

The PA Writing & Literature Project Newsletter



Volume 32, Number 2 Spring, 2013

Gearing up for Summer!

PAWLP has an exciting selection of 15 courses this summer, including five new ones. Classes are offered at West Chester University's Graduate Business Center, at the Bucks County IU and Michener Art Museum in Doylestown, and at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square. All of PAWLP's courses address ways to connect your teaching to the Common Core Standards. We hope you can join us this summer!



Reconfiguring PAWLP Institutes Inspires Re-Visioning, Reconnecting, and Excitement!

For more than 30 years the Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project Institutes have rejuvenated and changed the professional and personal lives of teachers in southeastern Pennsylvania. This year will be no different. Teachers who attend the 2013 Institutes will have time to read, write, confer, and think with other life-long learners in order to enhance their own writing and their writing and reading instruction. The only difference between this year and previous years is our new time frame. We are piloting Institutes which will commence in the spring, continue for three weeks in the summer, and conclude in the fall.

This reconfiguration has inspired many thoughtful discussions at the Project. The new calendar prompted us to reach out to other National Writing Project (NWP) sites, to revisit our belief in the inquiry stance as the way to effect change, and to revisit the core principles of NWP.

As a part of the National Writing Project, we embrace the following principles:

- Writing can and should be taught, not just assigned, at every grade level.
- Teachers improve their knowledge of reading and writing by engaging in and studying these practices.

- There is no single right approach to teaching writing; however, some practices prove to be more effective than others. A reflective and informed community of practice is in the best position to design and develop comprehensive writing programs.
- Successful practicing teachers are the best teachers of other teachers.
- Real change in classroom practice happens when teachers actively engage in classroom inquiry in their own classrooms in order to reach and teach everyone.
- Effective professional development for educators is on-going and occurs when schools and universities work in partnership.

In addition to revisiting NWP's core principles, we reviewed syllabi from other sites in order to help us re-vision PAWLP's traditional Institute syllabus to include more opportunity for classroom inquiry. The new Institute calendar will afford the 2013 cadre of PAWLP Fellows the time and space to explore their own writing and reading lives -- and to explore and reflect on their own classroom and district practices.

Application deadline: April 5.



PAWLP
Community, Connections, & Collaboration

A Note from Mary

Dear PAWLP Fellows and Friends,

From Bristol Township, Pennsylvania - to Brooklyn, New York - to Twitter -- Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project Fellows and staff members continue to impact the universe in marvelous and myriad literary and literacy-based ways. PAWLP concluded twenty days of professional development for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade teachers in Bristol Township in January. One of the Bristol teachers shared the following: *"This was the best investment the District has ever made for professional development. I have tried harder to make my daily writing block appear in the schedule. The kids love implementing the pieces taught in the mini lessons."* PAWLP Fellows (too numerous to mention) receive fabulous feedback regarding their professional development workshops.

We are also embedding professional development into our own meetings—meetings that previously focused more on the business of running PAWLP, now include presentations on the Common Core or other current topics. PAWLP Fellows leave energized and edified from the activities and lively discussions that ensue – and even more ideas can be found by following PAWLP on Twitter. PAWLP Fellows are tweeting inspirational literacy strategies and ideas! See inset below for more information.

PAWLP's efforts to improve the literacy lives of students everywhere do not stop with professional development and social media. Shortly after Hurricane Sandy ravaged the northeast corridor, Marie Wardynski looked at her collection of children's books and realized that there might be schools, libraries, and shelters that could use her books to replace those they had lost. See page 7 for the rest of the story.

So many PAWLP Fellows are enhancing the literacy lives of those with whom they teach and work that it's impossible to highlight everyone. What we are striving for this year is to provide avenues for PAWLP Fellows to share their stories, classrooms strategies, and opinions in a variety of ways. In this *Newsletter* you will see a new feature – *The PAWLP Guest Columnist*. In this issue, Diane Dougherty shares her insightful and thought-provoking ideas regarding the Common Core and Reader Response. Consider writing a column for the *Newsletter* or send your work to PAWLP for inclusion in PAWLP's peer-reviewed e-journal. See page 6 for e-journal information.

It is a pleasure and honor (and always exciting!) to work with such a wonderful group of educators.

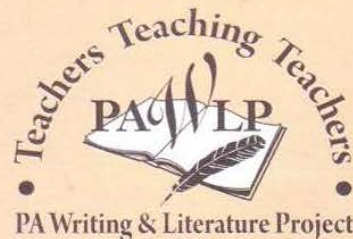
Sincerely,
Mary Buckelew

PAWLP Fellows - Do you Tweet?

Attention all tweeps (or potential tweeps)! We're looking for Fellows who are on Twitter or have the desire to find out more about Twitter while sharing ideas and best practices.

"It is great Professional Development. Every time I go on there I find something I can use," says PAWLP Co-Director Judy Jester.

Please contact Judy to find out more information. Email her at judithmjester@gmail.com.





PAWLP Guest Columnist

The following piece consists of my thoughts on reader response and the Common Core Standards, supplemented by those of Susan Ohanian and Dr. Douglas Fisher. You can find arguments on both sides of this issue by googling Louise Rosenblatt and Common Core Standards. I confess to my own biases; 32 years of teaching at the secondary level have made me a firm believer in the efficacy of reader response. If the theory has been bastardized over the years by standards testers, that is neither the fault of reader response nor of the teachers who have successfully implemented the theory in their classrooms. - *Diane Dougherty*

Make Room for Louise, Please

The newly adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in Language Arts are designed to focus on the text. For example, in three of the ten standards, 10th grade students are required to:

- *Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivation) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme;*
- *Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text;*
- *Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.*

Note that there is *nothing* in the language of the standards that asks what the student thinks or feels about the text.

CCSS seems to be saying that reading is NOT about the reader. David Liben, Senior Literacy Specialist at David Coleman's **Student Achievement Partners**, says, "In college and careers, no one cares how you feel. Imagine being asked to write a memo on why your company's stock price has plummeted: 'Analyze why and tell me how you feel about it.'" Liben seems to assert that it is unimportant that readers and writers examine their perspectives of

the text.

We should realize that these assertions are really a simplistic version of Rosenblatt's reader response theory, which *always* gives emphasis to close reading. Reading is about the reader! Literature is about you, the reader. Literature is written to make an emotional impact on the reader. We feel: anger at injustice; wonder at the nobility of character; curiosity about what makes us tick; empathy for people in situations unlike (or like) our own.

We broaden our understanding of human nature. These are some of the things that provoke thinking *including* analysis of how the author achieved (or didn't achieve) that emotional impact. Teachers may use Socratic shared inquiry which *begins* with our strong reactions and *then* steps back to reflect (perhaps through discussion) on where these reactions came from (within the text; within the reader). Through discussion with others, we may find ambiguities in the text or in our responses as a result of our mixed feelings. By focusing exclusively on analysis, or worse by *beginning* with analysis, we skill and drill the joy right out of reading. Analysis and close reading are really *rereading*. Rosenblatt never suggested only one reading or only one way to respond. Transacting with text includes response *and* analysis.

A close reading is a careful and purposeful **rereading** of a text. It's an encounter with the text where students focus on what the author has to say,

what the author's purpose is, what the words mean, and what the structure of the text tells us. It is getting to what Louise Rosenblatt talked about as a transaction between the reader and the text. Reader Response Theory emphasizes what the author has to say and not impugning those author's words, but getting what the author has to say and bringing some of your own ideas to bear on that text.

In a close reading we have to have students reread the text. We may give them questions, text dependent questions that require that they go back to the text and search for answers. These aren't simply recall questions, just the facts of the text, but rather questions that allow the students to think about the text, and the author's purpose, the structure, and the flow of the text. Close reading requires that students actually think about and understand what they are reading. CCSS require that students provide evidence and justification for their answers. The only way we know how students can do this—that they really learn to provide evidence and justification—is through close reading. They pay attention to the words, the ideas, the structure, the flow, and the purpose of the text. Close reading (rereading) prepares students to answer more complex questions that require that they think about what the author said *and compare that with what they know, what they believe, and what they think*.

Louise Rosenblatt trusted the reader; we teachers should too.

Summer Courses

At the WCU Graduate Business Center

Three-credits. 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners in the Content Areas, 4 - 12. PWP 510-31	July 15 - 19
Nonfiction in the Writing/Reading Classroom, K - 8. PWP 599-31	July 15 - 19
Strategies for Teaching Writing, 4 - 12. PWP 503-30	July 15 - 19
Popular Mechanics, 4 - 12. PWP 503-31	July 22 - 26
Writing and Children's Literature: Creating Successful Writers with Mentor Texts, K - 8. PWP 513-30	July 22 - 26
Writing with 2.0 Technologies, 5 - 12. PWP 512-30	July 29 - Aug. 2

One-credit. 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Content Literacy: Strategies for Implementing the Common Core Standards, 4 - 12. PWP 599-43	Aug. 5 - 6
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At the Bucks County Intermediate Unit, Doylestown

Three-credits. 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Writing Essentials, 1 - 8. PWP 599-30	July 8 - 12
Moving Writing into the 21st Century: Integrating Technology and Language Arts, 3 - 8. PWP 508-30	July 29 - Aug. 2
Nonfiction Texts: Reading to Analyze and Writing to Explore in the Age of the Common Core, 3 - 8. PWP 599-40	Aug. 5 - 9

At Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square

Three-credits. 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., with introductory meeting June 4, 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Literacy in Bloom: Botanical Inspirations for Reading, Writing, and Learning, K - 12. PWP 510-30	July 15 - 19
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One-credit. 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Nature as Inspiration for Reading and Writing: Partnering with Children K - 2. PWP 599-33	July 22 - 23
Writing Revision in Bloom, 6 - 12. PWP 599-41	Aug. 5 - 6
Nature Journaling in Bloom, K - 12. PWP 599-42	Aug. 7 - 8

At the James A. Michener Museum, Doylestown

Three-credits. 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., with introductory meeting June 27, 9:00 a.m. - noon

Visualizing Words and Worlds: Writing, Literature, and Art, K - 12. PWP 513-31	July 22 - 26
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Tuition and fees:

Three-credit course: \$1,434 (add \$50 materials/facility fee for Visualizing Words and Worlds)

One-credit course: \$497.12

(out-of-state residents higher)

Register on-line at www.pawlp.org

Invitational Institute Dates

New configuration - 3 weeks in the summer!

West Chester Writing Institute

Spring: April 20 + May 18, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Summer: July 1 - 3, 8 - 12, and 15 - 18, 8 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Fall: Sept. 26 + Oct. 17, 5 - 8:30 p.m.

Oct. 5 + Nov. 2, 8:30 - noon

Nov. 7 - Closing ceremony at 5 p.m.

Bucks County Writing Institute

Spring: April 20 + May 11, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Summer: July 1 - 3, 8 - 12, and 15 - 18, 8 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Fall: Sept. 26, Oct. 3, 10, + 17, 5 - 8:30 p.m.

Nov. 6 - Closing ceremony at 5 p.m.

Reading and Literature Institute

Spring: April 20 + May 18, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Summer: July 1 - 3, 8 - 12, and 15 - 18, 8 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Fall: Sept. 26 + Oct. 17, 5 - 8:30 p.m.

Oct. 5 + Nov. 2, 8:30 a.m. - noon

Nov. 7 - Closing ceremony at 5 p.m.

- Final application deadline: **April 5, 2013**
- **All applicants** are eligible for a stipend from the National Writing Project to help defer costs.

The Institutes and most 3-credit courses apply toward the WCU Master's Degree in Writing, Teaching, and Criticism. For application information e-mail Sally Malarney at smalarney@wcupa.edu, or call 610-436-2202.

Fall Courses

At West Chester University

Teacher as Writer, K - 12

PWP 502-01

Tuesdays, 4:15 - 7:00 p.m.

August 27 - December 10

(Registration deadline: August 13)

Coordinator: Mary Buckelew

Strategies for Teaching Literature, 6 - 12

PWP 520-01

Wednesdays, 4:15 - 7:00 p.m.

August 28 - December 11

(Registration deadline: August 15)

Reading and Writing in Content Areas:

Connecting to Common Core Standards, 4 - 12

PWP 510-01

Weekend course, dates TBD

At Longwood Gardens,

Kennett Square

Nature Poetry in Bloom, K - 9

PWP 599-01 (one-credit)

Saturday, October 26, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 2, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Registration deadline: October 11

PAWLP Author Series

Free and open to the public

Meet PAWLP Authors and learn about their writing and publishing experiences. Sessions are from 5:00 - 6:30 p.m. in Phillips Memorial Hall, 700 S. High Street, on the campus of West Chester University.

April 9 - Tiffany Schmidt and **Kate Walton** will discuss their books and experiences publishing Young Adult novels.

September 24 - Tina DeLiberato, Cecelia Evans, Don LaBranche, Donna Searle McLay, and Cheryl Stahle will discuss their experiences publishing memoir and poetry.

October 22 - Pam DeMartino, Diane Dougherty, Janice Ewing, Judy Jester, and Rich Mitchell will discuss their experiences publishing in professional journals.

November 12 - Tiffany Schmidt and **Kate Walton** will discuss their experiences publishing Young Adult novels.

To register please contact Sally Malarney at smalarney@wcupa.edu or 610-436-2202.

Spring

Literacy Conference

On **April 27**, PAWLP Fellows Rose Cappelli and Lynne Dorfman, authors of three professional books entitled *Mentor Texts*, *Nonfiction Mentor Texts*, and *Mentor Poetry: Making Reading and Writing Connections*, will keynote the Spring Saturday Seminar at Mill Creek Elementary School in Warrington. The theme of the day is **Making Reading and Writing Connections**.

Register on-line at www.pawlp.org.



*Rose
Cappelli*



*Lynne
Dorfman*

KUDOS

Pat Bove, '07 WC Writing, published a letter in the January issue of *Teaching Music*.

Pam DeMartino, '11 WC Writing, published an article entitled "Courtrooms, Classrooms, and Crossings" in the Fall, 2012 issue of *The Berks Barrister*.

Cecelia Evans, '81 WC Writing, published a book of poetry entitled *When Turtles Whisper* in February, 2013.

Kathryn McKenna, '01 Literature, '03 Bucks Writing, published a book entitled *A Treasured Legacy: Stories of the James-Lorah Memorial Home*.

Tiffany Schmidt, '08 Bucks Writing, published her young adult novel, *Send Me a Sign*, in October, 2012.

Cheryl Stahle, '05 Bucks Writing, published *Slices of Life: The Art and Craft of Memoir Writing* in July, 2012.

Starr Troup, '01 WC Writing, is managing editor of *Etruscan Press*, a nonprofit cooperative of poets and writers.

Kate Walton, '06 WC Writing, published her second Young Adult novel, *Empty*, in January, 2013.

We enjoy keeping up with the accomplishments of our PAWLP Fellows. Please contact Mary Buckelew at 610-436-2998 or e-mail mbuckelew@wcupa.edu with news we can share with our PAWLP family.

~ PAWLP E-JOURNAL ~

- Read PAWLP's first electronic Journal at http://issuu.com/pawlp/docs/final_summer-fall_2012.
- Look for the next issue in May, 2013.
- Submissions from PAWLP Fellows are always welcome.
- Submission guidelines can be found on our website (click on *PAWLP Fellows* on the left navigation bar).

PAWLP Book Club!

All PAWLP Fellows are invited to attend the Spring Book Club meeting on April 30 from 5 - 7 p.m. at the Alumni House on the campus of West Chester University. Join us for a light dinner, discussion of Charles Duhigg's *The Power of Habit*, and socializing with fellow PAWLPers.

Donation: \$10

RSVP by April 15 to
smalarney@wcupa.edu or call 610-436-2202

Continuity Saturdays for PAWLP Fellows



Continuity Saturdays afford PAWLP Fellows an opportunity to stay connected with the Project. Space and time is provided for group meetings in flexible formats such as writing groups, study groups, and/or professional book clubs.

Facilitated by Co-Directors Diane Dougherty and Janice Ewing, the group meets from 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. at the PAWLP Office.

A new iPad study group led by Co-Director Judy Jester meets from 9:30 - 10 a.m., and a Common Core group meets from 11:30 - 12:30 p.m.

The last date for 2013 is April 13
Join us for one, two, or all three groups.

To register please call 610-436-2202 or e-mail Sally Malarney at smalarney@wcupa.edu.

News from the WCU Poetry Center

Teacher scholarships are available for the annual West Chester University Poetry Conference June 5 - 8, 2013. A package designed for middle and high school teachers on Saturday, June 8, includes:

- Saturday panels
- Saturday meals
- One-day workshop with Molly Peacock
- Two-hour teachers' workshop with Catherine Tufariello and Rhina P. Espallat or Michael Cirelli
- Saturday evening concert

Scholarships are available.

Contact the Poetry Center at 610-436-3235 or poetry@wcupa.edu.

All poetry readings sponsored by the Poetry Center at the University are free and open to the public.

To view the calendar of events go to

<http://www.wcupoetrycenter.com/poetry-readings>

PAWLP, Westtown School, and Avon Grove Students and Teachers donate books to Hurricane Sandy victims

Shortly after Hurricane Sandy ravaged the northeast corridor, PAWLP Fellow Marie Wardynski looked at her collection of children's books and realized there might be schools, libraries, and shelters that could use her books to replace those they had lost. Marie's suggestion inspired an amazing outpouring from PAWLP Teachers and the community. Westtown School in West Chester collected approximately 1,500 books. PAWLP Fellow Heather Winterbottom and her students and colleagues in the Avon Grove School District almost matched Westtown.



Shalini Schaeffer and Mary at Good Shepherd Services



unloading the truck in Brooklyn

In addition, Sarah Ortiz, Karen Pawlewicz, and Laura Brannen made substantial contributions. PAWLP delivered approximately 3,000 books to the Good Shepherd Red Hook Counseling Center in Brooklyn. The center will distribute the books to those in need. The Executive Director of the Good Shepherd Services, Sister Paulette LoMonaco, sent a letter of thanks and wrote, "I cannot tell you how much we appreciated this extraordinary gift, which will make a deep and lasting difference in a community that has sustained such terrible losses . . . The dedication you and your colleagues have shown to the education of children and teens, as well as the letters of encouragement from fellow students, are truly inspiring."

Youth Corner

With spring right around the corner, the Youth team is in the midst of organizing and gearing up for the summer of 2013. The Young Writers/Young Readers program has lots to look forward to this summer.

We are back in Central Bucks SD after a three year hiatus, and we are looking forward to our second year at Valley Forge National Park. We are hiring teachers and making plans for professional development for Youth teachers. The professional development dates are April 27 in Central Bucks and May 4 at WCU. All teachers and site coordinators attend one of these two meetings. Lynne Dorfman and Rose Capelli will present in CB, and Jolene Borgese will present at WCU. We look forward to both presentations!

Last year's author presentations were so great that we decided to try once again to have our own Fellows present. Linda Kerschner agreed to present to the elementary level children and Tiffany Schmidt and Kate Walton will do the older groups. We are excited that these awesome PAWLP Fellows will present to our young writers and readers! In addition to our traditional Young Writers/Young Readers courses, we also offer a variety of specialty courses including: storytelling, reading and writing with the arts, nature journaling, poetry, math and science, gothic, fantasy and science fiction writing. We also have special sites which include Longwood Gardens and Pennypacker Mills.

We look forward to this, our 29th summer of youth. Thanks to the team - Mary Buckelew, Debbie Neves, Kathy Garrison, Betsy Brecht, Ann Mascherino, Toni Kershaw and myself. Together we plan to make 2013 a successful and memorable summer for the Young Writers/Young/Readers Program!

- Karen Pawlewicz, Summer Youth Program Administrator



The PA Writing & Literature Project
 West Chester University of Pennsylvania
 West Chester, PA 19383

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THE PA WRITING & LITERATURE PROJECT

Director

Mary Buckelew

PAWLP Office Staff

Toni Kershaw
 Sally Malarney
 Ann Mascherino

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 Jean Shervais, Literature

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 by and for those affiliated with the
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 are always welcome and can be
 mailed to the PA Writing & Literature
 Project, West Chester University,
 West Chester, PA, 19383 or e-mailed
 to amascherino@wcupa.edu.

Phone: 610-436-2202

Fax: 610-436-3212

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