out seemed to have accomplished the objective of helping the children appreciate the skill of writing.

Two colleagues of mine, another fifth grade teacher and the sixth grade teacher who reproduced my class with their groups, two sixth grade classes and one fifth grade class. We got together after classes to share our experiences and it was amazing to discover that all the classes had apparently enjoyed the exercise as much as my class did. This experience led me to think of starting my proposed writing program as early as first grade. Since fifth graders, who generally are no longer very interested in school, enjoyed and appreciated the exercise so much, that I had to provide the space to preserve and encourage younger children’s fascination on learning.

Most assuredly, realizing how complicated writing is makes me thankful to have been able to master such a skill. This is why making children realize the importance of their literacy process and what a big achievement it is, may encourage them to value writing and to appreciate it more than they usually do.

If children’s awareness is important, it is much more important in teachers. I believe that if teachers became conscious or just remembered the process that
writing involves, they could teach and maintain their students’ interest more effectively. A person’s awareness of writing can be increased when she undergoes the process in a foreign language. She can only be amazed at the wonder that is the human brain. We can never be conscious enough of the importance that awareness has in the learning process until we become aware of our own awareness. I definitely believe that awareness should first be raised in teachers by making them become conscious of the miracle they see occur in their classes. It is sad to say that only when a boy or girl with learning disabilities crosses our path, do we appreciate the wonder that is the human brain. It establishes connections, and allows such “simple” things such as holding a pencil and associating figures with sounds. We teachers many times concentrate on the result so much that we disregard the process. Sometimes writing is reduced to having a well-written sentence or sentences on a piece of paper. Sadly for the children, it has to be the sentence WE want. Unfortunately, that way we kill the children’s innate eagerness to explore the world. Calkins says that letting children use writing as a means to communicate their perceptions could shift their view about writing, too. “They, [children] too, will care about writing when it is personal and interpersonal” (Calkins, 1994, 14).

3.2 Finding Relevance in Writing to Maintain Motivation

Motivation has been studied and defined in many ways in the learning process, but in familiar words it can be defined as the drive that promotes or initiates and maintains learning. It is the teachers’ duty to help children find and
maintain their intrinsic motivation. Linda Shalaway in her book *Learning to Teach* quotes Meier talking about motivation: “It isn’t something you [teachers] have to inspire them with; it’s something you have to keep from extinguishing” (Meier in Shalaway, 2005, 94). The idea of maintaining motivation in writing is important but I think it can be achieved only if children find the relevance writing has in their lives.

When talking about how fascinated young children are about writing, Calkins makes the reader notice that they choose unbelievable places at home, even carpets, become notebooks of figures or pictures that express the desire for record keeping that humans show from early years. The analogy she makes between drawing and writing is very important. In fact, it makes us aware that writing is a form of drawing arbitrary symbols that has become conventional for a certain group of people that share a common code, i.e. language. This is evident when one examines different alphabet systems.

Becoming aware of the innate inclination humans have for record keeping, as Calkins says in her book, can clearly be seen when we watch young children “writing” about things that they consider important. Topping and McManus say this about writing: “The urge to write is more natural than the urge to read” (Topping et al, 2002, 105). They say that if we humans did not have the need to represent whatever is in our minds, or the desire to leave our mark for others, nobody would be interested in reading. This is why they claim that writing came before reading. They reinforce the idea by mentioning the ancient drawings found in caves. The wish primitives had to keep a record of their lives started with drawings to which the “authors” assigned meaning.
After talking to our fifth graders who were part of my class, they really did not seem to see it as a tool but rather as a burden. To them, writing represented a way to accomplish tasks for teachers. Writing was one of the nuisances of school. A few teachers I talked to had not thought about the skill as anything else other than a requirement in order to go to second grade or as the basic skill needed to be able to succeed at school.

The big enthusiasm pre-school children have for homework fades away as soon as they finish the first term in first grade. Why? Calkins claims that teachers should maintain the children’s interest in writing by first letting them write about things that are important to them and then by becoming listeners to whatever is important to them. “Teaching writing is a matter of faith. We demonstrate that faith when we listen well…When we help children know that their lives do matter” (Calkins, 1994, 16, 17).

Calkins further discusses the importance of maintaining the initial motivation that children have for writing. By initial, she means early pre-school years. She suggests that children use a notebook through which they may acquire the habit of record keeping. The importance of this tool is to encourage children to observe their surroundings and the events occurring around them and to take note of anything that calls their attention. The earlier this is done, the easier it will be for them to become writers because unfortunately, as we grow up, we lose the ability to be amazed. Calkins says that around middle grades “… children begin to lose the ability to watch in awe” (Calkins, 1994, 119). She quotes Vicki Vinton, who speaks beautifully about the richness that writing brings into a person’s life. Vinton says that the same richness and magic that many people tend to believe is only for
gifted famous writers. However, we can keep in our own and our students’ lives. “It is an illusion that writers live more significant lives than non-writers; the truth is ‘writers are just more in the habit of finding the significance that is there in their own lives’” (Vinton in Calkins, 7).

In the fifth grade class I taught, I tried to illustrate the relevance of the idea of finding significance in life by giving the children a section of the book Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl (See Appendix B, p. 49.) In the entry I chose, Anne Frank talks about her life, the way she feels and sees the world. We read the piece together and talked about it. One of the students had visited Anne Frank’s museum and was a big fan of her, so he told us her story. The children were very moved and shared ideas about it. One of the girls said: “Yes, but she had a really exciting life! She lived a war! How can one not write beautiful things in those circumstances?” A boy said: “Sure! Our lives are BORING! We always do the same things every day!” Finding significance is a big task. The children and I had a long conversation about the topic. I felt really alive when we arrived to the conclusion that we will never know when we will die, just like Anne Frank did. Therefore, our lives can be as exciting as we make them to be. Noticing our surroundings was the first mission we had. Anne Frank never left the small space where she lived the last years of her life. We, on the other hand, can freely move.

The last activity proposed to the children was to have the children walk around the school yard imagining that they had their last fifteen minutes to see the world. At the end of the walk, they had to return to the classroom and write about anything that called their attention. This was the first writing assignment in the class. It was beautiful to read their compositions. I returned the papers with
questions I had about what they had written. In this way, writing did not become a burden but a means to tell me about their findings, their likes and dislikes. My colleagues and I loved the task as much as the children did. Following Calkins’ idea, we gave the children a booklet that they could decorate as they wished and carry with them all the time to keep a record of whatever they considered worthwhile. This practice was to implement the idea of introducing journal keeping in the writing program at Liceo as the first step toward writing.

The ideas explored so far meant to illustrate what I believe is the most important goal of this writing project: to introduce writing in a natural, student-friendly way by making teachers and students aware of the importance writing has in our lives. It is not only a source of professional pride for academic accomplishment -which many times is limited to having good spellers- or as a tool to please teachers by doing nice homework. I would rather have writing become a source of self-discovery and improvement, a spring of meaningful conversation and a wonderful link to integrate the four skills in the language classroom. Teachers play a very important role in such a project, and in order to be successful, renewing our teaching approach is crucial.

Language teaching methodology encourages teachers to try to integrate the four language skills in the language classroom as much as possible, for that is the way language really works. We listen and understand and then we speak. We read and understand and sometimes comment on things that we read. We write and someone else reads what we wrote or vice versa. For this reason, in order to connect writing with the other skills and to give children a real reason to write, the idea of having a time to share their writing with the class came along. I suggested
having a time to share whatever had been written in the booklets. Unfortunately, the students in my class were not willing to share with their classmates; they were ashamed of what others might say or think about what they had written. A clear problem emerged from this exercise: the class was not a safe place for many children as many of them felt threatened and judged by others. The home-room teacher and I discussed the issue and with the primary school director a project to tackle this discomfort was started. I think a whole new IPP could be written on this phenomenon.

This last experience concerning the classroom not being a safe place for writing to be read and the conversations I had with the other two teachers with whom I worked plus the interaction with the children along with my background in Philosophy for Children (p4c) made me realize the other central idea of my writing project. I will discuss it below.

### 3.3 Connection with Philosophy for Children (p4c)

Philosophy for children is an approach to teach children from early years. There are two main proposals. One by Matthew Lipman whose aim is to provide children with philosophical tools to approach thought and conversation. The other by Per Jespersen who proposes the task of enabling children to remain in touch with their inner self, which according to Jespersen, is the seed of a natural philosopher we all possess. Our inner self is in permanent search of truth.

Throughout my teaching practice with different age groups, the possibility of establishing conversations with the students has shown me that people, no matter
how young or how old they are, have a deep need to be listened to. The language classroom presents rich opportunities for conversations that can not be possible in other classes. Having meaningful conversations in the target language is very profitable for the language acquisition process.

In the year 2001 I became acquainted with Dr. Per Jespersen, a Danish philosopher who has worked on p4c for more than twenty years and with his proposal at an international p4c congress that Liceo Internacional organized. Jespersen claims that children in our day suffer from loneliness. From his talks with children, he says that many of them believe that whatever happens in their lives is not important because nobody around them takes time to talk to them and to share their perceptions, feelings or emotions. Little by little many children lose their capacity to wonder and question themselves, because they learn that it is not relevant or important (Jespersen, 2001). It is sad to admit that many adults are to be blamed for this, maybe because the adults around them when they were children did the same. By giving importance to other things, adults reduce the importance of the inner dialogues children develop in the search for meaning in their world.

Due to my involvement in p4c as part of my practice and the kind of upbringing I had, I think it is my duty to work with children to rescue the “philosopher” within they are born with. What could be a better tool to do so than my teaching practice? The integration of p4c practices in the classroom is intended to preserve the human capacities of questioning and wondering, and to keeping the children open to their surroundings. Jespersen suggests as the main practice opening a space for sincere dialogue in the classroom. This dialogue is a
fixed time during the week in which the teacher and students have a conversation about the events, ideas or questions of the members of the class. This can be defined in Gattegno’s words, as opening a space for: “…dialogue understood as minds in the search of truth. Another one is to conceive the classroom as a community for its members to explore their world and share it with those that are on the same path. By opening a space for “…dialogue with ourselves and our interaction with the challenge we transform ourselves, we develop new ways of functioning, thinking, understanding, feeling, imagining, evoking, etc” (Gattegno, 1993, 3).

The p4c space for dialogue in the case of the writing project could be devoted to sharing the children’s pieces of writing, those that they choose to share with their peers. By listening to each other, asking questions and responding them (or not being able to answer them), the children establish connections that go beyond academic learning and explore their reality while supporting one another. I would like to share a brief dialogue that took place between one of my students and the class. The girl said: “I feel vulnerable now, because now you know what makes me feel scared and you could torture me. Please don’t do it.” One of the boys answered: “If we torture you, we would not be friends and we are because we know each other’s souls.” I think that learning to know and learning to accept oneself fearlessly in a community that supports us and questions us is my way to build up humanity, to learn and to teach more than writing.

I have discussed the central ideas that support the writing proposal for children at Liceo Internacional. In short: By enabling children to become aware of the wonder writing represents, and by giving them space to experience it as a tool
for real communication about topics that are relevant to them, we can preserve the children’s innate motivation toward learning. In addition, we provide them with tools to maintain contact with themselves as well as to establish meaningful contact with their peers. Having that foundation firmly set, not only will a learning community have been built, but language skills that smooth the road to academic writing will also have been constructed by and for the children.
4. Writing Program Practices for Students and Teachers

“They can be like the sun words. They can do for the heart what light can for the field” (St. John of the Cross).

In order to fulfill the goal of the program is introduce writing in the elementary school section of Liceo Internacional; the students were to begin writing by keeping a journal in which they had to record anything that called their attention for whatever reason. Calkins suggests that this be the first step taken to encourage writing and make it relevant to the writer. The other activities that comprise the writing project will be discussed next, and then, a specific program is proposed for each grade as well.

4.1. Sharing

Teachers and students participate in sharing their writing. Sharing time is a time during a class period in which students will read or talk about an entry they have written in their journals. The idea of having a time for sharing is inspired by the importance of integrating the four language skills as much as possible and by the importance of creating a learning community in the classroom.

The integration of the four skills is achieved by taking the children’s written pieces as a starting point. Each child should have time to share his work orally with his peers. This oral interaction exercises listening and speaking skills.
Reading skills are reinforced when the children read their own or somebody else’s work.

The creation of a learning environment in which children are able to express their ideas, questions, concerns, and feelings is, in my view, a way to provide a space for children to get in touch with their inner selves and therefore, grow up as conscientious human beings. Community Language Learning (CCL) is an approach that advocates the importance of human contact within the language classroom. Tom Miller et al summarized it as follows:

“[CCL]…stands for the philosophy, principles and attitudes from which practices are designed. It stands for a non-defensive learning environment the teacher/counselor consciously nurtures. It symbolizes the supportive space where the risks and challenges necessary for learning can happen and everyone in the experience can gain a sense of dignity, worth and achievement…” (Miller et al, 2004, 2)

CCL encourages the possibility of giving space to a whole human being, i.e. emotions and intellect, in the classroom. I think that when we teachers create and maintain an environment in which students feel safe, we help shape well-rounded human beings. This is key because whether we like it or not, students are emotional as well as intellectual beings and both facets should be welcome and acknowledged in the classroom. “We [educators] must learn how to attend to the words and movements of others around us. We must learn to attend to matters of the heart” (Henderson, 2004, 5). In this way we are more likely to teach and to learn on a two way road; thus, students and teacher can teach and learn about the language and about each other. Journal sharing time can then become, more than a time to trigger language acquisition, a time to learn about partners. The knowledge children and teachers obtain from each other is the essential material to build up a learning community in the classroom.
Teachers have an important role during sharing, which is to create a safe and nurturing atmosphere. This atmosphere, as Calkins says, “…is absolutely determined by what happens in the playground, on the bus, and in the cafeteria. We cannot write well if we are afraid to put ourselves on the page” (Calkins, 1994, 143). Creating this atmosphere is the teacher’s responsibility as the adult who is there to take care of the children’s general education, which goes further than mere academic training. More and more in our post modern world, school has become a substitute for the home because it is there that children spend most of their time since many children interact with the adults in their families only a few hours during weekdays or weekends.

I absolutely agree with Jespersen when he says that the feeling of loneliness that some children experience nowadays is a consequence of the lack of an adult interlocutor who is willing to spend time with them not only to instruct or to demand results, but also to listen (Jespersen, 2000). We present-day teachers have an enormous responsibility because we are often the only adults children are in contact with more often that with their parents. It is crucial for children to feel accepted and listened to. As Upland says: “When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand. Ideas actually begin to grow within us and come to life… It makes people happy and free when they are listened to” (Ueland, 1992, 104). In the classroom, teachers need to become increasingly aware of the importance of not only transmitting academic knowledge, but also of the value of providing room for the students to grow as human beings. Again, this is done by creating a special time during which everybody can express their concerns, news, and feelings. This also encourages students to listen to each other and accept
each other's differences and in this way honor life and share the treasures each one of them carries within.

Calkins asks a very challenging question: “Toward what end are they [our classes] working?” (Calkins, 1994, 160). She challenges teachers by asking us to analyze what purpose we are striving towards in our lessons. Do we just want our classes to go smoothly? Or do we want students to be in charge of their learning process? What is the ultimate goal we have in our teaching? Calkins explains her desire to “…teach into their intentions, to teach in response to their concerns” (Calkins, 1994, 160). The aim of this writing program is to provide a space in the language classroom for students to write and talk about what is relevant and meaningful to them. It is amazing to see how honest children are on paper and to witness the deep conversations they can engage in once they get a taste of what it means to listen to each other respectfully.

4.2. Editing

This process is carried out by teachers and students. Unlike many authors who think that editing is an obstacle to creativity, Calkins supports the idea of editing students’ work based on the belief that once a piece comes to light it belongs to anybody who reads it. One of the most important goals of this writing program is to encourage the students to see themselves as writers, as authors. This implies the task of creating a sense of ownership of any piece they produce. Students should learn to be in charge of their production. They should learn that they are responsible for what their writing communicates. As a consequence,
students should accept responsibility for their pieces by becoming familiar with the editing process and by assuming the responsibility for editing their pieces as early as possible. This process promotes in children the responsibility of always doing their best and learning to always review their work. Calkins suggests teachers create a checklist for students to refer to before turning in any work to be edited by the teacher. A checklist created for each level created in this project will be provided in the description of each grade’s program in chapter five.

In first and second grade, editing is a personal task. It consists of the student verifying that his name and date are written on the paper and evaluating the quality of the student's own work. Peer editing is added to personal editing from third grade on. For this to take place, children start by just writing entries during the first term. In the second term they can select any piece they wish and share it with a classmate. Peer editing is done in pairs. During this pair-work time, children read the chosen entry to their partners. The listener may ask as many questions as he wishes and he may request certain things to be clarified. The reader must write all this information down. The edited piece is revised with the partner and then with the teacher until the student feels he has worked it well enough on it. The best way to introduce this practice seemed to be the following: The teacher asks for a volunteer. This student reads any selected piece to the class. After that, all questions and comments are welcome, all of which the teacher writes down for the next step which is that all the class rewrites the entry, including the information requested by the audience.

This practice of peer editing, besides giving students a time to share their pieces and therefore, to get to know each other better, gives them a clear idea of
the importance of reader-based writing, editing and writing as a process. It also reinforces listening skills and creates a true learning community. Meeting with the partner after the first editing process and receiving direct feedback is the best way to find out if the editing process was effective or if the document needs to be revised. Of course, the teacher’s feedback is another source for improvement. Additionally, this practice is aimed at building up the sense of authorship, which from my point of view is a means to prevent plagiarism. Plagiarism is a very sensitive issue that unfortunately has been disregarded in Ecuadorian society and therefore needs to be addressed.

It is crucial for teachers to know that the students’ entries are personal stories, points of view. It is essential to remember that we have asked the children to share their inner world with us. It is compulsory for us to honor those pieces by respecting children's right to privacy when they request it. All comments must be made to the author and not to other teacher or student. One must not forget that writing is a path to explore, to ask, to wonder, and to reach your innermost thoughts. Teachers are not to judge ideas or values. They should invite students to communicate, and they should work to become trustworthy in their eyes. I am sure that if we keep these ideas in mind, the editing time could become an enriching experience for both teacher and students.

Teachers need to keep in mind that editing is part of the writing process and therefore they need to respect each child’s process by giving importance to the creation of a sense of authorship in everyone, because it is during the writing process that students acquire responsibility for editing their work. If writing is a task that students carry out to please their teacher, they will work for the teacher’s
approval and thus put all the responsibility on her shoulders. Students should, on the contrary, become communicators to whom teachers are merely assistants who help them overcome certain major difficulties and who invite them to do their best.

Part of the teacher’s task is to hold editing conferences with students. The conferences should be directed toward reflection upon each child’s process of awareness about his writing skills and encouragement of the child’s capacities to become attentive to his surroundings and experiences. Teachers should take into account the clarity of mind and openness young children have about their performance, and remember how fruitful it is to safeguard the connection children have with their inner selves and thus work wisely to enhance those connections during the conversations with each child. This connection between mind and internal self will not only create more sensitive people who are able to communicate effectively; it will also generate independent learners, i.e. students who have learned how to learn. In order to hold successful editing sessions, teachers must be conscious of the fact that language acquisition is a process and that mistakes are part of that process. Calkins explains that children's reasoning is always in some way logical: “When we understand the intelligence behind students' errors, we can help in a way that truly extends their understanding.” (Calkins, 2004, 306). It is the teachers’ duty to understand that logic, by asking ourselves or the child what he could have been thinking when writing the piece. Mistakes tell us where the child stands in the learning process and if we pay attention they also give us the clues as to how to help children improve.

Editing conferences must be carried out with a positive spin. Teachers should start by acknowledging what the student did and celebrating it. Students
need to be supported, encouraged and guided rather than corrected and reprimanded. It is important to deal with one issue at a time. Find the most urgent issue to make the piece clearer and work on that; for example, the use of periods at the end of sentences. Teachers should show what needs to be improved and keep each child motivated. Holding editing conferences with each child is very important because many times what is written on the paper is not enough feedback for some children. Time for conferences with each child as the work progresses is the time for the teacher to prove that she works with the child until the piece is ready for the audience.

Editing conferences must not be reduced to giving feedback on how a piece has or has not been corrected. The most important part of the editing conference is the dialogue that each teacher must initiate with each student to invite him to reflect on the kind of work he is doing, on the difficulties or strengths he finds in his work and on the awareness of his process as a writer.

4.3. Keeping Records for Assessment

This is a process for teachers. Calkins begins the chapter on assessment by making a very important clarification: assessment is not evaluation. Assessment has many times been equated with testing either by standardized tests or tests done by teachers. Authentic assessment is a tool that constructivist teaching uses. Since classes at Liceo have a constructivist perspective, receiving true data from real classrooms and real events in classrooms is essential in making any decisions about syllabus or curriculum.
“There are many reasons to applaud the new interest in authentic assessment. Above all, we can applaud because the current interest grows out of the fact that constructivist approaches to teaching are becoming more central, more mainstream in our schools.” (Calkins, 2004, 315).

It is important to work individually with students and to respond to their needs. When talking about assessment Calkins says that each teacher should create her own system as long as it serves the purpose of having evidence of each child’s progress. This evidence will not only enable the teacher to give each child the motivation and feedback he needs, but it will also help each teacher to see how accurately she is working toward the objectives set for each year.

Calkins presents various examples of record keeping: recipe cards (one for each student), a notebook with a brief description of the interview and a notation of the child’s progress based on descriptors in rubrics: Teachers who continuously study and observe their students are better prepared for everyday decision-making because they base their decisions on students’ needs. Such teachers usually obtain really successful results.

4.4. Writing a Reflective Piece

This is also a process for teachers. If they are to lead the reflective process of their students, they must have the habit of reflecting upon their own practice and learning. Records of students’ progress and their everyday practice are a rich source of personal and professional growth. If teachers teach writing, they should experience it. Every term teachers at Liceo are required to write a report on
students' progress. A reflective piece about their teaching of writing will be required too. The aim of this requirement is to give teachers the opportunity to experience what their students do and to introduce a healthy habit in the profession that leads to renewal and awakens awareness of the need for permanent study. Teachers will have a time for sharing with other teachers and with the program coordinator in the same kind of sharing time they have in the classroom with their students.

4.5. Publishing a Collection of Students’ Work

Teachers are to take the lead in producing a publication of students' writing. It should appear during the third term of school in June as the actual materialization of the children's work. Our aim is to promote the children's writing skills. If we want them to see themselves as authors and as writers, they must be treated as such and must publish their work. Students should keep all the pieces they consider are ready to be published. Teachers should ask each child to select one piece among all the selected ones to be included in the annual class publication.
5. Description of the Program

“...The map of progress has no straight roads”
(Greg Henry Quinn).

I am going to give a description of the objectives, practices for the writing program. They are going to be given for two grades a time, because at Liceo we consider each pair of grades as a cycle with particular characteristics and requirements each. The program is based on that rationale.

5.1. First Grade

In first students learn how to read and write. They also become familiar with the routines at Liceo.

By the end of first grade students should be able to:

- Keep a visual journal with at least three entries a week.
- Describe, at a beginner level, what each entry represents.
- Write his name on each entry.
- Evaluate the kind of work she has done when recording the entry.
- Actively listen to classmates when they are sharing their entries.

First graders at Liceo have already had two years of exposure to the English language and are familiar with basic vocabulary related to home, colors, shapes, community workers, pets, farm animals, toys, fruit, vegetables, and weather, with an average of six words per category. They are also familiar with
prepositions such as "in", "on", and "behind", and language patterns such as I like..., I see..., I have..., I want... .

The first grade teacher has the responsibility of encouraging the children’s natural desire to communicate by asking questions and praising each child’s participation. Teaching the children to take turns and to raise their hand to speak is crucial during this school year. During first grade, children are eager to talk about the events and people around them, which is why it is important for the teacher to give clear instructions and tell the students they can draw anything they consider important even if they do not know the words in English. During journal sharing time the teacher must provide for necessary words.

The teacher has to instruct the children on how to use the editing checklist before they turn in any entry. The checklist will be provided in the form of a slip attached to their notebooks.

The editing checklist for first grade includes:

1. Name.....

2. 😊 😞

Number one is to make sure children have written their full name and number two is for self evaluation of the kind of work done. If they did their best effort, they will color the first face and if they feel they can do better next time, they will color the second face.
5.2. Second Grade

By the end of second grade students should be able to:

- Keep a visual journal with at least three entries a week, accompanied by one or two sentences referring to it.
- Describe, at an upper beginner level, what each entry represents.
- Write their name and date on each entry.
- Evaluate the kind of work they have done when “writing” the entry.
- Actively listen to classmates when sharing their entries.

Children at Liceo start writing in English in the second term in second grade. Before that, they copy words and they “read” them as in a global approach to reading and writing. The school has decided to approach the language in this way because we prefer the children to have their Spanish literacy process well defined first. In the second term they start receiving Spelling and Phonics as part of their instruction. This is why it is only then that they are asked to keep a visual journal with one or two sentences about the entry. The time for sharing has to have the same general characteristics as in first grade until the second term when the children are formally introduced to verbs in the present tense, and in the third term to past tense. It is important to clarify though, that starting in first grade, the teacher should supply past tense when needed, without explaining the grammatical necessity for the word. This helps students to become familiar with the verbs forms as means for communication rather than meaningless forms in the Grammar class. Thus, when the time comes for formal instruction about verb
tense, a rule or explanation will make sense in terms of practical use and not in
terms of something as distant as the explanation in a text book.

The check list for second grade will be as follows during the first term:

1. Name…

2. ☺ ☻

By the end of the second term it will be changed to:

1. Did I write my full name?

2. Did I write the correct date?

3. Did I use capital letters correctly?

4. Did I use periods at the end of sentences?

5. Did I add an ‘S’ to verbs with s/he, it, in present tense?

6. Did I use past tense to talk about events that happened before I did my
   homework? (This question will be introduced after the unit on past
   tense has been completed.)

7. ☺ ☻

5.3. Third Grade

By the end of the third grade students should be able to:

- Keep a journal with at least three entries a week. The entry should
  consist of five-to-six sentence paragraph with any visual additions if the
  student wishes.

- Read their entry to the class.
• Evaluate the kind of work they have done when writing the entry.
• Actively listen to classmates when sharing their entries.
• Maintain a meaningful exchange about the topic presented in the entry with classmates and teacher.
• Work with a partner and give feedback to edit the partner’s work.
• Edit a selected piece with the help of a classmate and the teacher.

A key point to consider is introducing language conventions as tools that will enable the writer get his message across. Starting with capitalization and periods in simple sentences, exclamation and question marks, etc., teachers should introduce their use whenever it is relevant for the writer. It is only when we need something that we discover its relevance. At the same time, in third grade students receive formal instruction on the use of language conventions as part of the program in the Grammar curriculum. This is why an item covering this issue will be introduced in the editing checklist for third graders.

Peer editing starts in third grade. Before this is possible, students must have acquired the ability of listening to their classmates and answering the questions asked. However, teachers should keep in mind that even adults are continuously in the process of learning how to listen properly, so it should be expected that children may require continuous monitoring and reflection on this process. The way to introduce this activity was already presented in 4.1.2.

The checklist for editing in third grade includes:

1. Did I write my full name?
2. Did I write the correct date?
3. Did I use capital letters correctly?

4. Did I use language conventions: commas, periods, exclamation and question marks in the paragraph?

5. Did I indent my paragraphs?

6. Did I add an ‘S’ to verbs with s/he, it, in present tense?

7. Did I use the past tense to talk about events that happened before I did my homework?

8. Did I give complete information to the reader?

9. 😊 😕

5.4. Fourth Grade

By the end of fourth grade students should be able to:

- Keep a minimum of three entries a week in their writing notebooks. Each entry should consist of five-to-six sentence paragraph with a visual addition if wanted. The entry may be the summary of an event or story or a journal entry.
- Read their entry to the class.
- Evaluate the kind of work they have done when writing the entry.
- Actively listen to classmates when sharing their entries.
- Maintain a meaningful conversation about the topic presented in the entry with classmates and teacher.
- Work with a partner and give feedback to edit the partner’s work.
- Edit a selected piece with the help of a classmate and the teacher.
• Select one piece of work to be published in June.

In fourth grade children write summaries and retell events. They use their journals to develop their pieces which may be selected according to their preferences. In this year children learn how to use comparatives and superlatives; they also learn the use of adverbs and present perfect tense in the Grammar class. The teacher should celebrate the correct usage of the already mentioned contents in the children’s pieces. The editing process will be carried out as in third grade, meaning both peer editing and teacher editing are to be done. The students select their favorite piece to be published in June.

The checklist for editing in fourth grade includes:

1. Did I write my full name? …
2. Did I write the correct date? …. 
3. Did I use capital letters correctly? …. 
4. Did I use language conventions: commas, periods, exclamation and question marks in the paragraphs? …. 
5. Did I indent my paragraphs?
6. Did I add an ‘S’ to verbs with s/he, it, in present tense? …
7. Did I use the past tense to talk about events that happened before I did my homework?
8. Did I use comparisons correctly when necessary?
9. Did I give information about actions by using adverbs correctly?
10. Did I give complete information to the reader?
11. 😊 😊
5.5. Fifth Grade

By the end of the fifth grade students should be able to:

• Keep a writing notebook with at least four entries a week. The entry should consist of two or more paragraphs about any topic they wish with any visual additions they want to include. The students who wish to work on poetry should be encouraged to do so and to develop this talent.

• Read their entry to the class.

• Evaluate the kind of work they have done when writing the entry.

• Actively listen to classmates when sharing their entries.

• Maintain a meaningful conversation about the topic presented in the entry with classmates and teacher. Give reasons for their choices and support their ideas.

• Work with a partner and give feedback to edit the partner’s work.

• Edit a selected piece with the help of a classmate and the teacher.

• Select one piece of work to be published in June.

Fifth grade students continue working on summaries and narratives of their choice. At this point children are pre adolescents, so journal entries become very important and they really enjoy writing them and receiving feedback from peers and teachers. Many times, children decide to undertake a narrative or summary but at the same time they also wish to continue writing entries in their journals. Sharing time may become a time when the differences between boys and girls become particularly evident. This is a precious time to work on gender differences
and for boys and girls to understand that many sexist attitudes and preconceived notions in our society are more fiction than fact.

The checklist for editing in fifth grade includes:

1. Did I write my full name?
2. Did I write the correct date?
3. Did I use capital letters correctly?
4. Did I use language conventions: commas, periods, exclamation and question marks in the paragraphs?
5. Did I indent my paragraphs?
6. Did I use the appropriate verb tensed correctly?
7. Did I use comparisons correctly when necessary?
8. Did I give information about actions by using adverbs correctly?
9. Did I give complete information to the reader?
10. Did I do my best?

In fifth grade students review all the grammar they learned in the other grades and at the end they learn the past perfect tense and also the first and second conditionals. Teachers in this school year should invite students to express their ideas, feelings, and points of view as accurately as possible and give them the opportunity to enlarge their lexicon by finding synonyms and antonyms, paraphrasing and using quotes.
5.6. **Sixth Grade**

In sixth grade children at Liceo do a general review of English grammar at a high intermediate level. The children's writing skills should include the capacity to:

- Keep a writing notebook with at least five entries a week. The entry should consist of two or more paragraphs about any topic they wish with a visual addition if desired.
- Read their entry to the class.
- Actively listen to classmates when sharing their entries.
- Maintain a meaningful conversation about the topic presented in the entry with classmates and teacher. Give reasons for their choices and support their ideas.
- Write a reflective piece about their performance in any issue related to home or school.
- Work with a partner and give feedback to edit the partner's work.
- Edit a selected piece with the help of a classmate and the teacher.
- Select one piece of work to be published in June.

In sixth grade students are taught about interviews. During this school year they, not the teacher, are in charge of editing their final publication. The material to be published contains students' pieces, such as narratives, stories, interviews, news items, poems...anything they consider is fit to be published. Students work in groups for the different tasks such as editing, photography, format, publicity, distribution. The different groups meet and plan their work during the second term, once they have all already produced and selected some written work of their
preference. In June there is a launching ceremony with the attendance of the children and their parents. In that ceremony one representative of each group talks about the experience on behalf of his peers. Each student receives a copy of the publication as well as the school principal.

    The writing program that has been described above was implemented in September 2006. There may be changes to it as teachers work on it and find better ways to apply it. A new IPP could be written about those changes and the justification for making them.
6. Conclusions

“The shapers of the young are
The shapers of the future”
(Greg Henry Quinn).

Undertaking this IPP has been a great learning experience for me. It has been wonderful to explore writing starting at the personal level and going further than that, to give to the children who are the reason of my everyday effort. I believe that the biggest achievement in my career, so far, has been to understand writing beyond the language skill to be mastered in the classroom, as well as to be able to find a clear connection between it and the construction of humanity. I have summarized the core ideas I have gained after this work as follows:

- Writing is a process that should be started as soon as possible at school by opening spaces that promote it. If its nature is understood, its earliest manifestations such as drawings that stand for ideas should be acknowledged and encouraged in young children.
- If writing is used as a tool to find significance in one’s life, one is more likely to easily acquire skills such as organization, fluency, creativity.
- Teachers who teach writing should undergo a process similar to the process students undergo, for one can in order to understand a process and guide somebody else through it in a more efficient manner if one has walked down the same path.
• Teachers who teach writing should become familiar with all the mental and physical processes involved in writing to understand, appreciate and help students in the process.

• To have a two way learning system, i.e. a system in which teachers and learners learn, may open spaces in the heart and the mind of teachers and learners and may permit the creation of a learning community in the classroom.

• P4c seems to be a framework that can be applied to any practice at school for its aim is to rescue and preserve the innate connection that children have with their inner world and to put children in contact with their peers and teachers or any adult involved in the children’s education.
7. Suggestions for Further Study

“The IPP is always a step into the future”
(Bonnie Mennell).

At the end of my second summer when I envisioned the end of my IPP, I thought that it was going to be the closure of some period in my life. I could not be more wrong. The process of the IPP is the beginning of a journey both personally and professionally. It is a joy to say that when finishing writing this paper the ambition of searching further and exploring teaching and learning is even more alive than at the beginning. As I mentioned in chapter five, this program is now being used. Several areas could be further studied by teachers and administrators. Most important of all students’ comments and suggestions about it are so far the most enriching source for its improvement and development. I have written the ideas that I consider are worth exploring after this project.

- Regular classroom observations during the execution of this program could be carried out in order to assess that what has been suggested in this paper is valid for the children and teachers at Liceo Internacional.

- It would be very interesting to study the learning process in first graders and to observe the way they gain oral and aural skills from the perspective of the language acquisition process.
• It would also be interesting to observe children who have had at least one year of this writing program in their writing performance in high school at Liceo Internacional.

• A follow up study on the reflections of teachers when carrying out this project would be very interesting not only as a way to improve the program but also as a tool to learn about our conceptions and paradigms about teaching and learning.

I hope that by the end of the school year 2006-2007 the teachers I worked with and I would have time to get together and implement the necessary changes to this writing program. I also hope that if someone reads it, s/he could let me know his ideas and opinions for they will be a source of inspiration and improvement.
Appendices
APPENDIX A

The following are numbers from 1 to 10 in Thai Language

๐ ๑ ๒ ๓ ๔ ๕ ๖ ๗ ๘ ๙ ๐
“I hope I shall be able to confide in you completely, as I have never been able to do in anyone before, and I hope that you will be a great support and comfort me” Anne Frank.

Saturday, 3 October, 1942
Dear Kitty,

There was another dust-up yesterday. Mummy kicked up a frightful row and told Daddy just what she thought of me. Then she had an awful fit of tears so, of course, off I went too; and I’d got such an awful headache anyway. Finally, I told Daddy that I am much more fond of him than Mummy, to which he replied that I’d get over that. But I don’t believe it. I have to simply force myself to stay calm with her. Daddy wishes that I sometime volunteer to help Mummy, when she doesn’t feel well or has a headache; but I shan’t. I am working hard at my French and am now reading La belle Hélvétie.

Yours, Anne

Friday, 21 April, 1944
Dear Kitty,

Yesterday afternoon I was lying in bed with a sore throat, but since I was already bored on the first day and did not have a temperature, I got up again today. It is the eighteen birthday Her Royal Highness Princess Elizabeth of York.

Friday, 3 March, 1944
When I looked into the candle this evening I felt calm and happy. Omma seems to be in the candle and it is Oma too who shelters and protects me and who always makes me feel happy again.

But...there is someone else who governs all my moods and this is...Peter. When I went up to get potatoes today and was still standing on the stepladder with the pan, he at once asked, “What have you been doing since lunch?” I went and sat on the steps and started talking. At a quarter past five (an hour later) the potatoes, which had been sitting on the floor in the meantime, finally reached their destinations.


Miller, Tom. Et al 2004 “A C-L /CLL Introductory Workshop” Counseling Learning Institute: SIT.


