



VOLUME 10 NUMBER 1 & 2

PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

FALL 1989/WINTER 1990

ON THE OCCASION OF PAWP'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY

From Fellow Directors and Teacher/Consultants
of the National Writing Project
I bring you greetings and congratulations.

We celebrate with you
the spirit of collaboration you have generated
between West Chester University and the
surrounding schools;

We celebrate with you
the new model of inservice education you have
established
in which teachers teach teachers the best ways
to teach writing;

And we celebrate with you
the countless times you have brought writing
into the lives of fellow teachers and students.

Because you have kept at it these past ten years,
your schools and university are graduating
students who now write well
in college, graduate school, and on the job;

And because you've kept at it,
you're changing the attitude of Americans toward writing.

Your work has been felt most immediately
in this area surrounding West Chester University.
But it also has had an impact across the country.

Your strong presence says that writing matters,
not just in one classroom, but in all classrooms;
not just in this area of Pennsylvania,
but in all areas of the country.

Over the past ten years your hard work has brought you
the good fortune of having
understanding Teacher/Consultants
and wise leaders in the persons of
Bob Weiss, Jolene Borgese, and Martha Menz.

On behalf of the National Writing Project
congratulations on a job well done.
May your good work continue for many years to come.

Donald R. Gallehr
George Mason University
Co-Director, NWP



*Don Gallehr, NWP Co-Director, Martha Menz, PAWP
Assistant Director; Bob Weiss, NWP Regional Director and
Founding Director PAWP, West Chester site; and Jolene
Borgese, PAWP Co-Director, enjoy the pre-banquet get-
together at PAWP's tenth anniversary celebration*

In appreciation...



More thanks than can be expressed in words
go to Lois Snyder and Gail Capaldi, retiring PAWP
Newsletter editors, for the last two years of devo-
tion to this newsletter

TENTH ANNIVERSARY BANQUET CELEBRATION

Over 90 people attended our tenth year anniversary celebration on November 1. Most were PAWP Fellows; others were the kind of supportive administrators that PAWP has always depended on. There were some other participants of note as well.

The Provost of West Chester University welcomed the group and marveled at Bob Weiss's creative energy and budget manipulations. Bob's Dean, his parents, and his daughter Molly were also in the assembly—probably marveling to see him in a handsome rental tuxedo.

Don Gallehr, co-director of the National Writing Project, traveled from George Mason University in Virginia to congratulate us on becoming one of the more "ancient" of the 154 sites.

On hand also were a Chester County legislator, Art Hershey of Coatesville; John Kerrigan of the Regional Computer Resource Center; and Leslie Peters, the writing assessment specialist for the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Awards for Excellence in Writing Instruction were presented to four people: Sr. Kathleen (Regina) Dunn of Villa Maria Academy; Julianne (Judy Yunginger) Gehman, Eastern Lancaster School District; Nicholas Spennato, Delaware County Intermediate Unit; Carol Straub, Upper Darby School District.



Arlene Silberman, author of Growing Up Writing, thanks Bob Weiss for his help in finding information for her book.

Sr. Kathleen, a 1980 Fellow, now serves on the Advisory Board of the Center for the Study of Writing, a federally funded research institute; she has written five articles on writing. Judy Gehman, a 1982 Fellow and past president of the Keystone State Reading Association, was to have been recognized for enabling her district to become a model of effective writing and reading instruction; her award was presented at a subsequent meeting. The award to Nick Spennato, Language Arts Specialist for the Delaware County Intermediate Unit, was in recognition of his continued record of active support for the Project through its entire life; his concern for quality in teaching writing and reading has helped us build good relations with many school districts. The last award went to Carol Straub, a 1984 Fellow whose first-grade classroom was cited as a Center of Excellence by the National Council of Teachers of English and who was a 1988 finalist for the Pennsylvania

Teacher of the Year Award.

Bob spoke briefly about the history of PAWP and the strength of our project. Two recent initiatives of the PDE were worth applauding but with caution: PCR2 and the Writing Assessment. Although the PCR2 curriculum framework "comes from on high," it is a useful validation of our project's work and that of other excellent teachers and researchers.



Two recipients of the PAWP Awards for Excellence in Writing Instruction personally thank Bob Weiss for his input. Nicholas Spennato is a Language Arts Specialist for the Delaware County Intermediate Unit, while Carol Straub is a first grade teacher in the Upper Darby School District. Other recipients were Sister Kathleen Dunn of Villa Maria Academy and Julianne (Judy) Yunginger-Gehman of the Eastern Lancaster School District.

Bob quoted Mary K. Healy of the National Writing Project: "You have to set up a framework within which they can make some discoveries...and then they make a discovery, and then they have to have an opportunity to **reflect** upon the discovery and discuss it, and **then** it can be fit into a larger context.

The Pennsylvania Assessment System is field-testing a writing sample for grades 6 and 9 in 1990, the first time writing outcomes have been measured in our state. Although we should be gratified that writing has gained this attention, we have to be concerned that the assessment advances rather than squelches the creation of rich writing environments in the classroom.

The keynote address of the evening was provided by Arlene Silberman, author of Growing Up Writing, who reminded us of the national support network that we have developed. Our project is filled with stories of children's accomplishments and teachers' strengths, and the encouraging news is that similar stories can be told of youngsters and their teachers all through the nation.



About GROWING UP WRITING

Arlene Silberman's Growing Up Writing is a clear look at how to rediscover the connection between writing, thinking and learning—and at the successful programs that bring colorful writing into the lives of children.

Children today must not grow up into a lifelong dread of the writing process. Parents and teachers often unwittingly quash a child's natural desire to write by over-emphasizing the technical aspects of writing and zealously penalizing errors, and by under-emphasizing writing as a way to develop ideas, beliefs, feelings, reflection. As a result, children fear their own inarticulateness and seek to avoid any critical response to the "flaws" in their writing.

"While no one intends to harm lively young minds," the author writes, "Our schools begin to curb a student's enthusiasm for writing during the first few months of first grade—and continue to suppress it for the next twelve years." Silberman criss-crossed the country for three years to study the ways that teachers and students are learning to write and to develop ways of bringing writing back to the classroom and to the daily lives of our young people.

This timely, vital book offers exciting prospects for turning our kids onto writing as a way of learning how to think, reason, and organize their ideas. Most important, the book shows what parents can do to get involved.

Arlene Silberman has spent most of her career as an education writer, lecturer, and consultant in the United States and abroad. She received her B.A. from Barnard College and her M.A. from Teachers College at Columbia University. She has taught English and other subjects on the elementary, junior high, and senior high school levels and observed model classrooms throughout the U.S., England, and Japan for a study of education funded by the Carnegie Corporation. Silberman has represented the United States Information Agency in lectures before teachers colleges abroad and has served as a consultant to state departments of education, school boards, and education associations. She has written on education for Reader's Digest, The New York Times, McCall's, Ladies' Home Journal, Woman's Day, Good Housekeeping, and Instructor magazines. Silberman was also the primary researcher and collaborator on her husband Charles Silberman's seminal work, Crisis in the Classroom.

"In Growing Up Writing, Arlene Silberman provides teachers and parents with a rich account of how writing can become vital in children's lives. It is a wonderful guide for good practice in schools."

Vito Perrone
Director of Teacher Education Program
Harvard University

"Can our students learn to love writing? Arlene Silberman thinks they can, and so do I. Silberman's Growing Up Writing offers a wide variety of ideas and insight that teachers—and parents—will find highly useful."

Mary Futrell
President, NEA (1983-1989)

"In the teaching of writing, "back to basics" is bunk. The good news, as Arlene Silberman shows vividly, is that all sorts of innovative methods exist that do teach kids to write well. The bad news is that your school probably doesn't use any of them. This is a good news book that every parent should read—and then buy another copy to give to the teacher."

Edward T. Thompson
former editor-in-chief
Reader's Digest

"Growing Up Writing is a timely analysis of where we are now, with strategies for change that will prepare our children for the 21st century. Arlene Silberman's emphasis on parental involvement in writing touches a key button. Today's students have wonderful imaginations; working together, parents, educators, and policymakers can unlock those imaginations through writing."

Dr. James Oglesby
President
National School Boards Association

"Writing puts thinking on paper. Do our children hate writing and write poorly because they have no thoughts to express? Of course not. Arlene Silberman demonstrates that thinking leads to writing, writing leads to reading, and drafting leads to composition. Our educational systems have the process backwards. Students are taught as if writing puts the rules of composition on paper because that is how the teachers were taught and how **their** papers are graded. Silberman teaches us how to get the writing message right side up. Every parent, teacher and school administrator who reads this book can help the nation's children to become thoughtful, fluent writers.

"Growing Up Writing is an admirable, important book, and I hope it gets the readership it deserves."

The Honorable Shirley M. Hufstедler
former United States Secretary
of Education

"Growing Up Writing is one of those wise books that comes along once in a great while. Its insights extend beyond writing and demonstrate what is truly basic in education at every age. Growing Up Writing should be read, discussed, and taken to heart by parents, teachers, school board members—indeed, by anyone who is concerned with children and adolescents."

Allan Shedlin
Executive Director
The Elementary School Center

"This is the right book at the right time. During a period when our school systems are being driven to spend more and more time getting students to come up with the right answers on standardized multiple-choice tests, Silberman places the emphasis on the need to get children to write—which is just another word for thinking, communicating and solving complex problems. Silberman's perspective should not be missed."

Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

After traveling 22,000 miles to meet with teachers of teachers and teachers of students, Arlene Silberman has good news to report: America's century-old writing problem is giving way to new solutions. Elementary and secondary schools that dare to loosen the grip of back-to-basics are devising and groundbreaking ways of going forward-to-basics. Most basic of all, Silberman says, is the ability to use language to write gracefully, think clearly, and foster learning at every age in every subject.

Provocative examples of change now extend from inner-city elementary schools to the backwoods of Alaska, from suburban junior highs to venturesome senior high schools. Taken together, they form the heart of her challenging book, Growing Up Writing: Teaching Our Children to Write, Think, and Learn (Times Books, October 1989, \$18.95).

To order:

TIMES BOOKS/RANDOM HOUSE MAIL SERVICE,
Dept. NWP, 201 E. 50th Street, New York, New York 10022

Please send me _____ copy(ies) of Growing Up Writing (9-1823-1) at \$18.95 each (please include \$2.00 to cover postage and handling).

_____ Enclosed is my check or money payable to Times Books.

Charge my account with

_____ American Express

_____ VISA

_____ Mastercard

Account Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State: _____ Zip Code _____

A limited number of Silberman's books are available at the Project Office for a reduced cost of \$16.00 plus \$2.00 for shipping and handling.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE DIRECTOR

by Bob Weiss, PAWP Director

What, after ten years, does the director do? When someone recently asked me that question, I thought about how my day runs and how much or little gets accomplished in a working day. Try this schedule if you want to—but note, my PAWP work is a half-time schedule only: I also teach a course and work 1/4 time for the English Department and campus writing program writing and advising proposals and organizing programs, attending and chairing meetings, and performing related tasks.

Write and read for three hours a day; this gets accomplished only away from office setting and in the following time blocks: 9:00-10:00 AM and 11:00 PM-1:00 AM. What gets written or read is not personal but professional and administrative. Newsletter pieces like this, planning documents for project events, write-ups of events after they occur, directions for PAWP coordinators, articles about the project such as the one appearing in the first issue of Scholars, and grant proposals are my larger products. Shorter compositions are the never-ending stream of letters and memos to PAWP coordinators, university offices, school administrators and NWP sites. In addition, I read and respond at some length to the work in process of four teachers whose projects I am directing in English 599 (Directed Studies); two secondary-level teacher consultants collaborating on a manual for the "personal search" assignment to replace "research papers"; a junior college teacher trying to develop a program for writing across the curriculum, and a secondary teacher on sabbatical who is interviewing teachers in two present and past PAWP courses. I read pieces from Language Arts, College Composition and Communication, Research in Teaching of English, English Education, and all other NCTE publications that deal with writing at any level, and I struggle to keep current with many other periodicals and with book titles from Heinemann, Longman, and publishers whose audience is teachers. I must know what is going on in the papers of Educational Leadership, the Kappan, American Education. These are the times I devote also to keeping up with correspondence by reading and responding to university and departmental communications.

Meetings in person or by telephone consume a large part of my time. I generally talk to PAWP program coordinators and presenters on an average of an hour a day divided between school hours (when it's hard to reach classroom people) and early evening. During regular business hours I talk to school administrators about PAWP programs they have or want; to caterers; the typesetter of this newsletter, the graphics department (where is the brochure they promised us?); and the facilities division (where do we have to move our summer programs?).

At least an hour a day I work with the office staff and give instructions or advice on how jobs should best be completed: the people here include Joann Miles, our new full-time secretary; Jean Thompson, our new half-time program coordinator; and two student aides, Jo Rinker and Marsha Harnick; and one graduate student who spends ten hours a week making sense out of PAWP research data.

PAWP Whole Language Summer Conference for K-8 Teachers

Keynote Speakers include:
John W. Stewig, Past President NCTE
and author of *Read to Write* and
Children and Literature

Exton Center - West Chester University
June 18-20, 1990

Co-Sponsored by the Houghton Mifflin Company

SPRING COURSES OFFERED BY PAWP

Strategies for Teaching Writing I

Berks County Intermediate Unit
Bucks County Intermediate Unit
Albert Einstein Academy
(for Delaware Teachers)
West Chester Area School District

Strategies for Teaching Writing II

Upper Darby School District

Computers and Writing

Bucks County Intermediate Unit

Writing, Reading and Talking Across the Curriculum: PCR2

Bucks County Intermediate Unit
Exeter Township School District
Norristown School District
Palisades School District
Upper Darby School District
Upper Dublin School District
West Chester Area School District

SUMMER 1990 SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PAWP FELLOWS

PCR2 Consultant Workshop

Date: June 21-22, 1990

Time: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Location: Upper Darby Senior High School

Credits: 1 graduate credit

Develop a presentation oriented toward
PCR2 critical experiences.

Return Institute: Teacher as Researcher

Date: June 25 - July 25, 1990

Time: 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

Location: Exton Center,
West Chester University

Credits: 3 graduate credits

Learn methods of classroom research and
"kid-watching" and prepare to implement your own
study.

More information will follow in a mailing to Fellows.

PAWP DAY

CONFERENCE FOR TEACHER-CONSULTANTS AND COLLEAGUES

March 14, 1990

**CHECK YOUR MAILBOX
FOR MORE INFORMATION**

1990 YOUTH WRITING PROJECT

Grades 1 - 4 (regular programs)
2 two-week sessions: July 2-13
and July 16-27

Grades 5-12
(regular and computer-based programs)
3 two-week sessions: June 18-29,
July 2-13, and July 16-27.

More information will be made available
in March, 1990.

AN INVITATION TO APPLY TO 1990 SUMMER INSTITUTE JUNE 25 TO JULY 26, 1990 AT WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

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

Structure of Summer Institutes

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

Content of the Institute

- Phases of the writing process
- Varying forms, purposes, and audiences for writing assignments
- Writing to learn/writing across the curriculum
- Evaluating writing
- Dealing with writing apprehension

Who should apply?

Experienced, talented teachers are eligible to be selected for Project Fellowships. Applicants may be teaching on the elementary, secondary, or college levels in language arts, communications, and English or in other content areas. Teachers may be nominated by their schools or school districts. The project staff interviews applicants. Teachers interested in writing across the curriculum or writing to learn are encouraged to apply, as well as teachers who are interested in improving the skills of their students.

Responsibilities of the Writing Fellows

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

Cost to schools or districts and participants

A school/district endorsement fee of \$980 per participant supports operating expenses of the project. It is payable in May after participants enroll. Stipends will be awarded during the Institute. Participants or their employers are responsible for paying tuition and fees for six hours of graduate credit (approximately \$745) and for personal expenses. Some schools and districts contribute to these costs in addition to the endorsement fee.

What will be gained by participating teachers and schools districts?

For Teachers:

1. A stipend of \$750.
2. Recognition as Fellow of the West Chester University/Pennsylvania Writing Project.
3. Six hours of West Chester University graduate credit.
4. Improved skills in the teaching of writing.
5. Training as an in-service "teacher/consultant."
6. Relationships with other writing teachers who seek to improve their teaching and writing.
7. A one-year sponsorship of the National Writing Project which includes the Quarterly of the National Writing Project.
8. A library of textbooks and articles.
9. Additional credits available for follow-up work in Fall & Spring.

For Schools and/or Districts:

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

HOW TO BECOME A PAWP FELLOW

Today: Tell your administrators of your interest so they can arrange for the school district's financial commitment.

February: Complete the application form on the next page. Follow all directions carefully and be sure to get the necessary approval.

March: Submit your application materials.

April: You will be contacted for a personal interview.

May: If you are invited into the Institute, you will receive an invitation to the preliminary supper meeting on May 16, 1990.

June: Do reading and writing to prepare for the Summer.

PAWP APPLICATION FOR SUMMER INSTITUTES

Important Information:

This application form must be endorsed by a district or institution official and be accompanied by: (A) a brief description of your background and experience teaching writing, including current and planned assignments; (B) a one-page statement presenting one aspect of your classroom teaching of writing that you would be willing to develop at the institute and present to the Fellows. Send the application and (A) and (B) to the Project Director by March 30, 1990. Interviews will be held and notification of Writing Fellows selected will be accomplished by April 20, 1990.

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

Teacher Application:

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

City/Zip: _____

Phone: Home _____ School _____

Grades:

K-3 4-6 MS 7-9 10-12 College

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

Signature: _____ Date: _____

School or District Endorsement by Official Authorized to Commit Funds:

I endorse the above application for a position as a Summer Fellow in the PAWP Summer Institute. I certify that this endorsement is supported by school/district willingness to contribute \$980 (per participant) to the PAWP and to conduct future inservice activities.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

School District: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

City/Zip: _____

Please enclose a brief supporting statement for applicant.

PAWP'S K-8 WHOLE LANGUAGE CONFERENCE/COURSE DRAWS OVER 200 TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

What is whole language? How do I become a whole language teacher? Last June, PAWP and Scholastic, Inc., presented a three-day program to help K-8 teachers answer those and related questions. Registration for this state-of-the-art conference came to the university's Exton Center from as far away as St. Louis, Missouri, but most taught in Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey and Maryland schools. Evaluations indicate that the program succeeded for these people in enabling them to learn with colleagues how to apply whole language ideas in the classroom; implement practical, everyday strategies and activities; and to integrate literary and writing techniques in varied content areas.

Featured on the program were Dr. Priscilla Lynch, Author, Teacher, Presenter, discussing "Whole Language: What is It; Advantages and Disadvantages" and "Effectively Using Big Books"; Dr. Kathryn Mitchell Pierce, Assistant Professor, Education, Webster University, Missouri, presenting "Authoring Cycle" and Strategies for Literature Discussion Groups"; Dr. James Allen, K-12 Language Arts Coordinator, Upper Arlington Schools, Ohio, covering "The Role of Assessment in Whole Language" and "Whole Language in the Whole Curriculum"; Dr. Rosemary Lonberger, Assistant Professor, Education, University of Arkansas, discussing "Literature and the Content Areas: A Reciprocal Relationship"; and Adrian Peetoom, Author, Director Educational Projects, Scholastic, Inc. presenting "Whole Language: Taking Charge of Your Classroom."

Each participant attended six workshops selected from the following: Drama in Classroom; Teaching Themes in the Whole Language Classroom; Techniques to Enable Students to Respond to Literature; Teaching Comprehension Through Literature; The Effective Use of Big Books; Approaching Reading and Writing Through Storytelling; Setting Up a Writing Workshop in Your Classroom; What Can You Do with Poetry?; The Role of Assessment in the Whole Language Classroom; and Strategies for Literature Discussion Groups.

The workshop leaders included featured speakers Lynch, Pierce and Allen as well as the following: Audrey Badger, Curriculum Specialist, Reading, English/Language Arts, Philadelphia School District, "Strategies and Techniques for Responding to Literature"; Gare Thompson, Editorial Director, Scholastic, Inc., "Drama in the Classroom"; Marni Schwartz, Teacher/Storyteller Schenectady, New York, "Approaching Reading & Writing through Storytelling"; Dr Catherine Hatala, Director, Reading, English/Language Arts, Philadelphia School District, "What Can You Do with Poetry"; Carole Straub, teacher, Upper Darby School District, "Setting Up A Writing Workshop in Your Classroom"; Suzanne Curry, Chapter I Reading Coordinator, Red Clay School District, Delaware, "Teaching Comprehension through Literature"; and Christine Justice, Master Teacher, St. Anne's School, New York, "Teaching Themes in the Whole Language Classroom."

Finally, in "pull-together sessions" on the last day, participants had the chance to reflect on how they would be able to make practical use of the conference information.

Among things learned about at the conference were writing about books, the authoring cycle, writing and reading processes, big books, storytelling, reading and writing poetry, collaborative groupings and more. Linkages were made to PCRP2, Pennsylvania's new curriculum framework for reading, writing, and speaking across the curriculum; all participants for credit kept a double-entry learning log as an extended assignment which produced excellent responses.

And the food! In addition to fine but calorie-conscious breakfasts and lunches, the conference got people together over a banquet and barbecue (complete with strolling musicians).

Plans are developing now to repeat the conference in 1990.



WHOLE LANGUAGE IN THE AREAS OF READING AND WRITING: BASED ON THE VOICES OF EXPERTS

by Debra Ann Sustaita

On the morning of June 28, 1989, I eagerly prepared for the Whole Language Summer conference at West Chester University's Exton Center. Attending this conference would complete the one credit I needed to fulfill my course requirements for my Master's degree in elementary education. In addition, meeting in Exton would be a welcome change from the dusty, littered, and hot classrooms of the main campus. Little did I know that morning just how exciting this conference would be: learning from successful and dedicated presenters, renewing old acquaintances and meeting new friends among the teachers who attended, receiving a wealth of helpful take-home materials, and enjoying good food and air conditioned rooms proved to be the most pleasant and worthwhile experience ever offered to me by the university.

Dr. Priscilla Lynch opened the program by presenting a thought-provoking dissertation on the meaning of the term "whole language." She affirmed that workbook pages only test and confirm knowledge, and that it takes the child/teacher as well as the child/child interaction for true learning to take place. Chapter two in PCRPII supports this also; learning occurs in a social context and collaboration with others is important for acquiring meaning. Dr. Lynch stressed that children learn the "whole" first, and then their knowledge is broken down into pieces for further understanding of a concept. Oftentimes the classroom practice goes against this principle and instead, the bits and pieces of unrelated facts are presented first. For example, children are seldom allowed to read a whole story all the way through. Instead, their reading is systematically interrupted by teacher questioning and word drill.

Her speech led me to explore the topic of reading in chapter three in the PCRP II text. The questioning chart on page 25 was of special interest to me. When questioned

properly, children interact with print in a more meaningful and personal way—connecting concepts learned throughout the curriculum, using prior knowledge, evaluating, and expanding their present schema. As a new teacher in 1987, I did depend on the third grade basal for reading instruction. At the time, I was not well grounded in the reading/writing processes and realize now how little those questions facilitated comprehension. Instead, they were recall questions with basically one answer which could be found in the text. When my students scored miserably on the reading comprehension section of their CAT test, it was obvious that new strategies had to be developed. The text asserts that when children are fed a steady diet of "read this story and answer these questions," they come to regard texts as authoritative and see their job as simply gleaning the facts instead of co-creating meaning with the author. Being aware of that helps me to look at a piece of writing as meaning different things to different people and thereby leaving room for the divergent thinker who might see something totally different than the majority of learners. The text pointed out however, the idea that some readings are more defensible than others.

Presenter Suzanne Curry provided an opinion/proof procedure which shows students how to form opinions about characters and concepts and to support their opinions with evidence from the story; any opinion students have about a character is correct as long as they can back up their views with evidence from the selection. If an opinion cannot be supported, then the reader must take a look and question his/her conclusions.

Curry also dealt well with the story mapping which the text touched on. Through mapping, both sources pointed out that when children become aware that stories have a common grammar or structure, they sharpen the skill of prediction which helps them make sense of the story. Furthermore, it helps their composing.

Much attention is being paid to the area of comprehension in the field of education. Presenter Dr. Lonberger reminded us that when Dolores Durkin did her research on comprehension training, she found that less than 1 percent of the time spent in reading instruction in the elementary classroom is spent in comprehension instruction. Since it has been established that a child's comprehension abilities help him/her to apply meaning in effective ways, it is important that educators seek ways to improve these abilities.

Using the ideas of the presenters in the field of reading and the concepts expounded in the text, I will incorporate many of these in my next classroom teaching experience. The Pennsylvania Writing Project has enlightened me; I intend to use more of the vast storehouse of excellent children's literature in the future and to better educate my students in story grammar and effective questioning techniques.

Writing—A Whole Language Approach

An area in which I was a bit more successful was that of teaching the writing process to elementary students. In my first classroom experience, the students wrote extensively, but were not aware of the process of pre-writing, drafting,

revision, and editing. Thanks to a graduate course offered by the Pa. Writing Project in January of 1987, I became acquainted with the process and gained confidence because of that informative workshop. My students continually excelled in expressing themselves and they learned to work effectively with their peer groups.

In chapter three of the text, entitled "Writing: Composing Texts," we are reminded that the act of writing as well as reading depends on the learners' prior knowledge, experience, beliefs and attitudes. I enjoyed the text's statement "as we write, our meanings change and develop, and because we write, a deeper kind of thinking is possible."

A common complaint about our nation's educational system is that children aren't given enough opportunities to think and to reason; the writing process is one way to encourage these skills.

Presenter Dr. Pierce provided a visual representation of the writing process which the text described. Her picture of the "authoring cycle" shows the one important principle that the writing process is an ongoing one. Children don't finish a piece of writing and then quit for the rest of the school year; instead, they complete one piece and then put it away to immediately work on another. Both Dr. Pierce and the text discussed the many forms of pre-writing (i.e., mapping, journal sharing, brainstorming) and publishing (i.e., newspapers, plays, sharing with whole class or in groups).

The text points out that young writers will not learn what to do if they only move as a group through a series of teacher-designed exercises to the production of final copy. The writing process as propounded by the Pa. Writing Project and by the presenters develops a sense of independence within the learner as he/she progresses eventually at his/her own pace. Independence and success in expressing one's thoughts are traits that will be carried throughout a lifetime.

Carol Straub's presentation was helpful because she showed how the learner, as early as first grade, can become involved in the writing process. She has a special table set up in her classroom with book-making supplies with which students work the first day of class. Many of the finished products were on display as an outstanding show of the remarkable books that youngsters can make. When I teach again, I am going to follow that presenter's good example.

In my first year teaching, I enjoyed watching the progress of the students I taught as they worked to revise their drafts. I pulled out two of the papers that were done to show examples of the way their writings improved. John, for instance, made some interesting changes in his story about Delaware: "...we have a boat there and we go fishing a lot," was changed to "...we have a boat in the bay and we go fishing every weekend."

John not only specified what "a lot" meant, but he also answered the questions posed by both members of his response group who asked "Where did you go fishing?"

Another example is Billy's writing which became much more interesting after he elaborated on the activities he shared with his grandmother in Florida: "I went swimming,

(Continued on Page 10)

WHOLE LANGUAGE

(Continued from page 9)

fishing, and for walks on the beaches," was changed to "...I went swimming in a nine-foot deep pool, and fishing in a lake that had alligators. I went for long walks on the beach also."

I learned that the writing process worked and eased children into composing some first-rate pieces. I am thankful for the "whole language" conference and for the work which the Pennsylvania Writing Project has done to better educate teachers in the area. It reinforced many of my own practices and armed me with strategies to use in my weak areas. I am a better teacher for it and I intend to remember Dr. Lynch's statement that education means "to pull out of—not push into." Learning to read, write and think independently are traits of the successful person and a teacher who can facilitate those traits in his/her students is one whose influence can never be measured.

1989 FALL DVASCD CONFERENCE

The 1989 Fall Conference of the Delaware Valley Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development at North Penn High School on Thursday, November 2, 1989 featured the theme of "Writing Across the Curriculum." The keynote speaker was Arlene Silberman, author of *Growing Up Writing*, who talked on success and dangers as we go about reforming writing instruction across the nation.

Participants then attended one of eight focus sessions, several of which were led by Writing Project teacher-consultants. Isabel Stefanisko ('88), who is a writing coach at Cheltenham High School, presented on computer assisted writing in social studies. Karen Nina Klingerman, another '88 Fellow, who teaches in the Bensalem School District, presented on writing across the curriculum with computers. Doris M. Kirk ('81), currently a Chapter I Reading Specialist in the Coatesville Area School District, gave a presentation on the reading and writing classroom: you can't have one without the other. "Process Centered Writing for the Exceptional Student," was the topic of Diane Bates' ('84), a learning disabilities consultant for the William Penn School District, presentation. Another presentation with a special education focus, "Bridging the Gap Between Oral and Written Language," was made by Barbara Heisler ('88) of the Bristol Township School District.

Presentations were made also by educators known for their commitment to fine programs in writing. "District-wide Assessment of Student Growth in Writing" was the theme of James O. Lee, Assistant Superintendent, Lower Moreland School District. The use and background of a videotape series called "Poetvision; the Sounds and Sights of Contemporary Poets" was presented by David Sutton, Advertising Specialist, the Rohm and Haas Corporation, and Catherine C. Hatala, representing the Reading/English/Language Arts Division of the School District of Philadelphia. "Implementing a Whole Language Program in the

First Grade Classroom" was the topic for two reading specialists from Delaware County, Rose Alek of the Wallingford-Swarthmore School District and Mary Sarkisian of the Marple-Newtown School District.

PAWP COURSES RATE HIGH

One hundred and sixty-four (164) teachers (K-12) from the Delaware Valley participated in versions of the PA Writing Project course "Strategies for Teaching Writing" given from January 1 to July 31, 1989. Participants were surveyed to evaluate the course. Some respondents did not answer each item. The evaluation brought highly positive results. In judging the overall effectiveness of the inservice, one hundred and sixty-one (161) noted it would be either valuable (22) or extremely valuable (139), with only 1 of 163 respondents finding it to be of limited value.

One hundred and sixty (160) participants noted that the topics covered in the course were extremely valuable (N=130) or valuable (N=30). When asked to judge the quality of the speakers' presentations, a like number (N=161) recorded "extremely valuable" (N=117) or "valuable" (N=44). One hundred and fifty-seven judged the materials distributed as either valuable or extremely valuable. The small group work was valuable or extremely valuable to 150 respondents, and the writing activities were valuable (N=108) to 153 participants. The discussion and interaction with speakers was valuable or extremely valuable to 157 teachers.

We also surveyed these 164 teachers to determine if the inservice had increased their general awareness and preparation for teaching writing. One hundred and thirty-six (136) commented that their awareness had greatly increased, and 136 were motivated to learn about teaching writing. One hundred and twenty-four said that their knowledge of the writing process had greatly increased, and 142 commented their enthusiasm for teaching writing had greatly increased. Ninety-four respondents said their own writing output had greatly increased, and 107 noted a great increase in the amount of writing they required of their students. Ninety (90) noted that their students' interest in writing had greatly increased, and seventy-eight (78) noted a great increase in the writing competence of their students.

Specific comparisons with past student writing behaviors were also reported by 107 of the participating teachers. As a result of their participation in PAWP extended-series programs, their students do more self-sponsored writing (N=93), spend a longer time writing (N=99), do more pre-writing (N=95) and rewriting (N=76), spend more time "contemplating the product" (N=86), do more reading and writing activities in the classroom (N=93), and do more writing of various kinds (N=90). Tellingly, 97 of the 107 responding teachers claimed that their students now take more pleasure in their writing.

The data for this summary were analyzed by Carol Gabrielli, a graduate assistant in the West Chester University English Department.

HOLDING ON...LETTING GO: LAST SUMMER'S ADVANCED INSTITUTE

by Mickey Bolmer

On the first day, we all "wondered:

Will I fit in? Will
they rip me to shreds? What are the
demands? Will I survive?"

Dick Halsey found these words for our shared concerns,
but after only seven days together, he could write,

"And now—with one week more
look at us,
how—with one week more (listen to us!)
—did we get this way,
how did we grow this way
into this group?
Quiet and boisterous,
reflective and inventive,
successful while frustrated,
individual while together—
teachers and learners:

A community of writers,
again."

How did we grow this way? We started with an amazing "fellow" ship: Mickey Bolmer, Beth Cox ('87), Karen Dobson ('88), Lisa Feerrar ('87), Bernadette Fenning ('87), Dick Halsey ('87), Rich Joseph ('88), Dona Lerew ('88), Lou Pomeroy ('87) and Donna Rubincam ('88). Then as in our summer institutes, we set ourselves a task—What can we learn about ourselves as learners?—and a method—active learning, that is, steady reading, writing, and talking all mixed up together. We laughed and ate a lot.

The first day we decorated our room, set out Mickey's collection of books and articles, shared article/book/resource lists, got to know each other, wrote and shared about learning experiences, and wrote for ourselves about how to use the institute time. The second day, we shared our project ideas, finding that we all had three or four, and used the group to help us focus, "Okay, I've got only 11 days. What's the most important for me?" On the third day, we settled down to a routine. We started with five minutes of freewriting and time to share. We ended with ten minutes of writing "reflections" and time to share. The rest was work time. Despite this simple "lesson plan," each day was alive and different. People worked alone, in pairs and in groups. Some days were mostly reading and writing. Other days were mostly talking—writing groups and quick conversations to bounce ideas. Some days the whole group hung together; others people were everywhere. One day the lights went out. Luckily, Lisa had brought candles as well as cloth napkins with her "snack." When the lights came back on, they were so glaring that we turned them off and went on with "candle writing."

We celebrated the two hundredth anniversary of the storming of the Bastille with quiche, cheese, croissants, fruit, champagne, and a powerful look at the difficulties

teachers face as they work to help students and schools grow. We read from Carl Rogers's Freedom to Learn for the 80's and James Moffet's Hidden Impediments to Improving English Teaching. We talked about how hard it is to get colleagues and administrators to change and how lonely and anxious we often feel as we experiment with a process approach to writing and learning. We agreed with Carl Rogers that it is hard, dangerous, and yet crucial that a teacher "be sufficiently secure within herself and in her relationship to others that she experiences an essential trust in the capacity of others to think for themselves, to learn for themselves" (Rogers 188). We talked of "old patterns," such as taking over student writing, becoming the fountain of the classroom knowledge, or doing our students' learning for them; we agreed that we often fall back into "old patterns" because they were safest and easier. In sharing our frustrations, we realized that sometimes we were less willing to trust administrators than to trust students and that this distrust increased our frustration and sometimes prevented us from working together. We agreed that teaching required a balancing act—letting go so that others might learn and holding on to our sense of purpose, to our joy in helping students.

We didn't have the words "Holding On...Letting Go..." until almost the end. By the last week, we found it harder and harder to break up and go home, most days everyone stayed an extra half an hour. We all agreed that we needed another week to look at what has happened to us as learners and to really finish our projects (by now everyone had at least two going!). But somehow much did come together. Rich gave us the words "Holding On ...Letting Go..." from his writing and the picture of his fist opening into a reaching hand. His words and pictures became the cover of our publication and touchstone for our work together. The publication shared our reflections on learning, our metaphors for learning/teaching (a swimming pool, a travel agent, a band director, a chef, and a farmer), and some moments and memories. We ended with lunch out together, plans for a fall reunion, hugging and many ideas for the new year.

Mickey Bolmer, a teacher-consultant of the New York City Writing Project, taught at West Chester University for a year and stayed through part of the summer to coordinate this institute.

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JANET GRECO DEVELOPS MARKETING PROGRAM

Janet Greco is the guiding hand in the new certificate program in marketing communications at the University of Pennsylvania. Janet, a 1980 Fellow, left teaching and is currently a corporate marketing director of Katzoff Development Corporation. The program was an idea which she began to develop through her knowledge of the field as a past vice president of Elkman Advertising and as a past president of the Philadelphia Public Relations Association. As a consultant her clients have included the DuPont Company; Polymer Products Department; Peat, Marwick, Mitchell; Philadelphia Labor-Management Associates and others.

U.S. ARMY NOT A FERTILE GROUND FOR T-C'S "GOSPEL OF WRITING"

by Cora Teter, Maryland Writing Project

Among the interesting accompaniments to last November's Maryland Writing Project Newsletter was a notice from West Chester University announcing anticipated positions for writing instructors. The notice clearly called to my sense of mission, to spread the gospel of writing according to the Writing Project, to teach and tutor, to plan lessons and evaluate writing. All this was to be done with government personnel at a northeast Maryland location; all work would be done at the work site. Could any teaching job exist that did not require the lugging home of books and papers?

My resume brought about a late November phone call from Robert Weiss, the "Keith Martin" of the Pennsylvania Writing Project. He invited me to West Chester's campus for an interview. As Mr. Weiss greeted me, he searched through several bulging fat accordion files for my resume. I was not the only applicant for this dream job. The northeast Maryland location was Aberdeen Proving Ground in Harford County, and the government personnel were soldiers beginning their climb up the ranks. The classes would contain sixty students; the army would provide all lessons and manuals, like battle plans sent down from the generals.

I smiled; Mr. Weiss smiled. In our mutual Writing Project experience we silently guffawed at the army's idea of writing instructions. However, the proposed \$12-\$14 per hour salary plus university benefits made me think I could probably do the job. No missionaries, after all, go into the wilds intending to join the prevailing heathen practices. Rather, they feel confident in their ability to convert everyone to their ways. The army writing program would be my mission.

With no word by late December, I called to inquire about the status of my application. The army had not yet awarded the contract. In early January a letter arrived asking me to be patient; I was a strong candidate, but the army had not yet decided. Soon after this encouraging letter a discouraging one followed. The contract had gone, not to West Chester University, but to a local community college. Quickly I sent a second resume; again I was invited for an interview.

Do all missionaries, when they first see the land they have come to "redeem," have the same sinking feeling I had when I went to Aberdeen Proving Ground for my second interview? The grimy green, temporary World War II building housing the writing program was not nearly so depressing as what I found inside. The college that won the contract had, in fact held it for many years, and the only current opening was a 20 hour per week (never the same 20 hours) position at \$6.50 an hour with no benefits. The hot air blasting from the huge, dust-clogged, ceiling-hung radiator withered my sense of mission. What I observed during my interview killed it. One soldier-author shortened his too-long essay to the required length by discarding the last page. Red ink flowed like blood on student essays in the name of revision. I browsed with dismay through the

instructional manual. Clearly a missionary would meet with no success here; the indigenous faith, writing instruction the army way, was too strongly entrenched.

My zeal for teaching writing, however, is not diminished by this experience. I wait for the next interesting notice to arrive with the newsletter announcing a new opportunity to spread the faith.

This piece is reprinted from the MWP Newsletter with permission.

PAWP DESIGNS NEW COURSE

by Jolene Borgese

After months of reading, talking and writing about the PAWP PCRIP II Course we are ready for business this January, 1990. Seven sites will host our "premiere course"; they are Upper Darby S. D., West Chester S.D., Norristown S. D., Exeter S. D., Upper Dublin S. D. Palisades S. D. and the Bucks County Intermediate Unit. Martha Menz, Bob Weiss and I are the course developers and coordinators. After several brainstorming meetings this spring and summer with many PAWP teacher-consultants and friends of the project, a course outline was finalized. Martha and Bob have worked closely with the site coordinators while I have concentrated my efforts with the cadre of presenters.

The site coordinators include Nick Spennato, Marion Rosecky, Joan Flynn, Vicki Steinberg, Gay Wells, June Hodge-Davis and Hilde McGeehan. The intense 15 session course will examine and explore the three critical experiences (transacting with text, composing, investigating language, extending reading and writing and learning to learn), as well as look at how we learn. The presenters have focused and developed presentations specifically for this course and have orchestrated their presentations to complement and support each other. The PCRIP II presenters are Charlotte Roede, Marcia Cole-Quigley, Anita Rauch, Patti Dietderich, Judy Yunginger-Gehman, Ed Schuster, Jim MacCall and Rosemarie Montgomery (many of the presenters are also PDE Cornerstone PCRIP II teachers). Martha and I will also present in each course to provide continuity and support to the coordinators.

The coordinators and presenters have met twice this fall to plan, write and discuss presentations, course plans and requirement. The course coordinators will have the opportunity to work with K-12 teachers, hopefully from all content areas. The course will include presentations from PAWP teacher-consultants and experienced teachers/presenters from the area, strategies and techniques in reading, writing and learning, reflections on classroom materials and practices and learning, reflections on classroom materials and practices and Don Graves' new videos on writing and reading.

Not since the "First Course, Strategies for Teaching Writing," has so much time, energy and excitement gone into one course. A toast to the new decade and a new course! A special thanks to all the teacher-consultants who helped with the development of this project and special thanks to Susan Lytle and Mort Botel.

NEW GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR NWP TEACHER CONSULTANTS

James Gray, NWP Director, has announced the first stages of a new mini-grant program for NWP Teacher Consultants. This is a program he has long wanted to make available to the network of NWP Teacher Consultants. The National Writing Project is expected to make available, through local, regional, and national review, 50 to 100 matching grants of up to \$4,000 (\$100 to \$2,000 from the NWP against an equal matching grant) to NWP Teacher Consultants for teacher-initiated project ideas. Funds to support the first stage of this program will come from the NWP Sponsorship Campaign and from the Andrew W. Mellon grant to the National Writing Project.

These grants go directly to Teacher Consultants to support needed and/or experimental projects and activities that would be impossible without financial support. The successful grant ideas must also be seen as clearly advancing the National Writing Project, through publication and dissemination, through potential impact on other teachers, etc. The intent of this program is to support classroom teachers and classroom teacher ideas, with the ideas for funding coming from the Teacher Consultants themselves!

These grants, like all NWP grants, will require a matching grant in the same way as NWP grants to local sites always require a matching grant. This is a long standing

project policy that has been successful in generating and guaranteeing local support for the National Writing Project. Grant applications can be submitted without having initially secured the required matching grant, but once the applicants have been notified of successful applications, they must secure a donor letter, testifying to the required match in order to receive the grant.

Gray believes that it should not be too difficult for Teacher Consultants to secure the required matching funds. The possibilities that have occurred to us—the most obvious—include—the following: matching grants from school and/or district administrations, from local school boards, from local PTA's, from local teacher organizations, from local service clubs, from local foundations, from local businesses. Local sites, also can be of help in identifying and securing matching dollars.

Applications will be due at your NWP site March 1, 1990, where they will receive their first review. The most promising applications will be submitted to the Regional Directors and then to the National Writing Project offices at UC Berkeley for final review. There will be an attempt—but no guarantee—to support Teacher Consultant applications from all regions of the country. The winning applicants will be notified on or about August 1, 1990 and donor letters will be requested at that time.

If interested, contact Bob Weiss for advice and aid in securing the matching grant.

THE BUREAU FAMILY: ONE OF SEVERAL PAWP FAMILIES



Jesse Bureau, Youth Writing Project



Daniel Bureau, Youth Writing Project



Chris Bureau, Fellow, 1989



Ed Bureau, Fellow, 1980

PROCESS WRITING: AN ADMINISTRATOR'S VIEW

by James Purcell

Many administrators walk into a classroom and they look for a very quiet controlled setting where students are sitting in neat little rows doing their worksheets and workbooks with the teacher as the center of activity. During process writing the classroom atmosphere will not be this way. When involved in process writing activities the classroom is not loud or noisy, but there is a constant buzzing of activity. Students can be found in the corner or on the floor writing. Some will be at their desks while others will be in the dictionary center. There will be more student interactions than in a traditional classroom and the teacher would better be described as coach, rather than as a dictatorial leader. I don't want to give the impression that the teacher does not have control in these classrooms. As a coach, she has control but it is a control gained by walking the children through the steps in the process. The children learn by doing.

An administrator should know each step in the writing process and some strategies that might be used at each.

PREWRITING/REHEARSAL

During this stage in kindergarten and first grade I may see a teacher using an oral story to set the stage for writing. The discussion that occurs during and after can be part of the prewriting activity. It is also a good time to get the children to draw their stories first.

When these children begin to write they may use their own symbols to represent language, but as the children become more knowledgeable about sound symbol associations they may try to sound out words with the help of their classmates or their teacher. The children will use invented spelling and the teacher should be encouraging children to invent spellings. Students' finished products will have invented spellings and it will be the job of both teachers and administrators to inform parents that everything certainly will not be perfect at this level.

In the second through the fifth grade classrooms, I would expect to see more teacher-student collaboration to explore topics. Semantic mapping is a good method to help students to develop an outline for writing. Mapping can also help children to develop lists of details about a topic. The maps then can be used to help a child narrow his/her topics down to one specific area. During this stage, I would not expect to see a quiet, formal classroom. I would expect to see the teacher leading large group discussions, which would later break down into smaller groups or individualized discussions with students.

DRAFTING

I would try to determine if the students understood that what they were doing was a "rough draft." This is a time when things like spelling and grammar don't count. If the students understand this concept I won't find them stopping to look up words in a dictionary. The teacher should remind the students that slowing down to look up spelling can cause them to miss an important idea.

During the drafting stage, the classroom would be much more quiet. If it were quiet students would be less likely to ask questions about spelling and grammar. Even though it were quiet I would hope to see kids who have opened up enough to get their ideas down without the worry of the red pen. A good strategy during drafting would be for the teacher to write while the students write. It emphasizes the importance of this stage to the children.

REVISION STAGE

The whole point of this stage is to clear up any misunderstandings or comprehension problems in their writing. I would hope to see two types of conferences occurring: the peer conference and the student-teacher conference. During these conferences the following should occur.

1. The students read their pieces. The teachers or students listen.
2. Questions should focus on the content.
3. Only one thing at a time should be focused on, that way if there is a problem the writer can solve any problems quickly and see positive results from the conferences.
4. A predictable routine should occur during the conference. One of the strategies that I liked during this stage and which I would encourage is the Praise-Question strategies. The peer group gets to write or say a positive comment and ask a question about a piece. I feel children really need the positive feedback, especially those who are reluctant to write.

EDITING

I think of the statement in Calkins' book about grammar research: "Teaching grammar has no effect on the quality of student writing." Regardless, administrators and teachers face the wrath of parents and school boards when papers filled with errors are published. The editing process attempts to teach the students to focus on getting the final copy correct. If a teacher has gone through the process correctly, when a child reaches the editing stage, all revisions and changes have occurred. The writing says what the writer wants it to say. Therefore, the editing can begin. We can't expect to have the paper perfect from the start.

During this stage, I would expect to see the students helping each other fix their spelling and grammar. It is probably helpful to have peer editors in each class. In heterogeneous classrooms, pairing up a high and a low child can help during the editing stage. I have actually seen this work on the first grade level. One little boy told another that he spelled "where" wrong during the rereading of his piece. The editing stage provides the perfect opportunity for a mini-lesson in grammar.

I would not be hung up if a teacher's lesson plan said that she would have students peer editing and instead she decided to teach a lesson on using quotation marks. I believe that the teacher is the best judge of her students' needs.

I feel that mini-lessons are a perfect way to cover the curriculum. Teachers have to be prepared to seize the moment and not to be worried about being locked into a lesson plan. It makes much more sense to cover grammar at the point the students need it rather than totally out of context.

PUBLISHING

Publishing can be accomplished in a variety of creative ways: in journals, books, bulletin boards, newspapers and magazines. The issue of grading published writing is constantly debated in our school. The issue of publishing work with mistakes is also a hot topic. I know there are two schools of thought on both topics. On grading, some advocate holistic scoring where the evaluation is based on the purpose for writing. Others favor an analytical scale which shows success on selected skills. I feel that we live in a society that constantly calls us to accountability. Therefore we need some type of scale which parents can understand. The analytical scale should cover the revision, editing and final copy stages. The scale doesn't take away the subjective nature of grading writing, but it makes both the student and the staff accountable. A scale provides the parent with a system that can be understood. Holistic scoring may be too subjective for parents to understand.

The other issue, publishing with mistakes, is difficult. For some kids publishing without mistakes is just about

impossible, but I believe that a final copy should be as nearly perfect as possible. It may mean that the teacher may have to act as an editor-in-chief. I do not believe that during this stage, a teacher should change content, but the editor may be able to use the moment to teach while correcting errors. Finally I don't believe teachers should use red and bleed from the margins in elementary school, but they should assume the role of the coach so as not to stifle students' developing creativity.

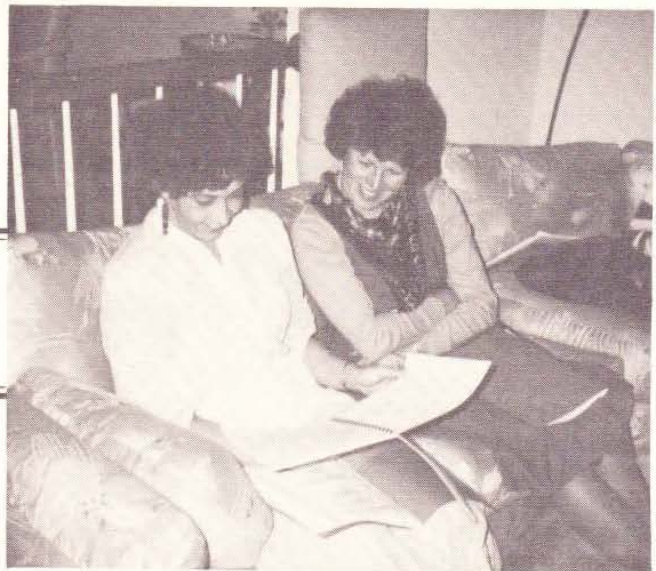
Some administrators have problems with process writing and writing across the curriculum because they go into a classroom with a preconceived idea of what is going to happen and, when it doesn't, they feel that something is wrong or the lesson is bad. With the writing process, I have to go into the classroom with an open mind, prepared to see anything that may help get kids writing.

James Purcell is an assistant principal at Delaware Valley Elementary School, Delaware Valley School District.



Members of the Strategies for Teaching Writing course, offered by the Berks County Intermediate Unit, meet for the final time in the coordinator's home for a dinner and publishing evening. Here the participants are compiling personal pieces and nibbling on fresh vegetables. Each participant supplied part of the meal along with good reading.

Two participants in a strategies course admire a personal piece by a third writer. This piece was an anecdote about being frightened in a dark beauty parlor.



PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

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

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