



VOLUME ONE NUMBER 3

PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1981

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Doris Gabel

We started slowly last fall, but momentum increased, and now we can look back on the winter of 1980-81 as a very busy one for the Pennsylvania Writing Project and its Fellows. PWP was hard at work throughout the three counties of Montgomery, Delaware and Chester. Fellows gave presentations in their own districts, participated in in-service courses, and introduced prospective new cooperating districts to the Pennsylvania Writing Project.

The first in-service courses in the fall were sponsored by the Delaware County Intermediate Unit and the Octorara Area School District. Kay Winters coordinated the former while the Octorara course was jointly coordinated by Bob Weiss, Cathy Powell, Pat Groves, and Doris Gabel. Mid-winter saw the start of a course in the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit with Janet Greco supervising, and Ed Bureau performing the same task in the Chester County Intermediate Unit class. Mid-winter also brought more classes sponsored by individual school districts. Edie Lefferts and Freema Nichols coordinated a program in their home district (Wallingford-Swarthmore). Pat Wachholz supervised a series of sessions in the Spring-Ford Area School District; and Merle Horowitz, Martha Menz, Sheila Bell, Sharon Moffett, and Lois Snyder presented a course in the Delaware County Intermediate Unit.

In addition to making their own presentations and coordinating classes, several PWP Fellows have been presenting the concepts and philosophy of the Pennsylvania Writing Project to other school districts and groups. Haverford, Marple-Newton, Avon-Grove, and Upper Dublin school districts invited Fellows to speak to their teachers in in-service day programs, and several Fellows participated in the November in-service day in Delaware County. Others addressed a meeting of English Department chairpersons and Curriculum Committee members of the Archdiocesan High Schools of Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties.

Project CARES, an agency working to implement PCRP (Pennsylvania Comprehensive Reading/Communication Arts Plan), included the Pennsylvania Writing Project in one of its workshops for administrators. PWP Fellows presenting the Project at these meetings included Sister Regina Noel, Janet Greco, Lois Snyder, Joan Flynn, Martha Menz, Pat Groves, Freema Nichols, and Doris Gabel. Bob Weiss also took part in several of them.

When we committed ourselves last spring to carry what we learned in the Summer Institute to others, we may have done so with a tongue-in-cheek attitude, thinking, "Oh, we'll never really have to do anything like that." The last nine months have proven us wrong. The commitment was serious. It has been a lot of work, but the name "Pennsylvania Writing Project" and the initials PWP are no longer unknown in the state of Pennsylvania.

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FROM THE EDITORS

Now that a year has elapsed since our first gathering on the West Chester College campus as Fellows of the PWP it might be a good time to review our own involvement in the writing process since the ending of the Summer Institute. Have you written any short stories, poems, essays, that you would like to share through the *Newsletter*? Have you read any books on the teaching of writing or the writing process that you would like to recommend to other teachers? Have you conducted any research on writing that will provide help to fellow teachers? We urge you to contribute your findings, ideas, reviews, and personal writing to the *Newsletter*.

In this issue we have included an article from the National Writing Project *Newsletter* about using research in the classroom. We have also provided information about monographs from the Bay Area Writing Project and books helpful for teaching writing.

Send us any news or writing that you would like published in the next newsletter.

Doris Gabel and Sr. Regina Noel Dunn

PDE AND PWP

On March 5, Bob Weiss and Martha Menz ignored a late winter storm and travelled to Harrisburg to meet with officials from the Department of Education, college faculty members and intermediate unit representatives from across the state. After sharing their common concerns about the improvement of writing abilities, Weiss and Menz described the Pennsylvania Writing Project, its summer institutes and in-service classes during the winter months. The afternoon was devoted to exploring two questions: could prospective individual sites work more effectively on their own or in a statewide network, and what might be possible sources of funding for other Writing Project sites in Pennsylvania.

As one outcome of the meeting, the Department of Education has agreed to fund a workshop for site directors of statewide Writing Projects, as well as to assist in the development of up to five such sites. A training workshop, already being organized by Bob Weiss, will be held on the West Chester College campus from July 21 to July 24. It will enable prospective site directors to develop a local site proposal acceptable for affiliation with the National Writing Project, to develop a statewide Writing Project proposal for joint funding, and to agree on how to link individual Writing Project sites. In addition, the workshop will provide prospective directors with a complete training program for model Bay Area-type summer institutes, in-service courses, and fund raising.

Because the March 5 workshop was held on a snowy day, people who could not attend have been invited to a similar event on May 14. Don Gallehr, who directs the Northern Virginia Writing Project, and Nick Spennato from the Delaware County Intermediate Unit will join Bob Weiss in presenting the program. They will be aided by Helen McLain and John Meehan of the state Department of Education.

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THE TEACHER AS RESEARCHER

Marian M. Mohr

I began to be a teacher-researcher accidentally, when I started keeping a journal early in my teaching career. So much went on during a school day and it all happened so fast. I knew that writing about what was happening to me somehow gave me control over my experience and that by studying what I had written I could begin to understand what was happening. There were so many people brushing past me, people that I needed to understand if I was going to teach them. Writing down what I saw and reading back over it later helped me learn to teach, but I did not think of what I was doing as research.

In fact, I shared a general teacher prejudice against educational research. Teachers do not have much time

to read research journals and when they do, they are too tired to plow through jargon, charts, and statistics to find information that would improve their teaching. They are also prejudiced against research that seems to assume that their particular classroom and its active, changing inhabitants do not exist. They read results from matched sets of control and experimental groups and shrug, aware of the multitude of variables operating in any classroom.

The resistance that I felt to research was also caused because much of it was done either by short-term visitors to the classroom or researchers who never actually appeared at all. Instead an intermediary, usually a teacher, handed out forms for the students to fill in. Somewhere else these forms were checked, compiled, and statistically manipulated in a computer. The conclusions rarely filtered back to the subjects or intermediaries.

Teachers are familiar with statistical data—grades, health and absentee records, test scores—but these are reminders to most teachers not of the usefulness of numerical data but of its inadequacies. Teachers of writing are especially uncertain about scores on tests which purport to measure writing skills but do not require students to write.

Among writing researches there are an increasing number who acknowledge the importance of case studies done in context and do not rely simply on compiling numerical data. The studies of researchers such as Janet Emig, Donald Graves, and Nancy Sommers have a sound of reality that makes them both readable and helpful to teachers. But even this role of the researcher—present in the classroom, observing and recording information in context—is difficult to accept for teachers who see their responsibility as transferring knowledge to their students.

Perhaps the roles of teacher and researcher inevitably collide. Teachers feel the need to impart knowledge, to show students what they know about their subject. Researchers want to find out what goes on in the classroom, to understand what the students do when they are learning. Teachers do not stand back and look at what goes on without also suggesting solutions to problems. Researchers maintain objectivity toward their subjects, not attempting to effect change.

For writing teachers to become researchers as well, they have to accept the close relationship between the writing process and the human growth process, because it is this close relationship that makes context so important to an understanding of writing. Writing is *in* and *of* context. The personal moves upon the paper can be encouraged, discussed, described, even looked at from an angle, but they cannot be successfully taught or understood as single words in a series. Teacher-researchers need to notice the details of their writing classes' experiences with great care, as if they too are students in that room, learning and growing within its context. It is this development that I recognize happening to me in the records of my journal.

The change began when I misspelled the word *aggressive* on a spelling list I had written on the blackboard. The students had accepted my spelling

(which was missing an s) and copied the word onto their lists. Later in the week I gave them a practice exercise. Again *aggressive* was missing an s. Fortunately one student in the class was brave enough to bring the misspelling to my attention. In my journal I have recorded the gentle teaching method of that student. She said that she assumed that her dictionary was incorrect, but she had noticed a difference between the spelling I had given them and the spelling given in the dictionary. Grimly I told the class that I had made a mistake and showed it to them, asking them to recopy the word correctly. I said that I would add it to my list of spelling words. They looked at me quizzically, amused at the idea.

During the days between my acknowledgment of the error and the test, one or another of the students would quiz me on the word, a little hesitantly but enjoying the situation, to see if I had mastered it yet. Eventually I did. On the test day *aggressive* was the only word that every student in the class spelled correctly.

When I considered all this in my journal, I thought of pretending to make a lot of mistakes during the year in hopes that it would increase the students' learning. As it turned out, I did not have to pretend. The humiliation of not knowing everything catches up with every teacher. One way I found to live with it was to begin asking why things happened the way they did in my classes, to become a student of my students, encouraging them to teach me about the way they learned.

As I begin watching my students more carefully, other changes took place in the way I taught. I had been recording for some time my irritation with the various noises and motions that students made when they were supposed to be writing. Invariably the aspiring drummers for the school band congregated in my ninth grade writing classes. Other students wriggled constantly and made a variety of strange noises. At first I thought these sounds were early signals of insurrection and needed to be stopped. One day I was writing about their movements and noises in my journal and I become so involved in describing that I didn't attempt to stop them. Everyone wrote longer than usual.

When the period was almost over I told them what had happened and read, using no names, what I had written about their actions. One of the drummers said that drumming his fingers on the desk or rhythmically jumping his knee up and down kept him writing. We began talking about noisy environments as opposed to quiet ones. They said that when they really became involved with what they were writing they forgot what they were doing. Their small habits, they said, were part of their writing processes. We all became more tolerant of each others' idiosyncracies as a result of our discussion, and I began to make these observations with all my writing classes as a way of helping them understand how they wrote.

What they wrote about caused another change in the way I taught writing. In my early journal there are repeated efforts to list composition topics. I pored over teacher-hint books, adding to my lists. Yet every time I gave suggestions to my students there was at least one who didn't like anything on the list. One day, after having another topic list rejected, I told the students to

come up with a topic themselves. At first they were stunned. I stood there looking at them and wondering what to do next. Suddenly topics started flowing fast and free, and I quickly started writing them down on the blackboard. As they came up with more and more ideas, some students stopped talking and started writing. Now, in some classes we make up and publish a class topic list so each student has a copy of everyone's ideas. Sometimes I have them add a personal topic list to the class list. When I began doing research on what topics students want to write about, their writing became livelier and they became more involved with it and therefore more eager to develop and revise it.

As we wrote together and discussed our writing with each other, the students did become more convinced of the value of revision, but I was unsure of the best way to help them with comments and conferences. First I stopped marking drafts of their papers because they told me that once they had received a grade, the process seemed over to them. They said they found it most helpful when I asked them questions while they were working on a writing. I started asking them what they were dissatisfied with in their drafts. I asked them if I had figured out their main ideas correctly. I asked them to tell me more about parts of their research that seemed skimpy. I used question marks to help them locate, within a line of writing, where their mechanical mistakes lurked.

I am currently working on a project with some students to define the revision process. They have written descriptions of their own writing processes and I am putting what they have written together to discuss with them. They will help me revise what I have written, adding, deleting, making sure I have recorded accurately what they have observed. As we revise together their theories of revision, both they and I will better understand the process.

The day I planned to show the fifth and sixth period writing classes my first draft of what they had said about revision, a pep rally was scheduled between those periods. Each class would last for only half an hour. Subtract from that the time it takes the band members, cheerleaders, and pep club members to leave early from fifth and return late to sixth. Consider the students who do not make it back at all to the last period of the day. I know—any teacher would know—that trying to conduct a rational discussion in the time remaining would be fool-hardy. The pep rally schedule is one of the many variables of the context in which my research takes place. These variables are frequently out of my control, but they are a part of the real world of my writing classes.

Keeping a journal of the context and discoveries of my teaching days has helped me to learn from my experiences and observations. Looking at teaching as research has made me more of a professional by making me more of a student. And, paradoxically, I am convinced that the model of a student that I provide for my students to observe will help them to become better students themselves.

Marian M. Mohr is a Fellow of the Northern Virginia Writing Project. This article originally appeared in *The National Writing Project Network Newsletter*, vol. 3, no. 1, November 1980.

BRIEF REVIEWS

Writing Without Teachers

by Peter Elbow

Oxford University Press, 1973

What makes Peter Elbow's book useful to teachers of writing are his practical ideas on getting the reluctant writer started, understanding the writing process, and responding with concrete statements to another person's piece of writing. His suggestions on free-writing and rewriting can apply to classroom processes in middle and secondary schools as well as to adult writing of directives, memos, and reports. The busy teacher can use many of the stimulating and useful procedures that Elbow proposes. His new book, *Writing with Power*, will be reviewed in a future *Newsletter*.

Rose, Where Did You Get That Red?

by Kenneth Koch

Vintage Books, 1974

Imitating poetry written by Wallace Stevens, William Shakespeare, and William Blake would be challenging for anyone. How did Kenneth Koch elicit such imitations from sixth grade students while at the same time familiarizing them with great poetry? A look at a few chapter titles reveals his creative mind, and a few trial runs of his methods shows their effectiveness. Teachers looking for stimulating ideas for writing will find this book a rich source.

PROJECT NEWS

As a result of awareness sessions held for the Haverford School District, the Project will conduct a week-long August workshop for up to 25 elementary teachers. The February awareness sessions were led by Joan Flynn, Doris Gabel, Merle Horowitz, and Lois Snyder. Similar awareness sessions led by Doris and Merle for the Marple-Newton School District have produced plans for Fall in-service work with that district's elementary teachers.

OPPORTUNITIES

To Attend: Conferences this Fall

October 16 and 17 are the dates for the Fall conference of the Pennsylvania Council of Teachers of English, held this year in nearby Harrisburg. Although it is probably too late for program appearances, Project teachers who are interested in the Idea Exchange have until October 1 to reply to the conference directors. Any PCTE member may attend the conference.

More locally, the Delaware Valley Writing Council will be holding its Fall conference on October 17 at Upper Merion Senior High School. The conference directors

are especially interested in papers or workshops which demonstrate the implementation of theory through lesson plans, units, course syllabi, and department or school-wide programs. Submit your proposals to Jane Kershaw, Upper Merion Senior High, King of Prussia, PA 19406 (Tel. 337-6000) or to Jerome Zurek, R.D. 3, Box 91, Malvern, PA 19355 (Tel. 647-2744).

The National Council of Teachers of English will be meeting in late November, 1981 in Boston. Bob Weiss will be chairing a program session and will be meeting with other National Writing Project Directors. Project Fellows are encouraged to join NCTE and attend this valuable conference; however, proposals for papers are no longer being accepted by the conference director.

To Publish

Each year, the National Council of Teachers of English invites teachers at all levels to submit manuscripts for a Classroom Practices publication. Articles should describe in detail a specific single method or strategy for successful classroom management of an English/language arts class.

Fellows should keep this publication in mind and consider submitting their work for the 1982 edition.

Merle Horowitz has pointed out another interesting publishing source, this one for student writing. It is described in the March 1981 number of *Language Arts* (p. 300). Need we say that the *Newsletter* encourages you to submit writing—your own and your students'?

POSITION PAPER FROM A PROJECT IN-SERVICE COURSE

Judith Volk

Although writing is probably the second most important skill for students to learn, it is one skill which teachers find most difficult to motivate themselves to teach or students to learn. Before learning of the Pennsylvania Writing Project, I found myself in that category of unmotivated teachers. My one consolation in teaching reading for fourteen years instead of English, which I had previously taught for three years, was that at least I did not have to mark compositions every week. Not that I disliked writing or disliked teaching writing. I find both to be very pleasurable, but the simple thought of marking themes was enough to send my mood plummeting.

Once I got over the compulsion that every theme must be read word-by-word, and every error marked with a "trusty red pen," and that students did not all have to write on the same topic at the same time, I discovered what I have termed "The Joy of Writing," and even better, my students have discovered this joy too!

Student response groups can sometimes do more in five minutes than a dedicated teacher can accomplish in three months. An old platitude learned in educational psychology class was "peer pressure works best." Unfortunately, the educational psychology professor did not share this method or gem of information with the professor of methods and materials of teaching English. How much more I could have accomplished in the past decade and a half! Fragments and run-on sentences become real when pointed out by a classmate. It is just another English lesson when the teacher says it!

I have always enjoyed poetry and the teaching of poetry, but unfortunately, I stopped short of teaching it properly. Deciphering the poet's meaning, and analyzing the figures of speech, meter and rhyme were the only skills the student learned. However, unless a student knows how to construct a poem, he or she cannot fully appreciate the art of the author. In this course, I learned a small amount of methodology in how to teach the writing of poetry, and I also learned that I would like to learn more about the art of writing in the poetic form. It seems strange to me in retrospect, that one of the first forms of language man learns, and one of the forms that man listens to most often in leisure-time activities (in the form of musical lyrics) is poetry, yet it is probably the form which the least number of people know how to write themselves with any degree of satisfaction. I would like to be able to have my students enjoy experimenting with and writing in the poetic form as well as the prose.

I have found that the suggestion of making marginal notations provides a more student-centered learning experience than the direct marking process I had used in the past. Students are encouraged, either as individuals or in small response groups, to search out and correct the errors themselves. As a result, their initial proof-reading is now more accurate.

Learning-centered writing is another valuable writing tool that teachers can employ to gauge the success of any given lesson. In addition, it is a means by which students themselves can summarize and assess their own grasp of the subject.

In short, I believe that the strongest benefits of the Pennsylvania Writing Project are the practicality of the lessons of writing styles presented, and the versatility of the lesson formats, in that they can be adapted to any level of instruction from kindergarten up to and including college level. I firmly believe that this course should be required of all college students preparing to teach English at any level of instruction. Ultimately, another course will have to be added to the project to teach writers about the various markets available to publish one's writing for public consumption. This is not an impossible dream, when one considers the kinds of success in writing already experienced by the teachers involved in the National Writing Projects.

Judith Volk was a participant in PWP's Delaware County Intermediate Unit In-Service Course, Fall 1980, and is a teacher in the Marple-Newtown School District.

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BE A WRITER

Preface by Jolene Borgese
PWP Fellow, 1980, Ridley School District

Be a Writer is a report written by "accelerated" seventh grade students at South Ridley Junior High School, a school in an average to upper middle class neighborhood. The occasion for the report was their participation as actors in an educational film about a normal writing day in their classroom.

Bob Weiss, who had been part of a panel discussion taped afterwards, spoke to the class extemporaneously after the cameras had been shut off. After much discussion, he suggested that the students write a report of their experience of the filming, and he proceeded to elicit from the group (and to teach) the format for a report. With that format in mind, groups of three and four students each wrote on one aspect of the process of the taping. They did **all** the writing and editing themselves, with no assistance from me. They are truly the authors. Most of their previous experience had been creative rather than reportorial, and they obviously found it difficult to bring together and unify aspects of the filming. Nevertheless, they came a long way during the process of preparing the report.

Further, they experienced the tedious tasks of meeting deadlines, proof-reading and editing. Bob Weiss had established a due date for publication in the *Pennsylvania Writing Project Newsletter*, and they met it. However, he returned their manuscript to them for further editing before he would accept it. The present version represents further correcting and polishing—also done independently of me as their teacher.

The slogan or title "Be A Writer" is on a bulletin board in my classroom. After completing the report, my students realized what the slogan really indicates!

"Be A Writer" Introduction

Ms. Jolene Borgese's section 7-6 was recently chosen to be filmed on February 17, 1981 by Dr. Arthur Smith, coordinator of Instructional Media and Technology for Ridley South District. He thought it was an excellent idea to film our class in an illustration of what actually goes on in an English classroom.

We always enjoy being in Ms. Borgese's class. She teaches us in a way that we will like having to learn the various ways of writing.

Our section has the desire to write and Ms. Borgese helps us to do this.

Renee Dixon
Sangita Patel
April Reilly
Linda Benedetto

Briefing

Tuesday morning on February 17, 1981, our section 7-6 assembled in Ms. Borgese's room to be filmed for a television program. Ms. Borgese briefly talked to us about the lesson and told us not to be nervous. Dr. Smith came in to brief us on what he was going to do with the camera. He also told us to be very quiet because the microphone is very sensitive. We started the lesson. We worked on septolets, which are patterns of a poem with seven lines. Even though it took us a long time, the lesson went well.

Ms. Borgese is a member of the Pennsylvania Writing Project and the program was filmed for American cable television.

*Sharon Traves
Mary Beth Enright
Dave Campbell*

Writer of the Week Board

Every Thursday Ms. Borgese's English class does a writing assignment. When the class hands in their papers she marks them. She picks out the ones she likes the best. She looks for form, creativity, etc. Then she pins them to "The Writer of the Week Board."

We interviewed our principal, Mr. Oliver Alexander. We asked him if he likes the idea of this board. He replied, "I think it's a good idea." Another question was, "Did you enjoy writing when you were younger?" Mr. Alexander said, "I enjoy it now, but really didn't do that much writing when I was younger."

We thanked Mr. Alexander for giving us the chance to interview him.

*Mike Humes
Billy Flocco
Austin Carney*

A Writing Workshop

A writing workshop is when we get into groups to do writing exercises such as stories, poems, etc.

The reason we have a writing workshop is that some people like to work alone. Also to find the most comfortable environment.

The good points of a workshop are that we could get help from friends if we get stuck and can also refer to dictionaries or thesauruses. Also to help us write an application or a letter.

It was included on the taping because we wanted the community to understand the process of writing and how writing is accomplished in the schools.

*Carla Sauer
Michelle Weihmann
Jenny Pastuzek*

Conferencing

Conferencing is talking with Ms. Borgese about your writing on a one to one basis. Ms. Borgese and the

student usually sit together at the front table. The student should have his or her writing folder and that week's assignment.

Ms. Jolene Borgese has the students read their writing and she points out their weaknesses and strengths. She gives them ideas on how to complete and improve the piece. Conferencing is beneficial because it makes the students think about their writing and gives the students a chance to become better writers.

*Chris Bracke
Frank Ryan
Rusty Richter*

The Panel Discussion

The panel of seven consisted of: Dr. Robert Weiss, Director of the Pennsylvania Writing Project; Ms. Jolene Borgese, 7th grade English teacher and writing consultant; Mrs. Marianne Black, a parent representing the community; Mrs. Elizabeth Smith, English and History coordinator (level 2) at the Ridley Senior High School; Mrs. Maureen Cartin, 8th grade writing program; Stan Belton, a 9th grade student; Samantha Kemp, an 8th grade student.

Some of the questions brought up in the discussion were 1) Is the writing program expensive to the school district? 2) How will the experience of sequential writing help the student when he begins a career? 3) How did his experience in sequential writing help in 9th grade? 4) How did you feel about not getting graded on your paper? 5) What is the Pennsylvania Writing Project? 6) How are the teachers trained to teach the program?

The reason for this discussion was to inform the public on the project.

*Laura Callahan
Terry King
Vicki Crowley*

Our Talk with Dr. Robert Weiss

We think the reason that Dr. Weiss talked to us after the program was to encourage us to write. One of the many questions that Dr. Weiss brought up was "Would you rather write about the program or would you rather discuss it?" Most of our classmates said that they would rather talk about the program rather than write about it. This was because our class thinks it is easier to talk about, rather than write it. We realize now that writing will be beneficial now, in the future and in our everyday lives.

*Denise Rouse
Nancy Robbins
Mary Ellen Di Felice*

Questions and Answers

To finish our newsletter we have decided to ask our classmates ten questions on writing and what they thought of the taping.

The results are as follows:

1. Is writing more enjoyable here at Ridley South or elementary school?
Twenty-one people answered that writing was more enjoyable at Ridley South than elementary school.
2. What is the difference between writing here at Ridley South and in elementary school?
Write more—7 Easier at elementary—4
Taught differently—4 More fun—3
Interesting—1 Easier at Ridley South—1
3. Did you enjoy talking with Dr. Robert Weiss? Why?
YES
He was interesting—5
Learned something—3
He was funny—3
Didn't make us write—2
Didn't have anything bad to say—2
Got to write this English project—2
NO
Boring—4
Talked too much—2
4. Did you enjoy taping? Why?
YES
Learning experience—6
It was the first time—5
It was fun—5
Missed four periods—4
Liked to be on television—2
NO
Didn't like it—1
Too much time—1
Boring—2
5. Do you like writing every Thursday? Why?
YES
Fun—5
Like to write—4
Something to do—4
Helps to be a better writer—3
It's easy—2
Be Creative—2
Different—1
Beneficial—2
6. How does it feel to get your paper on the "Writer of the Week Board?"
Feels good—23
Doesn't matter—2
7. Why do you think our class was picked to do the taping?
Ms. Borgese likes us—4
Ms. Borgese is in the Writing Project—3
Did good in other projects—2
We are brains—4
Just as talented as Learning Enrichment Program for Students—1
Smarter than Learning Enrichment Program for Students—2
We are great—4
8. Do you think the taping was beneficial to you?
Yes—19
No—7

9. Do you think the taping will be beneficial to others?
Yes—17
No—7
10. How will the writing be helpful to you in the future?
Get a job—11 College—5
Smarter—7 It won't—5

*David Bell
John Purcell
Vince Vitale
Ray Hanosek*

* * * * *

**CONNECTIONS
Waiting Room
1980**

They sit,
Waiting quietly,
With gaunt faces, hollow eyes,
Watching the solid line of
Closed doors.

Efficient, delineated doors briskly
Open, and a bright white light
Burst through,
Beckoning one to come through.

To what? Hope? Cure?
Then why do they look so hopeless and incurable,
Those people waiting in the darkened room
With gaunt faces and hollow eyes.

1969

In a crowded room, empty of life,
A woman sits alone, even though I am there.
In a waiting room, where there is nothing to wait for,
Except the truth neither of us will accept.

*Kathryn Head, Project Fellow,
1980, West Chester Area
School District*

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PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

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Delaware County Intermediate Unit

Montgomery County Intermediate Unit

The Pennsylvania Writing Project is an affiliate of the National/Bay Area Writing Project. It 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.

For additional information on the Pennsylvania Writing Project, contact Robert H. Weiss, Director, The Writing Program, West Chester State College, West Chester, PA 19380. Telephone (215)436-2281.

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