



PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 9 NUMBER 4

SUMMER 1989

ANNOUNCING THE 1989 FELLOWS



Welcome to the Fellows of the 1989 Pennsylvania Writing Project Summer Institute, West Chester University at Exton:

<u>Fellows</u>	<u>School District</u>
Jane Ash	West Chester
Linda Becker	Wilson
Chris Bureau	Avon Grove
Al Coleman	William Penn
Sheri Lyn Davis	Wallingford
Lynne Dorfman	Upper Moreland
Diane Dougherty	Coatesville
Pamela Eichorn	Springfield
Sheryl Forbis	Avon Grove
Lisa Fox	Avon Grove
Marian Gable	Exeter
Amy Goldberg	Norristown
Margaret Heaton	Unionville
Carolyn Loue	Octorara
Braden Montgomery	Springfield
Joe Moretta	Southeast Delco
Loretta Mowery	Manheim
Steve Taylor	Rose Tree/Media
Meg Terry	Coatesville
Janet Weihbrecht	Quakertown

Look for more about the 10th Summer Institute in the Fall issue of our newsletter.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

It is a rainy summer in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Drought no longer menaces. Day after day we see rain and feel a drenching humidity. Without the full summer days of sunshine, crop growth is retarded. The deer from Ridley Creek State Park have foraged miles beyond their accustomed haunts and found their way into my garden. Seven tomato vines and five pepper plants were topped off and struggle to recover. At home each day I am threatened by dampness and its frustrations.

Yet, I am more often happy despite the dampness. The Writing Project teems with activity. I have been traveling back and forth between Exton and West Chester this summer to teach, administer, and present in 10 courses and programs for teachers, one for West Chester University faculty, one for school administrators, and four for youngsters. Nothing that the weather has done dissuades us from the struggle to compose and share our thoughts.

The 3-day Whole Language Conference brought 193 people from 6 states; the summer institute daily beckons drivers from Quakertown, Millersville, and Voorhees, New Jersey. The Return Institute guided by Mickey Bolmer has produced a raft of solid writing, and the assistance of teachers and administrators who worked the weekend of June 3-4 is enabling the Project to initiate a PCR2 course in 1989-90.

A few programs, unfortunately, were canceled, just as a few of my crops did not thrive. But—the metaphor really seems to work out—enough seed planted in a proper environment will produce an ample yield. We look forward to the Fall harvest, to the beginning of a new school year and new faces in our classrooms, and to the 10th full year of our Project.

We also look forward to November 1, our first PAWP DAY, which will be followed by a bountiful banquet of celebration where all friends of the writing project will be welcome.

Bob Weiss

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS...

No matter how lazy, no matter how hazy are the days of summer, come mid-August one need not consult a calendar to realize that those lazy hazy days are fast coming to an end. Back-to-school specials abound. We start counting the days instead of the weeks until Labor Day. The inevitable "Welcome back - hope you've had a nice summer" letter arrives... and, finally the summer issue of our newsletter.

As the Newsletter continues to celebrate the success of the Project, the programs, and the people, this issue features an in-depth look at the particular Strategies for Teaching Writing course sponsored by the Norristown School District. Also featured are reactions to several writing-related conferences. In addition, our Review section has been expanded to include computer software.

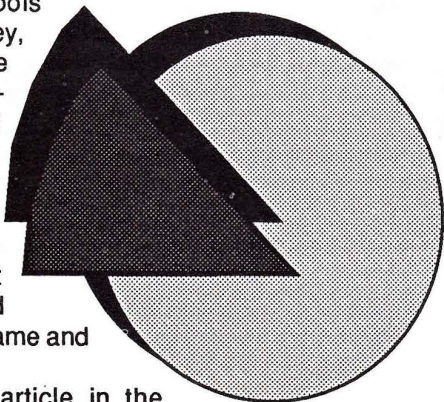
The up-coming Fall issue will commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Pennsylvania Writing Project. It will be an issue of celebration, nostalgia, and future plans which include two new graduate courses — Strategies for Teaching Writing II and PCRP2. We invite you to become a part of this celebration by filling in and returning to us the information sheet found in this issue. We hope to see you during the anniversary festivities but, until then, here's to those remaining lazy hazy days.

Gail Capaldi and Lois Snyder,
Co-editors

PART OF A WHOLE

by Mickey Bolmer

Being part of the Pennsylvania Writing Project excites me. The main reasons are the colleagues with whom I get to share and the many ideas that come my way. But an added benefit is that I just by being a "PAWPer," I find myself part of educational change. Often when I read or hear about interesting new programs, about teachers, students, and schools who have said, "Hey, we can get more learning happening here!", I find that one of the key people is a writing project fellow or that "writing is one of the biggest changes and Donald Graves came and talked last year."



The feature article in the March 1989 On Campus, the AFT newsletter, was "Partners for Reform" by Barbara McKenna. The article began with a nearly full page picture of James Gray and the following story.

"In 1956, James Gray was a young reading teacher at San Leandro High School in California. Books climbed two walls of his classroom and students arrived at his door ready to combine quiet reading time with vigorous discussion in an environment where the written word was revered.

"One day, Gray, founding president of the local AFT chapter, attended a school meeting where two visiting professors were critiquing the work of the school's teachers. Gray's memory of that day is vivid:

"I remember them telling us what a rotten job we were doing. I was enraged. They had never seen me at work—the joy of my students reading and talking about what they had read. I was enraged by the contempt they showed. They wanted to improve things, but what a way to do it! They did not even consider that a K-12 teacher could know anything."

McKenna goes on to tell our history: the first Bay Area Summer Institute that brought together K-college teachers to write and study writing, the founding of the Bay Area and then the National Writing Projects, and the growth that has made us part of a network of 87,000 teachers in 165 sites set all around the world.

But McKenna's article was not about writing, rather about how "school-college collaborations are becoming a national movement." One of the article's examples was of International High School, a joint venture of the New York City Board of Education and The City University of New York's LaGuardia College, where all the students speak English as a second language, where the students' many cultures are the heart of the curriculum, where the teachers and the students run the school, and, not surprisingly, where a teacher-consultant with the New York City Writing Project, Marsha Slater, has been helping to shape International High School since it opened.

I am supported as I work with my students, my colleagues, my school by being part of a network of teachers who are working alone and together to make learning better.

Mickey Bolmer from the New York Writing Project is the associate Editor of the Newsletter.



**TEACHING POETRY WRITING
TO ADOLESCENTS**
by Joseph Tsujimoto

You're teaching poetry this semester. You love poetry, but you're sure the kids don't. "Why do we hafta read this junk?" they always ask. And yet you know some kids write poems - private lines that they tell the other kids are song lyrics. The kids never get as excited as you do. Bleak. Bleak.

Joseph Tsujimoto's **TEACHING POETRY WRITING TO ADOLESCENTS** offers a perspective that can unclog the creative juice pipes. He shares his personal passion for this genre, and includes many fine examples from the literature. In three concise chapters he describes the process that he uses to entice middle school students to appreciate the literature, and craft their own pieces. This teacher emphasizes the use of student works as primary examples. He describes his role as a knowledgeable guide who can offer constructive advice while respecting his students' personal views.

"...the teacher must indulge his or her feelings, not only in selecting examples that are truly admired or loved, but more especially in the personal way the teacher reads those examples to the students."

One of the Tsujimoto's most inspiring messages is that students learn not the subject matter so much as their teacher. It makes you aware that your energy and enthusiasm are the real food you serve kids in the classroom. Start cookin'.

In the last chapter Tsujimoto describes his method through eighteen assignments. Here we read his process, his reflections, and some powerful examples of his students' work. As I read, I imagined myself in this man's classroom. And that's no small feat — he teaches in Hawaii.

If you don't have the airfare, you can visit anyway. The book, *Teaching Poetry Writing to Adolescents* by Joseph Tsujimoto is available through ERIC. National Council of Teachers of English, Urbana, Illinois.

Reviewed by Richard Joseph, a teacher at the Delaware County Intermediate Unit's Community School. Rich, who became a PAWP Fellow in 1988, teaches in a computer resource room and particularly enjoys teaching poetry.

"FIVE LITTLE BOOKS"
from Donald Graves

Donald Graves, so dear to the heart of many PAWPer, is working on a series of five little books for Heinemann. Already available at \$7.50 a piece is *Experiment with Fiction*, only 70 pages long. *Investigate Nonfiction* is also available, with *Discover Your Own Literacy*, *Build a Literate Classroom*, and *Explore Poetry* forthcoming. If they are \$7.50 a piece, that's quite a tidy sum.

Although the book is aimed at teachers K-6, there are lessons for all who run a writing classroom. The book is divided into six chapters, each of which suggests at least one writing "action" for the students or teacher. Included are ideas about what fiction is, first lines, leads, plot, endings, and responding to the writings.

Probably the most interesting chapter is the last, called "A New Look at Children's Fiction." Here Graves uses a small part of Jane Hansen's three-year study to theorize about where children begin, the sorts of characters they use and when they use them, and how children use dialogue.

Part of the book's last paragraph certainly applies to those running a writing process classroom. "There must be an element of play in composing fiction or working in any other genre. Along with this notion of play in composing must be the parallel process of 'playing' with our teaching. We experiment, toy with, and explore new notions of representing the world in our teaching, as we do in reading and writing."

Reviewed by Vicki Steinberg (PAWP '83). Vicki teaches at Exeter Senior High School.



**MODERN FOLKLORE AND WRITING:
A GUIDE FOR MIDDLE
AND HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS**

Elizabeth Radin Simon

Do you remember the games you played during your childhood? "Writing about the Folklore of Childhood," is one chapter of Elizabeth Radin Simon's *Modern Folklore and Writing: A Guide for Middle and High School Teachers* from Boynton/Cook-Heinemann. This chapter offers a method by which teachers invite childhood memories as part of American folklore, thus helping to transform their memories into studies of American culture.

During prewriting, students reminisce about their childhood games through fogged memories, initially remembering the most vivid parts, then, through brainstorming and conferencing, they add details as to how the game was really played. Simons suggests segregating by sexes while forming groups of four since there are certain games common only to girls or boys.

Next, she lists all the games mentioned on the chalkboard, allowing the students to discuss freely the details for each game. These details should include whether the

games are gender-specific or age-specific. Did the games span generations? What are the functions of the games?

After listing, the students must choose a topic and settle into writing the first draft, followed by responding and revising. Then the students put away their drafts and start researching their games through interviews using a class designed questionnaire. Students practice on other classmates before interviewing their outside subjects. The class responds to the classroom interview, each student trying to help the others improve their techniques.

Before the final draft, Simons has the class analyze each other's folklore. Each student reads another paper and writes down an impression of the function of the folklore. Discussion follows and the students must write an analysis, giving their ideas on why the folklore they are researching still thrives.

The final papers break down into three separate pieces of writing: the childhood memory, the interview, and the analysis. However, the more capable students can weave all three pieces into a single paper.

If you are familiar with writing processes, there is no need to buy this book. If you want to know the topics covered by Simons to teach American folklore, check the table of contents the next time you are in the bookstore.

Reviewed by Pamela Hertz Hilbert (PAWP '86). Pam teaches in the Exeter School District.

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TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROLE OF PROCESS IN WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

George E. Newell and Phyllis MacAdam

Responding to the National Assessment of Educational Progress Report, "Reading, Thinking, and Writing," which concluded that reading and writing tasks normally assigned do not require students to "think deeply or critically enough," George E. Newell and Phyllis MacAdam studied three secondary school English teachers and the methods they used to "teaching writing about literature."

Their five month study was conducted in three overlapping stages. First the teachers were asked about their concerns with regard to written responses to literature; second, Newell and MacAdam conducted classroom observations once a week for several months while the teachers kept logs on how they used writing with literature; third, joint planning sessions were held which focused on instructional goals and the creation of writing-to-learn strategies to implement those goals.

The study revealed complex and compelling issues such as how the teachers interpreted their experiences and how well implementing Newell's and MacAdam's strategies deepened students' literary knowledge. Another perplexing issue discovered by Newell and MacAdam was that English teachers are familiar and comfortable with a process approach to writing but the same is not true for their approach to teaching literature.

Newell and MacAdams found that each teacher viewed the writing process differently. The first teacher said that she gave the students a model of the writing process in September and felt that the depth of her AP curriculum was

such that "it's not worth the time to keep fussing about it with these (advanced) kids." Both of the other teachers used process writing with literature more as a means of getting their students to write about their own experiences rather than looking at literature as an "artistic exploration of experience in its own right." Yet, all three teachers were in line with their own established instructional goals. Ironically, all three teachers felt that the writing strategies developed by Newell and MacAdam were "inadequate as an indicator of literary understanding as institutionalized by their schools."

These three outstanding teachers were resistant to and apprehensive about their overuse of personal writing. One reason was the dual roles we face as teachers of writing and literature which cause confusion in students. As teachers of literature, we feel the need to "have that one correct interpretation" of a work; yet, as teachers of writing, we call for "the writer's personal interpretations of experience." Another reason is that we fear our colleagues would "complain about their new students' lack of knowledge of what they consider the 'basics' of literature."

Intensifying this conflict was the fact that none of the teachers had any "previous course work in either writing or literature pedagogy," although two had master's degrees and the other was working on hers.

Newell and MacAdam conclude that part of the problem lies with the "differing notions of literary understanding," and they believe that "the more fundamental issue is what teachers consider to be important about literary education and how writing tasks might support those beliefs." For students to make meaning out of their reading, we "may need to transfer, or at least modify, our traditional, text-centered approaches to literature" and allow students ownership of both their writing and literary experiences.

Furthermore, as school administrations turn more to English teachers "to make a significant contribution to the school reform movement," English teachers must understand and respond to the need to reform their own teaching methods so that they can become those "able teachers."

Comment: Newell and MacAdam's study is intriguing. I can identify with these dilemmas. We have a body of literature and writing tasks to cover, and the curriculum rarely has the two interrelate. In addition, old teaching strategies die hard. Too often, we find it easier to impart knowledge on our students rather than plan the time to allow them a "self" discovery. Yet, as a Writing Fellow, I know how dynamic a classroom can be when students "own" their reading and writing. Perhaps this report should be mandatory reading in all university English methods courses. Yet, again, maybe it should be mandatory in all methods courses, since research has proven that writing is the key to developing critical thinking skills.

To order: This article appeared in the October 1988 edition of The Quarterly. If you would like a copy, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the PAWP office. Please give the title of the article so that we can send the correct article.

Reviewed by Bernadette Fenning (PAWP '87). Bernadette chairs the English Department at Cardinal O'Hara High School in Delaware County.

THE WRITING & PUBLISHING CENTER A SOFTWARE REVIEW

The Children's Writing and Publishing Center is a program by the Learning Company which follows Writer Rabbit in difficulty. It requires a 5.25" disk drive, and a black and white or color printer. A Program Disk, Picture Disk, Storage Disk, User's Guide and Ready Reference Card are all included in the package which sells for \$59.95, but discounts are available. It can be used on Apple IIc, IIe and IIGS computers.

This program is a complete word-processing tool. It is easy to use and would make the writing process fun and rewarding. It is designed for students ages 9 and up, but I feel sure second graders could successfully use this program with a little guidance and support.

This program features: 8 fonts for stories, letters, and reports; 8 fonts for newsletters; 137 pictures that can be inserted into the writing at any point, plus the graphics that are contained in Print Shop and its Libraries; 22 pre-designed headings for stories and reports; one and two column formats; easy-to-read menus and screens; on-line help and examples; cut and paste text; and a well written user's guide that anyone can follow.

The feature that seems really valuable for children's writing is being able to insert pictures without disrupting the words. When a picture is added, the words move automatically to make room for it. If the picture is moved, erased, or if another one is added, the words will move all by themselves to fill an empty space or wrap around pictures.

The pictures are divided into categories: Adventure, Animals, Going Places, Holidays, People, Sports, and Things. The Headings can be used for reports or Story Starters. They can be used for Bulletin Board display very easily. What a time saver!

Another nice feature is a View Display. This enables you to see the entire piece of writing on one screen. The writing is not clear, but you can see where you are and how much of the document is filled up.

The Newsletter is a great feature because this program is so much easier than the Newsroom. The print automatically becomes small and the words wrap around the pictures. A one-page Newsletter can contain about as many words and pictures as a four-page Report. More pages can be added to a Newsletter. The first page can be saved, and a new page started from Main Menu.

Awards and Signs can be created with this program. It also lends itself to the child creating a page that no one else has ever seen—the possibilities are endless.

In conclusion, I feel this program is one of the best word processing packages for children that I have ever seen. It teaches them word processing in an easy, successful way. It is also valuable to teachers, because stories can be printed with illustrations and print that they can understand. I bought it yesterday with my own money and plan to start using it immediately.

Reviewed by Susan Tapper, a second grade teacher in the West Chester Area School District. She was a recent participant in PAWP's "Computers and Writing course."

MASTER GRADES A SOFTWARE REVIEW

The master Grades Program by Midwest Software has been in charge of my gradebook since 1983; in fact, it has taken the place of the black gradebook. Now I have computerized listings of students with their grades on them tucked neatly into manilla folders marked according to the current marking period.

Generally speaking, Master Grades allows me to enter the score of a student (points earned) which is then compared to the total possible points on the assignment. The computer calculates the students' averages with a corresponding letter grade to accompany it. This program affords me the freedom to design tests, quizzes, or projects with a wide range of points possible and to enter as many grades as I feel necessary in any marking period. The grading scale can be tailor-made; I use the West Chester Area School District scale.

The main menu options include entering names, entering scores, attendance, grading scale, deleting names, print options, erasing scores, corrections, and the all important—quit and save! As soon as my class lists are complete at the beginning of the school year, I select from the main menu "enter names." Using the surname, first, and code which includes the hour of that student's English class, my subject name, and the grade of the student, I enter the information for all students in each of my five classes. For me, the entry would be typed as follows: Sprenkle Lynn1107, since I would be a first hour English student in seventh grade. After all classes have had their students' names added to the files, I can choose print options and run off grade book pages on which I record at my desk with pencil/pen the current graded activities of my students. After several grades have been accumulated, I go to the computer to enter these grades on my file. The computer then computes the grades so that as soon as I enter the grades, the students can be made aware of their academic standing.

There are two print options: one prints students' names with their grades in percentages and the corresponding letter grade and the other prints all the above mentioned material but substitutes the students' code numbers for their names. The pages on which the names are printed are put in (gradebook) and the other with code numbers is posted in the room for the students to peruse. Of course, beforehand, I have given each student his code number to record in a safe spot for future use.

Another print option which I have used is the "progress report." The decisions which need to be made for this option are: will each student receive a report, will a congratulatory report be sent to those scoring above 90%, or will reports be sent only to those who score below 70%?

Two other options on the menu are the deletion of names and corrections. I use "deletion" when a student ceases to be my student or simply is moved from one of my classes to another. It could also be used for an entire hour of students if the teacher has short term classes. "Corrections" allow all information about a student to be changed. I mainly use this when a formerly absent student takes a

test after the scores for his classmates have already been added to the computer.

Then there is "erase" which is used at the end of a marking period to each student's scores to zero. The names remain, but I'll ready for a new marking period. The grades for previous marking periods are on file because I already saved the earlier scores.

The "quit and save" function is vitally important. Every time I make a change in the file (add scores), I must save my data so that it can be recalled when needed.

In conclusion, I would highly recommend the use of Master Grades by Midwest. I would never revert to the old grade book method of penning in grades, weighting quizzes to equal the value of tests, or recording students' names. For me, I would have to say that the strongest advantage of this program is the complete flexibility it affords me in the design of graded material. I can assign any number of points necessary for an assignment. For example, a composition which takes seven class days to prepare can be worth 100 points which a quiz can be worth 12 points if I so desire. Then, these points are simply entered into the computer with the computer calculating the students' grades according to the points earned in relation to the points possible. Master Grades earns an "A" from me!

Reviewed by Lynn Sprenkle who teaches seventh and eighth grade at Fugett Middle School in West Chester. She was a participant in the PAWP "Computers and Writing" course.

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READING YOUR STUDENTS: THEIR WRITING AND THEIR SELVES

Anne Martin, *Teachers and Writers Collaborative,*
New York, 1983

Dear Mrs. Brown,

Your child Jill loves reading. She is very good at it also. She likes all kinds of books.

In her writing she doesn't always get all her thoughts down on paper even though I know that they're all up there. (p. 24).

So wrote a fourth grader, Jill, in an end-of-the-year mock teacher report to her mother. This piece of creative writing shows almost as much about Jill's teacher, Anne Martin, as it does about Jill.

Martin's classroom is a whole language place where children – and their thinking–flourish. In Reading Your Students, Martin has take a dozen pieces of writing done throughout the year for each of two girls, Jill and Brenda. Martin has analyzed both the style and the content of each girl's writing in order to understand better the girl herself. Although I interpreted some of the poems' meaning differently than Martin had, I could see how most of the new understandings about each girl grew out of the writing (and of course her prior knowledge of the students and their families and friends).

As a result of her insights into each student, Martin planned activities, suggested books and writing topics, set up cooperative learning groups, and even provided affective "transitional activities" for one or both girls. Many of

these situations benefitted other children, too, as one child "caught fire" from another.

At a more personal level, Martin found that knowing Jill and Brenda more deeply helped her be more tolerant of "irritating behaviors" she had previously not understood.

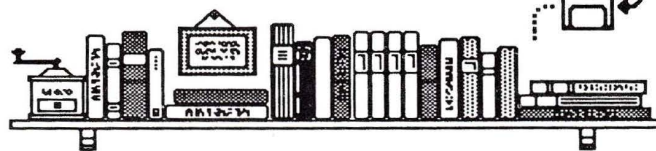
This little yet crammed book appealed to me because in my years in elementary teaching I found that knowing a child well helped me "reach" him. I also liked the concept Anne Martin used—of looking at the body of a student's work to see patterns of meaning that might shed light on the writer herself.

In my current assignment (secondary school), I might use this technique in reading a student's journal or personal essays. Anne Martin's words on the subject apply to students of all ages. She writes, "A child learns through interaction with the world around him. And to various degrees teachers are supporting that learning by the relationship they develop with the child, the materials they provide, and the atmosphere of their classroom."

To order: Teachers & Writers Collaborative, 84 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York, 10011 212-691-6590

Reviewed by Isabel Stefanisko (PAWP '88). Isabel teaches in the Cheltenham School District and was a Fellow in the Bucks County Summer Institute.

Have a review of a book
or software program
that would benefit
other educators?



Then send it to:

PAWP
210 Philips Building
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383

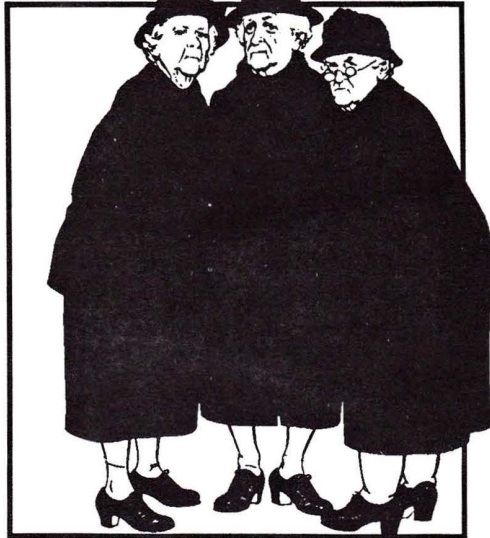


THE "F" WORD

by Barbara Turgeon

I was quite old before I heard the "F" word. It might have been whispered in corners or muttered under someone's breath, but it was taboo in normal conversations—even in the conversations of kids who usually were not afraid to utter words their parents frowned upon. How strange it was, then, that I first heard it spoken aloud by the ladies' bridge club.

Once a month the bridge club met at our house. The ladies of the club talked endlessly. If I stood outside the closed doors of the livingroom, I could catch up on the latest news about the folks in the neighborhood. But because one conversation tended to



overlap with the next it was difficult to get all the details. One part of me hated catching only parts of the conversations, but the other part of me loved being able to make up my own endings. My versions were always juicier and racier.

One my night the conversation was hushed and whispered. I strained to hear, but I could barely catch a word. It sounded as if they were talking about the "F" word. I knew that wasn't possible. This, after all, was the ladies' bridge club. The word was repeated, and I knew I hadn't made a mistake. The conversation came to a standstill. Silence prevailed. I believe I heard several sharp intakes of breath. From inside the room, I heard a dull thud.

"Helen's knocked over her glass," I heard someone say. I tried to beat it out of there before they could discover me at my listening post, but, alas, it was too late. I was caught in the hallway and had to pretend that I was merely on my way to get a soda from the kitchen. As the livingroom doors opened, my mom and I stood face to face. Did she know that I had heard the conversation? That I had heard That Word, that forbidden word, spoken in our home? She didn't ask and I didn't tell.

We never discussed that night, and I tried hard to blank the whole thing out. I hinted around to my friends, trying to discover if That Word were ever used in their homes. I knew if I told anyone about that night, chances were I wouldn't be believed. So I kept it to myself and got on with my life.

Many years passed and I did all that I could to obliterate the memory. I got married. I had children. I

stayed married. I had more children. There were some days that I had an uneasy feeling, as if I were trying to block something out. But that's all it was now, just an uneasy feeling. Times had changed, though. The "F" word was used and I read That Word in the daily news. It was possible to turn on the television and hear the "F" word being used as if it were the most normal thing in the world. It still made me extremely uncomfortable. I avoided its use and did not allow the word into my home.

To no avail. As the years passed and the children grew, That Word became an unwelcome guest in my home. It swooped menacingly at me one day in the midst of an argument my husband and I were having about my returning to school. When the argument had reached a no-win impasse, my husband suddenly hissed at me, "You've become such a f... such a f... feminist." There it was out in the open at last—that dreaded "F" word. Feminist. That was the word that had caused grown women to speak in hushed tones. Feminist. F-E-M-I-N-I-S-T. Feministfeministfeministfeminist. I found if I repeated it often, it lost its shock value. Once it lost its shock value, it was just another word, and I could begin to investigate the word itself.

The word "feminism" is synergistic. That's the only way to explain how it can cause the reactions that it does. It's a word which has a different meaning for everyone who uses it, or avoids using it. To some, the word is akin to "leper." As in, "Oh, yes, we don't have much to do with her. She's, uhm, a feminist." To others, the word implies a red-eyed monster. "We don't use words like scholarette around her; she's a feminist, and you know how unreasonable she can be about ordinary words." Feminist is a word used to explain some otherwise unexplainable behaviors. "Well, she gets really incensed if we just want to stay with the classical literature. You know, all that good literature of our forefathers. But then what can you expect—she's a feminist." Fathers no longer use the shaming word "sissy" to their sons: No son of mine is going to be a pantywaist feminist, no sireebob," has become the new he-man rallying cry. Mothers now caution their daughters that "men don't make passes at girls who are feminists."

Webster's New Collegiate dictionary has two meanings for the word "feminism." The first is "the theory of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes." The second definition may be a little more threatening than the first. It defines feminism as "organized activity on behalf of women's rights and interests." As I examine both these definitions, I fail to see anything that could be objectional to reasonable people. I still cringe whenever someone hurls the "F" word at me. Only now I don't cringe in shock or dismay, I cringe because I know in my life I often fail to live up to the ideals and responsibilities which feminism implies. The uneasiness that word now stirs in me is the voice of my sisters or my daughters asking me what I've done to assure their political, economic, and social equality.

Barbara Turgeon was a participant in the PAWP Computers and Writing course. She is a ninth grade teacher at East High School in the West Chester Area School District.

THE PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT GOES TO NORRISTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT

by Lois Snyder (PAWP '80)

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING WRITING I

The seemingly instinctive nature of groups intrigues not only an observer but any participant who cares to take notice. Groups move through stages - exploration, resistance, cohesion/productivity, consolidation, termination, and follow-up evaluation. The Pennsylvania Writing Project Summer Institute is always exciting to facilitate as the Fellows engage in learning, not only from experiential self-discovery, but through these group interactions. To some degree these same phenomena occur during the months teachers spend together for the Strategies for Teaching Writing course.

From January 10 through April 11 eighteen Norristown School District teachers spent three hours a week together for thirteen weeks. The school district sponsored this course to be run on-site at Paul Fly Elementary School. The organizer for Norristown was Diane Leventhal, Communications Instruction Leader, who contacted the Pennsylvania Writing Project to run the West Chester University three graduate credit course. Coordinator for the Writing Project was Lois Snyder (PAWP '80). Teachers in the group included eleven primary classroom teachers, three intermediate classroom teachers, a K-8 teacher, a teacher of the gifted K-5, and two reading specialists, k-5 and 5-8.

During the time spent together these teachers had eight presentations by PAWP teacher consultants. Topics included Prewriting, Revision, Writing in Science, Conferences, the Reading/Writing Connection, Collaborative Writing, Mini-Lessons, and Publishing. Teachers engaged regularly in freewriting and focused freewriting sharing on a volunteer or whole group basis. There were two book discussion group sessions based on The Art of Teaching Writing by Lucy Calkins. There were five scheduled Response Group sessions which provided some small degree of experience in group response to personal writing. This left many teachers wanting more time for this valuable form of interaction. The group seemed to develop an awareness of the potential power of such response on a regular basis.

A large percentage of the participating teachers took advantage of an individual conference session offered on February 28th. Each one met with the course co-ordinator to discuss the various writing assignments. These assignments were: a piece of personal writing, a book review, and a lesson plan. Many teachers expressed a desire to share these lesson plans particularly since there were several teachers from each grade level. These lesson plans could be adapted to other grade levels. The quality of the work generated by these teachers during the thirteen weeks together was impressive.

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of such a course is the time provided for interchange of ideas and reaction. It

is a course based on the concept of teachers teaching teachers and the belief that teachers become better teachers of writing only if they begin to know themselves as writers. Norristown School District is applauded for providing teachers with these opportunities. The participating teachers are applauded for their willingness to come together after a busy day as they strive to learn more about being writers and teachers of writing.

LESSON PLANS AVAILABLE

Many of the lesson plans developed by the eighteen Norristown teachers are available for use by other teachers. Each lesson plan incorporates major writing strategies and assignments. If any of the topics listed below seem useful to you, please contact Lois Snyder at the PAWP office.

GRADE - LESSON PLAN TITLES/TOPICS - AUTHOR

K-8	Greek Myths	Suzette Cirella-Wolf
K-1	Saving the	Diane Costanzo
	Gingerbread Man	
3-Sp. ed.	Beginning Research	Peggy Emmerich
	Papers	
4	My Mystery Story	Amy Goldberg
3	News In View	Maryanne Hoskins
5	Journey Through	Tony Lalli
	Writing Process	
2	Writing a Friendly	Denise Long
	Letter	
K-Sp. ed.	Who Are You?	Valda Lowry Green
2 -Sp. ed.	The Importance	Kimla Matthews
	of Signs	
Read .	Response to Literature:	Sandra Myer
Spec.	Bernard Most's <u>If the</u>	
K-5	<u>Dinosaurs Came Back</u> and <u>My</u>	
	<u>Very Own Octopus</u>	
2	Designing an Original Park	Diane O'Neill
1	Contrasting the characters Frog	Sheri Rainear
	and Toad: A. Lobel's <u>Frog and</u>	
	<u>Toad are Friends</u>	
Gifted 1-5	Writing in Response to Literature:	Barbara Ritter
	Chris Van Allsburg's <u>The Mysteries</u>	
	<u>of Harris Burdick</u>	
Read.	Introduction to the Novel:	Marilyn Rosenthal
Spec.	Robert C. O'Brien's <u>Mrs. Frisby</u>	
5-8	<u>and the Rats of Nimh</u>	
2	Creating Poetry	Lydia Snyder
5	The Research Process	Michele Suplicki
3	A Comparative Study of Two	Linda Weiss
	Days With TV and Two Days Without TV	
3	Biography	Suzanne Wolfert

Through my participation in the "Strategies Course" I began to experiment with different kinds of writing and take risks during my Writer's Workshop. In turn, my students did the same as they explored and discovered a variety of ways to write and learn.

Amy Goldberg
Fourth Grade Teacher
Norristown Area School District

THE ART OF TEACHING WRITING

The Art of Teaching Writing by Lucy McCormick Calkins is the current text read by elementary teachers in *Strategies for Teaching Writing I*. The book was reviewed by all eighteen teachers. While some found the book did not meet certain specific needs, a definite appreciation for the comprehensive nature of Calkins' work and her teacher-friendly style was evident. Following are excerpts from the reviews of five teachers with diverse classroom roles.

□ The processes discussed by Lucy Calkins are appropriate to gifted children. Higher level thinking skills are included in conferencing, and in responding to another's writing and to one's own writing. I particularly liked her suggestions for teaching research—having the child stop part way through writing his research paper and put in a single sentence about what he is studying. This kind of focus leads to better understanding of a topic rather than the typical regurgitation of information. The poetry suggestions, including imagery and expression of feelings, are also particularly applicable. Writing across the curriculum and the reading-writing connection are two ideas that work well with the more-sophisticated thought processes of gifted children.

-Barbara Ritter

□ Once Calkins has covered the basics necessary for implementing the Writing Workshop, she launches into an in-depth discussion of writing characteristics from kindergarten to middle school. All teachers will find new insights into their students' writing ability after reading this portion of the book. Numerous fascinating student writings are presented, many with a necessary translation provided. She gives examples of story rehearsals, drafts, revisions, and editing for each grade level. The point is often made that in evaluating student writing it is more important to look at the process and not the product.

-Sheri Rinear

□ I appreciated Calkins detailed examples of the stages of children's writing. Because of my students' disabilities, they are functioning on many levels. They are worried about capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. They would rather write a few sentences that are correct than a longer more detailed piece. Some are on a kindergarten level where they must draw the picture and put a few letters underneath it and that's the story. Others are between the first and second grade levels. It was beneficial to me to see where they were in their development. Calkins' examples give me a greater appreciation for my students' writings. We all came to realize it is not important for all writings to be perfect. We can always put them aside and come back to them later.

-Peggy Emmerich

□ As a substitute teacher I found *The Art of Teaching Writing* a very interesting book. Moving from class to class, student to student everyday I found it helpful to see what could be expected at each grade level. Calkins spends a great deal of time in classrooms observing and participat-

ing. I found her describing real situations.

I found her discussions very similar to what I have seen in many classrooms. Many times I find myself in a classroom with little or no lesson plan. This makes me happy. When there are no plans I introduce writing. I use different writing exercises I have collected while substituting. The children become absorbed immediately. I enjoy every aspect of writing but I was always afraid of conferencing. I tried conferencing in the classes where I substituted. I was intimidated by conferencing before reading Section III. Now I feel more secure.

-Suzette Cirella-Wolf

□ Because I am a reading specialist, my interest in the *Art of Teaching Writing* was piqued by Lucy Calkins' exploration of the writing-reading connection. I was also impressed with Calkins' use of the learning log in the research process to incorporate what the students already know with his research findings. Analysis of the structure of their own writing coupled with evaluating new information in terms of how it fits with prior knowledge, in log writing, makes it possible for a very powerful observation. "The imprint of a researcher thinking should be evident in the notes." (p. 281)

The more recent trends in the field of reading indicate that teachers need to help children examine the strategies they use in the process of reading. In this way students become aware of what they do as readers, and compare those strategies to those of good researchers. It is hoped that they will become more efficient readers through this analytic process. By asking children to do the same with writing, Lucy Calkins comes to the same conclusion, i.e., making children aware of their writing, and comparing their work to those of professionals and peers will mold them into more proficient writers. (Chapter 16).

Another powerful concept is one in which students formulate questions, and instead of answering them, analyze and evaluate them: "Which were the best questions? What makes one question more effective than another?" (p. 266) In my own classroom experiences I have found that uniformly, the practice is to have students write questions which are not evaluated or refined, which leads to the writing of papers that lack depth and/or direction.

The *Art of Teaching Writing* is a valuable book for teachers of all grade levels because it directs the teacher of writing to the understanding that teaching writing is indeed an art. However, if I had chosen a title for this book, it would have been *The Science of Teaching Writing*. The recursive steps of the process of writing are equivalent to recursive precepts of the scientific method:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1. REHEARSAL | PREMISE/HYPOTHESIS; |
| 2. DRAFTING | TEST HYPOTHESIS; |
| 3. REVISION | REVISION; EDITING-TEST AGAIN/EDIT PROCEDURE; and |
| 4. PUBLISHING | FINAL PROCEDURE/CONCLUSIONS. |

It is no surprise that they are equivalent. Both the scientific method and the writing process as Lucy Calkins has defined it, are tools for learning.

-Marilyn Rosenthal

We hope you enjoy Marilyn Rosenthal's personal writing. Even sweltering summer days won't make you envious of this Bahamian adventure.

"IF THEY COULD SEE ME NOW..."

by Marilyn Rosenthal



Have you ever seen that Carnival Cruise commercial where an ultra-cute girl sings, "If They Could See Me Now"? She makes four changes in two minutes—femme fatale to bathing beauty to tourista and back again. Her perkiness is intended to snare the minds and hearts of inveterate sun-worshippers everywhere, and cajole them into trying something new and different from the lazy beaches of Florida winters.

My husband and I were wending our way through Florida to one of those beaches via a side trip to Cape Canaveral—a thoroughly forgettable experience which we likened to being in one of those cartoons where we were the only English-speaking people among Japanese tourist shutterbugs. We were trapped on an endless double-decker bus ride. It was interrupted only for picture taking of the outsides of similar sand colored buildings and equipment. Guess where our seats were. After the fifth stop we gave up getting off the bus. Take my advice: if they're launching something don't go.

We wanted an adventure, we got an experience. Ah, well...and then it appeared—a magical discount coupon on the back of our tour booklet for a SEA ESCAPE.

We didn't have the time for a long cruise. But a SEA ESCAPE! One day of being special—sunbathing in deck chairs, being fed sumptuous meals like royalty, and a half-day in verdent, idyllic Freeport, with its lilting language, straw hats and shopping. Donald Trump move over!!

I should have known. Our odyssey began in the darkness of 5:00 AM when the operator woke us in a tired monotone. We had to be on board the ship, an hour away, at 6:30 AM. We dragged ourselves out of bed and, after dressing, dragged our luggage downstairs (My husband only spoke to complain that I packed too much for one day). Waiting for us were our hapless friends, the yawning Freedmans, dramamine in hand. We had convinced them to join us on our adventure. That's what friends are for.

By the time we arrived at the dock we had woken up a bit to witness hundreds of people moving along through crowd control lines, weaving a tapestry of large rears in Bermuda shorts, various and sundry hand luggage, and Indiana Jones hats. At the far end of the boarding dock, the ship's lounge act was playing, "Don't Worry, Be Happy."

I spied a sign: HAVE PASSPORTS READY. What passport? Nobody told me I needed a passport. "Don't worry, be happy..." the line snaked on until we reached the check-in desk.

"Passports?"

We all worriedly chimed in, "We don't have any."

"Voter Registration?"

No problem! I routed through my handbag confidently as my husband and friends presented their cards. All of my credit cards were neatly lined up in their spaces...white Blue Cross card, red and blue library cards...where's the stupid voter registration?!? Panic was setting in. The people in line behind us were beginning to make impatient noises. "I don't have mine."

The man behind the desk frowned. "Well, ma'am (I hate ma'am). I'm afraid the officials may give you a hard time getting back into the country." He gave us our tickets. "Have a great day!" Don't worry, be happy. For now I convinced myself that this was good advice. The line behind me was too long and complicated to turn back. I'm American. I speak American. I have a Blue Cross card...my husband will vouch for me (he was kidding me that he wouldn't—"so that's what they mean by 'SEA ESCAPE!'")."

Finally we passed the lounge act and boarded ship. People were scrambling everywhere. We headed for the locker room to put away our bags and line up for breakfast. We were starving. It was a long line. We weren't seated at the captain's table either. So much for the Love Boat. The food was displayed on an island in the center of the room. People paraded by picking and choosing what they wanted (or could carry) to their tables.

The eggs were cold. The juice was warm. The coffee was so strong and thick it lined the cup. So much for breakfast.

The sun was up by now. It was going to be a glorious day! Cruise ship—deck chair, right? Wrong. There were eight hundred deck chairs and twelve hundred deck chair hunters aboard. Eight hundred passengers who knew the ropes of cruises "reserved" chairs with towels, bags, and hats. They were now eating, while a sea of eight hundred empty, but reserved, chairs flaunted themselves at us. We were doomed to four and one half hours of sitting up-right on lawn chairs in the open-bar area.

So what if it was 90°, there was no shade, and the pool was two flights down? So what if we didn't dare go down to the pool area because 386 people had no place to sit and eyed us like hungry barracudas? We contented ourselves by thinking of everyone back home, mobile but freezing in cold weather.

We took turns taking pictures of each other in bathing suits to record the moment for posterity. I instructed my husband to shoot me from the waist up. There I sat, like a flabby flounder, desperately sorry that I hadn't prepared for this moment with diets and work-outs. To make matters

worse, my friend Judy had dieted and worked out. No matter. The camera's eye wandered to two nubile girls in string bikinis.

Eventually we arrived. Everyone, all twelve hundred of us, lined up by the doors anxious to "shop till we dropped," or bathe luxuriously in turquoise water. We waited for half an hour, sweltering and cramped. The four of us found our place in line to be in front of the infirmary. At least we didn't get sea-sick. Judy's husband, Gil, took a picture of us pretending to gag in front of the sign. Symbolism was always my forte.

The island was beautiful and lush. I shopped and put my tootsies in the cool, salty sea. The taxi drivers drove at suicidal speeds on the wrong side of the road and spoke with marvelous island accents.

It was all romantic and wonderful, but when it was over I wanted to go home to the good old U.S.A. I queried our taxi driver, casually, if he thought I might have trouble with authorities. "Oh, it's very bad (pronounced bod), but don't worry." I knew. Be happy.

Back on board we scurried for deck chairs (we were educated now). We changed for dinner in crowded, overheated locker rooms, and waited endlessly in yet another line for another semi-sumptuous meal.

All through the rest of the evening's frivolities a nagging fear was building in the back of my mind, as we came closer to shore. I was distracted by a trite musical review, followed by two weak drinks and a waiter who danced with beer bottles perched on his head. We never sat in the deck chairs. It was docking time, 10:00 PM It felt like 2:00 AM. We wearily gathered our gear and queued up again. Twelve hundred men, women and children stood together, like packed sardines, to wait.

When the doors finally opened, events moved like lightning. Tired customs officials stood at the bottom of the stairs droning instructions to passengers to surrender any fruit they had taken from the ship. I never saw so many oranges and bananas come out from so many places!

The moment had come. My heart was racing. I rehearsed what I would say as I grabbed my husband's hand. We were face to face with authorities. My husband flashed his voter registration card. The guard looked me over and chuckled. I must have looked as scared as I felt.

"You're with him?"

"Yes, YES!!!"

"Go ahead."

I ran on in shock. Disappointed (almost) that I didn't need my arguments...ah, God bless America...

As we drove back to our apartment, we passed a revolving sign atop a building on our left. CAPE CANAVERAL/SEA ESCAPE flashed against the darkness. I yawned. Two adventures I'd recommend to everyone.

Marilyn is a Chapter I Reading Specialist in the Norristown School District. She wrote this piece while taking the PAWP course Strategies for Teaching Writing this past Spring.



DEEP CREEK REGIONAL CONFERENCE

by Judy C. Fisher

The Regional Mid-Atlantic Conference of the National Writing Project was held near Oakland, Maryland on May 21st through May 23rd. Representatives from six project sites (Pennsylvania, Western Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Northern Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland) attended the conference held at the Will o' the Wisp Resort and Conference Center on Deep Creek Lake. The lakeside conference center provided a quiet setting contrasting with a fast-paced series of workshops which extended into the late evenings. The flexible agenda accommodated a wide variety of interests.

Mary Lou Kuhns, PAWP Associate Director, led a delegation composed of Fellows from a wide area and a variety of teaching positions. Carol Meinhardt is a secondary teacher in Allentown. Karen Klingerman, Lonnie Aul, and Rosemarie Montgomery represented Bucks County. Gloria Williams teaches in the Chichester School District. Jim MacCall, who is coordinating the Youth Writing Project, teaches pre-first grade in Southeast Delco. Cynthia Jenkins Muse and Judy Fisher are Philadelphia reading teachers.

A diversity of project site activities became evident as agenda issues were shared. The Northern Virginia Writing Project, just celebrating its tenth year, investigates meditation and guided fantasy as aids to writing. The Maryland Writing Project, which provides in-service support to the Baltimore city schools, runs teacher as researcher institutes and is anticipating the NCTE conference in Baltimore this November. Programs for young writers, variations of student workshops offered by West Chester, are provided by most writing projects. All sites offer institutes to train teacher consultants and writing courses to help teachers use a process approach to writing instruction. The teacher as researcher and writing across the curriculum were issues which commanded wide interest.

Nick Coles, the Western Pennsylvania site director and host, had concluded a retreat for teachers who write, immediately preceding the conference. Special interest groups for Fellows who want to write have been accommodated by sites in our region. Some writing Fellows, members of response groups or retreat participants, are active only in this way, apparently having joined the writing projects because of their personal love of writing. Project retreats attract published writers as well as those who need the support to begin. Plans are under discussion to begin such an interest group at West Chester in the fall.

The conference was inspirational. Much was learned about the structure of the writing projects and how they serve the members with a wide range of activities. The opportunity to meet and discuss issues and concerns with teachers of writing from a wide variety of teaching situations was rewarding. All returned home with new enthusiasm and a long list of ideas to implement.

Judy C. Fisher, a reading teacher in the Philadelphia School District, became a Fellow in 1982.

NCTE '89 CONFERENCE...MY FIRST

by Beth Cox

I attended my first NCTE Conference April 5-9 in Charleston, S. C. For those who have never attended a conference or convention, I would like to share my first impressions.

Don't expect to attend all the workshops even though many of the titles will tempt you. At some point exhaustion sets in, after attending sessions beginning at 8:30 AM and continuing until 4:30 PM. Besides, you'll want to see some of the city sights and do some local shopping.

Get to the meeting room on time. After an hour of sitting on the floor or standing in the back of the room your attention wanders. You may want to select a chair close to the door in case the speaker is not what you expected or you have to dart out quickly because your next meeting is in a different hotel three blocks away. Also, if you come late to the room you may lose out on getting the handouts, a real disappointment.

Expect a variety of speakers. Some may just "read" a paper, something PAWP-trained presenters are unaccustomed to experiencing. Allow time for browsing at the book companies' exhibits. You may be tempted to lunch longer or attend more sessions, but allotting time for the exhibits is a must. Here you get free posters, books, and perks such as fortune cookies and stationary. I'm told that at the Fall convention major book companies will host complimentary parties. Plan to join in the fun.

Talk to as many fellow teachers as possible. I received many addresses to exchange ideas and literary magazines. Two teachers from the South helped me with a computer problem I was having with the new writing lab. It is a great opportunity to join forces with teachers from all over the country.

Meal tickets are available but I strongly suggest that you dine in town. It was the best way to become familiar with the local sights and customs. The cost is comparable, if not cheaper at some places, and the quality of food is much better.

Dress professionally. These workshops are not like the in-service days in some school districts. Jeans are not acceptable uniform. I was thoroughly entertained by the fashions and was glad that I packed two suits and a dress.

The "coffee and conversation" session features about twenty-five tables in a large ballroom packed with people talking about twenty-five different topics. It is very difficult to hear much of the time. Since the leader of the table is not told the topic in advance, it may be somewhat chaotic. I think next time I'll visit the book exhibits instead.

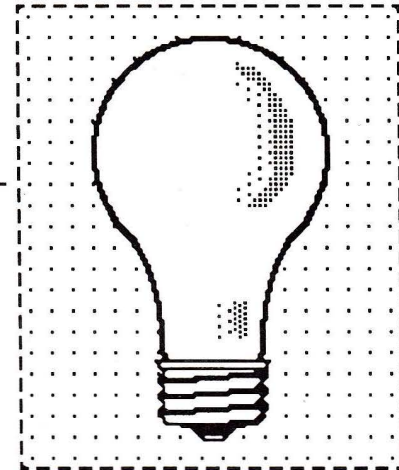
PAWP courses prepare you well for many of the topics covered by the speakers. All the terminology was familiar thanks to Bob Weiss's handouts. One workshop was based on two books that I had purchased and read during the Summer Institute. Another speaker held up a book that strongly supported her talk. After I had recently purchased that book.

Attending this NCTE conference proved to be a very worthwhile experience. I'm planning to attend the 1989 NCTE convention in November at the Inner Harbor in

Baltimore. I hope to see you there. I'll be the one dressed in the purple suit sitting by the door with the handouts.

Beth Cox, a high school English Teacher in the Chichester School District, became a PAWP Fellow in 1988.

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Bright Ideas:

Do you have any ideas
for articles or
features for the
Newsletter...

...then jot them down
and send them to:

Gail and Lois
c/o PAWP
210 Philips Building
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383

PAWP DAY IV

April 12, 1989 proved to be yet another successful PAWP Day with Lela DeToye of Webster State College, St. Louis, adding her special brand of insight and enthusiasm to the day's events.

Lela's teaching experience has included elementary, secondary, and now college levels. She has co-directed Summer Institutes of the Mississippi Writing Project. In December, Lela participated in a 10 day institute on whole language led by her and Yetta Goodman. All this made her a perfect resource and reference person for PAWP fellows and friends interested in developing and integrating "whole language" presentations and concepts into their teaching (a central theme of the conference).

The afternoon sessions were varied as usual (see Mary Corcoran's participants' eye-view) offering Fellows a range of choices centered around PCR P II awareness and PCR P II's critical experiences.

Once again, PAWP Day provided Fellows and friends with an opportunity to interact with and react to not only some interesting ideas but interesting people as well.

PARTICIPANTS' EYE-VIEW

by Mary Corcoran (PAWP '89)

In our afternoon session Jolene Borgese, the co-director of the Pennsylvania Writing Project, presented an overview of PCR P II. She explained that the writing project shares a common philosophical base with PCR P II. Writing project representatives, including Jolene, were asked by Botel to read and respond to PCR P II, and throughout the PCR P II document are periodic references to the project and the common goals inherent in both. Jolene has given presentations for administrators and teachers in her district, and her presentation to us included much of that information.

She began with an explanation of the four fundamental assumptions on which this framework is based: language is meaning-making, social, interrelated, and human. She explained the five critical experiences outlined in PCR P II: reading, writing, extending reading and writing, investigating language, and learning to learn. Jolene gave various examples of how this approach works in the classroom, and participants had frequent opportunities to questions and comment.

One example that Jolene gave was related to the study of a novel, in this case To Kill a Mockingbird. Rather than have students answer teacher prepared questions, Jolene had them keep a log which included summaries of the chapters and the questions which students themselves had. She was worried that they would not have questions or that the questions would not be as thought-provoking as hers, but she was pleased to find she need not have worried. The students asked questions of a more complex nature than those she had prepared. This example illustrates an approach to learning which allows students to respond in genuine ways to a text, rather than to seek the "right" answers to questions for the teacher to grade. This type of meaning-making is basic to the PCR P II approach, as well as the writing process approach. Other teacher participants spoke of the rewards of creating a community of readers in their schools, where students selected their own reading material and shared their responses with other students, staff, and family members.

Procedures for evaluation were discussed. Emphasis was on observations and portfolios as a means of evaluation be to used in conjunction with the traditional testing which is so widespread in our schools now. Jolene also spoke briefly about developing networks and mentioned, in particular, the PCR P II papers, which will be used as means of spreading the word about progress and practices in different schools in the area. Also mentioned were courses on PCR P II being planned at West Chester. Jolene distributed a handy 10 page booklet which gives a very brief overview of PCR P II. (I've already found this helpful as a quick reference.)

The session was informative and interesting. Jolene covered the material quickly and allowed the necessary time for questions and concerns. It was just the kind of information I wanted, and I appreciated the fact that Jolene responded to our questions with understanding.

DETOYE'S DETHING

by Vicki Steinberg, PAWP '83

Lela DeToye, an elementary classroom teacher for 14 years and currently with Webster University, discussed the whole language movement with the April 12 PAWP Day attendees. Bringing her expertise as a coordinator for the Mississippi Valley Writing Project to the subject, Lela explained that marrying the writing process classroom to the whole language movement is a natural since teachers were intuitively doing both anyway.

She quickly pointed out that whole language does not mean throwing away basals, does not mean throwing out reading strategies, does not mean forgetting evaluation any more than writing process means the student never has to spell anything correctly. Like writing, however, whole language does not lend itself to a series of materials or a set of practices and is, therefore, difficult for the same teachers and administrators who can not handle writing process classrooms. Teachers attempting a whole language atmosphere need the same attitude change as those trying the writing process: less concern with the teacher's needs and more with the learning styles of students. Students must have ownership of their learning process in order to make meaning. The catalysts that get teachers interested in whole language are several: teachers wish to be in charge of the classroom, not the textbook; teachers see others doing it; teachers see what doesn't work well in their classrooms; administrators back teachers, realizing tests (which are beginning to change a little to reflect the new classroom practices) are not the only important item, and empower the teachers, who, in turn, empower the students.

It is necessary to remember that students come to school with language. How did they get it? Through use. Obviously, classrooms should immerse the kids in the experience. Instead, texts separate the experience into little bits and pieces; therefore, teachers should design ways for the students to use language in real situations.

One important point to recall is that students come to school having taken five years to learn what they know and schools expect them to learn to read in less than one.

Contrary to current practice where students who are having trouble break the language down even more, whole language advocates suggest "whole" ideas, real ideas, real reading. The least efficient way of reading is to deal with each letter or each separate "thing." Instead, whole language recommends learning the information together—Pennsylvania teachers can check the PCRIP II manual for a good overview of the process.

Lela referred to the "institutionalizing" of new ideas. All PAWP members have seen this happen with the most recent textbooks trying to graft writing onto traditional grammar books. She warned that the whole language movement is experiencing some of the same problems. However, there are TAWL (Teachers Applying Whole Language) groups forming to help teachers avoid pitfalls.

Lela summed up by stressing that reading and writing are not curriculum—they are the tools to be used in all learning.

REFLECTIONS ON PAWP INSERVICE COURSES

by Doris Kirk, PAWP '81

What can happen when teachers are able to see writing as a process? The learning can be strewn with personal discoveries. The teaching can be filled with abundant insights into how our students learn and what they have to teach us. The opportunity to write in any of the Pennsylvania Writing Project's classes usually provides time in which an individual teacher can experience the pleasure or pain of writing. Each brings to the writing classroom a past history of successes, feelings, beliefs and apprehensions. Where some are at ease and enjoy writing, others are anxious and reluctant. In talking with and listening to teachers participating in inservice courses on writing processes one hears expressions of increased interest. It is easier to write many times after doing one or two pre-writing activities. Some who haven't done much writing of late, or are very uncomfortable with it, are surprised with the written products they get after proceeding through the steps of pre-writing, writing, conferencing, and revision. Here the stress is on process and not product; the red pen has been put away. There is a sense of satisfaction as the writings accumulate through the course. There is a growing awareness of voice and ownership. The position papers and personal pieces are tools of learning for the writer. But I have learned from them also. The papers are published and are exposed to a reading audience. I've laughed, cried and uttered many Ah-ha's! We all don't agree, and ideas are often put to the test. But there is appreciation for what the writer has done, for the writing process itself, and for what it means for our students.

The Writing Project also provides a time for being together. Educators are often isolated from one another. Time before, during, and after class is consumed by the very task of educating. Our students and their concerns occupy our consciousness to an extraordinary degree. With the nation's concern to foster excellence in our schools and with parents, administrators, fellow teachers, even family and friends, all adding to the global feeling of being a teacher, it is no wonder that our energies are totally tapped into. Distance is needed; so is the time to write and observe. The writing courses provide this setting where teachers of all levels can share and learn from one another. They can find out from the first-hand experiences of others what kind of writing is done before, during and after the level they teach. They can realize that writers of all levels go through the same steps as professional writers. They can have easy access to pertinent books and articles about the writing process. No one can escape the positive influences exerted by Donald Graves and the work done through the University of New Hampshire. He is an educator. The respect and concern and humor he displays in person and in his writings enrich us all. It is not unusual to hear teachers speak of Donald Graves with genuine appreciation and warmth.

Inservice courses must also cultivate this same respect for teacher participants. A quote from "What's Basic to

Teaching Writing" by R.D. Walshe says it very succinctly: "Implicit here is a realization that only one thing is 'basic' to the teaching of anything: the teacher. It is the individual teacher that makes the difference; one who approaches classroom and child in the right spirit."

Because of the varied talents and differences that exist within all teachers, participants will take from the Writing Project courses something which is their very own. No guarantees are made that all will be well pleased, or enthused, or convinced. But as sincere educators, each takes back to the classroom the best that he has to offer. It is in the classroom that the true magic takes place. To describe adequately or attempt to list all the facets that make up what occurs between a teacher and his class is impossible. But it can be said that each class has a life of its own. We must aim within the 80's to prepare our students for their lives in the coming decades. A child who is 10 today will only be 26 in the year 2000. Moreover, the United States is moving away from an economy based on industrial production to an economy based on information sharing. The report of the Commission on Excellence in Education states: "Learning is the indispensable investment required for success in the information age we are entering." We will need to ensure to an even greater degree than in the past that our students possess the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Also, writing is a tool that can enhance our learning of all subjects - not just composition. Many teachers expressed great interest in using writing process in the teaching of such content areas as science, history, and health. What this will do for learning and for generating interest in all subjects taught in our classrooms has yet to be tapped fully. There is no boredom ahead for us if we so wish.

Using the writing process approach helps to make the classroom a very human place. Talking, sharing, questioning, and writing are greatly increased. Students and teachers are brought together in conversation. In PAWP inservice courses this can also happen. When given time, a genuine writing atmosphere is created. We will have helped them to possess their own learning, and to begin to develop expertise in using it.

Doris Kirk is a Chapter I Reading Specialist in the Coatesville Area School District. An earlier version of this piece was published in our newsletter several years ago; the editors felt that it was still timely in 1989.

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**Keep a look out for
information regarding
PAWP Day
November 1, 1989!**

PAWP REFLECTIONS

At the fall '87 and spring '88 conferences, fellows were asked to write about the impact of participation in the PAWP on their profession lives.

Nancy Goldstein, PAWP '87: It has made me aware of current research and trends in education. It has given me a sense of professionalism—one that says we can share our knowledge among ourselves and do not need the "ivory tower" to tell us what works. But in empowering the teacher, the Writing Project has also shown us that we can and should empower the student and let her/him take charge of her/his own learning...through writing and thinking. How much have I grown? A lot!

Jim McCall, PAWP '87: As both teacher and writer, the Writing Project has helped me realize the potential in me. I am now teaching writing; something I always felt primary children could do but was unable to approach. I have also realized my ability to be a published writer.

Dick Halsey, PAWP '87: The Writing Project has helped me be comfortable with much more sharing between students, which has helped them be more comfortable with their writing.

Doris Kirk, PAWP '81: My contact with the Project and the work done by Graves, Giacobbe, and Atwell still is having an impact. Reading-writing-thinking now are part of a whole. My teaching is being reshaped and redefined.

Freema Nichols, PAWP '80: I write more and with less pain than I used to. I write better letters and more of them. As a teacher I have more students doing more writing, and they seem to enjoy writing more.

Arlene Smagala, PAWP '87: I have more support for choosing and implementing strategies in the classroom. I have research, books, people, and shared stories to back me up.

Lisa Armstrong, PAWP '87: There have been struggles along with successes, so I have learned to modify and change. I feel I have become a very flexible and versatile teacher. Writing has become very important in my classroom. I feel that all subjects can be taught much more effectively when children are encouraged and motivated to use writing as their essential tool in learning. (...) I write daily in some form to keep my interest as well as skills steady.

• FOR YOUR INFORMATION •

TEACHERS & WRITERS COLLABORATIVE: A RESOURCE

The journal and books published by the Teachers & Writers Collaborative are stimulating resources because they grow from the joined talents of teachers and writers. For example, a forthcoming book on teaching science writing was co-authored by Dale Worsley, a high school teacher, and Bernadette Mayer, a poet.

Teachers & Writers is published five times a year, \$15.00 for one year. Recent articles were on high schoolers writing about their childhood, on oral history, and on the history of typography. Regular features include poetry, book reviews, and letters which are often reports from teachers about how suggestions worked out in their classes. The tone is honest, reasonable, and respectful.

To get a list of books and/or to subscribe to Teachers & Writers, write to:

Ron Padgett, Editor
Teachers & Writers Collaborative
5 Union Square West
New York, NY 10003

DIALOGUE: A RESOURCE

Dialogue is a wonderful newsletter because it focuses on one excellent learning practice, the dialogue journal. This takes the journals which many of us use, professionally and personally, one step further. Dialogue journals are the "practice of communicating in writing about topics of mutual interest through continuous, functional conversations between (usually) learners and teachers." Nancie Atwell's letters back and forth with her students were a type of dialogue journal.

Dialogue covers early elementary through college, uses, benefits, and theory, teachers and researchers. It appears approximately three times a year at \$10.00 a year. The editors have gathered previous newsletters into Dialogue I (82-86) (\$7.00) and Dialogue II (87-88) (\$5.00). To order:

Dialogue
c/o CAL
1118 22nd St., NW
Washington, DC 20037

HELPING YOUNG WRITERS GET PUBLISHED: A RESOURCE

Kathy Henderson's Market Guide for Young Writers (Shoe Tree, 1988, 171 pp., \$12.95, ISBN 0-936-915-102), details information of more than 100 markets and contests that welcome submissions from children and teenagers. Each market listing contains a description of a publication's target audience and the types of manuscripts it seeks, detailed submission information, editor's remarks and subscription rates.

GETTING PUBLISHED: A RESOURCE

The Project subscribes to Writer's Digest, a magazine full of advice for writers who are writing to get published. The May 1989 issue was particularly useful, describing itself as a "Writers Workshop on Paper". Articles included "Nonfiction Writer Meets Editor", "What Kind of Story Are You Telling?", "The Only Playwriting Tools You'll Ever Need", "What's in a Title?", and "Writers Conferences, Workshops, and Seminars (450+)".

WHOLE LANGUAGE: A RESOURCE

Heinemann has published a separate catalog called "Resources for Whole Language Teachers and Administrators." Contact Heinemann, 70 Court St., Portsmouth, NH 03891.

THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WRITING: A RESOURCE

by Gloria Williams

In this age of euphemisms, acronyms and slanguage, it is refreshing to find some truth in labeling.

The Center of the Study of Writing (CSW) is exactly that. Operating under a five-year grant from the U.S. office of Educational Research and Improvement, CSW exists to improve the teaching and learning of writing from early years to adulthood.

CSW engages in research that focuses on the social context of writing and the cognitive processes demanded by writing. Its home center is located at the University of California, Berkeley. In conjunction with the National Writing Project, also at Berkeley, CSW provides a network of experts in the research and practice of teaching writing.

In addition to its researchers' series of published books, technical papers and occasional articles, CSW teams up with the National Writing Project to publish The Quarterly.

Now this bank of expertise can be tapped in our region without having to write or travel to California. Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh is an affiliate of CSW. The researchers there support CSW's central emphasis that all projects be "practice-sensitive research" and "research-sensitive practice." In other words, the research grows out of real classroom practices and observations and in, turn, the research is intended to be refocused on classroom practices.

Carnegie-Mellon researchers investigate cognitive processes in Reading to Write, Writing in Classroom contexts, Writing and Learning, Strategic Learning and Revision and Reader's Needs.

These same areas of concern are directly shared with the educational community in the form of traveling seminars. Teacher-researchers at Carnegie Mellon have set up a Research-for-Teaching Seminar Series as a vehicle to reach college and high school teachers, both to share the

research results with them and to encourage them to engage in their own informal research. In one to two-hour presentations, each seminar discusses current research findings on a given topic and implications for the classroom and then expands the discussion to informal classroom research that can be used to help students become more aware of their own thinking processes in writing tasks.

Another outgrowth of the research at Carnegie Mellon is the technical reports and occasional papers now in progress. The Reading to Write series (ch.-1-11), edited by Linda Flower, is a collaborative effort by the researchers; each bringing to bear his/her own perspective on the collected data. The chapters are available as separate entities. They cover such topics as the disparity that can exist between strong organizational skills and poor content, techniques of elaboration or using what you know, the effects of prompts upon revision, different ways that students interpret the same writing task, the impact of cultural assumptions on student writing, and the transition from revealing just comprehension to developing actual rhetorical discourse prompted by a reading.

To examine the seminar topics in depth, to arrange for a seminar, or to order an annotated list of individual papers, write to:

The Center for the Study of Writing
Department of English
Carnegie Mellon University
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(412) 268-6444

or

The Center for the Study of Writing
UC Regents School of Education
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720

Just to whet your appetite, here are some of the titles currently available from the CSW:

Research in Writing: Past, Present, Future, \$3.50, S. W. Freedman, A. H. Dyson, L. Flower, and W. Chafe

Historical Overview: Groups in the Writing Classroom, \$3.00, A. Di Pardo and S. W. Freedman

A Sisyphean Task: Historical Perspectives on the Relationship Between Writing and Reading Instruction, \$3.50, G. Clifford

National Surveys of Successful Teachers of Writing and Their Students: The United Kingdom and the United States, \$3.50, S. W. Freedman and M. McLeod

Writing and Reading in the Classroom, \$3.00, J. Britton;

What Good is Punctuation?, \$3.00, W. Chafe

Drawing, Talking and Writing: Rethinking Writing Development, \$3.00, A.H. Dyson

Writing and Reading Working Together, \$3.00, R. J. Tierney, R. Caplan, L. Ehri, M.K. Healy and M. Hurdlow

*Written Rhetorical Synthesis: Process and Products, \$3.50, M. Kantz

*Readers as Writers Composing from Sources, \$3.50, N. N. Spivey and J. R. King

*Narrative Knowers. Expository Knowledge: Discourse as Dialectic, \$3.50, A. DiPardo

*The Problem-Solving Processes of Writers and Readers, \$3.50, A. S. Rosebery et al.

*This title is available at the Writing Project Office.

Most of these are about thirty (good sized type) pages long, i.e., readable. Don't be put off by fancy titles. For example, if you've ever said to yourself, "But of course reading and writing should be taught together!", then get Geraldine Clifford's A Sisyphean Task; the tale of how from the beginning of a discipline called "English" various forces have kept reading and writing separate is fascinating.

An informal synthesis of research in writing and reading from the Center for the Study of Writing reinforces many PAWP practices:

"Writing and reading skills develop best when students perceive the relevance and usefulness of writing and reading to their academic and personal needs. If students are to develop mastery over writing and reading, then classrooms cannot deny students their own choices for what to write and read.

"Classroom regimes that place great stress on grades or on frequent testing have the effect of undermining the learning value of class undertakings; they discourage the risk-taking necessary to learning and discovery."

A CAUTIONARY TALE

by Patricia Hampl

One day some years ago, after I had published a book, I was asked for permission to excerpt a piece from it in an anthology. Delighted, I wrote back. As it happened, I used this anthology in a course I taught, I admired its selections, and found the study questions helpful. Not that I used the study questions much, I suppose, but I directed my students to them from time to time. I was pleased about being included in the next edition of the book, imagining students not just reading my work, but studying it. About a year later, the anthology arrived. Snappy new jacket (better than the first edition, I thought), well designed pages, clean type.

I skimmed through my piece. No typos—good. And there, at the end of the selection, in those shivery italic letters reserved for especially significant copy, were the study questions. There were several under the heading "Questions about Purpose." One will do: "Why does Hampl establish her father's significance to her family before she narrates the major incident?" Beats me, I thought. I had no idea what Hampl's purpose was. All the study questions looked quite mad to me.

Patricia Hampl (from an introduction to her, Houghton Mifflin Anthology of Short Fiction, 1989).

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• FOR YOUR INFORMATION •

(Continued)

COMPUTERS AND COMPOSING

Bob Weiss, Karen Klingerman and Chris Kelly, two teacher-consultants, presented ways that Apple or other computers aid composing at the second annual Eastern Pennsylvania Educational Computing Conference in March.

Bob gave a brief overview of the writing project and the writing process. Karen then offered a full range of publishing activities. She was knowledgeable not only about activities but also about the software, highlighting pluses and minuses of particular programs. She referred the audience of about 50 to sign-making, letterhead, single page class publications, lists of questions, school newspapers, literary magazines, and menus using PRINTSHOP, NEWSROOM, or word processing.

Chris Kelly followed with a short presentation on pre-writing and revising using the computer. Her Computers-and-Writing elective is a popular course at Academy Park High School. She uses memory prompts and writing about one's name, and trains her students to respond to one another's work with "Praise-Question-Polish" and "ARMS" revision guides.

Bob ended the morning with a review of computer activity files or textfiles which he has created or borrowed from Stephen Marcus and others. He showed several "revision workshops" using successive drafts of the Declaration of Independence and of student writing. "Fill-ins" was an exercise that had students complete the middle of a story or essay for which only the first and last lines were supplied. In "The Penguins of Death Quiz," students had to re-assemble the jumbled sentences of two zany paragraphs. Lastly, a series of textfile screens were shown that could prompt students to pre-write about change as a pattern in fictional plot and character.

The trio of PAWP presenters each received an EPECC mug from Ginger Modla of the Upper Dublin School District, who chaired the session.

PAWP-POURRI



Wendy Towle (PAWP '88) is soon to be published. Wendy is a first grade teacher at Nether Providence Elementary School in the Wallingford-Swarthmore School District. She worked on this published piece with her response group in the 1988 Summer Institute at Exton.



Maternity leave isn't keeping Holly Clark (PAWP '88) her first grade students. Every Monday afternoon Holly touches base with her Writing Lab at Glenwood Elementary School in Rosetree Media School District.



Congratulations to Upper Darby School District's Carole Straub (PAWP '84). This first grade teacher at Garrettford Elementary School received double recognition this year for her outstanding teaching. Carole was nominated for 1988-89 Teacher of the Year in Pennsylvania as well as selected as a candidate for NCTE's search for Centers of Excellence in English and the Language Arts (1989-91). As we go to press Carole's program is one of 50 out to 210 selected for validation visits. Directors of selected programs will be notified during the summer. Best Wishes Carole.



Kennett High School teacher Debbie Roselle (PAWP '81) was featured in a recent edition of Brandywine Crossroads an area newspaper. The article, written by Myra Cline, focuses not only on Debbie's success as a writing teacher but also as a writer and a PAWP teacher consultant.



DATABASE



DATABASE



DATABASE



A
Day of
Whole
Language

Sponsor: NCTE
Cost: To be determined
Location: Baltimore, MD
Date: Monday, November 20, 1989
Contact: NCTE Convention, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801
Speakers: Ken Goodman, Carol Edelsky, and Yetta Goodman

Taking the
High Ground:
Exemplary
Teaching
Practices

Sponsor: NCTE
Cost: To be determined
Location: Colorado Springs, CO
Date: March 8-10, 1990
Contact: NCTE Convention, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801

Computing
Conference

Sponsor: Eastern Pennsylvania Educational Computing Conference
Consider Presenting: Deadline November 1, 1989
Location: Valley Forge Convention and Exhibit Center
Contact: Hank Pagnanelli, Montgomery County I. U., Montgomery Ave., PA 19118 (215) 23309560

Cost: To be determined
Date: April 3-4, 1990



PAWP DIRECTORY

Please supply all information; although not all requested information will be published, the material will help to plan new projects.

Deadline for Returns: October 15, 1989

Name: _____

School: _____ County: _____

School Address: _____

Preferred Mailing Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Year attended PAWP Summer Institute: _____

Grade levels taught: _____

Years of full-time teaching experience: _____

Highest degree obtained: _____

Degree obtained from: _____ Year: _____

Publications: If you have published any articles, books creative writing, etc., after your experience in the PAWP please list below, giving titles, publication, and date.

Special Projects: If you have developed special projects as a result of your work in the PAWP, include a description of the project with this survey.

Tell Us What You Need: What would you like done for your own strengthening as PAWP teacher/consultant—tell us what you need on an additional sheet.

In celebration of the 10th year anniversary of PAWP please jot down a few thoughts as to the impact of the PAWP upon you professionally and/or personally (may be quoted for the Newsletter if granted permission).

PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

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West Chester, PA 19383

Director: Robert H. Weiss *Co-Director:* Jolene Borgese

Associate Director: Mary Lou Kuhns *Assistant Director:* Martha J. Menz

Editors: Gail Capaldi Lois Snyder

Associate Editor: Mickey Bolmer

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Pennsylvania Department of Education

The purpose of the *Pennsylvania Writing Project Newsletter* is to link together all teachers of writing in our area. The Newsletter features, but it is not limited to, articles that deal with writing and 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: Gail Capaldi or Lois Snyder (Editors), Pennsylvania Writing Project, West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383.

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

Pennsylvania Writing Project
Phillips Memorial Bldg. #210
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383

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