

PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 8

NUMBER 1 & 2

FALL/WINTER 1988

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS ARTS IN EDUCATION PROGRAM MAKES SPECIAL PROJECT AWARD TO WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY FOR PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT ACTIVITIES

West Chester University has received a grant of \$28,690 from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to improve the teaching of creative writing in schools in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The grant will support:

1. A winter conference for teachers
2. A summer institute for teachers, and
3. School year activities to link the two events.

The project, under director Robert Weiss, will be a collaboration with over 50 school districts in as many as eight counties.

The conference, to be held March 11-12, 1988, will introduce area teachers to contemporary writers, their methods, and their products. The summer institute will focus on teacher-consultants of the Pennsylvania Writing Project. Both events will emphasize the teachers' own writing of poetry, prose, and plays as well as their ability to help students as writers and to apply creative writing ideas and methods to teaching other material in the school curriculum.

Bob and his colleagues in the English Department are excited about the planned activities. "Using the networks we've already established with teachers and school districts, we can have a significant effect on thousands of students. There will be more creative writing in the schools, and more use of writing to advance the academic curriculum." Further, the NEA funding will "bring noted writers into new graduate-level programs in writing and into the Youth Writing Project."

More information will be available in future Newsletters.

HOW TEACHERS TEACH TEACHERS

by Mary Ann Smith

Last summer I was invited to a California Writing Project site to talk about "what makes an effective presentation." The good news was that directors and teachers wanted to explore once more the notion of teacher-to-teacher effectiveness. The not-so-good news was that I had agreed to lead the exploration, for the very topic suggested that I would practice whatever I preached. The odds were that the participants would remem-

ber not so much what they heard, but what they saw; and what they saw it turned out, was "nonslick"—a seemingly messy mixture, like their classroom teaching, of informing and being informed, of engaging in activities and reflecting on them, of citing authority and giving over authority. The group felt both relieved and unsettled by the apparent message that teachers teaching teachers probably meant teaching after all, as opposed to a staged presentation. Teaching makes you so much more vulnerable—and responsible—than other slick, noncontact sports.

Over the Project's fourteen-year history, teachers have assumed the risk and the responsibility for teaching their colleagues and, in the process, for creating new models, new higher standards for staff development workshops. I have watched how they teach, what they do that makes a noticeable difference in the way workshop participants respond to their ideas. And what they do, I believe, deserves our attention and discussion.

First, in effective workshops I've seen, Writing Project teachers are selective in what they teach other teachers: a slice of their classroom practice rather than a parade of all the procedures they know. They resist the temptation to unload the whole of their teaching careers from September to June. Rather, like skillful writers, they find a focus that can be followed with confidence, in this case into other classrooms with other students. Their emphasis is not on how much they can teach in a three-hour workshop, but on how much their colleagues can put into practice.

These selected approaches to the teaching of writing, however, are far from isolated or random. Teacher Consultants describe what they do in the context of their classrooms, in the progression of their teaching and their students' learning. They provide the necessary framework in which a best practice occurs—when in the process of writing, when in the development of a student writer, when in the school day or year. Rebekah Caplan, for example, frames her writing-for-specificity approach by her personal history as a teacher, recalling for workshop participants her fruitless margin inscriptions on student papers: "Give more detail." "Unclear." When these vague notations failed to inspire additional detail and clarity, she looked to her own childhood experiences as a student of the arts, to the daily finger exercises in her piano practice, to the improvisation that always preceded her drama performances. In this context, she developed her daily training program for young writers. In this context—with the understanding that "show not tell" exercises are the opening warm-

(Continued on next page)

ups each day in Rebekah's classroom—other teachers can successfully train their students to write with specificity.

Another characteristic of effective Writing Project workshops is attention to theory, to the "why" behind a teaching strategy. The reasons that underlie a successful approach to writing instruction give it conviction and staying power. Here, I can use my own experience as an example of the importance of theory, or more accurately, of the void when theory is omitted. Several years ago I led what seemed to me a lively workshop in my district. The teacher writing was memorable that afternoon, touching pieces about grandmothers and brothers and lost moments of childhood. The response groups virtually hummed. As we were finishing, still heady from the display of our prose, a young bearded fellow reached under the table and pulled out a hardcover grammar book. "This," he said, now holding the book up for everyone to see, "is a whole lot easier than what you're talking about." He was right, of course. Why, without knowing why, should he entangle himself in clusters and drafts and revisions and all this recursive business? The experience alone, no matter how heady, was not enough.

It is difficult, at best, to change established classroom patterns, to trade in the known for the "trust-me-this-will-work." Teachers need to know why peer response groups, for example, are worth the sacrifice of time and frontline control. Even if teachers are enticed by the initial excitement, they will probably bail out at the first sign of failure in their own classrooms unless they are convinced that the approach at hand merits a not-always-smooth transition.

Without theory, even the best practices can fall into a kind of fashion industry. Teachers, barraged every season by new styles and designs, are free to swap one attractive practice for another. Theory—whether it is personal theory, the theory from research, or the findings from teacher-research—inspires longevity, the chance for a best practice to wear well rather than out.

Writing Project Teacher Consultants have given new definition and credibility to theory itself. Their special knowledge from classroom practice has added to knowledge from research. They bring to Writing Project workshops an informed set of observations and experiences that invite the participants to go beyond mere imitating of a practice to developing their own informed points of view.

The strongest evidence of successful practice that Writing Project teachers can bring to inservice workshops is student models, especially if the papers represent a range of student writers. Teacher Consultant Alice Kawazoe offers a series of drafts from one of her non-native speakers to demonstrate the power of student response, the results of one student helping another to improve his paper.

Draft 1: When my brother got shotted I was glad not me. If I got shotted I never come to America to make new country, to make new life, to make new chance. My family used to struggles, so American struggles o.k. with us. But I am sad.

Draft 2: The air hot all around even still about 9 at nighttime. No noise hit our ear. Even still the birds are asleaping. Only earth noises when it receive our shoes. From moonlight we see the ground and bushes and leafs. No heavy tree yet. But most time at night we try see with ear to catch danger. My brother is walking in front of me. He move much fast than me, not more leg—just more fast.

His shirt I can see and the backof his leg. His head is too black to see. He turn head to look after me then

BOOM. The BOOM and the shock knock me down. I cannot see his shirt again, so crawling to him. The bom clear away leaves. My brother I cannot describe. He no my brother anymore. So shock.

When my brother got shotted, I was glad not me. First so sad, then glad. Full of thankfulness I am still living. Then guiltiness for been still alive myself.

If I got shotted I never come to America to make new country, to make new life, to make new chance. My family use to struggles, so American struggles O.K. with us. But still I am sad for my brother not here too.

The poignancy of this student's writing is not the primary reason Alice selects it as a model, for such writing is relatively common among ESL students. She selects it, instead, because it clearly demonstrates how one student, in this case a remedial writer, can be taught to ask the right questions of another to unturn the story that is hidden in the first draft. Workshop participants are bound to know from her student models that Alice has an approach worth examining.

In effective Writing Project workshops, Teacher- Consultants are also themselves models of how they teach their students to write. Their workshops go beyond a presentation format. Science teacher and former football coach Bob Tierney once referred in a workshop to his early years of delivering lectures as entertainment for the teacher. His teaching of teachers now reflects an entirely different practice. We are involved, moving together through one of Bob's strategies for writing to learn. He delivers stiff lamprey's to our tables, pointing out their obvious smell of formaldehyde. We touch and turn them, talking about what we see. We write and read to each other the stuff of our observations, our speculations and questions. Bob circulates, his not-so-white lab coat brushing by us, his nods encouraging us to learn firsthand about lampreys and in the process, about his approach to writing in science. These activities and others like them—writing and responding, close reading of student papers, reacting to problems posed—prepare teachers for the next step, transferring what they've learned into their own classrooms. The writing, in particular, gives participants a chance to step into the shoes of their students, to experience what it is they will ask students to do. No amount of explanation can replace an actual try-out for building confidence or for empowering a teacher to reshape classroom practices.

And no amount of try-out can stand entirely alone. When Writing Project teachers, at the close of an activity, ask their colleagues, "What did you notice . . .?" "How did you react to . . .?" "What happened when. . .?" they are inviting participants to explore together the nuances of an activity, to uncover its extensions and limitations and adaptations. They are inviting reflection, an exchange of authority, a chance for workshop participants to talk through their experiences. With this invitation, participants can give voice to their new refined points of view. Reflection, then, can be an antidote to dogma, to pat presentations of procedures and to rote following of those procedures. Teachers, both participants and consultants, work together to re-examine premises and the most precious of practices.

Rebekah Caplan, in her book *Writers in Training*, explains what happens to her own teaching when her colleagues have the opportunity to reflect and question:

At one point in my career as a consultant, I was sure that my four-part training program was foolproof, inviting relatively little challenge. But, I soon found that as I closed the door on one problem, I opened a door to another. My teacher-audience taught me that. I soon realized how crucial it was for

me to return to the classroom to rethink and retest my original ideas. I am still defining, then, what I believe to be the writing process and how it should be taught.

And Writing Project teachers like Rebekah are still defining the best ways to teach others about their successful practices. Even now, having described what I have found impressive in Writing Project workshops, I am bound to qualify. No description, no guide lines such as the BAWP *Presenters Handbook* can encompass the infinite variations in teaching, the humor, the gentleness, the energy, the astute minds that Teacher Consultants bring to their workshops. Nor can a single description accommodate the changes Rebekah notes, the tailoring Teacher Consultants do to find common ground in uncommon situations, the constant questioning of what they're about. We can, however, continue our openness to what works, to our discoveries in teaching all levels, in classrooms and in workshops with our colleagues. And we can continue to nurture the professionalism that prompted Teacher Consultant Jane Juska, when asked in a workshop what the Writing Project is selling, to answer, "Respect. Can you use some?"

At the close of my most recent summer workshop for the BAWP Open Program, a teacher came forward to shake my hand, saying, "I can't believe how much you've learned since the last time I heard you two years ago." I was amazed that he could see the changes in my teaching—until he explained that he was talking about himself. "I just wasn't ready to hear you until now," he said. We shook hands again. This teaching each other is a humbling business.

Mary Ann Smith is Director of the Bay Area Writing Project, University of California, Berkeley. This piece is reprinted from The NWP Quarterly, July, 1987.

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WRITING AND THE TEACHING OF THINKING SKILLS

by Sheridan D. Blau

Twenty-two teachers affiliated with the South Coast Writing Project met recently for an informal colloquium on writing and the teaching of thinking skills. The meeting was called in response to the current widespread interest throughout the educational community in teaching thinking skills as if they constitute an identifiable set of skills to which a program of instruction might be directed. As a group we began with some skepticism about the validity of any such program, although we all shared the belief that as writing teachers our principal task is to teach students to improve the quality of their thinking. Moreover, most of us already tended to build our writing classes around a set of assignments roughly based on James Moffett's discourse typology which classifies discourse types according to the degree to which they demand increasingly mature or more abstract kinds of thinking. Several of us had also been impressed by the utility of a collection of writing lessons developed at the UC Irvine Writing Project carefully designed to engage students with intellectual problems at the various levels of thinking identified by Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives.

After two and a half hours of discussion, we found that we had arrived at a sense of considerable clarity on a number of difficult problems related to the teaching of thinking and that we could agree on at least six axioms which we felt should guide instructors who would teach thinking in the context of a

composition class. I want to summarize our shared conclusions here so that teachers beyond our group might join and perhaps benefit from our continuing collegial conversation.

Our discussion yielded general agreement that as a collegial community we remained suspicious of attempts to identify and teach any set of intellectual strategies or repertoire of behaviors that might be identified as "thinking skills." We felt that the idea of the "thinking skill" is a pseudo-concept which misrepresents and trivializes the authentic intellectual activity that we call "thinking." As a group we embraced Dewey's dictum that "There is no method for thinking; thinking is the method."

Our skepticism about a skills approach to teaching thinking does not mean, of course, that we don't want to direct our teaching to enhancing the quality of thinking that our students engage in. We do believe that we can describe qualitative differences in thought and that such descriptions as we are accustomed to using are adequate to characterize advances in thinking. This is to say that we have a responsibility as teachers to foster more mature, more complex, more discriminating, more critical, and more penetrating thought on the part of our students. We agreed further that in composition classes our teaching is most likely to foster such advances in the thinking of our students when it is informed by the following set of axioms or principles for teachers of writing.

1. *Teachers must try to recognize and acknowledge exemplary thinking in the discourse of students whenever it occurs.* Students need to be provided with many opportunities for discourse on a variety of topics without necessarily being directed toward certain kinds of thinking. Our responsibility as teachers is to appreciatively call their attention to instances where they are doing their best thinking.

2. *Thinking is learned as a social activity. All thinking implies an auditor or respondent or collaborator.* Thinking is fostered through opportunities for exchanging and responding to ideas in conversations, discussions, writing-response groups, editing pairs and so on. A student is most likely to make advances in his or her thinking through direct interaction with engaged peers as well as with more mature thinkers.

3. *Advances in thinking are most likely to occur when thinking is directed to solving authentic problems.* Composition teachers must encourage students to write about problems that they experience as their own in their attempt to understand texts or investigate issues. Inauthentic problems are likely to yield inauthentic thinking--which is to say, some substitute for thinking. We should accept no substitutes.

5. *Thinking can be modelled. Students can learn to think from the examples of teachers and peers.* Students are likely to learn to think more efficaciously about any subject by seeing their teachers (and advanced fellow-students) engaged in the kind of thinking that instruction would promote. This means that teachers must provide students with more than finished lectures or essays which represent the products of thinking. Instructors must be willing to confront new and difficult intellectual problems in class and to think them through with and in front of their students, modelling the difficulties and frustrations as well as the satisfactions attendant upon making advances in thought.

Every teacher of composition must recognize further that his own oral discourse in the classroom will eventually serve as a model for the kind of written discourse that his students are learning to produce. Most undergraduate English majors learn to write literary papers without ever reading one. Their model for discourse is the speech of their English professors and of their own articulate colleagues. (Continued on next page)

6. *Thinking is a function of character.* To promote critical, creative, insightful thinking teachers must teach in a way that models and fosters in their students the intellectual virtues of risk-taking, a willingness to suspend closure, a tolerance for uncertainty, and a respect for truth. These attributes define the larger virtue of intellectual courage, which is ultimately what is required for a student to engage productively in any difficult thinking task.

Sheridan Blau is the Director of the South Coast Writing Project, University of California, Santa Barbara. This piece is reprinted from the NWP Network Newsletter.

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**REVIEW: Language Connections: Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum
Eds. Toby Fulwiler and Art Young,
NCTE, 1982**

After an exhilarating two days of immersion into the teaching approaches and philosophy of Bob Tierney of the Bay Area Writing Project, I questioned how I could possibly retain all that this Writing Across the Curriculum "evangelist" had shared with me. Moreover, how could I, a newly-converted disciple, effectively carry the message to my colleagues? Language Connections: Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum may very well become my Bible in my quest to learn more and to spread the word.

This is a book rich in both theory and practical teaching methods. It is a text that is certain to find a favored spot on my desk as I see myself turning to it again and again. The text reads easily, and colleagues in other disciplines should not be intimidated by its approach.

Basically, Language Connections is a compilation of essays written by faculty at Michigan Technological University, where a successful cross-disciplinary writing program has been established. The exciting element is that the contributors are not merely theorists, but real faculty who deal with real teaching situations. Although the book is rich in references to theory and research, the mainstay of all the essays is the specific and well-detailed tasks that teachers in all disciplines can employ in their classrooms.

Randall Freisinger's introductory essay establishes the premises upon which the Michigan Tech program is based. First, language for learning differs from language for informing. Introducing the work of James Britton, Freisinger reviews the expressive, transactional, and poetic forms of language. Having been introduced to this terminology on the third day of the workshop, I was interested to read further about it. Every movement, of course, has its unique terminology, but an understanding of these language types clarifies the basis of the WAC movement.

The second premise of the Michigan Tech program is that the expressive phase of language is generally ignored by schools, yet, ironically, is where the entire learning process should begin. After understanding this concept and reviewing my twenty-plus years of teaching, like Bob Tierney, I realized that years of supposedly well-thought-out assignments had missed the mark. "Learning must be made personal" will be the slogan of my future years.

The third premise is that a broader range of writing functions and audiences needs to be addressed by the teacher. Introducing the work of James Moffett and considering it in light of Britton's approach, Freisinger shows how students traditionally have had little awareness of a sense of

audience. In fact, most students write for the teacher as evaluator. Ultimately, students do not learn to adapt style and content to larger sense of audience, nor do they gain experience in the more abstract levels of informative writing.

The over-riding theme of Freisinger's essay is that "the development of writing ability is the responsibility of all teachers in all disciplines at all educational levels." It is apparent that this theme is the reason for the success of the Michigan Tech program.

An especially intriguing essay in the collection is Toby Fulwiler's "Journal Writing Across the Curriculum." Fulwiler begins by attacking the typical objections that teachers might have to assigned journal writing. Having discussed journals with colleagues in other disciplines, I found Fulwiler's remarks quite realistic and most helpful. He shows how journals can be the stimulus for discussion in class, a vehicle to clarify uncertainty, a replacement for quizzes and book reports, and most importantly, a reinforcement for learning experience. Fulwiler's essay concludes with approaches to take in evaluating the journals. Again, he is a classroom teacher who is sharing his real experiences with the journal. He cautions teachers against negative or critical comments and encourages teachers to make the journals "count for something."

An essay by Toby Fulwiler and Robert Jones, "Assigning and Evaluating Transactional Writing," I found to be very important. As often happens in any movement, good concepts can get distorted, and the ensuing practice can become even more detrimental than the practice it was meant to supplant. This essay cautions that although expressive writing must be emphasized and developed as never before, transactional writing still has a very important place in the classroom. Students must also be taught how to write in this mode more effectively. Fulwiler and Jones suggest that too often poor writing is caused by poor assignments. Considering that failing grades on writing assignments do little to change students' behavior and do not result in improved learning, the writers suggest practical approaches to prepare students to take essay tests. They also emphasize the need for teachers to require drafts as students go through the stages of writing reports. Finally, they suggest that a few short papers are generally more productive than one long paper, but even more so, that the process of writing in drafts needs to be addressed by teachers in all disciplines.

Perhaps the most unexpected material in Language Connections was contained in Art Young's essay on "The Poetic Functions of Language." Young contends that poetic writing has a place in all subject matter classes, not to teach creative writing, but to provide a very personal way for students to interact with the course material. Writing in poetic form, he says, transforms abstract thought into personal understanding just as expressive writing does. However, it places form above self and causes the writer to be a spectator while at the same time it engages the writer's values. Young convincingly illustrates the power of this approach as he details the responses of a philosophy class to a poetic assignment.

Bob Tierney said again and again, "There is no one right way." Language Connections effectively illustrates that statement. It provides a wealth of opportunities for teachers who want to explore writing and learning. It is also a caution to us not to be exclusive as we formulate our approaches, for each approach to writing can help the student to learn, and that, after all, is what we are all about.

Reviewed by Joanne D. Gerken, an English teacher at Pinebrook Junior College, Coopersburg, PA.

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The Pennsylvania Writing Project
West Chester University

A CONFERENCE for TEACHERS AND WRITERS

MARCH 11 - 12, 1988

Supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts

Featured writers:

Sharon Sheehe Stark (fiction), A Wrestling Season
Gary Soto (poetry; essay), Lesser Evils
Tom Disch (science fiction), 334
Len Roberts (poetry), From the Dark
Dana Gioia (poetry), Daily Horoscope
Craig Czury (poetry), God's Shiny Glass Eye
Karen Blomain (poetry), Black Diamond
Ken Smith (fiction), Decoys and Other Stories
Bruce Bawer (essay), critic for New Criterion

The conference introduces teachers at all levels to short workshops conducted by practicing poets and writers of short stories, science fiction, and personal essays. Teachers will participate in these workshops and practice writing their own samples in each form. Writers will share their successful ideas for teaching creative writing and for bringing writers into a school setting. Readings will be part of the conference, and the writers' work will be displayed and available for purchase.

The conference will be held at West Chester University on March 11-12, 1988. The fee includes morning refreshments, lunches, and a Friday reception for the visiting writers. Information on local motels is available.

Cost: \$70.00 (both days, early registration)

For registration details and additional information, contact:

The Pennsylvania Writing Project
Room 210 Philips Bldg.
West Chester University
West Chester PA 19383
215-436-2297

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

CONFERENCE

THE COMPOSING PROCESS REVISITED II

MAY 20-21, 1988

FEATURING: Roy Peter Clark (Free to Write: A Journalist
Teaches Young Writers)

Tom Romano (Clearing the Way: Working with
Teenage Writers)

Sondra Perl (Through Teachers' Eyes: Portraits
of Writing Teachers at Work)

Tom Newkirk (Understanding Writing K - 8 and
To Compose: Teaching Writing in High School)

ANOTHER LOOK AT THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF WRITING INSTRUCTION

The conference will be held at West Chester University and
the University of the District of Columbia, MAY 20-21, 1988.
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 (both days, early registration)

Registration details and additional information
will be available in the next Newsletter.

PAWP
Pennsylvania Writing Project
Robert Weiss
Philips 210
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383
215-436-2297

NCAWP
National Capital Area Writing Project
Virginia Newsome
English Dept.
University of District of Columbia
Washington DC 20008
202-282-7522

MARY ELLEN GIACOBBE ON MINI-LESSONS

By Julianne Yunginger

Mary Ellen Giacobbe addressed a group of some forty writing teachers for Intermediate Unit 13 at Manheim Township High School on August 27, 1987, for two and a half entrancing hours. In her low-key manner, with her gentle sense of humor, she taught us about many things, mini-lessons being one of them. Her design for mini-lessons seems to me to bring a necessary balance to the writing time, a balance between the analytical and the global.

Mary Ellen advocates short (5 to 8 minute), direct lessons to initiate the daily writing workshop, followed by conferences. I have advised teachers that "you do your teaching as you confer," but I have also seen teachers struggling to keep conference sessions short when trying to teach skills to some students. Mary Ellen modeled the short-cuts teachers can take when lessons have been presented invitationally in the mini-lesson.

A child who did not pick up on the skill, concept or strategy presented in a mini-lesson may later meet the need for it head-on in his writing. He may be wanting to add information to his piece and the teacher says, "Do you remember when we had the mini-lesson about adding information?" (a lesson, perhaps, on cut-and-paste). Another child may be struggling to read dialogue in her story and the teacher helps her to recall, "We had a mini-lesson about the signals we can use as writers to help our readers know that people are talking." Minutes can be trimmed from the conferences when there is that frame of reference.

My previous concept of mini-lessons had been limited to skills lessons. Mary Ellen described these as the easiest kind of topics but cautioned us not to overdo them. Her rule of thumb was two per week after the workshop time is well established. Early in the year, many of the mini-lessons may focus on classroom procedures for writing workshop, for example, how to use the writing folder, how to date and store all drafts, how to be always on task during workshop time. Other topics may have to do with the qualities of good writing and/or strategies good writers use. Many of these lessons can be introduced with readings from children's literature. We can use the mini-lessons to make the reading-writing connection explicit for students.

Balance is the key to good writing, Mary Ellen reminded us, but be prepared when you introduce skills and concepts in mini-lessons to see those students who are ready for the invitation overuse them for a time, and be aware that the quality of the writing as a whole will suffer for that time.

Balance is also the key to good teaching. In her recommendations for the direct mini-lessons, Mary Ellen has introduced an analytical aspect to the very global process approach, but without the traditional drill and practice that we know, based on research and on experience, is ineffective. I suspect the new dimension will help us to help even more students to become even better writers.

Julianne (Judy) Yunginger, a Learning Skills Coordinator for the East Lanacaster Co. School District, was a 1982 PAWP Fellow.

STATUS REPORT ON WRITING PROJECT LEGISLATION

The news is almost good — in other words, bad news for 1987-88. Although the Senate passed its measure that would have supported the 6 existing NWP sites and created 3 more, the House did not act similarly. Meanwhile, Nevada was added to the list of NWP sites receiving legislative support; each of their two sites now gets \$50,000 a year.

What would we do with a legislative appropriation: We'd visit you in your schools, we'd reach out to districts and teachers not yet involved with PAWP, we'd conduct an evaluation, we'd provide more resources to you for teaching strategies, we'd support teacher research, we'd enhance the *News-letter* (statewide), we'd encourage inter-project visits, we'd reach out to new audiences, and we'd run a stronger program of follow-up activities.

"Writing, like life itself, is a voyage of discovery."
Henry Miller

"The great art of writing is the art of making people real to themselves with words."

Logan Pearsall Smith

"I think the whole glory of writing lies in the fact that it forces us out of ourselves and into the lives of others."

Sherwood Anderson

RESEARCH FOUNDATION ESTABLISHES PROGRAMS

The Research Foundation of the National Council of Teachers of English announces two new grant programs to be conducted in the coming year. In addition to its Teacher-Researcher Grant program and the Research Foundation Grant program the Foundation has established the Collaboration Grants program and the NCTE Special Project Grants program.

"The grants," says Miles Myers, University of California, Berkeley, chair of the trustees of the Research Foundation, "are part of an overall effort to define teachers as learners in the classroom. The system of accountability in effect at this time, standardized testing for example, only show the students' wrong answers, not what the students are actually learning in the classroom. The grants will allow teachers to look at the ways children learn and to research and examine the learning process."

The Collaboration Grants will be awarded to teacher and professional researcher teams who are co-investigators on a project. The ceiling for these grants is \$2,500.

The Special Project Grants will be awarded to official subgroups of NCTE for the purpose of research in a critical area and/or dissemination of information promoting or developing a particular research agenda.

For more information on the Collaboration Grants, the Special Project Grants, or any of the other Research Foundation programs, write to the NCTE Research Foundation, NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois, 61801.

DATABASE

Bucks Co. IU Whole Language Workshops It's not too late to register for the Bucks County IU sponsored program in Whole Language. The two remaining events, geared to K-3 teachers, are Writing Across the Curriculum (Feb. 4, 1988) and Diagnosing, Evaluating, and Designing Activities for Reading and Writing (April 7, 1988). Programs are held at Warrington Motor Lodge, Rt. 611, from 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM. The \$25 cost includes lunch. For more information and to register contact: Karen Steinbrink at the Bucks County I.U., Routes 11 and 313, Doylestown, PA 18901.

Keystone Workshops The PA Department of Education and eleven intermediate units are currently offering workshops focusing on improving English, language arts and thinking skills:

Thursday, February 25, 1988 –
Reading, PA
IU #14-Sally M. Sentner
(215-779-7111).

"Writing Across the Curriculum" –
John Collins

Wednesday and Thursday,
March 2-3, 1988 – Doylestown, PA
IU #22-Elliot Seif (215-348-2940).

"Tactics" – Robert Marzano

Tuesday, March 8, 1988 –
Washington, PA
IU #1-Jean Roach (412-938-3241).

"A Writing Program That Works" –
John Collins

Wednesday, March 9, 1988
State College, PA
IU #10-John McDannel
(814-3412-0994).

"Writing Across the Curriculum" –
John Collins

Thursday, March 17, 1988 –
East Petersburg, PA
IU #13-Sharon Althouse
(717-569-7331).
"Oral Communications for High School Students" –
Speech Communication Association
of Pennsylvania

Tuesday, March 22, 1988 –
Edinboro, PA
IU #5-Jack P. Jarvie
(814-734-5610).
"Once Upon a Time: Read Aloud and Storytelling
Techniques Using Children's Literature" –
Steven Herb

Wednesday, March 23-24, 1988 –
Lewisburg, PA
IU #16-Kathleen Gearhart
(717-523-1155).
"Developing A Thinking Program for Classroom
or School" –
Kenneth Chuska

Tuesday, March 29, 1988
Allentown, PA
IU # 21-Evette Lamka
(215-799-4111).

"The Curriculum Director as (Reluctant)
Researcher"

Roger McCaig

Wednesday, April 13, 1988 –
Media, PA
IU #25-Nicholas Spennato
(215-565-4880).

"A Plan For Teaching Writing That Actually Works" –
Roger McCaig

Wednesday, April 20-21, 1988 –
East Petersburg, PA
IU #13-Sharon Althouse
(717-569-7331).

"A Plan for Teaching Writing That Actually Works" –
Roger McCaig

For more information, contact John Meehan, PDE,
Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction, 8th Floor, 333 Market
St., Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333, (717) 783-3946.

Bard College Workshops/Conference The Institute for Writing and Thinking at Bard College Center is offering three two-day workshops and a one-day conference. Workshops are scheduled for April 8-10, May 6-8, and July 11-15. On April 22, Florence Grossman will be the featured speaker for the Conference on Teaching Poetry: Reading and Writing. For more information contact Paul Connolly or Teresa Vilardi at The Institute for Writing and Thinking, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y. 12504.

Lancaster/Lebanon Teachers & Administrators Writing Connection: Bringing Them All Together will be the theme of the for seventh annual conference for teachers and administrators sponsored by the Lancaster-Lebanon Writing Council and the School District of Lancaster. McCaskey High School will host the conference on Saturday, April 9, 1988. Elementary through college participants are welcome. For more information contact Morris E. Krape, School District of Lancaster, 225 West Orange St., Lancaster PA 17603.

American Mathematics Project The Bay Area Writing Project not only was the inspiration for the creation of Writing Projects all over the world, but also was a model for a new species of project created by the California State Legislature in 1982, the Californial Mathematics Project. There are now sixteen mathematics projects in California and several in other states, many of them next door to writing projects and created with the help of people involved in writing projects.

The Mathematical Association of America and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics are sponsoring a national workshop for people interested in developing local mathematics teachers projects.

Application forms and further information may be obtained by writing to:
Philip Daro, Executive Director
The American Mathematics Project
University of California, Berkeley
2199 Addison Street, Room 359
Berkeley, CA 94720
(415) 643-7310

Heinemann Boynton/Cook Publishers Merger Boynton/Cook Publishers has become a division of Heinemann Educational Books. Each imprint will continue to

publish the kinds and numbers of books it currently publishes—Heinemann in the elementary field and Boynton/Cook in the secondary and college fields.

Readers familiar with their books already know that they share a common philosophy about learning and teaching, and about the central role of language (spoken and written) in those enterprises. They feel that this joining of forces will strengthen English education here and abroad through commitment to teacher and student control over classrooms and curriculums.

They hope that this is a "true marriage of minds and missions." PAWP too will benefit by having to order from one fewer source.

Call for Manuscripts *Issues in Writing*, for its first issue – Spring '88, is seeking manuscripts on dialogue across traditional disciplines, modes and boundaries. Article focus may emphasize research, practice, or theory. Send manuscripts (and inquiries) to:

Editor

Issues in Writing

Department of English

University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point

Stevens Point, WI 54481

Correctlions:

The Summer Newsletter was prepared by guest editors Gail Capaldi and Marilyn Sandberg. Unfortunately, their names were omitted from the credits. Also, a photo credit for Sue Smith's pictures was also omitted. While their names may have been overlooked, their fine efforts for a job well done certainly were not.

PAWP-POURRI

Attention PAWP Fellows

Let us hear from you. Please send:

- writing strategies that work for you
- reviews of articles and books of interest (written by you)
- your responses to any "reading about writing" in this newsletter or any other source
- your point of view on current issues and trends in writing
- tips on effective presentations
- student writing in the context of teacher/classroom-based research
- any noteworthy accomplishments involving you or other Fellows

(Send to Lois Snyder/Gail Capaldi, PAWP Newsletter, Philips Memorial Bldg. #210, West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383)

RUTH WATT and GUY MACLOSKEY have been honored by the Ridley School Board, for their Young Author's Project. The Project, held last June, involved elementary grade students from the Ridley School District.

Project staff recently learned of the death of Theresa C. Fridericks, a 1981 Fellow from the Marple Newtown School District. We appreciated Terry's presentation on using puppets to stimulate thinking and writing in secondary students, and we warmly remember her enthusiasm for the Writing Project.

MERLE HOROWITZ, a Fellow in the 1980 Pennsylvania Writing Project Summer Institute, has earned her principal's certificate from the University of Pennsylvania during a one year sabbatical. Currently Merle is both the principal of Aronimink Elementary School in Upper Darby School District as well as the district's Curriculum Coordinator K-8. One of her highest priorities for the building and the district is that every child should have the opportunity to become familiar with his/her own writing process.

Opportunities Exist For PAWP Fellows to Work for the Project

People interested in gathering information about the 260 teacher/consultants so as to update the PAWP database please contact Jolene Borgese (at the office). This would involve calling PAWP fellows as well as entering information into the IBM computer.

* * * * *

A MESSAGE FROM THE NEW EDITORS

1987 was a time of growth – not only for individual PAWP participants but for the Project as well. Enrollments increased as more courses were offered both on and off campus. Our first issue of the new year is a reflection of that growth. Highlighted are the PAWP Summer Institute at West Chester University and writing samples from our newest "community of writers".

As new editors, we envision the PAWP Newsletter as continuing to connect the growth of the Project to the growth of its participants. This issue introduces DATABASE, featuring information about conferences, publications, research, and current trends relative to writing and the teaching of writing. Another feature introduced in this issue is PAWP-POURRI, offering a variety of PAWP-related news items. In subsequent issues look for features reflecting writing strategies, relevant books and articles, school writing programs, and more.

We hope that you will be one of our primary sources. One of the tenets of the Writing Project is to develop a community of writers. Our newsletter offers an opportunity for its "readership" to become its "writership". We invite you to publish. Tell us about the writing strategies that are working in your classroom. Tell us about an interesting book or article you have read. Tell us about any research you may be involved with relevant to writing.

Tell us about your school's writing program. We know that you have something to say and we want to hear from you.

Gail Capaldi and Lois Snyder – Editors

Gail Capaldi, a 1986 Pennsylvania Writing Project Fellow and teacher/consultant, is a fourth grade teacher in the Upper Darby School District. She is a Ph. D. candidate in the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania specializing in Child Culture, a new program within the Department of Psychology.

Lois Snyder is employed by the Upper Darby School District. She has been a writing consultant and coordinator with the Pennsylvania Writing Project for eight years. A 1980 Fellow of the Pennsylvania Project Summer Institute, she has been co-director of that Institute for the past five years.

THE 1987 SUMMER INSTITUTE

by Lois Snyder and Bob McCann

As the summer of '87 follows the path of the sun, vivid flower colors and intense heat already suggesting the soft edge and the rustling warm glow of autumn, we remember the Summer Institute of 1987 here at West Chester University. It had a life of its own and we color it red, fading to soft pink. Twenty-four exceptional, inquisitive, individualistic teachers each bringing a color, a style, an energy, a sense of humor to the group. And we marveled, as we do each year, as the group took on a color of its own: red – supercharged, intense, fun-loving – to pink – exhausted, drained, inundated with writing and saturated with reading and talking and thinking about what it means to be a teacher of writing. In those five weeks they all came to realize what only a few of them had known before: they were writers.

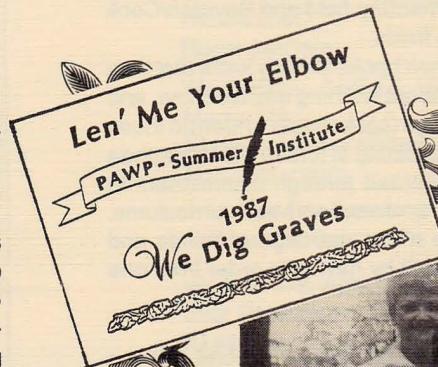
The design of the PAWP Summer Institute, much like writing itself, is recursive in nature. While the components we hold essential remain in place, each year we look again. In eight years we have revised again and again, led by our own instincts as well as the fellow's comments. Always an integral part of each institute are response groups, individual presentations, theory, and a wide range of writing assignments.

This year for the first time we scheduled the institute to run for five weeks, Monday through Thursday. Since relevant articles are distributed daily and there is an extensive reading list as well, the four-day-a-week schedule allowed for Fridays to be used as reading days if needed. Doubtless some readings were merely scanned and filed for future reference due to time and energy constraints. We anticipate that each teacher consultant will develop a personal library using this wealth of material as a beginning.

We were fortunate to have different guest presenters each week of the institute. Mary Ellen Giacobbe, Bob Tierney, and Len Roberts had been with us in past years. New to us this summer were Elaine Jarchow and Lela DeToye. Mary Ellen Giacobbe, one of the teachers originally involved with the Writing Process Lab at the University of New Hampshire, and a frequent visitor to the West Chester site, focused on the connections between children's literature and writing. Bob Tierney, a biology teacher from Fremont, California and a teacher-writer-consultant with the Bay Area Writing Project, involved us in writing strategies for content area classes. Len Roberts is an award-winning poet who conducts poetry workshops in schools and teaches at Northampton Community College. Many of the fellows were surprised and excited by the poetry they began to write with Len's guidance, as shown by the number of poems they chose to publish at the end of the institute. Fellows met with Elaine Jarchow of New Mexico State University in the computer lab, where she presented excellent ideas on using the computer in language arts classrooms. This was solid reinforcement after two fellows gave presentations on related topics.

In addition to the four-day week, the institute design was also changed to insure the group's solidarity. Each presentation was critiqued by all fellows and at least two directors. With twenty-five written responses in hand, each presenter had immediate considerations for revision. More varied writing experiences were woven into the fabric of the daily schedule. Fellows were asked for personal response to activities on an on-going basis. Morning writing time was expanded to include, in addition to freewriting and focused freewriting, experimenting with strategies that could be used in classrooms to encour-

SUMMER



age students to write. More time was allowed for reading the group's publications. The entire morning of the last day was set aside for quiet reading and response. Each fellow received written response from six fellows and a director. This year, for the first time, the personal pieces as well as the position papers were bound into separate booklets with photographs.

We were especially impressed this summer with the positive energy of the group. There was a sense of togetherness which held up under sometimes difficult conditions: child-care problems, illness, long commutes, personal problems, and ironically two marriages – one a week before the institute and one the week after. We had marvelous socials thanks to Lucy Portland, Lou Pomeroy, Bob McCann, Gerri Eisenstein and Lisa Armstrong. We had energizing coffee breaks thanks to everyone. Thanks to Teri Cesarz we have tee-shirts with the slogan "Len' Me Your Elbow; We dig Graves" paying tribute to Len Roberts, Peter Elbow and Donald Graves. Our final luncheon, sans administrators, included skits, by the Paul Esposito – Bill Stumm ensemble and a slide show thanks to our

INSTITUTE 1987

We invite you to enjoy the work of seven institute Fellows—the poetry of Jeanne Hill and Kathy Laird; the personal pieces of Patty Dietderich and Lisa Feerrar, and the position papers of Bernadette Fenning, Susan DiGregorio, and Nancee Goldstein. As recommended by institute participants and staff, these pieces were submitted for statewide publication to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

THE PRICE OF EXCELLENCE

by Patty Dietderich

The last fence was an ominous triple bar coming off of a sharp turn. If Grandy, my horse, was too quick or cut the turn too short he could hang a leg over the top and pull down a rail, thus ending our chance for the blue ribbon. As we approached the turn it seemed as if he sensed what this victory meant for the two of us. He checked himself and neatly sailed over the fence. I fell forward to hug his neck as he raced through the finish flags and tears fell from my eyes. We had done what many had said would never happen and now the honor of being the best was ours. As I looked at the crowd and saw faces smiling, faces who the week before had tried to prepare me for the possibility of failure, I thought to myself, what price had I paid for excellence?

I was never a natural at riding. It was always something I had to work at very hard. I had friends who sat on a horse as if they had ridden for years. Blue ribbons came easily to them. Many of these same friends gave up riding after a very brief interlude in the sport. It was as if they felt no challenge, so they moved on the next contest. Meanwhile, I struggled and never received the praise I was hoping for.

It was almost as if I rode in spite of popular opinion. I knew deep inside I could do anything I set my mind to do. My father had instilled this fervor in my life at an early age. He backed me wherever I wanted to go.

When I was eleven I joined the local Pony Club. This is an international organization similar to the 4-H except that it is devoted entirely to horses. As a member you become a well-rounded horseman, learning care of horse in the stable as well as proper riding technique. As you progress you are tested both in stable management and riding ability. The top two ratings are called the B and the A rating. These ratings are done at national test sites with national examiners. The A rating is done in two parts and each part covers at least two days of testing. You are allowed to try to pass through the A test until you are 21.

My adolescence was shaped by Pony Club. I was always running off to meetings and Pony Club shows. My friends in high school stopped asking me to parties or school functions because they knew I would be doing something "horsey" in my other life. My dad silently supported this madness I had for horses. He was the atypical Pony Club parent, a non little-leaguer. He shared my love of these mysterious beasts — he had horses of his own.

I remember sitting wide-eyed at my first Pony Club meeting hearing talk of superstars called A's. I decided then I would someday gain this status. I never realized that the goal I set would bring such turmoil to my life. Riding was fun but I had to really sweat to make it all work. I was a full-grown child, both

(Continued on next page)



Picture credit: Dick Halsey, '87 Fellow — Summer Institute

resident photographer, Dick Halsey. It was truly a unique experience.

We look forward to a continuing relationship with these fine teachers and join with the other fellows of the Pennsylvania Writing Project in welcoming them into our community of writers.

Institute Fellows Lack Writing Apprehension

Already a group of teachers less apprehensive about writing than the general public or the typical teacher, the 1987 Fellows of the PAWP summer institute tested out as decreasing their apprehension levels as a result of their work in the institute. The group took the Writing Apprehension Test developed by Daly and Miller before the 5-week institute and after, with a pre-test score of 53.2 and a post-test score of 42.4 (the lowest possible score being a 26). One Fellow's scores decreased by 40 points, 6 by 20 or more points and 11 by 9 or more points.

tall and on the heavy side. It would have been easier for me to balance on a large horse, but generally bigger horses cost more money so I had to make do with what I had. I did not look pretty on a horse and ribbons were hard earned when I began showing. By the time I was 14 I was ready to take my first shot at the B test.

Each Pony Club is run by a parent called the district commissioner (D.C.). It was with apprehension that my D.C. sent in my registration for the test. It seems that his misgivings were correct. I breezed through the written and oral questions but I didn't have enough experience riding different horses to pass the riding phase.

Instead of giving up, my dad and I decided that I would begin taking advanced instruction to prepare for the next test. I tried to ride some different horses but again it was difficult to find a nice-sized horse to work with. The second test came up about a year after the first. Dad and my best friend Kate were my "soul supporters" that day as I guess it was too far for anyone else to bother making the trip. It was a doomed repeat of the first test and it was with embarrassment that I called my D.C., who didn't seem too surprised at the news.

I had one more shot and I wasn't giving up. I had found an excellent instructor, Ellen, who dealt with the problem of my large size honestly and encouragingly. She had a long talk with my dad and it was decided I needed a more suitable mount to work with. We all began to look and Grand Cru was found. He was a large striking palomino who had a thoroughbred look. He was a challenge but I decided to meet it now that I had found an open hand to guide me.

It wasn't easy when I went to my D.C. about trying for my B for the third and final time. He tried to explain to me that some riders just aren't meant to be B pony clubbers, and there was nothing wrong with being a C-3. I gritted my teeth and said I wanted that last chance. Even my dad tried to reassure me that he only wanted me to be happy and that passing this test wasn't everything. I appreciated what he said but nothing could have stopped me at that point, or so I thought.

I never considered the possibility that Grandy could stand in my way. He had put up with a lot from me and I had asked so much from him. But that morning of the test as I unloaded him from the van I noticed he didn't look right. When I trotted him out he was lame and I felt as if my world had crumbled. All of that in a matter of minutes. The examiners came over to look at Grandy. It was as if everyone knew that I was the one taking the third and final try at this test. They asked me to trot him out again and it actually seemed that he limbered up the more he trotted. It was decided that I would be allowed to ride and they would test me to see how I handled the situation.

As the day progressed I felt better than I had in a long time and by the end of the riding phase I knew I had passed. When they handed me my paper at the end of the day I hugged everyone in sight and Grandy had a carrot dessert that night, but the challenge was not over. Later that evening I talked to my D.C. and I decided to compete as a B in the rally at the end of the week. I was given the option of riding at my old level for experience without it counting but again the hackles went up and I refused. I felt I was being patronized and I had waited too long for this.

That is where I found myself when I entered the ring one week later. Grandy and I had been competing for three days and much to the chagrin of my peers we were the leaders. As he sailed over that last fence the realization of what I had done hit home. When the blue ribbon was pinned on Grandy's bridle I was told that I was to captain the Maryland team at the national rally in Kentucky. Our team won a bronze medal.

I passed my A test two years later. I had travelled a long bumpy road and it brought many rewards. I realized it would never end, that there would always be more to learn and to enjoy. Most importantly is the satisfaction of knowing that if I were allowed to repeat that part of my life I would follow the same path. A bond was formed on that path which will touch me for the rest of my life and only my dad, my horse, and I will understand.

Dressage

A rythymical tune envelopes your ears as you seem to float across the arena. The animal at the end of the reins demands only the slightest touch to obey your every signal. Your back arches proudly erect as you feel the swing of his muscles working to carry you along. Your seat molds to the contours of the saddle as you follow every stride as if it were your own.

The moment you have worked and sweated towards is here. The training has come through and you are one with each other. Communication need not be spoken or demanded. Rather, it is felt and passed between two confidantes, hidden from the observer. Trust has been earned and the reward is high. Two bodies working in unison, privileged to honor each other with the most they can give physically and emotionally.

A song is created. This is a silent song and all who witness the melody are drawn to a rare sight. A massive beast has been transformed into a dancing athlete. The grace of his stride is evident as he performs delicate movements which deny his imposing magnitude.

Patty Dieterich was raised on a horse farm in Annapolis, Maryland. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Washington State University. After teaching 2 years in California, she presently teaches 8th grade science in Northampton Junior High School in Pennsylvania. These pieces are dedicated to her father and her horse, Grand Cru.



Fellows Susan DiGregorio, Dick Halsey, Gerri Eisenstein, and Bernadette Fenning in their response group.

SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER

by Nancee Goldstein

Dear Fifth Grade Team Members,

Remember me? I'm the one who disappeared for five weeks and promised to resurface after the Summer Institute of the Pennsylvania Writing Project. I'm the one who promised to bring back all kinds of tools to help get our fledgling writing program off the ground. Well, how flexible are you?

I should start off by letting you know that research studies dating as far back as 1906 have consistently con-

cluded that teaching grammar alone without giving it meaning through the framework of a writing program has negligible, even harmful effects on the quality of student writing (Shirley Neill, *Teaching Writing: Problems and Solutions*, 1982). Also it might be interesting to note that findings indicate that writing, like reading, is a developmental skill. This is evident when a student is taking a risk experimenting with a new, more complicated form of writing. His frequency of error increases until he has incorporated the skills needed to support this more mature writing development. A teacher's role at this point is not to red pen the errors, but rather to encourage the experimentation and offer the needed skills. In fact, rather than mastery, continuous growth should be the objective in any writing program (McCaig, "What Research and Evaluation Tells Us About Teaching Written Expression in the Elementary School").

And for those of us who are concerned about not having enough of a background for teaching process writing, I think Donald Murray's advice is terrific. In answering the question of how to motivate your students to revise a piece until it is polished, Murray responds: "First, shut up." He goes on: "When you are talking he isn't writing. And you don't learn a process by talking about it, but by doing it. Next, by placing the opportunity for discovery in your student's hands" ("Teaching Writing as a Process not a Product"). So now that we are told to shut up and let the kid write, and not to follow the grammar book chapters because they will not be relevant to the current stage that individual students are writing at, how do we structure our language instruction time?

Now I'm getting to the exciting part. First off, you can dispense with all the long detailed assignments that the class has to work on concurrently. Giving the assignment was itself a time-consuming event, let alone all the questions you had to answer so that they could give you just what you wanted. If we let the students select topics that interest them, they will write for the same reasons that literate people anywhere will write — to learn more about something, to tell about an event they've experienced, to tell about themselves, to advise, to argue, to request information. Kids need their own writing and have a vested interest in the quality of the work they produce. To do this, they need to have time they can depend on: a regularly scheduled writing period (Nancy Atwell, "Making Time"). Well, we do have fifty minutes of time to work with every day so now I'd like to suggest ways in which this time can be used.

I like Lucy Calkins' label for this time block, The Writing Workshop, because it creates the proper mind set for the entire class (*The Art of Teaching Writing*). The main emphasis is on writing and in that respect our function is mainly one of facilitator and support system. We listen, we respond, and we listen again. We offer guidance to help our students stretch into new avenues of communication and we ask questions to let them discover ways of getting out of problem areas. In addition, the Writing Workshop has a variety of purposes. After some initial student training and maybe altering the activities to suit your personal teaching needs, you will find an altogether different learning environment within your classroom. Here is a schedule you may want to consider. (The framework for the following is drawn from *Now We Want to Write!* by Jan Turbill.)

5-10 minutes: Mini lesson on a topic that you have identified as an area that needs attention. Lessons could be on the use of quotation marks, writing good leads, identifying voice, keeping verb tenses consistent, proper response questions, prewrite activities.

10 minutes: The children write quietly as you move around the room to talk to those who seem

to be stuck. At this time you can also record details about problems the children are experiencing or progress they are making. (These are roving conferences.)

15 minutes: The writing keeps going. Response groups can meet at this time, sharing their work and asking questions. Meanwhile, you can either meet with a single child who has a specific need or you can have small group editing sessions for children who are ready to be published.

10 minutes: This segment can be used in a variety of ways. You can continue with conferencing and responding to specific areas within a written piece. You can have individual children share their work, or parts of it, with the whole class. (At this time you can talk about specifics such as style and voice). Or, you can read pieces of literature to them and discuss the way that the writers crafted their work.

That leaves us with five minutes to spare and that feels very comfortable to me. Because if that five minutes isn't gobbled up by the writing workshop, we can always use it in our reading workshop. But the reading workshop is a topic for another letter, as is the topic of how speech and writing are invaluable tools for learning in all curricular areas. Pretty heavy for a summer day? But I thought I'd send this to you just so that you can start those wheels rolling.

See you in September,
Nancee

Nancee Goldstein teaches fifth grade in the Pennsbury School District in Bucks County. She lives in Yardley on the banks of the Delaware River with her husband, Steve, and her two teenage sons, Michael and Adam.

* * * * *

WHAT IS QUIET? by Kathy Laird

Quiet is like the whiteness of a blank page
Staring back at you.
Nothing to say.
Yet words echo in your ears.

Kathy Laird teaches second grade at Wallingford Elementary in the Wallingford-Swarthmore School District. Kathy has taught in this district for the last five years. She has also taught in the Kindergarten classroom as well as the first grade classroom.



Arlene Smagala and Kathy Laird share each other's writing.

MUM MUM CORA

by Lisa L. Feerrar

If the sense of smell has the longest memory, then I remember the smell of Mum Mum's White Shoulders perfume in the folds of loose, flowered dresses. She smelled faintly of long summer evenings on the porch swing by the roses. I remember her house smell of lemon polish on old cherry wood, and of cinnamon rolls filling the kitchen with a warm sweet-yeast scent.

And I remember the last smells too. A mixture of Lysol, medicines and sickness hung with each step when I walked into Berks Heim, the county home. Glaring lights, old, cold green linoleum and metal chairs filled my little girl's vision of Mum Mum's new home. Where was my tea set that Mum Mum always kept in the bottom of her china closet? Where will Mum Mum make dinner without a kitchen?

I heard the whisperings unintended for our ears.

"Honey, I'd love to keep Mother, but all of our children are still at home. We don't have an extra bedroom" and "I don't know why George can't keep her, or Helen. They have room."

Privately my sisters and I each thought that, somehow, the four of us could share a bedroom and Mum Mum could have the little room. We discussed the possibilities in secret snatches of conversation.

"She could even have her bedroom downstairs so she won't have to climb steps." "We can all be in the same room—we won't fight." "If only she could live with us."

But we knew by the grim, hard-lined face of our mother that Mum Mum would not live with us. We also knew that, out of all the children and grandchildren, we thought we loved her the most. But love wasn't seen when Mum Mum moved to Berks Heim. We saw Aunt Helen swoop into Mum Mum's house to claim all of her antique dishes and pieces from her china closet. The remembrance of Aunt Helen's fragrant blueberry pies faded in that instant. Uncle George, the favorite son, took away the most valuable pieces of furniture. Everyone took something, but no one took Mum Mum.

Instead, she was taken away from the home that had been hers for fifty years. Unwillingly loosened from the brick rowhome that reflected her life, Mum Mum left behind the sights and sounds of raising six sons and a daughter. She would not see any more blue windy March days when the boys flew their penny kite, or feel the sun on her back as she knelt in the garden. She wouldn't hear any child's voice in the same way again, not the sounds that used to ring through her rooms and yard. The granddaughters would no longer serve tea to her or bake her tiny cakes presented on gold filigreed trays. The boys wouldn't bring home the trout they caught for her to fry in the black iron skillet. Neighbors and relatives would miss stopping by during Lent to take in the aroma and flavor of Mum Mum's fasnachts. Mum Mum would miss her crimson roses, the feel of her softly worn furniture, the control of her own life, her pride.

I missed seeing Mum Mum in her home. In the unreal, antiseptic shell of the nursing home, she wasn't the same. She looked smaller, and pale. She had to share one tiny room with a stranger, not for a few days or weeks, but for the rest of her life. Her clothing and personal items were often misplaced or even stolen.

Each time we visited her, Mum Mum seemed more and more like all of the other patients. These were old people, not like my Mum Mum, who were propped in wheelchairs lining the hallway, wearing old smelling sweaters and blankets on their

laps. Their eyes never looked as if they focused on me as I walked slowly by them on my way to Mum Mum's room. Their eyes didn't seem to focus on anything, just like their lives. Their days were filled with taking pills from small paper cups, usually handed to them by brisk hands. Meals brought little satisfaction. How different than the home-made dishes Mum Mum proudly served.

Days and weeks in this institution turned to months. Although we brought Mum Mum home on holidays, she couldn't take Thanksgiving leftovers back with her. She would never wake up in a cozy, sunfilled room of her own. She no longer smelled like the sweet roses on a warm summer night. She grew old before our eyes, and her life faded as quickly as her housedresses.

As December approached, Mum Mum talked more about memories. We tasted watermelons turning icy cold in the spring water pool at the cabin. All of our days at the beach were seen through pictures in the family album. She held onto those memories as we talked, while I gripped her frail hand. I've memorized that touch. And if memories soften after the years, then roses smell sweeter to me every summer.

Lisa Feerrar teaches 9th grade English at Octorara High School in Atglen, PA.



Fellows Lou Pomeroy and Melanie DeBouse in conversation.

SHARING: A CRUCIAL COMPONENT IN THE PROCESS OF WITING

by Susan DiGregorio

What strikes me most about my five weeks spent at the Pennsylvania Writing Project is the close bond that developed among the members of our group. A congenial aura permeated our workshop. Each morning, twenty-four teachers arrived with smiles upon our faces, in spite of our heavy work load. By the end of the Institute, I felt that I knew each member of the group as well as his/her values and writing style. I found myself questioning, "How did this closeness occur in just five weeks? What makes the Writing Project so unique?" I believe that bond resulted from the daily sharing in which we participated. Each day, our freewriting was followed by opportunities to share what we had written. We also had response groups with whom we shared developing drafts of personal writing. This sharing transformed our group into a community of writers who valued and trusted one another. This "togetherness" is the climate that I wish to cultivate in my classroom. My position

is that sharing is a crucial element in the process of writing. I will explore reasons for sharing, ways to incorporate sharing into the classroom, and strategies for encouraging the reluctant child to share.

Perhaps the most obvious reason for sharing is that it is an enjoyable event which provides relief from the often painstaking and solitary act of writing. Elbow equates sharing with an act of giving. To him, sharing is like a celebration which gives pleasure to both the writer and the listener.

In addition to providing enjoyment, sharing fulfills a basic human need. In *The Art of Teaching Writing*, Lucy Calkins illustrates this with a quote by Francois Mauriac, "Each of us is like a desert or like a pigeon let loose with a message in its claws, or like a bottle thrown into the sea." Calkins relates the poignant story of a crying child who shares her story, "the girls is sad. She has no friends." Another student responded, "I'll be her friend." The point is that we need to write but we also need to be heard, even if only by a single person. Donald Murray believes that humans have a need to write — "to make meaning out of chaos, to celebrate, to record, and to attempt to understand the world in which we live." He says that writing is not enough; it must be shared because in doing so, one discovers the need for writing. Through sharing, needs such as power, entertainment, escape, or applause become apparent.

One of the most vital advantages of sharing is that it is motivational in better writing. By listening to others and receiving feedback, students improve their own writing. Murray says that it is very important for students to share drafts in process, not just finished products. They must see fellow students struggling with language. When students witness the metamorphosis of weak writing into strong writing, they begin to see possibilities in their own writing. Elbow states this idea simply with a quote he once heard, "If that nerd can write something like that, so can I!" Students learn to imitate what they like and discard what they don't like. Sometimes, a student shares what Graves calls a "hot topic," which stimulates other pupils to write about the same subject. Thus, sharing helps pupils gather ideas for future writing.

The major way in which sharing improves writing is that it enables readers to find their voices. This mysterious thing called voice cannot really be learned via books or lectures; it must be done through sharing. According to Elbow, there is a deep relationship between the speaking voice and the reading voice. Reading aloud can reveal writing that is too stiff, too fake, or too cute, etc. When a writer reads, she should hear herself coming through; if not, the voice in the writing must be improved. Strong voices in a classroom are contagious and help stimulate improvement.

In my learning disabilities class, I have already encouraged sharing; however, this year, I intend to make sharing a more visible, significant component of our writing program. I am going to create a sharing arena in the back of our classroom where we can gather at the end of our writing sessions to share our drafts, similar to the Helping Circle described by Kirby Liner. I hope to find a comfortable, attractive chair which I can designate the Author's Chair. Most likely, I will model Graves' techniques by asking questions such as, "What were some of the topics this morning?" "How did it go?", and "Would anyone like to read what they have written so far?" I anticipate that most of my pupils will want to share their work. This should not pose an initial problem since my class is small and their writing tends to be brief. However, as the year progresses and their

writing develops, I may find it necessary to limit the number of pupils who share each day. In this case, I will probably use Graves' idea of posting special sign-up sheets for sharing.

In addition, I plan to take the advice of Kirby and Liner, and Calkins and establish "sharing partners," similar to response groups. Each pair of children will sit with their desks together and will be free to share and discuss their writing with one another. This will give pupils practice in sharing before they go public with the whole class.

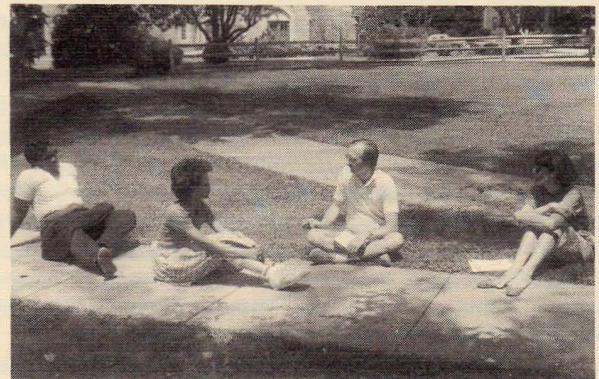
I am also going to enact some of Calkins' gimmicks such as "Sharing Day" and "Author of the Week." On "Sharing Day," willing students will read aloud for parents and guests, and refreshments will be provided." I am toying with the idea of having pupils read aloud on the school district's cable channel. For "Author of the Week," we will focus on the work of a particular child in the room by reading it, listening to it, and displaying it.

Although I have many strategies for sharing, I will probably encounter several students who are hesitant to share. I will have special empathy for these children since I was a reluctant sharer. At the Institute, I carried around a dangerous audience in my head, as Elbow would say. I constantly compared my writing to my fellow writers' and judged mine to be inferior. Each day, I felt myself retreating into a frightening shell until the third week when I felt the desire to share my freewriting about the impending birth of my sister's baby. The group received the piece warmly and boosted my self-esteem. Once I had taken the plunge, I felt more comfortable with my writing and sharing became easier. Just as I had to discover that I had interesting topics to share, my students may need help in realizing that they have material worth sharing. Kirby and Liner recommend leaving a message in a child's writing folder, such as, "This piece is interesting. Please share it with us." Further, I can help reluctant children by offering to read their pieces for them. Once they experience and enthusiastic response, they will be hooked on sharing.

I believe the best way to promote sharing is by creating a safe, supportive environment in my classroom, similar to the one that emerged at the Writing Project. Robert Walshe believes that a climate of personal relationships is basic to the teaching of writing. My pupils and I will feel free to share successes and failures and will value each other as writers and individuals.

Susan DiGregorio teaches learning-disabled students in Sharon Hill Elementary School.

* * * * *



A response group in action: Fellows Melanie DeBouse, Donna Dingle, Paul Forberger, and Ruth Sklar.

JOURNALS AND THE DEMISE OF THE RED-INK SYNDROME

by Bernadette M. Fenning

When I first started teaching fourteen years ago, it was as a remedial teacher in an individualized English classroom. Having just completed my student teaching in a traditional mode, I hadn't the slightest idea what I was getting into. The program was the talk of the system as the epitome of progressive education. But from the beginning, I was uncomfortable with its philosophy. We created learning packets from all the grammar and reading textbooks in the room and the students sat at their desks doing workbook after workbook excercises in their copybooks. There was no traditional teaching by me and there was definitely no writing taking place.

I also taught two composition classes, and what a disaster that was! Nowhere in my college years had I ever been taught how to teach composition. So, I went into the class twice a week, opened the text, read the model for the day, and then told the students to write a paragraph or two just like the professionals had done. I knew as it was taking place that it was a disaster, but I didn't know what else to do—and so it went for the next eight years.

Then, in the summer of 1985, I attended the Pennsylvania Literature Institute at Bryn Mawr College and heard Martha Menz lecture about journal writing. That September, buoyed with enthusiasm, I started journals with my honors students. Unfortunately, I began to lag and the journal writing turned into sporadic assignments with little in the way of effective result.

Last year, however, determined to do something about my ninth and tenth grade basic skills students' writing I started, *in earnest*, a daily journal writing assignment. I had read Kirby and Liner's work *Inside Out* which notes that journal writing becomes an invitation to open up, and I identified this as a need for basic writers. They are afraid to open up because teachers like myself have red-inked their work to death. The journal allows the student to write about his/her own feelings and beliefs without fear of attack. By establishing guidelines beforehand, I set the mood and tone of the class and eased their minds. The journal rules were simple. I'd give them points, 1 to 5, based on quantity of entries, not quality of writing.

At first I just told them to free-write, but I wasn't sure how to manage it, and because I wasn't in control of myself, they just sat and stared down at the page and doodled or gawked out the window and counted the cars in the funeral processions that passed by. Finally, I gave them sentence starters and this seemed to be more effective, but I still didn't know what else to do with the journals even though the students began to enjoy writing them. Although Harvey Wiener in *The Writing Room* believes that journal writers hold back when someone is looking over their shoulder, I did not find this to be true. My students were enthusiastic about writing in their journals because they began to discover they could write down their ideas and be accepted for them.

Now after attending the PAWP 1987 Summer Institute, I have found dozens of new ways to use the journal in class. One important way to use it, as Bob Tierney recommended in his presentation, is in a *Writing to Learn* mode. The student splits his paper in half and heads each column as *note-taking* and *note-making*. On the note-making side, the student uses the expressive mode of writing by creating questions he/she may have about the lesson. These questions are then used by the teacher to clarify a point or review for a test.

In addition to writing problems, the basic skills students also have reading deficiencies. Often I read to them, but never had any follow-up. Now, they can use the *reading journal* as a summarizing technique after I have read a scene or a chapter.

This type of journal writing, discussed in Bartholomae and Petrosky's book *Facts, Artifact, and Counterfact*, is also expanded into the *double entry journal* which has students write and initial response, share those responses, and then write another entry which synthesizes all information gained during private and public discovery.

Another journal which could be used to help students characterize the persona in literary work is the *dialogue*. For example, since neither Count Paris nor Juliet ever speak together in *Romeo and Juliet*, two students could create a dialogue in which Juliet questions Count Paris about his desire to marry her.

Pat Juell in *Roots in the Sawdust* states "sharing entries allows students to learn from one another's perspectives, gives them responsibility for their thinking, allows them to respect each other's ideas, and encourages active involvement in their own learning; they cannot be passive." This dialogue journal is just one type of sharing experience for students. The *unsent letter* is another. Since one of the themes in *Romeo and Juliet* is the generation gap, students could send a letter to either parent questioning their motives for forcing Juliet to marry Count Paris.

Journals can be used by students to role play, to clarify concepts, to create questions about lessons, and to signify what has been learned on a given day. But most important, the student becomes free through journal exploration, free to find a voice, and free from the **red-ink syndrome**. It is my belief that journal writing gives all students, but especially the basic skills student, the chance to experiment with his/her writing style and achieve a sense of accomplishment unencumbered by teacher interference.

Bernadette M. Fenning teaches English at Cardinal O'Hara High School in Springfield, PA

* * * * *

DIAMOND SOLITAIRE

by Jeanne Scjubba Hill

A diamond sounds like rain
that falls in a desert cave,
Splashes against the rocky floor,
splinters into sparks of fire,
Tumbles down crevices,
digging out tears,
Strains at ledges,
falling like stars.

A diamond sounds like a screeching howl,
that grips the heart in blue-white light,
Blinds reason, snatches hopes, encasing
dreams in crystal walls,
Freezes in the path of flight,
seeking something dear.

A diamond sounds like feathery snow
that sneaks past fences, slip-slides rooftops,
Blankets fields, cuddles branches,
nestles visions
Disappearing into earthen depths,
forming droplets of beginnings.

Jeanne Scjubba Hill teaches chemistry at Henderson High School in the West Chester Area SD.

**AN INVITATION TO APPLY
TO 1988 SUMMER INSTITUTES
JUNE 27 TO JULY 28, 1988**

The summer institute is an intensive five-week program approved by the National Writing Project for demonstrating specific teaching strategies, examining research and key texts in the field of written composition, writing in several different modes, and meeting regularly in groups to share and examine manuscripts with one another. Up to 25 Fellowships are awarded to selected teachers of writing who represent all grade levels and all areas of the region. The Fellows may subsequently serve as teacher-consultants in in-service workshops and programs.

Two parallel summer institutes are offered in 1988, one at West Chester University and one in Central Bucks County.

Structure of Summer Institutes

Participants meet four days each week for five weeks. Usually mornings are spent sharing knowledge and classroom strategies through participants' presentations. Presentations by noted consultants and writers are also part of the program. Afternoons are devoted to writing and editing sessions.

Who should apply?

Experienced, talented teachers are eligible to be selected for Project Fellowships. Applicants may be teaching on the elementary, secondary, or college levels in language arts, communications, and English or in other specialties emphasizing writing skills. Teachers may be nominated by their schools or school districts. The Project staff usually interviews applicants.

Responsibilities of the Writing Fellows

1. Attend the Institute and present one classroom method or approach that has proven successful.
2. Write periodically in several different modes during the Institute.
3. Make in-service presentations and contribute to other activities during the following year as requested, and as mutually agreed between teacher and school or district officials.
4. Adopt methods gained from the Institute and participate in evaluation activities as needed.

What will be gained by participating teachers and schools districts?

For Teachers:

1. A stipend of \$700.
2. Recognition as Fellow of the West Chester University/Pennsylvania Writing Project.
3. Six hours of West Chester University graduate credit.
4. Improved skills in the teaching of writing.
5. Training as an in-service "teacher/consultant."
6. Relationships with other writing teachers who seek to improve their teaching and writing.
7. A one-year sponsorship of the National Writing Project

For Schools and/or Districts:

1. Trained specialists in writing to assist in staff development.
2. In-service programs to improve the teaching of writing.
3. Participating in the National Writing Project network for exchange of information about school writing programs in Pennsylvania and the nation.

Cost to schools or districts and participants

A school/district endorsement fee of \$900 per participant supports operating expenses of the Project. It is payable in May after participants enroll. Stipends will be awarded during the Institute. Participants or their employers are responsible for paying tuition and fees for six hours of graduate credit (approximately \$630), and for personal expenses. Some schools and districts contribute to these costs in addition to the endorsement fee.

HOW TO BECOME A PAWP FELLOW

Today:

Tell your principal or supervisor of your interest, so they can arrange for the school district's financial commitment.

February:

Complete the application form. Follow all directions carefully and be sure to get the necessary approval.

March:

Submit your application materials.

April:

You will be contacted for a personal interview.

May:

If you are invited into the Institute, you will receive an invitation to the preliminary luncheon on May 15, 1988.

June:

Do reading and writing to prepare for the Summer Institute, which begins Monday, June 27, 1988.

**PAWP COURSES
CONTINUE TO FLOURISH**

Strategies for Teaching Writing, PAWP's meat-and-potatoes course, is now being offered off campus at four school districts: Upper Darby, Bensalem, Northampton, and Cheltenham. The coordinators are Martha Menz, Mark Ruppel, Gail Capaldi, and Brenda Hurley, and many teacher-consultants are making presentations. The Strategies course offers first-hand experiences in the practical application of both theories and techniques of process approaches to writing and the teaching of writing.

This past summer, Strategies courses were offered at West Chester University and at the Bucks County Intermediate Unit. In Spring, the course is again being scheduled at several locations: Doylestown (for the Bucks County Intermediate Unit), West Chester University, Drexel Hill Middle School (Upper Darby SD), and the Northampton, Bensalem and West Chester Area School Districts. A non-credit version is being developed for secondary teachers in the Wissahickon School District.

Two computer-related courses are also being offered this Spring. Computers and Writing (3 credits) is sponsored by the Southeast Delco School District, and a 1-credit basic course on Computers and Writing for Elementary Teachers is available for free at West Chester University, courtesy of the Regional Computer Resource Center (RCRC).

* * * * *

PA WRITING PROJECT: APPLICATION FOR SUMMER FELLOWSHIP

Important Information:

This application form must be endorsed by a district or institution official and be accompanied by: (A) a brief description of your background and experience teaching writing, including current and planned assignments; (B) a one-page statement presenting one aspect of your classroom teaching of writing that you would be willing to develop at the institute and present to the Fellows. Send the application and (A) and (B) to the Project Director by March 31, 1988. Interviews will be held and notification of Writing Fellows selected will be accomplished by April 18, 1988.

Return Application to: Pennsylvania Writing Project, c/o Robert Weiss, West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383

Teacher Application:

Name _____

Home Address _____

City/Zip _____

Phone - Home: _____ School: _____

Grades K-3 4-6 MS 7-9

10-12 college

I enclose required supporting materials and agree to accept the responsibilities of a Writing Fellow.

Check here to apply for the PAWP Institute in Bucks Co.

Signature _____ Date _____

School or District Endorsement by Official Authorized to Commit Funds

I endorse the above application for a position as a Summer Fellow in the PAWP Summer Institute. I certify that this endorsement is supported by school or district willingness to contribute \$900 (per participant) to the PAWP and to conduct future in-service activities.

Signature _____

Name _____ Position _____

School District _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City/Zip _____

Brief Supporting Statement for Applicant: _____

PAWP INTRODUCES COURSES IN WRITING AND THINKING

by Gail Capaldi

I had the good fortune to participate in the Writing Project's three-day workshop this summer entitled Writing and Thinking. The course was coordinated by Jolene Borgese with the assistance of Lela DeToye of the Mississippi Valley Writing Project. Both teacher-consultants collaborated as a result of the institute that they both had attended in August (1986) at the University of California, Irvine. Lela is also working on a doctorate in Writing and Thinking.

Writing and Thinking blended writing theory with Bloom's taxonomy of thinking levels. While we agreed that teachers could not necessarily teach "thinking skills," we could still establish an atmosphere that fostered more complex thought on the part of students. Writing, therefore, is a means by which students' thinking can be both encouraged and enhanced. The 3-day workshop reflected the trend toward connecting all acts of composition—reading/writing/thinking/talking—that is currently seen in much of the education literature.

The course offered a variety of both experiences and strategies for the participants and was grounded in just enough theory to illustrate the connection between the processes of writing and those of thinking.

The translation of theory into practice became a reality for all of us when we were asked to submit a lesson integrating writing processes with thinking processes that could actually be used in our particular teaching situations. The lessons were copied, bound together in a booklet, and sent to all of the participants.

One other very "thought-provoking" strategy used by Jolene was that of analogous thinking—she asked us to write a "writing and thinking metaphor". I have included a few that I think show how inextricably bound writing is to thinking as well

as the excitement that was generated by this course for its participants.

Thinking is like spilling a box of blocks—writing is like building a castle out of those blocks.

Thinking is like dreaming. Writing is enacting that dream.

Connecting thinking to writing can be compared to finding a deserted island and then sharing it with your friends.

(Note: The West Chester Area School District is currently conducting PAWP's first extended Writing and Thinking course—over a ten week period.)

* * * * *

FOURTH SUMMER COURSE IN COMPUTERS AND WRITING

Brenda Hurley conducted a course entitled Writing and Computers from June 28-July 17. The participants included nine senior high school English teachers, seven elementary and middle school teachers and one elementary vice-principal. Three of the participants were PAWP teacher-consultants.

Amid oral reports, software reviews, and much writing and experimentation with FredWriter or Bank Street Writer were presentations by Bob Weiss, Bob McCann, and Elaine Jarchow. Brenda provided the group with some of the theory and practice of computers in the classroom and offered labs with individualized attention accommodating the varying levels of "expertise" within the group.

FROM THE SUMMER POETRY WORKSHOP

by Alex Frazier

As a teacher, I have also learned quite a bit. In some respects, it is difficult to separate my writing from my teaching. I believe that all teachers who teach writing should write themselves. I have only recently started doing this but already I can see the benefits. By writing our own poems in this workshop, I think all of us understand more clearly what students go through. The poems starters that Len gave us, such as the memory poem, the beach scene, the use of pictures, the letter or address poem and becoming an object, will be invaluable in encouraging students to produce good poetry. The comment that he made about having kids write poetry first before they read or analyze it was very cogent. That approach seems to make good sense to me. Once students know what goes into a poem, they will appreciate the craft of a poet.

One of the things that I thought was most valuable in the workshop and which I plan to do more with my students is to have them read their poems aloud to the class in order to receive feedback. It was invaluable to me as a writer to hear the comments of my peers, and I also felt a sense of achievement reading to the group. Len made a point about what comes from reading aloud—sometimes there is a silence that follows which indicates your poem is effective, sometimes you will discover ideas or images that you can build from, or sometimes you may receive advice about work changes. The brief time we spent in peer groups was also valuable. I received some good feedback about trouble spots in my poem, and was also able to provide help for the other members. This process approach with poetry is just as valuable as it is with prose writing.

Alex Frazier teaches English and American Studies at the Germantown Academy.

4:00 AM

by Alex Frazier

Like a burglar
I turned the knob ever so slowly
and inched open the door,

Inside the quiet hammered in my head
Each creak of the random width boards
An explosion of noise in the blackness.

Tiptoeing up the stairs
I winced as the stair tread
bellowed my name.

I padded slowly across the rug
On the hall landing
Touching the railing to find my way.

Like Odysseus
I navigated past Scylla and Charybdis—
My father's bedroom, on the right and my mother's on the left.

The last labor lay before me
The entrance to
My third floor bedroom.

Carefully, I pushed against the door
So the metal lock would not
Screech my presence.

As I lifted the latch
Which uttered only the slightest squeal,
I heard, "Alex, is that you?"

And then silence.

PAWP CALENDAR

When	What	Where
October 28, 1987	PAWP First All-Day Conference	WCU
November 20-22, 1987	NCTE; NWP Directors meet Friday, Nov. 20	Los Angeles
March 1 or 9, 1988	PA/NWP Directors Meeting	Harrisburg
March 11-12, 1988	PAWP Regional Conference: Teachers and Writers	WCU
March 17-19, 1988	NWP Directors Meeting at CCCC	St. Louis
April 20, 1988	PAWP Second All-Day Conference	WCU
May 15, 1988	1988 PAWP Fellows Luncheons	WCU
May 20-21, 1988	PAWP Regional Conference with Heinemann Authors	WCU
May 22-24, 1988	Retreat for NWP Mid Atlantic Sites	New Jersey
June 22, 1988	Summer Programs begin	WCU
June 27, 1988	Summer Institutes begin	WCU

PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

Published Quarterly
by the Pennsylvania Writing Project
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383

Director: Robert H. Weiss
Co-Director: Jolene Borgese
Assistant Director: Martha J. Menz

Editors:
Gail Capaldi Lois Snyder

Sponsors:
West Chester University Bucks County Intermediate Unit Chester County Intermediate Unit
Delaware County Intermediate Unit Montgomery County Intermediate Unit
Pennsylvania Department of Education

The purpose of the *Pennsylvania Writing Project Newsletter* is to link together all teachers of writing in our area. The Newsletter features, but it is not limited to, articles that deal with writing and the teaching of writing and related matters.

We seek articles from all teachers of writing at all grade levels and in all subject areas and from anyone else interested in writing. All articles will be considered for publication. Comments, questions, etc., are also welcomed. Please send all communications to: Gail Capaldi or Lois Snyder (Editors), 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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