grammar and printer formatting errors. If you were to make it through all of that, then you would be lucky if you didn’t end up running out the library with computer papers in hand and the library security guard chasing you close at the heels. I am serious! The system is ridiculous! I think that Edge Hill is definitely non student-oriented like Ball State. Can I go back to America? Muncie doesn’t sound so bad anymore?! It is probably more frustrating for the American students because we were used to having twenty-four hour computer labs on the Ball State campus. Actually, it’s just one of those cultural aspects that a person just has to get used to—remember that it’s not wrong, just different.

I awoke Wednesday morning to a beautiful, sunny, semi-warm day. It was wonderful to hear the little birds chirping outside my window. I ate breakfast (the only valuable and taste-worthy meal served at Edge Hill College) and arrived at Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School about 8:20 a.m. Today was out last day this week in the English primary schools...sadness. That particular morning My teaching partner and I learned the basics of the game cricket from one of the students. He told us all about the game. The schools have primary teams, and he also told us that last night Rainford Brook Lodge beat Eccleston Mere (one of the other primary schools where some of the college teachers were teaching). I thought that was pretty great! We all laughed heartily. Instead of normal class time, a special International Euphonium Concert was performed. All of the students attended, but my teaching partner and I opted to work on lesson plan preparation for next week, so we just listened while we worked. We heard some familiar American tunes and learned some new ones as well. It was a fun as well as productive time.

In the afternoon I caught myself thinking about home and gazing at Mrs. Ashby when I discovered how much she looked and acted just like my mom. Had I actually found my
mother’s twin? They have the same facial features, similar hair style, body structure, and clothing style. It was amazing—I could not believe my eyes! At least it would make me feel better, because every time that I talked to my teacher, it will be like I am getting to talk to my mom. Interesting!

When I arrived back at Edge Hill, I realized that I had received a postcard from my best friend Michelle—yeah!! She was prancing around Chicago with Brett, who wrote to wish me luck here in England. The picture of the front of the postcard was of the Chicago lake shore. Once again, memories of home. I really do miss all the events of home and summer in Indiana. It will be like tropical paradise when we finally do get to go home in July.

The rest of the evening I washed my clothes, cleaned my room, and worked on homework. It seems like there is a never-ending supply of the latter!

**Thursday May 25, 1995**

Today is again sunny and mild, but it wasn’t for long. Showers came in the late afternoon, lasted all evening, and into the night. Yuck! No wonder the foliage here is so green when it rains anywhere from two to six times each day or night. Unbelievable!

Instead of going to the schools today, our professor met with us at Edge Hill College for seminar time. Together we discussed discipline in the schools. I found many practical applications in our discussion. We took a break for some lunch about noon and then we resumed hard at work once again at 1 p.m. During the afternoon session we discussed our current teaching experiences in the British schools and the differences in discipline techniques between Britain and America. After about 2:30 p.m. we spent the rest
of the time in the library lab working on our thematic units. They were going to be due very soon. I am really stressed with the tremendous amount of work, the time that this unit is taking up, and am thoroughly frustrated with the library computer system. As one of my fellow college teachers said, "It's just out of control!" Before I went to bed this evening, I packed for our small trip to Bedale School on Friday and talked with my floormates for a bit. I was becoming good friends with those people—I don't think that I will ever forget the times that we shared. My living experience with those friends are one of the more memorable experiences of my trip to Britain. By the time I crawled in bed, I was very glad that the next day was going to be a Friday.

Friday May 26, 1995

This morning it was again sunny until late afternoon. Our EDEL-O group along with Dr. Nierenberg left Edge Hill College at about 8:30 a.m. and headed east to the town of Bedale. We were traveling on the roadway transportation system of Britain—yahoo! I was really excited to travel today. The small town is located about in the center of England. I was pleasantly surprised that it had been arranged for us to take a very nice twenty-seater coach on the road for our trip that day. I liked it for silly reasons, but I got a seat to myself and the vibrant colors of the upholstery just put me in a perfect mood. The trip provided a nice ride and was just generally a lot of fun!

We traveled east on the open highway for about two hours. We passed by sheep, cows, horses, goats with horns, gorgeous multi-colored fields, and beautiful creeks that cut through the lush green land. Nature marked the boundaries of the fields and wooden fences lined the highways. As we gained altitude there were more pine trees and walls
made of stacked stone which stretched across the green pastures. Some of these walls made impossible curves and were very tall in height as they ventured up and over the sides and tops of hills. It was absolutely amazing. The stones of the wall seemed to defy the very laws of gravity. I thought to myself, "There is a lot of history in them there walls." I can't imagine how long it must have taken to build all of these stone walls--and this is only a small portion of England. Britain is an old-fashioned country surviving in a modern world. Rolling hills began to rise in the distance as our last hour of travel took us off the highway to a windy road. Soon, the hills turned into mountains as we headed farther east. This road curved on the edge of mountains and ventured up and down through the brush and rocks. It reminded me of West Virginia--all of those narrow and windy roads through the mountains. Something was different though, oh yea, in this situation there were actually guard rails on the curve of every road. It was comforting feeling. In the English hills, there were rippling streams covered with tall branches shadowing the water below. Cobblestone houses and more walls lined the countryside. The hills became massive heaps of stone rising into the sky. The peaks seemed to reach for the light of the sun through the white puffy clouds. I just couldn't stop looking around at all of the scenery--everything was so green and beautiful. It was elegant grandness. It is such a wonderful feeling to think that God created such beautiful land and that man has taken the care to preserve it with the hands of gentleness. As we grew closer to Bedale, the roads seemed to grow more narrow and the sunlit trees began to bend over the road as if they meant to protect us from harm which the sky might yield. We drove past this one particular farm where I spotted a rooster standing and pacing on the gravel drive near the road as if it were his duty to guard that position of the countryside. For the first time, I truly felt as if I were in another country. The
rocky hills of the countryside made me think of a favorite nursery rhyme about Jack and Jill. We’re just having a smashing good time!!

The trip ended up taking longer than Dr. Nierenberg had anticipated and we finally arrived at Bedale Primary School at approximately 11:45 a.m. Bedale Primary school is in Yorkshire. All of the parts different of England have varying accents, so Bedale was yet another language difference to decipher. We had the opportunity to freshen up and then were taken in pairs to classes in which we would spend the rest of the day. We ate lunch in a warm and delightful atmosphere, visiting with teachers and administrators of the school. I decided to get the school lunch, so I had chicken sticks, [English] spaghettios, orange juice, and an apple. For dessert I had some of those wonderful chocolate-mint cake bars like a friend of my mom’s from home makes. It was some rather tasty food for a slight change.

After lunch, the school put on an assembly in our honor. I distinctly took notice that the Head Teacher did not deem it necessary to yell at the students in order for them to behave. There was a totally different atmosphere at this school compared to the one at Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School. Bedale’s manner of schooling was much more like the schools we have in America. I felt that the school was a place of education in which the student were cared for in the arms of the staff. The children were very well-disciplined. The program began with a song called *Tumbala* about a young man attempting to seek the true love of a woman. It reminded me of Matthew and I. I absolutely loved the song. After the song was finished, the Head Teacher told a story about the sun being the Light of the World.

When the assembly was finished, all the students and the teachers returned to their rooms. That day I worked in a reception classroom of four and five year olds—the children
were so darling. All the children and teachers watched an educational video on snails and then the teacher conducted a class discussion. When the students rose their hands to answer a question, they would point their little fingers as high as they could reach into the air. They were so eager to be called on by the teacher. I had a good time listening to the discussion about the snails. Ha! Ha! After the movie it was recess time. The children loved to have another adult figure on the playground with whom to play. This was an exceptionally neat day for me because I usually always teach the older students. The teachers and the Head Teacher seemed like one big family in a community of education.

Bedale Primary was a lovely school. I know someday I would like to work at a school similar to what I have experienced today. At about 4 p.m. we said good-bye to everyone and set out for Edge Hill College.

On the way back to college I listened to beautiful guitar music of the song 316 that Matt dubbed on my cassette tape as we climbed the hills of England. What a wonderful feeling! We arrived at Edge Hill about 6:30 p.m. I ate supper at the college fast food grill. I had pizza that tasted fairly good. Then I went to the library computer lab for a little while. I wrote some letters later in my room and then walked them to the mailbox in Ormskirk. Amazingly I got to bed the earliest yet at 10:30 p.m. Yahoo!! Congratulations—what excitement! Aw—now I'm not sleepy anymore...

**Saturday May 27, 1995**

I arose by about 8:30 a.m. and began working and revising lesson plans. Since the library didn't open until 1:15 p.m., we all had to work in our rooms as much as we could until that time. Then, my thematic unit buddies and I headed to the library for a grueling
afternoon on the computers. Our thematic unit was called Planning a Trip To American Travel Sites. It was a lot of work, but I am sure that it will be well worth the effort in the end. We had thought that perhaps we could get far enough to be able to leave for our week of independent travel in Britain on Sunday, but this was not to be the case. At 4:30 p.m. we determined that we needed at least another fully day of work in the computer lab. See, next week we were taking a break from teaching and we were to take that time to travel independently throughout Britain. However, our units are due the Tuesday (June 6th) after we come back to Ormskirk, England. Therefore, most of the unit needs to be completed because of the limited amount of time between Sunday (the day we will return our independent travel) and Tuesday. These are unbelievable deadlines and way too much stress! My, oh my!! So, as you could see, I had a rather frustrating day. Until......when I returned to my dorm room it became quite a happy, happy day !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Slid under my door was a letter from none else than my beloved, Matthew Gumbel. Oh, I love him so much and I haven't even read the letter yet. I threw my book bag and coat on the chair--my heart was beating so fast from being so excited and I had not even yet read the letter. I think that if there would have been room in my dorm room I would have done a few cartwheels. I then sat down calmly (sure!) at my desk and carefully opened the letter. As I opened the envelope I could smell cologne and knew immediately it was the cologne Matthew wears. I sat for a few minutes with the smell of the cologne wafting through the air thinking only of Matthew. I'm sure that there was a smile on my face from ear to ear! He had typed the letter on his computer and used a very small font in order to fit more information into the letter. At the top of the letter he wrote, "This counts as a four page letter--I think that is a record for me!" He started out his first paragraph answering some of
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the events I wrote about in my previous letters and then said, “I have so much to tell you.” I could hear him say the words in my mind as I continued to read. His next paragraph began by telling me that right after I left he counted out the number of days until I would be home on the calendar. He said it had been about 67 days, but it was more like 58 now. He said that he took his allergy medicine pills and counted out exactly enough to equal the 67 days and put them in a special jar. This way, he knew that when the jar was empty, I would be home. Isn’t he a crazy love bug?! He described visiting his grandparents in New Haven, his family, how he was doing in school, and the speech he wrote and delivered at his senior awards assembly. I was laughing at his witty side comments and feeling proud of his accomplishments as a senior. I wish that I could have been there to share in his high school graduation experiences. When I reached the end of the paragraph, the letter said that they had the ceremony recorded on tape for me to watch after I got home—I nearly jumped for joy straight out of my chair. The rest of his letter was cute—from the way he described his car antenna getting stolen to how he got soaked at the car wash—I loved it all! However, the tone changed in the next to last paragraph of the letter. Matt is so sweet—he makes my heart cry happy tears. He began, “Now that I’ve told you what’s been going on in my world, I want to tell you what’s been going on in my head. I truly and dearly miss you!

On Friday I went to the Pops concert at Northrop. One group sang the song titled “Wind Beneath My Wings” and I could only think of you. I cried quietly. Then tonight I really cried. I miss being able to talk to you and tell you anything and everything, big and small. (At this point in time the tears had already begun to trickle down my cheeks.) You always seem interested in what I have to say. Other people may seem interested, but it’s just not the same as with you. I really miss talking with you! You were my only true friend. I have no
I want to date. I cried when I realized how far away you are--Britain! It doesn't look that far on the map, why does it have to be that far in reality? I cried when I realized how alone I am. I could really use a hug right now. (At this point I just didn't know what to do—he was breaking me up.) I just have to remember that it is only 58 more days—Ugh! I need to concentrate about all of the fun things that we can to when you return. You'll be back before I know it! Yeah, right? Am I trying to fool myself? I will just have to be strong and struggle through it. Our time apart wouldn't be so bad except I am always thinking of you. I think about you in the morning. I think about you while I am at school. I really thing about you when I am mowing. I think about you when I feel lonely. I listen to your tapes, but it is still not the same as having you with me. I need you Beth! O really do!" My gracious, the tears were pouring by this time and I had to stop and get a kleenes before I could continue. Matt is such a wonderful guy and I'm the luckiest gal on the face of this planet. I have to tell you about something else in the letter that just flipped my lid! Matt described one particular Sunday when he rode down to Indianapolis with other PTSA members to attend the awards banquet. One intriguing member, Dr. Fowler-Finn, particularly caught Matt's interest—at least the phrasing of his last name did. Matt found out that the Dr.'s last name consisted of a combination of both his and his wife's last names. Matt thought that was just great! The next thing I knew he was asking me how Elizabeth Anne Schweigert-Gumbel sounded or whether Gumbel-Schweigert sounded better. Wawohee! I couldn't believe it—I mean asking a question like that—that's serious. Whew! It is comforting to think that Matthew views me in those terms. "Ow, I feel good!" I was only to find out how serious he really was at the end of his letter. Matt finished up the setter with some ideas about getting a second job and his summer college fast-track calculus class.
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Since he is away at college already, he told me that he was going to try his hardest to travel home the weekend that I arrived home from England to America. Cool! He closed the letter by saying that every time I heard a bird chirp, it would be a sign that he was thinking of me. My heart was just melting away... He signed the letter, “Love, Matt.” His handwriting was beautiful. I then proceeded on to the P.S. remarks and had to get up from my chair, walk once around the room, and then sit down on the bed. I read the P.S. remarks once again and a big smile warmed from my cheeks up to my ears and then all the way down to my toes. Oh, I felt like I was going to explode with happiness. (I guess you want me to tell you what it said huh?) “P.S. Yes! If it weren’t for obvious reasons (i.e. distance) I would ask you to be my girlfriend! P.S.S. I LOVE you!! P.P.S.S. I feel much better now!” Wow, I’m so excited that I just can’t hide it! The rest of the evening was fabulous—I know by the glory and blessing of God that I felt as if I were walkin’ on air. Thank you Lord for a man like the one I’ve got—Matthew James Thomas Gumbel!!!!

In my mind I spoke the words, “Matt I LOVE you. You are all my dreams come true...

Monday May 29, 1995

This morning I got up at 7 a.m. and I took a shower, got dressed, and then packed my backpack. This week began a six day independent exploration of northern England and Scotland. I ate breakfast together with four of my college traveling partners. I was very excited! We left Edge Hill College at 8:50 a.m. for the Ormskirk train station. We decided to take a relaxing start today. Today is also something called Band Holiday in England, Scotland, and Wales—all of Great Britain. To my understanding it is a national holiday upon which all the banks, businesses, and many stores are closed. It makes a nice three day
weekend for the Brits! Most of the schools also conveniently have breaks for the next two weeks. It must be nice! We took a small one-cab train to Pristine Station.

On the train we met and talked with a young man who, we came to find out, was a British education major at Edge Hill College. It is a small world! His name was Richard. I was father friendly and delightful. We all talked about our experiences here in England and he filled us in with some tips for Scotland. The scenery was unbelievably beautiful on the way to Preston. Richard would laugh at all of us when we would gaze out the window and say, “Wow!” or “Neat!” or “Look at that...!” “Tourists,” he would say! It was a rather funny situation. I wanted to much to take the breathtaking scenery home with me to show my family and friends—I guess the pictures will have to do! Yup! Yup! At the Preston station we changed trains for Edinburgh, Scotland. Richard left us halfway through the trip. We were sad to see him leave, but knew that we might run into him again some day while trekkin' around Edge Hill College. He was sure to inform us that he worked in the SI building at the computer lab. That’s considered a nice job to have at Edge Hill.

In a few more stops we had an elderly couple join us. They were from Scotland and were quite fascinated with us (Americans). I learned that the Scottish measure weight was something called stones, not pounds as we do in America. About fourteen pounds equals on stone, so I weigh about ten stones. I thought that was pretty cool.

It had been sunny in the morning when we left Ormskirk, but it was now rainy and foggy. The terrain was changing again. It was more hilly as rows and rows of many pine trees lined the green hillsides. The funny thing was how the pine trees seemed to be arranged in particular shapes and placed in specific areas. Some groups of trees make direct cutoffs, while others formed triangles and squares. It was definitely a different style of
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nature. Somehow our discussion with the elderly couple turned from weights and measures to boyfriends. Those of us who had those special men in their lives as least talked about them. We passed around pictures and shared stories, laughed, and cried. When the elderly couple saw a picture of Matt they commented with, "He's quite a handsome ol' chap—looks like he could be a movie star." Oh, I loved it! I got quite a tickle out of the comment. I thought, "Yup, that's my Matthew—the handsome chap!" Let me tell you though, he is handsome enough (at least in my eyes) and definitely has the personality and the wit needed to be an actor. I thought their comments were very nice.

We arrived in Edinburgh at about 12:45 p.m. Our hostel was not very far away from the train station, so we decided to take the time to cash in our Brit-Rail partial passes for the real Brit-Rail Flexipass. Our wait in line seemed to take forever, but I think the pass will prove its worthiness during our week of travel. With our passes, we can travel anywhere at anytime without having to buy tickets. The only thing we have to check is train times. I believe the whole set-up will be quite a convenience. Compliments of our Brit-Rail Flexipass was a neat little tri-fold blue Brit-Rail wallet. I thought it was really cool! Afterwards the nine of us walked to High Street Hostel and reserved rooms for the night. The hostel turned out to be a cobblestone castle-type building. It was very Scottish. Yahoo—I really felt like I was traveling! On our way to the hostel we walked up a portion of the Royal Mile in Edinburgh, Scotland and then down High Street. I think it is really neat because the roads were still made of cobblestone. The car tires would make the funniest sound as they drove over the stones. The cobblestone streets are a part of the long history of the city of Edinburgh. For my first hostel experience, High Street Hostel was a very nice choice. There was a front desk type check-in place, a small lounge area that included a
piano, and then the next doorway led off to all of the eight or ten floors of rooms. All of us fit into just two different rooms. At the desk when we checked in, they gave us a little pink slip that had our specific bed name on it and everything—that was a lot of fun. We settled all of our backpacks in our rooms and then set out to explore the city.

Our first point of interest in Edinburgh was the Museum of Childhood on the Royal Mile. It reminded me a lot of the children's museum in Indianapolis. That thought brought back some good memories! In the museum there were moving figure toys, dolls, puppets, old money, toy theaters, musical and optical toys such as a kaleidoscope. They also had train models, an old piano player, circus, toy farm animals, and mini matchbox car toys. There were also the cutest English doll houses that displayed the old time shop such as the Meat Market, the Green Grocer, and the Mercantile. The English doll houses on display were built with materials available during the war to raise money for the Red Cross' Prisoners of War. Mrs. Grace Gavin was the organizer of the program. In addition, there was a display talking about drills at school, gas masks, and the types of medicine available during war times. On September 1939 the children were sent to safer places in the country due to the movement of the war. I gained some very interesting information and it was fun to walk through the historical museum. It had seemed like a step back in time. As 4 p.m. rolled around, we were walking up and down Royal Mile visiting shops. I bought patches of Scotland and Edinburgh, visited a Scottish plaid making shop, a kilt-maker shop, and grabbed some homemade ice cream at the shop. The ice cream tasted soooo delicious. I had a sugar cone double scoop of Butter Pecan and Nut Fudge Brittle. Ah, an unbelievably tasteful dessert was going to ruin my appetite for dinner. Oh, well.
It was quite a beautiful evening as the sun began to make its daily descent from the sky. For supper we ate at Pizzaland and received a super deal of half price meals. Cool! I’m looking to save money wherever I can. I tried something else besides pizza—it was fettuchini alfredo with ham cubes. Of course, this didn’t mean that I wasn’t carving pizza—just a particular kind of pizza. When I get home to the United States, one of the first things that I am going to do is order a Papa John’s Pizza. Oh, that sounds so good that my mouth is watering already. I also miss popcorn. Maybe I could add that to my dessert list after I eat some pizza. It was kind of funny, but it is the little things that please you when you are visiting a foreign country. This restaurant had the most excellent restrooms. They were even nicer than our restrooms at Edge Hill College and I haven’t dared to sit down on one of the toilet seat yet. It has been a rather scary experience with the restrooms at Edge Hill College. Ah well, it was a good time to sit and eat some supper while listening to some good ol’ American tunes over the background radio.

After supper we headed up the Royal Mile a bit to attend Robin’s Ghost and History Tours. By now it was about 6:50 p.m. and getting dark. The Edinburgh walking tour featured stories of ghosts, torture, murders, hangings, witches, and terrifying tales of Edinburgh’s very horrific past. The tour started at the Old Town Information Center, the big clock. The stories on the walking tour were described by a young lady and one story was told by a young mad apprentice. It was interesting to learn the history behind some of the past hangings and murders in the city of Edinburgh and to see some of the sites where reports of ghosts took place. I thoroughly enjoyed myself! There were two separate segments to the ghost tour. I had initially only paid for the first part, but the second part led you into the sewers under the city for some mysterious trekking around. After coming
halfway around the world, I couldn't resist missing the second part of the tour. I paid the few extra pounds and then the lady led our small group into the underground sewers of the city of Edinburgh. A few stories were told in the vault area where it was so pitch black that we could not even see our hands in front of our faces. I followed closely to the people in the group. After spending a good while under the city and upon hearing several ghoulish tales, we returned to the surface of the city. Ah, I gave a sigh of relief. The small tour group was then all gathered into the back room of a bar by the name of New Haven. This was the first bar that I had walked into in England. However, this evening I just ordered a soda. The young man ventured to tell the company a few more extravagant tales about Ol' Edinburgh. He also related some ghost stories (strange events) which had occurred within the last few weeks to a couple of people who had worked for the ghost tour company and to two people who had actually been traveling on the walking ghost tour one evening. If nothing else this guy was really getting me thinking. My ears were turned, eyes wide, and mouth probably wide open. I think the greatest and the most believable story was the one about the continued burnings of the Scarboro Hotel right in the city of Edinburgh itself. The last time the hotel burned was in 1992 and before that 1986. Every time it catches on fire it burn completely to the ground. The hotel has been completely rebuilt several times. It is also strange how the fire never spreads or burns anything besides it—very mysterious! This story is just too realistic for me. I don't think that I would be staying in that hotel if it could be avoided.

On my way back to the hostel, I decided to stop at the hotel and look around a bit. It was a really ritzy hotel, so I don't think that I would ever have to worry about staying there anyway. I thought it was just fun to be present in the hotel. At 9 p.m. I returned to the
hostel and began organizing things for bedtime. It had been a fun, but very long day. I was exhausted. Every one talked for a while about their adventures in Edinburgh and then slowly we each wandered off to bed. After writing in my dairy for a while, I was mighty ready to hit the sack by 11 p.m.

Tuesday May 30, 1995

This morning we got up at 7 a.m. and took showers. About 8:15 a.m. I went to breakfast with two of my college friends in the High Street hostel basement. The walls in the basement were very colorfully painted with mountain and valley landscapes. Breakfast was delicious! I thought it was pretty neat how we were supposed to wash our dishes after breakfast in the kitchen. High Street Hostel was more like a big dorm on a college campus. Great! Waiting for the rest of our friends to get ready, I ventured to the train station to check on some departure times for later today. It was relaxing to walk through the streets of Edinburgh by myself. On my way back to the hostel from the train station I decided to be adventurous and attempt a shortcut. I turned into an alley that led between two buildings. The alley consisted of stairs and landings that led up and up and up. I gave it a try---ya know, "nothing ventured, nothing gained." The step and tunnel doorway led out to the Royal Mile. I ended up practically straight across from High Street Hostel. Brilliant! The shortcut is safe and provides a much shorter trek to the train station. By that time everyone was ready to leave, so we set off up the Royal Mile to Edinburgh Castle. The sites were wonderful and then, there in the distance, I caught my first glimpse of the great historic castle. Edinburgh Castle is Scotland’s premier visitor attraction. Perched on its rocky summit, the castle overlooks the southern city of Edinburgh. The castle is a national
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symbol with a history reaching back almost 3,000 years. Edinburgh castle story is the story of Scotland. Here St. Margaret died in 1093. The English captured the castle in 1296, but the Scots won it back for Robert Bruce. In the later Middle Ages it became Scotland's principal royal castle--a stronghold, a palace, an arsenal, and a treasury. The giant Medieval siege gun "MONS MEG", and the ancient Scottish crown jewels (the oldest regalia in the United Kingdom) are still displayed here. Also for viewing is the tiny chamber where Mary Queen of Scots gave birth in 1566 to King James the VI of Scotland.

As we began our tour of the castle, we were told that there is a 514 foot climb from the gate (inner gate) to the top of the castle. The streets were cobblestone and as the hill got steeper, the stones were cut thinner and turned diagonally. This was done to give the horses traction as they climbed (hoofed) the steep slope, pulling supplies. Foogs Gate leads to the royal portion of the castle. In that place lies St. Margaret’s Chapel, containing one original stained glass, and the royal coat of arms. We also saw the Scottish United Services Museum was very architecturally decorative. Next, there were many memorials created in memory of men who fought in some of Scotland’s wars. There was also a crown jewels building which housed very beautiful objects which were rather old. Another building gave a pictorial description of the royal lines of Scotland, showed a movie which depicted the kings and queens riding in procession down the Royal Mile in the city of Edinburgh, and also showed a recreation of the king’s dining room. There were old tapestries and curtains and the windows stretched from the floor to the ceiling. In the top castle square there was also a cathedral built in memory of the fallen Scots in battle. At the very top of the castle, the view across the water named Firth of Forth was magnificent. You could see for miles from the top of the castle. Working our way back down, we came upon a cemetery for
soldiers’ dogs that had died in battles. Edinburgh Castle was truly a historical wonder and exciting journey through the history of Scotland.

After leaving the castle we proceeded on down the Royal Mile. Our first stop was at the Camera Obscura and Exhibitions Center. It was too expensive for us to visit the museum and we were short on time, so we perused the gift shop. This place was loaded with hologram stuff. I ended up buying several gifts for my family and some Scottish fudge too! Ya know, it was Scottish, so I had to try it. We ate lunch at a small coffee shop I pub on the Royal Mile. I had Quiche, ice cold milk, fruit salad, and highland fudge. It was yummy to my tummy! After lunch we proceeded down the Royal Mile to scope out some of the good shops. One shop named Scottish Crafts was very interesting. The shopkeepers were men and were quite a lively pair. I think they would have talked my ear off if I’d let them. They helped us to find what we wanted. One fella noticed my journal and wrote the following message as my impression of the store, “Scottish Crafts is a shop full of psycho’s. However, I did notice the great pieces and thought to myself--top quality at a price that counts!” I think that he wanted me to think very highly of his store. I suppose I did since that is the store at which I bought Matthew a Scottish tie. The shopkeeper was funny with his stories of previous American shoppers. He seemed to be very delighted with the American lassie shoppers. That was certainly an interesting adventure.

Moving on down the Royal Mile we visited the Writer’s Museum and Sir Giles Cathedral. The cathedral was very pretty. There, I also found the most precious Mom, Dad, and Friend poem I saying books. I bought them for my family. I think I will give the friend one to my sister. She is my sister, but she is also my best friend and good companion. Upon traveling to the bottom of the Royal Mile, we visited the Abbey and
Palace of Holyrood House. The large mountain at the bottom of the Royal Mile next to Holyrood Palace is named Arthur's Seat. It was beautiful.

Holyrood Palace is termed a working palace, because it is a royal home before it is a museum. It is cleaned twice daily to remain in a state of preparedness for the possible arrival of the Queen. On the way to the entrance, I walked along a forked iron rail fence. The trees were bent over the stone path, creating some nice shade. After passing through the front surrounding gate I came to a courtyard. In the center there stood a clock from the year 1680. It was neat! As we entered Holyrood House I quickly noticed the exquisiteness of the palace. The stairs were carpeted with a blue fabric with brass dividers at the back of each step. I think that must be a historically fancy way to hold the carpet to the floor. There were old tapestries hanging on the walls. We visited the dining room which was decorated with the colors of green and white. The decorative scroll work was beautiful. There were also chandeliers. We were told that the queen and her family still dine in this room. They were currently scheduled for a visit in June. The tour led us through many halls and rooms of the palace. I saw the velvet chairs with the coat of arms insignia of the King and Queen in a large sitting room. The carpets and tapestries throughout the palace were embroidered or hand-stitched. The floors and door frames were made of beautiful oak wood. Out of an upstairs window I got a glance at the tennis courts and outside gardens. Using some British vocabulary I said, “We should all go out and romp in the garden when our tour is done!” We all smiled and laughed agreeably. Next, I viewed Mary Queen of Scots' chambers. Inside the room there was a skull and sword of Robert the Bruce on display. There were also large frame paintings hanging on the walls. Great embroidered tapestries surrounded and closed off the area above the bed. As I ended the tour I realized the great beauty, as
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well as history, attached to this old, old house. Leaving the palace I entered the garden area and then walked into the ruined remains of the Holyrood Cathedral. There were stone memorials, some stone columns, and most of the ceiling was gone as a result of many years of Scottish warfare. It gave me a tingly feeling to walk through the cathedral. Outside the cathedral were even larger gardens. It was all so pretty. There was lush green grass, flowering trees, rocky hills a small distance away, and many birds. It was a magnificent garden. I could hear many birds singing and I knew Matt was thinking about me. What a wonderful feeling!

I know why England is so green—it must have rained about six times today. There are brief showers and then the sun comes back out. It started to rain as we left Holyrood Palace and headed back up the Royal Mile. We first made a stop at the People’s Museum off of the Royal Mile. The museum described the history of the common people of Old Edinburgh. We also had to stop at a candy shop on the Royal Mile. I tasted my very first miniature truffle. It was a Jamaican Truffle to be precise. The candy was a white chocolate circle rolled in coconut with vanilla creme on the inside. It was quite a tasteful delight! Having covered a majority of the Royal Mile, we decided to venture off into the streets of Edinburgh. We traveled across a busy bridge and found ourselves in the business district of Edinburgh. After eating super at Burger King we explored the city. We went to the mall, walked in the skyway, and climbed a hill that allowed us to see some wonderful sites.

We needed to get back to the train station, so I led my college friends back to the train station and the alley tunnel I had found earlier. Whew, we all made it up those many stairs! After getting our backpacks, we headed back down through the tunnel and over to the train station. It felt good that they trusted me to lead them in the right direction. Today
we were taking a night train to Inverness. I was very excited! We caught the 7:40 p.m. train out of Edinburgh to Inverness. As a tourist, Inverness is about the most northern city visitable by train in Britain. Riding in a first class coach (in a seat all to myself—thank goodness!) the journey began by crossing the Firth of Forth inlet where the Atlantic Ocean and the North Sea come together. A very long bridge stretched across the water. The train crossed the water on the bridge. The bridge reminded me of San Francisco’s Golden Gate Bridge. Out on the water were oil rigs, sailboats, and large ships carrying cargo. It was not long before we reached the lush green rocky shores. What an awesome experience! For a while, the train was still running along a body of water that seemed to stretch on forever. After a while the train turned inward and traveled north. The land scenery appeared once again. It began to get dark as we headed into the northern mountains. The sunset was beautiful and the mountain and forest scenery were grand. We traveled through the Cairngorm Mountains. I’ve never seen such land structures. As we continued, the temperature was turning colder and colder. Snow-capped mountains began to emerge—Brr!! I enjoyed the evening scenery as I listened to kind words and loving music on the tape Matthew made for me. What wonderful warm-hearted thoughts as I traveled through northern Scotland. We arrived in Inverness very late and walked cautiously to our hostel by midnight. We were staying the night in the Inverness Hotel Hostel for only 7.90 pounds. I was so tired that all I wanted was someplace clean and safe to lay my head. This turned out to be an exciting, but long day. I was excited about exploring Inverness the next day, but also very glad to get some sleep.
Wednesday May 31, 1995

I arose the next morning to the chilled weather of Inverness. It was definitely turtleneck, sweatshirt, jeans, and winter coat weather. I didn’t have a winter coat, so I just put on extra layers. The bread I had for breakfast was really good—especially the strawberry jam. It just moved my taste buds. After leaving the hostel we headed to the tourist information center. From there we took a Guide Friday tour of the city of Inverness and made reservation for a later Jacobite Cruise to Loch Ness. The Guide Friday tour pointed out several significant Inverness sites. It is interesting how Britain is sometimes referred to as Europe. When I think of the countries that are categorized under the heading of Europe, I don’t usually think of England. I usually think of the mainland Europe. I guess that I had better change my thinking! First I saw the river Ness. It is only six miles long—the shortest river in Europe, yet the fastest flowing. Old High Church was built in 1171 and it tolls every night at 8 p.m. It is currently used as a curfew mark for the youth of Inverness. The present public library was converted from Dr. Bell’s Institute. I was also told that Academy Street used to be the Medieval boundary of the city. We passed by the market arcade. It is a building with four entrances occupying an entire block. It used to be a Victorian market until 1890 when a fire destroyed the shops. In that fire only a dog died, all others survived. The market was rebuilt in its present form. The tour then ventured down Kirk Gate (how street names are phrased in Scotland). It was an old road from the 1700’s and still is one of the three main roads in the city of Inverness. On this particular street there were nine churches—today there is only one religious church left. The tour also took us by Dunbar Hospital, the school, and the flats that were for rent. There were mountains all around the city. From the top deck of the bus I could see for miles. Yahoo! As we
crossed over Friar Bridge I was told that it was built in 1985 and was the ninth bridge to be added to the city. There was a canal constructed during the Napoleonic Wars that served to connect the transportation of the city. I never got the opportunity to physically visit Inverness castle, but we passed by it several times during the tour. The Inverness Cathedral had no spires which means (in Britain) that Inverness is a town and not large enough to be classified as a city. Cool! At Inverness Castle there is a floral display which is in the shape of a map of Scotland. We drove by Hektor Russel's Kilt Shop, through the Haugh area, and Cavell Garden. The Haugh area used to be separated from Inverness and the Cavell Garden is a flower and plant memorial for the 717 soldiers that died in two specific wars. It was very nice. Getting off the Guide Friday tour we decided to go to the Scottish Kiltmaker Center. Hektor Russel kilts are a very important part of Scotland's cultural history.

We then ate lunch across the street at Babarouskies Bar and Diner. I had some vegetable soup and a cheese toastie. The meal hit the spot! By 1:45 p.m. we were at the tourist center to take an adventure to Loch Ness Lake on the Jacobite Cruises. The elderly man who drove the Jacobite van to the lake was very chipper. He was dead set on being formal to us ladies, providing a step stool and a helpful hand every time we got in and out of the van. It was sweet! The tour combines visits to the Official Loch Ness Monster Exhibition and Urquhart Castle, ending with a cruise on Loch Ness. It proved to be an exciting, but rather chilly afternoon. As we headed out of the town and into the hills, the Jacobite Cruise van took us from Tommahurich Bridge to the Monster Exhibition. Loch Ness is the most famous lake in the world. It is twenty-four miles long, a mile wide, and up to 700 feet deep. Loch Ness is a land-locked, freshwater lake lying at the eastern end of
the Great Glen. The water stays a chilly forty degrees Fahrenheit all the time and has a trench-like huge basin shape. Scientific study at the lake has been easier as a result of Scotland’s approximately eighteen hours of daylight provided for each day during the summer. It is a funny feeling to see the sun set about 10:30 or 11:00 p.m. and know that it comes up again around 3:00 a.m. each new day. I like the extra daylight a lot!

The museum was very intriguing. It provided displays with informational videos. The possibility of a Loch Ness Monster actually living in the lake was discussed, as well as the scientific research conducted on the lake terrain and in searching for a Loch Ness monster. I think the Loch Ness monster is just one of life’s little mysteries—not there to be solved or disproved. After the museum, the Jacobite van took us to see the ruins of Urquhart Castle on Loch Ness. That was fun! I stood on the bank of Loch Ness and wondered what it would have been like to have once lived in such a castle on such a mysterious lake. From the castle we got on a small ferry boat which took us out into Loch Ness. Woooooo! I peered over the side of the boat into the dark blackness of the water and could see absolutely nothing. Strange! Mountains rose on either side of the mile-wide lake. The wind was very chilly, but the ride was peaceful. Towards the end of the ferry ride we entered a man-made canal off the lake. The ferry actually went through a locke—the lowering of the water and all as it proceeded to the Jacobite Cruise dock. I had a very mysterious, yet relaxing afternoon on Loch Ness. The Jacobite van picked us up from the dock and took us back to the tourist center. That particular day and the story of the Loch Ness monster is one that I hope I will remember forever.

Our group of travelers then went to the train station to check train times for Thursday morning and then split up for dinner. I wanted to have a good meal for I was very hungry,
but others in our group just wanted to get some food from the grocery. While searching for a Chinese restaurant, we discovered an Indian food restaurant. Indian food originates in Pakistan. I was feeling adventurous and wanted to try something new. Therefore, two of my friends and I ate supper at the Cottage Tandoori Restaurant (Indian food). I ordered Chicken Tikka, Indian baked bread, sauces to try a little with my chicken, and ginger-ale to drink. It turned out to be a nice, elegant, sit-down dinner. The food was scrumptiously tasty! After finishing our dessert and paying our bill, we headed back to the hostel. I was stuffed with good food and I slept well that night getting to bed before 10 p.m.

**Thursday June 1, 1995**

This morning we took the train to York at 7:50 a.m. Good-bye Scotland! The train ride went pretty smoothly. I just worked on my diary the whole time. However, there was some very pretty scenery. York is so close to the east coast of England that oftentimes the train would run close to the seashore. Lovely! By mid-afternoon we made it to the city of York. Upon arriving at the station we got train time information and accommodations at the York Hotel. It was a very interesting place! The linens and rooms were not very clean, there might have been a sprinkle of water coming out of the shower head, and breakfast consisted of tea and two rolls. Oh well, I should not complain. It was a safe roof over my head. I have many blessings. After resting at our hostel for a little bit, we headed out to explore the city of York. The city of York is what was called Jorvik by the Vikings. Vikings were the first people to land and build the city to make it what it is today. On our way to visit the Jorvik Viking Center, we stopped at a bakery for some snacks—chocolate chip shortbread and a custard. Delicious! The Jorvik Viking Center was a real treat! It began
as a ride in a cart that took you through the historical stages of the city of York. The cart began at the present year and took you back in time. To the sides of the cart were life-size displays of people, settings of life, and objects of particular time periods. It was very nice. The car still went backwards until we reached 1,000 years ago in the history of York. The date was 948 A.D. An entire village describing the illustrating the Viking settlement had been created. Village houses, boats, merchant stands, and toilet facilities were all reconstructed as well as life-size moving human figures. It was quite an impressive display!

After the Viking Center, we walked around York looking in the shops and seeing the sites. We ate supper at a pub by the name of Lowther. I had Chicken Kiev and ginger-ale. It was yummy! After supper we walked around for a bit and then at 8 p.m. I ventured on The Original Ghost Walk. It was a guided tour of the city of York that also related some historically documented ghost appearances and human-ghost experiences that occurred in the city of York. Our guide was a gentleman who was a professional actor, so our tour and ghost stories were exquisite! This wasn't a ghost story tour that tried to scare you. I learned a lot about the historical aspects of the city of York, as well as about people who helped to build the city of York. Our guide and actor was very personable and he had fun interrogating us Americans. An hour and thirty minutes seemed like a long time to stand and listen to someone talk, but I was so captivated by his speech that I didn't even notice as the time flew past. I actually wanted him to relate more stories about the supernatural history of the city of York. I bought a VHS video cassette tape from him after the tour. I can't wait to get home and play the movie. After the tour we headed back to our hostel. This was the worst hotel we had stayed in yet. On top of a rough day with my college travelers, I tore my contact when getting ready for bed. Could my day get any worse? No, I
don't want to know after all. My eye had been hurting all day long, so there must have been a whole already in my contact during the day. I hope that my parents can send me another contact. I knew that it was definitely time to head to bed.

Friday June 2, 1995

This morning we got ready and then made our way to the Castle Museum in York. Wearing my glasses was necessary, but a little troublesome. The Castle Museum rests on the site of the historical York castle and was founded by Dr. J.L. Kirk. All of the displays in the museum reminded me of the Children's Museum in Indianapolis, Indiana. The Castle Museum recreated real city streets, carriages, and shops that depicted the historical times of York. I first visited an old time city street—it was full of the antiques from the city of York. All the different types of shops included: shoes, a weaver, candy, a library, optician supplies, saddle store, a confectioner, clothing, jewelry, police station, blacksmith shop, printer / engraver, Cricket Dealer, music store, performance poster, post office, glass manufacturer, toy store, firehouse, watchmaker, apothecary, coppersmith, pewter, a pawn broker, and a General Store. Everything seemed so realistic! The posting house was also the coach office. In the General Store one could get such items as spirits and wines, soap Sylvan, caster oil, and Lion ink. There were definitely some interesting names of products on those shelves. All of these sites were classified under the heading of York Gate (street) in the museum.

The next gallery was the Barn Gallery. There were several displays illustrating different farming practices and types of livestock common in the York area. The displays described sheep rearing, dairy farming, arable farming, wheat and barley growing, pig
rearing, bee keeping, and vegetable growing. The displays also described horses and horsemen and their tribute to York's industry and transportation systems.

The next gallery described Dales Kitchen and Dairy--Farmhouse Kitchen and Dairy products. This showed a modern English kitchen display and then traced various kitchen stoves and appliances throughout history. I saw huge metal pots used for cooking on a fireplace, an old pump spigot, and antique iron stoves. This area also concentrated on the "hardware" of the hearth and kitchen.

The next area was termed Dr. Kirk's Gallery. It contained many miscellaneous items. There were items from dress accessories to iron keys, to old greeting and valentine cards. The rest of the display was made up of appliances. The television was brought to England in 1925 by John Logie Baird. The radio was first started in 1922 by the British Broadcasting Company. The telegraph was started in 1894 by Marconi. Cameras were on display to show the 35mm revolution. The types of toilets stretched from Moule's Earth Closet in the 1860's to the 1880's wash-down ceramic type. There were antique tubs and showers on display that looked rather inventive. Also on display were vacuum cleaners, lawn mowers, light fixtures, oil lamps, a washing and drying machine, and sewing machines. I'm glad that technology has brought society as far as it is today.

The next gallery was named Thomly Park. The room had been turned into a historical looking park area. There was a bandstand, people (mannequins strolling for walks in the park, a merry-go-round, and old time bicycles with the one large wheel and the one small wheel in the back. The life-size display looked like a lot of fun!

The next gallery was titled 20th Century Decorative Arts. The age of plastics was described, along with music from Jazz to Pop. The next portion of the gallery recreated
various rooms to fit a certain time period. First, I met a man by the name of Old Henry Jenkins. He is Yorkshire's Oldest Man and was 169 years old when he died. The Yeoman's Room was styled from the 1600's to 1700's, the Georgian was styled after the 1720's. The Moorland Cottage depicted the 1800's and the Victorian Parlor described time in the 1870's.

In the Costume Gallery they showed some typical everyday English dress, wedding dresses, particular hair ornaments, and historical English family jewelry. The next gallery was the Children's Gallery. This was some great fun! The museum displayed historical puppets, model planes and cars, blocks, dolls, games, puzzles, a doll house, and toy soldiers. There were also some old metal toys which depicted cars, bicycles, boats, fire engines, etc.

There was a small change of scenery as I walked outdoors. The outside walk in the castle grounds took me to Raindale Mill. The mill was once used as a great community necessity. There were many cranks and gears--some as large as my outstretched arm length. There was a clicking sound as the gears went around. Outside the mill, the gears turned a large water-wheel that was beautiful. The whole scene reminded me of the show titled "Little House on the Prairie." I next viewed the Prison Cells typical of historical York times. Prisoners under sentence of death or awaiting transportation were separated from those confined for debt or those awaiting trial. One of the condemned cells I visited was called "Pompey's Parlor." Dick Turpin, one of England's most famous murderers and highwaymen, was held prisoner here and then hanged at York Tyburn. That was the last and final gallery in the museum. I then visited the gift shop and bought my mom and
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grandmother English cookbooks. This morning had been quite a historical experience. I learned much about the history of the English city of York.

After the museum we headed out into the square outside the museum. We visited the outside of Clifford's Tower. It holds the famous story of glowing red one particular night—supposedly with the blood of persecuted Jews in the historical past of York. This story was related to us on The Original Ghost Walk the evening before. Doesn't it make you think?

Our group then ventured back into the city and walked through the area of town called the Shambles. This area of town marks the place of the most ghost sightings in York. Interesting! We then came to the famous York Treasurer's House. Supposedly, the sight of a rather ghostly story. First, we watched a video about the history, architecture, and decoration of the house. For the last 450 years this house has been the official residence of the Treasurer of the York Minster. The Treasurer's House stands on Roman ruins lying within the legionary and fortress of historical Roman York. This time period was in 71 A.D. and called Eboracum. The cellar of the house contains the remains of a Roman column. The story is told that in 1954 a plumber working in the cellar heard the sound of an approaching trumpet closely followed by ghostly images of a line of Roman soldiers. Very interesting! It was difficult to sort out what I believed about all of this at first, but with such documented evidence, how could such events not be believed to be true? I think that ghosts and spirits of different forms do exist in the past as well today.

The rest of my friends wanted to go shopping in the Shambles, but I didn't want to do that, so I headed for the Dungeon of York. Obviously being a dungeon, it described Scotland's and England's history of prison punishment. In those days most of the prisoners were tortured horribly for their crimes. I am not going to describe the many grotesque
torture methods. It was unbelievable. Because of the already queasy stomach that I've got, I didn't feel too well after visiting that museum.

At about four o'clock in the afternoon we all met back at the York Minster. The cathedral was much more massive than the cathedrals in London. The size was literally unbelievable! Once inside, I had to lean my head all the way back just to see the top arch in the ceiling. I can't imagine how much architectural engineering, time, labor, and tedious sculpting work it would take to build such a structure. While I was there I got to hear the clock chimes ring. The clock chimes on the hour. The chime music was very pretty. The cathedral was simply beautiful inside and outside.

For dinner, my college friends and I went to Betty's Tea Room. It is a very famous English restaurant in the city of York. The atmosphere in the restaurant was serene. The large dining room was filled with warm sunlight as a result of the many windows. There was a piano player who performed familiar and beautiful tunes. The dining guests sat at white, round tables that had wicker chairs. Our waitress was highly commendable. There was also the sound of clanking dishes. It was a very wonderful and elegant dining experience. I had finally experienced fine dining in a foreign country. It was rather exciting! Betty's Tea Room is an elegantly cute restaurant that I would recommend to anyone. It is very appropriate for dinner as well as an afternoon dessert or snack. I tried some African Zulu Tea with two lumps of sugar. (I wanted to be adventurous!) The food that I ordered was very good. I ended up paying about ten pounds for the meal, but it was definitely worth it.

After dinner we went to see a movie by the name of Rob Roy at a close cinema. The movie showed a beautiful story about Scottish the 1700's. It was quite a treat after having toured much of Scotland this past week. I loved the movie! It described the honor of man
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and the love that binds a man and wife. The music and landscapes were beautiful. I think that I shall try and purchase this soundtrack at my local Target store when I return to the United States!

**Saturday June 3, 1995**

I arose early today and set out homeward—well at least back to Edge Hill College—by myself. I had many things that I needed to return to college to complete. I'm an early morning person anyway, and I wasn't bothered a bit by traveling by myself. I took the 8:30 a.m. train from York and arrived in Ormskirk a little after 11:30 a.m. On my way to the college I bought some fruit and bread to eat later. I also bought a green clothesline so that I could hang up my clothes after laundry. After unpacking a few things, I went to the library to do some more typing on lesson plans for our thematic unit. Later I ate some supper and then strung up the clothesline that I had bought from Woolworth's across the ceiling of my room. It turned out to be quite a useful little device by giving me lots of space to hang up wet clothes. Oh, every once in a while I come up with an ingenious idea. I completed my wash and while it was drying decided to go and call Matthew. I missed him so much and wanted to hear the sound of a friendly voice. I felt rather lonely. Matt was so excited that I had given him a call. His mother said that he was jumping all around the house. He even called my parents to tell them the good news! What a character who I love dearly!

**Monday June 5, 1995**

Ah, today was the first day of our large seminar week. The best part of the day was breakfast! Seminar was jam-packed with information and lasted until 12:30 p.m. Today we
talked about differences between England and the United States. We also discussed multiculturalism in the classroom. Multiculturalism is of great importance to forming a community within the classroom. Cultural differences are something we encounter on a daily basis and it is good to know and understand how situations that may arise should be confronted and handled.

Through much of today's discussion I confirmed information that I believed to be true. I discovered that many of my other college classmates felt the same way I did about the cultural differences we have encountered here in England. Adjusting to this different, not wrong, way of life has been my greatest challenge in these last three weeks. It was therapeutic to sit down, list, and discuss the cultural differences. Our differences concerning language accents, cleanliness, sports, entertainment, attitudes toward health, and some cultural discriminations have been rather burdensome since our arrival in England. Dealing with my frustration has led me to be very thankful to live in the United States and feel very proud to be an American. Several times in my personal diary, before today, I commented upon the cultural differences and how much I missed being in America. Today I confirmed that others felt the same way through the class discussion and listing of information on the overhead projector.

The aspects that I learned today concerned what I as a teacher should be incorporating into my classroom in order to be sensitive to differing cultures and in order to incorporate activities concerning various different races, religions, and celebrated holidays. As a teacher, in order to incorporate these ideas of multiculturalism in the classroom, I will attempt not to avoid children of different races, research cultures and religions with which I'm not familiar, use cultural ideas to integrate the child as an important individual in the
classroom, give each child one week to explore and discover their cultural background. Create unit activities involving cultural crafts, sports, and cooking traditions, create multicultural workshops and bulletin board displays in the classrooms, and integrate literature and music in the classroom to support the idea of multiculturalism. All of these activities emphasize the importance of addressing cultural differences in the classroom. One good idea to remember about multiculturalism is that the traditions of a culture are not wrong, they merely differ from our own.

For lunch today I had cheese and crackers, nil, and an orange-chocolate candy bar. Orange-chocolate is divinely delicious! Fantastico! After lunch I went to the library to type and edit lesson plans for our thematic unit about U.S. Traveling Sites. My two other thematic unit group members and I worked in the lab until 8:55 p.m., when the library people kicked us out. We continued to work as a group in Brenda’s room to try and finish assembling the unit. We were all so tired of working on the same project for such an extended period of time. We stopped working on the unit as a group around midnight, but I had a few lesson activities to finish up for the unit, so I returned to my own room to complete them. I finally finished at about 2:30 a.m. and went to bed. What a wild day! At least our unit was finally completed and ready to be turned in on Tuesday. Cool!

**Tuesday June 6, 1995**

Another seminar session occurred today. We talked about language arts topics and their application in the elementary classroom. I thoroughly enjoyed turning in my unit today! Hee! Hee! After seminar I met with Dr. Nierenberg to discuss my senior honors thesis. We talked about possible ideas for the structure of the thesis and established some meeting
plans for next year. I was happy to get started on my thesis, but I also knew that it meant the beginning of a lot of work. This afternoon I worked on some curricular reading, organized some things, ate supper, took an hour nap, read some more text, and then went to bed about 11:30 p.m. However, it turned out to be a very productive day. I also felt much better now that the unit was done. Oh, I do wish that there was not so much to do with all of my course work.

**Wednesday June 7, 1995**

Today was once again another seminar day. We discussed the subject called educational foundations. Our topic was philosophies and theories of education—very interesting material! Oddly enough, I enjoyed today's discussion. It was great the way that Dr. Nierenberg led us to educational discovery with the philosophies and theories of learning, and the development of our own educational philosophy. My favorite activity for today involved planning a classroom arrangement. Arranging my own classroom is one thing that I cannot wait to do. It was comforting to recognize so many practical applications to our classroom discussions. Too many times I am in a college class and asking myself, "Why I am learning this?—How is this going to help me later in life? The development of the philosophy was very helpful. A personal teaching philosophy is something that I had always wondered how to formulate. With today's information, I can sit down and make my philosophy reality.

I want to relate a few of my beliefs on my personal philosophies and theories of student learning. I believe that children learn best through methods of discovery and experimentation. Hands-on activities and meaningful activities are important. To maintain a
classroom conducive to learning, various methods of discipline should exist. Students should help the teacher design the specifics of the classroom rules and consequences. I also believe in Glasser's model of discipline, behavior contracts, and using "When you_____ I feel_____ , I wish you would_____." These methods encourage student communication and student choice in discipline correction. Parents are an important consideration in every classroom. Parents should know what subjects and activities are being taught to their children. Teachers must take advantage of parent interest. Parents should also be informed of the progress, both good and bad, of their students. I also believe that teachers should keep the lines of communication open. In my classroom, I'm going to implement ideas from the philosophies and ideas of pragmatism and existentialism. I favor existentialism because I strongly believe that after learning and practicing an idea or concept, students should test the reality of their values and beliefs on an experience, guided discovery, making the classroom a community, examining the learning process, posing questions to change reality, and the emphasis on developing problem-solving skills. I also believe that the theories of progressivism and social reconstructionism are important. Progressivism is based on individual student needs, hands-on activity, and the building of knowledge through experiences. Social reconstructionism leaves an avenue for social change and development of beliefs. Sticking to theories and philosophies can be one of the hardest duties as a teacher. With honest reflection upon instructional methods on a regular basis, great accomplishments for the learning of students can be made.

Today seminar lasted until 3 p.m., at which time I headed to the town of Ormskirk to accomplish some shopping. I ate the cafeteria supper at about 5:30 p.m. and then worked on homework the rest of the evening. I went to bed early.
Thursday June 8, 1995

It's almost Friday! Today seminar lasted until 2:30 p.m. The topic of seminar involved the development of instructional methods in the classroom. The lesson was very beneficial for me. I enjoyed the word matrix activity the most. I was excited about completing the project ever since Dr. Nierenberg had first mentioned that we were going to get to take this test which determined our style of learning. After taking the test, I found out that I am a concrete sequential learner. I also thought the discussion on the topic of ability grouping, for subjects such as reading was beneficial. I had a really hard time completing the individual ability grouping assignment that Dr. Nierenberg gave to us. I don't like the idea of grouping students by ability. Students may know who the intelligent and less intelligent students are in a class, but I think that ability grouping only encourages intelligence separations. I think that ability grouping does more damage than is instructionally and educationally beneficial. In my classroom I will group the students according to mixed ability and encourage the reading of chapter books instead of constantly relying on the basil for instructional ideas. By grouping the students according to mixed ability, the students can help one another learn. To avoid very smart students from being held back, it might be a good idea to change the students who are in various groups about every two months. This process may allow for a greater variety of educational opportunities and curricular advancement for each student.

In planning methods of curricular instruction, the teacher must keep in mind his/her beliefs concerning different philosophies and theories of education as well as the different learning styles (auditory, kinesthetic, and visual) of students. It is important as a teacher to
keep in mind that with every lesson, every activity, literally every word that is muttered from the mouth of a teacher, is in some way affecting the education and ultimately the life of every student in the classroom.

After seminar I went to the library to work on one of my language arts projects. While at the library I toured a special information display called Europe Today: The Ugly Face of Nationalism. It was very informative for I did not know that such aggression and nationalism acts were occurring in some of the countries in Europe. I just don’t understand why we can’t all get along and live relatively peacefully together? I know I can’t fully understand and can only sympathize with the situation, but the persecution for religious as well as political reasons is detrimental to human society. I am very thankful that I live in America and am a citizen of the United States of America. My life has not been touched by such aggressive conflicts. I am a very grateful person for the life that I live.

Friday June 9, 1995

This morning turned out to be such a beautiful and warm day. I woke up today a little earlier than normal, so I went ahead and got dressed to go to breakfast. As I was almost ready to leave I heard these loud quacking noises outside my open window. I went to investigate and found a bunch of quackers wandering around in the courtyard outside looking for food. I had some old crackers in my room, so I crumbled those up and fed the ducks out through my upstairs window. It was fun and I’m sure the ducks enjoyed getting a little something to eat. After I was done feeding them they all waddled noisily away. What a beautiful day for a Friday!
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Today's seminar topic involved the planning of curricular subjects into an actual school day—creating a time schedule. Our second focus brought us to readers' and writers' workshop and discussed ways in which it should be incorporated into the classroom schedule to ensure that students' needs are met, meaningful experiences are created, and cooperative learning methods are established. I thought the subject yielded much practical information. I really enjoyed setting up a theoretical school day. With some of the different activities that we have done this week, I feel like the reality of becoming a professional teacher, getting a job, and organizing my classroom has finally arrived. The seminar discussions have made me feel a lot more comfortable and sure of myself as a professional educator when I think of the amount of work teaching requires. I've been reading some of the information in my texts, and it scares me to the point where I've been sitting in my room, have sat back to reflect upon what I was reading, wondering how I could ever implement such programs in my classroom. I think that the instruction which Dr. Nierenberg has provided for us greatly comforted my fears and showed me how education and learning can occur in my classroom.

The amount of shared ideas for teaching that have occurred this week in seminar will be invaluable—I'm so glad that I took advantage of the opportunity of studying and teaching this summer in England. Someday I will be able to view the effects of the ideas discussed today for student learning. In some ways I wish that we could continue seminar for the remaining weeks we are in England. These seminar education discussions have been very beneficial.

The flowers on campus today were blooming so beautifully. I miss summer times with Matthew. On my way to supper I walked past some beautiful marigolds and begonias--
ah, they reminded me of our family garden at home (Ft. Wayne, Indiana) and the marigolds
that my parents used to plant each summer along the front walk at our house in Richwood, West Virginia. These are such wonderful memories on a nice summer day. Today the weather was warm enough that I was actually able to wear jeans and a T-shirt. Don’t hold your breath though, this is England, tomorrow it will probably be raining and fifty degrees Fareignheight outside.

Today in seminar we celebrated the student summer birthdays with chocolate chip cupcakes. Yummy! However, we are also going to do some celebrating tonight for we had one of the college girls in our group turn twenty-one.

This evening our entire EDEL-O group ventured to a pub in Ormskirk by the name of Raily’s Wine Bar. Well, that evening marked the date in which I ventured to experience my first alcoholic drink. Thank goodness it wasn’t beer (Yuck!) but instead it was a divine fruity wine. I had a 1992 8.4% volume Merrydown Original Extra Strong Dry Vintage Cider. Without some kind of flavoring I don’t think that I would like the taste of alcohol (wine). It was something different to try though. I was drinking in a responsible manner; I didn’t get drunk or sick. I do know that the alcohol affected me. I was acting a little more silly than usual and one of my college mates said they had never seen me smile so much. I thought to myself, “Well, the only other thing that makes me smile so much is the good loving of Matthew James Thomas Gumbel. I was having a good time dancing and listening to the music while at the bar. The other people at this place also provided much entertainment. Even though I drank responsibly, there were those in our group who did not. I played “mother” to some very drunk students that night. I would like to not repeat that experience again. Even with the little amount of alcohol I had, I had trouble sleeping and my stomach
didn’t feel so good all night. I avoided getting sick, but I didn’t feel like running a marathon either. I am still standing by the idea that alcohol in large amounts is not a wise decision. Social drinking is fine, but one should always drink in a responsible manner. Moderation is the key. Furthermore, alcohol and driving should never mix. Designate a driver, call a friend, or call a taxi. Don’t put your life or the life of others in peril. This Friday night is definitely one that I will remember for a long time to come.

Saturday June 10, 1995

I slept in for part of the morning, and then got up and did my laundry (fun, fun!) with some fellow college mates. The rest of my day pretty much consisted of trying to catch up on my homework and working on my journal. I went to the library to check my e-mail later in the afternoon and discovered that I had a message from Matt Sliger. He has been very helpful in relaying messages between my parents and I. In addition, it has been nice to have a friend from back home with whom to communicate. Even though my best friend Michelle does not think so, I believe that she has a really nice brother.

I ate supper at the Italian restaurant by the name of Cafe Bar in Ormskirk with several people from our EDEL-O group. While I was there I saw my teacher from Rainford Primary School, Mrs. Debbie Ashby. She was dining with her husband and her little four-year old girl. I had some lasagna and some chocolate dessert. It was all so delicious after experiencing cafeteria food for such a long time.

With no television to watch I have found other activities to fill my spare time. Well, the spare time I do have—usually on weekends. I have listened to the radio acting programs, written letters, read books, or my favorite is to listen to the tape Matt made for
me and dream of romantic times with him. Ah, isn't love the sweetest! I got to bed about 10 p.m.

Monday June 12 - Monday July 3, 1995

This time period served as one of the most beneficial teaching experiences for my entire college career. Completing my junior teaching practicum requirement, it was a great opportunity to work individually with an English primary teacher and to gain the experience of teaching all day long, four days a week in a foreign teaching setting. I really missed being away from my home, but the warmth of the teaching staff and the love of the students at Rainford Primary School brought great comfort. I will never forget the people who touched my life during these weeks of teaching in an English Primary School.

I assisted the teacher in any way which she needed and then she slowly allowed me to take over a portion of the class for lessons. I taught math lessons about time to three different levels of students. I also taught several geography and travel lesson from my American travel unit. The students were eager to learn about the United States. I learned much about effective methods of teaching. I also learned much about myself. Teaching in England is a growing experience that I will never forget as long as I live. The students were interested in me as a person and also in the traditions of life in America. It was a good feeling to share my culture with other people. My weeks of teaching in England brought great pride and gratitude to my heart.

I made the teacher and students going away gifts for the last day upon which I would teach. The students made me cards, and some of the students gave me gifts. Before I left on my final afternoon, the students gave a "Hip, Hip, Hooray" cheer three times to show
their gratitude. It was a great British experience for an American teacher from Indiana. I was very sad to leave the students that I had been given the opportunity to teach in England. It was like losing my first year of students as a professional teacher. I cared so much for each one of them. A teacher instills knowledge to assist students in their growth and development. When the end of the year has finally arrived, the teacher hopes that he/she has adequately prepared the students to meet the challenges of the world. I felt that I had made an intellectual as well as cultural difference in the lives of nearly forty English primary students.

Saturday June 17, 1995

Today was the day in which I set out for the city of Manchester, England with a small detour through Wales. A small group of students and I left Ormskirk on the train this morning about 7:10 a.m. The intended destination for the trip was Merthyr Tyde Ville Brecon Beacon National Park in Wales. The name of the city where the National Park is located is called Brecon. We grabbed breakfast at a Burger King and then got on a train heading south for Crewe. We had to do a little backtracking today due to train schedules. Our train from Crewe will take us to Cardiff, which is the capital of Wales. Wales is located on the southwestern side of the country of England. From Cardiff we took a train to Merthyr Tyde Ville and arrived in town at about 1:45 p.m. There was a bus which then took us to the town of Brecon. As we neared Brecon, the mountains rose magnificently into the sky. We drove through a portion of Brecon Beacons National Park to reach the town of Brecon. I saw sheep, campers, and waterfalls in mountain crevices. The scenery was absolutely beautiful—everything you cold imagine in a national park and more. The surroundings were
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so enthralling that I felt as if I could stay in this valley and not worry one bit about being unattached from civilization. Walking through the town we found the Visitor’s Information Center. I was now about 2:30 p.m. The next information I heard was frightful to my ears. We had arrived too late in the day, most of the important sites in Brecon Beacons National Park were a good hiking distance away, and the bus schedule was entirely too infrequent. For us to enjoy the park and still make it on time back to college, there were no available transportation services at the times which we needed. Unfortunately, touring through Brecon Beacons National Park was not going to happen today.

Before leaving Brecon we toured the city a bit. It was fun to look though some of the shops. I soon discovered that the people in Wales speak a separate Welsh language, but many also speak English. The sun came out as we loaded onto a bus bound for the next small town with train transportation services—Abergaveny. It is a few miles south of Brecon. The bus trip was very relaxing after quite an eventful, or rather uneventful, day. I was not at all upset at the turn of events, for I had gotten to travel and see the country of Wales and I was not back at Edge Hill working on homework. I was a happy person. On the bus I rode through several small towns and farm and grazing areas. Many people decorated their lawns with mini windmills and colorful window flower boxes. The scenery was gorgeous! I especially liked the narrow road which was at times surrounded by tall green hedge bushes, trimmed to perfect shapes. This made green walls at the side of the road. It was a lot of fun to drive down the road!

Abergavenny train station was a small building with train tracks running in front of it. There was nobody around and it seemed as though we were in the middle of nowhere. However, the train finally came and we were on our way to the city of Manchester. The
train ride was a nice rest—I enjoy train rides much better when there are a fewer number of people traveling on the train. We arrived in the Manchester train station at about 8:08 p.m. What a day! Our first objective was to find our way through the city to the YHA (Youth Hostels Association) by using a trusty map. It took a while, but we finally made it to the hostel twenty-five minutes later. It was modern, very clean, nicely furnished, and it had bathrooms in the rooms. There was a waterfall out in front of the hostel. Ah, it provided such comforting sounds. This was going to be great!

We settled into our room and then freshened-up. We were all a little hungry, so before we went to our ten o’clock movie we stopped in at the local Kentucky Fried Chicken and had something to eat. The American chain restaurants are not very common, but when one is found I am sure going to take advantage of the situation. The movie was pretty good and I got to bed at about 2 a.m.

Sunday June 18, 1995

Today was Father’s Day, however I was not able to be at home. It made me feel a little bit better because I had celebrated both Mother’s Day and Father’s Day before I left the United States. I’m sure that they both know that I miss and love them dearly. Who could ask for any other better parents. They have always been so good to me—loving, caring, and guiding with life’s trials and tribulations. The trip back to Ormskirk went rather well today. I was eager to arrive at the college and start on some of my homework. Later in the evening I found some joyous comfort as I called my family and Matt’s family to wish them a “Happy Father’s Day.” I miss them all so dearly!
Tuesday July 4, 1995

It is Independence Day—the fourth of July! Yahoo! I think that it is interesting though, the people in England don't see too much cause for celebration on the fourth of July. Hmm?! I guess that I had better be on my best behavior and wave my American flag in a non-offensive manner.

This evening we threw an American celebration to thank all of our teachers and administrative staff who had worked with us over the past few weeks. My favorite part of the party was the food. Each one of us (college students) had volunteered to bring one American food item with us to England for this special occasion. There was a nice variety of snack foods. I liked the fact that we introduced some of the foods to the teachers and administrators for the very first time. I really enjoy sharing the culture in which I live with others. The events of the evening served as a nice, friendly way to say good-bye to our professional British education friends.

The rest of the evening I worked on homework and rested my tired little self.

Friday July 7, 1995

This morning marked the beginning of one of the best adventures of my entire life! I left Edge Hill College this morning at 6:25 a.m. for the continent of Europe. I am so excited! Our group of four college students traveled from Ormskirk, to Liverpool, to London by train. Arriving in London about 10:20 a.m., we caught the London Tube and traveled to Waterloo Station. Our method of transportation to Europe was the chunnel. This is a relatively new method of transportation between Britain and Europe, and I thought that I was rather privileged to be able to travel the chunnel. At the station, we checked in, exchanged some
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money, and got something to eat. At 12:15 p.m. we were allowed to begin boarding for our 12:27 departure to Brussels, Belgium. The side of the chunnel train was white, navy, and yellow and labeled with the title Eurostar. We departed from Waterloo station in London, England shortly after 12:30 p.m. I am finally going to Europe! Yahoo! I will be traveling to another continent! Can you imagine the experiences I may have?

As we proceeded I viewed the lush green English countryside. It was only a short time and then we were heading into the long, dark chunnel tunnel. It was about 1:43 p.m. or 2:43 p.m. Belgium time. We had crossed another time zone and I was once again losing hours. I was also getting farther away from my family and friends in America. The dark tunnel is the portion of the chunnel which ventures under the water between the two land masses of Belgium and Britain. We emerged from the tunnel at about 2:10 p.m. British time / 3:10 p.m. Europe time. The sun was out and shining beautifully. I was intrigued by how much the terrain had changed—the foliage and field crops looked more American than English. It looked flat like Indiana—like home. As the train moved further inland, the terrain was turning a little more hilly. Oh, I'm getting more excited than ever! I took my first step onto the continent of Europe in Brussels, Belgium at 4:45 p.m. It was very nice and warm. Our first objective while in the Zuid train station was to validate our Eurail Pass. Things were kind of hectic for about an hour, so I decided to savor the moment of being in Brussels by eating a Belgian Waffle. After arranging accommodations for the next couple of days we headed to the C.H.A.B. Youth and Budget Hotel. We checked in, freshened-up, and then headed out into the city of Brussels. At 7:30 p.m. we ate supper at l'ecole buissonniere. I had some Spaghetti Carbonara and a Lemon Soft Drink. My favorite part of traveling is to take some leisure time to explore cities. I came upon Flag Square and the

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large statue on Rue Royale Street. We walked by a great cathedral, visited the markets, and visited the city center. A small quartet of string players played the famous Bolero. We then went to visit the infamous Manneken Pis "Peeing Child." That was rather interesting! I was kind of disappointed, the sight was supposed to be very famous. It was a small black statue of a young boy and he was "peeing" into the water. Unbelievable! The city of Bruxelles was a great experience!

July 8, 1995

I arose early the next morning at about 6:30 a.m.—hey I was eager to "see all that I could see." By 7:30 p.m. we were packed, hurriedly eating a breakfast, and running to catch an 8:10 train to Amsterdam, Holland. It was sometimes very difficult arranging the schedule—hostels, trains, and landmark sights to see. It was very frustrating when certain business were closed on Mondays, our phone cards wouldn't work even with the country codes, and Europe doesn't take hostel reservations. Isn't that silly. I suppose that they have their reasons. Our group has decided that if you plan to travel Europe that a guided tour would be perfect.

On the way into Amsterdam, Holland I saw: a windmill, canals, boats, cows, and irrigation devices in the fields. I remember reading somewhere that windmills are an integral part of the Dutch landscape. Windmills were built centuries ago in Iran and therefore came to Europe through the Arabs. After arriving, we got some food from a sandwich shop and then took a Redery Plas Excursion (boat ride) on the Amsterdam canal. That was a really neat experience. First, viewing the historical and modern sights of Amsterdam from the system of canals built throughout the city was exceptional. Second, I
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learned much about the city of Amsterdam by listening to the information given during the boat ride. Later in the afternoon, the boat ride returned to its dock was done and we decided to tour the Anne Frank Hiding House. As I was walking through the streets to the Anne Frank Hiding House, I realized that a tight rule was held over the life of the Jews. It gave you chills to think that the Nazis trampled on the very street upon which I was walking. Not too many words could describe the feelings of my experience. I won't ever forget the bravery of the girl named Anne Frank.

On our way back to the train station we all ate some dinner and then boarded our train bound for Koln, Germany. This train had a room with six seats and the space was wonderful! We arrived in Koln at 7:45 p.m. This was going to be quite an enjoyable experience for me. I stepped out onto my homeland for the very first time that evening. It was an exhilarating feeling to know that my father was born in this country fifty-one years ago. At the train station we were confronted with finding a place to spend the night. It was a rather difficult process and we ended up being rather worried of not finding a place to stay. Eventually we had to go with a little bit more expensive of an accommodation. At least it was a safe roof over our head. We stayed at the Hotel Berg. It was a little confusing to find due to the road signs written in German. It was a neat aspect of the culture. Where was Dad or Grandpa when I need them to translate a little German for me? After relaxing in our room for a bit, we decided to take a stroll down by the river. We stood on the peaceful shores and then crossed the three tier bridge which crosses over the Rhine River. All the sights and sounds started me thinking of home and of Matthew. We came upon a fountain on the other side of the bridge at which we took our pictures. We decided that we need some silly pictures from Europe as well.
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The rest of the evening we visited sights closely surrounding the bridge in the city. Before turning into bed we had to stop in at the local McDonald's and have some orange juice and doughnuts. That treat definitely hit the spot! It was terribly hot that day and evening and I think that prevented me from sleeping soundly, but I attempted to go to bed about 11:30 p.m.

July 9, 1995

For breakfast I had some good German food! I had juice, tea, roles, crackers, and Krauter Pate-Braunschweiger. I was an exceptionally happy lady that morning. I could not believe how good the food was. That morning we set out for Werzberg and ultimately Bamberg, Germany. It was a nice sunny morning for traveling. As the train continued on, the terrain began to change. The land was now covered with dense forests and hills and mountains rose in the distance. Germany is so pretty!

It was a very warm day for train travel, but I didn't mind one bit. The trip went rather smoothly except for when our Eurail Pass ticket traveled to Munich Germany, even though we stopped in Bamberg. I will always remember the story behind that stunt! Our next destination would involve staying in someone's house who lived in Bamberg, Germany. The family was from the states and was friends with one of the girls in our college group. Ah, an American family. I was rather excited about the idea of staying in a real house in the country of Germany. It was a nice time to explore the more residential areas of Germany, rather than maintaining only the tourist point of view of traveling. Bamberg was a lovely little German town. One of my favorite activities were the movies we watched and the popcorn we ate one evening. As we explored the surrounding areas of Bamberg we took a
drive on the Autobahn, visited a cathedral, watched some sunsets, took a hike in a forest near their house, went shopping, and visited an official German Beer Keller. I'm so glad that I had the opportunity to visit such a nice place in my homeland of Germany.

**Tuesday July 11, 1995**

Today we left the city of Bamberg and traveled south to the German town of Munich. From there we traveled to the memorial concentration camp named Dachau. Visiting the camp was a great learning experience in so many different ways. The events and visual experiences of this particular day will live in my memory forever. I walked on the grounds where many Jews and people of other nationalities suffered life and experienced death. There was a commemorative museum which had collected information from various different types of media to describe the many events that led up to Hitler seizing power in Germany and the destruction of non-Germans in the concentration camps. One of the more meaningful quotes on a stone wall states, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” That statement carries a lot of power. Mankind needs to focus on reuniting the living for the defense of peace and freedom and in respect for their fellow men. The events of today brought much reflection time to me late in the evening and I wanted to related some of my thoughts.

During this trip I learned a lot about life and living and I've also learned that I've got a few things yet to learn about the big wide world. I've reinforced my belief that family and friends are some of the most precious aspects of life here on Earth. The freedom that I possess as an American is very dear to me and should not be taken for granted. I also think that a person should take advantage of every great opportunity that comes around in
PLUS JAMA'AH
NEVER AGAIN
NEVER
NEVER AGAIN

FOSSE COMMUNE
GRAB TAU SENDER
UNBEKANTNER
GRAVE OF
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life, because it may be your only chance to experience such a wonderment. I'm sad to leave my home country of Germany this evening, but the Europe adventures must now move on to Italy. Sleep tight world!

**Wednesday July 12, 1995**

The journey through the mountains of Austria last night was phenomenal. Even though it was night, I could still see the dark outlines of the tall mountains against the sky. I just stared in disbelief—I had never seen such mountains, rising with great stature and glory to the Heavens above. There are also small towns situated in valleys and their lights in the dark night make the sight even more wonderful. It reminds me of Gatlinberg, West Virginia in the United States. Some of the mountains even have snow on their tops. I couldn't wait for the sun to rise to expose the underlying colors and true beauty of the landscape. God painted such a wonderful world. As I look outside I cannot imagine what kind of human strength it took to build train railways and highways through these great rock statues. With each passing moment a new world is revealed before my eyes. At times the train also ran along a raging rapid river. It flowed very quickly as I noticed the moonlight highlighting the white foam of the water. As morning approached, new wonders were seen.

The sides of the hills were terraced to grow crops, and grape vines are arranged in rows and strung on a great large trellis. It was quite a sight. We arrived in Venizia, Italy at 9:44 a.m. There was this vast bridge that had to be crossed by the train to get to the city of Venizia. The city is surrounded entirely by water. We reserved at a hostel by the name of Dolomiti. Today would definitely be a genuine experience. It simply amazed me how the water was completely surrounding the city. We visited many of the canal bridges,
sandwich shops, fruit stands, the Basilica de San Marco, and the Bell Tower. Venice was a nice city, but I was looking forward to visiting Rome.

**Thursday July 13, 1995**

As we headed into southern Italy today the weather was again very warm. We arrived off the train in Rome at about 12:44 p.m. It was such a large city. We had relatively nice hotel accommodations, but I will never forget the hassle we experienced due to extra charges on the bills. It is an unbelievable story. We had a little bit of time to spend in the city that afternoon and evening, so the Coliseum was first on our list of attractions. I had previously studied the language of Latin and the history and culture for four years in high school, and to now actually have the opportunity to experience it in real life—wow! I loved Rome. It contained such a great architectural history and structures dating from the ancient history of the Great Roman Times. Other sights visited were Vatican City, Sistine Chapel, Pantheon, Arcademia Americana, Circus Maximus, and The Roman Forum. Rome is beautiful as both a modern city and a historical city.
Sunday July 16, 1995

Ah, Pari! After traveling straight through from Rome to Paris on a night train, I was ready to greet the great outdoors at 10:15 a.m. Paris was not one of my most favorite cities in Europe, but it has its high points. While in Paris we stayed in a very interesting youth hostel—how could you forget the thirty-second raindrop stream of the shower? The Louvre was a very nice historic museum. I especially like the glass structural triangles outside the Louvre. However, my favorite was the Eiffel Tower. I took an elevator to the top portion and walked around soaking up the fresh air and watching the beautiful sunset. The lights of Paris grew very pretty as night fell on the city of love. This was definitely somewhere that I would like to have ventured with my love, Matthew. I stared out to the west and knew that the thought of home became more realistic with every passing moment. A big smile came to my face when I thought of home, family, friends, and Matthew. Five days and Matt would be holding me in his loving arms. What nice thoughts that warmed my heart and put an extra spring in my step.
Wednesday July 19, 1995

Oh, today I checked out of my last hostel for a while and took the subway to the train station. We caught our 10:16 a.m. Eurostar journey from Paris, France to London, England. During this trip the captain marked the train at traveling 186 mph. Wow! Let me tell you, the word England never sounded so good. I'm moving westward and feeling better with every hour that passes. I just can't wait until I get home!

Friday July 21, 1995

Our college group and Dr. Nierenberg left Edge Hill College at 6:20 a.m. to begin the long journey back home to the United States. Right before I entered the plane at London Heathrow, I turned and took one last glimpse at England and thought, “Good-bye! I'm heading west, heading to my home in the United States.” It was such a good feeling to know that I was going HOME! A coach, a couple shuttles, and three planes later I was safe in the arms of loved ones. My plane landed in Ft. Wayne at 4:55 p.m. that evening. We cheered as the plane touched the ground. Oh, big hugs, big hugs! It was so good to see my family and to be rejoicing for making it home. This trip to Europe will be one recorded in the history books of my life forever.
PART III: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Taking the road less traveled to Western Europe contributed significantly to my professional development as an educator and will greatly enhance my teaching abilities in an American classroom. My experiences studying and teaching in England, and traveling throughout Europe, opened many doors of emotional and intellectual opportunity. My encounter with Europe allowed me to grow, learn, and develop as a person, but also to grow, learn, and develop as a professional.

EUROPEAN LIVING IN ORMSKIRK AT EDGE HILL

During my time in Europe, Edge Hill University College became my place of intellectual enlightenment. There are many specific ways in which my seminar study at Edge Hill University College served as a contribution to my professional development. Edge Hill offered a comforting college atmosphere where I could explore the history and modern application of education in Britain, specifically that of England. It was most interesting to experience post-secondary study and living at a different college as well as in another country. For example, having a bedroom and a tiny washroom all to myself was a new living situation. The rules and regulations that accompanied anything from delivered mail to administrative processes to computer lab hours, were all part of my ability to make adjustments to the customary parts of life in a foreign country. Finally, it was neat to discover commonalities and to make connections with the British as well as other international students studying at Edge Hill. At times, I felt I gained a greater understanding of different ways of life by talking with “the experienced people of the culture” rather than
experiencing it for myself. From the library to the dining hall to the seminar rooms, Edge Hill provided a "home away from home."

EUROPEAN SEMINAR EXPERIENCES

Seminar study at Edge Hill College University, with Ball State University professor Dr. Nierenberg, served as a vital time of reflection upon the combination of my study and teaching experiences in England and America. Dr. Nierenberg was not only a remarkable asset due to her vast knowledge of education in America, but also because of her past educational experiences in England. Having such an intricate background allowed her to lead discussions covering the educational theory from our summer teaching curriculum and to combine it with our teaching experiences in the English classrooms. Seminar study served as an excellent opportunity to study educational theory, and then discuss our observations of its application in the English classroom. As a college student, I had never before experienced such an effective method of learning, nor do I think the experience will ever be equaled.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

Seminar study in England covered specific educational aspects of classroom teaching that had never been discussed in any other of my college courses at Ball State. Many of my prior courses gave me a glossy overview of teaching in an elementary classroom, but Dr. Nierenberg took theory and had us put it into practice by reacting to specific British and American classroom scenarios. I knew that someday I would be able to use the topics discussed to be an effective elementary classroom teacher. The topics I
learned provided great advice. As a seminar class, we discussed establishing a time schedule that would encompass an entire day, and then how we might modify it to integrate units or participate in cross-curricular studies. We also talked about meeting individual student needs as a teacher, different types and the appropriateness of student assessment, involving parents and the community in the classroom, and drew pictures of the set-up of a "dream" classroom and then together as a class realistically created an elementary classroom. The greatest phrase that I learned and will always remember is, "If you don't know why you are teaching a concept or having the students perform an activity, don't do it." Additional ideas and philosophies that were meaningful to me include:

- Lesson plans should be 60% thought and 40% implementation.
- A suggested way to incorporate both the instructional basis of the basal, and still expose children to a rich literature environment would be to examine the text for skill topics and then integrate literature to cover those particular skills.
- Speaking against ability grouping, "When children use the knowledge they already have, you are not holding anyone back."
- Students should be given choices of topical projects to complete when working on research.
- Teachers need to know and fully understand the rules of grammar in order to not teach students misconceptions.
- The teacher should not try to fit the children into the structure of school, teachers should try and fit the structure of education to the style or needs of the students.
- The development of student thought processes and conceptual applications to life are more important than unnecessarily rushing to complete curriculum.
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- Have specific expectations for children.
- Give away some of the teacher control to the students.
- As a teacher, don't expect abilities you don't teach.

**DISCIPLINE**

One of the larger topics of discussion in seminar was that of discipline. We discussed the difference between discipline and punishment. Discipline is a process used to teach appropriate behavior, while punishment is a method of discipline which simply makes the child feel miserable. Some discipline problems may diminish themselves, but others may call for intervention by the teacher. Teachers have a variety of discipline strategies that can be used with students. Teachers could implement Glasser's model of establishing individual student contracts to correct behavior. Additionally, teachers can refer to Lee Canter's book titled *Assertive Discipline*. In another model Jacob Kounin believes that teachers possess a trait called "withitness"--the teacher is highly attuned and sensitive to what is occurring within the classroom environment. However, my two favorite methods involve setting up a discipline plan through a variety of behavior questions for the student, and my other favorite is to use the phrase. "When you_______ I feel______, I wish you would______." Whatever techniques are used in the classroom, it must be remembered by the individual to teach and model appropriate behavior. Students needs to realize that they are individually accountable for their own actions. Additionally, teachers should remember that students who are engaged in a variety of activities are less likely to misbehave. Finally, before jumping to conclusions concerning student discipline, teachers
consider why a student is behaving in a particular fashion.

**RELIGION**

Religion in schools was a great topic of interest in seminar sessions. In American schools, any school-mandated religious practice is forbidden, yet in England, religion in the public school is very much supported as part of the British National Curriculum. I learned much from my teaching experiences in the English classrooms. From my observations, religion is what creates a close knit bond between the students. Their value system and religious beliefs are the base for discipline, curriculum learning, and social friendships. The English students seemed to really enjoy the time set aside during a normal school day for assembly. The main question of seminar was, "How do I handle religion in the schools as an American teacher?" American teachers must remember that it is not the subject of religion that is restricted, but rather the preaching that one particular world religion is better than another. Therefore, teachers are permitted to instruct the students about a variety of different religions as long as each is considered equally. I believe that I would apply these same ideas to the curricular concepts of multiculturalism. It may be a good idea to inform the principal and parents when a controversial topic such as religion or multiculturalism is going to be discussed in the classroom. Christmas may be an appropriate time to study the way in which many different countries and cultures celebrate a winter holiday. Teachers could create a "Festival of Lights" theme and study the various different holidays. Some themes of peace, love, and giving could be covered. Due to my experiences in England, I have decided that religion is as much a part of life as science, math or reading and should
be included as information for the students to assemble and develop on their own. In my classroom, I would very much like to include religious studies.

**CULTURE**

Another seminar topic that was discussed involved the observed cultural differences between the United States and England. These observations were based upon the experiences of the seminar class teaching in rural public school communities, traveling within England and Scotland, and the daily life of students on the campus of Edge Hill University. There were three major areas in which our seminar class noticed differences—food, social / clothing, and the media. We listed the British food differences as: drink fewer liquids, no ice in drinks, eat less food at a meal, like to mix foods together, use lots of sauces (especially on desserts), food is more bland, shop at several small markets instead of one large grocery store, cold food and liquids set out longer due to the cooler climate, and nutrition / exercise is viewed differently. We listed the British social differences as: speaking loudly, the young generation are not very accepting of people, the older generation welcomes visitors, the pubs and bars close at 11:00 p.m. and groups can be heard loudly singing long afterwards, popularity of folk songs and music from the eighties, different views of male and female roles, dress up a lot—rarely wear jeans, bars are not viewed as harshly as in America—bars are simply appropriate for a social gathering, accent of the British language, views and attitudes toward alcohol, weather, and sense of humor. The British differences in the media involve: the increased number of documentary television shows, talk on the phone mostly for business and to arrange travel plans, and write many letters to keep in touch with the family. These cultural differences sometimes
yield feelings of frustration and discrimination. I am very proud to be an American citizen. However, an individual must realize that our two cultures are not better or worse—just different. As a future educator, I will use culture to integrate instructional experiences through activities such as crafts, sports, and cooking. Identifying with familiarities of life may open the minds of discriminating children. Acting as a resourceful teacher, I might research the background of a culture, create a multicultural workshop, allow a student to help represent the culture and plan activities for a “highlight” week, and bring in clothing or artifacts representative of the particular culture. As an educator, I will learn to take advantage of available opportunities to teach multiculturalism that may be present in my very own classroom. One of the better ways that I feel students learn is through experience. To gain familiarity with, and attempt to understand the aspects of particular cultures or religious celebrations, is to grow with life.

**AMONG SCHOOLCHILDREN**

A final seminar topic that was discussed involved a reaction to the novel *Among Schoolchildren* by Tracy Kidder (1989). Throughout the novel Mrs. Zajac, a fifth grade teacher, shares with the reader her classroom philosophies, practices, and feelings about teaching, in relation to her personal life. Having the novel describe Mrs. Zajac's trials and tribulations, as well as those moments that make teaching all worthwhile, gave me a new perspective on my ideas of “daily classroom teaching.” Reading this book while teaching in England provided opportunities for me to try some of the methods described in the book, as well as to discuss with fellow student teachers the positive and negative aspects of Mrs.
How An International Experience Contributed To My Professional Development

Part III: Professional Development

Zajac’s teaching. Upon reading one of Kidder’s passages in this novel, I immediately fell in love with the poetry of the words:

Good teachers put snags in the rivers of children passing by, and over the years, they redirect hundreds of lives. Many people find it easy to imagine unseen webs of malevolent conspiracy in the world, and they are not always wrong. But there is also an innocence that conspires to hold humanity together, and it is made up of people who can never fully know the good they have done (p. 313).

Teachers are indeed special people.

EUROPEAN TEACHING EXPERIENCES AT RAINFORD BROOK LODGE

Completing my EDEL 360 teaching practicum overseas at the English primary school by the name of Rainford Brook Lodge served as invaluable professional experience. My professional growth from teaching in a foreign country will greatly enhance my professional development as a future American teacher. Working daily in a primary classroom setting brought the whole big teaching picture together. I witnessed first-hand the challenges and joys of everyday teaching. A primary classroom teacher has to wear many different hats all in one day. She is teacher, nurse, parent, counselor, instructor, and psychologist. A primary teacher cannot simply master the subject content of one particular area, but must have knowledge about many different curricular subjects, and how to best implement that knowledge through instruction with the students. I learned just how important a teacher is to the intellectual, physical, and emotional development of students. One of my favorite quotes with which I can clearly identify was related by Ginott (1972):

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I have come to a frightening conclusion. I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach the creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or de-humanized (p. 15).

A teacher can be seen either as a terrible or a special person through the heart and mind of a student. As an American student teacher in England, I recognized the possible love and warmth from student acceptance of the teacher, as well as the anger and hostility due to frustration with the teacher. Oftentimes the teacher would greatly praise the work of a student or allow them to work on a special creative project as a result of good behavior. At other times however, the students became frustrated with the teacher because of the way a situation in the classroom was handled--an example might be a disruption with a discipline problem. I hope my students someday view me as a positive element in the classroom.

By teaching daily lessons to students of varying abilities, I improved on my implementation and instructional skills. I gained confidence as a teacher in the classroom. Developing many lesson plans on one specific topic helped me to organize my thoughts and to better meet the instructional needs of the students. It was helpful to follow a conceptual idea though the span of a week and watch how the students applied the knowledge learned. Their questions kept me on my toes. I also learned much by working together with fellow teachers. First, I compromised and worked together with a group to develop a thematic unit covering the topic of travel in America. Then, I applied those same skills to
arrange the instruction of some of the thematic lessons with the English classroom teacher. Not all of my ideas were always the “best” and I learned that it was good to heed the advice of those teachers more experienced than myself. Still, relying on your own knowledge, beliefs, and values about education, and working together with other teachers, is a very beneficial way to produce effective instructional material. Through implementation of daily Year Five math lessons and some of the thematic unit lessons concerning American travel, I believe that I made great strides personally concerning my instructional techniques, question and discussion strategies, heightening student interaction, and in linking background information with new concepts. A lesson can survive or fail depending upon the implementation of the teacher. To provide more effective instruction in the English classroom at Rainford Brook Lodge, I learned that self-evaluation of my teaching is important. Many good discussions in seminar surfaced concerning evaluation. Student evaluation is important, but the teacher should also evaluate his/her instructional methods to encourage effective student learning. Improvement of instructional methods and curricular ideas are one of the two most valuable tools in the hands of concerned teachers.

At times, it was rather difficult to communicate with the children in my classroom. One of the more difficult aspects of being a student teacher in a primary classroom in England was the different accent placed on the English language. In addition, English and American students had different terms for the same objects. For example, the English students and I had to ask extra questions to get to the “meaning” of statements. However, it was comforting to know that they understood my initial confusion with particular words and were willing to help me out until I became more familiar with the customs and language. No matter what age, there is so much that two people from different countries or cultures can
learn from one another. The variety of cultural dialects even within Britain itself are wondrous.

**INDEPENDENT LISTENING INTERVIEWS**

For one of my teaching projects, I worked on interviewing two British students at Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School about listening skills. This group consisted of one boy and one girl from the Year Five class with which I was working. It was an enjoyable experience to sit down on a one-to-one basis with a student. Too many times I have been through experiences in the classroom and only talked to the students in class as one large group. I never received the opportunity to work through a question-response strategy with a student on an individual basis. Working one-on-one with students sets the foundations for a more personal relationship between the teacher and the student. After performing these interviews, I became much more aware of the beliefs, difficulties, and different styles of listening. As a result, I will be more attuned to the skills and individual student abilities of listening in my classroom (Hoskisson and Tompkins, 1995).

In my classroom I want to integrate the three listening purposes: listening for enjoyment (aesthetic), listening for information (efferent), and listening to evaluate a message (critical). Recognizing that there are three main ways to learn (auditory, kinesthetic, visual), a teacher must develop the skill of listening through all three styles. As a future teacher, I want to create a small unit which would develop students' listening skills. Some strategies to include are: predicting events in stories and in music, creating mental images of concepts being taught, connecting concepts to student experiences, categorizing information, student self-monitoring, note-taking, learning memory strategies, and usage of
nonverbal cues for speaker-listener relations. Some classroom activities for the students might include: the game called Telephone, having the students role play handicapped individuals for a day, listening to music while identifying certain instruments, creating a listening "Ignore the Above Instructions" sheet, and construct a "Draw in the Box What I Say" activity to determine individual listening abilities. Listening is a skill needed for effective learning. As teachers, we must seriously consider the teaching of the topic of listening in our classrooms (Hoskisson and Tompkins, 1995).

There is another side to my experiences of English education and culture. As the students shared their country with me, I described education and life in America. It was a brand new feeling to share the culture and place that I came from with people, especially students. I thoroughly enjoyed getting the opportunity to share information from my thematic unit about the geography and various travel sites in the United States with the English students. Several afternoons were set aside for the exchange of cultural traditions and information about our homes, schools, entertainment, sport teams, etc. It made my heart full of joy to see that the students recognized cultural differences as only differences and did not judge them as right or wrong. It was a very thoughtful and inspirational experience to be the "one on the other side of the fence looking in."

EUROPEAN LANGUAGE-RICH CLASSROOMS

One of the most valuable experiences as a teacher while in England was discovering the importance of a language-rich elementary classroom. Elementary classrooms should be authentic language environments that encourage students to listen, talk, read, and write (Hoskisson and Tompkins, 1995). The physical arrangement and materials provided in the
classroom play an important role in creating a classroom community cohesive to these elements. The teacher's role is to involve students in meaningful, functional, and genuine language learning activities in order to promote the elements of listening, talking, reading, and writing.

Several years ago, teachers relied on textbooks as the primary instructional material and students sat in rows of desks facing the teacher. Today there is a wide variety of instructional materials available in addition to textbooks, including trade books, educational and world event magazines, newspapers, math manipulatives, and various audio-visual materials (Hoskisson and Tompkins, 1995).

Language-rich classrooms facilitate children's learning. Some components of a language-rich classroom include: desks arranged in groups to facilitate cooperative-operative learning, classroom libraries stocked with many different kinds of reading materials, displays of student work and projects, displayed vocabulary signs, materials for recording language (pencils, pens, paper, journals, books, computers), and a special area for reading activities. Each of these components of a language-rich classroom will be discussed in the following paragraphs (Hoskisson and Tompkins, 1995).

The English classrooms at Eccleston Mere Primary School, Bedale Primary School, and Rainford Brook Lodge Primary School are examples of language-rich schools. These particular primary schools are located in England and follow the standards of the British National Curriculum. All three primary schools were excellent examples of the importance of physical arrangement in the language-rich classroom. The student desks and tables were grouped to encourage students to talk, share, and work cooperatively.
At Rainford Brook Lodge, the primary school at which I was teaching, I specifically observed the existence and proven effectiveness of a classroom library stocked with many different kinds of reading materials. The teacher has topical volume sets of informational books, and a mixed plethora of chapter and poetry books. During silent reading time, the children love to peruse the bookshelves and select a book of their choice.

All three of the primary schools proudly display student work and projects. The English classroom is one in which the environment surrounding the students is very artistically decorative. It encourages and supports the language development of the students. The many bulletin boards that display curriculum subjects and student work function to build the self-esteem of students. The ceiling and walls at the primary schools of Eccleston Mere, Rainford Brook Lodge, and Bedale are very elaborately decorated using construction paper, cardboard, yarn, cellophane, student work, and artistic borders and backgrounds. The completed displays are very creative and artistic as a result of watercolor-painted backgrounds, intricately-patterned borders, student work being double-mounted on multi-colored construction paper, and the creation of real and imaginary lands on one-dimensional walls. A teacher may display students' written work and artwork that describes a certain story in order to culminate the curriculum subjects of art, literature, or history. The student work is mounted on two or three different colors of construction paper in order to accent and organize the display. The creative display of student work fosters eagerness to learn and appreciation of school curriculum subjects.

At Eccleston Mere Primary school, the teachers displayed vocabulary signs and activities in the classroom. Students created art projects and literature writings that were built around a specific vocabulary term from history, religious studies, literature, art,
geography, or other curriculum subject. In one particular Eccleston Mere classroom, the teacher created a *Caterpillar Word Cruncher* that assisted the students in building vocabulary knowledge in every subject. Integration of many curriculum subject areas into one lesson is greatly stressed.

In the classrooms at Rainford Brook Lodge, the materials needed for recording language are neatly arranged and organized. In the classroom where I was teaching, there were labeled writing material bins. Materials such as rubbers, (erasers), pencils, fountain ink pens and refills, lined and unlined paper, scrap paper, and notebooks for journals are organized in separate bins. Throughout the day, students have access to the materials they need to complete an activity for an assignment or as a time-filler.

The final aspect of language-rich classrooms concerns the creation of special areas for reading and writing. Teachers may set aside a particular corner in the room that facilitates silent reading, or writing and exploration of the imagination. Life-size figures and climates, such as jungles, may be made out of cardboard and colorfully decorated with paint and construction paper to create a story-time corner. The reading corner may also be filled with a loft that students can climb and read, or sit underneath on beanbags and pillows, and explore the world of literature.

In all three of the classrooms, other language-rich elements could be incorporated. There is always enough room for improvement. One of my favorite aspects of literature that could be easily added to the classroom are quotations. A different quotation could be displayed in the classroom each week. I love to collect quotations and sayings. The wonderful aspect is that quotations can relate to so many curriculum areas, such as history, math, science, literature, philosophy, and the laws and liberties of life. Quotations could

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Elizabeth Anne Schweigert  
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also be used in a study of historical as well as modern people. Another language-rich component that I would implement in the classroom involves the creation of a classroom activity station in the form of a student-interactive bulletin board. All the displays that exhibit student work are good, but a board should also be provided upon which the students could further practice a concept or perform an enrichment activity. This type of student involvement would incorporate individual student needs and hands-on experience. Interactive participation is the best way that student learning can occur.

As a future elementary teacher, I want to implement and create a language-rich classroom. In my classroom I want to establish an environment conducive to learning with theme, library, listening centers, art and science displays, technological equipment, and interactive bulletin board displays. The positive benefits, such as enriched learning and knowledge application, are absolutely wonderful for both the teacher and the students. The advantages may even be extended into the community to parents and area schools. Hard work, organization, and extra creative effort put forth by a teacher will only improve the learning environment of the classroom.

**EUROPEAN TRAVEL EXPERIENCES**

Traveling independently in a foreign country was an entirely new experience for me. Although I have not visited millions of different places within the United States, travel and exploration of never-before visited locations has always been an innate passion of mine. Traveling is one of my most favorite activities. Discovery and experience of the land upon this earth is a worthwhile venture. Never having experienced such a feat as what I knew this European trip would prove to be, I was a little scared as well as excited as I said good-
bye to my parents that summer day at the Chicago airport. In retrospect, I can easily visualize the personal growth and learning experiences gained from my traveling abroad throughout Western Europe.

**VARIED CULTURES**

Culture defines the very heart of life. It is what unites and yet distinguishes the people of the World. As people of different cultures interact, understanding becomes possible. Traveling throughout Europe helped me to realize that even though the people of the world are located in separate countries, speak different languages, practice various traditions, the ways in which we collectively survive each day are very similar. I learned to appreciate the cultural differences as well as recognize the commonality of the survival of mankind.

One of the greatest discoveries that resulted from my travels, was that culture varied not only between different European countries, but also within the small geographic area of one country. I experienced the regality of France, the eccentricity of Amsterdam, the warmth of Germany, the romance of Venice, and the vast history of Rome. Each place had its distinct cultural characteristics. Then, there was the formality of England. England possessed a culture all its own. Even within the country, the cultures would vary between the city and the countryside, and between countryside to countryside. The accent of language was the most noticeable variant as I traveled in Britain. Food, vocabulary, architecture, climate, and ways of life also differed. Adapting to each of the new cultures with which I came in contact was a challenge, but not an impossible feat. Sometimes I felt
lost as the American minority in the crowd, but it will always remain as an unforgettable experience in my mind. The great variety of life made the journey ever wondrous.

**GEOGRAPHY AND CURRENCY**

One of the major advancements in my knowledge concerned my geographic awareness of the locations of Western European countries. In order to effectively travel, I had to locate specific countries as well as cities of important sights. I had to determine available places to reside the nights, plan for the next meal I might be eating, and decide which trains to catch for the next destination. In addition, it was difficult keeping the currency of each country separated in my mind. It was important to know whether the value of the dollar was more or less than the currency value of the current country being visited. Determining the value of merchandise was also a learning experience. As a consumer I had to figure the prices on items and evaluate that according to the value of the American dollar. It was all a lot to handle by myself, but by working together with my three other college traveling partners, we safely and successfully accomplished a tour of Western Europe. I had much fun traveling throughout the various European countries.

**HISTORY**

Another advancement was in my understanding of the history of European countries, cities, and traditions. For example, in York and Edinburgh I discovered the cities and castles of the past. I felt like I had taken a historical walk “back in time” to experience the ways of life in the past. In Inverness, Scotland I experienced the traditions of Kilt Making. Rome was one of the most amazing cities that I have ever seen. Having studied Latin in
high school, it was a great opportunity to be able to actually visit the place that I had studied in a book all of those years. Experiences are much more meaningful witnessed firsthand.

**GETTING ALONG WITH OTHERS**

The other side of the geographic coin involves compromise and responsibility. Traveling with the same group of people, "twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week," for selected weekends and then for fourteen days straight on continental Europe, was a definite personal growing experience. Even though within my travel group we delegated various responsibilities to everyone, it was still sometimes difficult to agree. One person was to organize the train schedule with our cities of destination, one person was to look up the hostel / bed and breakfast information, one person helped translate our English into European language phrases, and my job was to get a map for each of our destinations and chart our ways through the cities to the hostels or sights we wanted to view. Decisions were successful except when typical human responses started to creep in, such as: fatigue, impatience, homesickness, etc. Other difficulties of adaptation included: foreign currency, having the physical endurance to carry a backpack with us wherever we would venture, not always having the money or the availability of food when one of us was hungry, early or late train travel time schedules, or the mental mind-set to make decisions. Sometimes we all just needed some space, and that was usually when we turned to tourism of the sights or relied on the relaxation of a long train ride. Through hard work, negotiation, and decisiveness we earned the respect of one another as individuals and we grew together as friends.
The vast amount of knowledge I gained concerning history of past and present cultures, the countries that make up the continent of Europe, traveling in a foreign country, artistic and architectural applications, management of money, personal growth and endurance, and life experiences are invaluable. I may never get another opportunity to visit the various cultures of the world, so I took great advantage of the opportunity at hand by learning and experiencing all that I could. The chance was there and I was not going to let it pass me by.

I believe that the intellectual, physical, and emotional experiences of traveling in a foreign country have made me more open to meeting new people and openly discussing our thoughts, feelings, and perceptions of this world in which we live. I had several interesting encounters with individuals while traveling in Europe and I think that speaking with them helped to open my eyes to the world and broaden my horizons. After returning to the United States and to school (Ball State) in the fall, I had the opportunity to meet a college student from England who had completed a work program and was now traveling in America. Several times we talked about international issues and about our personal perceptions of Europeans and Americans. Our perceptions concerning our experiences traveling in a foreign country were mostly similar. We both thought that traveling and studying abroad would serve as an excellent opportunity both for future careers and as good life knowledge. The opportunity was an ideal situation that could not be passed up. We both thoroughly enjoyed our trips in the respective countries—our experiences were a lot better than what had been imagined. Being so far from home, we learned to proudly appreciate and to be thankful for our home and our cultural background (C. Anderson, personal communication, September 6, 1995).
The British student experienced many new American customs. She described American clothing as being more "relaxed." In England the students don't wear T-shirts, everyday attire is a little more dressy. She described the differences in the emphasis of our sports teams, the drinking age of twenty-one, and that our public transportation system was terrible in comparison to that of Europe. Traveling by train, rather than by car, is much more popular in England, but the car is the main mode of transportation in America. In a more social light—she described Americans as very friendly. She explained that the English are nice, but they will not go out of their way to assist someone. The English are typically more reserved. One American concept that shocked her was that of the "melting pot." She could not believe that the races were so diversified and that discrimination, especially of blacks, was so common. The presence of different cultural races are not thought about very often in England. However, traveling here in America has made a great impact on her life. She said that she is much more sensitive and attuned to her own as well as others' perceptions (C. Anderson, personal communication, September 6, 1995).

I thought it was a rare opportunity, just having studied and traveled in England, to find and make the acquaintance of an English student traveling in America. Talking with her helped me to further contemplate and develop my feelings and perceptions of having studied and traveled in Europe. It was a good feeling to be able to identify and know that someone else felt the same way I did. I truly believe that the people of the World are more similar than they are different.
CONCLUSIONS

This international experience significantly enhanced my growth and development as a person and as a professional. Studying and living at Edge Hill University College provided comparative learning experiences. The educational and philosophical discussions of seminar offered times of reflection for defining what it means to be a teacher. Teaching in the English Primary schools and learning better methods of instructional implementation will prepare me for future interaction with students. Traveling throughout Europe expanded my awareness of the world.

In addition, I have gained a deeper understanding of the similarities and differences in the educational systems of both America and England. My ability to reflect upon the studying, teaching, and traveling experiences of Europe contributed to my educational knowledge. Having a better grasp of the educational systems of other countries can contribute to the further evaluation and development of the current educational system in America. Citizens throughout the world must keep in mind that the ultimate goal for education is learning. My experiences in Western Europe will have a profound impact on my growth as a professional educator.

Studying, teaching, and traveling in Western Europe was an intellectual, physical, emotional, and personal growing experience that will be held dear to my memory for the rest of my life. As a teacher I will keep the dream alive by sharing my experiences with students in the elementary classroom. The part of me that grew, learned, and developed in Europe is that same part of me that will grow, learn, and develop as a professional educator in the schools of America.
Anderson, Claire. [personal communication] (September 6, 1995).

Education in Britain. (Date Unknown). London: Foreign and Commonwealth Office.


