



VOLUME 5 NUMBER 4

# PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 1985

## FOLLOW UP YOUR SUMMER: A FALL WRITING COURSE FOR TEACHERS OF WRITING

This fall, the Pennsylvania Writing Project at West Chester University will again offer a "directed studies" course to enable people to develop and complete an individualized project in writing or the teaching of writing. Called "Directed Studies in Composition and Rhetoric" (Eng. 594), this course will be adapted to the needs of the participants and will provide guidance and consultation for their proposed projects.

Participation will be limited. Participants will meet as a full group bi-weekly or as needed during the Fall Semester to present and respond to proposals, work in progress, and completed projects. Possible projects include but are not limited to:

- development and refinement of a position paper or writing process journal
- classroom-based case-study descriptions or experimental research
- development of articles related to the teaching of writing or to courses and programs in writing
- development of "guides," monographs, or curriculum-related materials such as published by the Bay Area Writing Project and the National Writing Project.

An individual's project may focus on writing as taught or learned at any grade level, on the writing teacher, on evaluation, on attitudes to writing, on writing programs or curricula, or on any related concern.

Directed Studies (Eng. 594) is offered for three graduate credits from West Chester University. The course will hold its organizational meeting on Monday, September 9, 1985, from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. in Main Hall, Room 201. Tuition is \$261.00 plus a \$2.50 fee. (Tuition costs are subject to change by Fall.)

Registration forms are available through the Writing Project Office, West Chester University, West Chester, Pennsylvania 19383 (telephone 215-436-2297). Register by mail or at the Project Office by August 9, 1985 if possible. Late registration must be in person at the Physical Education Center, South Campus on September 3rd and 4th.

If you would like to know more, please call Bob Weiss at the Project office.

## PROJECT NEWS

### Editor Susan Ohanian Meets PAWP

*by Vicki Steinberg*

April's Saturday meeting began as usual with Bob Weiss's overview of upcoming events and summer programs. Among those attending were six fellows of the 1983 Summer Institute who followed the brunch meeting with a luncheon get-together at DeStarr's Restaurant in West Chester.

Main speaker for the session was Susan Ohanian, former New York teacher and current senior editor for *Learning*. Susan made several points about teaching and the teaching of writing. She strongly supports teachers' independence and professionalism: "Teachers should not let anyone tell them how to do their jobs."

Susan's first printing in a national publication came in *Learning* — more than a full year after acceptance of her article. Nevertheless, she loved seeing herself in print. Teachers who wish to be published should "take all opportunities to write" even small projects as letters to editors and to friends, because they'll "get replies and see themselves in print." Many PAWPs are already assigning letter writing in the classroom (see "Exeter Gets Mail"), but are they writing letters and other pieces of their own?

Susan advised teachers to write about things they care about and believe in. If interested in writing for *Learning*, they should consider articles on discipline, math, science, and getting kids to read. The best articles include anecdotes about children's reactions to an assignment. Susan also recommended sending a cover letter with the submission.

Learning that Susan had written a recent article debunking the media praise of the new IBM phonics-and-writing elementary program, the PAWPs asked many questions. The group was dismayed about the way elementary schools emphasize computer programming instead of computer-assisted instruction.

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### Exeter High School Gets Mail

*by Vicki Steinberg*

Exeter Township Senior High School outside Reading employs three of the four PAWP consultants in Berks County and is a hotbed of process writing activity. Among the successful units in the required composition quarter course is letter writing.



The first task is to list approximately five complaints. These lists have contained such problems as cat food containing big bones, rip-off record companies, hairdryers that intake, bad cafeteria food, missing trash cans, bad drivers, small lockers, and too much homework.

The class then shares the lists. With advice from others, each student decides which letter he will actually write and who the intended receiver is. The next step is to determine what to include in the letter. Class brainstorming elicits such ideas as full explanation of the problem; information on where the item was purchased; item number, codes, price; and the response the writer expects from the reader.

This brainstorming is followed by actual letter writing, first draft sharing, revisions, and editing. Students are responsible for finding the address they need and can choose to type their final draft. Each letter goes out through the school mail. Although a few students have asked to use the school's mailing address, most use their home addresses.

Neither Vicki Steinberg or Rosemary Buckendorff, who use this exercise, reads the finished letter. They feel confident that students care enough to do their best job. During the process, many students are enthusiastic about their letters, but many are sure they'll get no reply. Fortunately, replies are frequent.

A member of Vicki's 1984 class wrote to the superintendent questioning the lack of hall trash cans; the superintendent responded with a letter explaining the state laws about the amount of room required for passage in a school hallway. Rosemary's third quarter class this year evaluated the senior high and suggested changes; the class received a visit from the assistant superintendent and a change was made in the cafeteria music system.

Replies are received not only from within the district, but from as far away as France. Rosemary had a class write letters to living authors. One student arrived home from school to find her mother waving an airmail letter from French author Pierre Boulez. Vicki's students have heard from Columbia House with an offer of two free records, from a dishwashing detergent with money-saving coupons, from a catfood manufacturer with coupons good for four free cans, from Nike with instructions for replacement of running shoes, and from Conair on how to send a hairdryer to be fixed.

In every case, the students were delighted that some action they had undertaken received such immediate response.

These letter writing exercises could be extended to foreign language learning with students writing to foreign countries for tourist brochures or foreign companies for year end reports.

Such a project which shows students that classwork has some relevance with the "real" world is certainly one worth attempting.

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### **March Meeting in Philadelphia**

*by Bill Bachrach*

Fifteen Writing Project graduates gathered at the Northwest Regional Library on March 19 to hear a presentation by Allie Mulvihill, who works in the Philadelphia School District's Division of Affective Education. Describing herself as the grandmother of PAWP in Philadelphia (she was a 1981 Fellow), Allie first asked her audience to write on "why bother" to go through the hard work of teaching writing. She built the personal statements into a manifesto, one she encouraged us to harken back to when we were experiencing difficult days as teachers. She spoke of developmental stages in writing—fluency, coherence and cor-

rectness—and how this continuum may be applied to individual writers, to classes, and to whole schools. She described key components of writing programs which permeate a whole school. The enthusiastic group asked for future Saturday meetings in Philadelphia, in addition to the West Chester gatherings.

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Congratulations to Brenda Polek who was recently awarded the Outstanding Young Educator by the Bucks County Jaycees and a grant from Bucks County for curricular work. Brenda is English department chair at Log College Junior High School in Warminster and was a 1984 Fellow.

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Melanie Goodman, a 1983 Fellow and 1984 participant in the Advanced Institute, was featured in a recent article in *Town Talk*. Once a story is written, the fine tuning which comes from adding, deleting, or substituting words and ideas is what makes the story personal. "Once you have a product you care about, it becomes more meaningful. You have a sense of pride in ownership," said Melanie. She has noticed an improvement in her students' ability to think critically about a topic and to express their thoughts in writing. They have gained expression and write more clearly and comfortably.

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English teacher George (Ed) Martin has been selected as a 1985 Fellow for Independent Studies in the Humanities in the West Chester Area School District. The grant will permit him eight weeks to study African literature in translation. He plans to read novels of contemporary authors as well as plays, short stories, and criticisms. His project will include written reactions to the readings. According to Ed, a 1981 Fellow and a 1983 Advanced Institute participant, this area of literature has long interested him, and the grant will allow him to concentrate on the topic.

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Joan Flynn, a 1980 Fellow from the West Chester Area School District, helped to conduct an inservice workshop on classroom management of the writing process for Upper Perkiomen School District teachers in early March.

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The English Language Arts Club of Greater Philadelphia announced new officers as of March 1. Newly installed President is Carol Adams of the Rite-Merit Project and a Fellow of the 1984 Philadelphia Institute. Corresponding Secretary is Shirley Farmer-Stoloff from Kensington High School, and a Philadelphia Institute 1982 Fellow. Congratulations to both.

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"Good writing should be interesting, organized and the words spelled correctly," was the conclusions of Kevin McAneny's seventh grade English class after a discussion on "What is *good* writing?"

On Wednesday, April 17th, I visited Oxford Intermediate School to observe and follow up on a 1984 Summer Fellow, Kevin McAneny. Kevin's classes were busy writing research papers on topics of their choice, and were visibly involved



in all stages of the writing process: pre-writing (outlining and organizing their note cards), drafting (writing up their notes "in our own words," said little Donny) and some were revising their drafts (checking for spelling errors, putting information into paragraphs, changing their opening lines and reading their drafts to each other for help).

"Choosing a topic, getting started and fixing up writing are the hardest parts of writing," stated the seventh graders.

Sounds as if Kevin's students were fully involved in writing as a process.

by Jolene Borgese

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## ARCO REGRANTS PHILADELPHIA INSTITUTE

West Chester University has received a second grant from the Atlantic Richfield Foundation to award Fellowships to Philadelphia teachers participating in the 1985 Pennsylvania Writing Project Summer Institute to be held in Philadelphia. Twenty fellowships of \$400 each are to be awarded. This will be the third PAWP Institute held in Philadelphia.

The Institute will be held at the District 5 office, June 27 - July 25, 1985 under the directorship of Robert Weiss of West Chester University, Mary Ellen Costello of District I, and Irene Reiter of Northeast High School. Application forms have been distributed by the Office of Staff Development and the district Reading/English Language Arts supervisors.

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## A ONE-ON-ONE PROJECT

by Janet Smith and Guy MacCloskey

"I'm finished!" a student would call as he yanked his paper out of his spiral notebook to fling it across the teacher's desk, fringes fluttering to the floor. The student used to believe that his composition was carved in stone once the writing reached reasonably close to the bottom of the page, even if the "bottom" was closer to the middle. The temptation to argue whether the student's paper was or was not finished was one of those professional struggles in the academic battle that has left the teacher limp by the end of the day.

Like many a tall tale, that writing scenario happened some time ago. The epic struggles have receded into memory, because the combatants have left the field of battle, both having claimed ownership to an effective tool which has thrown them to the same side of the field.

No longer the giant defeated by Jack of beanstalk fame, no longer the Goliath struck down by David, the teacher is the coach who, clapping his hand on the shoulder of his student, commends the sentence extended in the back stretch. The coach and his protege huddle over the clipboard viewing the game plan, discussing some tactics and discarding others. Like the quarterback, the student is making the calls with the advice and endorsement of the teacher. The tool that has brought the teacher and the student to the same side of the field is the skill of revision.

How has the student moved from the former attitude of "once written, forever finished" to one of revise and control? What has caused the student to question the choices he makes? How does the student gain a sense of revision? Instead of writing to be finished, a student has learned to write to explore and express ideas. Revision will serve to clarify and focus those written ideas. Through the teacher's intervention in a one-on-one conference, the student learns strategies in a non-threatening atmosphere.

Generally, any time that a student discusses his writing with his teacher can be considered a one-on-one conference.

Sometimes a student has such an overwhelming need to have his paper heard that he may accost the teacher for help in the corridor, the study hall, the cafeteria, as well as the classroom. To keep the demands on the teacher's energies at a manageable level, these conferences can be referred to a classroom schedule. "Be sure to sign your name on the Conference List on the wall when you get to class," says the teacher. Balancing the lunch tray in one hand, the other hand on the doorknob of the faculty room, the teacher agrees that she wants to hear the student's composition. The student is assured of a one-on-one conference with the teacher during classroom time, and the teacher is assured of her lunch.

What is of more immediate concern are those students who would never seek out the teacher even if he were the only one who holds the secret to rock stardom. Few students are motivated to teach themselves — few paw willingly through the grammar book. Revision is sometimes not motivated even by the teacher's comments on the student's first draft. We've all seen that kind of composition — two copies, one in pencil, the other in ink, both exactly alike. This is the appropriate time for the teacher to choose to confer with that student.

In any case, whether the conference is student-initiated or teacher-initiated, it is a dialogue between the student and teacher to create a desired and voluntary act of revision on the part of the student. The conference can be a roving one with the teacher moving among the students, or it can be a desk conference with the teacher and the student sitting together. The conference will not place an undue demand on the teacher's time when it is incorporated within the on-going writing experience.

## THE ROVING CONFERENCE

The time or the day has been set aside for pre-writing a comparison/contrast paper on Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer. After the teacher's introduction and chalkboard modeling, he roves between the desks as the students brainstorm lists of twenty-five words to describe Huck or Jim. The teacher talks briefly to several students as he moves down the rows. He remains on his feet, leaning over a student paper only occasionally. Conferences are so brief that they seem to be mere "pats on the back."

In another classroom, the students are beginning their first drafts, having made their pre-writing notes the day before. At first, the teacher models the desired behavior of draft-writing at her desk. After about five minutes of writing, the teacher begins the roving conference. The roving technique is desirable at this point. Students should not have to interrupt their flow of ideas to come to the teacher. In fact, many students will not know if they need help because they will have just begun to gather ideas. The teacher moves smoothly among the rows, not hovering for very long over any one paper.

## LENGTH OF CONFERENCE

Donald Graves, consultant to the New Hampshire Writing Project, speaks of the ninety-second conference which does provide time for questioning and direction. However, it is unrealistic to expect to have conferences with every child in one class period. A reasonable expectation for a beginning revision teacher is four to five students per class. Through practice and class training, the teacher will be able to increase the number of conferences in one period. As long as the conference is short, the teacher can eventually confer with all of the students over the course of several days of writing.

Dealing with one problem at a time keeps the conference short. The teacher handles one student at a time; the student handles one skill at a time. The student is trying, in his written piece, to control a great many language skills.



It is counterproductive to demand that he change too much at once. If he must reshape too much of his "sculpture," he may lose sight of the project he has in mind. A longer conference naturally encourages more changes and the temptation of more teacher interference, that is, the temptation to re-write the student's paper. A shorter conference permits teacher intervention but not teacher interference in the writing that the student owns. To keep the teacher intervention brief so that the student can cope with one manageable skill, the conference in the pre-writing and draft-writing stages is directed toward content to encourage the flow of ideas.

### CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

So, the teacher roves, randomly at first, or, selectively, if she knows which students routinely have trouble getting started on their writing. Graves suggests conferencing with "untroubled" students first. Briefly engaging them in conversation about their papers will introduce a note of confidence and success into the atmosphere. Other, perhaps less successful students in the neighborhood of the conference can benefit. By overhearing, they too will discover what is expected of them. By conferencing with the best writers first, the teacher is allowing advice and ideas to filter down to troubled writers before the conference even occurs at their desks.

Naturally every teacher must decide what is best for the class in each period. Perhaps a "troubled" student is causing a disturbance in the classroom. The teacher might choose to conference with that student immediately to get him back on task. As a classroom management technique, the roving conference is useful.

Later on, as the teacher becomes more familiar with the variations in students' skills, the roving conference can be less random and more purposeful, that is, directed more toward those who need encouragement and direction during the writing process. In any case, the conference involves three phases: an opening, a dialogue to discover problems and alternative solutions, and closure.

### THE FIRST PHASE OF THE CONFERENCE

The teacher opens a conference in a manner so as to establish a climate of trust. His remarks are hospitable. The teacher inquires what kind of writing is going on. This gambit acknowledges that the student owns his writing and does not have to relinquish it for the teacher's presumed "superior" revision. The teacher is crediting the student with the authority of his own experience or ideas. The following scenarios are demonstrations of successful openings in one-on-one conferencing.

#### Scenario I

A fourth grade teacher, Mr. Booker, after modeling the expected writing behavior, begins to rove from desk to desk to check on the progress of his class. He entertains no hand-raising during writing time to eliminate one demand on his energies. Mr. Booker stops at Tina's desk to scan the few words on her paper.

	PROCEDURE	ANALYSIS
Booker:	How are you doing?	The teacher establishes a climate of trust by engaging the student in spoken language. This is the first of the three-part conference: the opening remarks
Tina:	Fine	
Booker:	Tell me about your writing.	
Tina:	I am writing about my birthday party.	

A second scenario demonstrates a variation on the theme of establishing a rapport with the student.

#### Scenario II

Mr. Brodie, an eighth grade teacher, roves toward Joey's desk.

	PROCEDURE	ANALYSIS
Brodie:	How's it going?	Opening remarks demonstrate concern for the student's efforts.
Joey:	I dunno.	
Brodie:	A little problem there, hm?	The teacher's question recognizes the student's need.
	Tell me about your paper.	The teacher draws out comments for problems.

A third scenario illustrates the positive approach taken by the teacher.

#### Scenario III

The twelfth-grade English teacher, Mr. Newright, stops at Ann's desk.

	PROCEDURE	ANALYSIS
Newright:	How's your writing coming along, Ann?	Sympathetic inquiry and the use of the personal name connect the reader/listener to the writer/speaker.
Ann:	Oh, fine.	
Newright:	Would you read your first paragraph to me?	The teacher responds positively toward skills the student does use. Not praise, but a reflective response underscores the effective part of the writing.
Ann reads.		
Newright:	I really like the way you used that phrase (pointing).	

In the three sample scenarios above, the teacher acts in a way that suggests interest and friendliness but which still allows the student to feel in control of his writing. Remarks are not critical or judgmental. On the contrary, they are designed to raise confidence and to point up strengths.

### THE SECOND PHASE OF THE CONFERENCE: FLUENCY

The middle portion of the conference is the time when problems in content, organization, or correctness are identified. Then, alternative solutions are discussed. This period of the conference is the real "workshop" when the teacher's comments and questions will direct the student toward appropriate revision.

The teacher considers content first because the information of a written piece is the object of communication between writer and reader. If the ideas are not clear or if the details are incomplete, then communication is short-circuited. Meaning can be elusive in sculpture, but meaning is essential in writing. Inexperienced writers must first draw out their thoughts (content), arrange them (organization), then perfect them (correctness). To focus on correcting thoughts that may be discarded later is a misuse of conferencing time. Very often in the process of revising one's content, the arrangement and correctness take on standard appearance because it is difficult to isolate completely the skills of language arts.

#### 1. Fluency by Expansion

If students are in the early stages of writing, or if they are beginning writers, the teacher will confer with them to



encourage fluency. This ready flow of ideas and words allows the student to have enough on paper to choose the best and to discard the rest. This flow of ideas is necessary to allow the student to become aware of his own knowledge. Appropriate teacher remarks and questions serve to release those concealed ideas.

Questions soliciting details or requesting more explanation or information will provide the student with access to his own thoughts. He discovers what he knows and can more readily record his thoughts in his written piece. Fluency presupposes improving skills in specificity, or precision. Fluency means developing skills in "showing" facts as well as telling them. Fluency expands an idea for improved meaning.

In Scenario I, Mr. Booker sees that Tina, the birthday girl, needs to expand her writing to create a clearer, more specific piece. After his opening remarks, previously described, he continues the conference.

Scenario I	
PROCEDURE	ANALYSIS
Booker: I see you had cake at your party. What kind of cake was it?	Seeing that Tina's content is limited, Mr. Booker wants to encourage fluency. He asks for more specific details to expand the writing.
Tina: Chocolate with little pink flowers on the icing.	
Booker: Where can you put that? Here? Here? (Pointing)	When writers are young, it is important to help them see that new information can be included.
Tina: I don't know.	After any new piece of information, the teacher asks the writer where she could include it in her piece. He can explain how to write the new details at the bottom of the page with arrows to show where the information belongs.
Booker: May I show you something?	
Booker: What else would you like to add about your party to show your readers?	The teacher suggests that additional information will appeal to real readers who will be Tina's classmates.
Tina: I don't know.	
Booker: Well, I'll come back to see what you have added. I see you need some time to think.	The teacher won't rush the student into a commitment, but he'll leave her with the notion that mulling over ideas is all right.

Students learn that what they write the first time is not the finished product. This is the first step in showing beginning writers that the first draft is actually a working draft, a writing on which to make changes: cross-outs, arrows where substitutions belong, or additions in the margin.

With appropriate questions, the information locked in a student's head can be drawn out. But, because a conference is brief, a simple question or two are enough to encourage the writer in the content-expanding phase of a conference.

## 2. Fluency with Focus

On the other hand, a beginning writer may already be so encouraged by his flow of ideas that his paper appears to be adequate in content, or at least, amount. The conferring teacher sees, however, that the ample paper contains many irrelevancies. Expansion of the writing is not likely to

improve meaning. In this case the inquiring teacher wants the student to tighten the writing to include only the related points. From the student's flow of ideas — his fluency — the student will choose what is best and will discard the rest. This hunt for specificity serves to marshal the rambling ideas and facts into a focus.

In conference, then, the teacher chooses one or two questions designed to develop focus in the student's writing. In Scenario II, the eighth grader, Joey, had no difficulty relating his summer trip to Disney World, but he does have a problem.

Scenario II	
PROCEDURE	ANALYSIS
Brodie: What seems to be the problem?	
Joey: I've got so much to write about, but I've already written two pages. I'll never get done.	The writer has too much information to give his piece focus.
Brodie: What are you writing about?	
Joey: My trip to Disney World.	
Brodie: What was your favorite part of the trip.	The teacher's question helps the student to focus on a meaningful aspect of the topic in order to focus his writing.
Joey: Space Mountain.	
Brodie: I'd like to hear about that. Do you think you could write about that?	The teacher's comment is not a command to the student to write, but a declaration of personal interest in what the student will choose to write.
Joey: Hey, yeah!	

The budding writer is encouraged to continue with his newly focused topic. The teacher closes the conference, assured that the student has found his new direction. Future conferences with the writer will touch on other areas of need.

It does seem contradictory that fluency can imply both expansion and focus. How can one stretch out a writing and tighten it up at the same time? The contradiction is only apparent because of the mistaken notion that fluency is a quantity of words. Not so. Fluency means the flow of ideas, complete, detailed, and precise. Fluency requires, first, sufficient content from which to choose those words and ideas to produce the very meaning that the writer intends. As the teacher in conference inquires, the learning writer discovers his clear meaning.

## THE SECOND PHASE: SHAPE

The "workshop" conference deals not only with content. In a subsequent week or month, when the student's writing has gained the kind of fluency for expansion or focus that the student desires or is capable of, other writing skills can be encouraged. This point may be reached after one homework assignment or after many periods of writing and conferencing. There is no magic time to shift conferencing gears to the second writing skill, which is shaping the writing. Whenever the apparent organization interferes with clarity, then it is time to investigate the problems of sequence and logic or with moving sentences into some kind of order.

In the course of struggling to capture what it is a student wants to say, he often arranges ideas according to a logical



order lying below his level of awareness. The conference can then raise his consciousness about organizing ideas so that he can do as well on the next writing.

A conference, then, can encourage revision to shape the writing for meaning or form. In the secondary school, for instance, where teachers are much concerned about standard expository form, that is, introduction with thesis, body, and conclusion, this conference has particular value.

Revising in this case is comparable to re-shaping the sculptor's stone so that standard items like limbs and nose appear in standard places. Variation on this theme is, of course, acceptable as long as meaning is conveyed.

In the third scenario, meaning is not conveyed in a logical manner. The teacher sees that Ann needs help with organizational skills on her senior research paper. He has previously pointed out a skill that she has used effectively.

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### Scenario III

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PROCEDURE	ANALYSIS
Newright: Something is not clear to me. I am not sure where you are going with this piece. Can you underline the sentence that tells what the whole piece is about?  Ann underlines a sentence.	The teacher asks questions about anything that is not clear or that is important to the piece. In this case, the teacher is asking for a thesis statement.
Newright: Hm... I wonder if that sentence would be more effective somewhere else. Would you think about that and let me know what you've decided?	This strategy suggests an alternative for the sake of "effectiveness" but still allows the student himself to decide the arrangement of his own sentences.

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### THE SECOND PHASE: CORRECTNESS

A third function of the "workshop" phase of the conference is to encourage correctness, the third of the writing skills. Once the student writer is satisfied with the fluency of his piece and the organization of it, or when a deadline looms, the teacher can direct the writer toward editorial standardization. In other words, the mechanics of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization can be addressed as well as requirements of format.

In this conference, the teacher can remind a student how to use a device, such as the apostrophe, which had been taught earlier to the entire class. In addition, the teacher can note which editing skills need more practice and which need introduction to the entire class. Even in editing papers, the teacher-student conference is productive.

Conferencing for correctness would engage the student in such functional activities as encircling words that might be misspelled or consulting a grammar or style handbook for punctuating items in a series. In every case, the teacher allows the student to take responsibility for the correctness of his written piece.

### THE THIRD PHASE OF THE CONFERENCE

Once the functional middle portion of the conference has been completed, the teacher provides closure by encouraging the student to continue toward his self-selected writing goal.

Mr. Booker in Scenario I, Ms. Brodie in Scenario II, and Mr. Newright in Scenario III will draw the conference to a

close by asking, "What else are you going to say in your writing?" or by stating, "I'd like to hear about that [ideal]." They are courteous as well as interested people. They will no doubt thank the students for sharing. This releases the students to continue their writing in progress.

### SUMMARY OF PHASES

The one-on-one conference of three, blending phases — opening remarks; discussion of either fluency, shape, or correctness; and closing remarks — is an effective revision technique because it directs the student to think of ways to improve his writing. Throughout the conference, the teacher listens to what the student is saying in order to respond with appropriate comments. Their conversation focuses on the past, present, and future of the student's work. Through talking with the writer about what has been written, where he is now, and what he plans to do next, the teacher is helping the student to obtain a better understanding of the piece. The teacher's questions should not tell the writer what to do, but merely allow the writer to decide what he himself wants to do. The questions enable him to think about his work, to make his own judgments and inferences, and to add missing information.

### THE DESK CONFERENCE AND POSSIBLE TEACHER QUESTIONS

When the student recognizes his own needs, he can sign up on the Conference List, provided by the teacher, on the wall, bulletin board, or chalkboard. These student-initiated conferences can be held while other students are occupied with peer conferencing, draft writing, or other phases of the writing process. Preferably, the student's working draft has experienced a response from a peer group first. Frequently the problem nagging the writer has already been solved in the group.

The teacher calls the scheduled student to a desk or table set aside for the conference. A neutral area, where teacher and student sit side-by-side with the writing before them, is desirable. The teacher's desk may be less desirable because it connotes authority. The teacher is not an interrogator nor an adversary. He must establish a climate of trust which, incidentally, takes longer for high school students who are suspicious of traditional authority figures anyway. The procedure to follow is similar to the roving conference with opening remarks, content, and closure.

The teacher begins by asking, "Tell me what your piece is about," rather than "What is the assignment?" in order to establish the student's ownership of the writing. As the student talks, the teacher can determine whether he has the necessary information to continue his piece.

Because the teacher has invited students with recognizable problems to join him, it is reasonable that the teacher next asks, "What is the problem?" or "How can I help you?"

#### 1. Problems with Fluency (Expansion)

"I don't know what to put next" or "I can't think of anything else to say" suggests problems in fluency. The teacher asks one or two of these questions to draw out the student's ideas.

Does your piece answer the questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

How did you feel about this when it happened?

Who else was there?

How did you become interested in this?

What happened next?

Why is this important to you?



## 2. Problems with Fluency (Focus)

A student may arrive with no sense of direction. After he tells the teacher what he is trying to say, the teacher may observe that the writing wanders off the subject or includes material too extensive to be focused. He can ask one or two questions to pinpoint the writer's intent.

- What part do you like the best? Why?
- Do you have too much information?
- How many stories do you have here?
- Can you circle the part that is the most exciting?
- What is the most important thing that you are trying to say?
- Where is this piece of writing taking you?

## 3. Problems with Process

If a student seems genuinely stuck, is doubtful of what to do next, or is reluctant to return to his seat, the teacher can engage him in talking about his work. The student's spoken words can generate ideas to write about. The dialogue to follow involves his own writing process.

- Why did you choose this subject to write about?
- Why is this important to you?
- What surprised you in the draft?
- What are you learning from your writing?
- How does this piece compare to other pieces you have written? Why?
- What kinds of changes have you made from your first draft? Why?

## 4. Problems with Shape

Other students, whose fluency skills of expansion and focus have been developed, may have problems in shape. Again the teacher asks, "What's your problem on this paper?" If the student responds with a comment that the ending is wrong or the beginning doesn't fit, or the article gets off the subject here or there, the problem is shape: organization and logic.

- Underline the part that tells what the draft is about.
- How do all the other parts belong to that section?
- What is the sequence of your story?
- Does your opening sentence or paragraph capture the reader's attention?
- How does your title fit your writing?
- Where is this piece of writing taking you?

This battery of questions is offered only as a list of suggestions to encourage the appropriate response from a learning writer. Both he and the teacher would be staggered by a barrage of these questions at once. Only a few at a time are appropriate to keep the conference short and problem-centered with time for alternative solutions. The teacher has to filter these questions through his own experience in order to find the expression that suits his own personality.

The third general writing skill — correctness — can also be handled in a desk conference. Standard usage, mechanics of capitalization and punctuation, spelling, and diction will probably be handled during editing workshops. In addition, some of these correctness problems disappear by the time a writer has "re-seen" his original draft. In the editing conference, the teacher deals only with one problem suggested by the current condition of the student's writing. This is the problem that the student can learn about, the problem he is ready to cope with.

## CONFERENCING IN PROCESS

Teacher-student conferencing can be implemented during any phase of the writing process. Through the teacher's modeling, the students internalize the questions and begin to use them with their own writing. They become better able to question their peers' writing and to respond with appropriate comments.

In summary, a teacher-student conference is an opportunity for the teacher to engage the student in conversation about his writing. The conference helps the student react to his own writing to diagnose possible writing problems and to develop strategies for solving them. The teacher allows the student to take the responsibility for learning to write. The teacher learns when to respond to and when to question a student's work. But, more importantly, he also learns when to back off to allow the student to be the authority on his writing.

By working hard to acquire skills for responding to student work through the one-on-one conference, the teacher will develop a positive attitude toward the teaching of writing. He will discover, suddenly, that he has more energy for teaching. Then, when he provides closure to a conference, his "thanks" will be expressed with the feeling that he has actually received a gift of genuine communication from his student.

*Janet Smith is a senior high teacher in the Avon Grove School District. MacCloskey teaches fourth grade in the Ridley Township School District. This paper was begun at the 1983 PAWP Advanced Institute on Revision.*

★★★★★

## 1985 — YEAR OF THE PENNSYLVANIA WRITER

Continuing its sponsorship of a statewide program recognizing 1985 as "The Year of the Pennsylvania Writer," the Pennsylvania Humanities Council is supporting a program of events to celebrate the role and stature of Pennsylvania writers.

Some related events in the Philadelphia area have included exhibits, conferences, films and lectures, held by four co-sponsoring organizations: the *American Poetry Review*, the Free Library of Philadelphia, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the Philadelphia Writers Organization. These activities are designed to increase public awareness of the vitality of Philadelphia's literary community.

The focal event of the Philadelphia program, a conference entitled "Philadelphia Ink: A Literary Celebration," took place on April 26-27, 1985 at cultural institutions along the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. The keynote address was by John Wideman, PEN/Faulkner Award winner. On Saturday, April 27, a series of panel discussions and readings with sixty of Philadelphia's top writers in the fields of poetry, fiction, biography, drama, nonfiction, criticism, column writing and children's books took place at the Free Library, the Academy of Natural Sciences and Moore College of Art. Future events being planned include fall lectures, a conference on "The Prerogatives and Responsibilities of Literary Journalism" and a conference at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania on "Writing the History of Philadelphia, Four Perspectives."

The Year of the Pennsylvania Writer program provides an opportunity for writers and readers to meet and share ideas. The sense of pride in our local literary community is promoted and creates an environment in which creative talent can flourish.



## WRITERS IN RESIDENCE

As reported in the previous newsletter, a grant from the Pennsylvania Humanities Council continues to bring authors to the Pennsylvania Writing Project. This summer, under the auspices of the grant for Writers in Residence, Sharon Sheeha Stark and Harry Humes will work with participants in the Summer Institute.



Harry Humes, author of two books of poetry, *Winter Weeds* and *Robbing the Pillars*.



Sharon Sheeha Stark, writer of *The Dealers' Yard and Other Stories*.

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### A FINAL EXAM — AND MUCH MORE

by Beth Greenberg

A final exam that's fun for the teacher to read? And that's useful for her and for the students as well as quick to grade? Impossible?

I experimented with a new final exam format last year and I'm excited about the results. It seems to resolve a conflict I face each semester when I must give final exams graded by number or letter. Since I emphasize writing all term, I don't want the major portion of my final to be objective questions. However, I like to actually *grade* the finals the kids produce (although the Board of Ed's schedule seems to discourage this) and grading writing takes time.

Two semesters ago, after a conversation at my school with Carla Asher, I decided to see, as part of my final exam, if the students had *really* caught on to the sort of responding to writing we had been doing all term.

This, then, was the exam I devised for my sophomore and junior classes:

#### Writing/Revision

Directions: Imagine that this is a first draft written by a member of your writing group. What kind of response would you give to help the writer revise? The writer will do at least three drafts.

#### Draft #1

I really love to dance. Ever since I was a little girl, I always wanted to dance. I never had lessons, but I was very good. Now I really don't care much about it. My grandfather was going to send me to dancing school, but for some reason or other, I just never went. I still dance, but

not that much. The only time I dance is when I go out or when I'm just bored. I love to watch other people dance so that I can compare their dancing with mine and because I like to learn new steps or moves. I guess I will never give up dancing. The biggest mistake I ever made was that I didn't take lessons.

**Write your response below.** Include any of the sorts of responses we discussed during the term. You should consider, but not limit yourself to, the following:

- What do you like about the piece?
- What would you like to hear more about?
- Is there anything you find confusing?
- Is there anything you would leave out?

My students had never seen this particular piece of writing before. It was, as I told them, an actual piece written by a sophomore. The four questions were very familiar, having formed the basis of the group discussions and the comments written on the response and advice sheets I asked students to use throughout the term. During the exam, the students wrote just as they normally do during a group session, but each worked alone. They had an hour, but most took about twenty minutes.

The results were astonishingly good, with even many of the weaker writers responding usefully to their imaginary group member. I was surprised to find the papers easy to grade and, in fact, I finished all five sets within a few hours (a miracle for me). I could easily spot the sorts of responses that would help a group member, yet I could accept an enormous range of answers. For example, we said repeatedly during the term that the writer should first be told what *is* working, the first reminder question was "What do you like about the piece?" and throughout the term we



practiced responding honestly to this (not just making up "any old thing"). I could easily see on the final if someone neglected the positives or just threw some in near the end. Here are a few of the successful points noted.

-I like the way you start from your childhood and work your way up to the present. There is a connection. (Michael)  
-I like the draft because it's explaining something that kids go through. It doesn't have to be dance, but I know from past experiences. I had a chance to do something I wanted and I decided to pass on it. Later I felt sorry for not taking the chance when I had it. (Joanne)

These responses, if offered in a writing group, would encourage the writer, and help her to know she had a sympathetic, interested, and thoughtful audience. None seems forced or artificial. Such responses showed me that most students understood this aspect of being a responsible group member, one of the term's goals.

By contrast, some students omitted the positives altogether or stuck in a brief scribble at the end. Others were only discouraging:

-I don't like the piece because it's too short. (Barbee)  
-Honestly, I don't like the piece. I think it is very boring. (Dejanira)

These students quickly launched into a list of problems and criticisms. It seems they had missed the point that the purpose of responding is to focus on the writer's intention and then, non-judgmentally, to draw out what the writer really wants to be saying. These students placed themselves, not the writer, first.

Some students were positive, but not specific enough to be useful to the writer planning to revise. We had discussed such vagueness often during the course.

-I like the piece. It was okay. (Maureen)  
-Your draft was very interesting. (Lisa)

Some responses to the next question the students had to consider, "What would you like to hear more about?" show the breadth of possibilities they invented. It was fun to have the kids read these aloud the day the papers were returned.

-Why was it your grandfather who was going to send you to dancing school and not your parents? (Janet)  
-Can you tell us what kind of steps or moves you've learned? Name them. (Pedro)  
-I'd like to know more about your grandfather. (Karen)  
-Are you or were you a wild dancer? (Danny)

Our lively discussions the day the papers were returned showed me that the students were clear about the concept of ownership. If the writer wanted to include whether or not she was a wild dancer, fine. If she chose not to include that, it was fine, too. The possibility was worth mentioning since it was easy enough to discard and might spark the writer's thoughts and feelings and memories.

The responses to "Is there anything you find confusing?" usually focused on the contradiction contained in "I really don't care much about it," and "The biggest mistake I ever made was that I didn't take lessons." Some students combined their responses to this question with their responses to "What would you like to hear more about?"

-You should state why you don't care much about dancing any more. Tell what happened that caused you not to care and not to take lessons . . . I would really like to know why you love dancing so much, even now, and why you didn't take those lessons. (And by the way don't your sentences contradict each other?) (Shanta)  
-If you like dancing so much, why in the world did you give up that big chance? Was it because of your friends, family, love life? (Esther)

The response to "Is there anything you'd omit?" took different forms as the students combined the responses to the four questions in various ways. Some suggested, as a solution, simple omission of the negative feelings about dancing. The more successful of the responses that began with such a suggestion ended by recommending that the writer *explain* and thus not oversimplify her complicated feelings. Apparently, as the students wrote, their thinking opened up the possibility of more complex explanations of the writer's ambivalence towards dancing.

-I would leave out the part that says "Now I really don't care much about it." . . . What I find confusing is that she says "Now I really don't care about it," and in the end she says "I guess I will never give up dancing." Either she had to leave something out or explain herself better. (Maryanne)

When I view the responses as a whole, I see that much of the active listening, questioning and suggesting shows involvement, perceptiveness, and sometimes compassion; additionally, the responses struck me as being highly individual.

-I get the impression that you are upset with your grandfather for not keeping up with the idea of sending you to dance class. Or do you blame yourself for not going? (Robyn)

-Do you not care about dancing now because you're older and you dedicate your time to other things. (Jose)

Here is a good and quite typical complete response:

-What I like about the piece is that you say I *love* dancing. Since I *love* to dance also, that caught my attention. I also like that you realized and admitted the mistake you made.

In this draft I would've liked to hear what kind of dance you really like best, for example: ballet, jazz, tap or modern? I wanted to hear more about why you didn't take the dancing lessons? How come you don't dance much anymore? I would like to hear more about that. Are you losing your interest?

I'm confused because first you say you don't dance much and then you say you'll never give up dancing. At first you sound like you're forgetting about it and don't care anymore about it. Then you say that you won't give it up, and it sounds sort of like you still dance a lot and care for it.

Overall, it is a good draft. Hey! I like it because it's about dancing. But there are a lot of details missing and you need back-up for some of the things you say. (Brenda)

I gave Brenda's response an A. I felt pleased that she raised the issues that really had to be addressed by the writer concerning the inconsistencies of the piece, but did so in a comfortable, encouraging and basically non-judgmental manner. While the points were raised in very different ways, the responders who touched on the issues seemed alert and thoughtful. The writer's ambivalence towards dancing, for example, is something students grappled with differently, but it seems to me that the vast majority of the responses would have started the writer thinking more and writing more.

There were a few weak responses, perhaps two or three per class. These are representative of those exams I could not pass:

-The draft is very interesting. I like the topic because I love dancing also. Since I love to dance I wish you would have written more about the dances you do. What type of dancing do you like doing—folk, calypso, disco, or what? In line 7 I feel there should have been a comma after "mine." The word "and" should be excluded after the word "mine." On line 8 I think the word "that" after the word "was" should be excluded.

I think everything is very clearly understood by the reader. (Emily)



—It's a well-developed piece but it's too short. I would like to hear more about why you like to dance and what kind of music is it that you like to dance to. I just think it should be longer. (Susan)

It was possible to make brief comments on the papers, explaining to such students that their responses were not passing because they had failed to notice the contradictory sentences or to question the writer on her confusion and vagueness. I could remind Emily of what we had repeated often in class; that the response to Draft #1 should not include grammatical fine tuning because those sentences might well be changed or discarded. In an actual writing group, there would be time for grammar later on. I could question Susan's evaluation of the piece as being "well-developed." Both made useful suggestions regarding the type of dancing and music, and the tone of each was appropriate. I wrote that on the exam papers, but decided that the missing parts were too central to pass the students for the test.

All in all, the findings were enormously encouraging. They made me feel that my students had grown a lot in the five months we were together. It seems likely that the better they are at responding to the writing of others, the better they'll be at doing it for themselves. The concept of revision, a crucial one, seems to make more and more sense to them as the term progresses, and employing it in our concluding activity, the final exam, affirms its status one last time.

*Beth Greenberg, a teacher-consultant in the New York City Writing Project, teaches at John F. Kennedy High School.*

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#### NCTE COMES TO PHILADELPHIA

In November 1985, Philadelphia will be the site of the 75th annual convention of the National Council of Teachers of English. The convention theme is "Listening to the Past, Speaking to the Present." The Diamond Jubilee convention will be attended by approximately 5,000 elementary, secondary, and college teachers of English and English Education. The event is being hosted by the Pennsylvania Council of Teachers of English (PCTE), the New Jersey Council of Teachers of English (NJCTE), and the Delaware Association of Teachers of English (DATE).

"In this opening celebration of the NCTE Jubilee Year," President Sheila Fitzgerald of Michigan State University said, "we will acknowledge the rich history of NCTE and the people whose statements and publications have set the course of this organization. We will look at what past experience tells us about present-day problems that demand our attention. Through this theme, we will also highlight listening and speaking. For too long, we have neglected their significance for developing literacy."

President elect Richard Lloyd-Jones, who chaired the convention planning committee for Philadelphia, notes that special sessions will "celebrate the work of individuals, past and present. Some programs will feature poets and other writers reading and discussing their work. Others will celebrate the work of outstanding teachers, past and present. One program strand will reemphasize our commitment to the teaching of literature. We will look to the future with a series of sessions on computers in English teaching."

The convention opens Friday, November 22, with committee sessions, the Board of Directors Meeting, Section meetings, and the Opening General Session Banquet. More than 150 concurrent sessions are scheduled for Saturday and Sunday. Other weekend events include the four convention luncheons, the Saturday breakfast meeting of the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents—NCTE, the

Sunday brunch of the Children's Literature Assembly, the Annual Business Meeting (with voting on NCTE resolutions), and the Classroom Idea Exchange (both on Sunday morning). Exhibits of professional material are on view Saturday morning through Monday afternoon.

Diane Ravitch of Teachers College, Columbia University, author of *The Troubled Crusade: American Education, 1945-1980*, will speak at the Sunday afternoon General Session, November 24. American Indian writer Jamake Highwater, who is to speak at the Books for Children Luncheon Saturday, November 23, is the author of a number of works for children, young adults, and adults. *Legend Days: Part One of the Ghost Horse Cycle* was cited in the 1984 American Library Association Best Books for Young Adults list. Speakers for other major sessions will be announced later. Some 50 one- and two-day workshops are set for Monday through Wednesday, November 25-27.

The Pennsylvania Council of Teachers of English is the principal host organization. With over 150 concurrent sessions, exhibits by all the major publishing firms, special events, school visits, and the luncheons and banquets, there is a job for every English Language Arts teacher. If you can help the NCTE with local arrangements, or help in some capacity, please contact Toby Polk at Germantown High School, phone 848-0606.

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#### HELP STAFF THE WRITING PROJECT BOOTH

Every year, the National Writing Project hosts a booth wherever the NCTE meets. Local Fellows are needed to staff the booth this year in Philadelphia during the three days of the conference. If you can help by donating an hour or two of your time, please write to Bob Weiss at the Writing Project office indicating your interest and possible time you can work.

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#### TEACHERS MUST BE TREATED LIKE ADULTS

In an article written for *Phi Delta Kappan's* "Year of the Teacher" issue (January 1985), American Federation of Teachers President Albert Shanker said that teacher salaries, from beginning levels up, must be raised significantly to attract and retain talented college graduates to public schools. But he added, "I do not believe that, if we solved the salary issue tomorrow, this action *alone* would be sufficient to prevent large numbers of good teachers from leaving their classrooms—or to attract to those classrooms the kind of new teacher we desire."

Too many current conditions in the schools frustrate fine teachers, Shanker said. He cited the time and energy teachers "must steal from the subjects they love, just to maintain order," the requirement to "deal with far too many students each school day," and "random" teaching assignments that waste talent. For example, a teacher who excels with the gifted is given a class of slow learners and vice versa.

Public school teachers "are still treated like children," Shanker charges. Instead of regarding them as responsible professionals, administrators make teachers turn in lesson plans to be checked for conformity. Administrators reward "blind obedience to authority above creativity and excel-



lence." Now state legislators are also "busy telling teachers what to do and how to do it, including which textbooks to use. . . .

"Anyone who thinks that school officials can continue to treat teachers in this fashion and still attract bright and self-directed college-graduates into teaching is sadly mistaken," Shanker adds. The looming teacher shortage, he says, makes it all the more urgent for those who govern schools to break their rigid concepts of teachers and teaching.

What are the chances that such a break-through can occur? Not good, a National Education Association spokesperson believes. Teacher shortages, according to that staff member, are usually relieved by waiving teacher-certification rules, thus relieving the pressure for change before change can take place. Because people admitted to teaching under relaxed rules are deemed "less qualified," administrators yield to the impulse to control teachers even more closely.

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### THE PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT FELLOWS, 1985

Margaret Barnes, Jordan Banks Elementary, Oxford Area S.D.  
Josephine Bigioni, Harris Elementary, Southeast Delco S.D.  
Edris Colyer, Culbertson Elementary, Marple Newtown S.D.  
Norma Cooper, Pennell Elementary, Penn-Delco S.D.  
Rachel DiFeliciantonio, Harris Elementary, Southeast Delco S.D.  
Jack Eells, Souderton Area S.D.  
Timothy Graham, Linwood Elementary, Chichester S.D.  
Janice McDonnell-Hartwig, Scenic Hills Elementary, Springfield Delco S.D.  
Janet Horninger, Sharon Hill Elementary, Southeast Delco S.D.  
Christine Kelly, Academy Park High School, Southeast Delco S.D.  
Diane Kloss, Hillcrest Elementary, Upper Darby S.D.  
Beverly Kohn, Penn Wayne Elementary, Lower Merion S.D.  
Robin Lit, Keith Valley Middle School, Hatboro-Horsham S.D.  
Jim MacCall, Delcroft Elementary, Southeast Delco S.D.  
Leon Markowicz, Lebanon Valley College  
Mary Miller, Sabold Elementary, Springfield S.D.  
Lynette Poole, Sharon Hill Elementary, Southeast Delco S.D.  
Maryanne Porter, Academy Park High School, Southeast Delco S.D.  
John Poynton, Ashland Middle School, Southeast Delco S.D.  
Nannette Ruth, Indian Valley Junior High, Souderton S.D.  
Sandra Schaal, Penn Wood High School, William Penn S.D.  
Elizabeth Shannon, Harris Elementary, Southeast Delco S.D.  
Rudolph Sharpe, Lower Dauphin Middle School, Lower Dauphin S.D.  
Valerie Shulman, Chichester High School, Chichester S.D.  
Sue Thorson, William Penn High School, William Penn S.D.  
Nancy Trimbur, Drexel Hill Middle School, Upper Darby S.D.  
Ruth Watt, Amosland Elementary, Ridley S.D.  
Marcia Wiker, Penn Wood High School, William Penn S.D.

An encouraging note is that more primary teachers participated in this institute than in past years. Grades taught ranged from kindergarten to college levels, with the majority of teachers from the second grade and the 10-12 grades.

### INTRODUCTION TO DONALD GRAVES' POEM

Donald Graves must meet hundreds of teachers each year and affect each of them powerfully. I feel very fortunate to be a teacher who has been touched by him in a special way.

Several times now I have met Donald, whether in West Chester, or at a professional conference. Each time, he recalls our previous meetings and our acquaintance deepens.

While at the NCTE/Writing Projects Conference in Iowa, he shared with me his new endeavor—poetry. I had the chance to hear him read several of his pieces. The following poem, reprinted with his permission, is especially appropriate for all of us who have played the roles of teacher (or professor), student, and conference participant. The poem is in print for the first time.

I deeply appreciate Donald's sharing this poem with me and through me with readers of the Pennsylvania Writing Project *Newsletter*.

Jolene Borgese

### The Professors

by Donald Graves

Sentries of their own truth  
They post themselves on the perimeters  
of meetings,  
Conferences and assemblies.  
Like gunfighters in old Westerns,  
They press their backs to the wall,  
Never to be outflanked by the  
hidden voice.  
Firing rockets and starshells,  
from thrust chins  
And lips pursed with the  
confidence  
Of loaded chambers,  
Their seamless breathing,  
Arcs incessant verbiage,  
While the troops hunker  
down  
And know.

*Donald Graves, of the University of New Hampshire, has recently published A Researcher Learns to Write with Heinemann. Jolene Borgese, of the West Chester Area School District, met Don in 1982 when he first visited the Writing Project.*

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### MODELS FOR EXCELLENCE: NCTE HOLDS CONFERENCE IN IOWA

From May 30 to June 1, participants in the NCTE conference, "Models for Excellence: Improving Writing in the Schools," met in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Featured speakers and conference participants explored diverse project models and instructional approaches used by teachers after their involvement in writing projects. One program component was designed for those setting up, managing and teaching in writing projects; another emphasized teachers interested in effective techniques for their classes. Presentations covered such diverse topics as "The History of Reform—Where Are We Now?" and "Show, Not Tell." Featured speakers were Richard Lloyd Jones, James Gray, Dixie Goswami, James Squire, and Lucy Calkins. Our own Bob Weiss presented "Reach In and Touch Someone: Staff Development for Teachers of Writing" with help from Jolene Borgese. Our next newsletter will feature additional details.



# PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

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

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*Assistant Directors:* Martha J. Menz, Jolene Borgese

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*Sponsors:*

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

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

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

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