



PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 15 NUMBER 3 SPRING 1995

PRIMARY SOURCES IN THE CLASSROOM

A Keynote Address by James Turk

by Judy Endicott

James Turk, Vice President of Programs at the Balch Institute of Ethnic Studies in Philadelphia, challenged his January PAWPDAY audience to consider the role of museum exhibitions as vehicles for us to study history and extend our understanding of cultural diversity.

A former classroom teacher who is now the museum educator, Turk shared with us information about the creation of the Balch Institute's present exhibit, "Through the Lens." This exhibit uses poetry as an interpretive text in conjunction with photography of the Civil Rights movement. This museum's unique collection involves all cultural groups, and its library archives, museum galleries of collections and exhibits, and public programs offer opportunities for all of us to make personal connections with history. Acknowledgment of cultural diversity should lead to understanding and appreciation of the diversity in our classrooms and society at large.

"History begins this very moment," he said. The story it writes is both a collective and individual concept. Our personal and collective aspects of history intersect in many ways providing us with the rich cultural heritage and diversity that surrounds us.

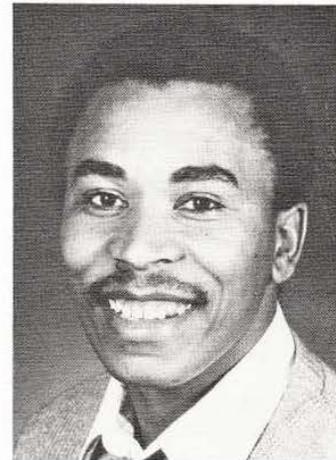
History's story is captured in literature along with the many items found in a museum exhibit, Turk reminded us. Many museum exhibits involve written components that are intended to help the visitor interpret the visual information. He referred to this as the "visual literacy" converted to text. History is most effective, he told us, when it makes a connection with our own lives.

We then searched for connections between some artifacts and our own personal history. In small groups we were encouraged to explore an artifact from the present exhibit to determine the cultural identity of the object and the rite of passage (identified as birth, marriage, coming of age, and death) the object may have
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AFRICAN AUTHOR AND STORY-TELLER RETURNS ON APRIL 22

Returning to PAWP/PennLit to participate in our PAWPDAY on April 22, 1995 is Tololwa Marti Mollel, an Arusha Maasai who grew up on his grandfather's coffee farm near Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania and became a noted story-teller and author. Tolo's books include *The Orphan Boy*, an ALA Notable Children's Book in 1992, and *The King and the Tortoise*. His presentation to our 1994 Summer Literacy Conference, on "The Power of Story," combined story-telling with an intensely personal narrative of his development as an author and was very well received. He holds degrees in Literature and Theatre from the University of Dar es Salaam and a Ph.D. in theatre from Edmonton University, where he now teaches.

Illustrator-author Peter Catalannato of Bucks County will be the featured speaker, with the follow-up sessions led by Joyce Helstrom (Bensalem SD), Freda Schopfer (Upper Moreland SD), Pat Carney-Dalton (Souderton Area SD), and Mollel, whose topic will be "Monsters and Mortals in the World of the Folk Tale."



Tololwa Marti Mollel

PRIMARY SOURCES [continued from page 1]

been connected to. We were encouraged to record our observations using a visual map or web, as is commonly done at the museum. Our group repeatedly acknowledged that we were interpreting our artifact within the context of our own cultural heritage(s) using some additional information about other cultures we had learned for studying or traveling.



James Turk explains an artifact

In connection with that activity, Turk led the audience through a slide presentation of photographs depicting rites of passage ceremonies and artifacts. As each group looked for where their particular artifact fit in, he filled us with fascinating insight about the visual images before us. His research supplied us with the information we needed to connect these items to our own history or to extend our information about other cultures and their rites of passages. The result for me was a much deeper understanding of the significance attached to items once I understood the cultural heritage and rites of passage they were connected to.

How does this apply to writing?, I asked myself. Thinking, which we know writing helps clarify, begins with our own experiences--our own perspective. Unless we challenge our own perspective--our own way of understanding--we will not experience the perspective of others. We must seek an understanding of cultural traditions, rituals, rites of passages and how they have changed through the years if we are going to be able to acknowledge and respect the culture of others. Experts say that for most of us, the best writing comes from our direct experiences. James Turk encouraged us to view museums as a source of these direct experiences. Museums can provide all of us with another vehicle for engaging and bringing in students to look for "points where they can connect." By reading the text presented with the visual images, connecting history to our own lives, and making an attempt to understand the collective history of others, we can extend our experiences that provide the ideas for our writing.

An instructional support teacher for the Abington SD, Judy was asked to report on the January 14 PAWPDAY. A poem of hers appears later in this Newsletter.

PAWPERS PROBABLY VERBAL/LINGUISTIC

Starting a new series of Saturday morning workshops for PAWP and PennLit teacher-consultants on January 21, 1995 was Martha Menz, a 1980 Fellow, a PAWP assistant director, and newly the curriculum/staff development director for the Upper Darby School District. Martha discussed the theory of multiple intelligences and its impact on curriculum and assessment with over 30 participants on a day that could have been snowy but--thankfully--wasn't.

After reviewing the early history of IQ testing, Martha explained that Howard Gardner's 1983 book, *Frames of Mind*, revolutionized the way teachers, students, and parents can look at the classroom. Gardner notes that schools have been warm and welcoming places for those who work best in one of two intelligences: verbal/linguistic and mathematical/logical. On the other hand, he explains, schools have turned a cold shoulder to those who learn in other styles: visual/spatial, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, body/kinesthetic.

Particularly revolutionary is the notion that all seven intelligences are equal and could be treated equally in designing lessons and assessments. Although the activities suggested are not new, what is new is the attitude that the 'enrichment' is where the learning really takes place. The idea is that activities should encourage all students to learn through all intelligences, although one or two may be easier and preferred.

Teachers will be pleased to note there's really nothing new in the following very abbreviated (English/language arts-oriented) chart--it's the attitude that's changed.

<u>intelligence</u>	<u>example</u>
verbal/linguistic	expert speech
logical/mathematical	compare/contrast
visual/spatial	imaginary field trip
body/kinesthetic	plays
musical/rhythmic	study of music
interpersonal	group work
intrapersonal	reflective logs

Martha suggests assessing the students for which intelligence(s) they are strongest in, teaching to all the multiple intelligences, and encouraging the students to use all the intelligences in all situations. Parents of students who are not strong in the verbal/linguistic or logical/mathematical intelligences particularly like Gardner's theory because it suits their notions about their children's abilities.

Lynne Dorfman, a 1989 Writing Project Fellow and third grade teacher at Upper Moreland School District, was instrumental in arranging the Saturday leadership series of workshops.

YOUTH PROGRAMS EXPAND TO EIGHT LOCATIONS

This year marks a growth spurt for PAWP's youth programs. After 9 years of successful programming at the West Chester University location, last year PAWP piloted its first off-campus program in the Upper Moreland School District and created the new program, **Young Writers/Young Readers**. Now, in our 11th year of youth programming, we have established 6 new locations and created 2 new programs.

In addition to the YW/YR program continuing at Upper Moreland, the other locations are the Central Bucks and Neshaminy SD's in Bucks County, the Coatesville and Kennett SD's in western Chester County, the Springfield SD in Delaware County, and the Hatboro-Horsham SD in Montgomery County. Each of these off-campus programs runs in the morning for two weeks and is intended for students entering grades 2-6 or 2-9 depending on location. Participants will be eligible for regional awards.

The two new programs, which will be offered this summer only on the WCU campus, are **Young Readers** and **Writing and Word Processing**. **Young Readers** runs for one week and is provided for students entering grades 1-5. **Writing and Word Processing** runs for 8 days and is intended for students entering grades 3-9. Readers of this *Newsletter* who wish a program brochure should call the Project office.

Also, we've made a name change to correspond to the concept underlying each program. **Young Writers** is the new name for the Youth Writing Project. The fledgling **Young Readers** program involves no writing at all. **Young Writers/Young Readers** is a combination program. **Writing and Word Processing** emphasizes word processing skills and is not so oriented toward writing improvement as the computer-based sessions of **Young Writers**.

Helping to coordinate and instruct in these off-campus and new programs are TC's Sylvia Pennypacker, Betty Esris, Rita Rotton, Judy Jester, Rina Vassallo, Kathy Hurst, Mary O'Gorman, and Karen Venuto. Bruce Seidel continues to serve as overall coordinator for all of PAWP's youth programs.

Thoreau on Grammar:

Any fool can make a rule and every fool will mind it.

NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT INFORMATION

Number of Sites:

163 sites (158 sites within the U.S.)

Location of Sites:

43 states plus Puerto Rico have at least one site; 2 sites in Canada; and three sites overseas serving U.S. teachers in Department of Defense Dependent schools and independent schools

Numbers of Teachers Trained (1992-1993 programs):*

Invitational Summer Institutes

Elementary	1,223
Junior High	682
Senior High	835
College	188
Other	220
Total:	3,148

School Year Programs

Elementary	41,262
Secondary	36,942
College	2,888
Other	3,456
Total:	84,458

All Other NWP Programs: **Total: 60,198**

Total Teachers and Others Trained in 1992-1993 Programs: 147,804

Total Teachers, Administrators, and Others Trained in NWP Programs to Date, 1974 to the Present: 1,318,174

* Yes, it takes this long for us to cumulate our data.

WRITING FOR REAL AUDIENCES

by Mary Lou Winkeler-Hoffman

Peter Elbow in *Writing with Power* (Oxford Press, 1981) states, "Writing's greatest reward, for most of us anyway, is the sense of reaching an audience." While researching background information for my summer institute response to Elbow, I become interested in the writer-reader connection. I am also struck by an article by Jennie Cooper, "Writing for Real People: A Client-Centered Approach" (*College Composition and Communication* Oct 1993: 386-388). In particular, I am intrigued by Cooper's asking freshman composition students to write a research paper for real people-- "journalists, government officials, millionaires, business leaders, faculty members, and local citizens" (386).

Cooper outlines her method of contacting and following up with the clients and documents the class's progress and morale. I especially like that the final paper is mailed to the client with the researcher's name, address, and telephone number. With few exceptions, the students receive highly appreciative phone calls or letters from the clients, rewards that the students seem to value much more than the grades they earn. One student tells Cooper, "Writing for a real person is a lot more fun than writing for an English teacher" (388). The students' investment level is very high compared to that for a "dummy run," James Britton's term for a practice exercise instead a piece of real communication.

I wonder if there are teachers employing Jennie Cooper's ideas at the high school level. As one congressman writes, "In an age when employers are constantly complaining that their entry-level employees are inadequately prepared for their jobs, you have found a way to provide your students with real-life experience" (386). My search is a fruitful one.

Margaret Cintonino in "Writing for the Public" (*English Journal* Mar 1993: 54-57) describes a program funded by The Bingham Trust as part of Clemson University's "Writing in the Schools" project. High school senior English students revise and rewrite documents such as memos, instructions, contracts, handbooks, and brochures. Because most of the students in the class are college-bound, project topics tend to focus on college concerns. One group decides to write a pamphlet explaining steps students should take during each year of high school to prepare for college. One group works on a handbook to guide students through the process of choosing a college. Another writes a guide for making one's way through the financial aid process. Two groups select non-college-related projects: revision of anti-smoking pamphlets to make them more interesting and less technical; a teenager's guide to auto insurance.

The students consult various sources. They write letters to invite experts to speak to their class. They record progress in weekly logs. They have to write collaboratively following document-design guidelines delineated in "Writing in the Professions" by Dixie Goswami (American Institute for Research, 1981). After months of research and writing, the groups field test by visiting a neighboring school with samples of their projects. Ultimately, the guidance department, school administration, and driver's education department use the products for the appropriate audiences. Students are proud of having produced practical writing, something of use in the world. They report learning a lot about deadlines, drafting original copy, and collaboration. As a result, the students develop a preparedness to meet the demands of a challenging work environment.

Dean Weber in "Technical Writing: Applications in the Classroom" (*English Journal* Feb 1992: 64-70) shares some business management insights regarding writing on the job:

- "I write all the time!" (Vice-president of a bank)
- "If I had know in college how much I'd be writing now, I'd have studied harder." (Commercial real estate agent)
- "Tell your kids they'll have to write well to be successful in business." (President of a small company)
- "Teach them how to write resumes and take interviews. Education won't help them if they can't get a job." (Vice-president of a corporation)

Weber's college-bound seniors design resumes, practice interviewing, and draft related correspondence. One skill that the teacher finds especially important is writing instructions, so a quick activity that the class does is to assemble a model and write the related directions.

Weber hands each student a sandwich bag containing about 20 pieces from Fisher-Price's Basix Construx kits. The student then builds a 3-dimensional model using at least 15 pieces in his package. The student cannot trade pieces with his peers. Once the model is constructed, a drawing is made of it. Then the students writes instructions describing how to construct the model step-by-step. When the student finishes the tasks, he disassembles the model, returns the pieces to the bag, and inserts drawing and instructions into the bag. The teacher collects the bags, which are numbered. The next day the bag is handed to another student who is directed to reassemble the model using the drawing and instructions. The student is asked to write onto the instruction page any problems he encounters as he assembles the model. Then the instructions with the notes and the drawing are returned. The product testing is done at least twice. The student who designed the model then can see how

successful he was in providing clear instructions.

In "Solving Problems in Twenty-first Century Academic and Workplace Writing" (*English Journal* Mar 1993: 46-53), authors Ruth Fennick, Mary Peters, and Lois Guyon look to a former president of Western Electric, Paul Gorman, to sum up an attitude many administrators have toward their companies: "Communications is my most important problem" (46). Students who manage to graduate without the necessary writing skills often find themselves without jobs or locked into entry-level positions. Employees in lower-level positions conduct a good portion of their work orally or in brief memos. Only when they are promoted does management see that, although they may be otherwise suited to the higher position, they are incompetent writers and unprofitable.

Completing whole, complex projects in a collaborative manner by adapting texts to specific audiences involves skills necessary to make students more marketable in an ever-changing work environment. Writers also need to understand how to operate electronic tools. Fennick, Peters, and Guyon cite several real workplace projects to demonstrate the need for the above skills. In light of the current O.J. Simpson murder case, one example deserves particular mention, the generation of a police officer's investigative report. Characteristics of such a report include extensive use of collaboration, keen awareness of audience needs, the importance of timelines, increasing use of computer technology, and the need for absolute accuracy (48).

An unclear investigative report can mean loss of a conviction, a person's freedom, or life. The field notes must be clear to other police department personnel, the courts, and the media. Some may refer to the notes immediately, or look at them months, even years, later. The officer makes important decisions regarding what to include, what to exclude, and how to phrase the information. For example, 'O.D.' on a report can mean either 'overdosed' or 'off-duty.' Small errors often provide legal loopholes. Consider the interpretations of these examples of unclear pronoun reference, unclear modification, and faulty punctuation:

1. "The officer told Sgt. Adams that he had made a mistake."
2. "I found a stain on a jacket which was red."
3. "After the suspect shot, John Smith ran" and "After the suspect shot John, Smith ran" (49).

According to Lance A. Parr, who is quoted by the authors, "For the past several years the police chiefs nation-wide have identified report writing as the major problem in law enforcement....Catching the crooks is not the problem....Keeping them caught is another matter".

Other projects contained within the article include a

massive invitations project--2,000 invitations to a shoreline cruise--and the press release. Their students locate newsworthy issues in their schools or community, prepare the copy according to predetermined guidelines, and submit for publication in local newspapers. The authors consult Teri Lammers' article in *Inc.* magazine, "The Press-Release Primer," for advice on how to write press releases that get published (52). Finally, letter writing to an author regarding strengths and weaknesses of a text is reviewed as a collaborative class assignment.

One very effective collaborative letter writing project is explained in "Public Letters: Discovering the Power of Good Writing" (*English Journal* Mar 1993: 58-62). Cheryl Grant's 125 seventh graders took matters into their own hands when they had only one computer to share. Equipped with a list of twenty major corporations, each student wrote to persuade the CEOs and/or presidents of two companies that it is in their best interest to give their outdated equipment to the school. Thirteen computers were donated from companies such as Mobil, CBS, ALCOA, and EDS, a partner company of General Motors. According to Grant, her students learned that big business has a human face and that there is no tool more powerful than communication (62).

I indeed discovered many ways in which high school students are writing for real audiences in their schools and their communities. In fact, one project focuses on the achievements of very pro-active junior high students interacting with big business. As students search for increasing relevance in the school curriculum, these projects provide opportunities for them to become invested, empowered, and skilled. Later job effectiveness is preceded by the development of writing skills. The selected projects vary in duration from a few days to several months and provide for pupils the mediums to create, collaborate, and assess effectiveness.

Homer A. Watt complains about theme writing being unreal when the student-writer has no real audience. He asserts, "The principal concern of the real writer is the adjustment of his subject matter to the understanding, prejudices, or emotions of an audience which he invariably has more or less in mind." Homer Watt originally shared his insights in "The Philosophy of Written Composition" written in 1918 (*English Journal* Mar 1993: 57). Years later, creative English teachers find ways to provide their students with audiences other than the teacher.

Mary Lou Winkeler-Hoffman, a 1994 Fellow, is a high school theme reader.



1993-1994 EVALUATION PROJECT REPORTS
GENERALLY SUCCESSFUL RESULTS

In the 1993-1994 PAWP evaluation project 14 teacher consultants scored writing samples of 100 elementary, 95 middle, and 120 senior high school students written in September and April of the school year. A different 6-point scale was used for each level, with 1 being the lowest and six being the highest score. The scales are holistically constructed to assess writing qualities such as: completeness, focus of ideas, organization, originality, voice and mechanics. Results of the project showed gains from pretest to posttest for each of the three groups, with the elementary showing the greatest improvement with a pretest mean of 5.403 to a posttest mean of 8.608.

An opinionaire was also completed by each student group in order to determine a student's feelings about writing and the writing process early in the school year and toward the end of the school year.

The elementary survey sheet focuses on five main areas of writing: overall feelings towards writing and the writing process, self-selection, revision, sharing and planning. The results for the surveys showed a substantially favorable increase in student attitudes toward writing in almost all areas for the elementary group. The middle and high school survey adds the area of audience. The results for the surveys showed generally similar responses from the pre to posttests for the middle and high school groups.

Currently, the writing project is beginning work on the 1994-1995 evaluation project. The first scoring session was held on October 8, 1994. Thirteen teacher consultants and one graduate assistant formed two groups: elementary 1-4, and middle school 5-8. Initially, the elementary group created a new scoring guide and the middle school group altered one prompt and added another.

REMEMBERING LIBBY

by Cathy Swanson

Her hands
struggle
to grasp the No. 2 brush
veins like indigo snakes
wriggle
beneath spotted flesh
each knotted joint
nailed in place
against
her will.

Her eyes
searching
through the wax paper lenses
that were once the eyes of
another, still seeing
so vividly
the colors
and shapes of
her vision.

Her legs
withering
under a finch's weight
stiffly shuffle-dance with
an ivory-handled partner
under the weight of
her years.

To the others she is a shadow
frail, already gone
just doesn't know it.

But I
I am
flooded
with images of her.

In a Park Avenue suite
the commandant, crisply
uniformed in navy linen and
decorated with white pearls
barks orders over
the edge of
her gemmed bifocals.

On Monhegan Island
the matriarch, draped in
breezy challis and mother-of-pearl
sips well-chosen
cabernet as the chill
of a Maine evening blankets
the screened porch.

At thirty,
she dined with the Wyeths
At forty, married a lawyer
a Twining of tea fame
Even at eighty, she

limoed to the city
to sip amber Manhattans
with faithful clients and
chat about Persians
fine art, chintz.

Now I watch
her, fading
before me
nearly ninety
copying
the Delaunay
she keeps taped to
her paintbox.
She slips into nothingness;
traces of linseed oil
and Chanel No. 6
twist and linger
in the air
leaving
only
her whispers.

Cathy Swanson, a fourth grade teacher in the Souderton Area School District, wrote this poem for a Teachers as Writers course.

NEWSWORTHY DOINGS

Attending NCTE & NWP meetings in Orlando this past November were TC's **Diane Dougherty** ('89), **Jolene Borgese** ('80), **Judy Fisher** ('82), **Cynthia Muse** ('82), **Pat Carney-Dalton** ('88), and **Brenda Hurley** ('84), as well as **Andy Fishman** and **Bob Weiss**.

Featured as a presenter for a full 1.5 hour session was TC **Steve Taylor** ('89) of Penncrest High School (Rose Tree Media SD), whose topic was "The Most Radical Teacher: A Teacher-Researcher Struggles to Transform the Literature Curriculum."

Meg Barney ('94) of the same school recently presented to the recent Pennsylvania Art Education Association Conference on writing in the art room and 9th grade art as a transitional year.

Congratulations to **Jolene Borgese**, PAWP's co-director, who has had yet another article published in a national journal. Her article, "A Long Road to Change," appeared in the October, 1994, issue of *English Leadership Quarterly*. Jolene is also serving with Bob Weiss as a member of the Advisory board to Downingtown elementary teacher Jeff Singleton's projects on service learning. Her NCTE presentation (with Lela DeToye of the Mississippi Valley Writing Project) on using children's literature in the secondary classroom pleased an overflow audience of over 200.

Congratulations to **Gail Capaldi Mushnick** ('86) on the birth of Ariana Barbara last September. Gail, an Upper Darby SD elementary teacher, co-edited this *Newsletter* for 2 years.

Isabel Stefanisko ('88) was featured in an article called, "The 'Cheltenham Model' Revs Up Interest in Social Studies." It was the lead article in the Fall 1994 issue of *Twentythree: The Newsletter of Montgomery County IU 23*.

Pat Carney-Dalton ('88) was quoted in the Heinemann catalogue for her NWP review of Jack Wilde's book, *A Door Opens: Writing in Fifth Grade*.

Conne Broderick ('84) of the Southeast Delco SD was the guest writer for the December 1994 journal of the Penn Literacy Network. Her theme was "congruent assessment."

Promotions for two Upper Darby TC's from the first PAWP institute: **Martha Menz** ('80) and **Merle Horowitz** ('80) changed jobs recently, with Martha becoming her district's Director of Curriculum and Merle becoming Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

Bernadette Fenning ('87), head of the English Dept. at Archbishop Carroll High School in Radnor, PA, has announced her imminent retirement from teaching. She

has also worked in the Youth Writing Project in recent years and hopes to assist with the editorial operations of this *Newsletter*.

Kevin McAneny ('84) is now principal at the Deibler Elementary School in the Pennridge SD in Bucks County, where he has the district responsibility for changing to whole language philosophy and instruction.

Judy Jester (PAWP '93 and PennLit '94) of the Kennett Middle School has become the first teacher to earn the joint Certificate in Instructional Strategies for Teaching Writing and Literature. Judy will be the site coordinator for our 1995 Young Readers/Young Writers program in her district.

Diane Dougherty ('89), currently on sabbatical leave from her job as English department Chairperson and teacher at Coatesville Area Senior High School, has been helping to organize the PAWP office's hundreds of articles and materials on writing and its relations. Also a Fellow of PennLit, Diane has just become the second person to earn our joint certificate. Diane also has been coordinating a Literature Circle for Teachers and will be attending some portfolio and assessment conferences for PAWP.

Erika Allen ('94) developed a monthly newsletter for the fellows of her Bucks County summer institute. Each participant sends her a brief description of something that's going on professionally or personally, she collects and reprints the descriptions, and thus the group stays in touch and is regularly updated.

Last summer, **Rosemary Buckendorff** ('81) studied the early Renaissance as part of a 6-week program held in Italy and sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Cecelia Evans ('81), recently retired from the School District of Philadelphia, has been working as a consultant on using poetry to enhance school curricula, especially to motivate pupils and raise their self-esteem. Cecelia is past president of the Philadelphia Council of the International Reading Association. Her second book of poems is expected this spring.

Chuck Jones ('84), formerly of the Exeter Township SD in Berks County, now teaches at Gallaudet University for the Deaf in Washington, DC.

Bob McCann (PAWP '81), **Tony Rotondo** (PAWP '94, PennLit '93), **Barb Turgeon** (PennLit '93), **Sue Blevins** (PennLit '93), **Jolene Borgese**, PAWP Co-Director, and **Andy Fishman** received a grant from the NCTE Research Foundation to develop a new model for student teaching. The project, called "We are all Student Teachers," involves five WCU student teachers.

PAWP'S SUMMER PROGRAMS

Strategies for Teaching Writing I

This most popular of all PAWP courses is available on campus in West Chester or in the Upper Darby School District. Offered over 200 times since 1980, "Strategies" includes presentations by nine teacher-consultants as well as the coordinator, who is also a classroom teacher. This puts teachers' voices at the center of the course and focuses on what really works in current classrooms.

Statistics tell the tale. In 24 Strategies courses offered between 1988 and 1991, 320 participants noted that their students now:

- spend a longer time writing (86.0%)
- do more writing of various kinds (83.8%)
- do more self-sponsored writing ((85.6%)
- do more pre-writing (81.6%) and re-writing (68.4%)
- do more reading and writing activities in class (86.0%)
- find more pleasure in their written products (86.9%)

Teachers' comments say even more.

- *"This course has dramatically changed my 4th grade class."*
- *"A great class! It really helped me to clarify my philosophy about teaching writing and provided me with lots of new ideas."*
- *"I feel fortunate to have taken this course. It has increased my confidence and skill in teaching writing to my students. I am amazed at the increased ability I have observed in four months. Even severely language disabled students will now write volumes. My students will rewrite stories or work on unfinished projects without being asked."*

The 1995 summer version of "Strategies" is available for three graduate or in-service/certification credits.

Teaching Literature I

Developed by PennLit teacher-consultants, this course offers practical application of reader response and whole language theory in the teaching of fiction, poetry, drama, film, and media for teachers K-12. Major topics include:

- Journals, response groups, and "literature circles"
- Performance and portfolio assessment of literature learning
- Selecting texts: race, ethnicity, gender, and censorship
- Reading-writing connections
- Teaching skills through literature

Participants read one current novel as a community of readers as well as self-selected literature of personal or professional interest. They develop projects for their classrooms and create assessment plans. Articles reflecting best ways to use literature in the classroom and presentation of classroom tested strategies by PennLit teacher-consultants round out the course.

This course has been offered successfully six times since 1992 in Berks, Bucks, Chester, and Delaware Counties.

Teachers as Writers

What can teachers write? What do teachers want to write? How can teachers get their writing published? What is it really like to be part of a community of writers? The answers to these questions are in this course for all teachers, K-12, who want to grow as writers.

The first part of each class session is a reading/writing workshop. Then PAWP teacher-consultants and published authors instruct in different genres including fiction, poetry, personal essays, and professional articles. We can't guarantee that you'll have your work accepted by an editor, but we can promise strategies and opportunities for developing your skills and seeking a market for your work. (The course provides a great model for teaching writing, too!)

Teachers as Poets

Many teachers find poetry the most difficult genre to read, let alone to write. Come to Souderton this summer and discover why that's just not true. Pat Carney-Dalton, a PAWP teacher-consultant and published poet, will help participants find the poets within themselves. They will experience different kinds of poetry as readers and writers and participate in presentations by other practicing poets. In addition, they will develop instructional plans for taking poetry back to their classrooms next fall.

Writing Assessment/Portfolio Assessment

We are all concerned with evaluating how well our students are doing in our classrooms. We are learning that authentic assessment requires student involvement and ownership. The goal of the course in "Writing Assessment/Portfolio Assessment" is to explore ways that assessment information can be used to create rich student profiles which celebrate all the unique voices in our classrooms.

The practical design of the course attracts all

PAWP'S SUMMER PROGRAMS

teachers, regardless of subject area and/or grade level. Kindergarten and content area teachers all find implications and direct application for their classrooms. Because the very nature of assessment is dynamic and in constant change, the course emphasizes portfolio applications--rich collections, selections, organizations, and self-evaluations and reflections.

Teachers work in peer response groups to create portfolio systems that will accommodate the needs of the students in their individual classrooms. Together they will find ways to make their systems manageable and comfortable. Many resources will be on hand for review and research, including samples of portfolio designs from previous classes.

In addition, the course covers holistic scoring, analytic scoring, checklists, and rubric design. Six PAWP teacher-consultants will demonstrate methods they use to evaluate children's writing in their own classrooms, often sharing student samples and/or portfolios. The last session is a "celebration" in which each teacher shares a portfolio design with the whole group and receives feedback. Join us this summer!

Whole Language, K-8

What does it mean to be a "whole language teacher"? How do you integrate language, literacy, and learning? And what about skills? The change from traditional teaching to whole language can be daunting. Developing and mastering whole language approaches takes time. This course helps participants at all stages of professional growth. Workshop formats, mini-lessons, interdisciplinary units, and authentic approaches to assessment are all discussed and demonstrated by the PAWP and PennLit teacher-consultants who share what works in their classrooms as part of this course. For teachers in elementary or middle school settings.

Writing in the Content Areas

Social studies, science, math, and foreign languages. Art, health, even PE and "tech prep" require students to learn and think about concepts and facts. Writing can help them all. This course focuses on strategies for helping students "write to learn" without adding to the curriculum or to the teacher's workload. PAWP teacher-consultants from all content areas and grade levels share ways they actually use writing in their classrooms. Come to Upper Darby in mid-August or to Quakertown in late June-early July and learn how.

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PAWP'S SUMMER PROGRAMS

The New Short Courses

This summer PAWP will offer a series of seven unique and exciting one-credit workshop courses to facilitate teachers' professional growth. These courses are representative of current philosophies and learning theories in education. "Because of their emphasis on reading and writing across the curriculum," advises Nicholas Spennato of the Delaware County Intermediate Unit, "these courses will prepare teachers to create the kind of literate classrooms and thinking environments which we have been reading about in journals for the last decade." Bob Weiss, PAWP's director, plans to make these new courses available in districts by the fall and is helping to create additional ones.

Below is a listing of each course with its date and number. In order to help you with your summer planning and long weekends these courses will be offered Mondays through Thursdays, July 17th through August 3rd, 8:30 - 3:30.

July 17-18	PWP 599-33
Writing and Children's Literature	
July 19-20	PWP 599-34
Create an Interdisciplinary Theme Unit	
July 24-25	PWP 599-35
Managing the Reading/Writing Classroom	
July 26-27	PWP 599-36
Inclusion Through Writing Strategies	
July 31-August 1	PWP 599-37
Writing Activities for Managing Double Periods	
July 31-August 1	PWP 599-39
Writing in Math and Science	
August 2-3	PWP 599-38
Persuasive Writing	

The series will provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate with colleagues within and across grade levels and districts and respond to the ever-expanding body of information which addresses how and why children learn. Embedded within the framework of each course are dozens of strategies and techniques teachers can use in their classrooms. Current practices in cooperative learning, flexible grouping, integrative curricula, writing process, and self-evaluative measures will be explored. We would like to acknowledge those persons who contributed their time and thoughts to design these

courses for PAWP. This truly has been a collaborative and ongoing effort. A BIG thank you to Diane Bates, Lynne Dorfman, Diane Dougherty, Ted Feldstein, Judy Fisher, Brenda Hurley, Mark Linkins, Jim MacCall, Gretchen Maysek, Rosemarie Montgomery, Cynthia Muse, Bruce Seidel, Nicholas Spennato and Robert Weiss.

Writing and Children's Literature

Do you want your students to have multiple classroom strategies for responding to literature in meaningful ways using innovative and cooperative approaches? This workshop offers an array of literature-to-writing activities for various purposes, audiences, and forums. This course will also help you to make a difference in your students' reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities through literature discussion circles and response journals. The coordinator is Judy Fisher, a Reading Specialist for the School District of Philadelphia who is a 1982 PAWP fellow and has coordinated many of our courses including Strategies for Teaching Writing I, Writing Assessment/Portfolio Assessment and the Pennsylvania Framework for Reading, Writing and Talking. Judy recently has become the editor of our *PAWP Newsletter*.

Create an Interdisciplinary Theme Unit

Is a practical and user-friendly workshop, you will have an opportunity to design a thematic unit and reflect on classroom practice. Teachers will work together to create a unit which will integrate language arts with many content areas and incorporate appropriate literature into themes. Participants will explore the latest teaching strategies for developing language, literacy, and learning in the content areas. They will also discuss how to make decisions regarding worthwhile themes and authentic experiences. Nicholas Spennato, coordinator for this mini-course, is the Staff Development/Language Arts Specialist for the Delaware County Intermediate Unit. He has assisted in the design of the PAWP/Pennsylvania Framework course based on PCR II and facilitated many of the courses. Spennato has also coordinated Interdisciplinary/Integrative curriculum workshops for the Delaware Valley English Alliance and the Delaware County Intermediate Unit.

PAWP'S SUMMER PROGRAMS

The New Short Courses

Manage a Reading/Writing Classroom

Explore ways to Participants will learn how to use mini-lessons, manage student conferences, and establish flexible groups. Ways to organize student/teacher conferences and peer conferences will be demonstrated. This course will also include strategies for self and peer evaluation. Rubrics will be examined and writing projects will be designed. Brenda Krupp, third grade teacher at Souderton and 1993 PAWP Fellow, will coordinate Manage a Reading/Writing Classroom. Brenda has presented at PAWPDAYS and various other programs including Strategies for Teaching Writing I. She has also presented at two PSTA conventions.

Inclusion Through Writing Strategies

This workshop offers an extensive range of possible options for lesson design and assessment for the inclusion classroom. Appropriate strategies to meet the needs of all students will be presented. The course will examine the multifaceted roles and responsibilities of teachers and interweave with practical classroom application. Additionally, teachers will learn how to organize and manage their classrooms through cooperative and collaborative strategies. Inclusion Through Writing Strategies will be coordinated by Ted Feldstein, a 1992 fellow who has been employed since last April as a Supervisor of Special Education for the Bucks County Intermediate Unit. Previously Ted was the program and training specialist for the IU and provided teacher support to facilitate inclusion throughout the county.

Writing Activities for Managing Double Periods

How to manage longer classes is the form of this workshop. the goal is to help create dynamic double periods in any content area with a workshop atmosphere where everyone is on task as a learner through reading, writing and responding. Teachers will learn how to help students recognize the powers and values of writing as a tool for their own learning and as a tool for instructing others. Strategies for sustaining writing experiences will be modelled and designed. Writing Activities for Managing Double Periods will be coordinated by Diane Dougherty (89 PAWP; 94 PennLit). Diane chairs the English Department for Coatesville Area Senior High

School, has coordinated Strategies for Teaching Writing I and a Literature Circle, and serves on the board of the Delaware Valley ASCD.

Persuasive Writing

Persuasion is one of three modes assessed annually by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. This workshop will provide practical strategies and techniques to enhance student writing in this mode in English/Language Arts classes and across the curriculum at all levels. Procedures, purposes, forms, topics and audiences will be discussed. Teachers will have multiple opportunities to explore persuasive writing activities appropriate for their grade levels and design evaluation tools such as rubrics, holistic scoring guides and self evaluations. Vicki Steinberg (83 PAWP; 92 PennLit) will coordinate. She has coordinated many courses for PAWP including Strategies for Teaching Writing I and II, the PA Framework, and Literature Circles. For several years she has edited our *PAWP Newsletter*. Currently Vicki is Co-director of PennLit and edits the National Literature Project Newsletter.

Writing in Mathematics and Science

What writing processes and functions within the math and science classroom at all grade levels can provide teachers with ways to engage students in an active constructive view of learning? Teachers in this workshop will "try out" writing activities to practice organizing, inferring, interpreting, communicating, explaining and reflecting. Emphasis will be placed on writing-to-learn experiences and the use of learning logs. Practical applications for evaluating and testing will also be modelled and discussed. The coordinator will be Marcia Cole-Quigley, a 1981 PAWP fellow who has coordinated Strategies for Teaching Writing I and served many times as a teacher-consultant. Currently Marcia is a middle school teacher of mathematics and English at Marple-Newtown. In 1989 she was one of the Pennsylvania disseminators for NCTM standards.

This description of our 1-credit courses was composed by Lynne Dorfman and Cynthia Muse.

From the Director

VICKI STEINBERG: AN APPRECIATION

Five years ago, when she assumed the editorship of the PAWP *Newsletter*, Vicki Steinberg had already been one of the more active teacher-consultants in our project. A high school English teacher in the Exeter School District, Vicki had already made many presentations for PAWP and had coordinated several Strategies I courses in Berks County and elsewhere. She had helped to organize Saturday meetings, retreats, and a variety of other programs for PAWP, and she had used her considerable organizational skills to make PAWP a vital presence in Berks County.

It was 1989, the year of our 10th anniversary banquet, and Vicki became editor of the issue that featured our gala affair when 100 people assembled to celebrate and got to see me in a tuxedo. In the five years of issues that followed, *Newsletter* readers came to appreciate Vicki's editorial style and humor. Each issue had a second page "corner" that was hers. In those editorials Vicki shared events of her classroom and ruminations about how her own attitudes and teaching strategies had emerged and changed over the years. We learned how she and her other teacher friends somehow managed to absorb all experiences—even travel to England—into their teaching. The voice that came through was always individual, personable, often whimsical and droll, sometimes pungent. There was always a lesson to be learned.

Vicki's other work as editor was less noticeable: selecting and editing items for inclusion in coming issues, and laying out the typeset items. This labor involved interaction with various office secretaries, and the university's Graphics Department. Many frustrating times were experienced as articles were delayed in the mail, held up at the printer, or stalled somewhere in space. But we always managed to produce an issue, and Vicki always did her end of the work with grace under pressure.

In addition to the written text, there were many pictures. Readers noticed and praised the many photographs that appeared in the *Newsletter*, probably not knowing that most of them had their source in the camera Vicki always had visible and working at PAWP events.

In recent years, the *Newsletter* came to include notices and articles referring to the Pennsylvania Literature Project (PennLit), and with those notices Vicki's job expanded. She was comfortable with the larger responsibilities of the editorship because she had gotten in on the ground floor of PennLit and was its co-director. Now the issues always included some articles

from the Literature institutes and courses.

As of this issue, the *Newsletter* circulates to over 4,800 educators in southeastern Pennsylvania. Most are teachers who have participated in our programs over the years. Registration materials and general program notices now appear in separate 12-page booklets. The *Newsletter* continues to feature samples of teacher writing, whether professional or personal or literary, and discussions of our programs and services. It is a vital window into the work of both the Writing and Literature Projects.

We deeply thank Vicki for a job well done. We know that she will be assuming the editor's role for the National Literature Project *Newsletter* and hope that she will continue to write for our local *Newsletter* and advise her successors. And we look forward to seeing her and her camera at PAWPDAYS for many years.

COMING PAWP EVENTS CO-SPONSORED WITH AREA IU'S

Montgomery County

March 25

Critical Thinking/Viewing through Children's Literature

Gail Haley, author

Bucks County IU

April 24 & 25

Portfolios for the Middle Levels and High School

Maureen Barbieri, co-editor, *Voices from the Middle*

Delaware County IU

May 9

Portfolios Revisited: Assess the System in Place

Bob Weiss, Jim MacCall, Lynne Dorfman, Steve Heffner

LITERATURE CIRCLES

by Ann L. Dietrich

Taking risks. That's what we've been told that we should be doing. Personally, I think all teachers take a huge risk every time they walk into a classroom full of children. But I know what they really mean. Try new things. Experiment. Start moving away from the basal and into using "real literature." Great idea—but how? I am constantly frustrated by administrators asking us to do new things and then providing little or no training. Yes, I believe that as a professional it is my responsibility to take the initiative to learn about new educational techniques by attending workshops and conferences, taking courses, and reading professional publications. And I think that I do all of these things. However, I also believe that our district has a responsibility to meet us at least half way by providing meaningful staff development programs. While I think our district has recently begun moving in this direction, I feel that we still have a long way to go in providing teachers with more consistent training in new techniques that they are expected to be using in their classrooms.

In talking to other teachers over the course of the last year, the term "literature circles" was thrown my way. It was something that I've wanted to try, but never really knew "how." I purchased books in sets of five. I bought a Literature and Writing Workshop through Scholastic. I also began reading short articles on literature circles. But nothing clicked for me. I am the type of person that needs to be shown how to do something. I have a difficult time using techniques that I've simply seen in writing.

You can imagine my excitement and enthusiasm in my Teaching Literature course during Terri Bernecker-Kelly's presentation. I was finally able to see a literature circle in action! Afterwards I thought to myself, "I can do this!"

My students were reading *Dear Mr. Henshaw*. They had read the last section of the book and had done double-entry journals. I decided to use their journal entries as the basis for our first literature circle discussion. As suggested by Terri, we met together in one large group. I laid down some ground rules, and then I sat back, expecting to hear some moments of uncomfortable silence. I was pleasantly surprised when my students jumped right into sharing their journal responses! Yes, most of them simply read what they had written. It was not really a discussion. It was more a summarization of the book's ending.

I then asked them to talk about the personal response part of the journal. The children began to talk about how the main character, Leigh, reminded them of themselves.

Some of them said that Leigh's parents begin divorced reminded them of their own family's situation. Others talked about the fact that their dad drives a big truck and is often away from home, just like Leigh's dad. Many were making a connection to the story, based on their own personal experiences. They even began to ask each other questions.

After noticing that three or four students had not yet made a contribution to the circle, I commented that I was pleased with what I was seeing, but I needed to see that everyone was being involved. Shortly after that, some of the more vocal students began directing questions and discussion at the students that weren't participating. I was amazed! Not only were these students trying to draw others into the discussion, those being pulled in actually seem to appreciate the fact that they had been noticed by the other students.

I felt good about my first attempt at a literature circle. The children in my class seemed to enjoy it, too. I think that they felt like adults, just sitting around and talking about books. I overheard several children telling their parents about it a Meet-the-Teacher Night later that evening. I know that literature circles are something that I will continue to use in my classroom in all subject areas. I look forward to trying this technique with smaller groups of children as the year progresses.

Ann Dietrich, a fifth grade teacher in the Kutztown Area SD, wrote this piece for a Strategies for Teaching Literature course.



Berks County teachers act out during recent workshops conducted by Sue Mowery ('89)

A TEACHER'S CONVERSION: A WRITER LOOKS BACK

by Rose Anne Uhrig

In 22 years of teaching third and fourth grade, I always stressed the basics of English. My students could pick out nouns, pronouns, verbs, and tense. They knew declarative, interrogative, exclamatory, and command. Students were afforded daily opportunities to apply the mechanics through workbook exercises and spelling sentences. Although they knew the rules of English grammar, students were never given the opportunity to explore their own writing and find their "voice." Every spring upon receiving the results of achievement test scores, I knew a commendable job was done and should have taken great pride in my achievement, but down deep inside something was wrong. The profession was changing and so were the students. They were no longer sweet, docile children who sat in their seats all day trying to please the teacher. They were at-risk children from splintered family units trying to survive with the street-wise skills they learned on the outside.

In the winter of 1990, I came across a flyer about a course being offered by the Pennsylvania Writing Project: "Strategies of Teaching Writing I." Finally, a course that was going to give teachers some ideas to take back to their classroom and enable students to write flowing, cohesive paragraphs that had their "voice" in it. Personally, I was not a writer but felt that if students could be given some great ideas to get them writing, surely a future Pulitzer Prize winner would reveal himself/herself in my classroom.

As the instructor introduced herself and cleared organizational tasks, she asked us to look over the information sheet listing the required readings/writing of the course and the dates due. *The Art of Teaching Writing* by Lucy Calkins was to be read and a response made by the middle of February. No problem. My eyes then settled on two words that caused my heart to freeze and a chill to move up my spine: Personal Piece. Although I had been teaching English for years, I couldn't write. Pat D'Arcy has written about the impact that feeling has upon learning and how our inability to feel positively hinders us. My past attempts at writing were usually returned covered in red, boldly giving testimony to my inability to spell, have command of grammar rules, and organize a paragraph. I was frozen in terror at the thought of once again exposing my weak skill at communicating in written language.

In Janet Emig's book, *The Web of Meaning*, she speaks of writing as a natural developmental capacity, as natural as speaking but activated by an enabling environment that is safe, structured, private and literate.

Adults in these environments are fellow practitioners and providers of possible content and feedback. Opportunities are given, many of them playful, for one to practice her writing. All of these features were present in the "Strategies" class. It was like no other class I have ever taken. There was energy and excitement in that room. We talked, we laughed, we read, we responded in writing and strangers became friends. We became a community of writers. With emphasis on content before form, my frozen state melted and words flowed more smoothly onto the blank page. I heard names and ideas that were new to me. Writing process? Lucy Calkins? Teacher as a coach? I became consumed with a desire to know more and aware of seeping changes and possibilities that were coming in the teaching of writing.

That summer I took a course on Holistic Assessment and PCRP II. There I became aware of the summer writing institute and promised myself that someday I would go. 1994 has been that summer. As I finished reading Emig, I knew that my natural writing abilities were activated by the supportive community of writers present in that "Strategies" class. Through their listening and understanding, I became a writer.

Of course, the change that came about in me was also reflected in my classroom. Slowly but surely changes were made there. In applying my new-found beliefs to teaching writing, I had to learn to trust myself and allow time for change and give up some of the control--these issues I will struggle with for years. Students were allowed to bring their worlds into my classroom and share them with others. At first we did a lot of listening, talking and sharing in order to realize the richness and varied experiences we all had which made up the fabric of my class. Students were afforded the "luxury of time" to explore and plan their writing. No longer do I deliver a ready-made curriculum devised by the publishing company. I model, listen, respond and gently guide. The enabling environment has spilled over into other subject areas and it has enhanced their learning. The rigid teacher-student relationship, where no one speaks without a raised hand and being called upon, has been replaced by a constructive noise of students in a more flexible setting collaboratively taking responsibility for their own learning. It is a supportive writing community where everyone is both teacher and student. We have all become writers.

Now a fifth grade teacher for the Reading SD, Rose Ann Uhrig became a PAWP Fellow in 1994.



MATH THE WRITE WAY

by Katherine White

Traditionally, elementary mathematics has been taught as an isolated subject with little connection to the way children function in their daily lives. Young students have grown accustomed to practice and drill worksheets, rote memorization of basic facts, and the frustration of failing to "get it" when everyone around them seems to understand perfectly. Burns believes that many students view mathematics as a collection of mysterious and often magical rules and procedures that must be memorized and practiced. It is little wonder then that children are fearful of mathematics instruction.

For years I have watched my third grade students enter my classroom with looks of excitement coupled with feelings of anxiety. They understand that third grade is going to be a challenging year with many new things to learn, especially in mathematics. Their anxiety level is heightened by the fact that they already believe, at the tender age of eight or nine, that in math your answer is either right or wrong. There is no middle ground, no room for error. What a surprise it is for them to learn that in my classroom, not only is there room for error, there is room for reading, writing, thinking, and fun when you play around mathematically. Even the most anxious, most terrified, or least skilled math students discover a technique which allows them to share their knowledge, offer new insights to others, and explain how they think. How rewarding it is to hear one student say to another, "I used a different strategy to solve that problem. Let me explain it to you."

The technique that offers students such an opportunity is the math journal. The journal is a tool in which all students can record their thoughts and make them visible. D'Arcy believes that those thoughts are then available for further reflection by the students and by the teacher as she becomes more actively involved in the students' acquisition of knowledge. Students are making and shaping meaning in math.

My students have used math notebooks for several years, primarily for computation. Increasingly, notebooks has evolved into more of a dialogue journals as I became more aware of how important it is to converse with my students in mathematics. My belief in the value of math journals has been further shaped by recently developed standards: teachers throughout the nation are being challenged to take a critical look at their mathematics instruction and evaluate its effectiveness because of the work of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. In 1989 the NCTM issued new *Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics (K-12)*. The *Standards* support the view of

school mathematics as a sense-making experience encompassing a wide range of content, instructional approaches, and evaluation techniques. The four themes that prevail are (1) mathematics as problem solving; (2) mathematics as communication; (3) mathematics as reasoning; and (4) mathematical connections. The *Standards* identified that the primary goal for the study of mathematics is to give children experiences to promote the ability to solve problems. Mathematics should be rooted in situations generated within the context of everyday experiences. Students are also expected to make conjectures and conclusions as well as discuss their reasoning in words, both written and spoken, using pictures, graphs, charts, and manipulatives. The *Standards* state that students learn to value mathematics when they make connections between topics in mathematics, between the concrete and the abstract, between concepts and skills, and between mathematics and other areas in the curriculum.

As I reflected upon my mathematics instruction and my students' mastery of new concepts, I realized that I could do more to promote the NCTM standards. By doing "writing to learn" activities, each student actively engages in the learning process. 'Writing to learn' means writing to discover connections, describe processes, express emerging understandings, raise questions, and find answers. This writing enables students to engage in more coherent, sustained thought. It forces students to personalize and internalize learning so they have a better understanding of concepts. For example, Jamie B. writes, *How to check a subtraction problem is easy. Here's an example. If you have $13 - 8 = \underline{\quad}$. All you have to do is say in your mind $8 + 5 = 13$, so $13 - 8 = \underline{5}$. Easy isn't it.* Writing also allows me to do a better job of on-the-spot assessment of a student's level of understanding. I can then make more informed instructional decisions.

Math journals are given to my students on the first day they arrive in my classroom. After encouraging them to illustrate the covers, which I feel gives them a good sense of ownership, I assign the first math writing topic: they are directed to explain in writing what they know how to do in math, as well as what confuses them. As the responses are shared, the students come to realize that they all have mathematical strengths and abilities which will help others in the class. I also believe this activity establishes attitudes of cooperation and community as children recognize that they can rely on each other to develop and share problem solving strategies.

The students use the journals throughout the school year for a variety of purposes. They are sometimes given a "Problem of the Week" which they are asked to consider. Students determine first if they are able to

solve the problem, then explain in writing, or by drawing if appropriate, how they solved it (See Figure 1). Then they share their strategy with other students. Should a student become "stuck," he explains why he is unable to go any further with the problem. Again, students share their information and enlist help from others in the class

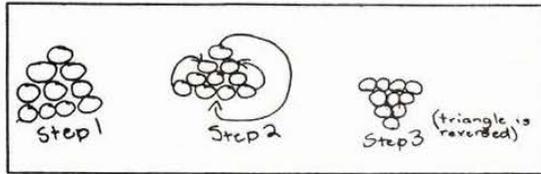


Figure 1. Jennifer D. demonstrates how to reverse the direction of the triangle of circles by repositioning only three circles.

My students especially enjoy creating their own problems and challenging others to solve them. The continual give and take of ideas and information serves to reinforce their learning.

Manipulatives are particularly effective in generating student writing in mathematics. Once a week an entire math period is devoted to creative math problem solving. Students work with pattern blocks, tangrams, and other math manipulatives to solve challenging problems. The level of involvement is extremely high as all students scramble to their notebooks to record information and consult with other students.

My students have invented their own math games, complete with written rules of play, to reinforce mathematical concepts. The writing requires that they formulate their thinking in a very orderly fashion to effectively communicate with others. April M. invented "Candyland Math," a game for 2-4 players in grades 3 and up. The game is designed to improve addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division skills. April's directions to players state, "Choose your man. Pick a card from the box and move how many spaces and colors it shows. If you pick a card with +, -, x, or /, you go to that space and solve the problem....The man who makes it to home first wins!"

My new goal for writing in math is to expand the use of dialogue journals. As was demonstrated through my PAWP Summer Institute, this is a powerful writing tool. My students will use it to write their questions and reflections about a particular concept or skill being taught. My responses will further stimulate thinking, clarify concepts, or encourage students to continue mathematical explorations. Writing will continue to open the doors to understanding for even the most reluctant learners. As I read and respond to their inquiries and reflections, I will learn and grow along with them. The math dialogue journals will allow me to make more

informed decisions when designing lessons. The range of writing possibilities is endless for teachers who are committed to extending students' problem solving and reasoning abilities. Routman believes that writing provides students a way to extend and deepen their understanding of concepts. With writing they can reflect on what they have been doing and formulate and rethink their ideas. Tori C., after working for two weeks to learn multiplication facts, wrote in her math journal:

Dear Mrs. White,

Multiplication is challenging enough. I think all the numbers up to the number 7 are easy. The other ones are a little difficult if I don't stop to think for about 30 seconds. I also know 11's and 10's.

Sincerely,

Tori

P.S. I love the 9's multiplication trick.

I responded:

Dear Tori,

Keep practicing the facts that you have to think about for 30 seconds. You will soon only need to think for about 2 seconds before you know the product. You caught on to the 9's trick very quickly. Matthew is still having trouble with it. Can you help him?

Mrs. W.

For my students, math has never been so thought-provoking or so much fun. In response to "Teddy Bear Tic Tac Toe," a math game designed to reinforce basic math facts, Tim T. reflected in his journal: *I think Teddy Bear Tic Tac Toe is a really fun game. Because it was a challenging game. That game is all luck. It was hard to get tic tac toe. Chris and I had a very long first game. It was really fun. David A. wrote, It was a fun game. I found it challenging. It was harder than I thought it would be. It takes a lot of strategy and luck.*

As I reflect on the Standards, I feel satisfaction in knowing that I am actively guiding my students along the path of mathematical competence and confidence.

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Katherine White, a 1994 fellow, teaches third grade in the Rose Tree Media SD.

APOLOGY TO ASHLEY

by Ruth Higgins

Why do I hurry? Why do I force Ashley to hurry? Why does her three-and-a-half-year-old life have to fit into my thirty-one-and-a-half-year-old routine?

"Let's go!...Get your shoes on...After we come home...We'll do that tomorrow...I promise...We have to stop here and get something...Today you go to Linda's, honey...We don't have time."

The lack of magic in her childhood hit me yesterday like a brick. I pulled up to the Citgo, and as I was getting out of the car a voice floated up to me--"We have to get gas, Mommy." It was even more poignant a few minutes later when I pulled up to a MAC, my main supplier in life. "We have to get money, Mommy," that same quiet voice said. I was shocked! When did she learn of all this? Why was it so obvious to her? I don't remember those moments from my childhood. Instead of being consumed with drawing and swimming and books and flowers, she knew where to get gas for the car and money for dinner.

As it was, we were on our way to Pizza Hut. Her Daddy wouldn't be home until much later, there was no food in the house, and I had lived through an especially hectic day.

It had started when I woke up two minutes before our planned time of departure. Suffering through my budgling, she was ripped out of bed, dressed, brushed and flown to Linda's, the babysitter. She arrived with shoes on the wrong feet, wearing yesterday's dress, and clutching frozen waffles in her hand. Later the realization hit me that in all the hurry I had forgotten to give her a kiss and a hug. I felt horrible. It haunted me all day. Hastily I vowed to never hurry her again. But, here I was, ten hours later, hurrying her through the evening.

"Let's go to dinner...Pizza Hut or McDonald's?... We can stop at MeMe's to see how BopBop is doing."

Quick call to check and now we have to pick up milk on the way. Stop to get gas, now we need money, hurry, hurry, hurry! Here's Pizza Hut. "Give me your hand, we're in a parking lot." Oh no, we had pizza last night. Oh well, at least she'll eat.

Sitting in the booth we finally relax. The atmosphere is quiet and slow paced. Ashley isn't eating. She just sits there dipping her bread stick into the sauce.

"What's the matter, pumpkin?...Are you hungry?...Are you tired?...Are you feeling okay?"

I stop myself. Just let her sit and relax, I think. It's cool in here; outside it's one hundred and hazy.

Pizza comes and a while later gets boxed. "Let's go, we have to get to MeMe's but first we have to stop and

get the milk." But I think, "What kind of milk? Did she tell me, or wasn't I listening?" Pulling up to a phone I jump out. My father answers, "One percent, two percent or skim?" I ask with no prelude or explanation. "Ask Mommy," I demand in response to his stuttering. "Two percent." Quick, back in the car and across the street to the Superfresh.

"Oh, we go to the store, Mommy."

"Yes, honey. Give me your hand, we're in a parking lot...Yeah, that's the Lion King...Let's see if we can find the milk...Ah huh, that's where we bought our waffles the other day...Here it is...Okay, lets go."

At MeMe's we go in separate directions. Ashley goes to find her BopBop downstairs with a quick hug. I put the milk away, check get well cards, gather some papers for work from my Dad, answer the phone. Finally sitting down with my parents and Ashley I look to the TV. "Oh, I'm so sick of this O.J. thing," I comment with my eyes glued to the screen. "There must be something else on," my mind wonders, momentarily released from the time, absorbed in the courtroom scene. "I wonder how much they're being paid for this..."

"Mommy, I want to go home."

"OK, honey...Let's go...Did you say goodbye to MeMe?...Did you say goodbye to BopBop?...Did you give him a big hug and a kiss?...It'll make his boobos all better!"

Out to the car and home we go. "You have to get ready for bed, honey."

"But I want to wear Jasmine!"

"OK. Here it is" I say, pulling a wrinkled tee shirt three sizes too big from my endless collection of laundry baskets.

"Oh, Mommy, it's clean! You wash it!" as if I never do the laundry. Boy, is this girl smart!

"Hop in bed...I'll go get your blankie...Give me a hug...When Daddy comes home he'll come say good night...Good night, Sweetie, I love you."

I wind the music box with the broken Pooh, plug in the night light and turn off the bureau light. Crossing the hall I'm stopped. "Sleep tight," the little voice says, "don't let the bedbugs bite!"

A teacher of learning-disabled students at the Don Guanella School in Delaware County, Ruth Higgins is a 1994 PAWP Fellow.

Style is everything and nothing. It is not that, as is commonly supposed, you get your content and soup it up with style; style is absolutely embedded in the way you perceive.

Martin Amis

A STUDENT REFLECTS

by June Freeman

Reflection took on a whole new dimension for the sixth grade classes at Keith Valley Middle School who constructed their first writing portfolio. The children spent the school year collecting, reflecting, selecting. In June, they were charged with the task of finalizing their portfolios. The reflective letter was a critical and telltale piece. The children were required to discuss themselves as writers and thinkers. The letters were incredible. The maturity and insight each writer exhibited in their letters showed that a portfolio is an absolute must for any writing class. Here is a sample.

June 20, 1994

Dear Reader,

I feel my writing has grown up with me. For example, in fifth grade there was no certain way of organizing my writing. In sixth grade we learned a certain way of writing.

Each one of these steps is important. It's like a staircase, if one of the stairs are missing the staircase can't be used. This way of writing helped me organize my piece. As my strengths I feel they are creativity and originality. Everyone is unique in something. I think it's my originality and creativity in writing.

One goal I have set for myself is being more creative on introductions. I can write the basic boring kind, but I think a boring introduction ruins the whole piece. I think my writing could be improved.

One of my favorite pieces I wrote was "Forever Alone." In that story I moved from place to place, but didn't lose the reader in one of the cities. Usually, when I read a peer's piece I get lost when they start to move. I was happy the way it turned out.

As you can see I may love to write and I do have my strengths in writing, but I still have to set goals. If you don't try to strive to improve your writing it can't and won't get better!

Sincerely,
Heather Blowitski

June Freeman of the Hatboro-Horsham SD submitted this reflective letter during the Strategies I course at Centennial SD this semester. June had previously taken our portfolio course with Lynne.



NEW EDITOR FOR PAWP NEWSLETTER

Judy Fisher, a 1982 Fellow from the School District of Philadelphia, has assumed the editorship of this *Newsletter*. Active in PAWP for many years, Judy is an elementary-level reading teacher at the Fell School, where she is on the school leadership team and is an active, dynamic part of the school community. According to her principal, Judy goes out of her way to give the best service possible to children--and even helps teach parents to read. Judy brings to the editorship her experience as editor of the newsletter of the Philadelphia Council of the International Reading Association as well as her years of writing, including several pieces we have published. Judy has coordinated Strategies I and the Writing Assessment/Portfolio Assessment courses.

She will be assisted by Bernadette Fenning and Lorraine DeRosa. More members are being sought for the editorial staff.

Readers of the *Newsletter* may communicate to Judy through the Project office to offer assistance or ideas or to submit articles or items of interest.

NO NEED FOR LABELS

by Judy Endicott

FAIRNESS - getting what you need

more acceptance
more time
more laughter
more love
more guidance
more practice

less pressure
less criticism
less demands
less isolation
less failure

I need to touch,
see,
and hear
in ways I can understand

I am what I am.

It is only FAIR that I get what I need.

From the Editor

**MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS:
REFLECTING ON PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT**

Kathleen Yancey, co-director of the University of North Carolina Writing Project at Charlotte, led a workshop on Portfolio Assessment at the National Writing Project Director's Meeting at the NCTE Convention that I attended in Orlando last fall. Her workshop was a "round robin" sharing of questions raised by her diverse audience, which ranged from practitioners already in support groups who had been using portfolios for years to novices motivated by the winds of state mandates. Appropriately, there were no pat answers and little time was wasted pursuing them.

Each question stimulated new ones revealing the complex opportunity portfolio assessment affords. If there was any agreement, it was that bureaucratic guidelines contrived by outsiders uninvolved with teachers and children would spoil portfolio assessment for teachers and students. The threat that state mandates may compromise portfolio assessment raised the question that requires us to examine what is integral and valued in this strategy that may be harmed by system imposed standardization.

All agreed that portfolio assessment would reveal a truer picture of students' performance, rather than the one-shot glimpse traditional testing provides. Portfolios represent a non-invasive form of assessment that does not penalize the student who has difficulty producing on command with time constraints.

An essential ingredient of portfolio assessment requires the student to reflect on and evaluate his or her own work. In our hustle-and-bustle videogame world, this is a little used modality. For our students to grow intellectually and become masters of their own learning, reflection and self evaluation must be taught from the earliest years.

These wide-ranging, thought-provoking questions raised in this workshop can be a stimulus for reflection by the *Newsletter* audience.

Questions

1. How do we involve parents in portfolio assessment?
2. How do we handle the concerns of parents and the community about the teaching of skills and mechanics?
3. How are portfolios celebrated?
4. How do we store the stuff?
5. Who does the portfolio belong to: the student, the teacher, the school?
6. Who can see the portfolio?
7. How will technology impact upon portfolio

- assessment?
8. How can portfolios be managed in secondary schools?
 9. How does portfolio assessment affect classroom instruction?
 10. What are the psychometric aspects of portfolio assessment?
 11. How do portfolios affect learning?
 12. How do we deal with anxiety produced by not having traditional tests and grades?
 13. How do gender and ethnic differences affect portfolio assessment?
 14. What strategies support authentic student involvement?
 15. What rituals are a part of portfolio assessment?
 16. How do we transmit what we learn about the student to others?
 17. How can we use portfolios in large scale assessment?
 18. How do we incorporate portfolio assessment in a grading system?
 19. How can we retain the excitement and still serve the drive to standardization and standards?
 20. What is our state actually requiring?
 21. How can we keep portfolio assessment from becoming diluted by mass production?
 22. How can teachers participate in state mandated portfolio design?
 23. How do we interest other teachers in portfolio assessment?
 24. Is this yet another bandwagon?
 25. How do we deal with teacher resistance?

TAWL

(Teachers Applying Whole Language)

The Chapter of the Pennsylvania Writing Project Affiliated with the Whole Language Umbrella

is offering a chance to join
colleagues grades K to 12
to share the
whole language philosophy,
to meet, discuss, share, and plan.
Year's membership is \$5.00.

For information call Nancy McElwee
(215) 675-8391

Pennsylvania Writing Project Newsletter

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

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Sponsors: West Chester University Pennsylvania Department of Education
The Intermediate Units of Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties

The purpose of the *Pennsylvania Writing Project Newsletter* is to link together all teachers of writing in our geographical area of southeastern Pennsylvania. The *Newsletter* features, but is not limited to, articles that deal with writing and the teaching of writing. We seek manuscripts from all teachers of writing at all grade levels and in all subject areas, and from anyone else interested in writing. Pieces originating in the Pennsylvania Literature Project are also welcomed. All articles and submissions will be considered for publication. Comments, questions, etc., are welcomed. Please send all communications to Judy Fisher, Editor, *Pennsylvania Writing Project Newsletter*, West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383.

The Pennsylvania Writing Project (PAWP) is an affiliate of the National Writing Project and is recognized as an Exemplary Program by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. PAWP was created 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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