Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships.

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Abstract

The use of projective assessments has a long history and tradition within psychological testing. However, there is a relative lack of research using these techniques with people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and Asperger Syndrome (AS). People with ASD have common features known as the 'triad of impairments': (a) impairments in social interaction (b) qualitative impairments in communication and (c) restricted, repetitive or stereotyped patterns of behaviour, interests or attitudes. Herbert Phillipson's (1955) Object Relations Technique (ORT) is a well-established projective assessment that examines an individual's ability to describe object relationships. A review of the literature has revealed no published papers using the ORT with this client group. The ORT is a story-based assessment in which the participants respond to a set of ambiguous pictures displaying one, two, three person, or group situations and one blank plate. The test seeks to show the different ways an individual experiences, or will avoid, the particular object relationships. The expectation is that the participants will display a consistency between the four dimensions assessed and how they conduct and view relationships, and this will be reflected in the stories. Five participants were assessed using the ORT. The results were compared to the normative data supplied by Phillipson (1955). The study found that all the participants had difficulties with meeting the full criteria for the stories. Stories lacked emotional connections and interactions between the characters, with a reliance on basic emotional states. Problems were encountered in story production for the blank plate. When compared to normative data the participants displayed a range of perceptual variations in relation to the figures in the pictures. Further analysis was also conducted using Labov's (1972, 1982) structural analysis which revealed difficulties with including all the elements in the stories. Miles and Huberman's (1994) thematic analysis was also undertaken. The themes that emerged highlighted that the participants' stories reflected their adolescent stage of development, though these are not always clearly articulated. Overall, the study highlighted the difficulties with using the ORT with an ASD population, which affects its practicality and usefulness for assessment purposes. The possible reasons for these difficulties are discussed.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Autism and Asperger Syndrome

The term autism was first applied to a cluster of behaviours observed in eleven children by Kanner (1943). This was the first paper to distinguish autism from childhood schizophrenia and Kanner named the condition 'infantile autism'. Kanner identified two areas that separated autism from schizophrenia in particular. Firstly the children had appeared to develop normally for the first 20 months of life before showing signs of autism. Secondly, none of the children diagnosed with autism developed hallucinations. Kanner used Bleuler's (1911/1950) term 'autism' to illustrate the idiosyncratic, self-centred thinking associated with schizophrenia to describe this group of children, who appeared to live in their own world. Kanner further observed a desire for 'sameness', children becoming upset at changed routines or when rituals were interrupted. He noted language impairments, characterised by echolalia, literal interpretation and pronoun reversal. These criteria still form the basis of the Diagnostic Statistical Manual-IV (DSM-IV, American Psychiatric Association, 1994) and the International Classification of Diseases-10 (ICD-10, WHO, 1992) classification systems (Appendix 1 and 2). In the DSM-IV and ICD-10 both autism and Asperger Syndrome (AS) fall under the category of Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD). The main characteristics of Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are commonly known as the triad of impairments (Wing, 1981):-

  (a) impairments with social interactions and relationships with others;
  (b) impairments with communication skills;
  (c) restricted and repetitive stereotyped interests, activities or behaviours.

AS is also a pervasive developmental disorder characterized by deficits in social interaction and motor coordination, and unusual or restricted patterns of interest or behaviour. Clinically, the distinction between autism and AS is often made in terms of severity and in the qualitative expression of the criteria. In both the DSM-IV and ICD-10 classifications, the onset of the criteria must be observed in the child before the age of three for a diagnosis of Autism. In the DSM-IV a diagnosis of AS requires the absence of any clinically significant delay in language acquisition, cognitive development, and adaptive behaviour (with the exception of social interaction) before three years of age.

There is no one agreed method for diagnosing ASD and a wide range of tools is available. Frombonne (2003) reviewed 36 prevalence rates studies and found an average of 13 cases of ASD per 10,000. The DSM-IV gives a prevalence rate of between 2-5 cases per 10,000. Mesibov et al (1997) argue that the discrepancies between estimates may be due to both differing sampling methods and diagnostic methods. Gender distribution of ASD has also shown a male to female ratio of 10.3:1 (Howlin & Moore, 1997). This is broadly reflective of the male-female distribution found in people with learning disabilities. There is also variation in the reported age of diagnosis of the two conditions. The average age of diagnosis for autism was 5.5 years, compared to 11.3 years for AS (Howlin & Moore, 1997).

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Despite the diagnostic categories there is some debate about AS being separate and distinct from autism (Eisenmajer, Prior, et al, 1996; Kunce and Mesibov, 1998; Schopler, 1998; Szatmari, 1998 and 2000). Szatmari (1998) states, "there is very little information on empirical distinctions that can be made between AS, autism and other disorders within the pervasive developmental disorder spectrum" (p 162). Some research has highlighted the differences between autism and AS. In AS motor deficits can be more pronounced, onset seems to be later, and social deficits are present without grossly impaired speech and language (Frith, 1991; Gillberg, 1985; Klin, 1994; Siegel, 1996; Wing 1991). Other research has found those diagnosed with AS have higher but not necessarily normal IQ's (Gillberg, 1985; Gillberg and Gillberg, 1989; Klin and Volkmar, 1997; Siegel, 1996). On the Weschsler Intelligence Scale for Children-IV, children with AS typically score 15 to 25 points higher than children with autism (Kaufman & Flanagan, 2004).

The position is further complicated with clinicians using a third category of diagnosis, High Functioning Autism (HFA). However there are currently no accepted diagnostic guidelines specifically for HFA. The American Psychiatric Association (1994) recommend that HFA may be most appropriately diagnosed when the criteria for autism are met and the individual's full scale IQ is above the learning disability range.. In early childhood, AS is generally associated with reasonable attachments to family members and attempts to interact with peers (although these may be inappropriate and awkward). In autism, attachment to family members is marked by withdrawal and aloofness (Gillberg & Gillberg, 1989; Klin & Volkmar, 1997).

The 'Autistic Spectrum'
Schopler (1985) objected to the use of a distinct diagnostic category for a disorder that represents only one point on the "autistic spectrum". Wing (1991) concluded that both autism and AS are best regarded as falling within this 'spectrum' of social impairment, but possibly differing in their clinical presentation due to the degree of deficit in the cognitive, language and motor realms. Frith (1991) argued there are two reasons that many parents will find the diagnosis of AS more acceptable than the diagnosis of autism. Firstly among lay persons, autism may be associated with extreme withdrawal, unusual stereotypies, and self-injurious behaviours. Secondly, many children with milder forms of the disorder would be left without a diagnosis and hence, without the services and understanding they require. Given the difficulties with diagnosis and the debate among professionals the autistic spectrum is often used when describing a diagnosis with the term Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). There is undoubtedly overlap between the three diagnoses as shown in Figure 1, taken from Bishop (1989)

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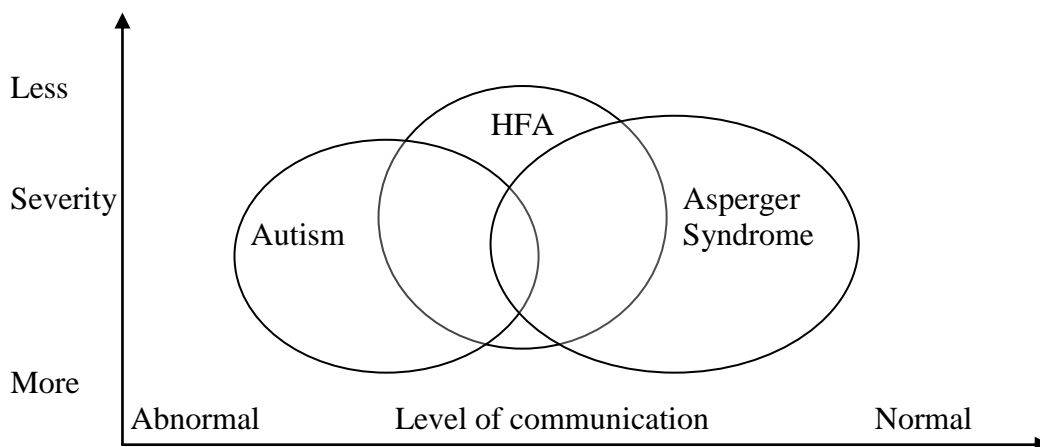
Figure 1. Bishop's (1989) Model of the levels of communication and overlap in ASD

Despite the common difficulties of the triad of impairments there are often very different presentations and effects on behaviour in individuals. Thus the ASD concept is used to describe the wide range of difficulties experienced and this can also be found in research. The author takes the view that the autistic spectrum is a continuum that runs from autism to Asperger's Syndrome, and will therefore review research that concerns the full range of this continuum.

1.2. Theoretical Approaches to ASD

1.2.1 Biological Explanations

As reviewed by Magee (2005), a number of biological theories have been proposed to explain the deficits found in ASD. This conclusion is supported by the finding that there is a roughly equal frequency of the diagnosis in different cultures (Baron-Cohen & Bolton, 1993). There are a number of medical conditions associated with autism including some genetic conditions (Fragile X, Tuberous Sclerosis) as well as learning disabilities, and epilepsy (Baron-Cohen & Bolton, 1993). Studies using Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scans have found reduced development in cerebellar tissue in autistic subjects (Courchesene, 1995; Courchesene et al, 1988; Murakami et al, 1989). However, other studies did not find the same abnormalities (Piven et al, 1992; Garber & Ritvo, 1992). Ellis and Gunter (1999) have proposed that ASD is reflective of a right hemisphere dysfunction.

ASD has controversially been linked to the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine (Wakefield, 1999). However, other studies have found no links between the two (Halsey & Hyman, 2001; Roberts & Harford, 2002). At present, no single biological or genetic marker has been identified as causing ASD.

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Other research has seen the development of two major cognitive theories to help explain the deficits found in ASD. These are Central Coherence Theory and Theory of Mind (TOM). Only a brief summary will be provided here. Both of these theories have generated a wealth of research findings. (Please see Magee (2005) for a fuller review).

1.2.2 Central Coherence Theory

Frith (1991) and Frith and Happé (1995) have proposed that the deficits in ASD stem from a failure of 'central coherence', which can be summarised as the inability to construct higher meanings from a set of details. This can cause difficulties in understanding the context of social information in particular. Shah and Frith (1993) suggested this may account for the fragmented learning styles of individuals with ASD It may also explain the special interests and preoccupations with details whilst missing the whole picture in a social context.

1.2.3 Theory of Mind (TOM)

The development of the TOM (Baron-Cohen et al, 1985) hypothesis has arguably had the most influence on the understanding of ASD. TOM refers to the ability to assign different mental states to the self and others. Baron-Cohen et al (1985) found 80% of ASD participants failed 'false-belief' tasks (the ability to distinguish what is the case from what other people believe is the case). This finding has been replicated by other studies (Leslie & Frith, 1993; Perner et al, 1989). Frith (1992) wrote that this deficit could explain the triad of impairments of communication, socialisation and imagination. However, wide variations in the percentage of ASD participants passing 'false-belief' tasks have been found. These have varied from 15% (Reed & Peterson, 1990) to 60% (Prior et al, 1990). TOM and Central Coherence Theory fail to explain fully all of the deficits found in ASD.

1.3 Psychodynamic Theories of ASD

In attempting to explain the behaviour of autistic children, early theories focused on the difficulties the children had in relating to others and in particular their parents. Mahler (1952) had postulated that autistic children could not differentiate their mothers from inanimate objects, and therefore could not develop emotional bonds to them. Mahler believed that the autistic child can withdraw from the emotional demands of interpersonal (object) relations. What Mahler did not make clear was whether the cause of the withdrawal from object relations arises from an innate incapacity or whether it is the result of receiving unsatisfactory responses from others.

Meltzer (1975) described how individuals with ASD use a 'defence mechanism', which interferes with the ability to pay attention to others. Thus for individuals with ASD the sensory elements of interactions can be overwhelming. The 'defence mechanism' screens out the overwhelming sensory elements and protects the person with ASD from them. Meltzer hypothesised that the obsessional mechanisms and repetitive routines often used by ASD individuals help to divert attention away from the stimuli they find difficult to process.

Kanner (1943) originally stated that the 'autistic aloneness' he observed in his group of children was the result of cold, unresponsive parenting. This hypothesis received

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support from a number of other researchers (Boatman & Szurek, 1960; Goldfrab, 1961; Szurek & Berlin, 1956). However, it was Bruno Bettlelheim and his book The Empty Fortress: Infantile Autism (1967) that popularised the notion of 'refrigerator mothers' who caused their children's autism. Bettelheim rejected biological theories of autism, asserting it was psychogenic in origin (has no known organic dysfunction). He claimed to cure children of autism, using psychotherapy. He adapted the work of Winnicott (1953) and Mahler (1952, 1971) by including the notion of 'critical periods' of development and adopted Klein's concept of the paranoid-schizoid position as the 'fortress'. Bettelheim theorised that the autistic child uses the fortress as a psychological defence from poor maternal care. When activated during critical periods of psychosexual development, these autistic defences and behaviours are triggered. As the understanding of ASD grew with increased research, Bettleheim's theory blaming parents and mothers in particular for withholding affection and contact, thus causing ASD to develop, was questioned by the basic epidemiological data. The fact that more boys developed ASD than girls and that often not all children in a family developed autism (Rutter, 1970). Rutter & Bartak (1971) also found that there was little evidence of emotional deprivation having been present within the families. Rutter, et al (1971) further argued that the central tenets of impaired object relations theory alone could not account for social withdrawal. They hypothesised that language impairments could better account for social withdrawal and problems in forming relationships encountered by ASD individuals. Rutter (1978, 1985) questioned whether successful psychotherapy proved that autism was psychogenically caused.

1.4 Intersubjectivity

Hobson (1986a, 1986b, 1989, and 1993) has theorised that autistic people have difficulties with 'intersubjectivity'. Intersubjectivity emphasizes the notion that shared cognition and consensus between people is essential in the shaping of our ideas and relations with others. Intersubjectivity requires the joint construction of shared meanings between caregivers and children (Trevarthen, 1984, 1979). Difficulties with non-verbal communication (common in ASD individuals) can impair the development of intersubjectivity skills (Hobson, 1986a, 1986b and 1993). Bruner (1986) explains that pre-verbal social communication skills including joint attention are required for an individual to be able to share with others the experience of a third 'object' or event. In addition, individuals have to be aware of the differences between the self and others, which Hobson (1993) termed 'triadic exchanges'. Cohen (1997) describes how the process of assigning meaning to the behaviour and emotions of others is linked to the development of an individual's 'inner world'. If a person is unable to develop a rich inner world due to problems with intersubjectivity then the concept of the self cannot be fully formed.

1.5 Object Relations Theory

Object Relations was originally a development of Freudian theory. Object relations theories focus on the development of 'self-structures' rather than the development of 'ego structures'. Object relations theories replace the development of the 'id' and 'ego' with 'self' and 'object relations' as the key elements in personal and psychological development. The term object relations refer back to the Freudian concept of a target (or object) for a drive instinct. The 'object' mostly refers to other people but it can also be an inanimate object such as a blanket or doll. Children commonly, form relationships with stuffed animals, toys and pets. Winnicott (1953)

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described these as transitional objects. Later in life, some people form intense and even self-destructive relationships with food and alcohol, as well as with other people. So the term object is more inclusive for the understanding of how humans form and preserve a sense of self, as well as relationships with others.

The common principle of all object relations theories is that there is a fundamental human need to form (object) relations with others (Gomez, 1997). In most object relations theories, the key element in the building of the psyche and personality is the formation of relationships, in both psychological (cognitive) and symbolic terms. Object relations theorists investigate the early formation and differentiation of psychological structures (inner images of the self and the other, or object), and how these inner structures are manifested in interpersonal situations. Within object relations theory, it is the early relationships with others that provide prototypes for all future relationships with the outside world. In most instances, the child's mother provides the very first object relationship. The child then goes through phases and stages of development towards psychological separation and individuation of the baby (subject) and mother (object).

Object relations theories consider that the sense of 'self' develops and exists within a context, environment and in relation to others (Gomez, 1997). All object relations theories propose that the sense of self develops within a matrix of other relationships. The internal relationship a person has with themselves is also a key factor in all object relations. Thus the combination of internal and external relationships is central to human development, as a person's inner world is dynamic with both fixed and fluid positions that operate at both conscious and unconscious levels, which affects how a person experiences external reality. However, these positions can be modified via life experiences (Mitchell, 1988). Mitchell illustrates how internalised object relations are not simply passive imprints of relationships, but that children learn subconsciously from their caregivers and their environment which forms part of the basis for how children construe relationships.

1.6 Critique of Object Relations Theory
Gomez (1997) writes that there are major differences among object relations theories, which are best described as "a loose school of diverse and often conflicting perspectives which hold in common the basic premises of Object Relations". Kramer and Akhtar (1988) also state that OR theory has become too diverse to have a single unified definition. This has been due to the use of the term by very different schools of thought within the psychodynamic field. A number of criticisms have been levelled at OR theories. Many of these concerns focus on the ascribing of adult psychological capacities and pathologies to infants (Fonagy & Target, 2003). In addition, the model of OR has been criticised for its lack of research evidence and lack of clarity by both Greenberg and Mitchell (1983) and Fonagy and Target (2003).

1.7 Object Relations Theory and ASD
As reviewed by Magee (2005), autism has been linked to object relations theories previously. Mahler (1952) used the term 'normal autism' to describe the first of the three developmental phases required to reach full development:

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1. Normal autism
2. Normal symbiosis
3. Separation and individuation

Mahler argues that the phase of 'normal autism' begins at birth, and lasts about a month. To move on from this stage the infant must attain awareness that gaining satisfaction of needs cannot be accomplished by the self but must come from somewhere outside the self. She suggests that infantile autism is a fixation at this 'autistic' stage of development. At each stage, unconscious object relations can superimpose patterns of behaviour and beliefs at the expense of more consciously learnt and validated ways of conducting relations. Mahler et al (1975) argue that the repetitive and isolated behaviours often displayed by ASD individuals are the activation of their unconscious object relations.

Tustin (1991, and 1993) has described the inability of autistic people to form coherent object relations. Tustin, believes that an 'autistic shell' is used as a defence. Tustin (1991) indicated that ASD manifests as an ego defence mechanism that protects from the confusion between the differentiation of the 'inner good' world from the 'outer bad' world. This confusion also relates to concepts of "me" and "not-me". Thus, the child learns only to relate to the 'internalised me' object. ASD children develop what Tustin described as 'autistic objects' in place of Winnicott's (1965) 'transitional objects'. The autistic object is used as a 'comforter' that can help to reduce emotional anxiety for the child. These autistic objects do not foster the development of the child's imagination or act to help the transition to more mature relationships. Behaviours such as hand flapping, obsessions with objects, textures or self-injury can create a barrier to human contact. However, it must be noted that these concepts ignore environmental and cognitive abilities as well as individual strengths and weaknesses that can influence the child's development.

Alvarez (1996, 1999) examined the impairments found with ASD from an object relations (Klein, 1952) and infant developmental perspective (Miller et al, 1989; Stern, 1985). When examining the object relations of ASD children Alvarez asked questions such as: What does the child feel about the experience of others and relationships? Are there different ways of being alone? Why is it that they do not turn to human beings? Alvarez argues that ASD children may not only have a deficit in theory of mind skills, but also a deficit in the 'theory of person' (of others and of the self). Alvarez states, "The self is in an emotional, dynamic relationship to its internal representations, figures and objects however skewed, deficient or odd these relations may be" (1999, p.54). Thus to an ASD individual, others may be seen as and related to as solid objects. The ASD person has failed to gain an inner image of any figure who is both interesting and interested in them. Reid (1999) has argued that the core feature of ASD is the person's deficit in their awareness of others and the world of personal relationships. Despite the theories about deficits in object relations in individuals with ASD, little use has been made of assessment techniques that could examine object relations. The most common form of this type of assessment of unconscious process is via projective techniques.

1.8 Accessing Object Relations

1.8.1 Projection and Projective Assessments

The theory of Projection consists of a person attributing their own characteristics (inner world) to external objects or events without adequate justification or conscious awareness (as a defence mechanism) of doing so (Freud, 1962). Projection has been defined as "the general tendency to externalize in our responding to the environment and interpreting it" (Rabin, 1986, p5). The use of projective techniques predates formal psychometric testing. Psychodynamic therapists used projective techniques to examine personality processes and inner conflicts. The idea of projection prompted therapists to devise ways of accessing unconscious feelings by allowing the person to project them somewhere else. This projective hypothesis is the foundation on which all projective techniques are based.

1.8.2 Projective Assessment Research

There is a body of research that attests that the results from the use of projective methods can yield valid and useful information about individuals (Hibbard et al, 1994; Hibbard et al, 1995; Parker et al 1988; Weiner & Kuehnle, 1998; Weiner 1996). Viglione maintains that projective assessment is useful as "...the respondent's spontaneous response to an image means something and tells something about the individual" (Viglione, 1999 p. 260). However, when assessing younger children and adolescents it is important to take into account developmental levels and expectations.

1.8.3 Projective Techniques Critique

As reviewed by Magee (2005), projective techniques have been criticised for almost completely ignoring the neuropsychological and cognitive sciences literature on perceptual and affective development. In addition, much of the clinical and research knowledge base for projective assessments is considered poor or outdated, both theoretically and empirically (Dawes et al, 1989; Hunsley & Bailey, 1999; Wood et al, 1996). The evidence for the clinical utility of projective tests is mixed (e.g., Hunsley & Bailey, 1999; Lilienfeld, 1999), Further criticisms of projective assessments have been aimed at their poor reliability and validity (Gittelman-Klein, 1978, 1986; Lilienfeld, 1999). Wood et al (1996) have argued that the processes by which humans perceive information are not always subject to conscious introspection.

In a review of the literature, Holmes (1978) argued that the assumed underlying psychological process of 'projection' has not been subject to empirical examination. However if projection is a valid psychological phenomenon, it may be the outcome of the human propensity to empathise emotionally with others, to accurately read emotions in others and act appropriately on those beliefs.

Though the use of projective assessments in psychological testing is less popular than previously, clinicians continue to use projective methods. Camara et al (2000) argue that in the USA, the Children's Apperception Test (CAT) (Bellak and Bellak, 1949), Rorschach Inkblot Test (Rorschach, 1932), and TAT (Murray, 1938) are still some of the most frequently administered tests. Magee (2005) has previously reviewed some of the work using projective assessment with populations such as people with learning

disabilities and the lack of work using projective assessments with ASD individuals. The focus here will be on the ORT, which is utilised in this study.

1.9 The Object Relations Technique Overview

At first glance, the ORT (Phillipson, 1955, 1973) appears very similar to the TAT (Murray, 1938). Both use pictorial stimuli to assess an individual's interpersonal relations. Both the TAT and ORT are part of the 'story telling' group of assessments that requires the participant to provide stories in response to a set of fixed materials. The ORT requires the participant to provide a story from each of thirteen cards depicting different ambiguous images of human beings in interpersonal relations and one blank card (Appendix 3). The standout feature of the ORT plates (how Phillipson described the pictures) resides mainly in their derivation from object relations theory. The ORT seeks to examine the way a person perceives human relations situations rather than internal drives. This process occurs largely unconsciously, within any individual in the course of development of relationships with others (Fairbairn, 1952). The ambiguous representations of human figures in the plates helps to distinguish them from the stimuli used in other projective or story telling techniques. This is said to allow the examinee the freedom to express their own views and thus project their views of relationships unconsciously.

1.9.1 Rationale behind the ORT

The basic assumption of the ORT is that a person's characteristic mode of perceiving the world around them has dynamic congruence (is closely linked) with their way of conducting relationships in any situation. If this assumption is correct, then the stories produced by the participants will reflect how they view relationships and how they may behave during interactions with others. The maintenance and development of object relationships is so fundamentally important to the individual that their way of dealing with the world is directly influenced by them. The ORT examines both the unconscious use of projection and the conscious use of language. The ORT seeks to explore an individual's object relations and to identify at what stage of psychosexual development a person may have become stuck (Infancy, Latency or Maturity) and how this is displayed when in the one, two, three person or group situations. This informs the therapist about how they should focus the therapy and areas where the individual's difficulties with relationships are most pronounced. The aim of the ORT is to evaluate the ways in which feelings and conscious and unconscious ideas about the self and others, as well the relations between the self and others, are organised in the individual's mind. Phillipson (1955, 1973) devised the means to assess the stories produced by examining the processes involved in producing the stories, as well as the participants' perception of the object relationships present in pictures from four different perspectives. These are:-

a. The perception of information provided in the picture; human figures, reality content and situation, the emotional context present in the story.
b. The apperception of the theme or relationship issues typical of the interpersonal situation in the picture.
c. The object relations content of the stories
d. The story as a production, in its structure and organisation.

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Phillipson (1955) acknowledged there are overlaps within these four dimensions, and the individual's perception of the plate will be a function of all four dimensions; the choice of closeness, distance or avoidance of the object relationships and situations can all give clues as to how the person views and conducts their own object relations.

1.9.2 The ORT Plates

Phillipson had the ORT plates designed to depict four types of human interaction situations, using one-person, two-person, three-person and group pictures respectively. They also uniquely represent human figures in very ambiguous ways so the participant has to assign important elements such as gender, age, movement, attire or affective disposition.   Thus, an individual's perceptual processing of each plate occurs according to the individual's life experience, feelings, and psychological makeup.

Shaw (2002) provides a useful description of the ORT plates and how these can be organised into a matrix, which reflects the three distinct levels described by Phillipson. It illustrates each set of plates (one, two, three person or group settings) and the associated developmental level in psychoanalytic terms (Infancy, Latency and Maturity) (Figure 2). The order of presentation has no significance in the assessment other than to avoid a pattern of one, two or three person plates affecting the responses.
Figure 2 - Matrix of Plates

← — — Developmental Level (Stages) — — →

	A-level (Infancy)	B-level (Latency)	C-level (Maturity)
1 - Person	A1 (1)	B1 (6)	C1 (12)
2 - Person	A2 (2)	B2 (9)	C2 (11)
3-Person	A3 (8)	B3 (4)	C3 (3)
Group	AG (5)	BG (10)	CG (7)

Relational Setting

(The number in the brackets is the order of presentation of the plates)

The three different levels of the plates are summarised below:-

The A-level (Appendix 3a) images have been designed to illustrate the 'world of infancy' (encompassing from birth through to the age of five). This is achieved by

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textured graphics and the absence of reality content in terms of the environment with no discernible objects or structures present.

The B-level images (Appendix 3b) aimed to reflect the latency period (six to twelve years) and to reflect the greater focus on separateness, authority and control. The plates depict sharper boundaries and contrasts that surround the human figures. Environmental features become a more recognisable part of the pictures.

The C-level images (Appendix 3c) the most detailed in their content. with figures placed in close domestic situations ranging from the use of a single person to the confrontation of crowds or society.

Plates depicting single person images address lone subjects and often reflect the participant's actual sense of self. Shaw (2002) found that stories produced for these plates often reflected the person taking stock of the self, in some way. The nature and depth of this self-evaluation may vary between each of the developmental stages. The two person images seek to invoke 'typical self and mother' object relationships (though this can apply to other types of relationships between two people).

Shaw (2002) describes the three person plates as possibly representing 'oedipal' type relationships and the normal development of friendships. Participants' stories tend to cover issues of "rivalry and the first beginnings of substitutes from maternal relationships" (Shaw, 2002; p.6). The group plates seek to reveal interactions within different groups (school, clubs) or even at the community level.

1.10 Previous ORT Research
The ORT has been used as an instrument to investigate a wide range of interpersonal issues for adults and adolescents in a diversity of research and clinical settings. Some are listed below:-

1. number of (a) persons seen (b) persons invented or introduced (O'Kelly, 1955; Orme, 1959; Shaw 2002);
2. psychological attributes of story characters (Coleman, 1969; O'Kelly, 1957; Orme, 1959);
3. the manifest relations and interactions (Aston, 1970, Coleman, 1974);
4. story structure and verbal analysis (Aston, 1970);
5. reality content and content of non-human figures (Coleman et al, 1970; Orme, 1959; Phillipson, 1955);
 6. aggression and anxiety (Haskell, 1961).

1.11 ORT Research with Children and Adolescents
A number of the above studies have undertaken research with children and adolescents. O'Kelly (1957) found that young adolescent girls classified as 'delinquent' projected more punitive and sadistic impulses in their stories compared to normative data. Elkan (1988) undertook research with adolescent boys and found that their stories related to the changes in social relationships that often occur during the different phases of adolescence. Koski (1987) compared the responses of diabetic and non-diabetic adolescent patients to the ORT plates and the TAT. Koski reported that

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the ORT proved more sensitive than the TAT in eliciting the participants' feelings about relationships. They argued that the greater ambiguity of the ORT aided in the construction of stories and therefore provided more clinically useful responses.

1.12 Possible validity and reliability problems with the ORT

Elkan (1988) notes there are no published studies on the possible effects of intelligence, social class, cross-cultural differences and education on ORT performance. He argued that cultural factors could affect a participant's capacity to express themselves and develop stories via visual thematic means. Many of the applications of the ORT have been undertaken in a treatment and counselling context and have not been published. Shaw (1988) reported that there is still a lack of understanding as to precisely why the ORT does appear to elicit such a wide range of information. Shaw (2002) does note that the ORT would not claim to meet present standards of test construction that would be expected if introduced today. In addition, the ORT is not designed to provide a 'true' score of a person's object-relations. Rather the analysis of the stories and how they are constructed, the emotional content and the type of relationships depicted can provide valuable information about a person. Despite these potential difficulties, the validity and reliability of the ORT has been supported by a number of studies with reports of high levels of agreement between raters. Phillipson and Hopkins (1964) found agreement between interviews and ORT data on object relations and patterns of anxiety and defence. Alanen (1986) found a significant relationship between optimally functioning object relations and therapy outcome for schizophrenic patients, using ORT data. Rayner and Hahn (1964) obtained 70%-80% agreement in responses to the ORT that identified positive and negative indicators of success in therapy.

1.13 Rationale for use of the ORT in the Current Study

The use of projective techniques has fallen out of favour with many psychologists in place of psychometric and neurological assessments. As reviewed by Magee (2005), projective techniques have been criticised for ignoring the cognitive and neuroscientific literature. In addition, projective assessments have been given limited use with diverse populations e.g. learning disabilities and other developmental disorders.

Both the Rorschach Ink Blot Test (1932) and the TAT (Murray 1938) have been utilised in research with ASD individuals. Dykens et al (1991); Ghaziuddin et al (1995); Holaday et al (2001) and Jura and Sigman, (1985) have all utilised the Rorschach with ASD individuals. Jura and Sigman (1985) have indicated that Rorschach responses of ASD children and adolescents differ from those of children with schizophrenia and were scored as 'immature' in construction but appropriate to the developmental level.

Though Yalof and Abraham (2006) and Cramer (1996) have both used the TAT with AS individuals, it was not felt appropriate to the aims of this study. One factor which led to the TAT not being used was that 30 pictures are presented, increasing the amount of time required to complete the assessment. In addition the respondents are given the following instructions, "What led up to the event, what is happening at the moment, what are the characters feeling and thinking and what was the outcome?".

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Though similar to the questions in the ORT, these questions require more cognitive ability and explicitly ask for the characters' thoughts and feelings. The ORT implies this only and therefore could be viewed as a truer test of the participants' ability to infer and communicate others' emotions in a real life context. The ORT instructions are relatively simple, with the participants being asked to produce a story with the three parts of a beginning, middle and end.

Furthermore, in choosing the ORT the nature of the pictorial stimuli was considered very important. It is common for people with ASD to focus on details or only a small part of an object or picture (Dakin & Frith, 2005; Happé & Frith, 2006). Thus ASD individuals may only focus on one aspect of an object e.g. a toy car's wheel while ignoring the rest of the car or when viewing a picture they may only focus on a small part and ignore the rest of the content. The ORT strikes a balance in showing recognisable scenes with human figures, without detailed visual material that a person with ASD may choose to focus on. The TAT's pictures contain a high level of detail and this could have led to the participants focusing on details and ignoring the whole.

The literature review by Magee (2005) found no published studies for the use of the ORT with ASD individuals. Dr Martin Shaw further confirmed this situation (personal communication). This does make comparisons of the results to previous studies with ASD individuals impossible. However it was thought that exploring how individuals with ASD respond to ORT in light of the difficulties they experience could potentially provide interesting information. In part this stems from the work of Howlin (1997), who described that ASD adolescents and young adults have problems in understanding and expressing the difficulties they encounter. Howlin has described how the inability of people with autism to communicate feelings of disturbance, anxiety or distress can mean that it is often difficult to diagnose depressive or anxiety states for ASD individuals. Howlin further discusses a key element in the depressive symptoms can occur from difficulties with relationships. Howlin describes how many individuals with ASD, "are not sufficiently aware of their own social difficulties" (1997, p. 100). Thus they may lack the ability to fully identify and express the difficulties they have. The result of this is that ASD individuals often report that they wish to have friends but often struggle to describe what they want from friendships or what part they may need to play in building successful relationships (Gillberg, 1984; Little, 2001; Stoddart, 2005).

The ORT is based on the projective hypothesis, in that people interpret ambiguous stimuli in ways that reveal their concerns, needs, conflicts desires and feelings and project these in their stories/responses. According to Phillipson (1955) the act of 'apperception', which occurs when the participants construct the ORT stories, refers to the fact that respondents actively interpret ORT stimuli in accordance with their individual personality traits and life experiences. Thus the ORT may be useful because it allows access to unconscious aspects of personality and how these may manifest in the participants' relationships. Thus the advantage of the ORT is that the stories directly reference relationships the characters have, without directly asking about the participants' own experiences. The stories produced could allow therapists to reflect and explore the themes and identify if the participant has experienced similar situations. It is common for ASD individuals to fear failure and they may deny having

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any difficulties with relationships (Howlin, 1997). The story themes can be discussed, possibly focusing on how the characters have reacted and how this may have affected them. The therapist could also ask the person if they have had similar experiences or how they would react if they were a character in the story. If a negative outcome occurred then time can be spent exploring what the individual thought would occur following their actions and allowing them to identify what went wrong. If the reactions did not produce a positive outcome then this could highlight the social skills deficits that prevented the successful outcome. This means of eliciting responses could be less demanding for the participant than direct questions as they have a cue to work from as highlighted by Howlin (1997).

The ORT stories could also highlight if the individual's difficulties concern not understanding why it is important to consider the needs and feelings of others Garcia-Winner (2002). The words used in the stories may indicate difficulties with language which could range from the individual being blunt or failing to adjust language to different situations and people such as adults and peers (Muskat 2005). The therapist could then explain how the individual's words could be interpreted differently by others and why this is so. Alternative suggestions could be suggested and modelled. The results may also illustrate that a referral or support from a speech and language therapist is required.

Despite the possible links between problems with object relations and social relationship difficulties experienced by ASD individuals there has been very little research linking the two areas. The lack of any previously published research using the ORT with ASD participants makes outcomes more difficult to predict.

1.14 Aims of the Study

The principal aim of the study was to investigate whether the ORT could provide insight into how children with ASD view others and relationships via the stories they produce. It was hoped that the use of a projective technique might reveal information about ASD individuals' views and experiences of social interaction that is difficult to obtain via interview. The nature of the test format provides for a wide degree of freedom in how to express a story. In addition to the ORT protocols it was decided that exploration of the narratives produced might reveal interesting insights into the participants' ability to convey their ideas and identify areas of potential difficulty. As already stated a feature of ASD is that individuals have difficulties with relationships and inferring what others may be thinking. (Mitchell et al, 1997).

1.15 Research Question

How do children with ASD describe relationships via the ORT? What type of patterns emerge?

In addition to the consideration of these questions, there will also be an exploratory investigation of the structure and content of the narratives produced in response to the ORT plates.

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2. Methodology

2.1 Design
The design of the research is essentially a series of five individual case studies of participants' stories, in response to the ORT plates.

2.2 Participants
Though the study was designed to have individuals with a range of diagnoses within the autistic spectrum (e.g. Autism, HFA and AS) the participants in this study are adolescents with a diagnosis of AS (one with ADHD co-morbid). All of the participants had been invited to take part in a social skills group at a NHS service in Hertfordshire. All of the participants were aged between 11 and 14. Therefore, the study utilises a convenience sample but it was felt that the group would meet the criteria required by the study due to the range of difficulties the group have with social skills.

2.3 Inclusion Criteria
To be included in the study the participants had either to have a diagnosis of an ASD with the presence of marked social communication difficulties and other social interaction problems that are having a marked effect on everyday functioning. In addition, it was important that the children would also be attending mainstream education and not be receiving any special educational support due to the comprehension and verbal demands of the testing procedure to produce stories.

2.4 Exclusion Criteria
Any child attending the group who did not attend mainstream secondary school was not invited to take part. In addition, any child who had a mental health problem that would interfere with the assessment process was not invited to take part.

2.5 Methodological Issues
A major methodological issue arises from the relative lack of previous research using the ORT with diverse populations. There are no guidelines on possible adaptations of the ORT instructions that may have been required to explain and administer the assessment. In this study, Phillipson's standard instructions were given, as all of the participants attended mainstream secondary schools and were not receiving special educational needs support. No other information about any possible cognitive deficits or difficulties in understanding of language (which are often found in people with ASD) was available about the participants. Therefore, there is an assumption that all the participants were able to fully understand the demands of the task. Following discussion with Dr Martin Shaw (personal correspondence) each of the participants was assumed to fit the criteria for using the ORT, regardless of the ASD diagnosis.

2.6 Ethical issues
The formal ethical approval procedures were followed, with applications made to the NHS Local Research Ethics Committee for Hertfordshire and the R&D department for the relevant Trust. From the literature review (Magee, 2005) conducted before the beginning of the assessment it was felt that there would be few if any ethical issues in using the ORT as none had been previously highlighted. At the Ethics Committee

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meeting the members raised questions about the interpretation of the pictures and how the children would react. The pictures can evoke difficult emotions, but the committee was assured that none of the published literature has recorded adverse reactions to the pictures. It was agreed that in order to reduce any anxieties the participants may have, they could be accompanied by their parents or carers during the assessment. In the cases where this occurred, the parent/carer would be instructed not to help the participant in constructing the stories. The additional instruction "There are no right or wrong answers or stories" was to be utilised to reduce any possible anxiety. As well as being reviewed by the NHS Research Ethics Committee, the study was also registered with the Ethics Committee of the University of Hertfordshire.

The usual ethical issues of providing information about the study, obtaining informed consent and debriefing participants after the interview were conducted in this study. As the study involved adolescent participants, it was decided that initially their parents or guardians would be consulted about the study and information sheets were provided (Appendix 4 and 5). The author held a forum with the participants' parents and carers as a group to answer any questions and consent was informally obtained at this point. The proposed study was then outlined to the participants, and any questions answered. Five of the six participants attending the group agreed to take part.

Formal written consent was then obtained from both parents and participants prior to the assessment (Appendix 6). In addition, the participants were reminded of their right to terminate participation at any time without providing an explanation. Each participant had an opportunity to ask questions following the interview and to discuss any issues that they might have about the aims of the study or the interview.

To ensure that the anonymity of all of the participants would be maintained, no personal information was recorded. Transcripts of each session were made from the recordings of the interviews on mini-discs, which were assigned a corresponding number to insure that a participant could not be identified by name. The necessity for recording interviews was explained to the participants and they were made aware when recording commenced.

2.7 Procedures
Each ORT plate was presented to the participants in the order set by Phillipson. The prescribed order is shown in the number in brackets beside the plate e.g. A1(1). Phillipson attached no significance to the order of presentation, other than to prevent any participant from being presented with a perceived pattern of one-person, two-person, and three-person and group pictures. The blank plate is presented last.

The participants were then asked to produce a story with these instructions: "I am going to show you some pictures. Will you look at each one as I give it and try to imagine what it could be? As you bring it to life in your imagination, make up a brief story about it. First of all you should say how you imagine this situation came about this you can do in one or two sentences. Then you imagine what is going on in the situation and tell me about it more fully. Finally imagine how it turns out, or what happens in the end. This final part you can do again in just a sentence or so. This story

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is to be done in three parts: the beginning, the middle bit which you do more fully, and the ending".

It is recommended by Phillipson (1973) that the therapist has spent some time with the participants before the test is used, to reduce any anxieties that may be evoked in the test situation. The author had been part of the team running the social skills group before conducting the interviews.

The participants were also offered the choice of writing the stories out if they wished. This is known as the 'Bagby Adaptation' (1958) and updated by Shaw (2002). However, none of the participants opted to use this option. Phillipson also recommends that prompts can be used if the stories do not meet full criteria. Phillipson (1955) provides some general prompts and non directive questions can be used in order to gain more information.

<u>2.8 Method of Analysis</u>
2.8.1 Phillipson Criteria
For this study the main scoring criteria devised by Phillipson (1955) were utilised to increase the amount of data generated. Phillipson's original instructions outlined a method of analysis of the stories that involves examining four main dimensions. These dimensions are:-

1. The perception of the information provided in the picture. This includes the human figures, the reality content of the situation described in the stories and the emotional context.

2. The apperception of the theme or relationship issues typical of the interpersonal situation in the pictures. This analysis examines how the story compares to normative information (provided by Phillipson) e.g. Is it usual or unusual? If it is unusual in what way does it deviate?

3. The object relations content of the stories. This is undertaken under the following headings:
   - (a) What kind of people are seen, omitted or introduced?
   - (b) To what extent, and how, are the characters differentiated as people?
   - (c) To what extent, and in what way, is the interaction developed (do they avoid or directly interact)?

4. The story as a production, the work in it, its structure and organisation.
   - (a) Does the story include all three parts (beginning, middle and end)? If not where is the omission?
   - (b) Is balanced attention given to all three parts required?
   - (c) Does the story contain a conflict?
   - (d) Is there any emotional content? What kind, and is it integrated into the action of the story? Is the feeling appropriate to the story chosen?
   - (e) What solution is achieved, and is this positive or negative?

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The individual stories produced were compared to the norms produced by Phillipson for each of these dimensions (Appendix 7).

Phillipson did concede that there are overlaps between the four dimensions. However, he argues that stories should display a consistency in the behaviour of the characters in each dimension. Thus the stories can be examined for their accuracy, fullness in the use of the human figures, the reality content and the emotional content of the stories. This should reflect both the conscious and unconscious experience of the participants. To aid reliability of the ratings another Trainee Clinical Psychologist who has experience with the ORT undertook the same protocol for the rating of the Phillipson criteria. All elements included in the results were agreed by both raters.

2.8.2 Narrative Analysis
In order to more fully examine the stories produced it was decided to conduct further qualitative analysis on all of the stories. Two different methods of narrative analysis were chosen.

2.8.2.1 Labov Structural Analysis
The first method followed the multi-step analysis set out by Labov (1972, 1982). For Labov there are six elements that should be present in a story to form a full narrative.

1. abstract (summary of the substance of the narrative);
2. orientation (time, place, situation, participants)
3. complicating action (sequence of events)
4. evaluation (significance and meaning of the action)
5. resolution (what finally happened)
6. coda (ending).

Labov accepted that not all six elements will be present or in this order, or occur just once within every story. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) argue that it is the presence of these six elements that allows the data to be analysed and facilitates creative thinking about the data. Labov's format examines the structural elements of stories without examining the meanings. McCabe (1991) has criticised Labov's framework for emphasising the start and ending of stories and less on coding more complex elements of a narrative. Riessman (2003) argued that Labov's framework is an excellent way to examine how simple narratives are organised, and provides an excellent first step in interpreting them. Labov's framework focuses on the structural analysis of narratives and provides a good starting point. It does not provide an analysis of the stories' themes. Thus a more detailed form of analysis was also required.

2.8.2.2 Miles and Huberman
Miles and Huberman (1994) developed a coding scheme to allow for interpretative analysis of qualitative data and narratives in particular. This uses a multi-step analysis conducted by the author. Initially all the transcripts were read and note taken of areas of potential significance. The second step involves assigning codes to the major themes and patterns identified in the first step. The third step involves re-reading the

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stories for the purpose of systematically applying codes. The fourth stage involves the development of theme documents around more major categories. In the final stage Miles and Huberman recommend that any themes that are deemed to be weakly connected to the story, occur only once or contribute little to the overall story theme are eliminated. They state that including all details makes the story analysis too complicated. The participants' relatively short stories did contain elements that did not contribute to the story

To address the issue of the author possibly introducing emotional content the actual words used by the participants were included. For this analysis the stories were re-read by a Clinical Psychologist. The results recorded separately and what was to be included agreed between the author and the Clinical Psychologist. Those words that were suggested to the participants e.g. "Is it a happy or sad picture?" were not included as they were not spontaneously given. The stories were also re-read for the emotional context of the stories separate from the Phillipson (1955) analysis.

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3. Results

3.1. ORT Phillipson Analysis Participant A General Comments

Participant A produced a consistent set of stories in terms of overall structure and emotional content (Appendix 8). The themes used included making friends, peer relationships, seeking separation in adolescence and the difficulties in relationships between friends as well as between parents and children. Participant A did appear to infer conflictual situations in the plates though these were not always included within the stories. Participant A took some time to begin several stories.

3.1.1. Story Perception and Reality Content

Participant A's stories contained clearly identified characters though few details of the group situations were provided (Table 1). Only one story contained a character that had no clear gender (story A3). Of those characters that were identified, there was a good balance between male and female characters. In terms of reality content all of the stories used real settings.

Table 1. Totals and types of figurers perceived and included in stories

Type of Figure	Frequency	Type of Figure	Frequency
Male	8	No Gender	1
Female	7	Group	3
Boy	5	Ghost	1
Girl	2		

3.1.2. Emotional Context

Participant A's stories included a wide range of emotional states and themes (see Table 2). The themes included happiness, sadness, mourning and violation. Several stories contained mixed emotional states rather than focusing on one character. There was at times a reliance on the implied emotions rather than directly stating them. All of the emotions were employed appropriately to the context and themes of the stories.

Table 2. Emotional Content of stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Sadness	4	Loss/Emptiness	1
Anger	5	Anxiety/Fear	3
Happiness/Joy	3	Isolation/Loneliness	1
Jealousy	2	Bored	1
Annoyance/Protest/Upset	4	Glad	1
Envy	1	Guilt	2

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3.1.3 Apperception of Object Relations Themes
The majority of participant A's stories included the expected themes set out by Phillipson (see Table 3). The type of deviation from Phillipson's expected perceptions were the avoidance of conflictual and oedipal themes.

Table 3. Apperception of Object Relations Themes

Type of Apperception	Frequency	Story
Usual	8	A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, B3, BG, CG
Unusual	4	AG, C1, C2, C3

3.1.4 Characters Introduced or Omitted
Participant A identified the correct number of people in nine out of the twelve stories (see Table 4). There were two notable features in this result. Firstly, there were no characters omitted in any of the stories and participant A was the only participant to do this. Secondly, there was the introduction of one extra character into all of the three single person plates. This was a highly unusual result as Shaw's (2002) collation of previous ORT research found that the average likelihood of this occurring was just 15%.

Table 4. Stimulus Variance of character from the plates

Characters	Frequency	Story
Introduced one figure	3	A1, B1, C1
Introduced two or more figures	1	C2
Omitted figures	0	
Correct number seen	8	A2, A3, AG, B2, B3, BG, C3, CG

3.1.5 Differentiation
Participant A utilised basic modes such as gender, group members or individual and roles to distinguish between the characters in the stories (Table 5). Only one fantasy character (a ghost) was introduced in the story for plate C1.

Table 5. Differentiation of characters

Role(s) Assigned	Frequency	Story
Gender	1	B2
Role Only	4	A1, B1, C1, C2
Group and Single Person	3	A3, CG, BG
None	1	AG
Ghost v Real person	1	C1
Friends	1	A2

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3.1.6 Interaction levels
Only four of participant A's stories contained direct interaction between the characters (see Table 6). This was due to the often descriptive nature of the interactions. Though each story was coherent, the interactions were not developed at an emotional level.

Table 6. Interaction Levels between characters

Interaction Level	Frequency	Stories
None	9	A1, A3, AG, B1, BG, C1, C2, CG, Blank
Basic Only	4	A2, B2, B3, C1

3.1.7 Story Structure and Organisation
The analysis of the stories found that ten of the twelve (83.3.%) of participant A's stories met the full criteria of having a distinct beginning, middle and end (Table 7). The same result was found for balanced attention being given for the beginning, middle and ending parts of the stories, relative to the story length. The majority of the stories had a logical flow.

Table 7. Story Structure and Balance

Characters	Yes	No
All three elements included?	10	2
Is balance paid to each element?	10	2

3.1.8 Conflicts and Solutions
Only 6 (50%) of Participant A's stories contained conflicts (Table 8). Some of the conflicts are implied within the story rather than being directly referenced in the narrative. Only two of the six conflictual stories contained a solution that is worked through by the characters in the stories.

Table 8. Conflicts and Solutions

Category	Yes	No
Does the story contain a conflict?	6	6
Is any solution achieved to the conflict?	2	4

3.2 Phillipson Analysis Participant B General Comments
Participant B found generating stories difficult and required a lot of reassurance that there was 'no correct' way of interpreting the pictures (Appendix 9). Participant B found it difficult to expand on the stories following the immediate perception.

3.2.1 Story Perception and Reality Content
The stories produced by Participant B did not always contain clearly identified characters though the group situations were all clearly identified (Table 9). Several stories containing characters had no clear gender (A1, C3, B2). There was a strong

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bias toward male figures. In terms of reality content all of the stories used real settings with no fantasy characters used. Participant B used a humorous remark in responding to the blank plate though this did not lead to a coherent story.

Table 9. Totals and types of figurers perceived and included in stories

Type of Figure	Frequency	Type of Figure	Frequency
Male	5	No Gender	4
Female	1	Group	2
Boy	1	None	2
Girl	0	Animal	1

3.2.2 Emotional Context

Participant B's stories tended to use basic emotional contexts with happy-peaceful, sadness-mourning or violation themes within the stories (Table 10). There were few directly referenced emotional states and there was some reliance on implied emotions. All of the emotions were employed appropriately in the context and themes of the stories.

Table 10. Emotional Content of stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Sadness	3	Loss/Emptiness	2
Death/Mourning	2	Violation	2
Happy	1	Isolation	1
None	7	Love	1
Dislike	1		

3.2.3 Apperception of Object Relations Themes

Participant B demonstrated an even distribution in the apperception of the OR themes (Table 11). The type of deviation from Phillipson's expected perceptions tended to surround the avoidance of conflictual and 'oedipal' type themes. The descriptive nature of the stories allowed for some of this avoidance of emotional interactions between the characters.

Table 11. Apperception of Object Relations Themes

Type of Apperception	Frequency	Stories
Usual	6	A2, AG, B1, B2, B3, BG,
Unusual	6	A1, A3, C1, C2, C3, CG

3.2.4 Characters Introduced or Omitted

Participant B's stories contained a mix of omitted and introduced characters (Table 12). The most notable feature was the introduction of characters in four of the stories.

In total only 6 out of the 13 (46.2 %) stories contained the correct number of human figures.

Table 12. Stimulus Variance of character from the plates

Characters	Frequency	Stories
Introduced one figure	2	A1, A3,
Introduced two or more figures	1	AG
Omitted figures	3	B3, C1, C3
Correct number seen	6	A2, B1, B2, BG, C2, CG

3.2.5 Differentiation

Participant B used basic modes such as gender, victim or offender, group or individual or an implied role to distinguish between the characters in the stories (Table 13). However, in the majority of the stories no differentiation was scored as being present.

Table 13. Differentiation of characters

Role(s) Assigned	Frequency	Stories
Gender	1	A2
Victim or Offender	3	B1, C2, CG
Group and Single Person	1	BG
None	7	A1, A3, AG C3, B2, B3, C1

3.2.6 Interaction levels

Only five (38.5%) of participant B's stories contained direct interaction (Table 14) Though the stories are coherent, interactions are not developed at an emotional level.

Table 14. Interaction Levels between characters

Interaction Level	Frequency	Stories
None	8	A1, AG, B1, B3, BG, C1, C2, Blank
Basic Only	5	A2, A3, B2, C, CG

3.2.7 Story Structure and Organisation

Analysis of the stories showed that seven (53.9%) of participant B's stories did not meet the full criteria of having a distinct beginning, middle and end (Table 15). Only three of the stories showed balanced attention to correct proportions for the beginning, middle and ending parts of the stories. The majority of the stories did follow a logical flow though these were short and lacked content with some being descriptions rather than a coherent narrative.

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Table 15. Story Structure and Balance

Characters	Yes	No
All three elements included?	6	6
Is balance paid to each element?	3	9

3.2.8 Conflicts and Solutions
Within Participant B's stories only three (23.1%) contained conflicts (Table 16). However, these were implied within the story as no narrative directly referencing a conflict between the characters was included.   None of these stories provides a resolution to the conflict.

Table 16. Conflicts and Solutions

Category	Yes	No
Does the story contain a conflict?	3	9
Is any solution achieved to the conflict?	0	12

3.3 Phillipson Scoring Participant C General Comments
For Participant C the stories produced were short and did not always contain a coherent narrative, with themes not always expanded on (Appendix 10). Participant C did infer some of the difficult and conflictual situations in the plates though within the stories these were often avoided. Participant C did utilise two different plates with the same theme to continue a story.

3.3.1 Story Analysis Perception and Reality Content
Human figures were used in all of the stories, though Participant C also included a Ghost figure in the stories for plates C2 and B1 as well as alien characters in story A3 (Table 17).

Table 17. Totals and types of figure perceived and included in stories

Type of Figure	Frequency	Type of Figure	Frequency
Male	7	No Gender	6
Female	6	Group	6
Boy	2	Ghost	2
Girl	2	Alien	1

3.3.2 Emotional Content and Context
Participant C included a wide range of emotional content in the stories (Table 18).

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Table 18. Emotional Context of stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Sadness	2	None	3
Anger/Annoyed	1	Anxiety/fear/shock	2
Happiness	3	Abandonment/Lonely	1
Crazy	1	Depressed	2

3.3.3 Apperception of object relations themes
Overall six of the stories were scored as having an unusual construction (Table 19). The unusual apperception of the themes in the stories also illustrated an avoidance of difficult emotions. Within the stories, couples are portrayed in non-sexual relationships with no intimate contact.

Table 19. Apperception of Object Relations Themes

Type of Apperception	Frequency	Stories
Usual	6	A2, AG, B1, B2, B3, BG,
Unusual	6	A1, A3, C1, C2, C3, CG

3.3.4 Character Introduction or Omission
Participant C's stories demonstrated a wide range of stimulus variance (Table 20). Only five of the thirteen stories contained the correct number of figures

Table 20. Stimulus Variance of character from the plates

Characters	Frequency	Stories
Introduced one figure	2	A1, C2
Introduced two or more figures	2	A3, C1
Omitted figures	2	B3, C3
Correct number seen	6	A2, AG, B1, B2, BG, CG

3.3.5 Differentiation
The use of real and fantasy (the ghost and aliens) characters within stories C2, B1 and A3 was the most clear differentiation between characters (Table 21). Others characters lacked clear roles with few personal qualities assigned to them.

Table 21. Differentiation of characters

Role(s) Assigned	Frequency	Stories
Gender	2	A2, B3
Real v Fantasy	2	C2, A3
Group and Single Person	2	AG, BG
Role only	2	C1, CG
Friends	2	A1, B2
None	3	B1, C3, Blank,

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3.3.6 Interaction levels

Eight of the thirteen stories contain full interactions between the characters (Table 22). This was due to lack of emotional connections between the characters or a lack of exploration of the relationships.

Table 22. Interaction Levels between characters

Interaction Level	Frequency	Stories
None	4	A1, B1, BG, C2
Basic Only	6	A2, A3, AG, B2, C1, CG
Good level	2	C3. CG

3.3.7 Story Structure

The three parts were present within the stories but they were almost of equal length (Table 23). There was little balance within the stories.

Table 23. Story Structure and Balance

Characters	Yes	No
All three elements included?	9	4
Is balance paid to each element?	6	7

3.3.8 Conflicts and Solutions

Only four of the stories (AG, B1, CG, C1) were rated as containing any level of conflict. However, these conflicts were either unspoken (AG, B1, C1) or at a safe distance (CG) within the stories. The conclusions of the stories as having solutions, as these were mostly practical and the emotional elements were often left unresolved.

3.4 Phillipson Scoring Participant D General Comments

The stories produced by participant D were characterised by the themes being inspired by films or TV programmes (Appendix 11). The association between the images and films was quite marked and the participant often remarked, "I know what this reminds me of", before beginning a story. Participant D was requested to not use these themes but to produce an original story. Despite the reminder, there were strong links to films in that the stories lacked a 'reality' setting. Participant D was the only one to include the examiner within a story.

3.4.1 Story Perception

Human figures were present in all of the stories, with the majority of figures used being male (Table 24). The group pictures were clearly identified and participant D incorporated these into the stories.

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Table 24. Totals and types of figures perceived and included in stories

Type of Figure	Frequency	Type of Figure	Frequency
Male	14	Family	1
Female	7	Group	2
Boy	2	Girl	1

3.4.2 Reality Content

Participant D constructed both reality and fantasy based stories (Table 25). Some of the stories more closely resembled films or fictional stories. Three of the stories, directly referred The Simpson's, (CG) Scary Movie (B2) and War of the Worlds (C1).

Table 25. Story Structure and Balance

Basis of story	Frequency	Stories
Reality	5	A1, AG, B3, C2, C3
Fantasy	8	A2, A3, B1, B2, BG, C1, CG, Blank

3.4.3 Emotional Context and Content

Participant D used a wide range of emotional content within the stories produced (Table 26). The emotions included were in the correct context and did fit the themes.

Table 26. Emotional Context of stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Death	1	Unhappy	1
None	5	Anxiety/fear/shock	1
Happiness	4	Separation	1

3.4.4 Apperception of OR themes

Seven out of the thirteen stories (53.9 %) were rated as having an unusual construction (Table 27). This reflects the avoidance of emotional situations by the use of TV and film themes. In the vast majority of the stories death, fear and aggressive feelings and actions took place and these did not match the expected responses provided by Phillipson (1953).

Table 27. Apperception of Object Relations Themes

Type of Apperception	Frequency	Stories
Usual	6	A2, AG, B1, B2, B3, BG,
Unusual	6	A1, A3, C1, C2, C3, CG

3.4.5 Characters Introduced or Omitted

In total Participant D introduced extra characters into eight (61.5%) of the stories (Table 28). Though a range of different characters were included within the stories, there was a marked bias towards male characters.

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Table 28. Stimulus Variance of character from the plates

Characters	Frequency	Stories
Introduced one figure	5	A1, B1, B2, C2, C3
Introduced two or more figures	2	AG, C1,
Correct number seen	5	A2, A3, B3, BG, CG
Omitted figures	0	

3.4.6 Differentiation

Participant D used basic modes such as gender, victim or offender, good or bad or an implied role to distinguish between the characters used in the stories (Table 29).

Table 29. Differentiation of characters

Role(s) Assigned	Frequency		
Gender	4	Good or bad person	3
Victim or Offender	3	None	2

3.4.7 Interaction levels

Scoring the interaction levels was problematic as many of the stories contained only a basic level of interaction (Table 30). However, some of the interactions were poorly developed with only actions such as fighting, without consideration of how these situations had arisen.

Table 30. Interaction Levels between characters

Interaction Level	Frequency	Stories
None	3	A1, B2, C2
Basic Only	6	A2, A3, B1, B3, BG, C1,
Good level	4	C3, AG, CG, Blank

3.4.8 Story Structure

The majority of Participant D's stories contained the three distinct parts (Table 31). A number of stories had the basic beginning of "One day", as an introduction in several stories (A3, B1, B2, C3, CG BG and Blank plates). Reasonable attention was paid to the balance of each of the three parts to each story.

Table 31. Story Structure and Balance

Characters	Yes	No
All three elements included?	11	2
Is balance paid to each element?	10	3

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3.4.9 Conflicts and Solutions
The conflictual situations were present in the majority of the stories with 11 (84.6%) of the stories containing direct conflict. In some of the stories the conflicts were physical or contained an element of a 'battle of wills' (A2, C3, B3, B1, B2, C1, Blank). In a number of the stories' conflicts the outcome had a distinct winner and loser yet the emotional impact of being a loser was often not explored. Solutions were found in nine of the thirteen stories (69.2 %). However, the solutions were mostly practical and the emotional elements were often left unresolved, with a mixture of positive and negative solutions present.

3.5 Phillipson Scoring Participant E General Comments
The stories produced by participant E were characterised by being short and precise. There were themes of hurt, betrayal, loneliness and death (Appendix 12). Each was coherent, yet there was a lack of emotional depth or explanation of the characters' internal states.

3.5.1. Story Perception and Reality Content
Human figures were present in all of the stories (Table 32). There was an even spread of adult male and female characters. Only one young female character was directly included in one story (AG). The group pictures were clearly seen and used appropriately. The majority of the stories used real settings.

Table 32. Totals and types of figures perceived and included in stories

Type of Figure	Frequency	Type of Figure	Frequency
Male	5	Family	1
Female	5	Group	3
Boy	5	Girl	1
Children	4	Group	3

3.5.2 Emotional Context and Content
Participant E used a range of emotional content within the stories (Table 33). Several stories demonstrated characters having mixed emotions, but many were more implied than directly stated. All of the emotions did appear to be used in the correct context and did fit the themes of the stories.

Table 33. Emotional Context of stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Sadness	1	Loneliness	3
None	10	Betrayal	1

3.5.3 Apperception of OR Themes

Within this area 9 (69.2%) of the stories were rated as having an unusual construction (Table 34). The unusual apperceptions surrounded the avoidance of the emotional reactions to the stories, e.g. the story for plate A1 described a child being kidnapped, and then killed when a ransom was not paid. However, there was no explanation of the kidnapper's motivations or the feelings of the child or of his carers concerning this situation.

Table 34. Apperception of Object Relations Themes

Type of Apperception	Frequency	Stories
Usual	4	BG, C2, C3, CG
Unusual	8	A1, A2, A3, AG B1, B2, B3, C1

3.6.1 Characters Introduced or Omitted

Participant E introduced characters in five of the stories (Table 34). These figures included males, females and children.

Table 34. Stimulus Variance of character from the plates

Characters	Frequency	Stories
Introduced one figure	5	A1, AG, B1, B3, C1
Omitted figures	1	C2
Correct number seen	6	A2, A3, B2, BG, C3, CG,

3.6.2 Differentiation

Participant E used basic modes such as gender, victim or offender, good or bad or an implied role to distinguish between the characters used in the stories (Table 35).

Table 35. Differentiation of characters

Role(s) Assigned	Frequency
Gender	4
Victim or Offender	1
Good or bad person	4
None	4

3.6.3 Interaction levels

Many of the stories contained only a basic level of interaction with a distinct lack of directly referenced emotional connections between the characters (Table 36).

Table 36. Interaction levels between characters

Interaction Level	Frequency	Stories
None	5	A1, BG, C1, C2, C3
Basic Only	5	A2, AG, B2, B3, Blank
Actions only	3	B1, CG, A3

3.7.1 Story Structure

There was a roughly equal spread of including or not including all three parts to each story with the proper level of balance being paid to each one (Table 37). At times when the three parts were present within the stories they were almost of equal length. Some element of description was present in all of the stories.

Table 37. Story Structure and Balance

Characters	Yes	No
All three elements included?	6	7
Is balance paid to each element?	5	8

3.7.2 Conflicts and Solutions

The conflictual situations were mostly avoided with only 5(38.5%) of the stories containing direct conflict (A1, B3, B1, A3, C1). However only story B3 had a direct emotional conflict. Solutions were found in three of the stories. The solutions were mostly practical and the emotional elements were often left unresolved.

3.8 Narrative Analysis

3.8.1 Labov Framework Results

Each of the participants' transcripts was read and rated for the inclusion or exclusion of each of the six categories (Appendix 13, 14, 15, 16, 17). Table 38 summarises the results and this illustrates that none of the participants included all six of Labov's elements as part of all of the thirteen stories produced. There was a wide distribution of scoring for the inclusion of each element.

Table 38 Distribution of the use of Labov's six elements

Participant	A		B		C		D		E		Average
Included	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Inclusion
Abstract	9	4	10	3	12	1	11	2	13	0	11.0
Orientation	9	4	10	3	12	1	12	1	13	0	11.2
Complication	13	0	3	8	12	1	12	1	12	1	10.4
Evaluation	12	1	3	10	9	4	12	1	9	4	9.0
Results	13	0	4	9	11	2	12	1	11	2	10.2
Coda	9	4	2	11	8	5	12	1	10	3	8.2

The most notable deficits occur for the evaluation and coda elements. In addition, many of the stories do not have a resolution. However, the majority of the stories did include all the elements prescribed by Labov.

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Participant B appeared to have the greatest level of difficulty with the task and this is reflected in the result of the analysis. In particular, difficulties were found in the inclusion of four of the six elements, complication, evaluation, resolution and coda. The evaluation element was only scored as being included in three of the participant's thirteen stories. Including the codas was also problematic for participant C, who was scored as including the coda on eight of the thirteen stories. These findings seem to reflect the short nature of and lack of depth in the stories. In particular there is a difficulty with exploring the initial ideas and in including emotional content or reflections on the action that has occurred to conclude the narrative.

Difficulties in beginning stories was illustrated by Participant D using the phrases "One day" or "Once upon a time" to begin a number of stories. Participant D also used the term "they all lived happily ever after", which does rate as a coda, though it is one that is associated with fairytales. Similarly the use of the phrase "the end" by participant E also fulfils the criteria to rate as a coda.

3.8.2 Miles and Huberman - Narrative Analysis

The second part of the narrative analyses was conducted following the protocol detailed in the method section. Following the initial reading of the transcripts, notes were taken on potential areas of significance. In total 120 initial basic codes were noted. For the second stage a fellow trainee clinical psychologist separately examined the 120 initial codes for the purpose of assigning these into more major themes. In this process the initial codes were reduced into 64 themes. The author assigned 57 codes and the second rater also assigned all of these 57 and added 7 more. These overlaps were grouped together and the frequency of each was recorded (Appendix 18). Due to the coding process there was no basis for calculating Cohen's kappa. Andrés and Marzo (2004) proposed a measure of delta as a new measure of agreement between two raters. However the data was not suitable for this process. In a wider sense there was a high level of agreement (89%) between the raters for the emerging categories.

For the third stage the stories were reread for the purpose of applying the codes to the transcripts. The fourth stage produced the major theme documents which are based on the major categories identified in the third stage. These theme documents highlighted thirty six thematic categories. The fourth stage broke these thematic categories into six larger headings: Relationships/Friendships, Parents/Family, Violence/Death, Emotions, Loss and Other Areas. It was decided that these headings would best cover the main areas highlighted in the stories (Appendix 19). All of the thirty six thematic groups had at least two comments (used at least twice) within the stories overall. The results of the six thematic groups are explored below.

3.8.2.1 Relationships/Friendships

All of the participants included stories about different types of relationship in response to the plates. To encompass all of these stories they were included under the larger heading of relationships/friendships. Different aspects of relationships were included within this larger area. What appear to be happy relationships between the characters are described in stories by participant B (A2 and A3), and participant C (B3, B2, BG and C2). In almost all cases these appear to refer to adult relationships (though some

are not directly stated). Indeed participant B's story for plate A2 refers to a couple returning from honeymoon and participant D's story for plate BG is based at a wedding.

In contrast there are also stories concerning poor or conflictual relationships. Participant D's stories are the most notable for containing conflictual relationships, with five in total i.e. C3, A2, B3, A3 and C1. In addition participant E provided two stories with conflictual relationships i.e. B3 and A1. Several of the stories appear to suggest that relationships between adults may be problematic and that there is a definite winner and loser in these situations.

There is a thread in some stories of the characters wanting to make friendships and have relationships with others/peers. In some of the stories the characters do make relationships successfully, e.g. participant C (stories A2, B3, C1, BG) and participant D (A3). These stories are again basic and contain very little information on the emotional states of the characters and there is no reflection on the outcome.

Participant B's story for plate BG has a male character that is separate from the main group (correctly identified) and states "he doesn't like groups". This is a not uncommon experience for people with ASD. In the story the lone male character is stated as "thinking about the castle and history of it". The story avoids giving any reasons or the possible emotional impact of his desire to be separate or his dislike of groups. Participant E's story for plate BG illustrated a different aspect of relationships. The lone character would like the group to ask him to join them but this never occurs. The character is stated as feeling "left out and unwanted". This again may be reflective of the experiences of children and adolescents with ASD who find it difficult to make friends.

In terms of the adult relationships, sexual themes are alluded to in the stories but none is made explicit within the text. The clearest reference to a sexual motive is the story by participant D for plate B3. In the story a male character is stated as being "really desperate to have that woman". There is no mention of sexual violence, but the female character is fought over by two men. Later in the story the 'victor' of this fight is about to kiss the woman but no description of this act or the emotions that may be present is given.

3.8.2.2 Emotions
It was striking to note that many of the participants' narratives failed to use emotional states directly. When they were used it appeared that at times emotional words were added almost as an afterthought, e.g. stories by participant B (A1), participant C (A2, AG) and, participant E (C2). Despite the lack of directly named emotional states, emotional themes are implied within the stories via the interactions of the characters and the overall tone of the stories.

Where emotional content was used the analysis of the main themes highlighted a strong bias towards more negative emotional states. These included sadness, anger, loneliness and fear (Table 39). It is interesting that the participants did recognise the possible conflictual situations depicted within the plates. Yet many of the narratives

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contained few emotional statements. Indeed a number of participants only provided emotional statements following the use of Phillipson (1973) recommended prompts, e.g. "It's a sad scene"; "It's a happy scene", "she's fed up".

Table 39   Distribution of directly stated emotions in the stories

Type of Emotions	Frequency
Loneliness	4
Fear	3
Sadness	2
Happiness	2
Depressed	2
Emptiness	2

The characters emotions are not always placed centrally within the stories and often contain more factual/descriptive based information. This is despite the conflictual nature of some of the stories. Other stories do include positive elements and emotions though these are more often implied rather than stated.

3.8.2.3. Parents/Family

At least one (and in most cases more than one) story from each of the participants included the use of parental or grandparent characters (see Table 40). There was a mix of both positive and negative stories about parental characters. This includes use in the stories of parents stopping burglars, or the children seeking comfort after frightening experiences (participant B story A3; participant, C stories B1 and C2). The positive stories tended to revolve around simple narratives of families spending time together (e.g. participant B story A3, participant E C3) or a parental figure helping to comfort, solve problems or making things better for the child characters (participant C C2 and C1; participant E, C3 and B1).

In contrast a number of stories focused on both emotional and physical fights between children and parental characters. Indeed, the most extreme example is that of a (drunken) father punching his child (participant D, A2). Some narratives included a sense that parent characters may not care about their children. An example of this was used by Participant E for plate A1 which refers to parental characters who do not pay a ransom for their son, who was subsequently killed. However the story fails to contain/state any reasons for the actions (or lack of action) by the adult characters.

Table 40   Distribution of parental/family characters in the stories

Type Parents/Family Story	Frequency
Parents make things better/protect	3
Parents do not care	2
Happy family	2
Parental control	2
Family fights	2

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3.8.2.4 Violence/Death

Another notable thematic area that emerged from the narrative analysis was the use of violent imagery (see Table 41). This appeared in various forms including actual physical harm, threats, and bullying. Several stories also contained images of death from both natural and unlawful killings. One story contained an example of a father threatening and then punching his son, while in another a man killed his step-father. A further story had a child being killed by a kidnapper. The most extreme example was given by participant D in response to the blank plate. This was based on a fantasy fight where the participant used himself as one of the main characters, who then fought with the author. During the story fight the character died but he then went on to defeat the author and press a button that destroyed the world.

Participant D included a story (AG) about the July 7th 2005 bombs in London. The narrative had a group of Christians praying for those who died in the bombing. The narrative continued with one of the group dying in a separate bombing. The group "think about" their friend but there was no sense of mourning of the loss or their feelings about the death of their friend.

Non violent death also occurred in a number of the participants' stories. This includes death from cancer, in a car crash and mourners in a graveyard (participant B AG, participant D B3, participant E A2 and B3). In each of these stories little or no attention was paid to the emotional impact of these deaths.

Other stories that included violent acts focused on areas of children feeling threatened by other children or groups (e.g. Participant B, story CG, participant C, C3, B1 and C1, participant E A3). Yet again though the opportunity was present for the participants to include how the characters may feel about these situations this content was largely absent. In a similar way there was no afterthought or evaluation of the consequences of the actions of the people suffering or committing violent acts. Violence not causing death occurred in a number of stories for participants D and E via physical conflicts.

Table 41 Distribution of stories containing references to violence or death

Type of Violence/Death	Frequency
Death	6
Murder by characters	5
Physical Fights	4
Threats	3
Children hurt	2
Bullying	2

3.8.2.5 Loss of relationships and possessions

Other stories contained elements of loss (see Table 42). These appeared in the form of both 'loss of possessions', such as stealing by robbers and burglars as well as emotional losses in the form of loss of relationships.

Only participant B provided an emotional reaction of a character whose house was burgled, i.e. "he does not want to go into the room as he will feel really sad". Participant E's story for plate C1 had a more resigned tone and a sense of helplessness for the victims of the crimes, "the police say they will do what they can but they don't catch the burglar". There was also a sense of loss present for some of the characters who had difficulties making friends or losing out to others when trying to form relationships.   Only a few of the stories reflected on these losses directly, e.g. participant E for the story for plate C2 stated the old lady character was dreaming of her lost youth.   Overall participant E's stories contained the largest amount of references to loss. These included stories involving actual death (A1, A2, B3), loss of possessions C1 and finally a story about the loss of peers/friends (BG).

Table 42 Distribution of stories containing references to loss

Type of Loss	Frequency
Robbery loss	7
Police Involvement	4
Loss of others	2

3.8.2.6 Social Rules and Conventions
Though not prominent in all the participants' stories several contained references to obeying/following moral and social rules. These included wrongdoing (robbers, murderers), in which some were caught and punished, while others got away with this. The following or not of social rules was also present in a diverse mix of stories. These included not talking in church (participant C and AG), reading someone else's mail (participant C and C3), not playing with your son after drinking alcohol (participant D, C3) and having an affair while married (participant E, B3 and B2). As in the other theme areas not all of the stories contained directly stated reflections on the consequences of not following social rules.

3.8.2.7 Fantasy and religious imagery.
Participants A, B, C and D included stories that contained references to religious images, including settings of churches and graveyards. The inclusion of the religious images was often combined with attending funerals or thinking about the dead. Participants A and D both had groups praying in the unusual setting of a garden. Participant D included stories based on fantasy and film characters. These included monsters and the Simpsons. The themes of these stories were based on a plot of a film or cartoon (stories B1, B2, C1 and CG). Participant C included both a ghost character (B1 and C2) and an alien (A3). In each story the fantasy character interacted with a lone human.

Summary
When comparing all the participants' stories, overall male and boy characters were used within the majority of the stories produced. Yet eleven characters were given no direct gender and could not be inferred accurately from the text (Table 43).

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Table 43 - Total and types of figures included in the stories

Males	39	No Gender	11
Females	26	Group	10
Boy	15	Ghost/Fantasy	4
Children	6	Animal	1
Family	2	None	2

Overall there was a relative lack of emotional words used by the participants within their stories (Table 44). The amount is relatively small compared to the overall themes and contexts contained within the stories (Table 45).

Table 44 Emotion words used in the stories

None	24	Happy	14
Sadness	9	Scared/Scary	6
Anger	5	Lonely	5
Depressed	2	Grumpy	1
Fear	1	Worry	1
Annoyance	1	Guilty	1
Violated	1	Ignores	1
Glad	1	Betrayed	1
Dislike	1	Enjoyed	1
Crazy	1	Love	1
Down	1	Hurt	1
Freaked	1	Overjoyed	

Table 45   Emotional Themes of the stories

Anxiety/Fear	18	Happiness	14
Sadness	13	Loss/Emptiness	12
Anger	12	Jealous	8
Death/Mourning	8	Loneliness	3
Envy	3	Guilt	3
Violation	2	Friendship	2
Depressed	2	None	2
Annoyance	1	Separation	1
Bored	1	Contentment	1
Love	1	Humiliation	1
Greed	1		

Phillipson (1955) provided normative data for the numbered plates and overall there was an even spread of normative and deviations from the normative data present in the

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stories (Table 46). Stories for the plates A1, A3, C1, C2, C3 and CG provided for the majority of the variance (Table 47). This was despite the C series plates containing the greatest level of detail and thus requiring less interpretation on the part of the participants.

Table 46- Apperception of themes according to Phillipson's normative data

	Participants					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
Usual	8	6	6	6	4	30
Unusual	4	6	6	6	8	30

Table 47 Apperception of themes according to Phillipson's normative data by plate

Story	Usual	Unusual
A1	1	4
A2	4	1
A3	1	4
AG	3	2
B1	4	1
B2	4	1
B3	4	1
BG	5	0
C1	0	5
C2	1	4
C3	1	4
CG	2	3

Overall the participants correctly identified and included the correct number of characters in the plates (Table 48). The introduction of one extra character was the most likely source of any variance.

Table 48 – Stimulus Variance of characters in the stories

	A	B	C	D	E	Total
Introduced one	3	2	2	5	5	17
Introduced two or more	1	1	2	0	2	6
Omit one	0	3	2	1	0	7
Omit two or more	0	0	0	0	0	0
Correct number included	8	6	6	6	5	31

The Phillipson (1955) analysis showed overall that a large proportion (46%) of the stories did not contain any direct interaction between the characters (Table 49)

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Table 49 - Interaction levels between characters

Interaction Level	Participants					
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**Total**
None	9	8	5	3	5	30
Basic	4	5	6	6	5	26
Good Level	0	0	2	4	3	

The instructions for the ORT state the stories should have three distinct parts (beginning, middle and end). Overall the majority of the stories did contain all three elements but a substantial amount (35%) did not (Table 50).

Table 50 Inclusion of all three parts of the stories?

	Yes	No
Participant A	10	3
Participant B	6	7
Participant C	9	4
Participant D	11	2
Participant E	6	7
Total	42	23

Phillipson (1955) recommends that balance needs to be given to each part (i.e. shorter beginning and end, with longer middle). Overall there was a wide variation in the participants' stories being balanced between all three parts (Table 51).

Table 51 Was balance given to all three parts?

	Yes	No
Participant A	10	3
Participant B	4	9
Participant C	6	7
Participant D	10	3
Participant E	5	8
Total	35	30

Though not designed to reflect conflictual situations, Phillipson (1955) and Shaw (2002) reported that many stories include conflictual situations. Overall a small majority of the stories did not contain a conflict (Table 52). The analysis highlighted differences between the participant resolving the conflicts with participants C and D resolving all or the majority of the conflicts (Table 53).

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Table 52 Did the story contain a conflict?

	Yes	No
Participant A	6	6
Participant B	3	9
Participant C	4	8
Participant D	9	3
Participant E	5	7
Total	27	33

Table 53 If the story contained a conflict was it resolved?

	Yes	No
Participant A	2	4
Participant B	0	3
Participant C	4	0
Participant D	7	2
Participant E	1	4
Total	14	13

Labov Criteria

The Labov analysis illustrated the difficulties participants B, C and E had with including the evaluation element within the stories (Table 38). The evaluation element conveys the significance and meaning of what is being described in the story. Participant B in particular relied on description and was scored as including only three evaluation clauses in thirteen stories. Overall the majority of the stories for all the participants did fulfil the Labov criteria of a full narrative.

Miles and Huberman

Overall the participants were able to include a range of themes in their stories. This is illustrated by the six categories identified by the Miles and Huberman analysis (relationships/friendships; emotions; parents/family; violence/death; loss of possessions; social rules and conventions; and fantasy and religious imagery).

However, there was a wide variation in how much the participants were able to fully articulate the emotional aspects of the relationships between the characters. There was a large element of description present in many of the stories. In particular participant B relied heavily on description. A large number of the stories did reflect some issues of adolescence were present including the individuation process of moving from the family unit to more independence, with participants A C D and E all including stories that reflect the challenging of parental and societal authority. This is combined with the search for and difficulties with forming friendships. Both participants B and E included stories about the difficulties in coping with groups of people, which is a common difficulty for people with ASD (Attwood, 1998; Stoddart, 2005).A variety of

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themes around family issues were also identified. Several stories featured parents protecting and caring for children that are contrasted with other stories that have conflict and actual violence between parents and children. There was also a noticeable inclusion of references to robbery, violence and death. To some extent the high level of violent references results from participants D's stories. However all the participants included at least one reference to one of the three areas.

Themes were largely poorly developed with little exploration of the underlying themes or characters' emotional reactions. The emotional states were more implied than directly stated and participants B and C required prompting from the author to gain the characters' emotions. These were not included in the analysis as they were not spontaneously participant generated.

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4. Discussion

This discussion reviews these findings firstly in light of the research question and secondly the narrative analysis. Comparisons to previous both ORT research and other studies of AS individuals are given in summary form. The implications for possible clinical applications of the ORT with ASD individuals will be discussed. The limitations of the current study will also be addressed.

4.1 Findings discussed in relation to research question

4.1.1 Stories for the picture plates

The research question asked, how do children with ASD describe relationships via the ORT? Overall a mixed set of results emerged. On the Phillipson (1955) scoring criteria, the instructions clearly stated that there should be distinct beginning, middle and end sections. The results showed that the majority (70%) of the stories did meet these criteria. However, a large proportion of the stories contained only very basic beginning, middle and end sections, with some appearing to be descriptions of the plates. A number of stories that did not meet the criteria contained a couple of barely connected lines.

Phillipson also recommended that there should be balanced attention applied to each element, with shorter beginning and ending sections, and a larger middle section. Only 38% of the stories were rated as containing this balance. For many of the participants there was little differentiation between the three parts, in part due to the short nature of many of the stories. In particular, the participants appeared to find beginning the stories difficult, with some containing large elements of description. Despite the stories containing the three elements, difficulties with story production and a lack of emotional content were evident. This was evident by the length of some of some of the pauses the participants used when beginning stories.

All of the participants appeared to find producing a story for plate A1 problematic. The stories were the least coherent and shortest in length (apart from those for the Blank plate). Phillipson (1973) recommended that participants should be shown the plate A1 again at the end of the assessment, and then asked to provide an alternative story. However, despite being offered the opportunity none of the participants did so. This was not unexpected due to the difficulties the participants may have with inflexible thinking that is commonly found in ASD individuals (Attwood, 2003).

A possible difficulty with including all three story parts is the deficits in communication encountered by people with AS. This may extend to a lack of full understanding of cultural expectations often implied in any story-telling task. Loveland and Tunali-Kotoshi (2005) suggest that story narratives of children with ASD differ from those of other children. Bruner and Feldman (1994) and Tager-Flusberg (1989, 1992 and 1995), found that individuals with ASD produced stories that were less complex, shorter and contained more grammatical errors than controls. In addition the participants used fewer causal statements, or failed to include a resolution of many of the conflicts. In part, these findings are replicated in the current

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study evidenced by the short nature of many of the stories and the relative lack of resolution of many of the conflicts.

Other research has found that children with ASD are less likely to describe the characters feelings in their stories and instead concentrate on information and description (Baron-Cohen et al, 1986; Tager-Flusberg and Sullivan, 1994, 1995). In contrast, children with AS have been found to be better able to produce imaginative characters and stories than autistic individuals (Craig et al 2000). Both Baron-Cohen (1991) and Capps et al (2000) found children with AS were more likely to describe the emotions or actions of characters within their own stories rather than identify the possible cause(s) of the characters internal states. In the current study, the participants also appeared to utilise this strategy in the content of their stories.

The Phillipson (1955) criteria do not score the emotional words used by the participants, but the emotional context of the story, further analysis on the stories was undertaken to compare them to the overall emotional themes (Appendix 22-26). The actual words used by the participants were included. For this analysis the stories were re-read by a Clinical Psychologist. The results were recorded separately and what was to be included was then agreed between the author and the Clinical Psychologist. Those words that were suggested to the participants e.g. "Is it a happy or sad picture?" were not included as they were not spontaneously given. The stories were also re-read for the emotional context of the stories separate from the Phillipson (1955) analysis. Given the short nature or the stories there was little disagreement on the scoring, The outcome was not included in the results section as this was a secondary analysis and not part of the original study. The tables are shown together to highlight the differences between the relative lack of words compared to the overall emotional themes of the stories. The lack of emotional depth or connections between the characters in the stories illustrates this limited ability.

4.1.2 Blank Plate
The stories for the blank plate highlight the difficulties that some ASD children have with imaginative tasks. Phillipson (1973) reported the blank plate allows participants freedom to express an ideal relationship due to the anxiety that the participants may have encountered with the previous plates. In contrast to Phillipson's assertion, the participants' stories may well reflect an inability to fully articulate the type(s) of relationships that the participants desire. From the author's observations of the participants' reactions to the plate this confusion and anxiety was evident. It appeared that the lack of a visual cue made the task more difficult and highlighted difficulties with imagination.

All of the participants struggled to produce a coherent story for the blank plate, though Participant E utilised the 'emptiness' of the plate in the story in a creative way. The social communication difficulties experienced by ASD individuals make negotiating through the 'unwritten' rules of relationships difficult.

4.2 Analysis of the narratives
4.2.1 Labov Criteria

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The analysis undertaken using Labov's criteria illustrated that the participants did have difficulties in construction of ORT stories, with many of the stories not containing all six elements Labov recommends as being required to be present in a narrative. The 'evaluation' element proved the most problematic and more likely to be omitted from the stories. Labov and Waletzky (1967) argue that what the narrator states in the 'evaluation' clause of a narrative is a reflection of how they want to be understood and the point they are trying to make. Culler (1980, 1981) and Toolan (1988) argued that the evaluation clause allows the teller to stand back from the action in the story and illustrates how they have chosen to interpret it. Attantucci (1991) emphasised the importance of the evaluation element in a story by stating, "The evaluation infuses the account with value and meaning" (p323). A number of the stories lacked a full evaluation and were more a description of the plates than an interpretation. Several of the participants required prompts to provide emotional content or to provide the focus of the story.

These results are similar to those found by Beaumont and Newcombe (2006), namely that on a narrative task, participants with AS were less inclined to provide explanation for characters' mental states than matched controls, yet provided the same level of explanations for non-mental state phenomena, such as the characters' actions. In a similar way, Losh and Capps (2006) found that adolescents with ASD performed similarly to typically developing children on a story-telling task. However, the ASD children were less likely to draw on personal experiences within their narratives. They reported that these results were associated with lower scores on measures of social understanding than on verbal IQ. The stories in response to the ORT plates illustrate similar patterns, with a lack of emotional content linked to the characters' actions and resulting consequences.

A number of participants also had difficulties including Labov's coda element (the ending). Participants B and C had particular difficulties in including codas in their stories. During the assessment sessions, these participants would often complete a story without always clearly indicating this verbally or non-verbally. In contrast, participants A and D used the phrases "that's it"; "the end" and "they all lived happily ever after" to indicate the completion of several stories. These results may reflect how individuals with ASD often experience difficulties with the awareness of the need to modify conversational style for a listener, including topic maintenance, seeking clarification, and topic switching in addition to indicating the ending of an interaction (Attwood, 1998; Stoddart, 2005).

4.2.2 Miles and Huberman Analysis
The Miles and Huberman narrative analysis demonstrated that overall each of the participants was able to produce some stories that reflected possible relationships between the characters. The majority of the stories were not developed beyond a basic interaction and some stories were mere descriptions of the plates (participant B's stories in particular). These factors and the short nature of the stories made the analysis problematic. Despite this there were a number of different patterns identified in the narratives. There was a relative lack of emotional words in contrast to the overall context of the stories. A wide variety of themes, situations and relationships were present with a number of the stories appeared to reflect the 'tasks of

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adolescence' e.g. less dependence on parents, renegotiating the place in family while coping with increased conflict with parents and developing more mature or intimate relationships with peers (Carr, 1999; Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 1991).

The stories did include a reasonable variety of subject matter and differing aspects of relationships. This included both successful and conflictual relationships. There is a wealth of literature on the difficulties that ASD individuals have with social relations (Attwood, 1998; Stoddart, 2005).   Previous research by Waldinger et al (2002) examined the narratives about relationships for a group of adolescents aged fourteen and then again at eighteen years. They found the group described others as more rejecting and were more likely to view the self in opposition to others. At aged eighteen the narratives contained a broader range of themes about relationships. Korobov and Throne (2007) have examined the narratives of 64 adolescents about relationships. They found that narratives about romantic problems were four times more prevalent than non-romantic problems. Relationship instability was the most frequent type of romantic problem. However they also found that the romantic problems were conveyed in the narrative in a detached, relaxed or uncaring stance. They concluded that though adolescents were concerned about relationships they wanted to appear to have little emotional investment in these relationships. Similar themes are present in a number of the participants stories e.g. participant A story A2; participant B story A2; participant C, B3; participant D, B3 C2; participant E A2, B3. It could be argued that though the participants' stories do reflect relationship difficulties, they do so in a similar detached manner to other adolescents' stories analysed by Korobov and Thorne (2007).

4.3 Findings in relation to other ORT Research

4.3.1 Stimulus Variance
Phillipson (1973) introduced the concept of 'stimulus variance' to describe the omission or inclusion of characters not present in the ORT plates (e.g. a story containing three people in response to a plate that contains two figures), providing the examiner with key information about the person. This may include the avoidance of perceived threatening situations or unconscious wishes or desires to be part of a group. Shaw (2002) compiled the results of previously published ORT material and clinical notes taken at the ORT Institute for the inclusion or exclusion of figures in stories. He produced set of estimated likelihoods for the stimulus variance (Appendix 27).

Examining the results of the stimulus variance showed a considerable deviation from Shaw's results. In the current study plates A1, A3, B1, B3, C1, C2 and C3 all differed from Shaw's estimates (Appendix 27). The difficulties the participants' had with including the correct number of characters was illustrated in the stories that featured lone figures (A1, B1 and C1) or had a clear separation of a character from a group (BG). For the single person plates the majority of the participants' stories included at least one other figure. The inclusion of extra characters in the stories is unusual in response to these plates. Compared to Shaw's (2002) estimated likelihoods for the inclusion of extra characters in one-person plates is A1 = 20%; B1 = 11% and C1 =1%. this is compared to 80% for A1, 60% for B1 and 60% for C1, found in this study. Shaw (2002) states that the inclusion of extra characters may reflect a fear or

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anxiety about being alone. This is in contrast to what is often reported for people with ASD, namely that they prefer being alone (Attwood, 1998; Stoddart, 2005). This finding may reflect Phillipson's theory of the dynamic congruence between how a person responds to the plates and how they wish to function in their object-relations with others. If this is correct it may suggest that the participants recognised the loneliness of the lone characters via their own experiences and thus may have wanted to avoid being in the alone position.

Plate C1 provided the highest level of variance, with four out of the five participants failing to utilise the lone figure in the window. The participants' stories focused more on the room itself and ignored the figure at the window. The result replicated to some extent a study of 40 adolescent girls aged 14-19 by O'Kelly (1955). O'Kelly reported the majority of responses did not include the human figure outside the window on plate C1. It appeared that the participants tended to focus on the contents of the room.

Given that the results of this study are taken from a very small sample, they should be viewed with caution. However, the results do demonstrate a much greater range of variance than predicted. Rimland (1964) described children with ASD having a 'molecular perception', in that they appear to apprehend stimuli but do not actually comprehend or understand them accurately. Thus, people with ASD can focus on minor details and fail to take in the whole of a stimulus or social situation. If this perception occurred during when constructing the stories then it could in part account for the results.

4.4 Object Relations
4.4.1 Object Relations Theory
From an object-relations perspective, Sullivan (1953) emphasised the important and fundamental nature that affect (emotional expression) plays in building representations of the self and others. A person needs to have accurate understanding and an ability to use affect in interactions. If difficulties with affect occur in social interactions, this can induce the avoidance of interpersonal anxiety by withdrawing from others. The difficulties the participants had in referencing affects in this study did appear to limit the scope and interactions between the characters in the stories.

Alvarez (1992) recognised that early object relations theories on autism used defences and resistance processes too readily, such as Tustin's (1981) 'Autistic Shell'. She states that rather than viewing autism as a defence mechanism for ASD individuals the lack of ability to provide a narrative of their experiences may hamper the formation of advanced ideas on the "the inner emotional world of object-relations" (p.94). Alvarez (1999) states that autistic people can both view others and experience them as physical objects. This may relate to physiognomic perception (when perceiving inanimate things as people or having human characteristics) the opposite of which may be occurring in autism. Alvarez examined the triad of impairments from an object relations perspective. She argues there may be a lack of theory of mind but also a deficit in the theory of person, of others and in the self. Alvarez states, "the self is in an emotional, dynamic relationship to internal representations, figures and objects however skewed, deficient or odd these relations may be" (Alvarez, 1999, p.54). This skewed perception may prevent the ASD individual from fully understanding others'

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feelings and intentions. Alvarez (1992) has also argued that people with ASD have a failure in projective identification with others that impairs their object relations. The lack of structure and flow in many of the stories underlines the difficulties that the participants may have in the expression of how others may feel and highlights the difficulties in negotiating the interpersonal world.

Alternatively, Hobson (1993) describes how ASD individuals often struggle with integrating fully two distinct modes of information processing, the 'I-It' (to understand things/objects) and the 'I-Thou' (for understanding people). According to Hobson the ability to utilise this mode of information processing skills usually coalesces in early childhood. These skills are required for the development of TOM, which can aid the person's ability to use symbols in social interactions. The failure or only part integration of these two processes in ASD children leaves them unable to develop the full sense of self. In addition, this can affect the development of the linguistic and social skills required for successful social interactions. Hobson argues that the relative failure to develop the, I-Thou information processing skills means that ASD children are "profoundly limited in their capacity for and experience of personal relatedness" (p.194). In addition, Hobson argues that ASD children fail to experience "interpersonal relations as interpersonal" (p.195). Thus psychological connection with others is often poorly developed even though the level of impairment is not uniform in people with ASD. This distortion can inhibit the person's ability to describe their experiences in interpersonal terms. If correct then ASD individuals would have a limited ability to complete story-telling assessments such as the ORT or TAT.

4.4.2 Difficulties with object relations
In object relations terms, Klein (1952) saw all experience as the interplay between internal and external reality. Object relations are thus a product of both internal desires and the perceptions of others and the product of learning from external relationships. This process occurs via 'projection' of innate and acquired feelings and images into others and introjection, which is the incorporating of attributes, attitudes or qualities of highly significant persons into oneself. As people with ASD have difficulties with social awareness and interpersonal perception, the observation of behaviour can be skewed and inaccurate. Thus, the learning process of what is introjected by the person may be compromised. People with ASD can have difficulties with imitation, which is an important element in learning social skills and may interfere with the projection and introjection process. People with ASD can also be inflexible (Ehlers et al, 1999; Myles et al, 2001) in their interactions with others and find it difficult to change their perceptions or engage in the to and fro of reciprocal interactions. They may attend to different stimuli in a social environment and derive different meanings from them than are ascribed by the majority of others. Thus for people with ASD the communication aspects of relationships may be poor, whilst 'speech' may be well developed and appear more able that they actually are in dealing with social situations.

4.5. Comparison with other ORT Research
4.5.1 Research with Adolescents
The narrative analysis also illustrated that the participants have similar concerns about relationships as other adolescents. Coleman et al (1970) conducted a study among adolescents using the ORT that examined developments in the perception of

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interpersonal relationships. The study compared responses to ORT cards between three age groups (twelve, fourteen and seventeen year olds). When the results of this study are compared to Coleman at al's study they suggest that the participants have similar concerns and thoughts about interpersonal relationships as their peers, though these may not be articulated fully. The stories reflect the exploratory nature of adolescent relationship with a basic awareness of the difficulties that can occur in relationships. Themes of conflict present in the three person plates. The stories in this study illustrate both close similarities and important differences compared to the stories of the twelve and fourteen year olds from the research by Coleman et al, which bear closer examination.

Single person plates
Coleman et al found the majority of older adolescent participants stories for the one person plates featured characters in 'constructive reflection', in comparison to twelve year olds, whose stories tended to concern the person as alone or waiting for others. In the current study, only one story referenced personal reflection (participant A for plate A1). The other stories in this study referenced meetings with a second character, or waiting to meet others as was found by Coleman et al. The responses to plate B1 were similar to the twelve and fourteen year olds from the Coleman sample. These stories referenced murder or being robbed.

Two Person Plates
In Coleman et al's study the majority of the stories for the two person plates contained young or adolescent characters. In contrast, the majority of stories in the current study refer to adult characters. Coleman et al argued that the stories that use the tree in plate B2 as shelter are unconsciously linked to dependent relationships with authority figures. In participants A, B, C and E's stories all the characters use the tree for shelter. It could also be argued that the use of the tree as shelter in this study comes from a literal interpretation of its apparent function as depicted in the plate. ASD individuals can interpret different situations in a concrete and literal way due to the difficulties with thinking flexibly (Attwood, 1998). What is also interesting is that participants A and E criticise the characters using the tree for shelter due to the threat from possible lightning strikes. These stories may also reflect the participants attempting to reject dependent relationships, and reflect the individuation and moving away from these relationships that occurs in adolescence (Stoddart, 2005).

Three person plates
In Coleman et al's study the stories in response to plate A3 included two main themes: one person in conflict with two others and a group of three in co-operation, which were the most frequently used by fourteen and seventeen year olds. These themes are present in the stories provided by participants A, B, D and E. This also demonstrates that the participants have similar worries and concerns as their peers about relationship difficulties. For plate B3, the participants in the current study produced stories with differing themes from those produced by Coleman. Only participant A's story was similar to Coleman et al's group of a child watching adults.

Group Plates

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The group plates proved the most revealing set of stories and in particular those responses given to plate BG. These stories may have produced the best reflection of the experiences the participants have had in their relationships with others. For plate BG four of the participants (A, B, C and E) recognised the separateness of the lone figure and utilised themes of the individual either voluntarily withdrawing from the group or being excluded by the group in their stories. This was the most common type of story present in Coleman et al's study.

Both Participant A and B included stories for plate BG in which the main character is separate from the main group by choice. This is a not uncommon experience for ASD individuals, who prefer to be alone or interact with one person at a time (Attwood, 1998; Mishna & Muskat, 1998). Participant B's story had the lone male character "thinking about the castle and the history of it". The story does not include any mention of the possible emotional impact of their dislike of groups.

Participant E's story utilised plate BG to illustrate a different aspect of relationships that can also be an issue for people with ASD. The lone character was "left out and unwanted" and wanted the group to ask him to join them. However, the lone character was not described as making any effort to form relations with others. This again may reflect the lack of social skills individuals with ASD have as they may be unable to follow the 'un written rules' of social interactions and friendships and become isolated and even bullied (Attwood, 1998; Klin & Volkmar 2000). Only participant C's story had the lone character successfully making friends with the group.

Participants A, B and D's stories for plate CG reflected similar themes as Coleman's group, which included the group expressing anger towards the lone authority figure or the groups engaged in mob behaviour. These themes perhaps reflect the move toward increasing individuality in relation to the family unit, which is a traditional developmental stage of adolescence (Bolick, 2001; McGoldrick & Carter, 1982).

4.6 Difficulties with the clinical utility of using the ORT with ASD individuals
A major factor in conducting this study was to explore if the ORT would provide a clinically useful tool in assessing the social interaction difficulties experienced in relationships that is common for many ASD individuals. Examining the results of the story analysis would suggest that the ORT is not currently a useful clinical tool with the ASD population. The Phillipson (1955) analysis demonstrated the participants provided very short stories, there was a lack of emotional words and there was little development of the interactions between the characters. This is despite what would appear to be a relatively simple task of telling a story based on a visual cue, which is usually an area of strength for ASD individuals. As stated in the method section all the participants attended mainstream school and received no additional educational support. It could therefore be reasonably expected that the participants could complete the ORT task.

A number of different factors do appear to have significant impact on the participants' ability to complete the story telling task of the ORT fully. Firstly, the difficulties that stem from the triad of impairments i.e. problems with social communication, difficulties with flexibility of thought and imagination and social interactions, will be

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considered. Secondly, other factors and theories that may explain the limited ability of ASD individuals to fully use the ORT plates (executive functioning, thematisation and intersubjectivity) will also be explored. Finally the administration, scoring and interpretation of the results the ORT stories and how this affects the clinical utility will briefly be examined.

4.6.1 Social Communication Difficulties
4.6.1.1 Language Deficits

It is possible that the difficulties in producing stories for the ORT plates could result from language deficits. Wetherell et al (2007) found that adolescents with specific language impairments (SLI) were poorer on a story telling task compared to peers without an SLI. Though language deficits are a key element in the diagnostic criteria for ASD, Koning and Magill-Evans (2001) have stated, "The precise nature of language deficits in autistic spectrum disorders is poorly defined in the literature". (p 23). Szatmari et al (2003) have outlined a broad range of deficits within the language skills of ASD children rather than a condensed set of difficulties. These deficits can range from subtle difficulties with syntax and grammar through to significant weakness with higher-level language skills such as figurative language, humour and sarcasm. Therefore both receptive and expressive language difficulties may have affected story production. The author did not have access to any speech and language assessments and it is not possible to exclude these factors from affecting the results.

4.6.1.2 Story Production

Tager-Flusberg and Sullivan (1995) compared adolescents with ASD, learning disabilities (LD) and typically developing children and found no group difference in narrative length, but found that children and adolescents with ASD and LD carried fewer emotion related responses to questions about their stories. In particular, children with autism had difficulties explaining the emotional states of their characters. Dennis et al (2001) examined the understanding of mental state verbs in HFA adolescents compared to typically developing children. They found that HFA children could understand mental state verbs in isolation but performed poorly at inferring mental states in real life context. The HFA group were also poorer than the contrast group in their ability to make inferences from social scripts of interactions of characters. The relative lack of emotional state words in the participants' stories may reflect the difficulties adolescents with ASD have with attributing mental states to the actions of their characters.

Pearlman-Avnion and Eviatar (2002) found that when discussing emotional elements of their stories, ASD children performed worse than children with Williams Syndrome and a group of matched controls. Thus even if the structural aspects of storytelling may be intact, difficulties may remain in the inclusion of the emotional and imaginative aspects of story production. The results of the Labov (1972) analysis showed that the participants did have some problems with the structural elements of the stories as well as the inclusion of emotional and imaginative parts of the stories.

Individuals with an ASD may react to emotional situations in inappropriate ways e.g. laugh or cry out of context but not actually find the situation funny or sad (Burke, 2003). The range of difficulties encountered may include a person not fully

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understanding specific emotions in others, though they may understand emotions by themselves when removed from real world contexts. Thus ASD individuals may resort to stating what others are doing and not what they are feeling. This may explain to some degree the lack of emotional words used and reliance on description in the stories. The participants did appear to find it difficult to fully assign emotional states to the characters. The analysis also demonstrated the participants' difficulties with including emotional content in the stories. The approaches taken varied among the participants with respect to how emotional content was introduced. Participant B only directly (unprompted) mentioned one emotional state (sadness). In comparison both participants A and C introduced a wider range of emotional states such as fear, sadness, anger and happiness into their stories in what appeared a much more natural manner. Participant A included the most notable emotional content throughout the set of thirteen stories, with more mixed emotional consequences for the characters. Participant D's stories contained fewer emotional statements despite these containing numerous 'extreme' or 'conflictual' situations. This may reflect the use of films, cartoons and TV programme as the basis of the stories. Participant E's stories appeared to contain a consistent theme of resignation and despair about relationships.

4.6.2 Difficulties with imagination

Problems with imagination may also have affected the participants' ability to produce coherent narratives. On a story-telling task, Craig and Baron-Cohen (2000) found that children with ASD produced more imaginative narratives than children with autism. However, they produced less imaginative narratives compared to both normally developing and children with mild learning disabilities. The participants in this study all attended mainstream schools, and did not receive any additional educational support, yet they performed poorly in terms of imaginative elements within the stories.

4.6.3 Difficulties with Social Interaction

Overall, the participants did construct stories that reflected human relationships. However the level of interaction between the characters within the stories varied considerably between the five participants. According to Phillipson's theory, how a person responds to the plates reflects a 'dynamic congruence' between how they act in relationships with others and the individual stories. Thus, the stories will reflect each participant's own experiences and perceptions. If this process did occur during story construction then it appears that the participants would struggle in their relationships with others. A number of the stories were incomplete and lacked emotional content and depth. This may be a reflection of the personal experiences of the participants as they were all attending a social skills group and all had experienced difficulties with their peers and parents. As previously discussed people with ASD can experience difficulties with social relationships that stem from the 'triad of impairments'. This includes difficulties with accurate understanding of both verbal (sarcasm, irony, literal understanding) and non-verbal (body language and facial expression) social cues. The difficulties in being able to infer others' emotional states impair the person's ability to interact and understand fully how others act, and can also affect how the person learns from others via introjection. Some of these issues are discussed below.

Given the age and stage of development of the participants, they may have lacked the emotional maturity and/or the vocabulary to articulate these feelings fully. One of the

major developmental tasks of adolescence is individuation, relying less on parental direction and establishing closer ties with peers and identifying with youth culture (Holmbeck, 1996; McGoldrick & Carter, 1982). ASD individuals may not share these interests and engage in activities that are solitary in nature, which increases social isolation. This is also a time when ASD adolescents begin to become aware of the differences between themselves and peers (Stoddart, 2005). If social isolation does occur then aspects of social and personal development can be restricted. Adolescents learn about more intimate and complex relationships at this time and social isolation and lack of skills may deny ASD adolescents these experiences (Attwood, 1998). This difficulty may be reflected in the relative lack of fully rounded relationships between the characters in the stories.

The participants also included stories that appear to view physical fighting as the way to get what you want from others. Participants A, B, D and E all included stories of physical fights between adults, between children and between adults and children. This may reflect the fact that three of the participants providing the stories were adolescent males. In Hall's (1904) classic paper adolescence is a time of 'storm and stress'. This stage of development is often accompanied by increased aggression that may be linked to a sense of identity (Hayes, 1998; Sorenson; 1973). Within these stories little consideration was given to the emotional reactions of the victim.

Klin et al, (2005) have discussed how individuals with autism appear to learn about people in a way that departs from 'normal' processes. They found that ASD individuals with good cognitive IQ levels can display total cognitive understanding of situations in logical tests of TOM, but fail to use these skills in 'everyday' interactions. Often there is a lack of generalising learnt social skills to different situations and people. A higher level of conscious effort can often be required by ASD individuals to adapt to differing demands (Atwood, 1998). Loveland and Tunali-Kotoshi (2005) discuss how many of the emotional experiences of individuals with AS can be confusing, difficult and can lead to depression. This can stem not only from deficits in social skills, but also from a lack of ability to describe accurately their own feelings to others. Again the lack of clarity in the participants' stories reflects this difficulty. However, the relationship between the ability to describe these and the understanding of mental states is not straightforward (Baron-Cohen & Staunton, 1994; Baron-Cohen and Tager-Flusberg, 1993).

4.6.4 The Participants
Given the difficulties with social interactions and communication found in ASD individuals, it is possible that those who would be willing to participate in this type of research study may be a unique group. The assessment format required interaction and the introduction of a novel task and it might be expected that this type of situation could provoke anxiety for the participants. The sample group may represent people with ASD who are more motivated or have more insight into their difficulties. This group may have more tolerance for their anxiety than those who would feel unable to participate or may have developed specific strategies to cope with their anxiety. The participants were attending a group dealing with issues of friendships and social understanding. However, as these problems have been identified as common in those

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people with ASD this has been accepted as a feature of the results. Due to the limits of confidentiality, it was not known if any of the participants were either currently receiving treatment for any mental health problems or had done so in the past. No attempts were made to control for depression or other possible co-morbid difficulties, which may add a confounding variable into the results

4.6.5 Difficulties with Executive Functioning

A possible explanation for difficulties in story production comes from research into executive functioning deficits found in ASD individuals. Turner (1999) found that ASD participants were impaired on tasks involving the generation of ideas from little or no cues, compared to matched controls with a learning disability. Turner describes how when ASD children are asked to go beyond their stored knowledge to formulate new or novel idea or interpretation, many are impaired. He argues that the inability of many individuals with ASD to generate novel responses is often assessed as a lack of fluency (Lezak, 1995). Bailey et al (1996) and Harris (1993) have linked the lack of spontaneity often found in individuals with ASD to the difficulties in generating new ideas. Both the failure to engage in pretence (Baron-Cohen, 1987) and the poverty of speech (Dykens et al, 1991; Rumsey, et al, 1985) have also been linked to this difficulty.

4.6.6 Thematisation

Kumar (2001) discusses how autistic children have difficulties in originating internal themes. He refers to the phenomenological process of 'thematisation'. Thematisation theory suggests that unconsciously generated internal themes are used to build up the skills required to share and understand how an individual's own themes may differ from other people's, which is similar to problems with TOM. Kumar suggests that the themes that children with ASD do generate are often more concrete, have a narrower content and often focus on a single aspect of a theme. This may interfere with a person with ASD being able to generate themes for ORT stories.

4.6.7 Scoring of the ORT

To fully explore the data fully either Phillipson's original system or Shaw's (2002) update need to be utilised. Each system requires a considerable level of analysis to produce results and the shorter narratives in this study are more problematic to analyse. If the results of this study were representative of people with ASD then it would suggest that short stories were likely to be produced, making the analysis problematic. This position may reduce the clinical usefulness of the ORT with this population.

A further potential difficultly with clinical utility of using the ORT with ASD individuals arises from a different aspect of scoring ORT responses. Phillipson (1955) devised a scoring system that describes a person's object-relations. He termed these 'A' and 'B' Systems (Appendix 28). Each system has nine elements and Phillipson rated which system a person fitted into from the relationships described in their ORT stories. Phillipson argues that a person whose stories fall into the 'A system' seek to make and maintain an appropriate range of interactions with people. In contrast a person rated as falling into the 'B' System is quite the opposite. They are

characterised as being relatively closed to others, with the person avoiding relationships, or they seek to make or maintain more one-sided relationships in which they have control, leading to poor social experiences. Phillipson argued that the majority of the stories of any participant will fall into either system and be representative of how they conduct their own object relations in everyday life.

Examining the stories of all the participants using these systems would place all of the participants into the B system. In particular elements five, eight and nine of Phillipson's B system are reflected within the majority of the participants' stories. As has been stated previously, many of the stories lack emotional connections between the characters (as stated in observation nine). In addition there was a bias towards the more negative emotional states within the stories. Phillipson (1973) stated that though a person may not exhibit all the qualities in either system a dominant mode of object relations would be present. To some extent the B system could be viewed as a crude approximation and description of ASD individuals and their social difficulties. Given this possibility it is likely that any ORT analysis for individuals with ASD that would always be scored as falling within the B system. The presumption is that an ASD individuals relationships are always deficient and that they seek one sided relationship with just a few people. However this does not reflect the fact that many individuals with ASD do form friendships and sexual relationships (Attwood, 1998; Stoddart, 2005).

The theoretical basis for object relations does assume that a person has the capacity for understanding others and not impeded by the difficulties arsing from the triad of impairments. Therefore assumptions made about an ASD individuals object-relations need to reflect the effects of the triad or impairments has on each ASD individual as not all are affected in the same way.

4.6.8. Administration of the ORT
Conducting the current study highlighted some of the issues that can occur during the administration of projective assessments with populations whose cognitive processes and social skills may be poor or not fully developed (Jura and Sigman, 1985; Panek, 1977, 1997). Panek (1977) has previously described a lack of guidelines for possible adaptations to the administration of projective assessments for people with learning disabilities or other social communication disorders, without reducing the reliability and validity of the tests results. This raises two areas for further exploration, firstly the administration and instructions given to participants and secondly the interpretation of the responses within the context of the disability or deficit. Jura and Sigman (1985) have discussed the need for flexibility in the administration of projective tests with learning disabled and autistic children. They argue that allowing the examiner some flexibility from the prescribed delivery of the instructions will enable the researcher to "unravel a multitude of intellectual, neurological and personality factors" (p245), without reducing the validity of the responses. Administering the ORT did highlight the fact that despite the relatively simple task of telling a story for each plate, the instructions may not have been fully understood by the participants. Though the author did confirm the participants' understanding verbally, they may not have fully grasped the concept of the task. There is a need for research into the type of variations to instructions that could optimise responses from individuals with ASD.

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4.6.9. Interpretation of Results

The interpretation of projective assessment results for ASD individuals can be complicated as it is possible that a number of cognitive issues such as language skills and perceptual difficulties often found in ASD individuals may affect responses. In addition, if projective assessments are employed as a diagnostic tool then the assumptions made may be based on different populations. Jura and Sigman (1985) have reported that Rorschach protocols for the ASD children were characterised as being "vague or concrete", (p.239). The descriptive nature of a number of the participants' stories in this study could also be viewed as being vague and concrete.

An example of the difficulties encountered with the interpretation of the stories is illustrated by one of the stories for the Blank plate produced by participant D. Participant D was the only one who placed himself within the stories. This story included the author within the narrative and details a fight between participant D and the author. The author wins the fight but before dying participant D hits a button to blow up the world. From a psychodynamic theory perspective, this could be interpreted as a defence against the participant's fear of being annihilated by the examiner (Alvarez, 1992). Kissen (1986) has stated that it is possible that by addressing the assessor/therapist within a story content the respondent is offering a challenge to a perceived authoritarian figure. In this case, this interpretation should be viewed with caution, as the inclusion of the author in the story may have been influenced by the author asking the participant not to use film or television programmes as the basis of the stories.

4.6.10 Possible utility of the ORT with ASD individuals

Despite the difficulties noted above with story construction and the Phillipson scoring criteria, the narrative analysis conducted on the participants' stories did reveal some potentially interesting results, suggesting that the ORT may prove useful as an informal assessment tool for ASD individuals. The participants' stories did reflect similar concerns to same age peers e.g. different aspects of friendships, relationships with parental and adult figures. As stated above ASD individuals often find it difficult to understand and articulate the difficulties they encounter in social relationships. Despite the participants struggling to construct and elaborate on their stories and include emotional content they did include themes that are relevant to being an adolescent and having ASD. The ORT did appear to help uncover feelings, beliefs and experiences of relationships which the participants had previously struggled and which individuals may find it difficult to articulate from direct questioning. Participant E stated that one character felt left out and alone, and participants B, C and E also included similar themes. This fits with Phillipson's (1955) recommendation that the therapist can use the stories to explore the difficulties and positive aspects of respondents' relationships. If barriers have arisen in discussing difficulties with others then using the ORT stories could allow for the exploration of the themes in an indirect way.

Many individuals with ASD have difficulties with perfectionism or getting something wrong (Attwood, 2003) At the beginning of the ORT assessment the therapist reassures the individual that they are free to interpret and respond to the ORT plates

how they wish and there and no right or wrong stories, just that they contain the beginning, middle and end parts. This instruction did appear to relax the participants and it is hoped that it would also relax other ASD individuals who could worry about providing a correct response.

Finally, though not part of this study the author showed the participants' stories blind to clinicians who had worked with the children as part of the social skills group and individually and who knew more of the personal histories of the individuals. The four clinicians were able to identify the children with a high degree of accuracy. They also were able to identify stories that reflected the participants' experiences e.g. participant D's difficulties with his step-father and participant E's difficulties with isolation and a lack of friends. As the author did not have access to this information and was only working within the social skills groups these themes could not be further explored. These results did illustrate that the participants' stories did reflect their own experiences of relationships. As stated above the participants' stories did reflect similar themes to other adolescents.   When reviewing the stories with ASD individuals the therapist can highlight that they share similar concerns and worries as other peers. The normalising of the social interaction difficulties and being able to illustrate how ASD affects the individuals could help with the introduction of social skills work by therapists.

4.7 Limitations of study
The results need to be considered in relation to the limitations of this study. Firstly, it must be remembered that like many early psychoanalytic theories, object relations and the projective assessment premises have been developed within a western, mainly white, European cultural context. This introduces biases for its philosophical foundations. It does not claim to represent all human relationships beyond this context. As discussed above there remains a considerable debate about the utility of object relations theories and the usefulness of projective assessments. The results and conclusions drawn from this study have to be considered within this context.

Secondly, the sample group was small, which reduces the extent to which the findings can be generalised to other adolescents with ASD. The author was unable to find another study with suitable comparison data for other adolescents or children with ASD. Although the study did not collect comparison data, the findings were examined in relation to Phillipson's (1953) original results and the results of other published studies. However, none of the normative data used included any participants with a diagnosis of ASD.

The comparison groups used from Shaw's (2002) study could have provided a systematic method to examine the responses given and to allow some different comparisons. However this form of analysis did not fit with the narrative analysis elements of this study. Dr Shaw (personal correspondence, May 2006) confirmed that no study has been published using the ORT with ASD participants. This means that the present research though innovative it is also exploratory and experimental in nature.

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In addition, as the ORT has not been used with participants with ASD previously, there is little information on the possible effects of any difficulties with TOM (Baron-Cohen et al, 1985) abilities on the production of stories. It was not possible to assess this prior to the assessments. Following consultation with Dr Shaw (personal correspondence, May 2006) the participants had been operationally assumed to have intact TOM skills. This is a large assumption and one that may undermine the results.

A further limitation is the use of a convenience sample. No screening procedures were employed prior to the assessments taking place. It was not possible to incorporate other information about the participants such as IQ level. As all the participants attended mainstream schools and did not receive any special educational support it had been assumed that none of the participants had a learning disability. Thus they had been operationalised as fitting into the criteria prescribed by Phillipson (1955) as being suitable to administer the ORT to them.

A final limitation concerns the scoring of projective assessments. When scoring the stories part of this process is down to the examiner's reactions and understanding of the stories produced. It was not possible to have the interviews videoed or to have the secondary raters present, so the inter-rater reliability measures are only taken from the transcripts of the interviews. Though each rating was based on the transcripts this does not rule out the possibility that the author's familiarity and experience of the assessment process with the participants may have influenced the ratings in some way. The element of context and intonation could not be fully captured in the transcripts and may have accounted for some of the variations. .

4.8 Future Research

In order to more fully explore the possible use of the ORT with ASD individuals, further studies would need to be undertaken. These should expand on the rather experimental nature of this study and build on the issues raised. This would require a much larger clinical sample recruited through NHS services, which should include participants with a wide range of social and communication disorders. As a starting point a larger sample would increase the underlying database for the responses that may be found. The building of the research base would allow for more accurate comparisons of the different aspects of the ORT, such as the Stimulus Variance for ASD individuals. The large amount of variation found in this study would benefit from a larger database to examine if this pattern would be repeated and consistent within this population. In addition further ORT research with ASD individuals may add valuable information about ORT story telling abilities

A study fully utilising Shaw's (2002) updated scoring criteria could also be considered in any further study. This could allow for a further comparison in the use of affects (emotions), identify any possible bias towards male or female, mother father etc type characters and the actions of the characters with other previously published research with non ASD populations. Shaw's analysis is more systematic than Phillipson's (1955) criteria and may be more clinically useful for individuals with ASD who may undertake psychodynamic therapy.

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5. Conclusion

As shown in the discussion this study has raised a number of issues that do appear to cast doubt on the clinical utility of using the ORT with individuals with ASD. The features of the triad of impairments (deficits in social communication, imagination and social relationships) do appear to impair the participants' ability to provide stories containing emotional connections between the characters. The lack of emotional content is reflective of the difficulties individuals with ASD have with interpersonal relations and fully articulating their needs and wants.

The possible effects of TOM difficulties may further reduce the usefulness of the ORT. The difficulties in analysing the stories coupled with the time required to undertake the analysis may also cast doubt on the choice of the ORT.

On the positive side the narrative analysis illustrated the fact that the participants' stories reflect similar concerns and issues as their peers (relationships, separation from family) that have been found in previous ORT research with non-ASD populations. However, the narrative analysis could have been undertaken on other drawings or photographs that show relationships between people and found similar themes. The narrative analysis also illustrated that the participants had difficulties with story construction in basic structural terms as well as with emotional content. Using Phillipson's (1955) personality system would seem to suggest that individuals with ASD would be characterised as being relatively closed to others, with the person avoiding relationships, or they seek to make or maintain more one-sided relationships in which they have control, leading to poor social experiences.

Overall the evidence does suggest the ORT would have a very limited use with individuals with ASD when using Phillipson's criteria. Until future stories are gathered using the ORT to examine if the results found in this study are reflective of other individuals with ASD it is difficult to make a firm conclusion regarding whether the ORT would prove to be a useful clinical tool with this population.

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List of appendices   Pages

Introduction Section

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 1 - DSM-IV Criteria for diagnosis - 299.80 Asperger's disorder

A. Qualitative, impairment in social interaction, as manifested by at least to the following:

    (1) marked impairment in the use of multiple nonverbal behaviours such as eye-to-eye gaze, facial expression, body pastures, and gestures to regulate social interaction

    (2) failure to develop peer relationships appropriate to developmental level

    (3) a lack of spontaneous seeking to share enjoyment, interests, or achievements with other people (for example, by a lack of showing, bringing, or pointing out objects of interest to other people)

    (4) lack of social or emotional reciprocity

B. Restricted, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behaviour, interests, and activities, as manifested by at least one of the following.

    (1) encompassing preoccupation with one or more stereotyped and restricted patterns of interest that is abnormal, either in intensity of focus
    (2) apparently inflexible adhere to specific, non-functional routines or rituals
    (3) stereotyped and repetitive motor mannerisms (for example, hand or finger flapping or twisting, or complex whole body movements)
    (4) persistent preoccupation with parts of objects

C. The disturbance causes clinically significant impairments in social, occupational or other important areas of functioning.

D. There is no clinically significant general delay and language (for example, single word used by each two years, communicative phrases used by aged three years.

E. There is no clinically significant delay in cognitive development or in the development of age appropriate self-help skills, adapted behaviour (other than in social interaction), and curiosity about the environment in childhood.

F. Criteria are not met for another specific pervasive developmental disorder or schizophrenia.

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 2 - ICD-10 Criteria for Autism.

A. Abnormal or empire development is evident before the age of three years . in at least one of the following areas;

(1) ,receptive or expressive language, as used to social communication;
(2), the development of selective social attachments or of reciprocal social interaction;
(3) function or symbolic play.

B. A total of at least six symptoms from (1), (2), and (3), must be present, with at least two from (1), and at least one from each of (2) and (3);

(1) Qualitative abnormalities in reciprocal social interaction are manifest in at least two of the following areas;

(a) failure to make adequate use of eye to eye gaze, facial expression, body posture, and gesture to regulate social interaction;
(b) failure to develop (in a manner, appropriate to mental age, and sharing of interests, activities and emotions.
(c) lack of socio-emotional reciprocity, as shown by impaired or deviant response to other peoples emotions; or lack of modulation of behaviour, according to social context; or, a week integration of social, emotional and communicate behaviours;
(d) lack of spontaneous seeking to share enjoyment, interests or achievements with of people (e.g. lack of social, bringing or pointing out to other people object of interest to the individual).

(2). Qualitative abnormalities in communication are manifest at least one of the following areas:

(a) a delay in, or total lack of, development of spoken language that is *not* accompanied by an attempt to compensate through the use of gesture or nine as an alternative mode of communication (often preceded by a lack of communicative babbling);
(b) rather failure to initiate or sustain conversational interchange (at whatever level of language skills is present), in which there is reciprocal responsiveness to the communications of the other person;
(c) stereotyped repetitive use of language or idiosyncratic use of words or phrases;
(d) lack of varied spontaneous make-believe or (when young) social imitative play

(3). Restricted, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behaviour, interests and activities are manifest in at least one of the following areas:

(a) an encompassing preoccupation with one or more are stereotyped restricted patterns of interest are abnormal in the context or focus; or, what more

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

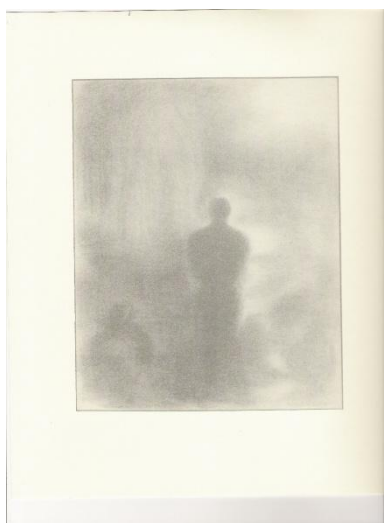interest are abnormal in their intensity and circumscribed nature though not in the content or focus;

(b) apparently compulsive adherence to specific, non-functional routine to rituals;

(b) stereotyped repetitive note mannerisms that involve either hand or finger flapping twisting, or complex whole body movements;

(c) preoccupations with part-objects or non-functional elements of play materials (such as their odour, the feel of their surface, or the noise of vibration that they generate).

C. The total picture is not attributable to all varieties or pervasive development disorders; specific developmental disorders of receptive language, secondary social emotional problems, reactive attachment disorder or distributed attachment disorder; that retardation with some associate it and emotional or behavioural disorder; schizophrenia of unusually early onset and Rett's Syndrome.
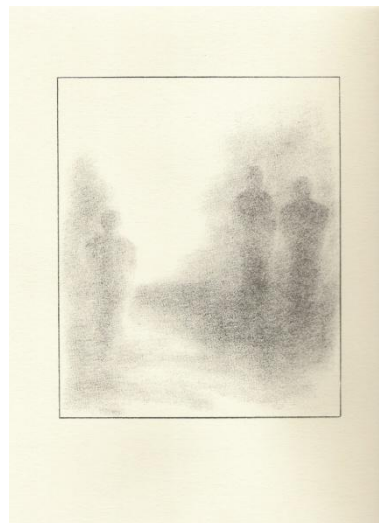
Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships.
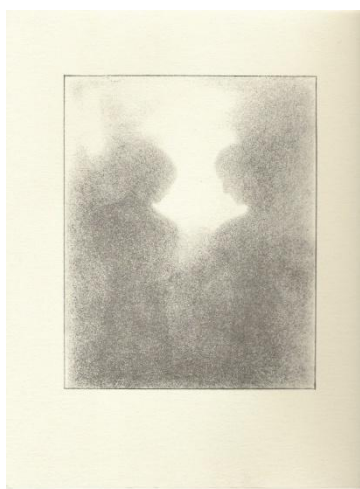
Appendix 3 - A Series ORT Plates
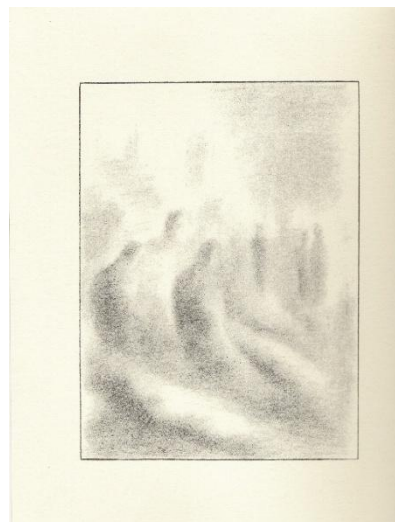
Plate A3 (8)

Plate A1 (1)

Plate A2 (2)

Plate AG (5)

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Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships.

Appendix 3 - ORT B Series Plates

Plate B1 (6)

Plate B3 (4)

Plate B2 (9)

Plate BG (10)

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Appendix 3 C Series ORT Plates

Plate C1 (12)

Plate C3 (3)
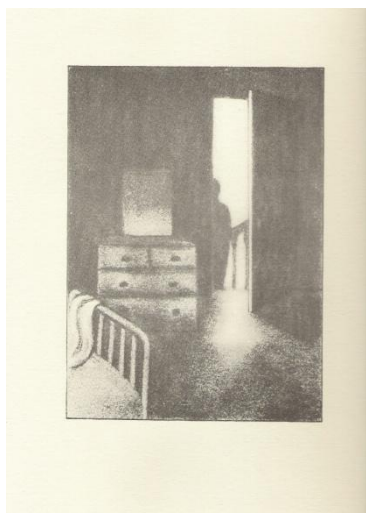

Plate C2 (11)

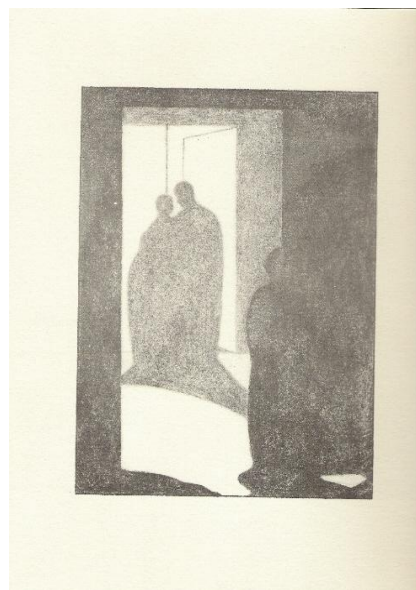### Plate CG (7)

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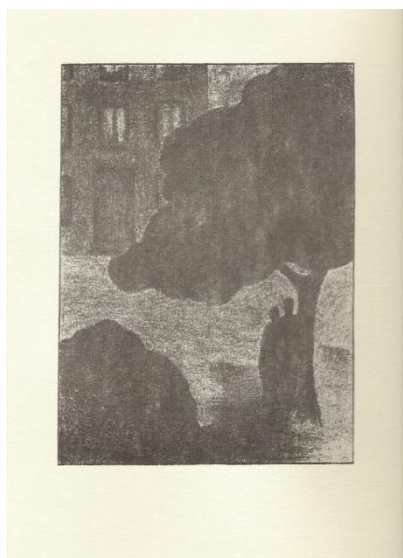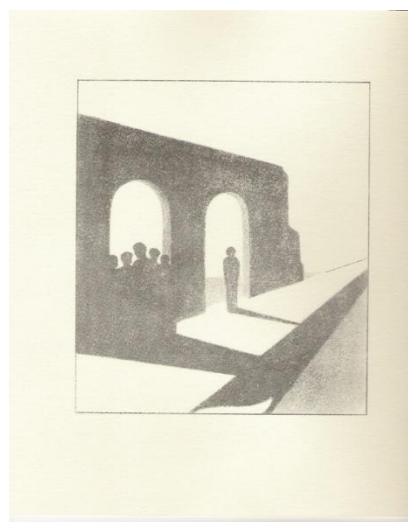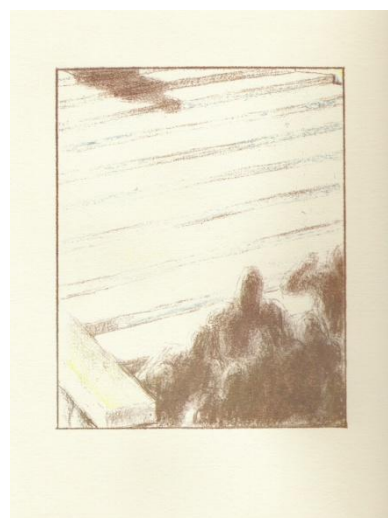Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 4 – Information sheet for parents

<u>HOW DO PEOPLE WITH ASPERGER SYNDROME EXPERIENCE RELATIONSHIPS?</u>

"You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Feel free to ask any questions if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not your child will take part. Thank you for reading this."

<u>**What's the purpose of the study?**</u>
It is often difficult for people with Asperger Syndrome to understand other people and make sense of relationships. They often need support from other people to be able to begin to understand others and relationships, such as the Friendship Group at Southgate Health Centre. I am interested in talking to **<u>between 5 and 10</u>** children diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome between the ages of 11 and 14 to find out about their about their experiences of relationships. In order to do this the assessment to be used is a story telling technique. These stories are generated after viewing some after viewing some pictures. There is no right or wrong way <u>for the children</u> to tell the stories as they are unique to each person. The test may prove help the to become helpful to help the professionals running the group to understand the children taking part in a more detailed way. people working with these children in the future. s running the group to understand the children taking part in a more detailed way.

<u>**Does my child have to take part?**</u>
It is up to you to decide whether or not your child should take part. If you do decide to take hat it is ok for your child to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form and given a copy to keep. If you decide to allow your child to take part initially, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Your child will also have to give consent and can refuse at any time for no reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect your child's place in the social skills group in any way or affect the standard of care your child receives from the team.

<u>**What will happen if our child does take part?**</u>
It is hoped that the testing will be undertaken after the interview with Lonnie Gross (Child Psychotherapist) and the other professionals. If this can not happen then I will arrange an individual meeting with you and your child at a time and a place that is convenient for you. The research will require 60 minutes of your child's time. I will show your child twelve pictures and one blank card. I will show the children the pictures one at a time and they are asked to tell a story about the pictures, that contain a beginning, middle and end. and ask him/her to tell a story about each picture with a beginning, middle and end. These can be as short or as long as they want. It is hoped that this story telling sessions testing will be undertaken following the interview with ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ (Child Psychotherapist) and the other professionals. If this can not happen then I will arrange an individual meeting with you and your child at a time and a place that is convenient for you. The meeting may last up to an hour during which I will show your child twelve pictures and one blank card. I will show the children the pictures one at a time and all they have to do is to tell a story about the pictures with a beginning, middle and end. These can be as short or as long as they want. We might meet at the clinic where your child is seen if that is convenient for you. At this time, you will also have the opportunity to view the pictures for yourself prior to any assessment and ask any questions.

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

What are the possible disadvantages or risks of taking part?
It is very unlikely that there will be any disadvantages to taking part. However, talking to a person your child does not know could be upsetting. It can be decided at the beginning of the interview what should occur in the event that your child does become distressed, i.e. end the interview, or take a break.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?
There are few studies that have examined how children with Asperger Syndrome experience relationships. It is also hoped that undertaking the test will allow those professionals running the friendship group to understand the children's experience off relationships and how they may get on in the friendship group. Taking part in the study will also add to the body of knowledge and research for children with Asperger Syndrome. In addition, it is hoped to understand if this technique could be useful for clinicians to gain an insight children's experience of relationships and how this may influence how the children will get on in therapy situations In addition it is hoped to understand and if this technique is useful for clinicians to use in helping to understand children's experience of relationships and how this may influence how the children will get on in therapy situations.

Will my child's taking part in the study be kept confidential?
All information collected about your child during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. The stories will only be read by the professionals at Southgate Health Centre who run the, friendship group. They are bound by the same rules of confidentiality they work under everyday. No information that could possibly identify individual children will be published in the finished study. The only time information would be shared is if someone is at risk and this would be discussed fully with you first.

What will happen to the results of the study?
When the research project is completed in November 2005, you will be given a report of the results if you would like them. **The results of the study will be written up as part of a professional doctoral qualification**. It is also hoped that the study will be published in a journal. No names will be used in any report.

Who is organising and funding the research?
This research study is being undertaken as the main research project assignment within the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology training programme, as a trainee on this programme I am a NHS employee funded by the University of Hertfordshire

What should I do if I want my child to take part?
If you plan to come with your child to an appointment at the clinic, I will be available to meet with you for a few minutes to answer any questions and to arrange a time for us to meet. If you are unable to attend your child's next appointment or if the next appointment is more than a month away, but you are interested in taking part, please inform the team at the Health Centre and I will call you when you say it is convenient for you. I can then answer any questions you may have and arrange a time for us to meet.

Contact details: ████████ or ████████ c/o, ██████████████████
██████████████ (a message will be taken and someone will get back to you).

Thank you very much for reading this information and for considering taking part in the study.

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Appendix 5 – Information sheet for participants

Information for Young People

I am a trainee Clinical Psychologist and am interested in finding out about young people with Asperger Syndrome's experiences of relationships with others. It is important that those professionals who work with them understand young people's experiences. Having a better understanding of this may help professionals to improve services and meet the needs of young people with Asperger Syndrome.

What will you have to do?

We will need to meet up for an interview. This will be like a chat where I will show you a set of pictures and then ask you to tell me a story based on the pictures, one at a time. These stories do not have to be very long and there is no right or wrong answers. The content of the stories is up to you. In addition, you will have the opportunity to tell me what you think about the pictures and what you thought about the process. We will need to meet up only once for up to one hour, though it should take less time than this. The interviews will take place at either your home or the Health Centre. You can also have your parents or carers present if you want. If you would prefer to meet alone that is also fine.

Do I have to take part?

No, you do not have to take part. Both you and your parents have to give permission for you to take part. You may want to talk about this with your parents. I can arrange to meet you with your parents to answer any questions you may have. If you do decided to take part, you will be asked to sign a form to confirm this. You will also be able to change your mind at a later date, without having to give a reason. The stories will then not be used in the research. Not taking part or withdrawing from the project later will not affect your care from the service in any way.

What will happen after the interviews?

All the interviews will be treated as strictly confidential. I will be using the interview material to write a report based on the stories. The staff at the Health Centre will read the stories when they have been typed up but they will not know whose stories they are reading. Nobody will be identified in the report and nobody who reads the report will know who said what. All of the interviews will be recorded, as the stories need to be transcribed word for word. Only the university staff and myself will have access to the recordings.

Colm Magee

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Appendix 6 – Study Consent Form

Participant identification Number:

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered Children to reveal their experience of relationships.

Name of Researcher: **Colm Magee**

Please initial

box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet
   for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that the participation of my child is voluntary and that they are free to
   withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without the standard of care
   I receive being affected.

3. I agree to take part in the above study.

_____   _____
Name of Participant   Signature

_____   _____
Name of Parent   Signature

_____   _____
Researcher   Signature

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Appendix 7 – Blank Phillipson criteria scoring form (1955)

Story Code: **Participant:**

1. Perception

(a) Human Figures

(b) Reality Content

(c) Emotional Context

2. Apperception
Themes of OR situation: how usual is it? If deviant in what direction?

3. OR content

   (a) What kind of people are seen, omitted introduced? –

   (b) To what extent and how are they differentiated as people? –

   (c) To what extent and in what way is the interaction developed?

4. Story Structure

   (1) Does it meet the task having three parts; where is the omission?

   (2) Is balanced attention give to the parts as required by the instructions? –

   (3) Does the story contain a conflict? -

   (4) Is the build up of the story logical: If not in what way and how illogical is the sequence? –

   (5) Is there emotional content; what kind, and is it integrated into the action of each story? Is it appropriate to the theme of the story?

   (6) Is there any attempt to work through the problem in the story? – None attempted.

   (7) What solution is achieved if any? Is it positive or negative?

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Appendix 8 – ORT Stories – Participant A

1(A1). I see a person and I think it is a man. It looks like he is walking in thick fog and thinking to himself. It could be about his life. He came across a person on the left who is kneeling down and begging. The man avoids him and does not want to talk. He walks for hours and still talks to no one. He likes being like that. He goes home to his own house and feels a bit better.

2 (A2). I think it looks like two friends meeting. Yeah these two women and I think they have not spoken for a while and want to catch up. The talk about a lot but I don't know exactly, maybe that they haven't spoken for ages. They talk about their lives and what they have been doing. They are looking out the window of the pub now but not saying anything. They enjoyed the day and meeting up. I think (pause) I'm not sure that they will meet again. Maybe they will.

3(C3). This looks like a pub. (laughs) Maybe it is a living room though I'm not sure. The people are just sitting there and not talking. Maybe they are too drunk or just don't want too. The person standing up. He (points to figure standing) is off to get drinks. So he gets up to get them and tries to chat up the barmaid. She is bored and does not like him and tries to make him go away and ignores him. He tries again but he's barred and thrown out of pub. He's pissed off he was thrown out of the pub. She's annoyed but glad he is gone.

4(B3). This one is hard. (Pause) The person (points to lone figure) is being sneaky and looking and listening to those two have just got married, going to get changed to go out on their honeymoon. (Pause). Yeah. They kiss and talk but I don't know what about. He (points) wants to hear them say something. The couple see him and are very angry at him. They shout at him and tell him off. It spoils their day. He shouts back and runs away but he is crying as he doesn't like being shouted at, as it hurts him. (I don't like the picture, (Why?) I don't know why, just don't.

5(AG) I know. People sitting in a garden, it looks like they are praying. Mmm (pause). Yeah they are praying while sitting in a garden. Maybe they are thinking about someone they know. They don't go to a church but do believe in god, that's why they are in the garden. They pray for their friend and hope he is ok. They hear that he is ok so they go home.

6(B1). A mum is watching after just putting her child to bed, saying goodnight before she goes to bed as well. The child was sleeping and there's a thunderstorm, which woke her up. She goes downstairs to get a drink but is still afraid of the lightning. So she runs back to bed and hides under the covers. She goes to sleep. That's it, the end.

7(CG). I know what this is. It's a stage and they are the audience. Hold on (pause). Yeah it is an audience but the man on stage (points) is a politician. The people don't like what he says. Like paying more taxes and stuff. Someone shouts out "Bastard". Can I say that? (Yeah). Others join in and want to storm the stage to get him. But his bodyguards get him away. So the people are unhappy and damage the place. They say they won't vote for him again and will protest a lot. The end

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8(A3). Are there three people? (It's up to you.) Ok, I know what's happening. Three boys have had a big argument. Those two (points) I don't know what they are arguing about. Maybe he has betrayed them and he's got off with one of their girlfriends behind his back. He is going to get beaten up. He used to be in their gang but he really pissed them off. He runs away and is chased but they don't get him. He's worried they will get him next time and do not want to go out or to school.

9(B2). (Pause) I know now. These two people are standing under a tree to shelter from the rain. The boy says to the girl, "I would like to live in a big house like that one", as their houses is small. They are stupid cause if the lighting hits the tree they will get electrocuted. They get scared and break into the house. I don't know if they steal stuff. (pause) Yeah they do but feel very guilty about it. They want to return it but know they will be in trouble if they do. They dump it were it will be found by the people. Then they go home.

10(BG). The person outside. I think it's a girl and the others are her classmates. Well she doesn't like being in the group. (Points). She likes to be away from the other girls as they aren't nice and she's quiet. She goes out to the edge sorry, balcony of the hotel to see the dolphins in the sea. She falls over the edge but slips and falls. As the girls don't notice her not being there, so it takes ages to get an ambulance and help and stuff. She does get rescued and is taken to hospital not to die but is hurt, very badly hurt.

11(C2). He's sneaking out of the house He's sneaking out of his room to go out and play with his mates. He really wants to get out to see his mates. I think he must have been grounded and told stay in his room. This makes him angry as he does not really want to. He pretends to go and sleep. Then when his mum and dad are downstairs, he goes out and they don't know. He meets up with his mates and has a good time. But he gets in trouble and gets brought back home by the police. He's now in more trouble as they think he's asleep. They ground him for ages.

12(C1). This looks like an empty room to me. A very empty space. I think that some old lady used to live there alone. She got very old and died of old age. Now the family are going to leave the property empty or demolish it or something. The person looking in wants to buy the house as he likes it. But he thinks he sees the ghost of the old lady and is scared. The place may not get sold now. So it gets knocked down and a new house built, to get rid of the ghost.

13 (Blank) (Pause. (Looks at author and laughs). I don't know what to say. (pause) This is hard. (Pause). OK I think that this is like the last one with a big empty space like the desert or the north-pole. I think that this a man lost in the desert. His jeep broke down and he had to walk. He thought he say a place to drink. What's it called? (pause) An oasis that's it. But when he gets close he sees nothing but sand, just like the card. He keeps walking and is eventually rescued. He then goes home and never comes back to the desert. I can't think of anything else.

Appendix 9 - ORT Stories - Participant B

Plate A1(1) (Pause 1.07) (What do you see?). I see two people standing in front of a waterfall. (Can you tell me a story about that?) No. (How did they get to the waterfall). They probably went through a jungle. They may have seen stuff like snakes and that. (OK now they have got to the waterfall, what might be happening now?) They are just looking at it now. (Do they want to do anything else). It looks to me like they just want to watch it really. (So they just want to watch so are they glad to get to the waterfall?) Yeah (So would they be happy) Yeah.

Plate A2(2). (Pause) So what do you see?) There is two people. (So there is two people can you think anything about those two people). Mmm (What might they be doing or thinking or saying to each other?) It looks a little bit like they are in love with each other. (Right. OK. What else?) Pause (Can you tell me a little story about them? They are a couple in love. Can you tell me a small story about them). No. (Are they old, are the young?) Quite young. (Quite young. Were would they be meeting? Where would they be?) Probably because of all the smoke it would probably be somewhere like a train station. (A train station because of all the smoke?) Yeah (Show me the smoke) Points. You have the two people there, and all the smoke in the background. (So they are at the train station. Nods. So have the just got to the train station or have the just got off a train?). Probably there to get a train. (Ok where might they be going?) Don't know somewhere they live. (So they have come back from somewhere? From holiday?) From their honeymoon.

Plate C3(3). (Pause). (So what do you see there?) Someone is sitting in a chair and someone is looking at a painting or something on the wall. It looks like a hallway there and there is a table (Ok. So what sort of place might that be?) Probably a like a hotel or something. They know each other. Maybe they are on holiday or something. (Pause) (Ok So what do you think. So where might the hotel might be?) Don't know. In Britain I think. Don't know where. (So if the people know each other what might they be talking about?) Yeah probably. Maybe talking about the painting they may be talking about that. (What sort of feeling might the people have?) Neutral sure. Just OK. (When you first seen it what did you think of that picture?) It just looked like a hotel room with some people in.

Plate B3(4)   (Pause) (What do you see there?) Just two people in a doorway. (And what else can you see?) Nothing really. (So what sort of story could you talk about that.) No idea what so ever. (Where do you think it might be?) Probably a house (What might they be doing?) Talking to each other (What might they be talking about?) Don't know. (What would you be talking about if you were in the picture?) Don't know.(Pause) A man and a woman. (Ok so are they older or young people?) Probably in the middle really. I think it is their house really.

Plate AG(5). (Pause) (What sort of things to do you see?) Just people. (How many people do you think are there?) Not many. About 6 I think. (What do you think they are doing and where might they be?) It looks a bit like a cemetery to me. (A cemetery) (Pause). (Would it be a funeral or visiting a grave?) I think visiting. Its Sad (Sad picture). So what else might be happening? It really foggy. Make it feel more sad. It not really a scary picture just sad. (So what would the people be doing) The people are

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dead. (Are they praying for them or talking about them?) Probably just talking about them.. Good things probably.

Plate B1(6). (Pause) Mmm. I think its like its at night and he's just been robbed by someone and that's why you cant see anything in the room. (Right) And like he is really sad. (So is that the robber or person) The person who lives there. (Was he in the house when he was robbed?) No he was downstairs. (Do you not think he heard them?). Yeah he probably did. (But he was too late?) Yeah. (So what do you think the person might have taken?) Took valuables from the drawers, like jewellery.

Plate CG(7). (Pause) (What do you see there). Some steps and some people at the bottom. (Is there one person or a lot of people at the bottom?) it looks like a lot of people. (What might they be doing?) Don't know. Trying to get to the top of the stairs. It looks like the shadow of a person at the top. (What would that person be doing in the story?) Maybe trying to run away from them. He may have committed a crime or something. (What type of crime?) A robbery.

Plate A3(8). (Pause) (What do you see?) Three people who are maybe going for a walk. (Where might they be going for a walk?) In the park. (Do they know each other, friendly together or separate?) They are a family with the mum and dad and children. It's quite happy really. The park looks like it has really big trees in the background. (So is it a big park or small park) A big park. The big black bit there (points) may be the path or it could be the grass as well. The child is a boy. (Where will they go after they leave the park?) Probably back home.

Plate B2(9). (Pause) Two people who are going out and the lost the key from their home. There is (pause) There… (Ok) So they are just waiting there outside under the tree. (So what are they going to do under the tree). They shelter there and maybe call someone and they told them they are going to be there. And the people they called they told them they are going to be there and stay and wait under the tree all night. (All night?) Yeah they sleep all night. They get shelter from the tree because it is raining.

Plate BG(10). (Pause) (So what do you see?) A lot of people there and one person. There is an arch (pause) (What sort of place would this be?) It could be a castle or a house. (Which one do you think it is a house or a castle?) Probably the remains of the castle. And the guy in the middle is the tour guide. The person on the outside is separate from the group. (Why is he separate?) Because if he was with them then he probably would have followed them. He doesn't like groups.   He may follow the tour guide. He maybe think about the castle and the history of it.

Plate C2(11). This looks exactly like the one I saw before with the robber. (Does it?) Yeah it the same from a different angle. (Ok so you think it is very similar?) Yeah (Ok so who is that in the picture then?) mmm. Probably the person who has been robbed. (So what feel different in that picture compared to the other one?) The position of the things in the room is slightly different. But you can still see exactly the same things. You can see the bed and the wardrobe and you can see the mirror on the wall. (So it feels like the other picture from a different point of view?) Yeah. The same really. He doesn't want to go into the room as he will feel really sad.

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Plate C1(12). (Pause). Its a kitchen or somewhere?. (Is there anything else you notice in the picture?) Yeah there is something hanging over the chair. (What might that be?) Don't know. I saw the red bits in it. A flower on the table. The room feels empty.

Blank (13). Its snowing and there is a polar bear out. (whereabouts is the polar bear) In the north pole. He's looking for food. Can you see his eyes?) No he is looking the other way.

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Appendix 10- Participant C Story Transcripts

Plate A1(1) (Pause) Mmm. I could guess what it looks like a bit. (OK tell me what it looks like.) It looks like someone's standing in front off a building or something in the background. Can you make a story out of that. What might the person be doing there. How they go there. Anything that comes to mind). Mmm. Don't know. (Have a go). Someone that is crouching down there is trying to get his attention and he is just ignoring him and walking towards the building. (O.k. why do you think he is ignoring him). He could be crouching down because he is poor or something and he is poor. (What about the building?) It is quite a tall building, a cathedral sort of thing. I think he is going to meet someone. (How does the story end?) mmm. The person is not there. There a bit down and depressed.

Plate A2(2). (Pause) There is two people talking. (Can you think of a story about those two people?) (Pause) (What might they be talking about?) I think they are talking about something outside the window, whether there is… There is a man and a lady, they are quite middle aged. (What kind of view can they see out the window?) A quite nice view. The countryside or something. They are talking about the view. How well do these people know each other?) Not a husband and wife. They are in a hotel. They are there for a meeting sort of thing. (What happens towards the end?) Mmm. (Pause). They find their other friends sort of thing. A happy scene.

Plate C3(3). (Pause) It's an old fashioned living room sort of thing. There is a person sitting in the armchair and a man going towards the fire. (Can you think of story about what is happening in the scene?) The man sees something on top of the fire place but he can not see what it is, so he walks over to find out. He finds a letter addressed to somebody else. (Does he read the letter?) Yeah. Is says something about his family. In not sure if it's a him or her but they are looking at the other person going up to the fire place. They think he is a bit mad just walking over to the fire place. (How does that story finish off then?) I think they are quite young, so I think their parents will walk in a find them reading the letter. I think the parents would shout and have a go at them.

Plate B3(4) (Pause). There are people walking and they are coming down like from a dark corridor into a light corridor sort of thing. Mmm I think he is taking her to a room or something. (Can you tell me a bit more about the people or the story?) Think they are in a party or something. Like an old fashioned ballroom party and they are talking. (What else is happening there?) I think the party has just finished so they are walking. He said he would take her back. I'm sure if something has happened and that is why they are walking back or its just the end of the party and they are walking back. (So what could have happened at the party?) Well if it is bad then someone has gone off with someone else or someone has left them there.

Plate AG(5). There are people sitting down there I'm not quite sure. (What kind off setting is it in?) I think it is in a church setting and their all sitting down in a ring sort of thing. (So why are they going to church?) I think they go all the time. I think two people have just walked in and are talking or something. The two people (points) who normally go to the church are like a bit annoyed. I think they just sort of ignore it and carry on. The service is just about to start. (So how does it finish?). The people sort of quieten down a bit a go to the back. I think it is a sad scene sort of thing.

Plate B1(6) (Pause) I think there is a shadow type of thing standing at the door. With someone in bed or something and they are a bit scared. (Someone in the bed is scared or someone outside is sacred?) Someone in the bed is scared because there is a shadow at the door. Because the room is quite dark it could be like a haunted house sort of thing or something like that. (Is it a ghost?) Yeah I think is sort of a child that is watching (So is the person in the bed a child or an adult?) A child. A girl. She gets out of bed and starts walking along to see what it is and it disappears. (How does she feel?) A bit scared because she does not know what happened. She is a bit scared at first so she don't but the she just falls asleep.

Plate CG(7) (Pause) I think it is. (Pause) I think it is a football match or something. (OK. So what is happening in the match tell me about it?) It looks like someone might have scored as most of the people are kind of cheering sort of thing. Mmm there is a shadow of one of the players there (points) Pause). He is a bit down and depressed as he is the one who hasn't scored. (What are the crowd doing?) They are really happy and are cheering on and stuff. Shouting. (How does it finish off?) The person who said it was a goal and it weren't a real goal so they took it out again. The crowd go from cheering and happy to really down. (So what about the player how does he feel?) He just starts smiling and stuff. (So is this like a terrace were the crowd were watching the match) Yeah.

Plate A3(8) Ok this time it is aliens. (Ok) Someone is going to meet two aliens or something. They didn't really think thy were going to be there and turn up but they did. (Right. So are they an alien or a human?) The other person is just like a normal person and thinks he is just going to play a trick on everyone and say the aliens are coming and all of this. But, he walks down there and there is two aliens standing there in front of him. (So how does he feel about that) is overjoyed as he can get some money as he has talked to aliens and stuff. (So what happened at the end?) His other friends he said about the aliens he said about the aliens and they run back up and away. He goes with the aliens.

Plate B2(9) I think it is a quite rich family sort of thing because there is a really big house in the background. Mmm. I think they are two friends meeting under a tree or something and they start talking about stuff. I think they have not seen each other in quite a while and one of them just runs up to him and is really happy. (Is it a boy and a girl) Yeah. They are like best friends. They are catching up on what they have been doing and stuff. I think he.. ..the girl had to leave to go somewhere on holiday or something and she is talking about the things she did on holiday and stuff. (How does it finish?). It starts raining so they walk inside.

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Plate BG(10) I think they are at those sort of paths that are at a back side and they are all looking at this old fashioned (What do you call them things?) Mmm, (Arch?) Yeah. They are looking out the archway to see…. (So what sort of things can they see?) Its just like boats and stuff. I think like one of them is on their own and the other people in the left column walk over and make friends with person who is by themselves. (What happens after that?) They start walking off and stuff. They go to the beach.

Plate C2(11). (Pause) It looks like it is linked to that other picture. (Right which one?) That one with the shadow. (The ghost one?) Yeah. (What makes you think it is linked?) Because there is someone standing at the door and there is a bed as soon as you enter the doorway. (So what story would you give me?) Mm I think this one is a bit different and it could be like a couple of days after or something. (Ok) Cause I think the person who was originally in the bed a couple of days after they were walking into their room and like someone is like sleeping in their bed sort of thing. So they are a bit scared and stuff and freaked. (So who might be sleeping the bed?) The shadow who was at the door before. (So what happens then?) I think its…yeah it is still a girl. I think she runs downstairs and tell her parents about it?

Plate C1(12). The people that were living there had to move or something. So they have just abandoned the house (Right so what do you see there?) It's like a kitchen sort of thing and there is nothing there apart from a few things on the table and chair. (Right. So what does it feel like to you?) well these persons had to literally had to go away from the house. (why might they have had to leave?) It been a war or something so they secretly had to get out of the country. They just grabbed all their stuff and went. It's a bit lonely sort of thing. (So what happens in the end?) The people try…after the war the people try to get back to the house but someone is already leaving there now.(So what happens?) They decide to move in together.

Blank (13). (What do you see Like our art teacher says in art (What's that then?) It likes blank pictures I have seen in my school and are like lonely sort of thing and lost. (Could you give me a story about that picture?) No. (It just gives you the feeling or lost?) Yeah. (So what is it about that picture or lack of picture that you find difficult) Because there is nothing there and its just blank sort of thing. (So is it hard to think of something?) Yeah.

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Appendix 11 -Participant D - ORT Story Transcripts

Plate A1(1). Well there is not really a lot to this picture and I think the man looks quite upset and well it looks all dark and gloomy and just doesn't look good. To me it's, one day a man and his wife got married and his wife died and the man went back home and was feeling really unhappy and he stood in darkness for the rest of his life. The end

Plate A2(2). Yet again it is really faded and you can't see anything really that much. It looks like a man hanging up on the wall in pain and a woman trying to help him get down. He is the story Once upon a time a man went up to his step-father and killed him and then got sent to prison The woman came to try and bail him out but unfortunately it didn't work and as in the first story she was in prison. The end. (So are these a man and woman?) Yeah to me it is. (And, so what might they be saying to each other?) In a whisper voice and sort of thing "I'm going to get you out" stuff the man goes "No don't, don't you'll get caught" and she goes "No forget I'll give it a try". The end.

Plate C3(3).   One day a boy called Fred was walking about the street and then when he came back he suddenly collapsed on it. His mother is crouched and mm and went down on her knees and started to cry and the doctor called Mr Edwards was trying to fix him and see if he could bring him back. And his father was drunk standing at the window sill and the boy suddenly woke up and said "What are you doing father" (Put on voice) and the dad goes and punches his son and goes "Shut up". This is all because he is drunk. The moral is, don't ever drink and play with your son. The end. That's only made up. The red thing I thought could be an apple. Then I thought it was nothing really. It could be blood.

Plate B3(4). I think I might know this straight away. (Take your time) I'm going to say it now. There were two men fighting over a woman one of them got punched out of the way and they lived happily ever after and the other one just sat in the corner of the room in darkness and thought that he was going to die because he was starving. He was really desperate to have that woman and he never had him…her. The end. (So what might the people be talking about or what might they be doing?) I think they may be about to kiss each other and say Don't worry about the other man. The other man and basically he is talking about the other man and saying don't worry about him. And they lived happily ever after really. (There is happiness and sadness in that picture for you?) Yeah. Its like Romeo and Juliet

Plate AG(5). To me it looks like people kneeling down and praying next to a tree. It looks like there is a little church in the background. I think it is either someone dying or someone just about to be born or they are just praying about different things and thinking about things. Once upon a time there were several Christians who gathered around to have a prayer. They started talking about different things and it ended up being about the London bombs. All of them basically just started to pray. Then the next day one of the people went down to London and he got killed by one of the terrorists. So all those other Christians prayed down and thought about him and the other incidents. The end.

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Plate B1(6). One day two people were watching telly and the phone rang. It went ring, ring and one of the people, a girl called Fiona ran downstairs and the voice on the phone saying "you will die in seven days". And then they both go up and one of them is crying her eye out but in fear. They go to sleep for seven days. A long time for sleep. They woke up and the doors goes "Eeee" Pow and then a creepy ugly monster came in grabbed the boy by the throat and threw her against the wall and killed her. And the other one who knew what had happened and lived in fear for the rest of her life. The end. (OK) I think these two people are probably going to be sacred and the actual monster was really horrible. (Is that like a film you have seen before?) I've heard of it before (You've heard it but not seen it before?) I don't particularly want to actually is sounds very scary. It might be a bit more exaggerated about a monster. Let's just say that it is probably scary. (So would the monster be an actual person?) It's an actual person.

Plate CG(7). I think it is an actual Mayor coming down the stairs and booing him as he has done something wrong to be honest. One day the mayor, mayor Quimby went to net a snake and went to let him free. Then all the crowd and all the Simpson's started booing and going "no, no". and then Homer went "Get out of my town". Bart Simpson goes "Hycrumba. Your crap." That's what he says. Lisa "Goes you should never ever disobey the laws Mayor Quimby". Maggie goes "suck, suck" and Marge goes "Mmm mmm". And after that Mayor Quimby knew what he did and finally got to be put in jail. The end.

Plate A3(8). One day three people to have a…..to look for a king and well they came across some quicksand. Two of them got across but one of them was stranded in the middle. Two of them go what are we going to do, what are we going to do?" "For god sake just help me". He yapping away like that. Then the two men. say that if he is that grumpy then be alone, see you later." And the two people got really, really busy and knew it was wrong, really wrong. So they went back and got them and saved him and the man that was stranded said "Thank you" and they lived happily every after. The end.

Plate B2(9). One day. They went to this place called Scary Movie 2 house and they opened the door and they found the "Eeeeh, Pow, Owww". So they went up the stairs and a girl was laying on the bed and twisted her head around all the way. One of them ran back downstairs and ran out and goes "stuff this" and then the man came back upstairs and the girl who was in the bed goes "you two suck" but then she got shot and then they had nothing to worry about in their lives. The end. (OK. So you think that those people would really have something to think about. Would they worry about it?) Yeah (So how does your story relate to the picture?) I don't know because it just looks like a driveway going out.

Plate BG(10). One fine sunny morning two people Fred and Margaret decided to get married   and they go to the church and the man Fred is waiting for Margaret. Margaret finally turns up and they have a big party and then suddenly they go back to the church. They look outside and they find a really big pig in the middle of the graveyard. They try to get it out and they kill it and have it for their breakfast in the morning. They call it bacon sarnies. And after that there was nothing left in the graveyard and they lived happily ever after.

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Plate C2(11). Once upon a time, Stephanie and her husband Frank had a really nice day, then they had a bit of an argument. Stephanie went to bed and then Frank came up the stairs and didn't know if he should get in or not. He wandered off and Stephanie went looking for her. They came back and they had a nice chat> They basically just started talking about different things and they finally lived happily ever after and had loads of agreements and enjoyed the rest of their lives. The end.

Plate C1(12). To be honest this reminds me of War of the Worlds. (Have you seen it?) Yeah have you? (No.) I'm not going to tell you about it. (Can you tell me a story that is not War of the Worlds.) Well, one day two men went into a house and got killed. Blood was everywhere. Another person went in. Police men came round looking different things and they found trails of blood and they found different. like loads of fingerprints and they found it quite successful. They caught the two villains they chained them. Barred them up basically and just got rid of them from the natural world. And then they went home and enjoyed the rest of their day and live happily ever after since then. Their not making sense these stories are they? (Do you think they are making sense?) Sort of and sort of not. They all start of "one day, two people". What's wrong with that type of story?) It just a bit repetitive. Do those stories come to mind when you see the pictures.? Yeah.

Plate 13. (Pause) One day nothing happened. (Can you tell me anything else about it?). One day Homer and Ned (Without it being the Simpson's). Ok. One day ████████ and Colm and together and Colm could tell the future. And one day ████████ went to work and he went to press the call button, that killed the whole city. And then basically he killed the whole world. And then Ned. Not Ned Colm got the microphone and kept saying "Don't' kill anyone, don't kill anyone don't press it". What is sounded like to Homer "kill everyone. Press the red button as you missed a few. The words out" . he had to press it and then Colm killed ████████ in the back with a blue gun he falls down and in all the eruptions and then Colm goes "No don't fall there" and he falls there and he misses it and sticks his tongue out accidentally and press the cool destruction button and Colm goes "You stupid little plonker. You little idiot". Ok then the whole world was absolutely blank and it was all gone because

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Appendix 12 – Participant E - ORT Story Transcripts

Plate A1(1). (Pause) Once there was a man and he saw a kid and he decided to abduct him. The end. (Could you tell me a little bit more?) He held him for a ransom of £1 million quid and no one would give him the money so he killed the kid and robbed a bank. (Is that a sad picture?) It's like a kid looking up there because of the shine of his hair and face? And this is like an ear and a small nose.

Plate A2(2). There was this man and this woman who met in a pub and they really liked each other. The man was drunk but the woman didn't know that. He said "Do you want me to drive you home?" She said yes as she was a little bit drunk and. they drove along and hit a hedge and drove into a, crash into another car and the woman died and he just got injured. (Did anything else happen?) He got put in jail for ten years.

Plate C3(3). It was the evening and Grandpa is telling the children a story about the time he killed Hitler or something (Laughs) I don't know. (What was the story about? Can you think what he was talking about?) I don't know maybe or something. He was telling a story about one he got beaten by someone that something like darts? (So what were the children doing?). They were sitting around a table and there's a cup of tea. (What sort of place is this?) A living room. (Is it a happy place or a sad place) A happy place. Grandpa is standing up. Its late autumn (are they around a fire?) There is just a lamp on.

Plate B3(4). His man and woman who are getting married. The man has an affair but the man and woman have a child and the child see there having an affair and goes on??/ and someone tells the other mum that he is having an affair with that one. (And) like a person. (And how is that person feeling?) What's the word that means you betrayed. That one (So the person is upset?) Nods. (So how would that end up after she told that?) The woman gets divorced from him and marries her. Then she dies of cancer.

Plate AG(5). It's a sunny day and they have decided to go to the beach to…play in the sand. These are sand dune things. (So what happens next?) They build a sandcastle. (Can you tell me a bit more about the people?) There is a dad, a mum and a son and a daughter. They have a picnic. (Any more?) The end.

Plate B1(6). The boy has heard something outside in the corridor. He is not sure what it is? It could be a thing he is just about to go downstairs. He finds a burglar. But the burglar doesn't see him so he rings and goes and wakes up his mum and dad. They ring the police then they go down and knock the burglar down from behind with a hammer. The police came and arrested him. The end. (Ok, so would that be at night or during the day?). The night.

Plate CG(7). Mmm. Once there was this conference and this very important person, with all these photographers. The important person's heading down the stairs and getting into a limo. Everyone and all the reporters and people came and they chased after the car. The end. (OK. What would the person be famous for A celebrity

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Plate A3(8). There is these two bullies and there was this kids who goes to their school and these two bullies would beat him up so he is trying to avoid them. But one of them sees him so he starts running away> The chase….. chase after him but he manages to get away. The end. (OK. So is this someone,. is the child always afraid of these two?) Yeah. (Is this something he worries about everyday?) Yeah.

Plate B2(9). They have been. They've come from being shopping and they have locked themselves out and its raining very heavily. There is a thunder and lightening storm and they don't know you shouldn't go under a tree in a lightning storm. The tree collapses on them. (Ok) The tree has been struck but lighting. They are both very badly hurt. (How do they know each other?) What? (What is the relationship between the people?) They are man and wife.

Plate BG(10). These children are on a field trip and there is some ancient place, with arches and everyone is in a group and no has decided to pick this one no one wanted this one child in their group so he has just been left alone. (So what's he looking at?) He is looking down at the floor as he is feeling sad. (What would he like to happen?) They ask him to join their group. This is something that happens to him a lot. (so how does he feel about this?) Left out and unwanted. (so how would the story finish?) It always goes on like that. He sits on the bus but no one sits with him.

Plate C2(11). This is an older woman who, old man, old woman. Who lives on her own in a wooden hut and she is going to sleep with a mug of coco. (What happens then?) She sleeps. She dreams she was young again and happy and she had a brick house. (is she happy now or not?) No because she wakes up an realizes its only a dream. (How does she feel then?) She feels upset again. She's lonely.

Plate C1(12). Are those part of the picture those two lines? (Yes they are). The person looking through the window has just returned home and they realise they have been burgled, because there is not much stuff around really. Everything has been thrown everywhere. (So where might they be going?) What the burglar? (The people when they came back?) They have just came back from a walk out. An evening walk. (How do they feel?) Violated. (So what happens next?) They ring the police and they say they will do what they can but they don't catch the burglar.

Blank 13. (Pause) There was once this boy that couldn't do his homework and he gets told off. The next day even though he said he gave it a try he couldn't think of anything. SO what happens next?) He got detention. Everyone made fun of him because it was actually quite easy.

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Appendix 13 - Labov Analysis for participant A.

Story A1(1)
Abstract   - Incomplete – One man only.
Orientation   - Man walking on fog – No place or time
Complication - Walking thinking about problems, avoids beggar.
Evaluation   - Person reflecting about his life. But avoids the other man and his
                              problems
Results   - Goes home and feels better
Coda   - Missing

Story A2(2)
Abstract   - Two female friends meeting.
Orientation   - No place, time or other details
Complication - Discussing their lives.
Evaluation   - They don't address the differences between them
Results   - Is left uncertain
Coda   - Not fully used.

Story C3(3)
Abstract   - Unclear at the beginning
Orientation   - Set in a pub. No other details.
Complication - Drunken character chats up the barmaid. (Attraction, lust)
Evaluation   - Rejection of advances
Results   - The group
Coda   - Barmaid is annoyed and relieved man is gone. He is angry.

Story B3(4)
Abstract   - Not present- Mergers with orientation.
Orientation   - Couple are just married and going to change for honeymoon.
Complication - The couple spot the lone figure.
Evaluation   - How people are sneaky/bad. People getting mad.
Results   - No one is happy, all angry and upset.
Coda   - Boys runs away.

Story AG(5)
Abstract   - People in a garden praying.
Orientation   - Not present. Repeats abstract.
Complication - Praying to god to help a friend.
Evaluation   - Significantly not belong to a church but have strong faith.
Results   - The group plays and friend is ok.
Coda   - They go home

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experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 13 - Labov Analysis for participant A

Story B1(6)
Abstract   - Mother putting child to bed
Orientation   - Night time domestic scene
Complication - Following thunderstorm, child wakes and goes for a drink.
Evaluation   - Young child is afraid and needs protection and reassurance of parents
Results   - Young child goes back to bed afraid but falls asleep
Coda   - That's it. The end

Story CG(7)
Abstract   - Stage setting with an audience.
Orientation   - Theatre with a politician and angry audience
Complication - The audience is angry about politician's policy and speech and shouts
                him down.
Evaluation   - Challenge to authority by crowd.
Results   - Politicians escapes from crowd. Group plans to protect and vote
                against him.
Coda   - The end

Story A3(8)
Abstract   - Three boys in an argument. (Somewhat confused start)
Orientation   - Possible school setting but not clear.
Complication - The two boys in the gang challenge lone boy to fight but he runs away.
Evaluation   - Teenage issue – Disloyalty to friends and teen relationships.
Results   - Boy runs away but is afraid to go out.
Coda   - Missing

Story B2(9)
Abstract   - Two people under a tree (boy and girl) taking shelter.
Orientation   - In a garden/on road under the tree and looking at the house.
Complication - They talk then break into house and steal goods.
Evaluation   - The jealousy overwhelms them and they break in. But later they feel
bad.
Results   - They dump the goods where the people will find them.
Coda   - They go home.

Story BG(10)
Abstract   - Identifying group v girl only.
Orientation   - School outing, place not defined though possible historic site.
Complication - Lone girl looks out over cliff and falls. Not noticed as separate from
                the rest of the group.
Evaluation   - The lone figure excludes self from the group and then gets in trouble.
Results   - Girl falls and is eventually rescued but is very badly hurt.
Coda   - Not present

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experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 13 - Labov Analysis for participant A

Story C2(11)

Abstract   - Boy sneaking out of the family home
Orientation   - Boy sneaks out at night to play/meet friends against parent's wishes
Complication - Lone boy goes out without permission. He gets caught by police and parents ground them.
Evaluation   - Defiance of parental control. (Teenage rebellion)
Results   - Gets in trouble. Parents are angry.

Coda   - Grounded for ages (Same as result)

Story C1(12)

Abstract   - An empty room only of house up for sale. (Hard to begin)
Orientation   - Lone figure (Family are not seen) and ghost in empty house
Complication - Lone figure wants to buy the house but is frightened off by the ghost. House is knocked down.
Evaluation   - Unresolved feelings about dead woman (mother)
Results   - The house is not sold
Coda   - A new house is built.

Blank (13)

Abstract   - Big empty space. (Hard to begin)
Orientation   - Man lost in the desert.
Complication - Man lost in desert sees an oasis but is just a mirage.
Evaluation   - None
Results   - Man gets rescued
Coda   - He goes home and never returns to the desert.

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Appendix 14 - Labov Analysis for participant B

Story A1(1)
Abstract — 2 people viewing a waterfall in a jungle
Orientation — 2 people in a jungle (no other details)
Complication — They walked through the jungle to look at the waterfall
Evaluation — There is no evaluation present. Reason or moral absent
Results — Looking at the waterfall
Coda — None (just stops)

Story A2(2)
Abstract — 2 people at the railway station. (Steam trains)
Orientation — Station setting, 2 people (Despite steam not time settings)
Complication — Nothing happens between them except waiting for the train
Evaluation — None is detectable
Results — None
Coda — None

Story C3(3)
Abstract — 1 or 2 people in a room
Orientation — In a room possible hotel lobby. People on holiday (Possibly)
Complication — Very little occurs a possible conversation only is suggested.
Evaluation — None
Results — None
Coda — None   (No Emotion)

Story B3(4)
Abstract — 2 people in a doorway.
Orientation — Absent
Complication — Absent
Evaluation — Absent
Results — Absent
Coda — Absent

Story AG(5)
Abstract — 6 people in a cemetery
Orientation — The 6 people are talking about a death
Complication — No other actions except talking about death
Evaluation — Only that this is a sad scene not part of narrative
Results — None except that only good things are being said about the dead
person
Coda — Not present

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Appendix 14 - Labov Analysis for participant B

Story B1(6)
Abstract   - A person has been robbed   (Emotion)
Orientation   - Domestic scene at night, following a break in
Complication - The man who have/has been burgled is feeling and no other emotions
                    are described
Evaluation   - None is clear. Other than it is sad when things are stolen
Results   - Valuables are taken
Coda   - No or above. Response is to prompts only

Story CG(7)
Abstract   - Nothing definitive. "Some people at the bottom".
Orientation   - A group of people, lone figures at top of stairs
Complication - The person (robber) maybe trying to get away from them? (Not
                    definite.
Evaluation   - Absent or lacks moral or reason?
Results   - No conclusion is drawn
Coda   - Alert on response to prompts only

Story A3(8)
Abstract   - 3 people going for a walk in a park   (No emotions)
Orientation   - In a big park with mum and dad and children
Complication - No action is described or expanded on. No feeling between them is
                    stated.
Evaluation   - Not apparent. Description only
Results   - None
Coda   - Going back home only

Story B2(9)
Abstract   - 2 People lose the key to their house   (No emotions)
Orientation   - Outside the home
Complication - They shelter under the tree in a garden and call for help
Evaluation   - They are not sure when the person they call for help will come
Results   - Stay out all night and get shelter from the tree
Coda   - Absent

Story BG(10)
Abstract   - Simple description of a lot of people
Orientation   - Group, tour guide and lone visitor at a historic castle
Complication - There is no development of what happens beyond the descriptions
Evaluation   - Focus on lone visitor and how he does not like groups (close to ASD
                    difficulties) No Emotion
Results   - The lone figure follows the group thinking about the history of the
                    castle
Coda   - Thinking about the history only.

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Appendix 14 - Labov Analysis for participant B

Story C2(11)
Abstract   - Refers back to previous story 6, only from a different angle (physical)
Orientation   - House that has been burgled
Complication   - No action or emotion is stated
Evaluation   - None present
Results/Coda   - The person feel sad and does not want to enter the room
Coda

Story C1(12)
Abstract   -   All absent
Orientation
Complication
Evaluation
Results
Coda

Story 13 Blank plate
Abstract   - Make a joke about picture only not a narrative.
Orientation
Complication
Evaluation
Results
Coda

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Appendix 15 - Labov Analysis for Participant C

Story A1(1)

Abstract   - I could guess what it looks like (but uncertain). Someone standing in front of a

           building.

Orientation   - Someone is crouching down trying to get the other mans attention.

Complication   - Man is ignoring him and walking away. He is "poor or something".

Evaluation   - The man walks away towards the cathedral to meet someone

Results   - The walking man does not find his friend

Coda   - Absent or is down and depressed.

Story A2(2)

Abstract   - 2 people talking

Orientation   - They are talking about secure outside the window, Male and female, middle aged

Complication   - Talking about the view. More business like interactions/small talk,

Evaluation   - Just small talk to pass the time (or absent)

Results   - The meeting takes places within the room. Business colleagues not friends.

Coda   - Happy event? No conflict and simple description

Story C3(3)

Abstract   - Living room scene.

Orientation   - Person in the chair looking at other man standing beside the fire

Complication   - The people are curious about an object on the fire place.

Evaluation   - The object is a letter that one person opens. The observer is not comfortable with this action.

Results   - The parents catch them out

Coda   - The children are told off and reprimanded

Story B3(4)

Abstract   - People walking towards/down a corridor (towards a room).

Orientation   - He or she only stated. Attending a party (No other details)

Complication   - The party has finished and they are going back (to the room but all details are omitted.

Evaluation   - Missing

Results   - Something bad may have occurred (not stated)

Coda   - Is missing

Story AG(5)

Abstract   - People in a church (no purpose stated)

Orientation   - They are church goers and sitting down.

Complication   - Two people enter the church and are talking. The others sitting down and do not like that others breaking etiquette of the church.

Evaluation   - The others sitting down are judging the others for talking and being disturbed.

Results   - The couple stop talking. The others attitude is not very Christian

Coda   - It's a sad scene. This is somewhat out of context with the story.

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 15 - Labov Analysis for Participant C

Story B1(6)

Abstract	- Bedroom scene with a figure (shadow) standing in a doorway.
Orientation	- One person is in bed and other at doorway. Dark setting. No other detail. Implies ghost.
Complication	- Girl in bed goes and she goes to investigate
Evaluation	- Fear of the unknown
Results	- Ghost figure disappears and girl still afraid
Coda	- Goes to sleep

Story CG(7)

Abstract	- Group v Individual. Story concerned about incident at a football match
Orientation	- Based at football match with crown and player included
Complication	- Fans are happy and laughing at player but the goal is disallowed and the emotions change very quickly.
Evaluation	- Changing emotions of the player and crowd. The narrator finds this a funny situation.
Results	- Goal is disallowed, play continues and player is relieved.
Coda	- Players reactions only (None or above)

Story A3(8)

Abstract	- Story about an alien encounter.
Orientation	- Boy goes to meet aliens (contradiction between his knowledge and him not expecting it to happen
Complication	- Boy meets the aliens and is happy as he thinks this will make him rich.
Evaluation	- Narrator having fun? Unclear due to fantasy nature of the story.
Results	- Boys friends run away, Boy cant make any money
Coda	- Boy leaves with the aliens

Story B2(9)

Abstract	- A rich family? Big house
Orientation	- 2 people (friends) one from the family meet under a tress
Complication	- No problems stated. Friends meet and discuss time apart/holiday
Evaluation	- (None). Two friends happy to be together and talking
Results	- It begins to rain and both characters move into the house
Coda	- Walking inside only.

Story BG(10)

Abstract	- Group of people at an historic setting
Orientation	- Group of people and a lone person (No other details)
Complication	- Simple interaction between group and lone person. Make friends
Evaluation	- None
Results	- Go off together
Coda	- Go to the beach?

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 15 - Labov Analysis for Participant C

Story C2(11)
Abstract   - Linked to previous picture (Continuation of the narrative)
Orientation   - Girl and Ghost in a bedroom (No other details)
Complication - Girl senses the presence of ghost and is afraid
Evaluation   - Fear of the unknown?
Results   - None
Coda   - Goes to tell her parents

Story C1(12)
Abstract   - Empty house- People are left out
Orientation   - Kitchen scene, though has an empty feeling
Complication - The people had to leave the house to escape the war and left empty feeling
Evaluation   - People had to leave their place of safety
Results   - The family return but find the place occupied. They agree to live together
Coda   - Empty

Story 13 Blank
Abstract   - Absent
Orientation   - Absent
Complication - Absent
Evaluation   - Absent
Results   - Absent
Coda   - Absent

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 16 - Labov Analysis for Participant D

Story A1(1)

Abstract	- Not set up (check)
Orientation	- Man alone in a room
Complication	- Wife dies
Evaluation	- Man's reaction
Results	- Stay's in darkness for rest of his life (Metaphor)
Coda	- The end (standard)

Story A2(2)

Abstract	- Man captured, torture scene (people helpless,)
Orientation	- Male and female in prison scene, others implied but not stated
Complication	-A man kills his step-father and sent to prison. The woman wants to free the man But is thwarted.
Evaluation	- The killing of the step father is a phantasy of the narrator??
Results	- After false ending? Woman tries again despite the mans protests
Coda	- The end

Story C3(3)

Abstract	-A young boy has a sudden collapse. Help the arrives
Orientation	- Boy, Mum, Dad, GP. Action takes place in street outside a house (the families?)
Complication	-Conflict arises between the boy and his father. The father punches him and tells him to shut up
Evaluation	- (Moral) Not to drink and play with children.
Results	- Father ends action with punch.
Coda	- The end. A final sentence is not given.

Story B3(4)

Abstract	- Man fighting over a woman, one man is the winner
Orientation	-Two men, one woman → Loser goes home to a dark room (the mind), and winner lives "happily ever after"
Complication	- The fight occurs with the loser "desperate to have her". The winner is about the kiss the woman.
Evaluation	-Narrator views the woman as a possession and dismisses any concern for the loser.
Results	- Ends "happy ever after". Loser left alone in the dark.
Coda	- The end is used. Then compares the situation to Romeo and Juliette

Story AG(5)

Abstract	- People kneeling by a tree (Scared),
Orientation	- Group (number not stated) in a church praying for
Complication	- Christians praying about the bombs and deaths in London (recent event at the time of testing).
Evaluation	- One of the group gets killed by terrorists in London (Premonition?).
Results	- Group pray and think about the dead friend
Coda	- The end

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 16 - Labov Analysis for Participant D

Story B1(6)
Abstract — Monster story (based on a film). Fantasy
Orientation — 2 men and 1 woman. Receive a phone that they will die in a weeks time. Based in a house
Complication — The people are afraid after the call. They sleep for 7 days (fantasy). The monster kills the woman. Other characters live in fear.
Evaluation —Woman is disposable, fear and death are not given emotional labels or the effects discussed.
Results — Death and living in fear (Mixed with above)
Coda — The end.

Fantasy story. Monster is an actual person. Real people do horrible things. Women as victims.

Story CG(7)
Abstract — Simpson's cartoon story. Wacking day episode.
Orientation — Simpson family, Mayor Quimby other Simpson's characters
Complication — Mayor's capture of snake and letting go upsets the crowd.
Evaluation — The crowd turn on Mayor and disobeys laws
Results — Simpson's win. Mayor acknowledges doing wrong and goes to jail.
Coda — The end

Story A3(8)
Abstract — Two commoners finding a king in quicksand.
Orientation — Fantasy situation. 2 men and a King. A Swamp. No other details
Complication — Two men find it King in difficulties but initially walk away due to the King's poor attitude.
Evaluation — The decided they should save him regardless of attitude and social position. Reconsidered know it was wrong to walk away.
Results — King is rescued and thanks the men. The live happily ever after.
Coda — The end

Story B2(9)
Abstract — Scary Movie 2 House, fantasy story
Orientation — 2 men find a girl with a revolving head.
Complication — The girl in bed is a kind of monster/possessed. (kill her?)
Evaluation — Can escape horrors through violence
Results — Absent
Coda — Absent

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 16 - Labov Analysis for Participant D

Story BG(10)
Abstract   - A marriage and celebration party
Orientation   - Fred, Margaret (bride and groom). Church setting and pig in the graveyard
Complication - The wedding occurs and the pig is seen and the killed.
Evaluation   - The happy event and death of animal to feed the characters appears to move sadness from the graveyard.
Results   - Happy ending?
Coda   - "lived happily ever after".

Story C2(11)
Abstract   - Stephanie and Fred argue and the make up
Orientation   - Stephanie and Fred in own house. No other details
Complication - The had an argument but then talk and make up
Evaluation   - None. Emotions are absent
Results/coda - Make up and live happy ever after The end Mix

Story C1(12)
Abstract   -
Orientation   - War of the worlds. Fantasy. The changes good v evil
Complication - Two men, police and 2 villains. Killing and investigation
Evaluation   -That no one gets away with murder or that people lie without thinking of the consequences
Results   - Villains are arrests and go to prison
Coda   - The end

Story 13 Blank
Abstract   - Fight with researcher
Orientation   - Few details given. Image of a science fiction setting
Complication - a battle of wills (physical?)
Evaluation   - The participant fighting/ better than the researcher
Results   - The participants wins but blows up the word. Destructive
Coda   - The end.

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 17 - Labov Analysis for participant E.

Story A1(1)
Abstract   - Kidnap of a child   (No Emotions)
Orientation   - No time or place given. No relationship between people develops.
Complication - Child is killed when ransom is not paid
Evaluation   - Not clear
Results   - Child dies
Coda   - "The end" is used when kidnapper robs a bank when ransom not paid.

Story A2(2)
Abstract   - A couple (M and Female) meeting in a pub   (No Emotions)
Orientation   - Man and woman is pub setting. Man is drunk woman less so
Complication - Drunk man offers to drive woman home. They crash and she dies.
Evaluation   - Should not drink and drive.
Results   - Woman dies and mans feels are ignored (not discussed)
Coda   - Man goes to jail for 10 years

Story C3(3)
Abstract   - Grandpa is telling a story to the grandchildren   (No Emotions)
Orientation   - Moves between pub (possible) and a domestic setting
Complication - Confused story as Grandpa talks about killing Hitler. (Fantasy?). It
               then moves onto a story about losing at a darts match
Evaluation   - None
Results   - None
Coda   - Absent

Story B3(4)
Abstract   - Male and female getting married.   (No Emotions)
Orientation   - No details are provided. Church setting implied with graveyard.
Complication - Male has an affair but is found out by children.
Evaluation   - You will get hurt by his actions
Results   - Couple split and divorce. Woman dies of cancer (When is not clear),
Coda   - Dies of cancer signals end

Story AG(5)
Abstract   - Family go to the beach
Orientation   - Family (mum and dad, son and daughter). Happy domestic scene.
               (Idealised view of narrators own family)
Complication - Playing together making sand castles and have a picnic
Evaluation   - No plot or explanation of the narrative
Results   - Non present
Coda   - The end

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 17 - Labov Analysis for participant E

Story B1(6)
Abstract   - A boy discovers a burglar in a house
Orientation   - Set in a house. Boy, parents and burglar
Complication - Boy discovers the burglar, alerts his parents who ring the cops
Evaluation   - Burglar is caught by family who knock him out. Family are strong
Results   - Police arrest the man and family is safe
Coda   - The end

Story CG(7)
Abstract   - Conference setting (Film premier)
Orientation   - VIP and photographers. No other details
Complication - VIP is photographed and then chased by reporters
Evaluation   - None
Results   - VIP drives away chased by the pack
Coda   - The end

Story A3(8)
Abstract   - A child is being bullied
Orientation   - School bullies and child. Setting is not given (outside school)
Complication - Boy tries to avoid bullies but is seen, He is chased but he manages to
                       get away from them successfully
Evaluation   - The bullies do not always win
Results   - Boy escapes. (No emotions stated)
Coda   - The end

Story B2(9)
Abstract   - Two people are locked out of their house.
Orientation   - Two people returning from a shopping trip who seek shelter under
                       the tree
Complication - When they found themselves locked out and shelter but the tree is
                       struck by lightning. They are badly hurt.
Evaluation   - The should have know better and servers them right
Results   - Physical pain (No emotional response but implied as above)
Coda   - Body is hurt?

Story BG(10)
Abstract   - Children are out on a field trip
Orientation   - School children on a trip at an ancient monument. One child is
                        isolated from the group
Complication - The lone child is isolated and he wanted to the other to ask him to join
                       them.
Evaluation   - The lone child is left out and feels very sad
Results   - Lone child sits on the bus alone on return journey feels sad
Coda   - As above

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their
experience of relationships.

Appendix 17 - Labov Analysis for participant E

Story C2(11)

Abstract - An old lady only
Orientation - Alone in a house no other details
Complication - She falls asleep and dreams that she is young and happy
Evaluation - Lonely people who wish to be happy
Results   - She wakes up and realises that nothing has changed.
Coda   - She is lonely. … Only

Story C1(12)

Abstract - A person looking into a window of a house
Orientation - Is a group but no details are given. Have been burgled and room
      is trashed.
Complication - Ring the police
Evaluation - Room in the house has been broken into by a burglar and family feel
      violated
Results   - Call the police but the burglar is not caught.
Coda   - As above only

Story 13 Blank

Abstract - A boy not doing homework.
Orientation - Boy and class at school (But no other details)
Complication - He could not complete the work and his classmates laugh at him.
Evaluation - Even if you try you may not succeed and others make fun. (I can't
      succeed. He should be able to do this.
Results   - He gets detention (Punished).
Coda   - Made fun off.

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 18 - Codes for first stage analysis (Miles and Huberman Step 2)

Code	Description	Frequency.
1	Relationship (Happy)	8
2	Death	6
3	Burglar Robber	6
4	Graveyard	6
5	Death threat	6
6	Little interaction	6
7	Relationship (Not work)	5
8	Killing	5
9	Religious/praying	5
10	Monster/ghost/alien	5
11	Breaking social rules	5
12	Police arrest robber/villain	4
13	Child is afraid	4
14	Physical pain	4
15	Lonely person	4
16	Talking	4
17	Obey the rules	3
18	Jail/Prison	3
19	Happy family	3
20	Escape from bad situation	3
21	Loss of things	3
22	Others require help	3
23	Relationship (Business)	3
24	Caught doing something you shouldn't	3
25	Told off (parental control)	3
26	Group versus Individual	3
27	Parents protect	3
28	Being chased by others	3
29	Parents not care	2
30	Relationship present but not care	2
31	Getting drunk	2
32	Children are hurt	2
33	Bullying	2
34	People are stupid	2
35	Child isolated from peers	2

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 18- Codes for first stage of analysis (Miles and Huberman Step 2)

36	Child seeks relationship	2
37	Wishes/dreams not fulfilled	2
38	Physical fight	2
39	Depressed	2
40	Couple about to kiss?	2
41	Boy seeking friends	2
42	People making friends	2
43	Fear of the unknown	2
44	Emptiness	2
45	Honeymoon couple	2
46	Child kidnapped	1
47	Grandparents	1
48	Story telling	1
49	Relationship (Betrayed)	1
50	Family overcome Robber	1
51	VIP	1
52	Cant change situation	1
53	Child made fun off	1
54	If you try you wont succeed	1
55	Torture	1
56	Physical illness	1
57	Difficult relationship with step-farther	1
58	Living in fear	1
59	Reject others who need help	1
60	Can solve problems	1
61	Being better than others	1
62	Curiosity	1
63	Changing emotions	1
64	Leaving for a better life	1

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 19 - Miles and Huberman Step 3 - Major theme groups

<u>Parents/Family</u>
1. Parents do not care   5. Parents can make things better
2. Happy family   6. Grandparents
3. Parents protect   7. Parental control
4. Family fights

<u>Emotions</u>
1. Sadness   4. Happiness
2. Depressed   5. Emptiness
3. Loneliness   6. Fear

<u>Violence/Death</u>
1. Physical fights   4. Death
2. Bullying   5. Threats
3. Children hurt   6. Killing

<u>Loss</u>
1. Theft
2. Robbers, Burglars
3. Loss of others
4. Police

<u>Relationships</u>
1. Making them   5. Wanting them
2. Couple   6. Sexual
3. Group v Individuals   7. Bad relationships
4. Happy

<u>Others</u>

1. Drunk   4. Obey the rules
2. Jail   5. Wishes or dreams not fulfilled
3. Religious   6. Monsters/Fantasy/Ghosts

<u>Miles and Huberman (Step 4)   Rejected Codes</u>
Story Telling
VIPs
Not help others
Wanting support
Help others
Solve problems
Little conversation/interactions

Using the Object Relations Technique with Autistic Spectrum Disordered children to reveal their experience of relationships**.**

Appendix 20 – Scoring of emotional words in the stories

Participant A- Emotional words used in stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Sadness	4	Dislike	3
Anger/angry	3	Like	3
Happy	2	Scared	2
Hope	1	Hurt	1
Annoyance	1	Ignored	1
Enjoyed	1	Guilty	1
Glad	1	None used	1

Participant B - Emotional words used in stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Sadness	3	None used	6
Scary	1	Dislike	1
Happy	3	Love	1

Participant C - Emotional words used in stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Sadness	1	Lonely	2
Annoyed	1	Scared	2
Happy	3	Freaked (Shocked)	1
Depressed	2	None	2
Mad (Crazy)	1	Down (Sad)	1
Overjoyed	1		

Participant D - Emotional words used in stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Upset	1	Fear	1
Happily	5	Scared	1
Worry	1	None	6
Grumpy	1		

Participant E - Emotional words used in stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Sadness	1	None	9
Anger	2	Betrayed	1
Happy	1	Loneliness	3
Violated	1		

Appendix 21 – Scoring of emotional context of the stories

Participant A - Emotional Context of stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Ignore others	1	Enjoys being alone	2
Renewing friendships	1	Uncertainty about relationships	1
Attraction	1	Irritation	1
Rejection	2	Deception	2
Fear	5	Caring about others	2
Faith in God	1	Parental Care	2
Hatred	1	Frustration	3
Group anger	4	Spurred to action	1
Revenge	1	Envy	1
Should know facts	1	Fear of consequences of actions	1
Wants to do right thing	1	Not missed by others	1
Loneliness	1	Haunted	1

Participant B - Emotional Content of stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Enjoyment	1	Love	1
None	5	Death	1
Good memories of person	1	Fear	1
Need to escape	1	Warm family group	1
Helpless	1	Togetherness	1
Safety	1	Social difficulties	1
Loneliness	1	Humour	1

Participant C - Emotional Context of stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Rejecting others	1	Fear	3
Parental care	1	Happy Outcome	1
Sadness	3	Curiosity	1
Crazy (Shouldn't do it)	1	Humour	1
Start of friendship	1	Attraction	1
Ignore social convention	1	None	1
Surprise	1	Excitement	1
Interested in others	1	Deception	1
Seeking Friends	1		

Appendix 21 – Scoring of emotional context of the stories

Participant D - Emotional Context of stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Dark mood/Depression	1	Literal dark place	1
Caring about others	2	Friendship	1
Poor relationship with dad	2	Caring mother	1
Lack of care	1	Attraction	1
Can win love with violence	1	Sadness	2
Unfulfilled desire	1	Rejection	1
Lack of warmth to others	1	Mourning	1
Emotional loss	1	Escape	1
Disappointment	1	Acceptance consequences	1
Guilt	1	Positive ending	1
Fear	2	Happy time	1
Intimate relationship	1	Relationship difficulties	1
Uncertainty	1	Concern	1
Talk about problems	1	Violent death	1
Severe punishment	1	Begging for life	1

Appendix 21 – Scoring of emotional context of the stories

Participant E - Emotional Context of stories

Emotional Context	Frequency	Emotional Context	Frequency
Greed	1	Concern for life	1
Attraction	1	Happy family life	1
Protect mother	1	Distrust	1
Sadness	2	Dies of broken heart	1
Uncertainty	1	Parental concern/protection	1
Relief at escape	1	Stupidity	1
Should know rules	1	Humiliation	1
Resigned to fate	1	Physical strength to solve a problem	1

Appendix 22 – ORT Stories – Participant A

Theme: Thinking about life, contemplation, avoid reminder of failure.

Emotions: Happy, Likes

1(A1). I see a person and I think it is a man. It looks like he is walking in thick fog and thinking to himself. It could be about his life. He came across a person on the left who is kneeling down and begging. The man avoids him and does not want to talk (*infers rejection)*. He walks for hours and still talks to no one. He **likes** being like that (*infers enjoys feeling alone*). He goes home to his own house and feels a bit **happier.**

Theme: Renewing Friendship, uncertainty;   Emotion: Enjoyed
2 (A2). I think it looks like two friends meeting. Yeah these two women and I think they have not spoken for a while and want to catch up. The talk about a lot but I don't know exactly, what maybe that they haven't spoken for ages (*infer*s *enjoying renewing friendship*). They talk about their lives and what they have been doing. They are looking out the window of the pub now but not saying anything (*infers uncertainty about the relationship later clarified*). They **enjoyed** the day and meeting up. I think (pause) I'm not sure that they will meet again *(infers hope they will)*. Maybe they will.

Theme: Attraction, rejection.
Emotions: Bored, Dislike, Ignored, Anger, Annoyance, Glad
3(C3). This looks like a pub. (laughs) Maybe it is a living room though I'm not sure. The people are just sitting there and not talking. Maybe they are too drunk or just don't want too. The person standing up. He (points to figure standing) is off to get drinks. So he gets up to get them and tries to chat up the barmaid (*infers attraction*). She is **bored** and **does not like** him and tries to make him go away *(infers irritation)* and **ignores** him (*infers rejection*). He tries again but he's barred and thrown out of pub (*infers complete rejection*). He's **pissed off** (**anger**) he was thrown out of the pub. She's **annoyed** but **glad** he is gone.

Theme: relationship, attraction, curiosity, eavesdropping, surprise, anger
Emotions: Anger, Upset, Hurt.
4(B3). This one is hard. (Pause) The person (points to lone figure) is being sneaky (*infers deception*) and looking and listening to those two have just got married, going to get changed to go out on their honeymoon. (Pause). Yeah. They kiss and talk but I don't know what about. He (points) wants to hear them say something. The couple see him and are **very angry** at him. They shout at him and tell him off. It spoils their day. He shouts back and runs away (*infers fear)* but he is **crying (upset)** as he doesn't like being shouted at, as it **hurts** him.

Theme: - Faith, God , caring for others   Emotions: Hope, Happy
5(AG) I know. People sitting in a garden, it looks like they are praying. Mmm (pause). Yeah they are praying while sitting in a garden. Maybe they are thinking about someone they know (*infers caring for someone*). They don't go to a church but do believe in god, that's why they are in the garden (*infers faith without organized religion*). They pray for their friend (*infers caring*) and **hope** he is ok. They hear that he is ok so they go home **happy**.

Theme; Maternal Care, fear of unknown   Emotions: Afraid

6(B1). A mum is watching after just putting her child to bed, saying goodnight before she goes to bed as well (*infers parental care*). The child was sleeping and there's a thunderstorm, which woke her up (*infers fear*). She goes downstairs to get a drink but is still **afraid** of the lightning. So she runs back to bed and hides under the covers (*infers still afraid*). She goes to sleep. That's it, the end.

Theme: Rejection of politician/authority, rebellions, call to action
Emotions: Dislike, Unhappy

7(CG). I know what this is. It's a stage and they are the audience. Hold on (pause). Yeah it is an audience but the man on stage (points) is a politician. The people **don't like** what he says. Like paying more taxes and stuff. Someone shouts out "Bastard" (*infers hate or frustration*). Can I say that? (Yes). Others join in and want to storm the stage to get him (*infers mob anger*). But his bodyguards get him away. So the people are **unhappy** and damage the place (*infers frustration*). They say they won't vote for him again and will protest a lot (*infers spurred into action*). The end

Theme: Argument, physical fight, attraction   Emotions: Worried

8(A3). Are there three people? (It's up to you.) Ok, I know what's happening. Three boys have had a big argument. Those two (points to figures) I don't know what they are arguing about (*infers conflict/anger*). Maybe he has betrayed them and he's got off with one of their girlfriends behind his back (*infers betrayal*). He is going to get beaten up (*infers getting revenge*). He used to be in their gang but he really pissed them off (*infers* anger). He runs away (*infers fear*) and is chased but they don't get him. He's **worried** they will get him next time and do not want to go out or to school (*infers continued fear*).

Theme: Envy, Friendship, Fear, should know better, guilt
Emotions: Sacred, Guilty

9(B2). (Pause) I know now. These two people are standing under a tree to shelter from the rain. The boy says to the girl, "I would like to live in a big house like that one", as their houses is small (*infers envy*). They are stupid cause if the lighting hits the tree they will get electrocuted (*infers distain at knowing the facts*). They get **scared** and break into the house. I don't know if they steal stuff. (pause) Yeah they do but feel very **guilty** about it. They want to return it but know they will be in trouble if they do (*infers want to do right thing and fear of consequences*). They dump it were it will be found by the people. Then they go home.

Theme: Loneliness, Distress, rejection of group   Emotions: Dislike

10(BG). The person outside (points) I think it's a girl and the others are her classmates. Well she **doesn't like** being in the group. (Points). She **likes** to be away from the other girls as they aren't nice and she's quiet (*wants to be away from others*). She goes out to the edge sorry balcony of the hotel to see the dolphins in the sea. She falls over the edge but slips and falls. As the girls don't notice her not being there,(*infers rejection*) so it takes ages to get an ambulance and help and stuff (*others don't miss her*). She does get rescued and is taken to hospital not to die but is hurt, very badly hurt.

Theme: Deception, parental control, peer pressure,   Emotions: Angry

11(C2). He's sneaking out of the house He's sneaking out of his room to go out and play with his mates (*infers defying parental control*). He really wants to get out to see his mates. I think he must have been grounded and told stay in his room (*infers parental control after being in trouble*). This makes him **angry** as he does not really want to. He pretends to go and sleep (*infers deception*). Then when his mum and dad are downstairs, he goes out and they don't know. He meets up with his mates and has a good time (*infers enjoys peer friendships*). But he gets in trouble and gets brought back home by the police. He's now in more trouble as they think he's asleep. They ground him for ages (*infers anger*).

Theme: Loneliness, death, removing the past   Emotions: Like, Scared

12(C1). This looks like an empty room to me (*Literal or feeling*). A very empty space. I think that some old lady used to live there alone (*infers loneliness*). She got very old and died of old age. Now the family are going to leave the property empty or demolish it or something. The person looking in wants to buy the house as he **likes i**t. But he thinks he sees the ghost of the old lady and is **scared**. The place may not get sold now (infers haunted and fear). So it gets knocked down and a new house built, to get rid of the ghost (destroying what induces fear).

Theme: Lost, survival, rescue   Emotions: None

13 (Blank) (Pause. (Looks at author and laughs). I don't know what to say. (pause) This is hard. (Pause). OK I think that this is like the last one with a big empty space like the desert or the north-pole. I think that this a man lost in the desert. His jeep broke down and he had to walk. He thought he saw a place to drink (*infers thirst/ need to survive*). What's it called? (pause) An oasis that's it. But when he gets close he sees nothing but sand, just like the card (*infers frustration*). He keeps walking and is eventually rescued. He then goes home and never comes back to the desert. I can't think of anything else.

Appendix 23 - ORT Stories - Participant B

Theme: Travel   Emotions: *Glad Happy prompted*
Plate A1(1) (Pause 1.07) (What do you see?). I see two people standing in front of a waterfall. (Can you tell me a story about that?) No. (How did they get to the waterfall). They probably went through a jungle. They may have seen stuff like snakes and that. (OK now they have got to the waterfall, what might be happening now?) They are just looking at it now. (Do they want to do anything else). It looks to me like they just want to watch it really (*infers enjoyment*). (So they just want to watch so are they **glad t**o get to the waterfall?) Yeah (So would they be **happy**) Yeah.

Theme: Romance, couple returning from honeymoon   Emotions: Love
Plate A2(2). (Pause) So what do you see?) There is two people. (Pause). (So there is two people can you think anything about those two people). Mmm (What might they be doing or thinking or saying to each other?) It looks a little bit like they are **in love** with each other. (Right. OK. What else?) Pause (Can you tell me a little story about them? They are a couple in **love**. Can you tell me a small story about them). No. (Are they old, are the young?) Quite young. (Where would they be meeting? Where would they be?) Probably because of all the smoke it would probably be somewhere like a train station. (A train station because of all the smoke?) Yeah (Show me the smoke) Points. You have the two people there, and all the smoke in the background. (So they are at the train station?). Nods. (So have the just got to the train station or have the just got off a train?). Probably there to get a train. (Ok where might they be going?) Don't know somewhere they live. (So they have come back from somewhere? From holiday?) From their honeymoon.

Theme: Hotel Scene only   Emotions: Neutral (After asked)
Plate C3(3). (Pause). (So what do you see there?) Someone is sitting in a chair and someone is looking at a painting or something on the wall. It looks like a hallway there and there is a table (Ok. So what sort of place might that be?) Probably a like a hotel or something. They know each other. Maybe they are on holiday or something. (Pause) (Ok So what do you think. So where might the hotel might be?) Don't know. In Britain I think. Don't know where. (So if the people know each other what might they be talking about?) Yeah probably. Maybe talking about the painting they may be talking about that. (What sort of feeling might the people have?) Neutral sure. Just OK. (When you first seen it what did you think of that picture?) It just looked like a hotel room with some people in.

Theme: None. Description only   Emotions: None
Plate B3(4)   (Pause) (What do you see there?) Just two people in a doorway. (And what else can you see?) Nothing really. (So what sort of story could you talk about that.) No idea what so ever. (Where do you think it might be?) Probably a house (What might they be doing?) Talking to each other (What might they be talking about?) Don't know. (What would you be talking about if you were in the picture?) Don't know.(Pause) A man and a woman. (Ok so are they older or young people?) Probably in the middle really. I think it is their house really (*infers possible relationship*).

Theme: Funeral, Remembering   **Emotions: Sad, Scary**
Plate AG(5). (Pause) (What sort of things to do you see?) Just people. (How many people do you think are there?) Not many. About six. I think. (What do you think they are doing and where might they be?) It looks a bit like a cemetery to me (*infers death*). (Pause). (Would it be a funeral or visiting a grave?) I think visiting. It's **Sad**. (So what else might be happening?) It really foggy. Makes it feel more **sad**. It not really a **scary** picture just **sad**. (So what would the people be doing) The people are dead. (Are they praying for them or talking about them?) Probably just talking about them.. Good things probably (*infers good memories of person*).

Theme: Robbery   **Emotions: Sad**
Plate B1(6). (Pause) Mmm. I think its like its at night and he's just been robbed by someone and that's why you cant see anything in the room. (Right) And like he is really **sad**. (So is that the robber or person) The person who lives there. (Was he in the house when he was robbed?) No he was downstairs. (Do you not think he heard them?). Yeah he probably did. (But he was too late?) Yeah. (So what do you think the person might have taken?) Took valuables from the drawers, like jewellery.

Theme: Robber escaping mob   **Emotions: None**
Plate CG(7). (Pause) (What do you see there). Some steps and some people at the bottom. (Is there one person or a lot of people at the bottom?) It looks like a lot of people. (What might they be doing?) Don't know. Trying to get to the top of the stairs. It looks like the shadow of a person at the top. (What would that person be doing in the story?) Maybe trying to run away from them (*infers fear/need to escape*). He may have committed a crime or something. (What type of crime?) A robbery.

Theme: Happy Family outing.   **Emotions: Happy**
Plate A3(8). (Pause) (What do you see?) Three people who are maybe going for a walk. (Where might they be going for a walk?) In the park. (Do they know each other, friendly together or separate?) They are a family with the mum and dad and children. It's **quite happy** really. The park looks like it has really big trees in the background. (*infers a warm scene*) A big park. The big black bit there (points) may be the path or it could be the grass as well. The child is a boy. (Where will they go after they leave the park?) Probably back home.

Theme: Couple locked out of house taking shelter   **Emotions: None**
Plate B2(9). (Pause) Two people who are going out and the lost the key from their home. There is (pause) There… (Ok) So they are just waiting there outside under the tree (infers helpless). (So what are they going to do under the tree). They shelter there and maybe call someone and they told them they are going to be there. And the people they called they told them they are going to be there and stay and wait under the tree all night (not solve problem). (All night?) Yeah they sleep all night. They get shelter from the tree because it is raining (*infers togetherness/safety*).

Theme: Tourists visiting castle, reject groups   **Emotions: Dislike**

Plate BG(10). (Pause) (So what do you see?) A lot of people there and one person. There is an arch (pause) (What sort of place would this be?) It could be a castle or a house. (Which one do you think it is a house or a castle?) Probably the remains of the castle. And the guy in the middle is the tour guide. The person on the outside is separate from the group (*infers social difficulties*). (Why is he separate?) Because if he was with them then he probably would have followed them. He **doesn't like** groups. He may follow the tour guide. He maybe thinks about the castle and the history of it (infers not interested in the group.)

Theme: Robbery (same as CG(7) Description   **Emotions: Sad**

Plate C2(11). This looks exactly like the one I saw before with the robber. (Does it?) Yeah it's the same from a different angle. (Ok so you think it is very similar?) Yeah (Ok so who is that in the picture then?) mmm. Probably the person who has been robbed. (So what feels different in that picture compared to the other one?) The position of the things in the room is slightly different. But you can still see exactly the same things. You can see the bed and the wardrobe and you can see the mirror on the wall. (So it feels like the other picture from a different point of view?) Yeah. The same really. He doesn't want to go into the room as he will feel really **sad**.

Theme: Description only   **Emotions: None**

Plate C1(12). (Pause). Its a kitchen or somewhere?. (Is there anything else you notice in the picture?) Yeah there is something hanging over the chair. (What might that be?) Don't know. I saw the red bits in it. A flower on the table. The room feels empty (*Infers loneliness*).

Theme: Joke only   **Emotions: None**

Blank (13). Its snowing and there is a polar bear out. (whereabouts is the polar bear) In the north pole. He's looking for food. Can you see his eyes?) No he is looking the other way. *(infers humour)*.

Appendix 24- Participant C Story Transcripts

Theme: Proposed meeting, loneliness, ignore the poor   Emotions:- Depressed
Plate A1(1) (Pause) Mmm. I could guess what it looks like a bit. (OK tell me what it looks like.)   It looks like someone's standing in front off a building or something in the background. (Pause) (Can you make a story out of that? What might the person be doing there?) (Pause) (Anything that comes to mind?). Mmm. Don't know. (Have a go). Someone that is crouching down there is trying to get his attention and he is just ignoring him and walking towards the building *(infers rejecting other person)*. (O.k. why do you think he is ignoring him).   He could be crouching down because he is poor or something and he is poor.   (What about the building?) It is quite a tall building, a cathedral sort of thing. I think he is going to meet someone. (How does the story end?) mmm. The person is not there. There a bit down *(infers sadness)* and **depressed**.

Theme: Man and Woman talking, enjoying the view   Emotions: Happy
Plate A2(2). (Pause)   There is two people talking. (Can you think of a story about those two people?) (Pause) (What might they be talking about?)   I think they are talking about something outside the window, whatever there is… There is a man and a lady, they are quite middle aged. (What kind of view can they see out the window?) A quite nice view.   The countryside or something. They are talking about the view. (How well do these people know each other?) Not a husband and wife.   They are in a hotel.   They are there for a meeting sort of thing (infer business relationship).   (What happens towards the end?) Mmm. (Pause). They find their other friends sort of thing. A **happy** scene. (*Infers good relationship between people*).

Theme: Family secret, challenge authority   Emotions: Mad (Crazy)
Plate C3(3). (Pause) It's an old fashioned living room sort of thing. There is a person sitting in the armchair and a man going towards the fire. (Can you think of story about what is happening in the scene?) The man sees something on top of the fire place but he can not see what it is, so he walks over to find out *(infers curiosity)*. He finds a letter addressed to somebody else. (Pause) (Does he read the letter?) Yeah. Is says something about his family. In not sure if it's a him or her but they are looking at the other person going up to the fire place. They think he is a **bit mad** (*infers should not do it)* just walking over to the fire place. (How does that story finish off then?) I think they are quite young, so I think their parents will walk in a find them reading the letter. I think the parents would shout and have a go at them (infers anger at actions).

Theme: Betrayal, Uncertainty of action   Emotions: None
Plate B3(4) (Pause). There are people walking and they are coming down like from a dark corridor into a light corridor sort of thing. Mmm. I think he is taking her to a room or something. (Can you tell me a bit more about the people or the story?) Think they are in a party or something. Like an old fashioned ballroom party and they are talking. (What else is happening there?) I think the party has just finished so they are walking.   He said he would take her back *(infers possible attraction)*. I'm sure if something has happened and that is why they are walking back or its just the end of the party and they are walking back *(infers uncertainty)*. (So what could have

happened at the party?) Well if it is bad then someone has gone off with someone else or someone has left them there (*infers possible conflict*).

Theme: Faith, Social convention in church, guilt   Emotions: Sad, Annoyed
Plate AG(5). There are people sitting down there I'm not quite sure. (What kind off setting is it in?) I think it is in a church setting and their all sitting down in a ring sort of thing. (So why are they going to church?) I think they go all the time. I think two people have just walked in and are talking or something. The two people (points) who normally go to the church are like a bit **annoyed**. I think they just sort of ignore it and carry on (*infer not care about convention*). The service is just about to start. (So how does it finish?). The people sort of quieten down a bit a go to the back. I think it is a **sad** scene sort of thing. (*infers sad church occasion*)

Theme: Ghostly, haunted   Emotions: Scared
Plate B1(6) (Pause) I think there is a shadow type of thing standing at the door. With someone in bed or something and they are a bit **scared**. (Someone in the bed is scared or someone outside is sacred?) Someone in the bed is **scared** because there is a shadow at the door. Because the room is quite dark it could be like a haunted house sort of thing or something like that (*infers fear*). (Is it a ghost?) Yeah I think is sort of a child that is watching (So is the person in the bed a child or an adult?) A child. A girl. She gets out of bed and starts walking along to see what it is and it disappears. (How does she feel?) A bit **scared** because she does not know what happened. She is a bit **scared** at first so she don't sleep, but the she just falls asleep.

Theme: Football match, joy and sadness, changing fortunes
Emotions: Down (Sad), Depressed, Happy
Plate CG(7) (Pause) I think it is. (Pause) I think it is a football match or something. (OK. So what is happening in the match tell me about it?) It looks like someone might have scored as most of the people are kind of cheering sort of thing. Mmm there is a shadow of one of the players there (points) Pause). He is a **bit down** (*infers sadness*) and **depressed** as he is the one who hasn't scored. (What are the crowd doing?) They are really **happy** and are cheering on and stuff. Shouting. (How does it finish off?) The person who said it was a goal and it weren't a real goal so they took it out again. The crowd go from cheering and **happy** to **really down (sad)**. (So what about the player how does he feel?) He just starts smiling and stuff (*infers relief*).   (So is this like a terrace were the crowd were watching the match) Yeah.

Theme: Alien fantasy, Fear   Emotions: Overjoyed (prompted)
Plate A3(8) Ok this time it is aliens. (Ok) Someone is going to meet two aliens or something. They didn't really think they were going to be there and turn up but they did (*Infers surprise/excitement*). (Right. So are they an alien or a human?) The other person is just like a normal person and thinks he is just going to play a trick (*infers humour/deception*) on everyone and say the aliens are coming and all of this. But, he walks down there and there is two aliens standing there in front of him. (So how does he feel about that?) He's **overjoyed** as he can get some money as he has talked to aliens and stuff. (So what happened at the end?) His other friends he said about the

aliens he said about the aliens and they run back up and away (*infers fear*). He goes with the aliens.

Theme: Friendship   **Emotions: Happy**,

Plate B2(9) I think it is a quite rich family sort of thing because there is a really big house in the background. Mmm. I think they are two friends meeting under a tree or something and they start talking about stuff. I think they have not seen each other in quite a while and one of them just runs up to him and is really **happy**. (Is it a boy and a girl) Yeah. They are like best friends. They are catching up on what they have been doing and stuff (*infers interest in each other*). I think he.. ..the girl had to leave to go somewhere on holiday or something and she is talking about the things she did on holiday and stuff. (How does it finish?). It starts raining so they walk inside.

Theme: Making Friends, enjoyment   **Emotions: None**

Plate BG(10) I think they are at those sort of paths that are at a back side and they are all looking at this old fashioned (What do you call them things?) Mmm, (Arch?) Yeah. They are looking out the archway to see…. (So what sort of things can they see?) Its just like boats and stuff. I think like one of them is on their own and the other people in the left column walk over and make friends with person who is by themselves (*infer wanting friends*). (What happens after that?) They start walking off and stuff. They go to the beach (*infers start of friendship*).

Themes: Ghost/haunting girl, continuing, fear of unknown   **Emotions: Fear**

Plate C2(11). (Pause) It looks like it is linked to that other picture. (Right which one?) That one with the shadow. (The ghost one?) Yeah. (What makes you think it is linked?) Because there is someone standing at the door and there is a bed as soon as you enter the doorway. (So what story would you give me?) Mm I think this one is a bit different and it could be like a couple of days after or something. (Ok) Cause I think the person who was originally in the bed a couple of days after they were walking into their room and like someone is like sleeping in their bed sort of thing. So they are a bit **scared** and stuff and **freaked (infers confusion/fear)**. (So who might be sleeping the bed?) The shadow who was at the door before. (So what happens then?) I think its…yeah it is still a girl. I think she runs downstairs and tell her parents about it (*infers parents can help reduce fear*.)

Theme: Abandonment, resolution   **Emotion: lonely**

Plate C1(12). The people that were living there had to move or something. So they have just abandoned the house (*infers fear and need to escape*) (Right so what do you see there?) It's like a kitchen sort of thing and there is nothing there apart from a few things on the table and chair. (Right. So what does it feel like to you?) well these persons had to literally had to go away from the house. (why might they have had to leave?) It been a war or something so they secretly had to get out of the country (*infers fear*). They just grabbed all their stuff and went. It's a bit **lonely** sort of thing. (So what happens in the end?) The people try…after the war the people try to get back to the house but someone is already leaving there now.(So what happens?) They decide to move in together (*infers happy outcome/compromise*).

Theme: None description   **Emotions: Lonely**

Blank (13). (What do you see Like our art teacher says in art (What's that then?) It likes blank pictures I have seen in my school and are like **lonely** sort of thing and lost. (Could you give me a story about that picture?) No. (It just gives you the feeling or lost?) Yeah. (So what is it about that picture or lack of picture that you find difficult) Because there is nothing there and its just blank sort of thing. (So is it hard to think of something?) Yeah.

Appendix 25 -Participant D - ORT Story Transcripts

Themes: Marriage, death, loss   **Emotions: Upset, Unhappy**
Plate A1(1). Well there is not really a lot to this picture and I think the man looks quite **upset** and well it looks all dark and gloomy *(infers dark mood)* and just doesn't look good. To me it's one day and man and his wife got married (relationship) and his wife died and the man went back home and was feeling really **unhappy** and he stood in darkness *(infer literally in dark place)* for the rest of his life. The end

Themes: Torture, death, attempts to rescue captive.   **Emotions: None stated**
Plate A2(2). Yet again it is really faded and you can't see anything really that much. It looks like a man hanging up on the wall in pain and a woman trying to help him get down *(infers relationship/friendship, caring)*. He is the story. Once upon a time a man went up to his step-father and killed him and then got sent to prison. *(infers poor relationship/anger at step father)*. The woman came to try and bail him out but unfortunately it didn't work and as in the first story she was in prison. The end. (So are these a man and woman?) Yeah to me it is. (And, so what might they be saying to each other?) In a whisper voice and sort of thing "I'm going to get you out" stuff the man goes "No don't, don't you'll get caught" *(infers caring)* and she goes "No forget I'll give it a try". The end.

Themes: Difficult father and son relationship, lack of fraternal care.   **Emotions: None, moral**
Plate C3(3). One day a boy called Fred was walking about the street and then when he came back he suddenly collapsed on it. His mother is crouched and mm and went down on her knees and started to cry *(infers caring mother)* and the doctor called Mr Edwards was trying to fix him and see if he could bring him back. And his father was drunk standing at the window sill and the boy suddenly woke up and said "What are you doing father" (Puts on voice) and the dad goes and punches his son and goes "Shut up" *(infers uncaring poor relationship)*. This is all because he is drunk. The moral is, don't ever drink and play with your son *(infers lack of caring)*. The end. That's only made up.

Themes: Men fighting over a woman, violence can win love, deep depression, lust/desire.
Emotions: Happily.
Plate B3(4). I think I might know this straight away. (Take your time) I'm going to say it now. There were two men fighting over a woman. *(infers attraction, can win love through violence.*) One of them got punched out of the way and they lived happily ever after and the other one just sat in the corner of the room in darkness and thought that he was going to die because he was starving *(infers depression and sadness)*. He was really desperate to have that woman and he never had him…her *(infers unfulfilled desire)*. The end. (So what might the people be talking about or what might they be doing?) I think they may be about to kiss each other and says "Don't worry about the other man". The other man and basically he is talking about the other man and saying don't worry about him *(infers rejection and lack of worth)*.

And they lived **happily** ever after really. (There is happiness and *sadness* in that picture for you?) Yeah. Its like Romeo and Juliet (*Infers classic tragic love story*).

Themes: Faith seeking answers, death or birth, praying/thinking about the dead
Emotions: None stated
Plate AG(5). To me it looks like people kneeling down and praying next to a tree. It looks like there is a little church in the background. I think it is either someone dying or someone just about to be born (*infers making choice*). Or they are just praying about different things and thinking about things (*infers contemplating life*). Once upon a time there were several Christians who gathered around to have a prayer. They started talking about different things and it ended up being about the London bombs (*infers mourning/sadness*). All of them basically just started to pray. Then the next day one of the people went down to London and he got killed by one of the terrorists. So all those other Christians prayed down and thought about him and the other incidents (*infers mourning and loss*). The end.

Themes: Fantasy horror, violent death, living in fear
Emotions: Scared, Fear
Plate B1(6). One day two people were watching telly and the phone rang. It went ring, ring and one of the people, a girl called Fiona ran downstairs and the voice on the phone saying "you will die in seven days". And then they both go up and one of them is crying her eyes out but in **fear.** They go to sleep for seven days (*infers escape*). A long time for sleep. They woke up and the doors goes "Eeee Pow" and then a creepy ugly monster came in grabbed the boy by the throat and threw her against the wall and killed her. And the other one who knew what had happened and lived in **fear** for the rest of her life. The end. (OK) I think these two people are probably going to be **scared** and the actual monster was really horrible. (Is that like a film you have seen before?) I've heard of it before (You've heard it but not seen it before?) I don't particularly want to actually is sounds very scary. It might be a bit more exaggerated about a monster. Let's just say that it is probably scary. (So would the monster be an actual person?) It's an actual person.

Theme: Simpson's cartoon, mob anger, realisation of guilt
Emotions: None
Plate CG(7). I think it is an actual Mayor coming down the stairs and booing him as he has done something wrong to be honest (*infers deception*). One day the mayor, mayor Quimby went to net a snake and went to let him free. Then all the crowd and all the Simpson's started booing and going "no, no". Then Homer went "Get out of my town". Bart Simpson goes "Hycrumba. Your crap." That's what he says. Lisa "Goes you should never ever disobey the laws Mayor Quimby". Maggie goes "suck, suck" and Marge goes "Mmmmmm." (*infers anger and disappointment*). And after that Mayor Quimby knew what he did (*infers feeling guilty*) and finally got to be put in jail (*infers acceptance of the consequences of actions*). The end.

Theme: Rescue of king, reconsidering actions, positive outcome
Emotions: Grumpy, happily
Plate A3(8). One day three people to have a…..to look for a king and well they came across some quicksand. Two of them got across but one of them was stranded in the middle. Two of them go what are we going to do, what are we going to do?" "For god sake just help me" (*infers concern*). He's yapping away like that. Then the two men say, that if he is that **grumpy** then be alone, see you later." And the two people got really, really busy and knew it was wrong, really wrong (*infers guilt*). So they went back and got them and saved him and the man that was stranded said "Thank you" and they lived **happily** every after (*infers positive ending*). The end.

Theme: Fantasy horror, fear, violent death   **Emotions: Worry**
Plate B2(9). One day. They went to this place called Scary Movie 2 house and they opened the door and they found the "Eeeeh, Pow, Owww". So they went up the stairs and a girl was laying on the bed and twisted her head around all the way. One of them ran back downstairs and ran out (*infers fear*) and goes "stuff this" and then the man came back upstairs and the girl who was in the bed goes "you two suck" (*infer anger*) but then she got shot (*infers killing/violence ends problem*) and then they had nothing to **worry** about in their lives. The end. (OK. So you think that those people would really have something to think about. Would they **worry** about it?) Yeah (So how does your story relate to the picture?) I don't know because it just looks like a driveway going out.

Theme: Adult intimate relationship, marriage, religious tradition, death
Emotions: Happily
Plate BG(10). One fine sunny morning two people Fred and Margaret decided to get married (*infers happy intimate relationship*). They go to the church and the man, Fred is waiting for Margaret. Margaret finally turns up. They have a big party (*infers happy time*) and then suddenly they go back to the church. They look outside and they find a really big pig in the middle of the graveyard. They try to get it out and they kill it (*infers violence to get what you want*) and have it for their breakfast in the morning. They call it bacon sarnies. And after that there was nothing left in the graveyard and they lived **happily** ever after.

Theme: Relationship, difficulties and make up   **Emotions: Happily**
Plate C2(11). Once upon a time, Stephanie and her husband Frank had a really nice day, then they had a bit of an argument *(infers both happy and difficult aspects of relationships)*. Stephanie went to bed and then Frank came up the stairs and didn't know if he should get in or not *(infers uncertainty)*. He wandered off and Stephanie went looking for her *(infers concern)*. They came back and they had a nice chat. They basically just started talking about different things and they finally lived **happily** ever after and had loads of agreements and enjoyed the rest of their lives *(infers ability to solve problems)*. The end.

Theme: Fantasy, Death, police catch criminals   **Emotions: Happily**

Plate C1(12). To be honest this reminds me of War of the Worlds. (Have you seen it?) Yeah have you? (No.) I'm not going to tell you about it. (Can you tell me a story that is not War of the Worlds.) Well, one day two men went into a house and got killed (*infers violent death/fear*). Blood was everywhere. Another person went in. Police men came round looking different things and they found trails of blood and they found different. like loads of fingerprints and they found it quite successful. They caught the two villains they chained them. Barred them up basically and just got rid of them from the natural world (*infers can punish severely*). And then they went home and enjoyed the rest of their day and live **happily** ever after since then. Their not making sense these stories are they? (Do you think they are making sense?) Sort of and sort of not. They all start of "one day, two people". (What's wrong with that type of story?) It just a bit repetitive. Do those stories come to mind when you see the pictures.? Yeah.

Theme: Fight over end destruction   **Emotions: None**

Plate 13. (Pause) One day nothing happened. (Can you tell me anything else about it?). One day Homer and Ned (Without it being the Simpson's). Ok. One day ███ and Colm and together and Colm could tell the future. And one day ███ went to work and he went to press the call button, that killed the whole city (*infers great power*). And then basically he killed the whole world. And then Ned. Not Ned. Colm got the microphone and kept saying "Don't' kill anyone, don't kill anyone don't press it" (*infers begging for life*). What is sounded like to Homer "kill everyone. Press the red button as you missed a few. The words out" (*infers misunderstanding/confusion*). He had to press it (*infers compulsion*) and then Colm killed ███ in the back with a blue gun he falls down and in all the eruptions and then Colm goes "No don't fall there" (*infers fear*) and he falls there and he misses it and sticks his tongue out accidentally and press the cool destruction button and Colm goes "You stupid little plonker. You little idiot" (*infers anger)*. Ok then the whole world was absolutely blank and it was all gone because

Appendix 26 – Participant E - ORT Story Transcripts

Theme: kidnap, violent death, greed, parents not care   Emotions: None despite prompt

Plate A1(1). (Pause) Once there was a man and he saw a kid and he decided to abduct him (*infers greed*). The end. (Could you tell me a little bit more?) He held him for a ransom of £1 million quid and no one would give him the money. So he killed the kid (*infers no respect of life*) and robbed a bank. (Is that a **sad** picture?) It's like a kid looking up there because of the shine of his hair and face? And this is like an ear and a small nose.

Theme: Attraction, death, irresponsible   Emotions: None

Plate A2(2). There was this man and this woman who met in a pub and they really liked each other (*infers attraction*). The man was drunk but the woman didn't know that. He said "Do you want me to drive you home?" She said yes as she was a little bit drunk and. they drove along and hit a hedge and drove into a, crash into another car and the woman died and he just got injured (*infers lack of justice*). (Did anything else happen?) He got put in jail for ten years.

Theme: Grandpa telling a story, happy family scene   Emotions: None prompted

Plate C3(3). It was the evening and Grandpa is telling the children a story about the time he killed Hitler or something (Laughs)(*infers happy family scene*) I don't know. (What was the story about? Can you think what he was talking about?) I don't know maybe or something. He was telling a story about one he got beaten by someone that something like darts? (So what were the children doing?). They were sitting around a table and there's a cup of tea. (What sort of place is this?) A living room. (Is it a **happy** place or a **sad** place) A **happy** place. Grandpa is standing up. Its late autumn (are they around a fire?) There is just a lamp on.

Theme: Betrayal, affair, divorce, death   Emotions: Betrayed.

Plate B3(4). His man and woman who are getting married. The man has an affair but the man and woman have a child. The child sees they are having an affair and goes on and someone. Tells the other mum that he is having an affair with that one (*infers protect mother*). (And) like a person. (And how is that person feeling?) What's the word that means you **betrayed**. That one (So the person is upset?) Nods. (So how would that end up after she told that?)   The woman gets divorced from him and marries her (*infers distrust/sadness*). Then she dies of cancer (*infers dies of broken heart?*).

Theme: Family at the beach   Emotions: None

Plate AG(5). It's a sunny day and they have decided to go to the beach to…play in the sand (*infers happy family*). These are sand dune things. (So what happens next?) They build a sandcastle. (Can you tell me a bit more about the people?) There is a dad, a mum and a son and a daughter. They have a picnic. (Any more?) The end.

Theme: Burglary, family catch him   Emotions: None
Plate B1(6). The boy has heard something outside in the corridor. He is not sure what it is? (*infers uncertainty*) It could be a thing he is just about to go downstairs. He finds a burglar. But the burglar doesn't see him so he rings and goes and wakes up his mum and dad (*infers parental protection/concern*). They ring the police then they go down and knock the burglar down from behind with a hammer (*infers physical strength can solve problem*). The police came and arrested him. The end. (Ok, so is it night or during the day?). The night.

Theme: VIP, conference   Emotions: None
Plate CG(7). Mmm. Once there was this conference and this very important person, with all these photographers. The important person's heading down the stairs and getting into a limo. Everyone and all the reporters and people came and they chased after the car (*infers desire to catch VIP*). The end. (OK). (What would the person be famous for?) A celebrity

Theme: Child being bullied, fear, escape   Emotions: None
Plate A3(8). There is these two bullies and there was this kids who goes to their school (*infers fear*). These two bullies would beat him up so he is trying to avoid them (*infers violence, anger*). But one of them sees him so he starts running away (*infers fear*). They chase….. chase after him but he manages to get away (infers relief at escape). The end. (OK). So is this someone,. is the child always afraid of these two?) Yeah.

Theme: Couple hurt by lighting, their own feeling   Emotions: None
Plate B2(9). They have been. They've come from being shopping and they have locked themselves out and its raining very heavily. There is a thunder and lightening storm and they don't know you shouldn't go under a tree in a lightning storm *(infers stupidity*). The tree collapses on them. (Ok) The tree has been struck but lighting. They are both very badly hurt (*infers should know better*). (How do they know each other?) What? (What is the relationship between the people?) They are man and wife.

Theme: Child lonely or school trip
Emotions: Sad, Alone, left out (rejected) unwanted
Plate BG(10). These children are on a field trip and there is some ancient place, with arches and everyone is in a group and no has decided to pick this one no one wanted this one child in their group so he has just been left alone. (So what's he looking at?) He is looking down at the floor as he is feeling **sad**. (What would he like to happen?) They ask him to join their group. This is something that happens to him a lot. (so how does he feel about this?) Left out and unwanted. (so how would the story finish?) It always goes on like that. He sits on the bus but no one sits with him (*infers resignation at situation*).

Theme: Old lady regretting life now gone **Emotions: Happy (prompted)**

Plate C2(11). This is an older woman who, old man, old woman. Who lives on her own in a wooden hut and she is going to sleep with a mug of coco. (What happens then?) She sleeps. She dreams she was young again and **happy** and she had a brick house. (is she **happy** now or not?) No because she wakes up an realizes its only a dream. (How does she feel then?) She feels upset again. She's lonely.

Theme: Burglary, loss **Emotions: Violated**

Plate C1(12). Are those part of the picture those two lines? (Yes they are). The person looking through the window has just returned home and they realise they have been burgled (*infers shock*), because there is not much stuff around really. Everything has been thrown everywhere. (So where might they be going?) What the burglar? (The people when they came back?) They have just came back from a walk out. An evening walk. (How do they feel?) Violated. (So what happens next?) They ring the police and they say they will do what they can but they don't catch the burglar (*infers resignation).*

Theme: Humiliation, failure **Emotions: None**

Blank 13. (Pause) There was once this boy that couldn't do his homework and he gets told off. The next day even though he said he gave it a try he couldn't think of anything. (S what happens next?) He got detention. Everyone made fun of him because it was actually quite easy (*infers humiliation*).

Appendix 27 - Stimulus Variance Table for all participants compared to estimates provided by Shaw (2002)

Plate	Stimulus Variance	Particulars	Estimated Likelihood	Sample Scores
A1	Nil	See lone figure	65%	20%
	Introduce one figure	Typically low to ground	20%	80%
	Introduce two figures	One or both low to ground	13%	0%
	Introduces a group	Most likely as an audience	1%	0%
	Omits one figure		0%	0%
A2	Nil	Sees couple	90%	100%
	Introduce one figure	Giving couple a child	9%	0%
A3	Nil	Perceives three figures	98%	60%
	Omits figures	Seen as feature(s) of landscape (Q)	15	40%
AG	Nil	Sees a group	86%	80%
	Divides a group	Constructed as two separate	12%	20%
	Introduce one figures	assemblies	1%	0%
		Sees group and individual apart		
B1	Nil	Sees lone figure on stairs	88%	20%
	Introduce one figure	In the bed	11%	80%
B2	Nil	Sees couple under the tree	96%	80%
	Introduce one figure	In window or doorway	3%	20%
B3	Nil	See couple and figure in doorway	95%	40%
	Introduce one figure	A child placed with couple	2%	0%
	Introduce one figure	Construing two in doorway	1%	0%
	Omits one figure	The one in the doorway	1%	60%
BG	Nil	See group and individual apart	98%	80%
	Omits one figures	Individual merged with group	1%	20%
	Omits the group	Construing it as some ornate thing	0%	0%
C1	Nil	Sees lone figure in the window	88%	20%
	Omits one figure	At the window	10%	40%
	Introduces one figure	Within the kitchen interior	1%	40%
C2	Nil	Perceives two figures	80%	40%
	Omits one figure	The one in the bed	19%	60%
C3	Nil	Perceives three figures, two seated	90%	60%
	Omits one figure	Either of the two seated	9%	40%
CG	Nil	Sees group and individual apart	94%	100%
	Omits a group	Making mere shrubbery or such	4%	0%
	Omits one figure	Perceives only group	1%	0%

Appendix 28 -Qualities of object relations 'systems' of experience

A Systems

1. Object i.e. other person, thing interests or activity, is seen, experienced and treated as a would be independent, whole person.

2. Relationship or activity enjoyed for its own sake.

3. Ability to identify and communicate to others both the good and bad in pervious experiences.

4. Reasonable tolerance of frustration and constraints in a relationship of activity; where these are encountered efforts to adapt are readily available

5. Flexibility and acceptance of changes that can be identified as meaningful and consistent

6. Self-confidence without excessive self reference. Ability to 'lose' self in an other, or in an activity.

7. Appraises own abilities and achievements realistically in relations to those of others. Aspirations match resources and efforts

8. Negative affects, anxiety, guilt, grief, humiliation are not unduly marked.

9. Deep emotional involvement with satisfying ways of direct or indirect self expression are available.

B Systems

1. Object is seen, experienced and treated in a restricted way, or over emphasises some facet of it. It is not treated as an independent but rather coerced to fit a role required by the internal, and often unconscious system.

2. Limited enjoyments, narrowed by personal insecure motivations.

3. Inability to identify either good or bad, or both in previous experiences.

4. Intolerance of frustration and constraints in a relationship or activity. Withdrawal or views others as bad.

5. Inflexibility, intolerance of change, or seeking for change that is not meaningful or consistent.

6. Self-consciousness, excessive self reference and need for evaluation of others.

7. Appraisal of achievements and abilities is inaccurate or insecure.

8. Negative affects more marked, permanent and less likely to change with new experience.

9. Little depth of emotional investment, or considerable depth with limited ways of direct or indirect self expression.