



PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 7 NUMBER 2

WINTER 1987

SUMMER INSTITUTE IN ENGLAND

This summer, the New York City Writing Project and the British National Writing Project will be co-sponsoring a two week advanced seminar in England for British and American teachers.

There will be a maximum of 30 participants in the seminar, 15 Americans and 15 Britons. The British teachers, who teach at a variety of grade levels, K-12, are all released by their local education authorities to engage in projects in the teaching of writing under the auspices of the British National Writing Project. They will be an extremely well informed and experienced group. The 15 Americans will be drawn from Writing Projects across the country. We are looking to involve our most well-informed and experienced people to work with the British group.

Bob Weiss has been asked to nominate one or two experienced teacher-consultants to apply for this program. If you are interested, contact Bob at the Project Office. You will have to prepare application materials before the deadline of April 1, 1987.

VISITING PAWP THIS SUMMER . . .

Mary Ellen Giacobbe

noted teacher-consultant, former 1st grade teacher, participant in Donald Graves' major research studies. Published articles in *Language Arts, Instructor*, etc.

Bob Tierney

noted teacher-consultant of the Bay Area Writing Project; science teacher and specialist in writing across the curriculum; articles in *Learning, California Science*, and *California English*; National Writing Project monograph.

Len Roberts

poet, NEA Fellowship 1984, PCA Fellowships 1985 and 1986; three books of poems in print.

Rosalind Pace

poet and painter; 12 years in poets-in-schools program; prize-winner in 1982 international poetry competition.

Elaine Jarchow

educational computing/curriculum specialist; chairs Department of Curriculum and Instruction, New Mexico State University; articles in *Education, Computers*,

Reading and Language Arts, Electronic Education, The Computing Teacher, etc.; author of 6 SOFT-LIT programs.

Olivier Dunrea

author-illustrator, 4 books for young children.

Charles Crawford

writer of adolescent fiction and middle-school teacher; 3 novels in print, 1 to be published October '87.

Lela DeToye

elementary school teacher; co-director of the Mississippi Valley Writing Project summer institute; Language Arts Consultant for Adult Continuing Education at Southern Illinois University.

William Lutz

professor of English at Rutgers-Camden; former director of N.J. Basic Skills Assessment Program; author of recently published "Beginning Bibliography on Assessing Writing."

NOTES ON NEW COURSES THIS SUMMER

1. **Writer's Workshop** (June 23-25): A three-day workshop on the teacher as a writer. The workshop will guide the participants through writing activities that will model the writing process and aid the participants in internalizing and developing their own process. Martha Menz will coordinate this new course that will also incorporate peer and teacher conferences.
2. **Teaching Poetry** (July 6-10): The workshop will demonstrate practical strategies for teaching poetry to all ages. Len Roberts, a teaching poet, will illustrate practical suggestions for poetic forms and language. Participants will write poetry as well as develop uses for writing poetry across the curriculum. Doris Kirk will coordinate this one-graduate credit course.
3. **Writing and Thinking** (July 21-23): A three-day workshop to foster critical thinking skills through writing. Writing lesson models that integrate learning theory, writing process research, and practical strategies will be shared and developed. Coordinator is Jolene Borgese.
4. **Administering Writing Programs** (July 14-16): Participants will learn about the aspects and components of

(Continued on next page)

writing programs, including rationale, management, and evaluation. Ed Bureau, a 1980 PAWP Fellow, currently Language Arts Supervisor of the Springfield School District, and Dave Morgan, Assistant Superintendent, Great Valley School District, will coordinate the course, which will demonstrate how to develop a plan for implementing (or improving) a writing program.

TEACHERS & WRITERS COLLABORATIVE INVITES YOU . . .

If there is an article you have in mind, or a concept you think should be explored in the magazine, please drop a note to Ron Padgett, the editor of *Teachers and Writers*. He wants to develop the magazine into a forum for exchange of ideas and he welcomes suggestions from everyone. So please do take the time to share your comments and ideas with him at 5 Union Square West, New York, N.Y. 10003.

WINTER INSERVICE SESSIONS

Nine PAWP teacher-consultants traveled to Northampton on January 19th to in-service the entire school district on the writing process and writing to learn. Guy MacCloskey, Conne Broderick, Jim MacCall and Kevin McAneny worked with the elementary teachers; Jolene Borgese and Chris Kelly addressed the English teachers; and Martha Menz, Chris Kane and Chuck Jones presented to the non-elementary, non-English teachers on using writing in their disciplines (PE, Home Ec, Shop, etc.) to help students show meaning and learn.

This winter has produced many in-service awareness sessions, with teacher-consultants traveling to Bensalem, Springfield, Penn Delco, Springfield, Ridley, and Pottsgrove school districts. Martha Menz and Jolene Borgese will be in-servicing the entire New Hope School District on February 13th on the writing process and writing to learn.

WINTER 1987 COURSES

The basic PAWP course, *Strategies for Teaching Writing*, is being held on the WCU campus for in-service or graduate credit beginning January 15. The course is coordinated by Martha Menz.

A 13-week computer and writing course at the Hatboro-Horsham School District is being coordinated by Brenda Hurley and Mark Ruppel. Participants are becoming familiar with word processing, the writing process, and applications of the computer and other content areas of teaching.

Jolene Borgese is coordinating two five-week courses for the West Chester Area School District: "Strategies in Writing" and "Writing to Learn." The courses are offered to teachers of all disciplines and grade levels. The "Writing to Learn" course emphasizes thinking skills and how to incorporate them into all areas of the curriculum.

PAWP was awarded a grant to train GED teachers in strategies in writing to prepare for the new writing sample of the 1988 GED test. Jolene Borgese is the grant coordinator with four site coordinators: Martha Menz (Philadelphia Community College), Chris Kane (West Chester University), Inez Hill (Lutheran Settlement House) and Rudy Sharpe (Harrisburg State Hospital). Each site coordinator will present at each of the sites along with Bob Weiss. The courses will run from January to April. Marion Rosecky (Upper Dublin School District) is the project evaluator.

PCEA CONFERENCE: CONNEXIONS

The annual meeting of the Pennsylvania College English Association (PCEA) will be held March 27-28, 1987 at the Sheraton Hotel at Station Square, Pittsburgh, PA. For more information contact Evelyn A. Hovanec, The Pennsylvania State University—McKeesport Campus, University Dr., McKeesport, PA 15132, (412) 678-9501, or Doris Coldren, The Pennsylvania State University—Fayette Campus, Box 519, Uniontown, PA 15401, (412) 437-2801.

THE YOUTH WRITING PROJECT

Open to students grades 1-12

July 6-17, 1987 1:00 - 4:00 pm

General Session

- Experience the writing process
- Work in writing groups
- Compose with word processing (Apple II)
- Work with noted Pennsylvania writers
- A final-day Young Authors Conference and publication
- \$110 tuition plus non-refundable \$10 registration fee

All-Computer Session

- Write exclusively on the IBM-PC
- Same activities as General Session
- \$140 tuition plus non-refundable \$10 registration fee

Brochure and application forms ready April 1
Register by June 13, 1987

NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT SITE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

The University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education has received funding to create the Philadelphia Writing Project (PhilWP). Directed by Susan Lytle, this NWP site will serve as a writing research and resource center for teachers during the school year and will sponsor intensive institutes on writing and research each summer. For teachers in the School District of Philadelphia PhilWP complements the existing PATHS Writing Across the Curriculum Project.

For more information contact Judy Buchanan at 898-1919. Judy, Assistant Director of PhilWP, is on sabbatical from the Samuel Powel School in District 1.

FROM BEN NELMS, NEW EDITOR OF ENGLISH JOURNAL

The writing projects have been an invaluable part of my professional life; I hope that they will become equally important in the life of the journal that I will be editing. Future issues of *English Journal* will have a section called EJ Focus which will include articles on a previously announced topic. The following topics have been tentatively identified for 1987-88. Please submit an article!

Grammar and Beyond: October, 1987 (Deadline May 1, 1987). How have linguistic studies in the last twenty years affected the teaching of English? How can the study of language be integrated with writing? How are skills in the surface features of language (i.e., edited American English) most effectively taught? When grammar is taught, how is it most effectively taught? What other aspects of language study deserve attention in the secondary curriculum? Dialects? Language history? Semantics?

Internationalism in English: November, 1987 (Deadline June 1, 1987). What is the responsibility of the English teacher to introduce students to the languages and literatures of other countries, especially developing countries in Latin America, the Middle East, the Far East, and Africa? What should be the relation of English teachers and teachers of foreign languages? What literary works in translation are recommended for study in junior or senior high school? What should one teach about the relation of English to other language families and about the difficulties of translation? How and when should these concepts be taught?

Testing and Assessment in English: Time of Triumph or Time of Tyranny? December, 1987 (Deadline July 1, 1987). What progress has been made in evaluation of student achievement in English since the publication of *Common Sense and Testing in English*? How is the classroom teacher being influenced by the widespread adaptation of instructional management systems? How *should* schools assess the effectiveness of their own programs in writing and reading? What should teachers know about statewide and national testing programs?

Responding to Literature: January, 1988 (Deadline August 1, 1987). How has the teaching of literature been influenced by recent reader-response criticism? What critical approaches to literature are most effective in encouraging and refining student response? How does the teacher prepare to teach a work when attention is to be focused on student responses? What particular works (novels, poems, plays) have elicited enthusiastic and/or thoughtful response from students?

Teaching and Research: Dialogue or Debate? February, 1988 (Deadline September 1, 1987). What is the role of the

classroom teacher of English in conducting, evaluating and applying research? What are some examples of worthwhile "action" research? How is the classroom teacher involved in research as a part of the day-to-day work of teaching a class? What are the most important research questions facing teachers of English? What are the most useful research paradigms for teachers? To what extent does recent research in teacher effectiveness and school effectiveness apply to the teacher of English?

The Progress of Public Doublespeak: March, 1988 (Deadline October 1, 1987). How have the nature and incidence of public doublespeak changed since the founding of the NCTE committee? In this election year, how do you assess the use of doublespeak by leaders of government, business and education? What lessons for English teachers and their students can be derived from the winners of the annual George Orwell award? What are recommended materials and strategies for teaching students to analyze public language? Is such study declining? If so, why?

Patterns of Professional Development: April, 1988 (Deadline November 1, 1987). How should individual teachers plan for their own professional development? How can school districts, graduate schools and professional associations most effectively cooperate to provide programs for teachers? What provisions for professional development in English should be incorporated in career ladders? What summer institutes and workshops have been most successful? Why? How can English teachers become involved in planning inservice education and in influencing graduate programs for classroom teachers?

The Round Table will address practical and controversial issues facing the classroom teacher of English and will provide an opportunity for brief discussion and comment on live topics. Provide a statement of 250-300 words (i.e., approximately one double-spaced typed page). The following topics have tentatively been identified for 1987-88.

October, 1987 (Deadline May 1, 1987)

How do you provide for the effective use of small groups in the classroom?

November, 1987 (Deadline June 1, 1987)

Is there a need for writing centers in secondary schools? If so, what services should they provide?

December, 1987 (Deadline July 1, 1987)

Should English teachers be involved in the teaching of values in the classroom? If so, how?

January, 1988 (Deadline August 1, 1987)

How do you and your librarian work together?

February, 1988 (Deadline September 1, 1987)

How do you and your students share recent books that you have read and recommend?

March, 1988 (Deadline October 1, 1987)

What should English teachers do to help students analyze political rhetoric in an election year?

April, 1988 (Deadline November 1, 1987)

What would you want to tell people in other parts of the country about the language and literature of your region?

Please submit manuscripts to Ben Nelms, *English Journal*, 215-216 Townsend Hall, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211.

When you're through changing, you're through.

—Bruce Barton

**MINI-REVIEW:
No Better Way to Teach Writing**

by Janet Augenblick

No Better Way to Teach Writing, edited by Jan Turbill, distinguishes itself as an invaluable guide for teachers, administrators and parents who plan to undertake the "conference approach" for teaching writing. Although the work focuses on the primary grades, I feel that it is also an excellent reference for secondary grades. Inspired by Donald Graves' presentation at the 1980 International Conference of Teachers of English, Turbill established the St. Georges Writing Project in her district. She precisely documented the "action research" of teachers as they conducted their classes for one year, and her findings justify the use of the conference approach for others who share her interest and philosophy.

For teachers who wish to pursue this method, Turbill's book is imperative since the participants candidly reported their initial misgivings, discussed any doubts that they had, and recorded step by step their method and management techniques as they followed children's writing through the publishing stage.

For administrators Ms. Turbill provides an overview of the Process (Figure 1), minimizes the threat of the financial

risks involved, and testifies to the success of the project in every respect.

Because of its manageable length and easy readability this book is also appropriate for parents and parent groups who might otherwise be less inclined to support or adopt this approach. Also, if teachers need to enlist the help of parents as classroom volunteers (as is suggested by the editor), the work provides detailed procedures that can be followed by virtually anyone.

The scope of Turbill's work is prodigious, yet the personal nature of her documentation is inspirational. Since my goal for the 1986-1987 school year is to initiate a K-12 writing program in my district using the conference approach, I am delighted to have read her findings. I am especially grateful for the chapters which focus on the uses of the conference, questions to ask in conference, and how to integrate the teaching of grammar and mechanics in conference. Having experienced this methodology for one term, the teachers' personal observations concerning their successes and failures help me to anticipate those aspects when we begin in our district this year.

Turbill's artful weaving of philosophy, procedure and data make her work indispensable for those who are serious about teaching through a conference approach.

Janet Augenblick teaches writing in the New Hope-Solebury School District in Bucks County.

How Writers Improve Their Writing

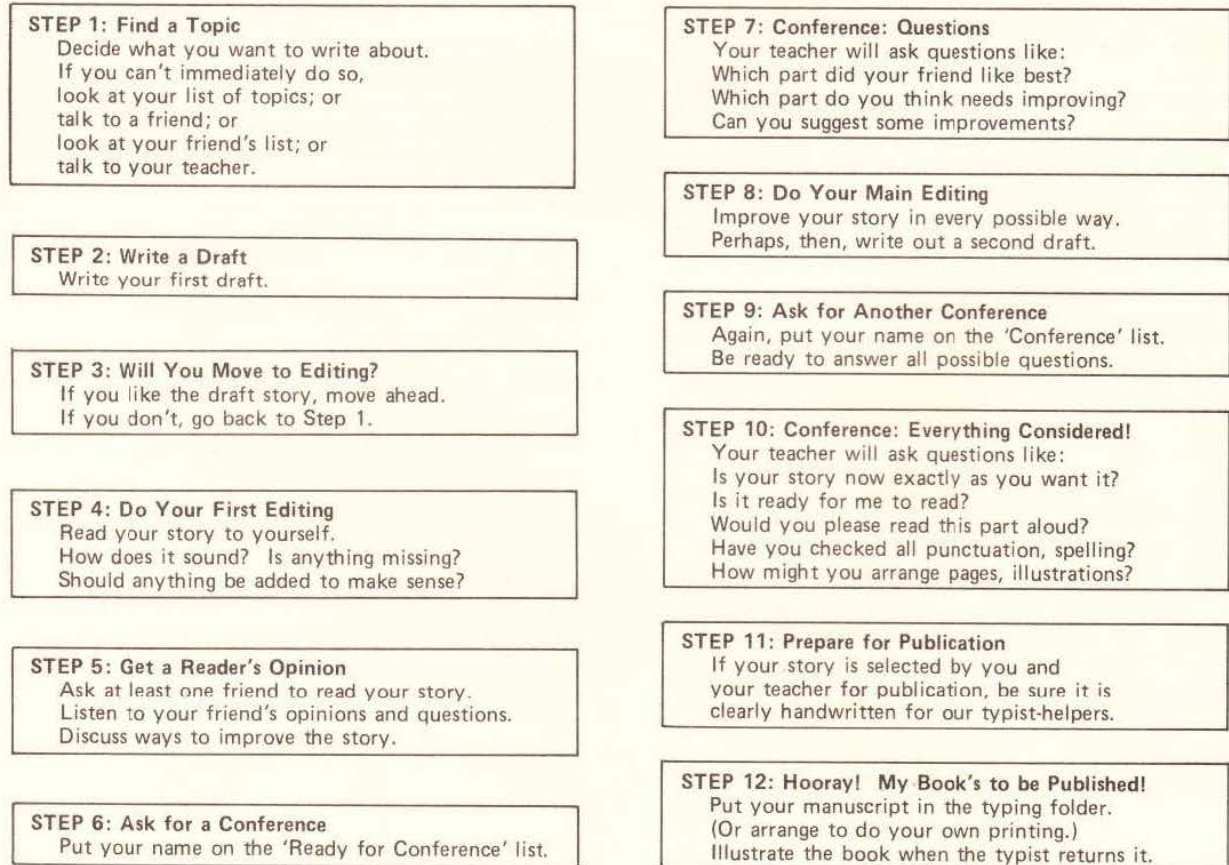


Figure 1.

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS IN THE ENGLISH PROGRAM

Departmental Responsibility for Gifted Dyslexics

by Nancy Traubitz

What about this kid? The one with the handwriting nobody can read. The klutzy kid who can't spell. He must do it on purpose! He must be a transfer student! How did he ever get to be a junior?

Yet the kid contributes enthusiastically to class discussion. He loves to talk about his writing, but when the class begins to write he watches the gym class outside the window. He can't keep his papers on his desk. He drops the dictionary. He finally turns in his long-overdue essay, in pieces. If his teacher is willing to grade the mess and return it to him for revision, he immediately loses it. Maybe we assign him to a skills-level class or the remediation group. Maybe, when he stops writing altogether, or starts to talk about dropping out, or attempts suicide, *maybe* we suspect something is very wrong with the way we're educating this student.

Recently, while my favorite klutzy kid, Joe, was in the hospital recovering from a suicide gesture, I happened to read through a set of composition revisions from his class. I also read the comments I had written on the original drafts. Partly because he was on my mind, I was especially sensitive to the mistakes I found in my own comments. The next day I talked about dyslexia as it showed up in the comments I had written during the initial grading. My "mistakes" formed the basis of my lesson for his classmates and for my fellow teachers.

Anyone involved in the writing process needs basic information about dyslexia. And that's a good thing because we *have* only the most basic information about the disability. We know that distorted handwriting, poor spelling, and poor physical coordination run in families. We diagnose such weaknesses more often in boys than in girls, and often in active, intelligent adolescents.

Sharing a Dyslexic Past

The lesson I taught my students was a liberating experience for me. I had no difficulty persuading them that I had been a hyperactive, careless, glib teenager. They were interested to hear that my father, who takes great pride in my career as a writer, himself resists writing the shortest of letters. They were amazed to be told that, while reading and writing difficulties are the most common dyslexic manifestations, the same disabilities often appear in speaking and hearing. The child who calls a bunny rabbit a "runny babbit" or hears "free" when the clerk says "fee" is dyslexic.

We are all dyslexic to some extent. The disability becomes more obvious when we are under stress. Gifted students develop compensations that help them survive. I learned to read in the blessed era when phonics were out and a child's ability to read was not a status symbol. But early on I experienced the common response to the dyslexic student. Beloved teachers cautioned me to slow down, to practice my letters. In fourth grade I dutifully filled an entire thick yellow tablet with *ns* that did not look like the Palmer method *ns*. If I wasn't careless, I must be lazy. Clearly, I wasn't lazy. Eventually I ran into the teacher who insisted I was willfully perverse. I was bad. By high school even the most supportive teachers were shocked that I didn't "bother" to proofread my compositions.

Too many of my students recognized their own experiences in my story.

We all agreed that not all problems with handwriting, spelling, and physical coordination are the result of

dyslexia. And some students may be careless, lazy, perverse, bad. Even some dyslexic students are careless, lazy, perverse, bad! As a student I felt enormous guilt and frustration because I recognized the truth in the accusations of my teachers, but at the same time I wasn't *that* careless, lazy, perverse, or bad. My teachers must have felt enormous guilt and frustration, too. After all, I wouldn't have shared my painful past had I not, as a teacher, been too aware of the suicidal level to which the dyslexic student can be driven.

Indicators of Dyslexia

The classroom English teacher who is willing to struggle through the compositions of the klutzy kid who cannot spell can check for five common indicators of dyslexia and then search his or her soul before failing the student for perverse and willful disregard for the conventions of standard written English.

1. Watch for lost letters.
2. Watch for letter reversal.
3. Watch for syllable reversal.
4. Watch for whole-word reversal.
5. Watch for substitution of look-alike letters and words.

To the dyslexic student, a handwritten *l* and an *e* look the same. The *l* is taller but not different in shape. A *p*, a *b*, and a *d* are all the same shape, only placed differently. A *w* is only an *m* reversed. An *n* and a *u* are the same, as are a *u* and a *v*. An *n* and the Palmer *r* are the same. My own dyslexia was finally diagnosed when I wrote on the family shopping list *paking dower* for *baking powder*. A sensitive husband realized I didn't know a *p* from a *b* from a *d*!

Often these five indicators coalesce. The samples I found in my comments to the student writers were usually a combination of lost letters and substitution. For example, I wrote "your learing to trust yourself" and "you actions are not entirely clear." I know the difference between *you're* and *your* and *you*. What we often diagnose as homonym confusion is a lost element, the missing apostrophe or *e* in *you're* or the missing *n* in *learning*. Remember, the Palmer *r* and the *n* are very similar. The doubled letter is a particular hardship for the dyslexic. I wrote "rather bluned here" instead of "blurred here," the *r/n* problem combined with the lost double letter *r*. "To talk the car" should have been "to take the car" but because *l* and *e* are the same configuration they are often substituted for each other. When such substitution is combined with reversal, *take* can become *talk*. Whole-word reversal is also common. I wrote, "You lose your reader several at points" for "You lose your reader at several points."

I shared my "mistakes" with my students on a very personal, autobiographical level. The honors English class followed my narrative with rapt attention. Severely dyslexic students in each class watched intently but offered no comment or response. By high school profoundly dyslexic gifted students have learned to write it down and check it over, never trusting themselves. Many students did relate the five indicators to their own writing difficulties. Most of them were familiar with the terribly intense attention required of dyslexics to remember names, give directions, write down phone numbers, page numbers, license numbers. I had to remind them that dyslexia is not an excuse for untrained memory or laziness or carelessness, or badness.

I discussed my lesson with our reading teacher, who asked me to share the lesson with her reading class of about ten students. All these students had serious reading problems and had discussed dyslexia at length. One student insisted I was "putting us on." He refused to believe an

(Continued on next page)

English teacher could have problems writing! Another student looked away and got out his math while I spoke, but then asked a multitude of questions. A girl asked why I tried to fill out forms in the first place. "Why don't you get someone else to do it for you and just sign your name?" I explained that on half the formal documents in my life, my name is spelled wrong. "You mean you can't even spell your own name?" Well, no, not always, not ever with absolute certainty. I believe much of the resistance in this group was resistance to the very painful facts of life every dyslexic learns. Writing is challenging, hard work. No amount of proofreading assures success.

Teaching the Gifted Dyslexic

As writers who teach writing, we have a great responsibility to these unusual students who arrive in our classrooms, young adults with compensatory mechanisms already so firmly in place that our efforts to teach them can quite literally destroy them. We must take the time, despite the stacks of "normal" papers, to identify and nurture dyslexic students. The new lap computer will ease note taking in class. Making a typewriter available helps. Word processing helps. For some dyslexic students, the very rigid, old-fashioned, entirely predictable teacher is the most successful guide. Most of all, awareness on the part of the writing teacher helps. Every writing teacher needs to be reminded that we teach more than handwriting.

We teach Joe, who lived, and won an NCTE Writing Achievement award and went to Princeton. And Mike, who helped me with the book inventory when I never knew if I had 196, 961, or 691 anthologies, because 6 and 9 are simple reversals. Maybe I had 199 or 661 or . . . he's a lawyer now. And Cherie, who produced her research essay on videotape for PBS, or Steph, who finally was able to write about being expelled in sixth grade because she spelled "shirt" as "shit" . . . and became a writer.

Dr. Nancy Traubitz is English Department chair at Springbrook High School in Silver Spring, Maryland, and a frequent contributor to the CSSEDC Quarterly. Reprinted by permission of the National Council of Teachers of English.

EVALUATION OF NWP

In 1970 the Carnegie Corporation of New York funded a three-year, outside evaluation of the writing project that was completed with nineteen technical reports. In his executive summary, Michael Scriven, evaluation director, stated that the writing project "appears to be the best large-scale effort to improve composition instruction now in operation in this country, and certainly is the best on which substantial data are available." In 1983, the Bay Area Writing Project published the *National Writing Project Evaluation Portfolio*, a collection of thirty-two evaluation studies conducted at National Writing Project sites nationwide. This portfolio includes positive data on: impact on student writing; impact on teacher attitudes and practices; and impact on administrators, on program costs, and on professional activities of teachers. The thirty-two studies included from the more than sixty available were those that: satisfied the requirements of evaluation designs; had data available for analysis; had completed all stages of the study; and had available written reports of the results.

From "Joining a National Network: The National Writing Project" by James Gray.

WRITE THINKING

Writing was so hard. It was not just setting down your thoughts or putting those clippings into a narrative, but more like learning how to think and then teaching yourself to write. It was not just hard—it was impossible for her. Her hand stiffened on her keyboard after the first *bop-bop-bop*.

She thought: I should get one of these word processors.

The Institute had a computer, with a telescreen and a printer. She sat at it with a stack of notes. *Chk-chk*. And then, *chk-chk-chk*. But it didn't think. It was a glorified typewriter.

—Paul Theroux, *Half Moon Street*, 1984



Barbara Marshall, Philadelphia PAWP ('82) Fellow and teacher at the Edwin Forrest School in Philadelphia, is a member of the Steering Committee for the Center for Teaching and Learning at Community College in Philadelphia.

A paper written by Barbara was published in Joel Slater's *Antiques and Auction News*. It appears later in this issue of the *Newsletter*.

The following Philadelphia PAWPs have made presentations with the Center for Teaching and Learning:

Christine Kane, PAWP ('81) on September 25, 1986, "Pre Writing."

Barbara Marshall, PAWP ('82) on October 2, 1986, "African Safari."

Audrey Badger, PAWP ('82) on October 23, 1986, "Revision—A Step in the Writing Process."

Cecelia Evans, PAWP ('81) on November 20, 1986, "Proofreading and Editing."

The Upper Darby School District nominated Martha Menz (one of our Ass't Directors) for the National School Board Association Scholarship, which would award \$2500 to be used for furthering a teacher's education. The winner will need to travel to San Francisco to accept the award. Good luck, Martha!

Lois Snyder, also of the Upper Darby School District and our Co-director of the Summer Institute, has been asked to help evaluate the Language Arts Program of the Haverford School District.

Gloria Wetzel (PAWP '82) presented a paper "Writing Across the Curriculum: Science and Math" at the Delaware Valley Writing Council October 11, 1986.

WORKSHOPS

HOLISTIC ASSESSMENT OF WRITING

Pre Session Workshop (PWP 504-21) 1 Graduate Credit
June 17-18, 1987 8:45 am-4:30 pm

- Improve your ability to assess writing
- Theory and practice of rapid, reliable assessment of large numbers of writing samples
- General-impression, primary trait, and other scoring systems
- Register by May 23

THE PROCESS-CENTERED WRITING CLASS

Regular Session Workshop (PWP 501-31) 1 Graduate Credit or
1 In-service Credit

June 23-25, 1987 9:30 am-12:30 pm and 1:30-3:30 pm

- Awareness of modern approaches to writing instruction
- All steps/stages of writing as a process
- Concurrent workshops for teachers of different levels
- Experience and discuss the writing process
- Noted speakers and presenters

WRITERS' WORKSHOP

Regular Session Workshop (PWP 599-31) 1 Graduate Credit

June 23-25, 1987 9:30 am-12:30 pm and 1:30-3:30 pm

- Develop writing through your own writing process
- Model and internalize all writing process phases
- Experience peer and teacher conferences

WRITING IN THE CONTENT AREAS

Regular Session Workshop (PWP 505-31) 1 Graduate Credit or
1 In-service Credit

June 30-July 2, 1987 9:30 am-12:30 pm and 1:30-3:30 pm

- Writing to learn; study skills
- Assignment design and writing process
- Classroom management; handling the paperload
- Noted guest speakers and presenters

TEACHING POETRY

Regular Session Workshop (PWP 599-32) 1 Graduate Credit

July 6-10, 1987 9:30 am-12:30 pm

- Work with a nationally known practicing poet
- Explore methods for students of all ages
- Practical suggestions on poetic form and language
- Steps for writing poetry
- Using poetry writing across the curriculum

SCHEDULE 1987 PAWP SUMMER SCHEDULE 1987 PAWP SUMMER SCHEDULE 1987
PAWP SUMMER SCHEDULE 1987 PAWP SUMMER SCHEDULE 1987 PAWP SUMMER

ADMINISTERING WRITING PROGRAMS

Regular Session Workshop (PWP 599-33) 1 Graduate Credit
July 14-16, 1987 9:30 am-12:30 pm and 1:30-3:30 pm
-Identify critical elements of a program
-Program management, organization, evaluation
-Practical plans and ideas to improve programs
-Needed administrative skills and resources
-May be taken as non-credit workshop

WRITING AND THINKING

Regular Session Workshop (PWP 599-34) 1 Graduate Credit
July 21-23, 1987 9:30 am-12:30 pm and 1:30-3:30 pm
-Effective writing instruction to teach thinking
-Link writing process and learning-centered writing with cognitive skills
-Apply ideas of Bloom, Perry and other researchers

COURSES

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING WRITING

Regular Session Course (PWP 502-31 or 32) 2 or 3 Graduate Credits or 2 In-service Credits
June 29-July 14 or 16, 1987 9:30 am-12:30 pm
-Explore practical and imaginative approaches to the teaching and learning of writing
-Lecture-demonstrations with applications across the curriculum
-Open to teachers in all subjects and at all levels
-Three-credit participants meet two additional days

COMPUTERS AND WRITING

Regular Session Course (PWP-508-31) 3 Graduate Credits
June 29-July 17, 1987 9:30 am-12:30 pm
-Using computers at all stages of the writing process
-Using, developing, and evaluating computer-assisted instruction in writing
-Demonstrations of computer courseware
-Hands-on experience (Apple II)
-Limited to 30 participants

ADVANCED INSTITUTE ON EVALUATION

Regular session (PWP 598-31) 4 Graduate Credits
July 20-31, 1987 9:30 am-12:30 pm and 1:30-3:30 pm
-Study major issues of assessment, including holistic assessment and commenting
-Assessment goals, methods, obstacles, solutions
-Practical and theoretical approaches
-Develop seminar presentations and action plans for evaluation

COMPLETE BOTH SIDES

GRADUATE COURSE REGISTRATION

Session: Spring Summer Fall
 Year: 1987

This card is for students who wish to enroll in a graduate course(s) for personal or professional growth only, and does not imply formal admission to the graduate school. Students wishing to pursue graduate credits toward certification or a degree program must complete the Application for Admission to the Graduate Curricula and submit the required accompanying materials. A fee of \$10 is required for all first-time students and will be applied to the fee charged if the student, at a later date, makes formal application for admission.

NAME: _____ Social Security No: _____
Last First M.I.

ADDRESS: _____ Date of Birth: _____
Street

City State Zip Sta County (Required)

PHONE: (home) _____ (work) _____

COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP: _____

BACHELOR'S DEGREE FROM: _____ Year _____

First-time graduate student at WCU? Yes No

TO COMPUTE YOUR FEES:

TO REGISTER

COURSE/WORKSHOP	TUITION/FEES (audit same as graduate fee)	YOUR COST
PRE SESSION - Register by 5-23-87		
Holistic Assessment-	\$119 graduate	_____
REGULAR SESSION - Register by 6-13-87		
Process-Centered Writing Class	\$118 graduate	_____
	or \$ 80 inservice	_____
Writers Workshop	\$118 graduate	_____
Writing in Content Areas	\$118 graduate	_____
	or \$ 80 inservice	_____
Teaching Poetry	\$118 graduate	_____
Administering Writing Programs	\$118 graduate	_____
	or \$ 80 inservice	_____
	(optional) \$ 15 luncheons (3)	_____
Writing and Thinking	\$118 graduate	_____
Strategies for Teaching Writing	\$186 2 graduate	_____
	or \$279 3 graduate	_____
	or \$150 inservice	_____
Computers and Writing	\$339 3 graduate	_____
Advanced Institute	\$412 4 graduate	_____

Make your check payable to West Chester University and send with this page (both sides) to the Pennsylvania Writing Project, Phillips 210, West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383.

You may charge the cost of graduate tuition and the community center fee (but no other fees) to Visa or Mastercard (forms available from the Project office) but none of the other costs. To figure your charge, multiply \$93 times the number of credits you are planning to take. Send a check made payable to West Chester University for the remaining fees. Send all payment materials and this page to the Writing Project office.

For Inservice and Graduate Credit, Complete both sides of this page and mail to the Project Office with your payment.

TRANSCRIPTS: Transcripts are mailed to participants in mid-August. Any other arrangements must be made directly with the Records Office by the participant.

RESIDENCE RATES are approximately \$85 per person per week for room and board. Apply directly to University Housing, West Chester University, West Chester PA 19383.

PARKING is available in any campus lot. No permits are required in the summer. There is no on-the-street parking except as indicated on street signs.

QUESTIONS: Call 215-436-2297 Mon-Fri 8:30 am 2:30 pm or leave a message on our answering machine.

ADDITIONAL FEES for Graduate Credit participants:

First-time graduate students of WCU	\$ 10	_____
Community Center fee (Regular Session)	2	_____
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE WCU		_____

STATISTICAL DATA: West Chester University is in compliance with the Office of Civil Rights, the National Center for Educational Statistics and the PA Dept. of Education. Each applicant is required to indicate his/her race/ethnic classification and sex. Please check one in Section A and one in Section B

A. Racial/Ethnic Identity:

- Black/Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaskan Native
 Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic White/Non-Hispanic

C. (optional) Handicapped: Yes No

If "Yes": Hearing Visually Mobility

Other _____

B. Sex: Female Male

I certify that I have answered all applicable questions and that all information submitted is correct to the best of my knowledge.

GRADUATE OFFICE APPROVAL:

Yes No

Signature _____

Date _____

Dean _____

The Pennsylvania Writing Project and National Capital Area Writing Project
with the Boynton/Cook Publishing Co.

CONFERENCE

THE COMPOSING PROCESS REVISITED

MAY 29-30, 1987

FEATURING: Lillian Brannon
Mary Ellen Giacobbe
Dan Kirby
Ken Macrorie
James Moffett
Peter Stillman
and others

A FRESH LOOK AT THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF WRITING INSTRUCTION

The conference will be held at West Chester University and the Catholic University of America MAY 29-30, 1987. Half of the speakers will present each day, switch locations and give their presentations again.

Pick the most convenient location and join us! Information on local motels is available.

Cost: \$70.00

Registration materials will be mailed next month

A SINGER, JUST LIKE GRANDMA'S

by Barbara J. Marshall

At eight o'clock, Hughes's Auction filled with city people and farmers pushing and shoving between the wooden tables and crowded aisles. The smell of hay, sweat, and stale tobacco saturated the air. The dirt floor was littered with crushed cellophane wrappers, cigarette butts and ticket stubs.

Like myself, city people were looking for a fantastic bargain, or lost attic treasure. Country farmers were out to sell their wares, find a useful tool, or secure a wonderful newfangled household object for the missus.

The locals found everything their hearts desired. They stumbled to their vans, loaded down with furniture and box lots of goodies.

Antique dealers, with large U-Haul trucks, were yelling and bidding as if their lives depended upon acquiring the object the auctioneer dangled before their greedy eyes.

I found nothing!

Entire rows were auctioned off for as little as fifty cents. But I saw nothing I wanted enough to bid on, and I lost my gold chain.

Bored, feet hurting, and thirsty, I circled between the rows of collectibles and treasures for another hour. There had to be something in those boxes for me!

During the heat of the housewares bidding, I was wedged between a huge housewife bidding on a box of linens and her equally huge husband, dressed entirely in black with a Rumpelstiltskin-style beard, holding a moldy crate of picture frames.

'Scuse me, pardon me..., Sorry... Excuse me...

As I doubled back toward the concession stand, an evil-looking white goat brushed past me, pursued by a barefoot boy with cheek of tan. I had no intention of blessing him since he knocked me into the corner of what appeared to be an old wooden dresser, only much shorter.

As I rubbed my hip, I noticed that what I thought was a small dresser was actually the corner of a treadle sewing machine, the kind my grandmother kept in her sitting room.

As a child, I spent hours "sewing" whenever I went to visit my grandmother. Her sewing machine held untold mysteries with its long skinny shuttle and iron treadle. It didn't need electricity to run! It looked like a small desk when it was shut! In fact, the machine itself seemed to appear magically when the top was lifted. That Singer was truly one of life's mysteries.

I eased over to the sewing machine, moved boxes from the top, pulled the cabinet away from the wall and looked around to see if anyone was watching.

I had heard that antique dealers lay in wait at country auctions. They bid on items they didn't want just to raise prices. A regular person, especially one from the city, had to watch out for those unscrupulous antique dealers.

Good, they're busy with the glassware...

I opened the top of the machine and set the head into the table top. Foot to treadle: it worked! With no other thought in mind, I knew I would claim the 1876 Singer.

My plans were slightly dampened: it was sitting in the last row, the row reserved for box lots. They wouldn't auction it off until eleven o'clock; it was just 9:30! During the hour and a half wait, I tried to remain calm, I even tried a few bids:

The box of hats ta' numba' twenty-four!

Not me!

Do I hea' \$25 for the milk glass pitcher? Sold ta' numba' sixty-five!

Wrong number again!

Finally lot ninety three; funny, Grandmother always said

nine and three were lucky numbers; I hope that luck works for me!

O.K. folks, lot ninety-three—this hea' Singa' Sewin' Machine—wood cabinet, machine works good, so they tell me...Do I hea' five?

My hand flew up.

Five-five-got me five-Do I hea' ten?

A short humanoid in blue coveralls held up by safety pins shouted "Ten"!

Corner says Ten! Ten- ten- Do I hea' twelve? Sumbody give me Twelve...Grandma Wilson only used dis machine on Satady!

"Twelve," drawled a thin blonde with pigtails, wearing a bikini top.

Twelve-twelve, Blondie says twelve- do I hea' fifteen?

I raised my shaking hand.

Fifteen, got cha' how 'bout Twenty? Twenty-twenty, who'll give me twenty?

Blondie shook her braids; the war was on between me and coveralls...

He nodded at twenty, spit a brown wad of tobacco on the floor and shot a furtive glance my way.

The man'll give twenty- Do I hea' twenty-five?

"Twenty-five!," boomed a voice I didn't know I had.

Coveralls seemed to have lost his taste for tobacco; he shoved his short hands into his deep pockets and turned to look at lot ninety-four...

The lady's got twenty-five! Do I hea' thirty? Thirty-thirty, who'll jump in at thirty? Thirty-thirty, do I hea' thirty?

Coveralls continued to root through lot ninety-four...

The silence in the barn had the taste of defeat and the aroma of victory...

Twenty-twenty-five-goin' once... goin' twice... Sold for twenty-five to the lady up front...Numba' three!

The Singer left Hughes's Auction at 11:05 for its new home. It has the place of honor in my sewing room, surrounded by pictures of old sewing machines, sewing objects, and needle crafts. The 1876 Singer Sewing Machine is used!!!

Grandmother used to say, "If you don't use it some other woman will; so it's better to wear out than rust out!"

Barbara J. Marshall, Philadelphia PAWP ('82) Fellow and teacher at the Edwin Forrest School in Philadelphia, is a member of the Steering Committee for the Center for Teaching and Learning at Community College in Philadelphia. This piece was published in Joel Slater's Antiques and Auction News.

A poor writer lacks comma sense.

—Anonymous

WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

The ninth annual conference of the Writing Centers Association: East Central Region will be held May 8-9, 1987 at Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio. For more information contact Sherri Zander, Director, Writing Center, Department of English, Youngstown State University, Youngstown, OH 44555.

KEN MACRORIE'S SEARCHING WRITING: A MINI-REVIEW

by Marty Walton

Searching Writing is designated by the author as a "contextbook" rather than a textbook, because the content of what the student has written about his subject as a result of interviewing and doing other forms of research is brought up against the context of authorities, not with the idea of one being better than the other, but because both are arrived at in much the same manner. The book includes directions for thirty-one assignments to help the student gain confidence in his own writing and researching ability and to encourage him to come to his own conclusions. The researching goes beyond a classroom assignment and becomes a real-life, practical way of gathering information pertinent to the student's experiences and needs. This is done through the "I-search" paper, a thoughtfully conceived substitution for the traditional research paper. The format of the I-search paper is as follows:

- (1) What I already know
- (2) What I want to find out
- (3) Searching
- (4) What I have discovered

The book is divided into three sections. Part one, "Writing Every Day" discusses principles of good writing. Part two, "I-Searching", includes various aspects of the I-search paper. Part three of the contextbook is entitled "Becoming an Editor" and covers such topics as response and conference groups, use of library resources, and peer-editing.

As a student, I found myself caught up in the idea of an I-search paper and have begun to search a topic of personal interest to me. Thus I feel this contextbook does a good job of motivating student involvement. As a teacher, I have begun to think of ways to adapt some of Macrorie's ideas to my seventh grade classes. While Macrorie has written this book to be used as a text for college level students, the ideas presented could be adapted by a resourceful teacher for use at various secondary levels.

Marty Walton is a 7th grade English teacher in the Somerset Area School District and a Fellow of the 1986 Institute.

A WRITING STYLE IS BORN: "TRANSLATIONAL WRITING"

by Alice E. Ebert

Conception took place in 1981 when PAWP fellows presented workshops in the Owen J. Roberts School District on "learning to write" and "writing to learn" which sparked my interest to gain more writing strategies to help my basic language arts students improve their reading comprehension and retention. On June 27th, 1986, after becoming a fellow of the PAWP, I took three Process-Centered Writing Workshops (all of which enriched me tremendously as a teacher and as a person). In the nourishing environment of the third Process-Centered Writing Workshop, an idea came to me for a new style of writing that fosters learning and reading comprehension. I have named this new baby "Translational Writing."

Just as we are products of our environment and people who influenced us, so is "Translational Writing." Bob Weiss taught me "Learning-Centered Writing." Keith Caldwell taught me listening, clustering, categorizing, and mapping. These strategies were further nurtured by Dorsey Hammond's viable techniques of combining writing with the predictive and reflective stages of reading to aid students in comprehending material they read.

In her workshop, "Learning-Centered Writing," Lois Snyder shared Nancy Martin's definition of transactional writing, feedback to a teacher what the teacher expects you to tell them, and Bob Weiss's description of "Learning-Centered Writing." As I mulled these concepts and mixed them with the rich diet of writing strategies I have been fed through PAWP coupled with my reading training under Dorsey Hammond, I suddenly realized that some types of writing I ask my students to do to help them improve their comprehension takes in all I have learned with process-centered writing and "Learning-Centered Writing." The focus or reason for which I have my students write made me realize that a great deal of writing I ask my students to do is designed to aid them in translating what their reading material means, hence, "Translational Writing"; a unique mixture of learning-centered, process-centered and transactional writing.

In ninth grade my students read Allan W. Eckert's novel, *Incident at Hawk's Hill*. The incident is based on an actual occurrence which centers around six year old Ben who wanders away from home and lives with a badger for two months. I have checked a factual article on badgers and discovered that all of Eckert's many details about badgers are true. In chapter two there is a detailed account of how the badger digs her breeding den. The "Translational Writing" I ask my students to do is to diagram and label the tunnels and den chamber as described in the chapter, thereby translating the written description into writing that helps them visualize what they have read. It helps them see, understand, and remember what they read.

Another technique I have them do is to map the characteristics of the badger, Ben, and George Burton. They separate the characteristics into physical and personality traits. I show them different ways to construct maps such as placing "Ben's Physical Traits" in the center of a circle, then writing these traits on lines that come out like spokes from the center of a wheel. Again students translate the written description to various map and diagram forms. Using "Translational Writing," I have seen my students comprehend and retain a far greater amount. Keith Caldwell had noted that a study done on fourth grade students showed mapping increasing their grades as much as forty percentage points. Why? Reading, organizing and writing involve thinking and mental manipulation which slow the mind so that it can assimilate and retain information read. When I hear, I forget; when I see, I remember; when I do, I learn!

I want to remind myself as I plan my lessons for the next school year to do much "showing and demonstrating" of what I want my students to do and to increase their involvement in "doing" more writing to increase learning.

My students may take their literature-based "Translational Writings" from my class to their English class and use them in process-centered writing assignments, but many times they do not need to because they remember the details so well.

Because "Translational Writing" helps them understand and remember details, my students are able to do higher level analytical thinking and writing about the characters in literature and topics we cover in content areas and newspapers.

Another type of writing I do centers on "What am I going to learn?" Before reading the chapter on the badger, I have students pair up and list all they know about badgers. I have them check the thoughts of which they are sure and put a question mark next to those of which they are unsure. I make a composite list on the board. Now students are eager to read to discover if their ideas were correct, incorrect, or unaddressed. Listing focuses their attention to have "a reason to read" through predictive writing.

The summer workshop helped me truly focus on what I want my students to do in my writing assignments: "Translational Writing." It also sparked many other ideas I can use to improve my classroom atmosphere and teaching.

I appreciated Jolene Borgese's story of "Writers, over here!" It made me truly examine the ways I can foster my students' positive attitudes about themselves as readers, writers, and learners by how I approach them.

I appreciated Jolene Borgese's and Dan Kirby's demonstrations of the writing process. Although the entire process is to happen in my students' English classes, I plan to negotiate at least one assignment this year where I get students to "publish." Most of my predictive and translational assignments are geared to pre-writing techniques that feed process-centered writing in English class. I plan to use the idea of family stories as described by Jolene after we read *Incident at Hawk's Hill*.

I've used "Learning-Centered Writing" as described by Bob Weiss, but not enough. A way in which I see I can do that is as we prepare to read. I will tell students that they will write at least five new facts they learned about the badger when they finished reading the assigned part. I will check for accuracy of ideas and give point value. As I have learned from Keith Caldwell, the more points the better with basic students. They need extrinsic rewards because their intrinsic motivation has been stifled. I will encourage them to list more than the required amount for additional credit. I can ask them to summarize in their own words what they learned from their reading assignment during the period. At the beginning of class, I may ask them to summarize the previous chapter and then predict what they think might happen next and why.

This year for the first time, many of my students will have the opportunity to take basic science and social studies. I will work with them in their study skills and show them how to use "Translational Writing" in the form of listing, categorizing, mapping and diagramming, and "Learning-Centered Writing" to improve their comprehension in these content areas.

Many students come to me remembering much failure. These types of writing help my students take ownership of their learning and give them a true feeling of accomplishment because they sense themselves as thinkers and learners.

I appreciate the wealth of ideas gained from the total team — the motivational strategies and the concepts of "showing and demonstrating" and "doing" and the thorough demonstration in process-centered writing done by Jolene and Dan, the new ideas of ways to use "Learning-Centered Writing" from Bob Weiss and Lois Snyder, the "I-Search Paper" described by Bob McCann, and the birth of the new idea and label of the type of writing I ask my students to do to reinforce their comprehension, "Translational Writing."

Alice E. Ebert, a 1981 Fellow from the Owen J. Roberts School District, returned to WCU this summer for several courses.

★★★★★

PERCEPTIONS OF WRITING SKILLS

A research investigation into the specific characteristics of brief, impromptu essay writing was made on a sample of 806 essays randomly selected from over 80,000 essays written for the College Board's English Composition Achievement Test (ECT) during December 1979.

The study was undertaken because "a number of major obstacles . . . operate in our society that obstruct the development of writing skills." First, the level of effort and time needed to learn to write well is approached only by a

select few; writing is a complex skill mastered only through lengthy, arduous effort, and few people in any program can direct others in this effort. Another major obstacle to effective writing instruction is that many English teachers are ill-equipped to teach writing and feel uncomfortable in their efforts to do so. A third obstacle is that teachers often disagree in their perceptions of writing skills. "Even though English teachers at times agree on writing standards and criteria (Diederich 1974), they do not agree on the degree to which any given criterion should affect the score they assign to a paper."

The standards that define good writing apparently do not serve well when scores are assigned to a piece of writing. The student needs to know more than a score in order to focus his or her efforts in learning to write better.

As a result of the research two conclusions have been reported. Different writing problems occur with different frequencies for different groups, but three stand out as most important for all groups: organization, thesis development, and the use of supporting materials. A second conclusion is that certain features may be important at the highest or lowest levels of skill only. "As a result, it seems unnecessary to burden all students with the study of all aspects of writing."

The study of how teachers perceived writing skills found that: 1) syntactic and lexical characteristics are rarely of high importance when dealing with an argumentative or persuasive task; 2) essay length is an important influence on reader judgments; 3) differences for groups sampled (black, white, Hispanic who reported that English was their best language, and Hispanics who reported that English was not their best language) are in syntax and word use, not in characteristics of discourse.

★★★★★

SOMETIMES THE GRASS ISN'T GREENER

In an article from the *ACAC* (Association of College Admission Counselors) *Journal*, Margaret E. Perry, assistant dean of students and associate director of admissions at the University of Chicago, listed examples of writing by students who took the CEEB English Composition test in 1964. Perry helped to score these tests, so she was able to cull these examples.

There is a lot of ill will between good and evil.
Harrow stories are read for cathartic purposes, too.
If all people agreed with each other, the world would be flat and we might not be alive today.
Dime detective novels were being read faster than they could be written.

There is nothing wrong with crime unless it goes to extremes.

There is necrophilia in all of us.

Man is revolved in a more criminal atmosphere than women; therefore, women are more interested in reading about crime than men.

Whatever it is, America would rather watch a bank being held up than a performance of "Swan Lake."

People enjoy murder and other forms of vandalism.

In today's world crime and violence are denied to the average person.

Most of us can control the wants of our Freudian "Id," but what of those of us who can't? How interesting!

This is a true statement which cannot be detested.

Human nature is an acquired characteristic.

People must learn to cathart.

People enjoy a healthy sick feeling.

Crime has existed since Eve ate us out of house and home.

★★★★★

STEAL THESE IDEAS

by *The New York City Writing Project*

Attempting to make up a meaningful final exam for her career guidance class, Lisa Rosenberg of James Monroe HS asked each of her students to submit one question for the test. They could use their notes and text, or not; and the only limit placed on them excluded questions requiring a yes/no answer.

The students struggled with several cognitive and writing issues: focusing on a topic, moving their thinking from the general to the specific, summarizing the term's work, being goal-oriented, phrasing clearly, saying what they wanted to say. For most students, this required at least one conference with the teacher for assistance in focusing more clearly on a specific topic or achieving clarity. Other students were also asked to give feedback about the question's validity or comprehensibility.

Though surprisingly difficult, the assignment yielded very positive results: the students were empowered by their voice in classroom procedure (it was motivationally powerful enough to inspire any of the more reticent students); it required all of them to utilize cognitive strategies and to communicate effectively; plus, it alleviated her workload.

In a unit on perception for a speech communications class, Gary Eiferman of Morris HS has used art and music to demonstrate how we interpret the world around us differently.

1. Exhibit 3-5 reproductions of paintings in any genre or subject matter. Ask students to free-write for 3-5 minutes about a story taking place in the painting or what they see that might be represented by the work. Students then read their responses to each work for comparisons and analysis.

2. Play 2 selections of music for 3 minutes, preferably something abstract (electronic, new music or what is sometimes called "space music"). Ask students to write about the images that come to their minds as they hear the music. (Tell them to think of the music as a soundtrack to a movie!) Then have students respond and compare their writing to demonstrate the differences in perception we have.

Joe Scrow of Curtis HS has his students write letters to each other on the last day of class. Because he only has 10-12 students in his class, each student is able to write a letter to every other student in the 40-minute period. As they finish each letter, the writer folds it up, puts the receiving student's name on it, and puts it in a pile. At the end of the period, students leave with all the letters addressed to them.

Using an idea that John Browne brought back from an AP English conference, Melanie Hammer of Art & Design has her students turn in a blank cassette with their longer written pieces. She talks her responses into the tape as she reads. It doesn't take much longer than responding in writing, and she is able to say a lot more. While reading a set of papers recently, she found herself reciting poetry, referring a student to a Faulkner story, discussing the problem of sexism in science fiction, predicting the story out loud as she read, and explaining grammar points, such as how a student might set up a dialogue so it would be easier to understand. Students take the tapes home and listen, and frequently come into school the next day wanting to talk more about what she has said. They also trade tapes, listening to what she said to their friends and members of their groups.

After participating in the NYC Writing Project Advanced Institute in England, Robin Cohen of Martin Luther King, Jr. HS "stole an idea" and modified it for her ESL class. During the summer, participants worked in pairs on reading interviews, questioning each other on various aspects of their reading behavior. Robin asked her ESL students to work in pairs on "learning English interviews." Students generated questions, interviewed each other, wrote first drafts, worked in revision pairs and are now working to put together a class magazine displaying the many different experiences they had learning English.

Steal These Ideas is an ongoing column of the New York City Writing Project Newsletter.

FROM OTHER SITES . . .

The National Writing Project has had a major impact on promoting classroom-based teacher research in writing. Anne Gere, Director of the Puget Sound Writing Program and Chair of the National Council of Teachers of English Committee on Research, was instrumental in securing NCTE funding to support research conducted by classroom teachers, and several NWP Teacher/Consultants have been recipients of these awards. The Maryland Writing Project Research Institute was selected, from nominations submitted by 79 universities and colleges, as the winner of the 1985 G. Theodore Mitau Award for Innovation and Change in Higher Education for its "innovative approach to both improving educational research and developing a linkage between secondary and post secondary education."

During this past year there has been a marked increase in networking at the state and regional level within the National Writing Project network. The NWP sites in the northeast are planning a retreat similar to the annual Wild-aces retreat that primarily has served sites in the southeast. Sites that serve large urban centers and sites that serve large geographic areas are planning networks within the NWP. Directors in states with multiple sites, particularly Texas, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Nevada, and South Carolina are working together as their counterparts have done in states that already have funded statewide networks. Don Gallehr, as co-director of the National Writing Project, has served as consultant to many of these new active state networks.

The National Council of Teachers of English sponsored its first National Writing Projects Conference in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in Spring 1985. The conference program was jointly planned by the National Writing Project and the Iowa Writing Project. The University of California-Irvine Writing Project sponsored a conference on "Exemplary Practices of the National Writing Project" in December, 1985. Both conferences involved speakers and program participants from NWP sites nationwide.

There is a recent marked increase in the number of books and articles describing the National Writing Project. Heineman has published *A Writing Project: Training Teachers of Composition from Kindergarten to College*, by Harvey Daniels and Steven Zemelman, directors of the Illinois Writing Project that describes the National Writing Project and the unique features of the Illinois project. Arlene Silberman is writing a major work on the state of writing in American Schools to be published by Viking & Penguin Books. Mrs. Silberman has spent most of one year

in visiting National Writing Project sites and in attending National Writing Project meetings and programs. The Modern Language Association and Jossey-Bass Publishers will soon be publishing books that present descriptions of exemplary collaborative university-school programs (in press). The National Writing Project will be featured in both publications in chapters written by the director. *Forum* magazine (Fall, 1985) published an article on the National Writing Project written by Miles Myers, associate director of the Bay Area Writing Project. In "Hidden Impediments to Improving English Teaching," *Phi Delta Kappan* 67 (1985) James Moffett refers to the National Writing Project as "the best curriculum movement I know of."

The editors of the Harvard Educational Review asked the staff of the Boston Writing Project to write a review of the burgeoning literature in the field of written composition and to assess the relationship between the literature and actual teaching practice. The works reviewed were selected with advice from directors of other National Writing Project sites across the country. ("Reading, Writing, Teaching: Classroom Teachers Discuss Literature on the Teaching of Writing" is included in the appendix.)

The Writing Project at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte has published Volume 1, Number 1 of a new writing across the curriculum journal, *Undercurrents: Conversations About Writing By Teachers At All Levels*.

California's State Department of Education awarded the contract to develop, conduct, and provide statewide staff development for the new California CAP Direct Writing Assessment Program to the joint proposal submitted by Educational Testing Service (ETS) and the California Writing Project. Through this direct writing assessment, statewide testing of the writing abilities of California students will in the future be based on writing itself rather than upon objective testing as in the past. Because this CAP Direct Writing Assessment will include matrix sampling of a variety of writing prompts reflecting a wide range of expected student writing experiences, as well as prompts reflecting all disciplines, with all student papers evaluated through primary trait scoring, this new testing program will have a major impact on the amount of writing and the range of writing in California classrooms. The nineteen National Writing Project sites of the California Writing Project can anticipate a marked increase in the demand for staff development as California schools prepare for this new program.

The State Department of Education in Kentucky will allocate \$100,000 in state educational reform funding to the development of a multi-site statewide Kentucky Writing Project as an affiliate network of the National Writing Project. A bill has been introduced in Pennsylvania to support a similar statewide network. Sites in Nevada and Texas are currently working to secure similar state support.

Time Magazine invited the director of the National Writing Project and three others in the field of writing to meet with the *Time* staff to discuss ways in which *Time-Life*, Incorporated could become positively involved in the national writing improvement effort.

A BBC team visited the San Francisco Bay Area in November, 1985, to develop background for a variety of stories on American life, including teaching writing in American public schools. The team spent several hours in BAWP Teacher/Consultant Art Peterson's classroom, tape recording student conversations as the students worked in

editing groups and interviewing Mr. Peterson.

Another way to view the impact of the writing project: An experienced English teacher, after interviewing extensively for an English position in the Bay Area, reported to the Bay Area Writing Project office that every administrator who talked to him, including the one who hired him, recommended that he get BAWP training immediately. Another English teacher, when asking "Are there any jobs for me out there?" was told by an administrator, "Yes, but I advise you to get involved with the Bay Area Writing Project." A BAWP preservice teacher, after two weeks of observing English classes in the Bay Area, reported that he couldn't find one teacher who was not trained or influenced by the project.

The research assistant for the California Writing Project statewide evaluation reports that CWP directors are finding it increasingly difficult to identify control group teachers "untainted" by the writing project.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CHALLENGED IN ESSAY CONTEST

High school students have their homework assignment from a federal commission: a 750- to 1,500-word essay titled "The Constitution: How Does the Separation of Powers Help Make it Work?"

The top three essayists in each state will win prizes of \$1,000, \$500 and \$250 from the Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, which is co-sponsoring the contest with the American Bar Association and *USA Today*.

The competition will bring each state winner and a chaperone to the nation's capital in September 1987 to meet the President, Supreme Court justices, and congressional leaders and to learn who has won a \$10,000 prize for the best essay nationwide. The commission has written to 60,000 high school principals and other educators with more information and a suggested bibliography for the essays, which are due April 15, 1987. For more information, contact the Commission on the Bicentennial at 734 Jackson Place N.W., Washington, D.C. 20503; (202) 653-9800.

PHI DELTA KAPPA LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE ON WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

"Writing Across the Curriculum" is the topic of a Leadership Institute sponsored by Penn State's Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa to be held April 9-10, 1987 at the Penn State Sheraton, State College, PA. Keynote speaker will be James R. Squire, Past Executive Director of the National Council of Teachers of English. Individualized workshop sessions appropriate for elementary, secondary and college level teaching will be available. For more information contact Mary Dupuis, 145 Chambers Building, University Park, PA, (814) 865-6568.

Clarity begins at home.

—Anonymous

PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

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The purpose of the *Pennsylvania Writing Project Newsletter* is to link together all teachers of writing in our area. The *Newsletter* features articles on the teaching of writing, information about writing courses, conferences, project meetings, reviews of books, and events relating to the writing process.

We seek articles from all teachers of writing at all grade levels and from anyone else interested in writing and the teaching of writing. All articles will be considered. Please send all articles, questions, and comments to: Robert H. Weiss, Pennsylvania Writing Project, West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383.

The Pennsylvania Writing Project (PAWP) is an affiliate of the National/Bay Area Writing Project and a training site for the nationally validated New Jersey Writing Project. PAWP was created by the sponsors under grants from the William Penn Foundation and the University of California at Berkeley, with the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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