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PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 2

WINTER 1984

1984 SUMMER PROGRAMS ISSUE

Summer Institutes

- at West Chester University
- in Philadelphia

Open Programs

1. Workshop: Holistic Assessment of Writing
2. Workshop: The Process-Centered Writing Class
3. Workshop: Computers and Composition
4. Teaching Composition
5. Advanced Institute on Revising Writing

Conference

- Computers and Humanities in Schools and Colleges

The Pennsylvania Writing Project continues to grow. All of last summer's programs will be repeated: the two-day workshop in holistic assessment, the three-day workshop on the process-centered writing class, the three-week course in teaching composition, and the two-week advanced institute on revision. New for PAWP is a two-and-a-half-week course on computers and writing, and a two-day conference on computers and the humanities. The project staff will be assisted by consultants who are excellent teachers as well as teachers of teachers.

THE TWO 1984 INSTITUTES

Teachers are again invited to apply to participate in summer institutes in West Chester and Philadelphia. The institutes will run for four weeks, from June 25 to July 20, and will again follow the successful model originated by the parent Bay Area Writing Project. Fellowships will be available for the West Chester and the Philadelphia location. Participants must be recommended by their school districts. Both institutes will be coordinated by Bob Weiss and will be visited by a full roster of PAWP summer consultants.

THE FIVE OPEN PROGRAMS

1. Workshop in Holistic Assessment of Writing

Over a two-day period, June 20-21, the Workshop in Holistic Assessment of Writing introduces participants to four systems of evaluating student writing: general-impression, analytic scale, primary trait, and feature-oriented. Participants assess large numbers of writing samples and are trained to come to agreement on their evaluation. The scoring systems themselves are evaluated for their applicability to different educational levels. The workshop is open to all teachers seeking graduate credit.

2. The Three-Day Workshop: The Process-Centered Writing Class

From June 27 to June 29, the Writing Project will run a workshop on why and how to organize a classroom to encourage the writing process fully. Nationally acclaimed Writing Project consultants lead workshop sessions over the first two days, with participants enrolled according to grades taught (K-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-College), and provide general keynote and concluding remarks. PAWP consultants organize the third day's sessions, to which participants are assigned according to their experience with process-centered writing instruction. The workshop is available for graduate or in-service credit.

Each year, almost 100 teachers participate in this workshop course and learn a healthy philosophy of writing instruction and a wealth of useful methods to try in their classes. We are certain that participants in 1984 will be as enthusiastic as their colleagues last year.

3. Computers and Writing Workshop

From June 25 to July 10, participants will study and experience the use of microcomputers at all stages of the writing process.

Because computers will become important tools in teaching composition, this course will cover pertinent points of rhetoric and composition theory to evaluate CAI in composition training. We will look at stages in the composing process and examine software packages and computer-assisted teaching techniques for each writing stage. Theoretical and practical questions will prepare teachers of writing to incorporate useful computer assistance into their classrooms.

Students will complete two projects: 1) a review of existing software or a design outline for new software; 2) a project of their own design — a "teaching plan" for a lesson assisted by a computer, for instance. While students may choose to do theoretical or research projects, one of the two class projects must be a practical application that students can take with them into a classroom. Students will prepare projects to distribute copies to the class members.

Bob Weiss will conduct the computer workshops with the aid of three outside consultants: Kate Kiefer, who piloted WRITER'S WORKBENCH at Colorado State University; Helen Schwartz, who developed SEEN as an aid for prewriting and writing about literature; and Stephen Marcus, author of COMPUPOEM and member of the Apple Foundation Advisory Board. Participants will be automatically registered in sessions of the 2-day conference, June 28-29.

A prerequisite is demonstrated knowledge of the writing process or knowledge of computers. (Having both knowledges is a plus but not necessary.) Participants should be willing to develop in-service presentations to offer as part of PAWP school-year programs.

4. The Three-Week Course in Teaching Composition

Simultaneous with the first three weeks of the Summer Institutes, the Writing Project will run a 45-hour, 3-credit course detailing some of the best methods of teaching writing at all grade levels. Available for graduate or in-service credit, this course combines the standard Writing Project course in Strategies for Teaching Writing with the 3-day Process-Centered Writing class. Participants will work with consultants visiting PAWP from June 25 to July 13.

5. The Advanced Institute: Revising Writing

The Advanced Institute on Revision, a two-week, 4-credit Workshop, links revision of one's own writing with the revision instruction to be shared with one's students. The goal of this institute is to increase participants' knowledge about revising as one aspect of the writing process, and thus about the full process as well, in order to improve their abilities as teachers, writers, researchers, or presenters.

Assisted by consultant Marion Mohr of the Northern Virginia Writing Project, Bob Weiss of PAWP will introduce and demonstrate varied methods for revising several modes of writing. Enrollment is limited to 15; a prerequisite is having been part of a previous summer institute or having taken other advanced work in teaching composition; participants are requested to submit two writing samples by June 1. The institute will run from July 16 to July 27, 1984 (9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.).

THE CONFERENCE

A conference on "Computers and the Humanities in Schools and Colleges" will be held at West Chester University on June 28-29, 1984, with support from a grant from the Pennsylvania Humanities Council. Sessions will focus on computer applications at all educational levels and on ethical implications for schools and society. Areas of interest are language arts/English, history/social studies, foreign languages, and other humanities subjects. Some sessions will require familiarity with computer terminology and use; some won't. A chief goal of the conference is to enhance humanities instruction in Pennsylvania schools and colleges.

People interested in offering a workshop, demonstration, or talk for this conference must request a form available from either Kostas Myrsiades or Robert Weiss, Department of English, West Chester University, West Chester, Pa. 19383; phone: (215) 436-2745 or 2281. Deadline for all proposals is March 20, 1984.

ARCO FOUNDATION SUPPORTS PHILADELPHIA INSTITUTE

Under a grant from the ARCO Foundation to the National Writing Project, a second summer institute of West Chester University's Pennsylvania Writing Project will be held for teachers in the School District of Philadelphia.

The grant will provide \$400 summer institute fellowships to twenty exemplary teachers in Philadelphia schools. After the summer training, these teachers will join with other PAWP teacher-consultants to conduct a series of in-service workshops for district teachers during the 1984-85 school year.

Further information about the ARCO-sponsored institute will be available in March. For details contact: Robert Weiss, 210 Philips Building, West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383, (215) 436-2281.

Mirror, Mirror . . .
A Teacher's Reflection on Responding Well
by Deborah Baker

INTRODUCTION

Upon returning from a twenty-one day canoe excursion through Algonquin Provincial Park in Canada four summers ago, I was shocked by my image in a mirror of a Park Service restroom. Without the usual daily monitoring of my appearance, my skin had become brown, my hair bleached out, and the tone of my body was, I liked to think, muscular. I hadn't scrutinized my reflection for three weeks. When I got back to all the comforts and habits of home, I was actually a bit embarrassed by my count one day of how often I looked in a mirror.

I've since convinced myself that I am not the only creature governed by vanity and the drive to improve one's image. We seek to improve in order to be approved and we can only improve by reflecting.

The following is a series of journal entries I wrote this semester in which I reflect on my teaching. My questions of how to improve have been many, but the one that recurs is, what can I change about my behavior that will or might lead to an increase in the amount of time and effort my students invest in their writing.

September 16

Today I got together with Betty, my close friend and colleague, who guided me through the insanity of my first few years of teaching. I've missed her support and inspiration the past two years since she was transferred to a different junior high. I had warned her that I was out to "pick her brain" for project ideas. There is so much that I should do, I need help focusing priorities. We came up with these ideas:

- using computers in language arts
- handling the paper load
- measuring the effects of a sentence combining program
- designing/incorporating workable conferencing techniques.

I'm not sure any of these ideas will suit me. Right now my biggest concern is being unable to process efficiently the writing done by my fifty-one English students. I need something that will help me make them better writers without increasing the amount of paperwork I have.

Betty gave me the Graves book and some materials she reviewed during last summer's Writing Project Institute. Now all I need is time to read it.

September 20

Without doing research, it is plain to me that when I respond to students in positive, supportive, personal ways, their level of interest and effort increases. Feeling a bit punchy and perky, I greeted my third period crew at the door with playful teasing, compliments and personal questions. The class was amazingly productive; Joe didn't have to be asked twice to take his book out, and Marva didn't nod off for her usual pre-lunch nap. It is clear that my attitude affects the level of attention they are willing to put into a task. I want to look more closely at *my* role as a means of improving their investment in class discussions and related work.

September 25

It was a typical scene. I sat at the kitchen table shaking my head over a stack of papers my accelerated students had just written. It was clear that most students had done

a quick, careless job disregarding directions. I self-righteously remembered how they had been given class time, not only to prewrite, but to share their ideas by exchanging papers. Granted it was early in the year, but I expect more. It's the same every year with every class. Am I really aiming too high?

I spent most of this morning talking to my husband, Ken, while he took note about my frustrations with my students' writing. The question he kept coming back to was, why is their motivation to write well so limited? It seems before I can be a better writing teacher I better sort out the reasons they don't like to write. These things seem to be key factors:

- lack of confidence in writing ability due to past failures
- discomfort with the physical process of writing
- unwillingness to reveal themselves and a fear of being judged personally
- low attention span
- lack of right answers (writing is not a rote activity with obvious ways to proceed)
- lack of reason for developing ability to write.

Writing isn't hard work; my students are writing. But making writing *good* writing *is* hard work and that's what most of my seventh graders aren't interested in.

September 27

Lists are easy ways to begin. Let me try another one describing what I can do, at least ideally, to attack the troubles above, because as Ginott suggests, adults can only depend on changing their own behavior not the child's. I could do these things:

- give praise, discover success in each student-writer
- identify special problems and prescribe specific help
- create and offer audiences other than myself for my students
- elicit parental help and involvement in our writing projects
- develop an atmosphere of trust between students and students and between students and myself.

Ah, the last thing is what this is all about I think. If a writer respects, trusts, likes his audience, then he will invest the time necessary to make the piece interesting, clear, polished.

Well, it's a sure thing that not all my students "like" me but I can probably get respect and trust that goes beyond typical roles. Ken said it, "Make your classroom a program of mutual exchange." Sounds nice . . .

October 1

Funny how things fall into place. In flipping through the September issue of "English Journal" I found an article that makes me feel less alone in my reflecting. Somebody else is finding "answers" like mine.

Michael Moore, beginning to feel stale, went back to school for a class in fiction writing. What he found was not just another professor, but a writer who pulled out of each student their motivations for writing so they could see more clearly the direction of their prose. Here are some things he says:

- what impressed me was how seriously he took our writing.
- he found our inspiration and through questions, drew out our own writing process.
- in retrospect, my interest (in getting to know my students) seems perfunctory and condescending.
- teaching involves having the right attitude as much as knowing the territory.

- I wanted my students to be writers, but I treated them like students.
- we were locked into our roles.
- I had to start by thinking of myself as a writer and by observing my co-authors as thoroughly as possible.
- we have made a transition from product to process to person.

October 6

I don't know who my students are. But can I so smugly assume that some personal regard like a magical ingredient will make them better or at least more willing writers?

I told Mrs. Smith on the phone today that her son has hardly done any work in three weeks. She wasn't surprised; ever since his father walked out to live with a "friend," Robert has been pretty "broken up."

I'm reminded how much I don't know and how little I can influence their lives.

October 9

For four years I have been keeping a journal along with my students. When they write, I write; no interruptions (save for the never failing p.a.). But that's not the same as *being* a writer with them. That's not the same as doing all my writing assignments (can I even bear to consider more homework for myself?) and wading with my students through revisions, responses and rewrites.

How do I actually make the transition from teacher to writer? Michael Moore wasn't very specific about how he did it. (I ought to get a letter out to him.) Do I have to change roles at all? They are, after all, not mutually exclusive terms - teacher, writer. Regardless of semantics, how do I get them to see me writing, struggling also? How do I go about sharing the process with my classes? Besides the fact that there hardly seems time to squeeze another thing into forty-five minutes, how do I share without dominating time? Do I talk, put my process on ditto, project my words onto the big overhead screen? It all seems so bogus.

It's interesting that I feel afraid to overwhelm them, that I worry about focusing so much of their attention on me and my work. After all, they focus their attention on me daily, except less personally perhaps. And we're back to square one; am I investing enough personally in those classes? Maybe it's me who is hesitant to "reveal" herself!

October 11

I did it. Today was the first day I put myself up for scrutiny. I put my poem on the overhead and asked students in each English class to write down their responses to "Dust in a Sunbeam." Then I opened things up for discussion and got a wide range of reactions. I did not tell them it was my poem until afterwards when I explained I hadn't wanted them to be biased. Maybe that was an easy out, but they seemed to accept my reason.

It was actually more fun once I told them it was my work because from there I was free to explain my inspiration. (Again, Mohr's motivation for writing becomes a key to explaining the prose and to discussing the piece.) I like talking with them about my writing which leads me to believe that many would enjoy telling the class about something they wrote. I didn't have to worry about their honesty being inhibited, but I suppose keeping my authorship quiet helped me in the beginning not to jump to a defensive posture. I just asked for and made notes about what pleased and confused them.

I taped these sessions and was considerably nervous until things got rolling.

October 16

It was Georgette's idea to tape. Last week when we were driving to our graduate class, I told her of my desire to know better how I respond to my students. Am I sincerely trying to know them? Am I really able to take on this role of participating writer?

We thought that perhaps I'd be able to hear and catalogue my auditory behavior by listening to tapes of my English classes. But points brought up in seminar make me wonder how valid my "analysis" can be. Does knowing I'm being taped change my behavior from my normal pattern of response? I don't think that I need to worry a lot about that for now for two reasons. First, if I am nervously aware and conscious of my remarks to students, I'm most likely improving my technique and, after all, that is my goal. Secondly, though I'm somewhat self-conscious the first minute or two, I genuinely believe I more or less forget about the tape; twice now, its click off has surprised all of us.

Another question centers around how I intend to distinguish such things as the tone of my voice or my use of inflection. Interesting question, but at this point, one that will have to wait.

October 20

It's clear to me today that again I have to narrow my concerns. I'll be looking only at the seventh period group and within that one class, limit my taping to time in which I am interacting with the entire group in open discussions as opposed to small groups and conferences as I had thought at first. This seventh period class will offer an interesting variety of student participation and motivation. The period one class is very small and most offer the same degree of involvement.

Also, I'm having doubts about the value of repeated taping. I tend to get lost listening to the tapes. Things go by so fast. I have to work hard to hear the students, a big problem because the recorder has to be nearest to me and their voices are so soft anyway. I'm also distracted with remembering things the tape doesn't reveal: a face David made, the glare I shot at Veronica for combing her hair at that pause. I am plagued by wishing I had said this or that, or moved along faster. But I am also delighted; I like a lot of what I hear. Most of my responses are positive, and often I ask the student to elaborate. My negative comments are very brief.

Listening to those tapes again tonight causes me to rethink some questions:

- How do I respond when I like a student's answer?
- How do I respond when I don't get the answer I want?
- How do I respond when I don't understand what the student means?

October 28

In Betty's school, they are offering the training in the T.E.S.A. program, that is, Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement. I've heard about this two other times through in-service meetings and I liked the sound of it. Now might be the time for me to find out how it works, and how, if at all, I could use it to improve my effectiveness with motivating students to write. The basic premise is that students who are perceived as "low achievers" are usually not called upon as often. However, when a teacher increases her attention to the "lows" these students soon learn that they will be called upon to respond and they become more in tune with the class.

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ARE YOU A WRITER? XEROX AND COMPLETE THIS FORM

TO: National Writing Project Sites
 FROM: Gerry Camp, NWP Newsletter Editor
 RE: Stuff for the Newsletter

Since I am teaching school full-time this year, I have very little time to dig up material for the Newsletter. I need some help from you so I know what may be out there to go after.

Please check any items below on which you may be able to help. Then send a copy of this form to the PAWP office or to me at 5635 Tolman Hall, University of California, Berkeley, 94720.

- I'd like to write an article about some aspect of running a Writing Project, say 1500-2500 words.
- We've been doing something I think other site directors would like to know about. I could dash off one or two paragraphs about it.
- I or someone else at my Project has published a piece that would be suitable to reprint in the Newsletter.
- One of our Teacher/Consultants has written a terrific paper that would be worth sharing.
- One of our Teacher/Consultants has done an interesting publishing project with his/her students and might be persuaded to write it up if you called him/her.
- I've read a good book on writing or teaching writing that I'd be happy to review.
- I'd be happy to read and review a good book if you'll send me a book. I'd be especially interested in a book on _____.
- One of our Teacher/Consultants would be a terrific book reviewer. Call me for his/her name and number.
- I've got an idea you haven't mentioned above. My idea is:

If you want to call me about any of the above, my name is _____,
 I'm with the Pennsylvania Writing Project. I can be reached at _____
 or at home at _____. The best time to call me is _____.

SCHEDULE OF PROJECT MEETINGS

<u>When</u>	<u>Where</u>	<u>What</u>
Saturday, March 10	West Chester University	How English is taught in England. Heather Jarvis teaches in London's public schools and is an exchange teacher at the M. L. King High School for one year. She will talk about how children learn when grammar and usage are not directly taught and under an entirely different system of evaluation.
Saturday, April 7	West Chester University	Beverly Bimes, director of the Lancaster School District program for the gifted, will present on teaching writing to gifted students. Bimes is a former Gateway (Mo.) Writing Project Fellow and 1980 Teacher of the Year.
Saturday, May 19	Lawrence Center, WCU	Luncheon for Fellows
Monday, June 25	West Chester University	Institute begins
Friday, July 10	West Chester University	Institute ends

NOTES FROM THE NOVEMBER MEETING

by Gloria Outlaw

The Revision Working Papers, written and compiled by the Advanced PAWP Institute participants, were the focus of the November 1983 meeting. After short introductions, we got right down to the featured topic. Each participant in the Summer '83 Advanced Institute presented his topic. The topics appear in the Working Papers in the order in which they are presented here:

An Overview — Debbie Roselle

Revision seems to be difficult for both students and teachers. Debbie asked these questions:

- Why do students dislike revising their papers?
- How do teachers handle revision?
- How can teachers change the students' attitude toward revision?

The Fellows responded as follows:

- There is too much time between the writing of the first draft and revision.
- Teachers discourage students by showing disapproval.
- Students believe the piece is finished when first written.
- Students are too lazy to revise.
- Teachers praise the first draft so much that students believe there is nothing to change.
- Students have not reached the revision stage in their writing development.
- Students equate "cosmetic fix-up" with revision.
- Students are unsure of what is really expected of them.
- Students want to maintain "ownership," so they resist revision.

Teacher Commenting in the Revision Process — Ed Martin

The key to teacher commenting in revision is to get the student to think about what he has written.

The questions which help a student to focus on his own writing and revision should be presented from the outset:

- What needs to be added?
- What needs to be deleted?
- What should be rearranged?
- What words or parts could be improved by substituting something else?

The participants practiced writing comments on a student paper to encourage revision in each of the categories mentioned. Writing comments to get students to delete a portion of the writing seemed to be the most difficult. One fellow suggested: "If you had to hide one sentence from your readers, which would it be?"

Teacher/Student Conferencing — Janet Smith and Guy MacCloskey

The Roving Conference — The teacher walks around the room quickly commenting on students' writings as they write. The conference consists of an opener (a friendly greeting); a middle (body) in which questions are asked or comments are made to increase fluency, shape, and/or correctness; and a closure, in which a comment is made to release the student and/or teacher (example: "What will you do next?" "I'd like to hear more about that.")

Desk Conference — A conference initiated by either the teacher or student in a more stationary place. The teacher's desk may be too formidable a place for this conference. A sign-up sheet might be used.

Peer Conferencing — Judy Yunginger

The class must be prepared for conferences through practicing group dynamics. The teacher must model the desired behaviors. Writing Every Day Generates Excellence, a New York City writing program, advocates a conference that is formal in its approach. In a group of 4, child #1 reflects, tells what he heard; child #2 tells what he likes; and child #3 tells what other information is needed. Response forms might be helpful.

Structuring the groups for Peer Conferencing is necessary. Students might structure their own groups; teachers might structure the groups; or Donald Fader's "triad groups" might be used. Restructure the groups when non-profitable revision occurs, friction among group members develops, students request change, disruptive noise occurs, or response forms are not filled out.

The teacher has individual conferences with students during Peer Conferencing or she moves from group to group.

Revision Workshops — Doris Kahley, Georgette Saladis, and Judy Yunginger

The Revision Workshop is a time to help students develop skills needed for revision.

Doris Kahley presented a revision workshop on helping students develop a sense of audience. Excerpts from several magazines were presented with a random description of these magazines. The task for the students (the audience) was to match each magazine with the audience it was intended to reach. Later the student was to write a paragraph for a particular audience.

Support Groups — Judy Fisher and Gloria Outlaw

The effective teacher of writing is also a writer and therefore in need of a response (support) group to aid in the revision of his writing. An intrinsic value of the support group is to help the writing teacher through difficult stages in the teaching of her students.

The support group section provides a recipe for the teacher/writer to develop and maintain a group to give feedback in revising his own work and to act as an audience on which to try them out.

Workshops for Teachers — Judy Fisher and Chris Kane

This section deals with presenting the writing process to teachers and others via staff development sessions.

In writing and compiling the Working Papers on Revision, those who shared authorship collaborated continually and used various techniques of revision to make sure the papers said what each wanted them to. Guy and Janet were as thrilled with their revision technique of "cut and paste" as they were with the compilation of the material. The feedback offered throughout the Advanced Institute and the writing of the working papers was immeasurably helpful.

JANUARY'S MEETING

About a dozen people braved the storm. Bob Weiss gave a preview of the summer course on computers and writing, illustrating how computer programs can aid writers for prewriting, planning, drafting, re-envisioning and revising, editing, sharing, and publishing. Software for Apple and IBM machines was demonstrated: COMPUPOEM, Bank St. Writer, TAGY, GRADER and READER, and COMPUWRITER (Bob's own).

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A group of teachers are trained by a T.E.S.A. facilitator to:

- be more aware of their expectations of the students
- understand how these patterns affect the student's achievement
- change very specific behaviors regarding interactions with students
- learn to observe other teachers in the program by coding the number of times specific behavior occurs with target students.

Of these target students, five are identified as high achievers and five are low achievers. The aim is to offer low achievers the same opportunity to respond as the high achievers. As I said earlier, distributing my attention evenly involving all the students is one of my prime concerns.

I don't have access to this program right now but from the notebook and annotated bibliography I've borrowed from Betty, maybe I can glean ideas to carry me on my own until our school offers the training.

November 1

I have to think again about the best place to focus my attention to responding during the school day. My sixth period class has taken on a new interest in light of my recent talks with Betty about evaluating my responses to students. My eighth grade readers are a small class of fourteen and represent a very clear variety of student attitudes and ability levels. Mary and Tracy don't participate with anything other than negative or irrelevant comments. Kim will provide an insightful answer anytime, though she often calls out. I can count on not understanding most of what Dawn tries to say. The others have combinations of these characteristics but participate less. I have more questions to consider:

- Do I wait long enough for all students to formulate an answer?
- Do I handle irrelevant comments in the most productive way?
- Do I call on students only when they've raised their hands?
- Do I let a remark be called out if it's what I want to hear?
- Do I intimidate any students?
- Do I use sarcasm in a careless way?
- Do I embarrass students?
- Do I give praise? Do I distribute it evenly?
- Do I give clues as to whether their response is right or wrong?

I am fairly convinced that on this last point, tone and facial expression make all the difference. By the inflection of my voice I can indicate to the student directly or to the rest of the class what I think of the student's answer. In a way I am teaching them how to fine tune their ability to pick up my signals: good answer; wrong, but try again; way off, forget it; excellent, you're obviously bright. It reminds me of the 19th century animal trainer who believed he had taught his horse to compute when actually the animal had picked up unintentional signals from the trainer.

What messages do I send my students? A recent letter from my friend, Lynne, inspired this reflection. She writes about her work with two year olds, "It is frightening to realize how impressionable they are, and how much impact my interaction with them can have. I re-evaluate my voice, my gestures, my everything. I have to think about the messages I send them."

November 11

Besides taping, I had planned to have Barb, Dian, or Betty (all colleagues) observe me by now. Two problems arise. Schedules are difficult and/or impossible to work around. More disturbing however is the fact that I haven't pressed the issue. I haven't badgered or begged anyone to come into my classroom. I somehow don't feel ready. I guess I share this hesitation with many teachers; we fear criticism. I talk plenty about "if only we (teachers in general) could loosen up enough to really enjoy and welcome visitors to our classrooms, we wouldn't need committees to ensure the curriculum is being addressed. We'd also be better teachers benefitting from positive feedback." Isn't that what I'm assuming motivates students?

Other professionals are observed daily—doctors, lawyers, people in business—all perform and are judged on their effectiveness. The only real observers of teachers are students, and although they perceptively may understand well who are the effective teachers, students have no power to change that teacher's performance. Am I willing to be more in tune with my students' feedback?

November 22

I set my pen down, a break from the commenting I scribble in margins on their papers on the nuclear issue. All that taping does is record auditory remarks. What about all this stuff I write on their papers? What about all these messages? How could I ever assess my response quality there? (I may question a lot of things without having lost my confidence. I actually feel my written responses are very effective means of sending students positive signals. I have my undergraduate training in teaching composition to thank for that. I also have noticed that for four years there is excited chatter as students eagerly read over their returned journals for my green ink ideas.)

November 29

Something is happening in sixth period, not the class I've taped, but which is revealing more about my teaching patterns than any analysis of my voice in seventh period. Tracy is working.

It was less than a month ago when she set her angular face in a sneer and said that her mother's boyfriend would be in "to beat my face." Tracy and I had agreed basically on the "fail quietly" policy; she could join class if she worked cooperatively, but if she wanted to be a vegetable, she had to be quiet about it and not disturb the rest of us. Trouble usually arose because she and Mary, who also had less ambition than most carrots I know, talked and fussed. I had segregated them from the active participants of this small class, which seemed to suit everyone.

But Mary has been absent recently. Probably out of boredom, or no longer having to act up with her buddy, Tracy came alive. She called out a few answers, but I consciously ignored these relevant remarks until she raised her hand and waited like the others. When I finally called on her, she impressed all of us with an amazingly insightful answer. My surprise and delight showed. Where was the tape then! (Not really a concern; I know full well what happened.) Tracy was pleased too, though she remained fairly detached and unimpressed.

Today she was reading the book and I think I caught her copying the vocabulary from the board.

December 5

Tracy did her homework more than once, but today she "forgot" it. No matter. She laughed when I teased her

in the office after school. Earlier she had said she liked my pants. We are feeding off each other's strokes. This is what T.E.S.A., what good teaching is about: investing equal time in responding to all students. Tracy may never be a high achiever, but she doesn't necessarily have to be at the bottom of my class, last on my list of priorities.

CONCLUSION

I have done a good deal of thinking this semester, but it has been the writing that has helped me to take my frustrations with teaching beyond the complaint stage. I can see how my perception of problems has evolved. Answers and results are not things I expected to see by December, but class discussions and time with my response group have given me support and direction.

Quality responding means distributing supportive, encouraging positive attention to all my students as best as I possibly can, day by day, week by week. From this I hope to see two things happen. First my personal involvement with each child should increase. I will write more, share more, empathize more. Secondly, they in turn will be more active participants, more interested, more motivated to do their best.

I hope in the next few months to follow through on these goals:

- target low achieving students and be especially aware that they receive equal feedback and encouragement.
- extend my positive feedback to students in the form of congratulatory notices sent home
- discuss with my principal the possible implementation of T.E.S.A. in our junior high
- set up observation time with at least two other teachers to take place before March.

In addition to specifically school related aims, I hope to maintain contact and exchange writing with my response group, two people who often helped me clear the fog from this mirror of reflection.

Deborah Baker teaches at the Penn Wood West Junior High School in the William Penn School District. This piece was written for Drexel Studies in Composition in Fall 1983.

CHELTENHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT SPONSORS WRITING COURSE

by Audrey L. Badger

For the first time, the Pennsylvania Writing Project held a graduate course in the Cheltenham School District. Fifteen participants, teaching in grades K-12 and several supervisors, were enrolled.

During half of each session the participants were involved in journal writing, working in response groups, and sharing the theories in recommended books. During the last half, the participants received an in-depth presentation from Bob Weiss or a Writing Project Fellow. The presentations were all superb, as was noted from the positive responses of the Cheltenham participants.

An additional highlight of the course was the participants' willingness to hold a session at the close of the course where many of them shared their students' writings and the results of what both they and their students had learned as a result of this course.

It was a most rewarding experience for me as facilitator, and I sincerely feel that each of the Writing Project presenters should be commended for a job well done.

Audrey L. Badger was a Fellow of the 1982 Philadelphia Institute.

WRITING ON RADIO

The teaching of writing continues to be highlighted on KISS-100 FM, as Bob Weiss's monthly *Education Update* features frequent interviews with talented and enlightened teachers. Bob's guest for the December and January shows was Heather Jarvis, an exchange teacher from London, England assigned for the year to the Martin Luther King High School in Philadelphia. Heather, who will be the presenter at the project's March meeting, explains the English system which calls for extensive language use in the classroom, tolerates language diversity, minimizes testing and evaluation, provides for writing folders, and generally succeeds in getting youngsters to want to write and to write competently.

If you missed tuning in on Sunday, January 8 at 7:30 A.M. or later that night (actually, Monday) at 1:00 A.M., come to the project meeting. The next *Education Update* shows are scheduled for those same hours on February 5 and March 4.

DO YOU HAVE A MANUSCRIPT?

The *Journal of Teaching Writing* encourages you to submit articles for publication. Elementary, middle, and secondary school teachers as well as junior college, college, and university professors who want to share ideas are welcome to send manuscripts.

The *Journal of Teaching Writing* is devoted to writing pedagogy throughout the curriculum — from kindergarten to college, from the science class to the literature class. It is committed to the teaching of composition and language skills and the relationship of writing to reading, speaking, and learning. The Editor is interested in considering manuscripts that relate to ways writing is taught or understood; for instance, topics could include composition theory, cognitive development, evaluation of skills, revision, literature and composition, business writing, creative writing, curriculum development, and innovative teaching techniques. Typewritten papers, double spaced, with notes and citations on separate pages, also double spaced, should be submitted in duplicate, accompanied by a stamped return envelope. Author's name and address should appear only on a separate title page. These steps facilitate our policy of anonymous manuscript review and the prompt return of unused materials. Correspondence regarding editorial matters should be addressed to the Editor, *Journal of Teaching Writing*, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, 425 Agnes Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202.

Gargoyle Magazine is looking for fiction for a volume to be called "Fiction/84." Deadline for submission is May 1, 1984. For details: The Paycock Press, P.O. Box 3567, Washington, DC 20007.

Open Places invites poetry, short prose, and illustrations for a special issue of humor to be published in the Spring of 1985. They are looking for the comic, the whimsical, the unabashedly irreverent. Deadline for submission is March 1, 1984. Send submissions to *Open Places*, Attn: Humor Issue, Box 2085, Stephens College, Columbia, MO 65215.

Indiana Review's 1983-1984 fiction contest will be judged by Mary Robison. The contest will be accepting submissions through June of 1984. For more complete information contact *Indiana Review*, 316 North Jordon, Room 302, Bloomington, IN 47405.

COURSES, PROGRAMS, ETC.

Winter also saw the completion of PAWP courses for the Downingtown and Philadelphia school districts, and the beginning of a course for the Neshaminy school district. A course is also scheduled to begin in March in the Hatboro-Horsham school district.

In-service programs are being conducted this winter for the Kennett Area School District, the Avon Grove School District, the Bryn Athyn Church Schools, Lehigh County Community College, and the Southeast Delco and Downingtown school districts.

Project teachers also participated for the third year straight in evaluating student writing submitted for the Scholastic, Inc. competition.

PROJECT FELLOW IN PRINT

Bob McCann, a high school teacher in the West Chester Area School District and a 1981 PAWP Fellow, has had another of his folklore articles published. Look in *Keystone Folklore*, New Series, Vol. I, 1982, No. 2 for Bob's article on his folklore course, "Before Suburbia Collapses: Teaching and Collecting Folklore Among Adolescents." The article was developed as a result of the Fall 1981 course in Directed Studies in Composition.

1984 KEYSTONE STATE READING ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Judy Yunginger of the Eastern Lancaster County School District, a 1982 PAWP Fellow, is organizing the 1984 KSRA Conference at Hershey, PA. The theme of the conference is "Aiming for Excellence: Learning to Read—Reading to Learn." Judy invites everyone on the PAWP mailing list to send a proposal to participate in this conference, which runs from Sunday, November 11, 1984 through Wednesday, November 14, 1984. Write for a proposal application form to J. B. Yunginger, c/o Eastern Lancaster County School District, 101 E. Main St., New Holland, PA 17557.

PCTE CONFERENCE CALL FOR PAPERS

The Pennsylvania Council of Teachers of English's annual conference will be held October 12 and 13, 1984 at the Host Inn in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The Conference welcomes proposals from educators interested in English instruction. Proposals are encouraged for workshop formats, panel discussions, group sessions, and formal presentations, especially in sessions which apply across several levels. Although there are no restrictions on topics, we are especially interested in those about how writing applies to reading, speaking, listening, creative writing, and language arts in general.

Proposals should include title, abstract (100-200 words), type of format, length (20-50 minutes), and special AV needs. You may also propose to serve as a moderator or recorder. Deadline is March 10, 1984. Send your proposals to: (Elementary Schools) John McClafferty, 2300 Walnut Street #733, Philadelphia, PA 19103; (Middle Schools) Ernestine Reed, 8935 Eastwood Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15235; (Secondary Schools) Ms. Susan D. Heide, 576 Crystal Dr., Mt. Lebanon, PA 15228; (Colleges & Universities) Dr. Louis Thompson, 730 E. Second St., Bloomsburg, PA 17815; (Supervision) Dr. Patricia L. Gump, 1273 East Avenue, Roslyn, PA 19001.

THE WRITTEN WORD AND THE WORD PROCESSOR

Spring Conference of the Delaware Valley Writing Council

An interdisciplinary conference on the writing process and the use of the computer is scheduled for Saturday, February 25, 1984 at the Connelly Center, Villanova University. The conference runs from 8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. and costs \$20.00 for registration, lunch, and late afternoon wine and cheese. Promises to be an interesting day.

BACK-TO-BACK CONFERENCES AT ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE

On Friday, March 9, a conference on the Process/Conference Approach to the Teaching of Writing will feature Donald Graves and Mary Ellen Giacobbe. Sessions will be held for teachers in grades 1 through 7. The conference fee is \$10.00. For further information, contact John L. Meehan, Senior Program Adviser, Pennsylvania Department of Education, 333 Market Street, Box 911, Harrisburg, PA 17126 (Tel.: 717-783-3946).

On Saturday, March 10, the Lancaster-Lebanon Writing Council's conference on Connections: Theory into Practice will be held at the same site. The keynote speaker will be Richard Larson, director of the Lehman College Institute for the Study of Literacy, City University of New York. The conference fee is \$13.00 and includes membership in the Lancaster-Lebanon Writing Council. For further information, contact Louise Black, Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA 17022 (Tel.: 717-367-1151).

Registrations for either or both Elizabethtown conferences are to be sent to Karen Steinbrink, Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit #13, 1110 Enterprise Road, East Petersburg, PA 17520.

STUDYING THE ROLE OF RESPONSE IN THE ACQUISITION OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE

The National Writing Project is involved in a new research project sponsored by the National Institute of Education. This project will (1) survey the response practices of 600 excellent National Writing Project teachers at all grade levels in the American public schools, (2) survey the effects of response practices on 6000 American junior and senior high students' perceptions of their writing development, (3) conduct an observational survey in the classrooms of outstanding secondary teachers in the Bay Area, and (4) analyze the response practices in the classrooms of two expert ninth grade writing teachers in the San Francisco Bay Area and the effects of different types of response for students in each of their classes. The survey will yield a national picture of response practices and their perceived effects. The observational studies will yield an analysis of how expert teachers use response to provide scaffolds or assistance for students engaged in the early stages of learning *expository* writing.

By studying response, the researchers expect to learn about a critical aspect of how teachers teach writing and to understand how expository writing skills develop. Findings may provide helpful information to teachers about how to promote the development of written language and to researchers interested in studying the acquisition of written language in the classroom and the role of response in the acquisition process. Project directors are Sarah Warshauer Freedman and Miles Myers of the Bay Area Writing Project.

PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

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

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

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

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