

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 336 751

CS 213 029

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 TITLE Student Perceptions of Achievement in School Literature. Report Series 3.5.  
 INSTITUTION Center for the Learning and Teaching of Literature, Albany, NY.  
 SPONS AGENCY National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C.; Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.  
 PUB DATE 91  
 NOTE 22p.  
 AVAILABLE FROM Literature Center, University at Albany Ed B-9, 1400 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12222.  
 PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)  
 EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.  
 DESCRIPTORS \*Academic Achievement; Educational Research; High Schools; \*High School Students; \*Literature Appreciation; \*Student Attitudes; Student Experience; \*Student Reaction  
 IDENTIFIERS Aesthetic Reading; New York

ABSTRACT

A study examined students' perceptions of the nature of literature learning and achievement. Subjects, 1,226 10th through 12th grade students from basic, average, and honors classes in 10 rural and urban schools in the State of New York were asked to write a letter to a younger student explaining how to do well in literature classes. The students were asked to give at least five specific pieces of advice. Results indicated that students saw listening in class and keeping up with homework to be the most important facets of success in school. Results also indicated that the students in the higher track added a concern with reading procedures, particularly the amount of reading and the use of guides and a concern with a personal psychology related to school and reading literature. Results also showed that schools support 2 different approaches to literature, dividing society into two cultural groups: one that takes literature and the life of the mind seriously, and one that sees it as apart from the business of living. (Four tables and two figures of data are included; one appendix, a classification of student advice on achievement in literature, is included.) (PRA)

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**National Research Center on  
Literature Teaching & Learning**  
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**Report Series 3.5**

**1991**

Preparation of this report was supported in part by grant number G008720278, which is cosponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI/ED), and by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and by grant number R117G10015, which is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI/ED). However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of OERI/ED or NEA, and no official endorsement of either agency should be inferred.

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Center-sponsored research falls into three broad areas: teaching and learning processes, curriculum and assessment, and social and cultural traditions in the teaching and learning of literature. Special attention is given to the role of literature in the teaching and learning of students at risk for school failure, and to the development of higher-level literacy skills, literary understanding, and critical thinking skills in all students.

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## Student Perceptions of Achievement in School Literature

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One strand of research conducted at the Center for the Learning and Teaching of Literature has focused on assessment. In performing these studies, we have been examining the underlying question of how achievement in literature might be defined by the various players in the game of school learning. The research projects have looked at the current state of testing (Brody, DeMilo & Purves, 1989), at the implications of domain-referenced assessment (Purves, Li & Shirk, 1990; Li, Purves & Shirk, 1991), at teachers' perceptions of student learning (Johnston, Afflerbach & Weiss, 1990), and at the theoretical issues surrounding text difficulty and thus at levels of learning and performance (Purves, 1991). These studies have so far neglected one of the major groups of players: the students. What do high school students consider the nature of literature learning and achievement to be? Answers to such a question may help us to understand something of the nature of achievement as it is made operational in the classroom.

There have been virtually no studies focussing on students' perceptions of subject learning in literature, although a few studies have included student questionnaire items (Purves, 1973; Langer, Applebee, Mullis & Foertsch, 1990; and Li, Purves & Shirk, 1991), in order to relate students' perceptions (particularly perceptions of the critical approach that is taught) and interest to achievement. These studies have consistently shown a decrease in interest in reading literature as students proceed through school. This study seeks to focus more directly on the perceptions of achievement and learning that are commonly held by students.

A previous study of composition learning conducted through the International Association for the Evaluation of Student Achievement had developed a novel way of gaining information on student perception (Takala, 1987). In that study, the students were asked to write a friendly letter of advice to a student coming to their school on how to do well in writing. The responses were subjected to a content analysis and tabulated by category. That study showed that internationally students saw success in writing primarily in terms of handwriting, spelling, and neatness. The research team at the Literature Center decided to emulate this approach and look at literature from a similar perspective.

### The Pilot Study

In order to develop the content analytic scheme, a judgment sample of ten schools was drawn from around the state of New York to represent urban, rural, and suburban schools. Teachers were asked for their cooperation and two 10th, 11th, or 12th grade classrooms in each school provided the data.

The students were given the following instructions:

Write a letter of advice to someone two years younger than yourself who is intending to attend your school and who has asked you to explain how to do well in literature classes in your school. Write a friendly letter and include in it at least five specific pieces of advice.

In general the student responses were full, many covering two pages of manuscript. Clearly, the task seemed to be one that they enjoyed writing on, and most took it seriously.

The research team read through the responses and developed a coding system. The procedure was one of first isolating the specific pieces of advice (each was usually contained within a separate sentence or independent clause) and then placing them in similar groups. As the team worked through the sample, they found that three levels of specificity seemed to suffice. At a broad level of generality, the advice fell into four categories: reading strategies, writing strategies, student strategies, and general attitudes. Within each category the team grouped a number of pieces of advice on the same topic (e.g. content, structure, style, surface features, procedures, and journals were all grouped within writing strategies). There would be a group of responses within one of those topics that had an even narrower focus (e.g. truthfulness,

topicality, clarity, source material, and thoroughness were grouped within content). The coding scheme, therefore, could employ a three-digit system in which the first digit represented the main category, the second digit the subcategory and the third the specific topic within the subcategory. This procedure was followed until there were no responses that fell into a miscellaneous group and until the four general categories had very few representatives. The elaborated scoring scheme appears in Appendix 1.

## **The Current Study**

The next phase of the study was to use the scheme with a larger sample. The schools in the sample were selected from the pool of award-winning schools used in a previous study (Applebee, 1990). Ten schools were selected to represent a broad geographic field and a range from rural to urban. The department chairs in each school were invited to participate, and from the pool eight schools agreed. Each school was asked to draw three classes: honors or advanced placement; mixed or college preparatory; and basic. Only four schools returned responses from each type of class and some oversampled from one type, so that the analysis was based on eight schools and 1,226 students with 113 from basic classes, 723 from average classes, and 387 from honors or advanced placement classes. It is unclear whether this imbalance reflects the distribution of students in United States schools.

Two raters were trained to use the scheme. One rater marked off each composition to separate the pieces of advice. In many cases the students gave more than the required minimum, and one provided nearly thirty separate pieces of advice. All pieces were coded. The total number of pieces of advice for coding was 7,890. Each rater then coded the sentences in a portion of the compositions. A check coding of a randomly selected 70 compositions (430 pieces of advice) was performed. The agreement on category was extremely high, there being disagreement on only two sentences. At the subcategory level, the agreement was 84% and at the topic level 68%. This agreement tallies with previous experience at such coding, and prompts the researcher to report results at the category and subcategory levels. In all cases, the data were analyzed for the total population, for the schools across tracks, and for the tracks across schools.

## **Results**

In preparing the data for analysis, the figures were based on the proportion of the students selecting one or more of the items from a topic, a subcategory, or a category. The reason for this procedure was that it was deemed better to determine the preponderant message concerning instruction even when students repeated the same piece of advice or related advice from the same subcategory.

The first tally was of the most frequently occurring specific responses, shown in Table 1. The five most frequently occurring pieces of advice come from the broad categories of classroom strategies and general philosophy. The students see listening in class and keeping up with homework to be the most important facets of success in school; no other piece of advice is selected by more than a quarter of the population. It seems clear that this group of students sees success in literature as an affair of the classroom. At the subcategory level, the students in the higher track add a concern with reading procedures, particularly amount of reading and the use of guides and a concern with a personal psychology related to school and reading literature. No specific aspect of writing receives any significant amount of emphasis by any group.

Within this broad picture of school literature learning, we note two sources of variation. One source of variation is by school (Table 2 and Figure 1). It is quite clear that one school (C) emphasizes journal writing to an extent unmatched by any other school in the sample. Schools B and H also appear to emphasize writing. In School C, the students report a strong emphasis on activities complementary to reading, on homework, on classroom strategies and on dealing with teachers and grades. These emphases are, however, matched by the reports from other schools. In only three schools (B, E, and H) do students report that literary foci while reading are constituents of success, and only one (A) reports a noticeable emphasis on test-taking.

Table 1

Most Popular Choices By Track  
Percentage of Students Selecting Topic

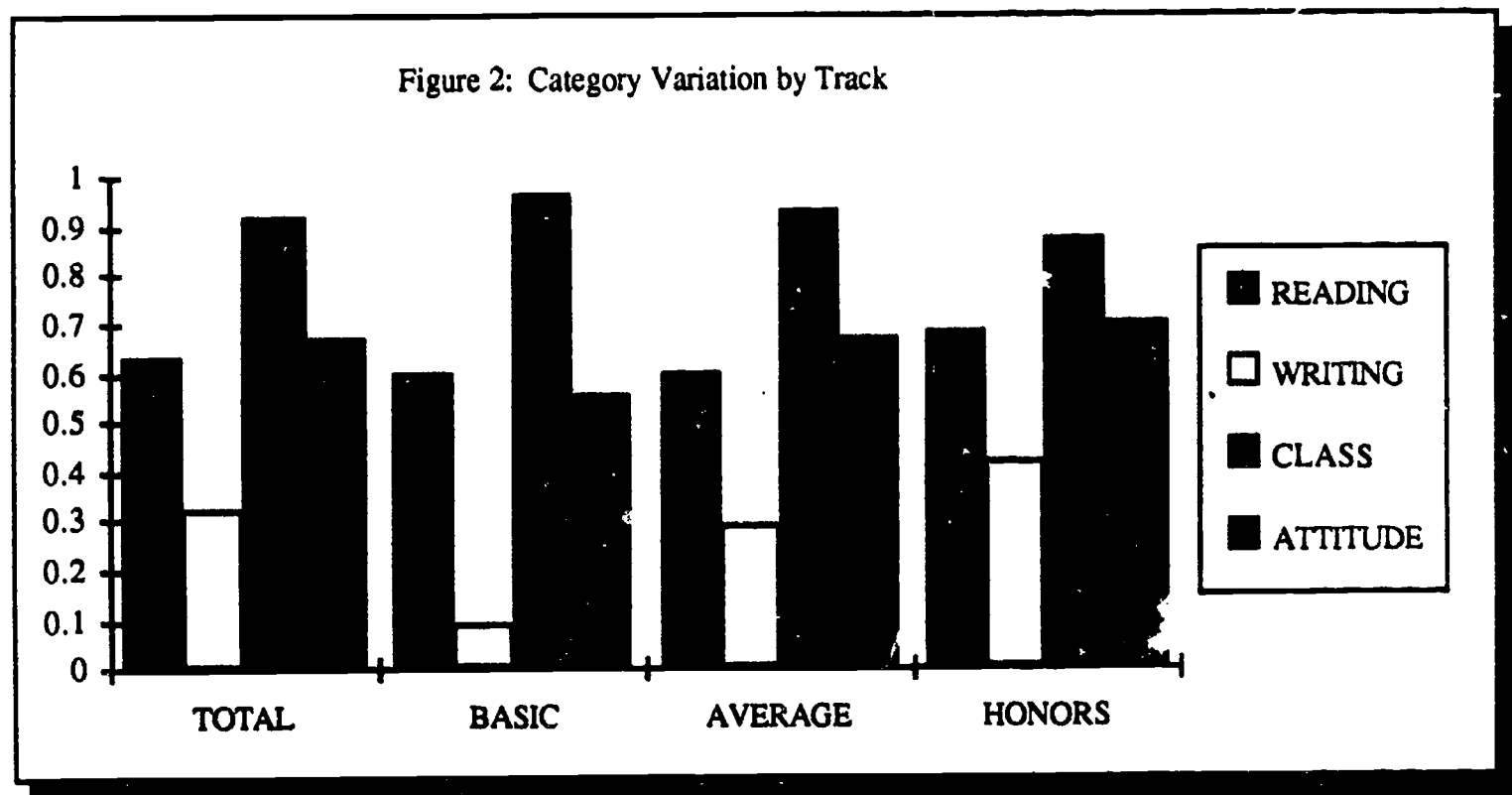
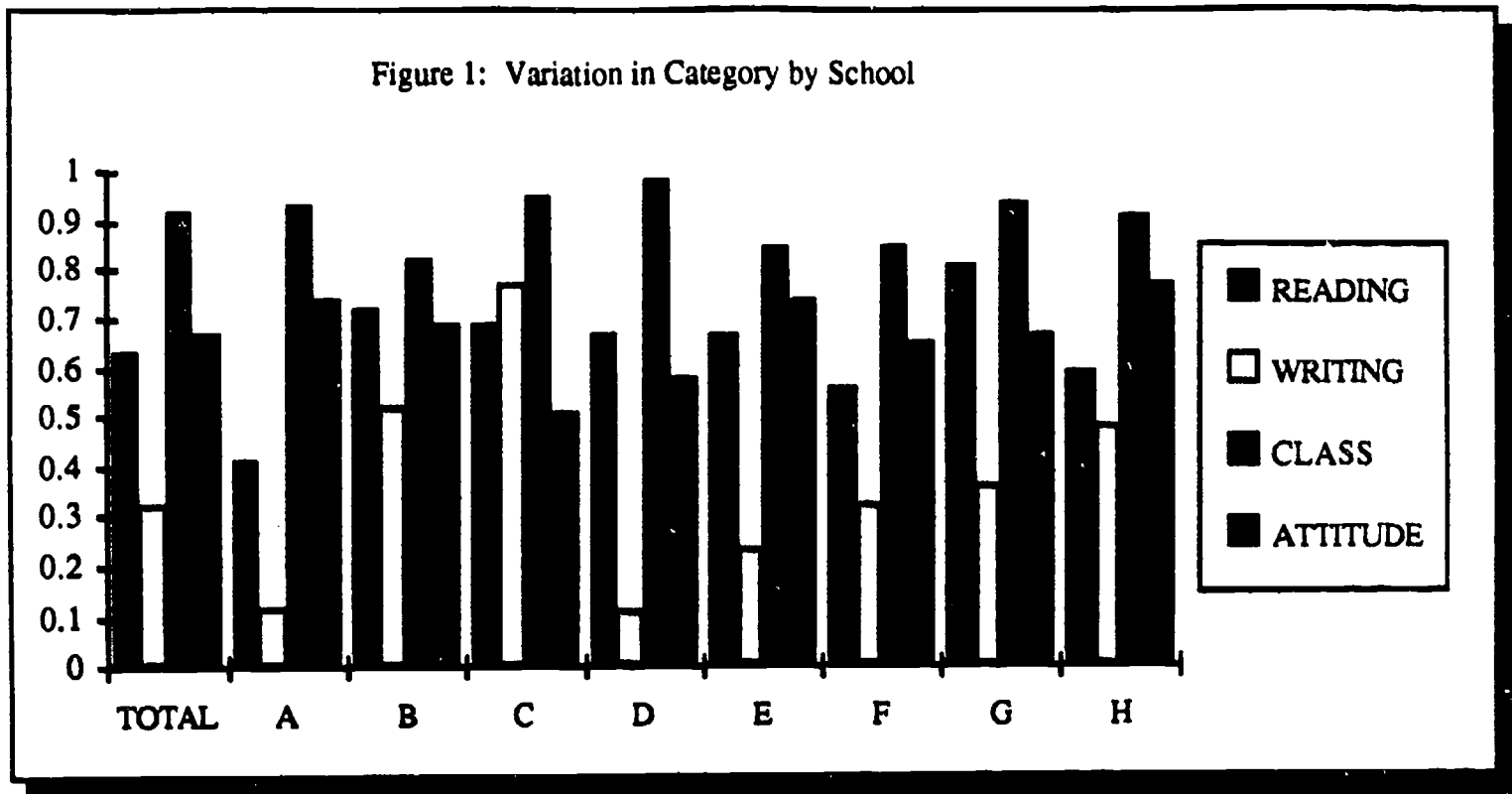
	Over-All	Basic	Average	Honors/AP
	N=1226	N=113	N=723	N=387
Listening	42.9	47.8	44.3	39.0
Homework	37.3	50.5	50.2	26.1
Class Participation	23.4	31.9	22.9	21.7
Persistence	21.9	17.7	24.1	19.1
Student Talk	19.6	36.3	16.5	39.0
Note taking	10.0	29.2	15.4	12.9
Attitude	19.4	11.5	21.8	17.6
Work ethic	16.4	14.3	14.5	20.4
Aesthetic Credo	11.4	3.5	10.9	14.5
Amount of Text	11.8	12.4	10.4	14.5
Quality of Reading	17.2	21.2	16.1	18.3
Use of Guides	7.7	10.6	6.6	17.3
Openness	12.9	6.2	11.8	17.1

Table 2

Percent of Students Giving Any Comments within a Subcategory by School

	A N=110	B N=62	C N=108	D N=192	E N=275	F N=294	G N=69	H N=114	STD. DEV
<b>Reading</b>									
Physical	0.9	1.6	2.8	0.5	11.6	6.8	5.8	1.8	0.04
Procedures	31.8	51.6	50.0	42.7	36.4	35.4	68.1	36.8	0.12
Complement	10.9	12.9	33.3	14.6	9.8	10.9	8.7	8.8	0.08
Alternate	10.0	32.3	14.8	31.8	34.9	25.5	23.2	22.8	0.09
Mental	8.2	11.3	5.6	13.0	14.5	7.8	13.0	15.8	0.04
Literary	2.7	19.4	5.6	9.4	21.5	4.8	5.8	15.8	0.07
<b>Writing</b>									
Content	0.0	29.0	13.0	4.2	8.0	9.5	5.8	11.4	0.09
Structure	0.0	4.8	4.6	0.0	0.7	2.4	0.0	2.6	0.02
Style	0.0	6.5	12.0	2.1	3.6	3.4	8.7	8.8	0.04
Surface	7.3	25.8	2.8	4.7	9.8	5.1	7.2	17.5	0.08
Procedures	6.4	25.8	23.1	5.2	8.4	22.8	18.8	30.7	0.10
Journal	0.0	0.0	47.2	0.0	0.4	1.4	14.5	6.1	0.16
<b>Strategy</b>									
Classroom	57.3	45.2	64.8	75.5	67.3	59.9	58.0	72.8	0.10
Oral Work	80.9	32.3	54.6	56.8	17.1	35.0	56.5	33.3	0.20
Homework	52.7	45.2	66.7	63.5	36.0	71.4	71.0	61.4	0.13
Tests	43.6	29.0	8.3	22.4	11.6	24.1	20.3	20.2	0.11
Teachers	37.3	40.3	48.1	38.5	22.5	42.5	44.9	30.7	0.08
Course	11.8	8.1	15.7	14.1	7.6	8.2	5.8	14.9	0.04
<b>Attitudes</b>									
Reading	4.5	19.4	14.8	12.5	15.3	15.0	17.4	28.1	0.07
PersonalPsych	49.1	24.2	22.2	42.2	57.1	42.2	40.6	42.1	0.12
Philosophy	50.9	58.1	15.7	48.2	35.3	35.7	29.0	52.6	0.14





When we examine the responses by the three tracks, we note clear differences (Figure 2 and Table 3). The most striking difference is the comparatively infrequent mention of writing by the basic track students. Interestingly, none of them mention journal writing, which seems to be an activity, if assigned, that is denigrated by the students as having little to do with success in literature. Basic track students refer to oral presentations (formal and informal), to doing homework, and to test-taking more than do students in other tracks. By contrast, students in honors and advanced placement classes mention writing the most often and in the greatest variety. They also mention a focus on the literary

aspects of reading (e.g. looking at character, language, plot, and tone). It would appear that reading literature as literature and writing about literature are most clearly the road to success for the students in the higher track. The low road to success focuses on managing oneself in the classroom.

Table 3  
Percent of Students Giving Any Comments within a Subcategory by Track

	Basic	Average	Honors/AP
<b>Reading</b>			
Physical	0.0	7.2	3.1
Procedures	43.4	38.6	43.4
Complementary	13.3	12.2	14.5
Alternative Sources	21.2	24.8	20.5
Mental Strategies	9.7	9.5	14.7
Literary Foci	8.8	6.2	20.4
<b>Writing</b>			
Content	1.8	6.8	14.5
Structure	0.0	1.7	2.1
Style and Tone	0.9	4.1	6.7
Surface Features	2.7	6.6	13.4
Writing Procedures	3.5	15.1	21.4
Journal Writing	0.0	6.8	6.2
<b>Student Strategies</b>			
Classroom Strategies	69.0	66.1	60.2
Oral Presentations	62.8	38.9	39.0
Homework	68.1	62.1	46.8
Test-taking	33.6	20.9	17.8
Dealing with Teachers and Grades	34.5	39.6	30.7
Course Selection	9.7	11.9	8.0
<b>General Attitudes</b>			
Reading Habits	9.7	15.2	17.1
Personal Psychology	36.3	45.9	40.8
Philosophical Outlook	28.3	32.6	40.6

In order to confirm the univariate results, an analysis of variance was performed using schools and tracks as the sets of variables. The results can be seen in Table 4. By far, the strongest source of variation is the school. The schools in the sample appeared to have clear policies concerning achievement that were apparent to students across tracks. This phenomenon appears most strikingly with writing, although there are clear track differences as well. Track differences occur most notably with respect to the focus on literary matters when reading although they were also apparent in the emphasis on content in writing.

Table 4  
Analysis of Variance

	School Effects (DF 7)		Track Effects (DF 2)		Interaction (DF 9)		Residual
	Mean Square	F Ratio	Mean Square	F Ratio	Mean Square	F Ratio	
<b>Reading</b>	1.55	6.65*	0.85	3.79	0.59	2.63	0.223
Reading-Physical	0.26	5.54*	0.24	5.10	0.12	2.45	0.047
Reading Procedures	1.48	6.39*	0.80	3.47	0.58	2.52	0.231
Complementary	0.78	7.22*	0.16	1.48	0.20	1.88	0.109
Alternative Sources	1.04	5.54*	0.48	2.57	0.34	1.82	0.187
Mental Strategies	0.19	1.99	0.16	1.67	0.30	3.11*	0.097
Literary Foci	0.51	5.61*	1.25	13.84*	0.19	2.06	0.090
<b>Writing</b>	4.94	28.64*	1.59	9.18*	1.30	7.53*	0.172
Content	0.47	6.33*	0.57	7.67*	0.37	4.94*	0.074
Structure	0.04	2.50	0.00	0.18	0.01	0.38	0.016
Style and Tone	0.16	3.65*	0.05	1.11	0.06	1.34	0.043
Surface Features	0.39	5.45*	0.21	2.97	0.39	5.36*	0.187
Writing Procedures	1.15	9.31*	0.55	4.41	0.53	4.28*	0.097
Journal	3.03	77.97*	0.00	0.05	0.02	0.50	0.090
<b>Strategies</b>	0.29	3.90*	0.20	2.70	0.13	1.71	0.075
Classroom	1.23	5.66*	1.20	5.52	1.05	4.84*	0.217
Oral	5.77	28.15*	1.15	5.62	0.32	1.55	0.205
Homework	2.65	11.96*	1.53	6.69*	0.60	2.71	0.222
Test-taking	1.27	8.14*	0.24	1.55	0.60	3.84*	0.155
Teachers/Grades	1.07	4.80*	0.30	1.36	0.50	2.24	0.223
Course Selection	0.28	3.19	0.51	5.74	0.60	6.76*	0.089
<b>Attitudes</b>	0.97	4.57*	0.59	2.78	0.83	3.91*	0.211
Reading Habits	0.45	3.51*	0.08	0.65	0.14	1.07	0.128
Personal Psychology	1.87	8.02*	0.84	3.61	0.70	3.00	0.232
Philosophy	2.44	11.74*	0.07	0.34	0.85	4.09*	0.208

\*=Significant (0.001 or better)

What is also noteworthy in this analysis is the number of significant school by track interactions. In the subcategory of mental strategies while reading, basic and average tracks are similar across schools, but there is variation in the importance of the item for advanced track students. With respect to writing generally and content, surface features, and procedures in writing, again there are school differences for the advanced track but not for the two lower tracks. Classroom strategies are uniformly important for the lower two tracks but there is school-by-school fluctuation for the advanced track. Test-taking, course selection, general attitudes, and philosophy show a strong school influence; apparently some schools emphasize tests more and some allow for course selection to a greater degree than others. Issues of general approach to the role of being a student are also influenced by where one goes to school as well as in what track one is placed. One can conclude that when it comes to what students see as the key to success in literature learning, tracks make a major difference, but so do schools.

### Conclusion

This study provides us with a tantalizing look at the literature classroom as perceived by one group of those who inhabit it. The consumer's view of the students complements that of the purveyors: test-makers, teachers, and

outside observers (Brody DeMilo & Purves, 1989; Applebee, 1990; Marshall, 1989). Success in literature is generally a matter of what goes on in the classroom, rather than in the reading of the texts or the writing about them. Literature is read to recite and take tests about, and it would seem that the focus is generally on what Rosenblatt (1977) refers to as efferent rather than aesthetic reading.

But this general picture masks the fact that there is a two-tiered system of teaching literature as the students see it. One is for the "best" students, who appear to be encouraged to read literature aesthetically and who are also encouraged to write and to consider writing as a serious event in their lives. For the students who are considered the worst, none of these matters is important to avoiding failure. More important are such matters as taking tests and surviving in the classroom. The students in the middle tracks are, frankly, in the middle. Some of them may be in schools where reading literature and writing about it are considered important indices of success; others find themselves in schools where all literature is reading for test-taking.

The schools in this sample, then, suggest that there are two types of students with clearly different criteria for success. Whether these students are reporting the ways in which they view the world of the literature class or the ways in which their teachers shape that class is not clear. It could be that the teachers are responding to their perception of the students and not that the students are responding to their perception of the teacher. This study cannot unravel that complex question. The studies by Applebee and Marshall are also unclear as to whether the differences between tracks are differences caused by the teacher in response to the students, or out of prejudice concerning those students. There is some evidence (Willis, 1977) that lower-performing students do indeed shape the classrooms they are in and themselves determine the nature of success and failure. There is also evidence that it is the teachers and the nature of the institution that does the shaping.

Whatever the cause, it appears evident that the schools support two different approaches to literature. The end result would appear to be the division of our society into two cultural groups: one that takes literature and the life of the mind seriously, and one that sees it as apart from the business of living. This situation appears to be a continuation of a cultural and educational situation that has persisted for at least two centuries.

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## Appendix 1

### Classification of Student Advice on Achievement in Literature

#### 100 READING STRATEGIES - GENERAL

##### 110 Physical situation of reading - General

- 111 Seating
  - ex. "Sit on a hard chair."
  - "Get comfortable."
- 112 Lighting
- 113 Noise/Quiet
  - ex. "Avoid distractions."
  - "Turn down the radio."
- 114 Accompaniments
  - ex. "Have plenty of foods."

##### 120 Reading procedures - General

- ex. "Buy your own book."
- 121 Amount of text to be read
  - ex. "Read the whole book."
  - "Read selected sections of the book."
  - "Skim."
  - "Read ahead."
  - "Don't read the night before it's due."
- 122 Order of text to be read
  - ex. "Read the introduction and back cover first."
- 123 Pace of reading
  - ex. "Read slowly."
  - "Read at your own pace."
  - "Do the reading in one sitting."
  - "If you get confused, stop and go back to it later."
  - "Budget your time."
- 124 Rereading
  - ex. "Review readings periodically."
  - "Reread the book."
- 125 Memorization
- 126 Oral reading
  - ex. "When reading a poem or play read it aloud."
- 127 Quality of reading
  - ex. "Read carefully."
  - "Read for understanding."
  - "Concentrate when reading."

##### 130 Complimentary activities to reading - General

- 131 **Marking text**
  - ex. "Underline passages as you read."
  - "Write comments in the margin."
- 132 **Note-taking**
  - ex. "Take notes on what you read."
  - "Make lists of the main characters and their significance."
- 133 **Use of textual aids**
  - ex. "Answer study questions."
  - "Check the footnotes"/"refer to pictures and maps."

**140 Use of the alternative sources - General**

- 141 **Use of people**
  - ex. "Seek help from parents, teachers or friends."
  - "Talk to older people about the book before you read it."
  - "Have someone else read the book and tell you about it."
  - "When reading a play, get 2 or 3 friends and divide up the parts."
  - "Discuss the work."
- 142 **Use of source materials about text**
  - ex. "Find out background information on author."
  - "Look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary."
- 143 **Use of guides**
  - ex. "Use Cliff's notes."
- 144 **Use of alternative versions**
  - ex. "Read the comic book version."
  - "See the video."
  - "Listen to tapes or record."
- 145 **Use of general literary knowledge**
  - ex. "Look for examples of literary terms."

**150 Mental strategies when reading - General**

- 151 **Predicting**
  - ex. "Make predictions and reject or confirm this."
  - "Make up an ending to the book."
  - "Come up with your own ideas."
- 152 **Questioning**
  - ex. "Ask yourself questions as you read."
- 153 **Imagining/Visualizing**
  - ex. "Picture the character in the story."
  - "Imagine what a normal day would be like for the character."
  - "Think of a different voice for each character."
- 154 **Projecting**
  - ex. "Imagine that you are there."
  - "Put yourself in the characters' shoes."
- 155 **Interjecting**
  - ex. "Relate the reading to your life."

- 156     Focusing             "Put words into into everyday speech."  
           ex. "Read for details."
- 157     Planning ahead for writing  
           ex. "Be planning the paper you will write."  
               "Start planning your thesis statement as you read."

160     Mental strategies - Literary foci - General

ex. Objectivity - "Be able to pull yourself away from the story."

- 161     Settings  
           ex. "Be aware of the setting."
- 162     Plot/Structure
- 163     Character
- 164     Point-of-view/Tone/Mood  
           ex. "Find out what the author thinks."
- 165     Linguistic and literary devices  
           ex. "Pay attention to symbolism."
- 166     Theme  
           ex. "Find the hidden points of the author."

**200     WRITING STRATEGIES - GENERAL**

ex. "Write a lot."

210     Content - General

- 211     Truthfulness  
           ex. "Don't make up the story."  
               "Write as much as you know."
- 212     Topicality  
           ex. "Stay on the subject."
- 213     Clarity  
           ex. "Write clearly."
- 214     Source material  
           ex. "Use quotes."
- 215     Thoroughness  
           ex. "Write enough so the teacher knows you read the book."

220     Structure - General

- 221     Length  
           ex. "Be concise."
- 222     Opening  
           ex. "Pick an opener that gets the reader's attention."
- 223     Closing



**230 Style and tone - General**

ex. "Figure out what type of essay the teacher likes. Adjust your style accordingly."

**231 Vividness**

ex. "Be descriptive."  
"Put some adventure in your writing."  
"Show how you feel."

**232 Details**

ex. "Be thorough and detailed."

**233 Language/Vocabulary**

ex. "Use fancy language."  
"If you don't know much, use a lot of big words and baloney."

**240 Surface features - General**

ex. "Leave the correct writing format."

**241 Neatness**

ex. "Write neatly."

**242 Spelling**

ex. "Spell correctly."

**243 Punctuation**

ex. "Punctuate properly."

**244 Grammar**

ex. "Be aware of proper grammar."

**250 Writing procedures - General**

ex. "Consult books that show you how to write a good essay."  
"Follow the format that the teacher gives you."

**251 Invention**

ex. "Be creative."  
"Read another person's work to get ideas."

**252 Topic selection**

ex. "Make a list of possible topics and select the one you know."  
"Brainstorm for ideas with friends or teacher."  
"Write about what you know best."

**253 Pre-writing**

ex. "Think out what you want to say."  
"Write an outline first."

**254 Drafting**

ex. "Concentrate while writing."

**255 Editing/Revising**

ex. "Write many drafts before you turn in the final one."  
"Have a parent or friend proofread for you."  
"Get teacher feedback on your first draft."

**256 Final form submission**

ex. "Type all papers."  
"Use ink."

"Learn a word processing program."

- 257    **Timing/Planning ahead**  
ex. "Don't wait 'til the last night to start."  
"Be planning paper you will write."  
"Start writing early."

**260    Journal writing**

- 261    **Relating to reading**  
ex. "Write as you read."  
"Plan your thesis statement as you read."
- 262    **Precision/Support for opinion**  
ex. "Use quotes."  
"Use plenty of detail."  
"Use a dictionary to get just the right word."
- 263    **Inventiveness**  
ex. "Teacher like it when you say something really different."
- 264    **Timeliness**  
ex. "Hand your journals in on time."  
"Don't get behind."
- 265    **Questioning/Teacher feedback**  
ex. "Ask the teacher questions in your journals."  
"You get a lot of information from the teacher."
- 266    **Personalization**  
ex. "Say what you really think."  
"Put yourself into your journals."
- 267    **Value of journals**  
ex. "They help sort out your feelings."  
"They improve your writing."  
"They're the best part of Literature class."
- 268    **Resource**  
ex. "Use them when you're studying for tests."

**300    STUDENT STRATEGIES - GENERAL**

**310    Classroom strategies - General**

ex. "Use class time wisely."

- 311    **Seating**  
ex. "Pick a good seat near your friends and toward the front of the class."
- 312    **Demeanor**  
ex. "Stay alert."  
"Stay awake."  
"Pretend your interested."  
"Use your cute smile."  
"Be able to concentrate in open classroom situation."

- 313 Attendance
  - ex. "Go to class everyday."
  - "Be on time."
- 314 Listening
  - ex. "Listen to the lecturer."
  - "Listen to other students during the class discussion."
  - "Pay attention."
- 315 Note taking
  - ex. "Take down what the teacher says."
- 316 Use material
  - ex. "Be organized; keep a folder of all work."
- 317 Preparation
  - ex. "Always come to class prepared."
  - "Be physically prepared too."

320 Student talk - General

- 321 Class participation
  - ex. "Participate in class discussions."
- 322 Content of class participation
  - ex. "Always be able to support your opinion."
- 323 Student-initiated talk
  - ex. "Always ask questions."
  - "Don't be afraid to ask questions."
- 324 Teacher questioning
  - ex. "Answer a question every so often so that the teacher won't call on you."
- 325 Formal presentations

330 Homework - General

- ex. "Do homework."
- 331 Timing
  - ex. "Do homework right after school."
  - "Hand work in on time."
- 332 Colleagues
  - ex. "Make friends with a smart person."
- 333 Persistence
  - ex. "Don't fall behind on reading assignments."
  - "Make up assignments when you're out."
- 334 Review
  - ex. "Review notes periodically."
- 335 Techniques

ex. "Write homework corrections on your paper to use for studying."

**340** Test-taking - General

ex. "Study for the test."

"Find out how the teacher tests."

341 Preparation - Tactics

ex. "Don't cram for the test."

"Avoid all nighters."

342 Preparation - Emphasis

ex. "Focus on major characters and themes."

343 Preparation - Use of aids

ex. "Use flashcards to learn vocabulary."

344 Preparation - Use of friends and colleagues

ex. "Stay home and call a friend who took the test that day."

"Get old tests from a friend."

345 Test-taking strategies

ex. "Take your time during the test; be sure to finish."

"Remain calm."

"Read the questions carefully."

346 Cheating

ex. "Write words on your body for vocabulary quizzes."

347 Make-ups

**350** Dealing with the teachers and grades - General

ex. "Befriend the teacher."

"Be polite to the teacher."

"Be nice to the teacher."

351 Teachers as interpreters

ex. "Find out what the teacher's interpretation is and be prepared to accept it."

352 Teacher's criteria

ex. "Teachers put more emphasis on effort than on quality."

"Get to know what the teacher likes and dislikes."

353 Payoff of student actions

ex. "Always do extra credit."

"Bribe the teachers."

"Butter up the teacher."

354 Teacher qualities/Caring adult

ex. "Some teachers really care and want to help you with your problems."

356 Teacher/Student conferences -- self-evaluation

357 Teacher as resource

ex. "Go to the teacher when you don't understand things."

360 Choosing a course

- 361 Ability  
ex. "Not too easy or not too hard."
- 362 Advice of others  
ex. Other students, counselors, other teachers
- 363 Interest
- 364 Teacher  
ex. "Get a teacher who brings literature to life."
- 365 Supplemental courses  
ex. "Take a Speed Reading Course."  
"Take a reading or writing skills course."

**400 GENERAL ATTITUDES**

410 Reading habits - General

- 411 Amount of reading  
ex. "Read as much as you can."
- 412 Purpose of reading  
ex. "Read to widen your vocabulary."
- 413 Text selection criteria  
ex. "Pick a book that interest you and has the fewest pages."
- 414 Mental attitude to text  
ex. "Think of reading the book as a new obstacle to conquer."  
"Read the book as you do when you read for pleasure."  
"Don't think of reading as the enemy."
- 415 Study vocabulary to improve reading

420 Personal psychology and outlook - General

- ex. "Be mature in class."  
"Stay calm and relaxed."
- 421 Patience  
ex. "Don't give up."  
"Stay in school."
- 422 Openness  
ex. "Keep open mind."  
"Be open to criticism."  
"Give the book a chance."
- 423 Diligence  
ex. "Be willing to work."  
"Don't think of the class as free time."

- 424 Attitude  
ex. "Try to enjoy the literature."  
"Try to have fun in class."  
"Have a positive attitude."

430 Philosophical outlook - General

- 431 Work ethic  
ex. "Always work to the best of your ability."  
"Work hard."  
"Be proud of the work you hand in."
- 432 Belief systems - General  
ex. "Explain what is going on and draw your own conclusions."  
"Believe in yourself."  
"Don't panic about grades."
- 433 Aesthetic credo  
ex. "Literature is like life, it is what you make of it."  
"Knowledge can be gained through reading books."  
"Skills can be gained through reading."
- 434 Mentor/Voice of experience